

# Notice of Meeting

---



Scan here to access the public documents for this meeting

# Executive

**Thursday 19th September 2024 at 6.00 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, 11 September 2024

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)



To:	Councillors Jeff Brooks (Chairman), Patrick Clark, Heather Codling, Iain Cottingham, Nigel Foot, Denise Gaines (Vice-Chairman), Stuart Gourley, Justin Pemberton, Louise Sturgess and Vicky Poole
-----	---

# Agenda

## Part I

	Pages
1. <b>Apologies for Absence</b> To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).	5 - 6
2. <b>Minutes</b> To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 25 July 2024.	7 - 14
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> .	15 - 16
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.	17 - 18
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.	19 - 20
6. <b>Financial Year 2024/25 Quarter One Capital Financing Performance Report (EX4513)</b> Purpose: the report presents the provisional outturn position for financial year 2024/25 against the approved capital programme and financing implications for financial year 2025/26.	21 - 32
7. <b>2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter One (EX4516)</b> Purpose: to report on the financial performance of the Council's revenue budgets for Quarter One of the 2024/25 financial year.	33 - 60
8. <b>Draft Waste Management Strategy (EX4406)</b> Purpose: to seek approval to publish the draft waste management strategy (enclosed at Appendix A) for public consultation.	61 - 114



**Agenda - Executive to be held on Thursday, 19 September 2024 (continued)**

9. **West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27 (EX4546)** 115 - 168  
Purpose: to approve West Berkshire Council's (the 'Council') Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27 ('Strategy'). The Strategy has been produced because it's existing Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-23 and Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23 are subject to review. A Strategy is a statutory requirement under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (the 'Act').
10. **Carers Strategy (EX4577)** 169 - 220  
Purpose: the Strategy is a key document in setting out how the council will support carers in the district.
11. **Briefing Note - Customer Charter Refresh (EX4534)** 221 - 228  
Purpose: to review and refresh the formal public-facing Customer Charter created in 2022.
12. **Charitable Sector Memorandum of Understanding (EX4597)** 229 - 238  
Purpose: the report provides an update on progress to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between West Berkshire Council (WBC) and the Charitable Sector.
13. **2024/25 Performance Report Quarter One (EX4540)** 239 - 284  
Purpose: to provide assurance that the priority areas in the [Council Strategy 2023-2027](#) are being managed effectively, and where performance has fallen below the expected level, present information on the remedial action taken and the impact of that action.
14. **Accommodation Review: Proposed Disposal of Unit 1 Turnhams Green Business Park (EX4507)** 285 - 302  
Purpose: as part of the Council's Transformation programme approved by the Executive, the Council is focussing on reviewing its accommodation. One area where a disposal has been identified as a preferred option is in respect of the Council's offices located at Turnhams Green and the recommendations within this report would see this realised.
15. **Members' Questions** 303 - 304  
Members of the Executive to answer questions submitted by Councillors in accordance with the Executive Procedure Rules contained in the Council's Constitution.
16. **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. [Section 10 of Part 10 of the Constitution refers.](#)



## Part II

17. **Accommodation Review: Proposed Disposal of Unit 1 Turnhams Green Business Park - Confidential Appendix (EX4507)** 305 - 306

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

*(Paragraph 5 – information relating to legal privilege)*

Purpose: as part of the Council's Transformation programme approved by the Executive, the Council is focussing on reviewing its accommodation. One area where a disposal has been identified as a preferred option is in respect of the Council's offices located at Turnhams Green and the recommendations within this report would see this realised.

*Sarah Clarke.*

Sarah Clarke  
Service Director: Strategy and Governance

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



Executive – 19 September 2024

## **Item 1 – Apologies for absence**

Verbal Item

This page is intentionally left blank

## DRAFT

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

### EXECUTIVE

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 25 JULY 2024

**Councillors Present:** Jeff Brooks (Chairman), Patrick Clark, Heather Codling, Iain Cottingham, Nigel Foot, Denise Gaines (Vice-Chairman), Stuart Gourley, Louise Sturgess and Vicky Poole

**Also Present:** Councillors Ross Mackinnon, Dominic Boeck, Richard Somner, Jo Stewart, Howard Wollaston, David Marsh, Carlyne Culver and Clive Hooker

**Officers Present:** Melanie Booth (Group Executive), Sam Chiverton (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice), Sarah Clarke (Service Director – Strategy and Governance), Paul Coe (Executive Director – Adult Social Care), AnnMarie Dodds (Executive Director – Children and Family Services), Joseph Holmes (Executive Director - Resources), Clare Lawrence (Executive Director – Place), Nigel Lynn (Chief Executive), and Sadie Owen (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

**Apologies for inability to attend the meeting:** Councillors Lee Dillon and Adiran Abbs

### PART I

#### 1. Opening Statement

The Leader of the Council made an opening statement on the decision of the Schools Forum to pass back money from some of the maintained School's reserves to the Council.

Questions were then allowed from members of the Opposition. The full statement and question and answer session can be viewed on the meeting recording: <https://youtu.be/xizpFBLPu9Q?t=50>.

#### 2. Minutes

Councillor Justin Pemberton was welcomed as a new member of the Executive replacing Councillor Lee Dillon with the Portfolio for Public Safety and Community Engagement. Councillor Ross Mackinnon congratulated Councillor Pemberton on his appointment.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2024 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Leader.

#### 3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Jeff Brooks, Iain Cottingham and Justin Pemberton declared a non prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 12 as Thatcham Town Councillors.

#### 4. Public Questions

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

#### 5. Petitions

There were no petitions presented to the Executive.

**6. Budgeting Approach - 2025 onwards (EX4561)**

Councillor Iain Cottingham introduced a report (Agenda Item 6), which set out to the Executive the process for the delivery of the 2025-26 budget papers.

It was reported that the Council would be moving towards activity-based budgeting methodology. Councillor Cottingham suggested that such an approach was better for decision making, would review outputs to drive costs, would increase the ability for cross departmental budget collaboration and would allow improved data-based decisions in relation to the revenue budget.

Councillor Cottingham reported that from a Capital expenditure perspective the Council would move towards a zero-based budgeting approach.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon wished the Executive luck with the new approach.

Councillor David Marsh referred to section 5.3 (c) of the report and queried how concerned the Council should be in relation to the High Needs Block deficit. Councillor Cottingham speculated that on the balance of probabilities the new government may call in the debt which would lead to financial difficulties for the Council.

**RESOLVED that:** Executive noted the report

**7. Capital Financing Performance Report - Outturn Financial Year 2023/24 (EX4524)**

Councillor Iain Cottingham introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 7), which updated on the under or overspends against the Council's approved capital budget and proposed reprofiling of planned expenditure into subsequent financial years.

Councillor Denise Gaines seconded the recommendations within the report.

**RESOLVED that:** Executive note

- The provisional outturn underspend against the 2023/24 capital programme of £47.7 million.
- The impact of required capital financing on the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and liability benchmark which identifies the Council as a long-term borrower of funding. (Appendix C).
- £13.6 million of planned expenditure to be reprofiled into financial year 2024/25 (project details in Appendix B).
- £1.7 million of funding proposed to be brought forward from approved expenditure from financial year 2024/25 into financial year 2023/24 (project details in Appendix B).

**8. 2023/24 Revenue Financial Performance: Provisional Outturn (EX4523)**

Councillor Iain Cottingham introduced a report (Agenda Item 8), which provided an update on the financial performance of the Council's revenue budgets.

It was noted that at the end of the financial year there was a reduced overspend of £3.1 million, with a provisional general fund reserve of £4 million, which equated to approximately eight days of spend. Councillor Cottingham acknowledged that this figure needed to be at least doubled in order to provide some level of financial security.

Councillor Cottingham thanked all of the budget holders within the organisation for working so hard to reach the current position.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon commended the reduced overspend but suggested that equating the amount of reserves to days did not work in the public sector, as there could always be reliance on payment of Council tax.



## EXECUTIVE - 25 JULY 2024 - MINUTES

### **RESOLVED that:** Executive

- Note the provisional management accounting outturn of £3.1m overspend, a reduction of £0.15m from Quarter Three.
- Note the continuation of Financial Review Panel (FRP) meeting weekly to ensure the spending limits are being adhered to and to monitor the measures around recruitment, staffing and agency.

### **9. Care Quality Commission Local Authority Assessment 2024 (EX4531)**

Councillor Patrick Clark introduced and proposed a report (Agenda item 9) which provided an update on the recent Care Quality Commission's (CQC) Local Authority Assessment in West Berkshire. The CQC had awarded the Council a rating of 'Good'.

Councillor Jo Stewart thanked officers for their work to achieve such a rating.

Referring to action 12 of the action plan, Councillor Stewart queried how the service aimed to manage the balance to be more innovative, against the ongoing budget pressures. Councillor Clark acknowledged that innovation could be costly but hoped that it would also save money in the long term. It was reported that a variety of different measures were being investigated, including improved IT equipment for frontline staff and implementing AI.

Councillor Nigel Foot added that there were innovative ideas stemming from the libraries service, including home deliveries and library hubs.

Councillor Stewart referred to action 17 and the emphasis on co-production, which Councillor Stewart suggested had been de-valued by the Council in recent years. Councillor Clark acknowledged the value of co-production and felt that it was an area that required greater investigation and energy in the future.

Councillor Stewart referred to action 18 and the requirement to enhance data relating to smaller communities and isolated groups and queried the optimistic target date of January 2025. Councillor Clark clarified that the target date was optimistic, and it was not anticipated that all the data deficiencies would be resolved by that date.

### **RESOLVED that:**

Adult Social Care (ASC) leads work to deliver the following actions:

- Develop and implement an action plan to progress issues identified through the assurance process. The plan will include engagement with relevant colleagues including Commissioning & Procurement, Human Resources, Digital and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead.
- Incorporate CQC feedback into the updated ASC Strategy

### **10. Contracts for Award under Delegated Authority from Executive (EX4562)**

**Councillor Iain Cottingham introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 10), which provided details of forthcoming supply, service and works contract awards that would have a contract value in excess of £2.5m and as such would require approval from Executive during the next quarter.**

Councillor Richard Sumner was pleased to see the progress of the Grazeley Solar Farm but requested that the name be changed to reflect its location in Bloomfield Hatch.

Councillor Jeff Brooks seconded the recommendation within the report.

## EXECUTIVE - 25 JULY 2024 - MINUTES

### Recommendation (**Vote to be taken in Part II**):

- Executive delegate authority to an individual (Service Director) to proceed with the award of the contracts in table 4.5 in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, following the completion of the appropriate procurement process and Procurement Board approval of a Contract Award report.

### 11. **Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge 2024 - West Berkshire (EX4568)**

Councillor Jeff Brooks introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 11), which presented the action plan in response to the recommendations from the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge for West Berkshire Council.

Councillor Heather Codling noted that an aspect of item 11 on the Action Plan and co-production of a SEND and Inclusion Strategy had already been completed and was present on the meeting's agenda as item 15.

Councillor Dominic Boeck noted that there had been a significant churn of Executive members and suggested that stability would be an advantage. Councillor Brooks responded that he was very happy and proud of his professional team which would be undertaking ongoing training.

Councillor Denise Gaines agreed with Councillor Brooks and expressed her pride at being a member of the Executive. Councillor Gaines reported that Portfolio Holders were working very closely with the senior leadership team and working well as an organisation, and seconded the recommendation within the report.

#### **RESOLVED that:** Executive

- Approve the actions that are being taken to address the recommendations within the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Report.

### 12. **Dunstan Park - Land clawback (EX4550)**

Councillor Iain Cottingham acknowledged his interest as a member of Thatcham Town Council and resident living close to Dunstan Park, and introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 12), which sought approval for West Berkshire Council (foregoing its clawback right), to agree the disposal of part of Dunstan Park site by Thatcham Town Council to West Berkshire Therapy Centre.

Councillor Richard Sumner referred to covenant 4.2(a) of the report and sought assurance that the facility would be available to all West Berkshire residents and not just Thatcham Town. Councillor Jeff Brooks provided an assurance that the facility would be available to all members of the district, with a fee for wider area use.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon queried the value of the financial income of the clawback that the Council was proposing to forego. Councillor Cottingham agreed to respond in Part II of the meeting due to the disclosure of commercially sensitive information. Councillor Mackinnon queried how the Council waiving clawback, could be justified to schools facing clawback. Councillor Brooks commented that the Council needed to provide health and support across the entire district.

Councillor Jeff Brooks seconded the recommendation within the report.

#### **RESOLVED that:**

- Executive resolves to grant delegate authority to the Service Lead for Legal and Democratic Services having consulted with the Service Director Finance to agree the disposal between TTC and WBTC and to forego its clawback right contained within

## EXECUTIVE - 25 JULY 2024 - MINUTES

the land transfer linked specifically to the disposal to the West Berkshire Therapy Centre (WBTC) for the purposes of the development of a new hydrotherapy centre on the site.

### 13. Home to School Transport Policy 2025/26 (EX4528)

Councillor Heather Codling introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 13), which introduced the proposed Home to School Transport policy for the academic year 2025/26. It was reported that it was the firstly time that the Policy had been reviewed since 2018, and amendments related to simplification and accessibility.

Councillor Dominic Boeck referred to section 5.7 of the report which noted that the Council was making a number of provisions outside its policy and urged for caution in communicating any changes to eligibility to residents and requested that it be significantly in advance of parents making any decisions about choice of schools. Councillor Codling acknowledged that communication would be key.

Councillor Howard Woollaston referred to Lambourn which he suggested was subject to an inequitable application of the policy being located directly in the middle of two separate schools. Councillor Codling responded that it was the Policy that the Council had to work to, and that it was parental choice that if the further school was chosen, then transport would need to be paid.

Councillor Denise Gaines seconded the recommendation within the report

**RESOLVED that:** the Home to School Transport policy for 2025/26 was approved for publication.

### 14. 2023/24 Performance Report - Quarter Four (EX4352)

Councillor Jeff Brooks introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 14), which provided assurance that the priority areas in the Council Strategy 2023-2027 were being managed effectively, and where performance had fallen below the expected level, provided information on the remedial action taken and the impact of that action. It was noted that the report had previously been discussed at Scrutiny Commission.

Councillor Brooks commended the report but noted that there were a number of improvements that could be made to the presentation and clarity of information.

Councillor Ross Mackinnon referred to the KPI under the 'Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency' priority which stated, 'Confirm plan to phase out the charge on garden waste collection' and commented that the information provided within the public portal was confusing and required far greater clarity.

Councillor Mackinnon further commented that Councillor Stuart Gourley had stated at Scrutiny Commission that 'nobody from the Administration had ever said that the garden waste collection would be phased out by 2027 and that it was an open-ended commitment'. Councillor Brooks agreed with the statement and refused to make a commitment to phase the collection out by 2027.

Councillor Mackinnon referred to the delay to the pedestrianisation of Newbury Town Centre and queried whether the Administration regretted not having undertaken a full consultation in 2023. Councillor Brooks commented that Councillor Gourley would be answering a Member question on the same subject later in the meeting.

Councillor Iain Cottingham seconded the recommendation within the report.

**RESOLVED that:** Executive

## EXECUTIVE - 25 JULY 2024 - MINUTES

- Note the progress made in delivering the Council Strategy Delivery Plan 2023-2027, maintaining a strong outcome for the majority of the measures, and remedial actions taken, where appropriate, where performance is below target.
- In line with the performance management policy, to approve remedial actions, including requests to update/reprofile measures and targets agreed by the Council, to help assess performance, pending the Council's approval of the annual refresh of the Delivery Plan.

### 15. **Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy for West Berkshire (EX4565)**

Councillor Heather Codling introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 15), which presented a revised SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-29. It was accompanied by a detailed Delivery plan addressing the priorities contained in the strategy.

Councillor Codling reported that the Strategy had been produced further to significant co-production and had been developed with six key priorities.

Councillor Dominic Boeck agreed that a lot of good work had been undertaken but noted that the delivery plan still appeared to be in draft format even though a number of target dates were imminent. Councillor Codling responded that it was still in draft form as some further data was required.

Further to a query from Councillor Boeck, it was clarified that those tasks and actions colour coded pink in the delivery plan related to DBV as opposed to the original SEND strategy.

Councillor David Marsh welcomed the report and thanked staff for the SEND work being undertaken across the district. Councillor Marsh referred to a report issued that day by the Local Government Association and County Councils Network which stated that SEND services were overwhelmed and dysfunctional, and queried in such an environment how the Strategy would be delivered. Councillor Codling acknowledged that the system was dysfunctional, but that the Council was doing its absolute best to help those affected.

Councillor Richard Somner requested that the delivery plan be properly RAG rated with no inclusion of blue colour coding.

Councillor Denise Gaines seconded the recommendation within the report.

**RESOLVED that:** Executive consider and approve the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024-29.

### 16. **Response to the Council Motion on the Bond Riverside Culvert (EX4575)**

Councillor Stuart Gourley introduced and proposed a report (Agenda Item 16), which provided the Executive with further information to allow consideration of a motion presented to Council at its meeting of 26 March in respect of the Bond Riverside culvert.

Councillor Gourley noted that elements of the motion had already been acted upon. He commented that he had given serious consideration to the motion, however noted that there were many residents across West Berkshire that had been affected by flooding in 2023/24 and that all residents should be treated equitably.

Councillor Denise Gaines seconded the recommendation within the report.

**RESOLVED that:** the motion is not taken forward but that some of the principals and aims of the motion be incorporated into the Drainage and Flood Risk capital programme and managed through the Council's existing governance structure.

EXECUTIVE - 25 JULY 2024 - MINUTES

17. **Members' Questions**

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

18. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED that** members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the under-mentioned item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as contained in Paragraph 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006. Rule 8.10.4 of the Constitution also refers.

19. **Contracts for Award under Delegated Authority from Executive (EX4562)**

*(Paragraph 6 – information relating to proposed action to be taken by the Local Authority)*

The Executive considered an exempt report (Agenda Item 19) which provided an update to contracts included and referenced in the Agenda Item 10 report.

**RESOLVED that:** the recommendations in the exempt report be agreed.

**Other options considered:** approval of a consolidated contract award report is considered the most efficient way of meeting the governance requirements of the Constitution, therefore no alternative proposals are being made.

*(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 8.40 pm)*

**CHAIRMAN** .....

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive – 19 September 2024

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

Verbal Item

This page is intentionally left blank



Executive – 19 September 2024

## **Item 4 – Public Questions**

To follow

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive – 19 September 2024

## **Item 5 – Petitions**

Verbal Item

This page is intentionally left blank

---

# Financial Year 2024/25 Quarter One Capital Financing Performance Report

---

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Iain Cottingham
<b>Report Author:</b>	Shannon Coleman-Slaughter
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4513

---

## 1 Purpose of the Report

The capital financing performance report provided to Members reports on the under or overspends against the Council's approved capital budget and proposed reprofiling of planned expenditure into subsequent financial years. This report presents the provisional outturn position for financial year 2024/25 against the approved capital programme and financing implications for financial year 2025/26.

## 2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note:

- (a) The forecast outturn position of planned expenditure of £62.1 million, generating a £4.1 million underspend. During the course of the financial year it is not unusual for forecast expenditure to be reduced, resulting in a requirement for reprofiling. Capital programme reprofiling occurs for a number of reasons, delays with projects through third party contractors, economic conditions and reprioritisation due to unforeseen events. No capital expenditure is financed until it is incurred, protecting the capital financing budget which is funded through the revenue budget.

2.2 It is recommended that the following budgetary amendments are approved:

- (a) The proposed reprofiling of planned expenditure from 2024/25 into 2025/26 of £7.6 million, detailed by service in appendix A.
- (b) The proposed transfer of Council funded expenditure budget totalling £2.8 million from 2025/26 into 2024/26 for support of the Northcroft Dry side Development Project.
- (c) The proposed transfer of £801k of external funding from 2023/24 into 2024/25 to support delivery of the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan project.

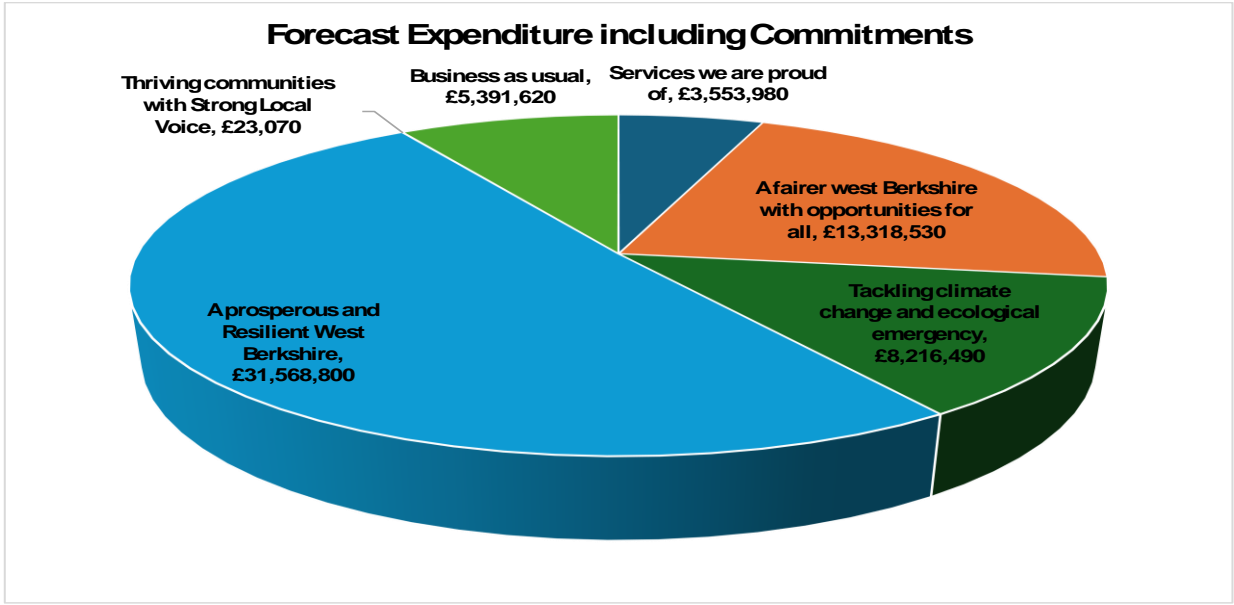
### 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	The outturn position is expenditure of £62.1 million has been incurred against a revised budget of £66.2 million, an overall forecast underspend of £4.1 million. £7.6 million of future expenditure is proposed to be reprofiled into financial year 2025/26. £2.8 million of funding is proposed to be brought forward from financial year 2025/26 into financial year 2024/25. A further £802k of external funding received in 2023/24 is to be applied to the 2024/25 capital programme.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Legal:</b>	There are no projects planned within the approved capital programme for 2024/25 that are purely for yield purposes. The Council is therefore protected from violating the borrowing protocols determined in the Prudential Code December 2021 that prevents Local Authorities from accessing financing in support of yield-based projects. Should an authority be found to be financing purely yield based projects, that authority would lose all access to the Public Works and Loans Board (PWLB) borrowing facility. PWLB financing underpins the Council funded element of the approved capital programme.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	The Council is also exposed to inflationary cost pressures across the capital programme as a whole. Furthermore, any changes in PWLB borrowing rates will impact on any new borrowing undertaken and the Council's weighted average cost of borrowing. Both of these external risks are largely outside the Council's ability to control, although the Council will take appropriate advice from our external treasury consultants, to determine the optimum time and structure for any new borrowing to be undertaken.
<b>Property:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Policy:</b>	Not applicable

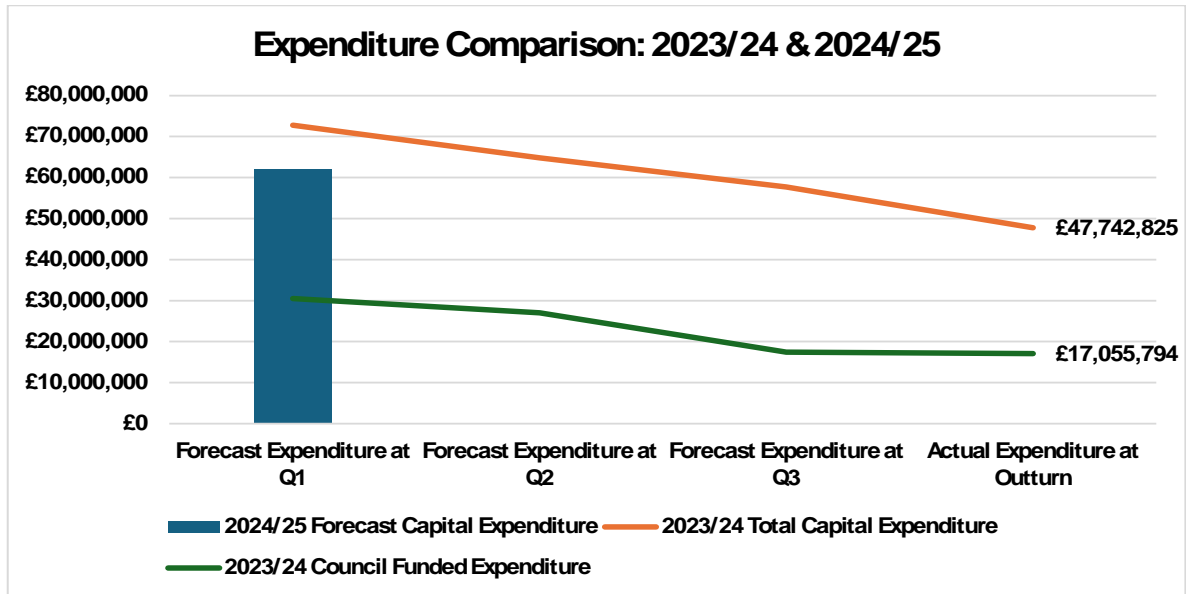
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>		X		
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, 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>	Joseph Holmes, Executive Director for Resources, s151 Officer			

## 4 Executive Summary

4.1 The capital programme enables delivery of key Council schemes focused on supporting the approved Capital and Council Strategies. As at Quarter One of financial year 2024/25 £10.6 million of expenditure across capital schemes had been incurred with a further £51.5million forecast to be spent by outturn. £62.1 million of planned expenditure incurred at outturn against the approved programme budget of £66.2 million would result in a £4.1 million underspend position.



4.2 The total forecast expenditure to be incurred in 2024/25 on delivery of the capital programme is £62.1 million split across Council funded (i.e. debt funded expenditure) of £35.4 million and externally financed expenditure of £26.7 million. During the course of the financial year it is not unusual for forecast expenditure to be reduced, resulting in a requirement for reprofiling. The graphic below details the current quarter one forecast against the forecast trend for total Council capital expenditure and Council debt funded capital expenditure in 2023/24.





- 4.3 Capital programme reprofiling occurs for a number of reasons, delays with projects through third party contractors, economic conditions and reprioritisation due to unforeseen events. No capital expenditure is financed until it is incurred, protecting the capital financing budget which is funded through the revenue budget. It is anticipated during the course of the financial year, as resources are reviewed, the level of expenditure forecast will vary and historically the trend has been to reduce, with reprofiling of planned expenditure into subsequent financial years.
- 4.4 As part of the forecast outturn position £7.6 million of future planned expenditure is proposed to be reprofiled into financial year 2024/25. £2.8 million of Council funded expenditure budget is proposed to be brought forward from financial year 2025/26 into 2024/25 to fund completion of the Northcroft Dry side Redevelopment project (the funding forms part of the approved ten-year capital programme). A further £801k of external funding budget is to be reprofiled from 2023/24 into 2024/25 to support delivery of the Newbury Town Centre masterplan project. A detailed breakdown by service is included in Appendix A.
- 4.5 In respect of financing the capital programme, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, the Council's total level of long-term borrowing to fund capital spend stood at £207 million. Capital financing costs are incurred a year in arrears; hence the cost of financing 2023/24 capital expenditure will fall into financial year 2024/25 and expenditure incurred in 2024/25 will be financed in 2025/26. The Council's liability benchmark (included in appendix B) identifies the Council as a long-term borrower. The approved Investment & Borrowing Strategy for 2024/25 includes provision for financing of capital expenditure incurred in financial year 2023/24 and the 2025/26 strategy for approval in March 2025 will include provision for financing of 2024/25 capital expenditure.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

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

### Background

- 5.3 The 2024/25 capital programme was agreed by Council on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024 with a gross expenditure budget of £53.8 million split between externally funded expenditure of £28.4 million and £25.4 million of Council funded expenditure (i.e. application of capital receipts and external borrowing). The repayment of principal sums and interest on loans used to fund capital expenditure are met from the revenue budget for capital

financing. During the financial year budget changes may occur, mainly as a result of budgets brought forward from prior financial years, additional grants, s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations received in year or expenditure re-profiled in future financial years. As part of the budget monitoring process, the forecast year end position of the capital projects is reviewed and proposals for unutilised budgets to be re-profiled is reviewed by Capital Strategy Group (CSG). As at quarter one the revised capital programme budget pre proposed expenditure reprofiling into financial year 2025/26 is £66.2 million. The inflation of in year budgets relates to agreed reprofiling of expenditure from financial year 2023/24 at outturn.

5.4 At quarter one expenditure of £62 million has been forecast to be incurred against the revised capital programme of £66.2 million, generating a forecast underspend of £4.1 million. The capital programme is aligned to the approved Council Strategy (2024/25 - 2034/35) and its key themes.

Strategy Theme	Revised Budget	Forecast Expenditure
Services we are proud of	£2,962,210	£3,553,980
A fairer west Berkshire with opportunities for all	£13,149,720	£13,318,530
Tackling climate change and ecological emergency	£8,367,640	£8,216,490
A prosperous and Resilient West Berkshire	£35,831,530	£31,568,800
Thriving communities with Strong Local Voice	£23,070	£23,070
<b>Total Planned and Forecast Expenditure</b>	<b>£60,334,170</b>	<b>£56,680,870</b>

5.5 The Council invests heavily in ensuring that West Berkshire remains an area that is prosperous, resilient and supportive of the most vulnerable. Key projects to be undertaken in year include: Investment across the education estate including basic need expansion project at the Castle School (£1.4 million), additional Special Educational Needs and mental Health provision improvements at primary school level (£2.4 million), enhancements to educational buildings across the district (£1.3 million). £5.4 million is planned to be spent in year redeveloping the dry side provision at Northcroft Leisure Centre, with further improvements to provision across the leisure estate (£648k). £3.9 million of carbon reduction and solar initiative projects are planned, including initiating provision of a solar farm in year. In excess of £12 million of expenditure is planned on enhancements to bridges, highways and public infrastructure across the district, including on going improvements to Newbury and Theale rail stations (£2.3 million and £2.0 million respectively).

5.6 Alongside delivery of the key themes, investment is required to maintain and enhance business as usual activities, primarily in respect of planned enhancement of business systems. £5.9 million of expenditure has been budgeted for in the financial year against with £5.4 million forecast to be incurred by the yearend. Key projects planned are: replacement of aging ICT infrastructure (£1.1 million), implementation of a new social care management system (£871k), enhancement of the new HR and payroll system (£662k), investment in telephony infrastructure (£245k) and enhancements to the corporate estate (£459.7k).

## Proposals

- 5.7 At quarter one £7.6 million of expenditure is proposed to be reprofiled into financial year 2025/26. £2.8 million of Council funding planned for 2025/26 is proposed to be brought forward into 2024/25 to fund the Northcroft Dryside Redevelopment Project and £801k of external funding received in 2023/24 to be reprofiled against expenditure to be incurred in 2024/25 relating to the Newbury Town Centre Masterplan Project. Net reprofiling of £4 million is proposed, details of reprofiling on a service basis is included in appendix A.

## 6 Other options considered

Not applicable.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 All capital expenditure must be financed, The Prudential Code requires authorities to look at capital and investment plans in light of overall organisation strategy and resources to ensure that decisions are made with sufficient regard to the long-term financing implications and risks to the Council. A key indicator is the Council's Authorised Limit for external for debt, which was approved at Council on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024, at £386.8 million for financial year. As well as the level of borrowing needed to fund capital expenditure, the Limit also allows for debt embedded in the Waste PFI contract up to a maximum of £13.2 million at any one time). As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, the Council's total level of long-term borrowing to fund capital spend stood at £207 million (split £206.6 million from the PWLB and £0.4 million community bond).
- 7.2 The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The 2024/25 capital programme is expected to increase the Council's CFR by £23.9 million to £316.8 million by 31.3.2025.
- 7.3 Capital financing costs are incurred a year in arrears; hence the cost of financing 2024/25 capital expenditure will fall into financial year 2025/26. Based on the outturn position, the Council's Balance Sheet forecast indicates that long term borrowing will be required in financial year 2025/26. It should be noted that the Balance Sheet resources assumption are based on draft accounts, until such time the accounts are finalised, and an audit opinion provided by the Council's external auditors, the figures remain draft and hence are subject to adjustment. Appendix B provides detail on the Council's CFR and liability benchmark.

## 8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Proposed Reprofiling of Planned Expenditure at Quarter One Financial Year 2024/25.
- 8.2 Appendix B – Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and Liability Benchmark

**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 Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months
  - Item is Urgent Key Decision
  - Report is to note only
- 

**Officer details:**

Name: Shannon Coleman-Slaughter  
Job Title: Service Director for Finance, Property & Procurement  
Tel No: 01635 503225  
E-mail: Shannon.colemanslaughter@westberks.gov.uk

---

## Appendix A

### Proposed Reprofiting of Planned Expenditure at Quarter One

Service	Q1 Budget	Forecast Expenditure	(under)/Overspend	Reprofilng into 2025/26	Funding from 2025/26	Increased Reprofiting from 2023/24
Adult Social Care	£1,888,010	£2,165,360	£277,350	£0	0	0
Children & Family Services	£20,000	£0	-£20,000	£0	0	0
Education	£9,152,070	£6,858,390	-£2,293,680	£2,614,810	0	0
Communities & Wellbeing	£10,922,440	£10,925,320	£2,880	£2,869,600	-£2,750,000	0
Development & Regulation	£6,911,950	£7,391,760	£479,810	£0	0	-£801,200
Environment	£30,938,640	£29,586,470	-£1,352,170	£2,108,080	0	0
Finance, Property & Procurement	£1,966,150	£1,742,700	-£223,450	£0	0	0
Strategy, ICT & Governance	£4,427,780	£3,402,490	-£1,025,290	£0	0	0
Total Council	£66,227,040	£62,072,490	-£4,154,550	£7,592,490	-£2,750,000	-£801,200

## Appendix B

## Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) and Liability Benchmark

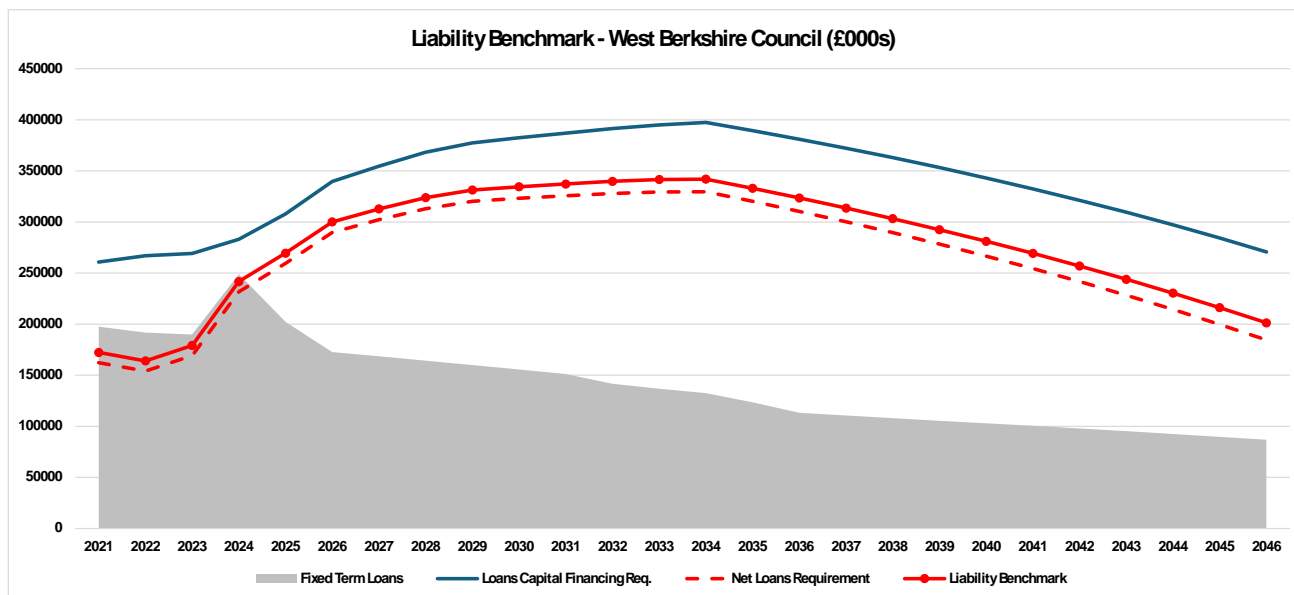
The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR results from the capital activity of the Council and resources used to pay for the capital spend. It represents the 2024/25 unfinanced capital expenditure, and prior years' net or unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.

Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)	31.3.2023	31.3.2024	31.3.2025	31.3.2026
	Actual	Actual	Projection	Projection
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Financing requirement	279,896	292,870	316,786	347,614
Less other debt liabilities	-10,670	-9,807	-8,892	-7,920
Loans Capital Financing Req.	269,226	283,063	307,894	339,693
Less: Existing External Borrowing	-189,890	-248,973	-202,242	-172,732
<b>Internal (Over) Borrowing</b>	<b>79,336</b>	<b>34,090</b>	<b>105,652</b>	<b>166,961</b>
Less: Balance Sheet Resources	-100,006	-51,363	-48,363	-49,863
<b>Investments/ (New Borrowing)</b>	<b>20,670</b>	<b>17,274</b>	<b>-57,289</b>	<b>-117,097</b>

To compare the Council's actual borrowing against an alternative strategy, a liability benchmark has been calculated showing the lowest risk level of borrowing. This assumes the same forecasts as the table above, but that cash and investment balances are kept to a minimum level of £10 million at each year-end to maintain sufficient liquidity. The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow. Councils are now required as part of in year reporting to publish the liability benchmark.

Liability Benchmark	31.3.2023	31.3.2024	31.3.2025	31.3.2026
	Actual	Actual	Projection	Projection
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Loans Capital Financing Req.	269,226	283,063	307,894	339,693
Less: Balance Sheet Resources	-100,006	-51,363	-48,363	-49,863
Net Loans Requirement	169,220	231,700	259,531	289,830
Preferred Year-end Position	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,250
<b>Liability Benchmark</b>	<b>179,220</b>	<b>241,700</b>	<b>269,531</b>	<b>300,080</b>

Financial Year 2024/25 Quarter One Capital Financing Performance Report



This page is intentionally left blank



# 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter One

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Iain Cottingham
<b>Report Author:</b>	Melanie Ellis
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4516

## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report on the financial performance of the Council's revenue budgets. This report is Quarter One for the 2024/25 financial year. The report is highlighting the financial position at each quarter of the financial year and impact on the Council's General Fund position. This allows the Executive and Scrutiny Commission to consider the implications and the actions being taken to mitigate and manage the position.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 There are no recommendations made within this report. Members are asked to note:
- The forecast Quarter One position of £5.5m overspend against a net revenue budget of £164.6 million and, if the Council outturns at the forecast position, the General Fund of £0.4m.
  - The key areas of pressure relating to demand led services driving the forecast overspend position detailed in section 5.6 of this report.
  - The work and mitigations underway totalling £3.5m which, if achieved, would reduce the forecast overspend to £2m, and would lead to a General Fund surplus of £3.9m. Further mitigations are in progress which will be factored into the Quarter Two reporting.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	The forecast position at Q1 of a £5.5m overspend has significant financial implications. The General Fund is at £4.1m, with a minimum recommended level of £7m. There is a planned £1.9m contribution to reserves in 2025/26. If the £5.5m

	<p>overspend remains at year end, there would be a General Fund balance of £0.4m.</p> <p>The minimum level of General Fund balance recommended by the s151 officer is £7m and this would put the Council significantly below this for future budget setting. This would mean an increase in future budget savings over and above initial forecasts for 2025/26 in order to replenish the reserves.</p> <p>With mitigations underway, a forecast overspend of £2m would result in a General Fund surplus of £3.9m.</p>			
<b>Human Resource:</b>	Not yet discussed in detail with HR			
<b>Legal:</b>	None			
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Measures have been included in the report to provide greater levels of scrutiny on much lower levels of expenditure and recruitment costs.			
<b>Property:</b>	Review of assets continue to be undertaken with a view to possible sales that could be utilised for reduced capital financing costs and / or funding for a range of transformational activity across the Council to reduce costs.			
<b>Policy:</b>				
	<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?		y		

<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		y		The proposal aims to continue to protect those characteristics
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		y		Unlikely to have any long-term environmental impact.
<b>Health Impact:</b>		y		
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		y		N/A
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		y		N/A
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>			y	The proposal could reduce spend on some areas of council priority.
<b>Core Business:</b>		y		
<b>Data Impact:</b>				No impact
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	Service Directors, Executive Directors.			

## 4 Executive Summary

4.1 The General Fund reserve is currently at £4.1m (per the 2023/24 Financial Statements), which is £2.9m below the S151 officer's minimum recommended level, as set out in the 2024/25 budget papers. In order to replenish the general fund reserve, £1.9m has been set aside in the 2024/25 budget and further amounts over the following two years to return the general fund to £7m.

4.2 The Quarter One forecast is an overspend of £5.5m as summarised below:

## 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter One

	Current Budget	Net Income/ Expenditure	Quarter One				
			Budget Manager Forecast Variance	Actions to reduce forecast	Forecast variance	Mitigations	Year end forecast variance
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
People	107,417	113,791	6,374	(2,147)	4,227	(1,000)	3,227
Place	33,521	34,360	839	(263)	576	0	576
Resources	12,276	14,531	2,255	(1,498)	757	(2,500)	(1,743)
Chief Executive	577	577	0	0	0	0	0
Capital Financing/Risk Mgt	10,818	10,645	(173)	185	12	0	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>164,609</b>	<b>173,904</b>	<b>9,295</b>	<b>(3,724)</b>	<b>5,571</b>	<b>(3,500)</b>	<b>2,071</b>

- 4.3 A number of measures are in place totalling £3.5m to help reduce expenditure / increase income to reduce the forecast overspend to £2m.
- 4.4 A Star Chamber has been established consisting of members and officers. Any overspending service attends this each month to explain the reasons for overspend and set out an action plan of mitigations in order to reach a break even position by year end. These further mitigations will be reported in at Quarter Two.
- 4.5 The Financial Reporting Panel continue to meet weekly to review all agency and recruitment and expenditure over £10k in overspending services.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

- 5.2 The 2024/25 net revenue budget of £165m was set in March 2024. The Quarter One forecast is an overspend of £5.5m after use of £0.2m of specific earmarked reserves, £2.5m of transformation funding and £1m service mitigations.
- 5.3 If this was to be the final outturn position then the General Fund would have a balance of £0.4m and the Council would be in the position where a section 114 notice would need to be issued or a capitalisation directive sought. It is therefore vital that the Corporate Board and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) continue with mitigations to reduce expenditure / increase income to reduce the forecast overspend.
- 5.4 These mitigations are currently forecast to reduce the overspend to £2m, which would leave a General Fund surplus of £3.9m. At £3.9m General Fund, it is unlikely that the Council will seek financial support if the mitigations can be delivered. Further mitigations are underway and will be reported at Quarter Two.

### Quarter One 2024/25

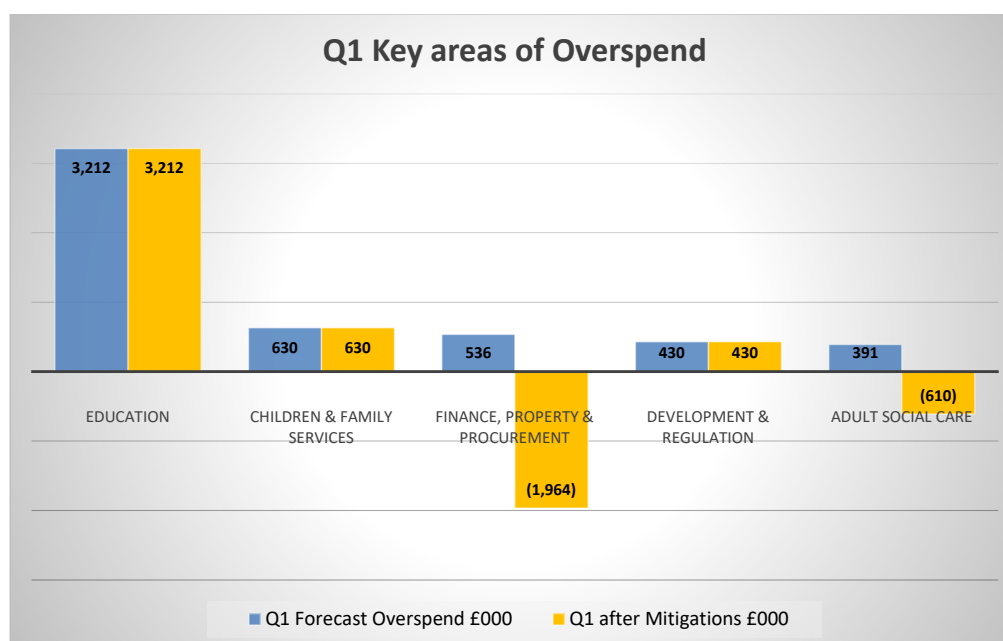
- 5.5 The Quarter One forecast overspend of £5.5m represents 3.4% of the net revenue budget. With mitigations of £3.5m, this overspend would reduce to £2m.

## 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter One

	Net Budget	Net Income/ Expenditure	Quarter One				
			Budget Manager Forecast Variance	Actions to reduce forecast	Forecast variance	Mitigations	Year end forecast variance
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Care	69,706	71,176	1,469	(1,079)	391	(1,000)	(610)
Children & Family Services	23,470	24,983	1,513	(883)	630	0	630
Executive Director	544	544	(0)	(53)	(53)	0	(53)
Education DSG funded	(444)	(444)	0	0	0	0	0
Education	11,594	14,806	3,212	0	3,212	0	3,212
Public Health & Wellbeing	(80)	(80)	0	0	0	0	0
Communities & Wellbeing	2,626	2,806	180	(133)	47	0	47
<b>People</b>	<b>107,417</b>	<b>113,791</b>	<b>6,374</b>	<b>(2,147)</b>	<b>4,227</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	<b>3,227</b>
Executive Director	44	189	146	0	146	0	146
Development & Regulation	5,864	6,294	430	0	430	0	430
Environment	27,614	27,877	263	(263)	0	0	0
<b>Place</b>	<b>33,521</b>	<b>34,360</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>(263)</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>576</b>
Executive Director	216	562	346	(125)	221	0	221
Finance , Property & Strategy, ICT & Governance	2,997	3,935	938	(402)	536	(2,500)	(1,964)
Transformation	0	256	256	(256)	0	0	0
<b>Resources</b>	<b>12,276</b>	<b>14,531</b>	<b>2,255</b>	<b>(1,498)</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>(2,500)</b>	<b>(1,743)</b>
<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Capital Financing	12,403	12,230	(173)	0	(173)	0	(173)
Risk Management/Reserves	(1,585)	(1,585)	0	185	185	0	185
<b>Capital Financing/Risk Mgt</b>	<b>10,818</b>	<b>10,645</b>	<b>(173)</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>164,609</b>	<b>173,904</b>	<b>9,295</b>	<b>(3,724)</b>	<b>5,571</b>	<b>(3,500)</b>	<b>2,071</b>

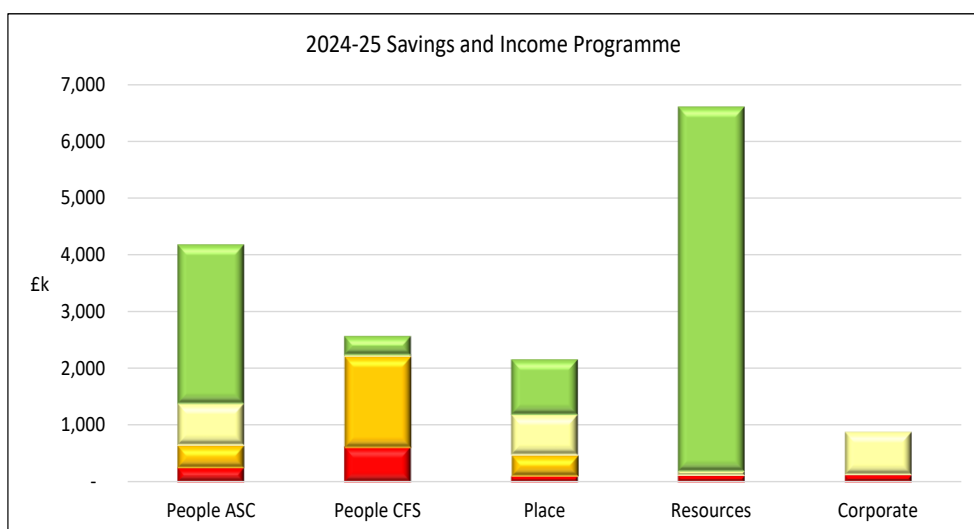
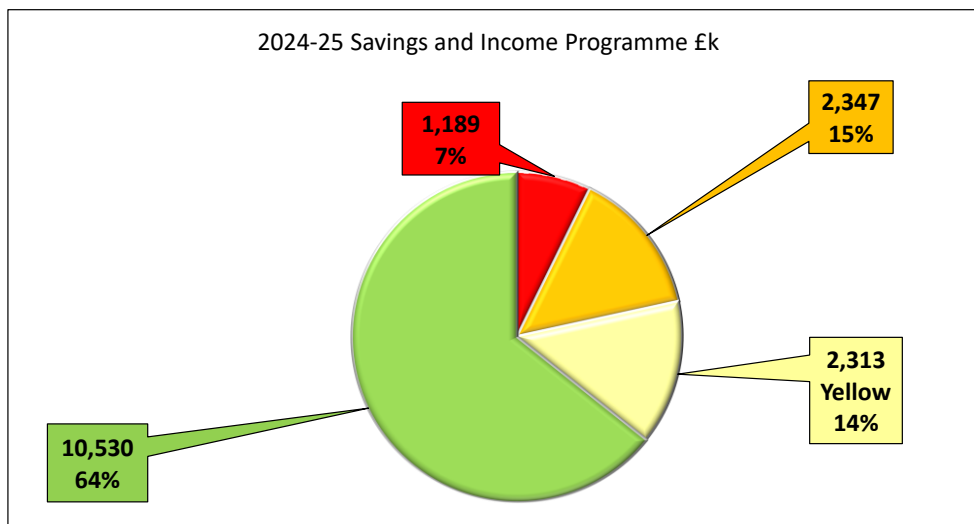
NB: Rounding differences may apply to the nearest £k.

5.6 The key areas of overspend are shown below with the forecast after mitigations shown alongside. The drivers of these overspends are covered in Appendix A together with details of actions being taken.



## 2024-25 Savings and income generation programme

5.7 In order to meet the funding available, the 2024/25 revenue budget was built with a £16.4m savings and income generation programme (£14.3m ongoing, £2.1m one off). The programme is monitored using the RAYG traffic light system. The status is shown in the following charts:



### Proposals

5.8 None.

## 6 Other options considered

6.1 None

## 7 Conclusion

7.1 The Council is facing an unprecedented level of financial pressures due a range of factors. The Council is taking proactive steps to reduce this expenditure as highlighted in this report, but the Quarter One position is placing a significant pressure on the

Council’s financial resilience. This position will be monitored very closely in the coming days, weeks and months to measure progress on reducing expenditure whilst mitigating the impact on frontline services.

## 8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Key Pressures and Overspends
- 8.2 Appendix B – People Directorate
- 8.3 Appendix C – Place Directorate
- 8.4 Appendix D – Resources Directorate

---

### 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 Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

### Officer details:

Name: Melanie Ellis  
Job Title: Service Lead- Financial Management Revenue & Benefits

---

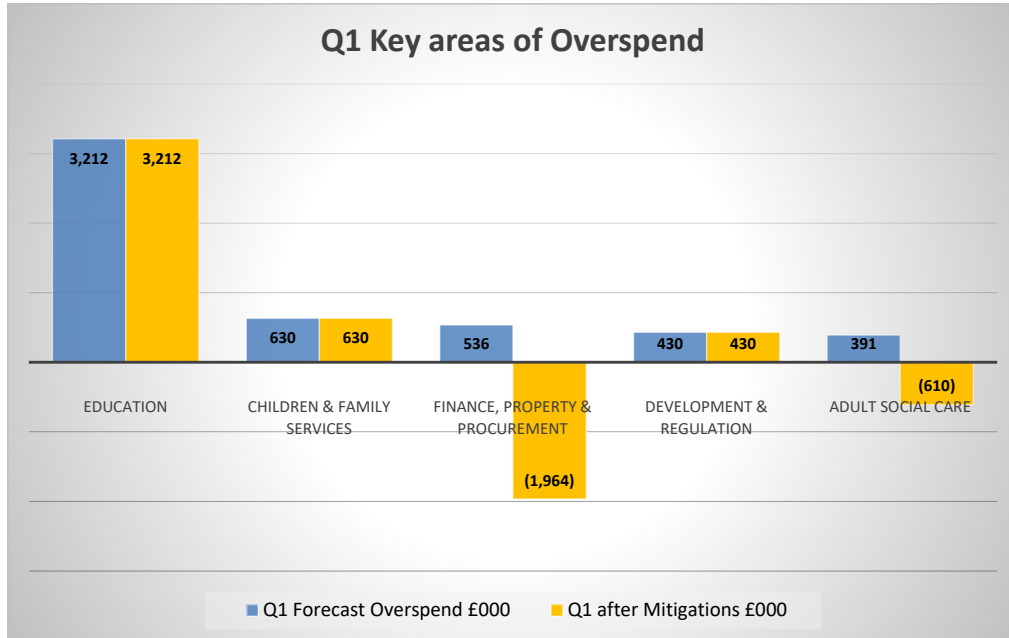
This page is intentionally left blank



# Appendix A: Key Pressures and Overspends

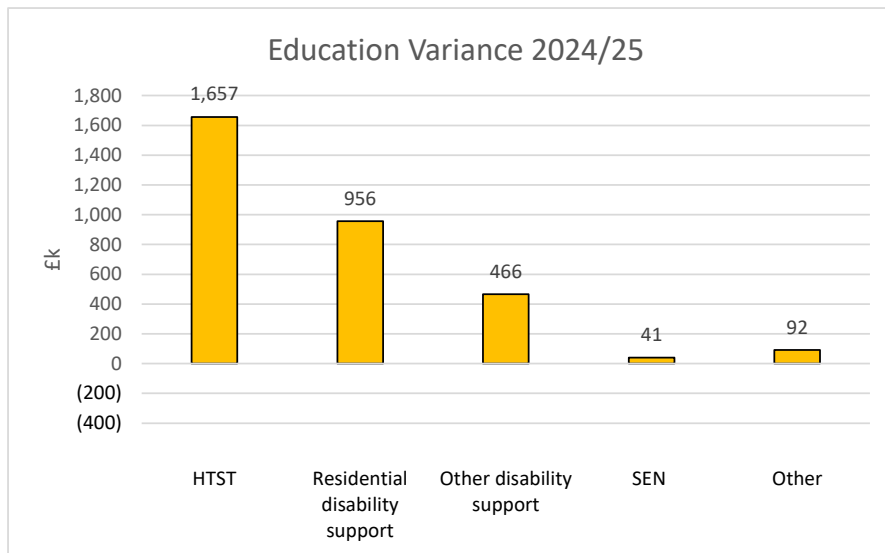
## 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter One

### 1. Summary



### 2. Education

2.1 The Education forecast is a £3.2m overspend, which is 28% of the £11.6m budget.



2.2 Home to School Transport (HTST) is overspending by £1.6m as continued increase in demand is being seen in pupils entitled to transport in both mainstream and SEN. This equates to 52% of the total overspend reported for Education. At this early stage in the year, the forecast is based on current contract costs and transport allocations as tendering is currently underway for September requirements. Whilst the service continues to try and identify savings, there may be an increase in cost should the total amount of contracts have to increase.

- A Home to School transport group has been set up and meet regularly. A Transformation project has been proposed to look at savings. This focuses on contractual and procurement issues with a view to ensuring the Council is consistently achieving best value.
- A sufficiency strategy for both mainstream and SEND education is being finalised. This will identify where additional capacity is required to ensure all pupils needs can be met as close to home as possible. This will reduce the call on HTST as there will be reduced need to access high cost provision outside of West Berkshire.
- A review of Home To School Transport expenditure has shown that some costs should be funded as part of an indivial child's package of support, linked to their Special Educational Needs. Addressing these issues will reduce the pressure on the HTST budget, but increase pressure on High Needs Block.

2.3 Residential disability support packages are forecast to be £1m overspent due to increasingly complex and high level care packages.

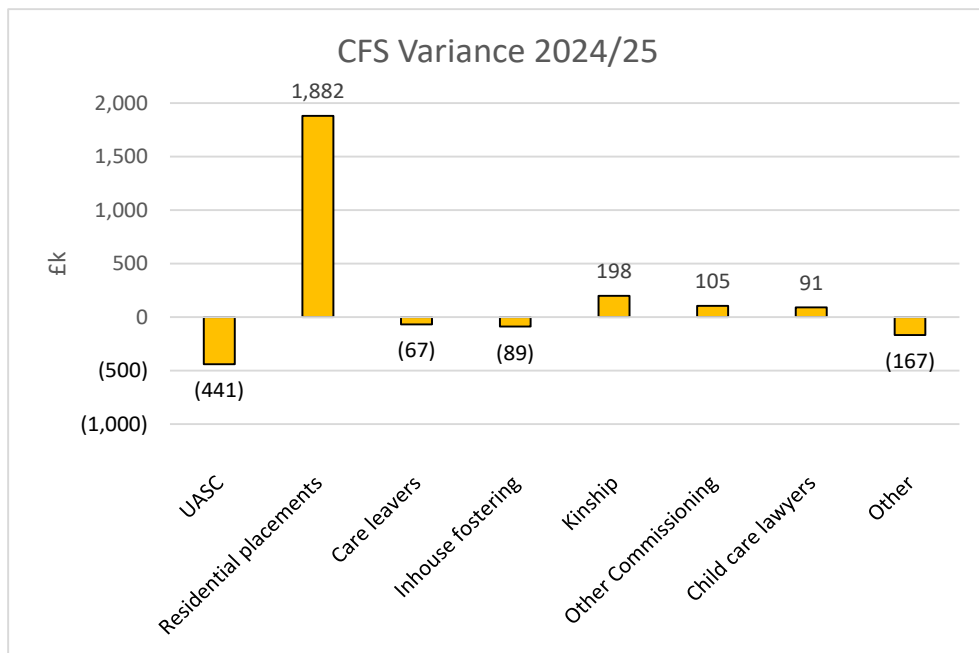
2.4 Other disability support is forecasting a £0.5m overspend. There is an increased level of requests for support for families in their own homes. The team remains focussed on supporting needs at home wherever possible reducing the high cost residential placements.

2.5 The 2024-25 savings target of £0.9m is £0.1m red, £0.6m amber, and £0.2m yellow and green. The red is due to the HTST review, which although is finding savings, increased demand means the target cannot be met. The amber is from residential disability increases in costs and the managed recruitment process.

2.6 Actions to get to breakeven are focussed on reducing spend in all areas apart from business critical spend and reducing use of agency staff where possible.

### 3. Children and Family Services

3.1 In CFS, the forecast is a £0.6m over spend, which is 2.7% of the net budget of £23.5m. This is after the use of Transformation Funding of £0.9m. The overspend before these reductions would be £1.5m as shown in the chart below:



3.2 There is a £1.6m overspend in placements (which incorporates UASC, residential, care leavers, inhouse fostering, kinship and other commissioning). The children in care population has stabilised, however there is increased complexity in the needs of children who have recently entered care alongside shortages of placements nationally. Placements for mental health and emotional wellbeing needs, and provision for teenagers continue to be a particular challenge. There is a cohort of young people with very high care needs requiring specialist residential provision at significant cost and a national shortage of appropriate residential placements with many Local Authorities competing to find homes for children with a limited availability. Many children in high-cost residential provision were initially supported in foster placements, however due to the complexity of their needs those placements broke down, with their care needs proving too great to deliver safely, resulting in residential placements.

- The service continue to effectively manage placements as part of the Children and Family service Accommodation & Resources Panel. Residential placements are scrutinised and reviewed frequently via the panel chaired by the new Service Director.
- The placement budget is rigorously managed, and more recently this has been reviewed and more robust mechanisms put in place to ensure this is reviewed regularly.
- Commissioning and Contract Management are a priority moving forward to ensure placements are both affordable and appropriate to meet needs.
- CFS continue to monitor and analyse the complexity of the needs of the children coming into care. This informs our foster care recruitment and training strategy as well as strengthening our influence at multi-agency focus areas such as ICB led mental health, The Youth Justice Support Team work and with education to reduce school exclusions.
- 79% of our children in care who are fostered are placed in house foster homes. Placements overseen by our in-house family placement team are our

first preference as we can offer timely support, placements are local and offer best value. We are actively seeking to increase the number of in-house foster carers, and have recently recruited to a post which will support this area further. Additional in house supports to foster carers (fostering hub, mental health team) will enable increasing numbers of children to live in lower cost 'In house' placements. There is a robust plan in place for some children to appropriately safely step down from costly residential care.

- A gap for us is the lack of joint funding to support some of our high-cost placements. It is considered that there are more options here to explore around commissioning, contract management and joint funding, specifically from the ICB. This will be explored over the next quarter.
- Longer term options are also being explored.
- Early Intervention continues to be developed to transform social care practice supporting children to remain with their families safely, reducing the children requiring statutory services, and reducing those entering care.

3.3 Childcare lawyers is £0.1m overspent due to an increase in child protection plans. Increased demand as identified above with the increase in child protection plans which have led to pre-proceedings being initiated and consequently increases the number of cases in the court arena. This is a joint arrangement managed by Reading.

- Following a recent internal audit of this service, there is more work to be done to ensure the use of legal services are approved and appropriate.
- New guidance has been issued around this and the new Service Director will keep this under review.

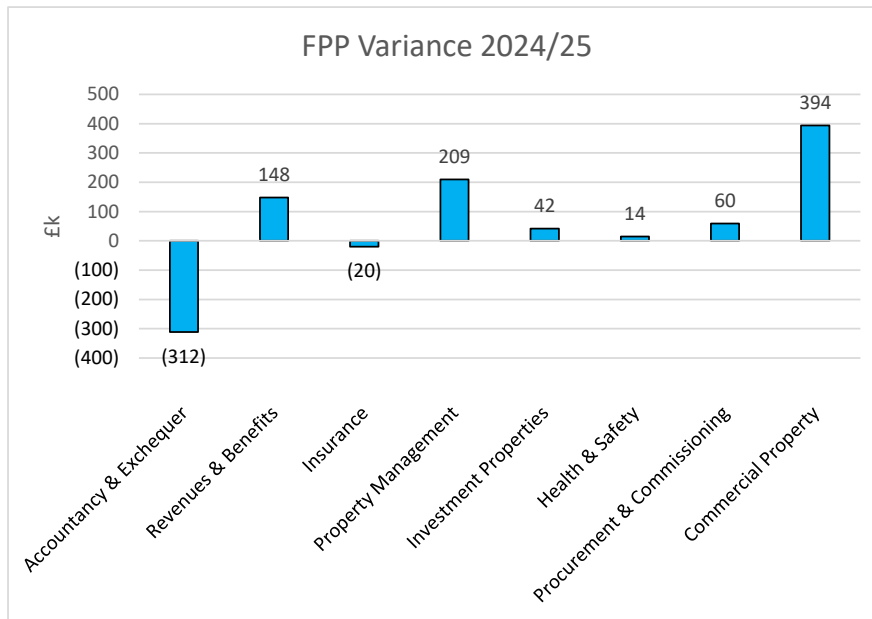
3.4 The 2024-25 savings target of £1.7m is £0.5m red, £1m amber, and £0.1m yellow and green. The red is due to delayed recruitment for a market management post and a foster carer recruitment post. The amber savings are for delayed recruitment to a placement funding post and difficulty meeting the managed recruitment saving.

3.5 Underspends are being seen in staffing, particularly in the Contact, Advice and Assessment Team.

3.6 Recruitment in West Berkshire continues to be a priority to increase the permanent workforce and reduce reliance on agency.

#### 4. Finance, Property & Procurement

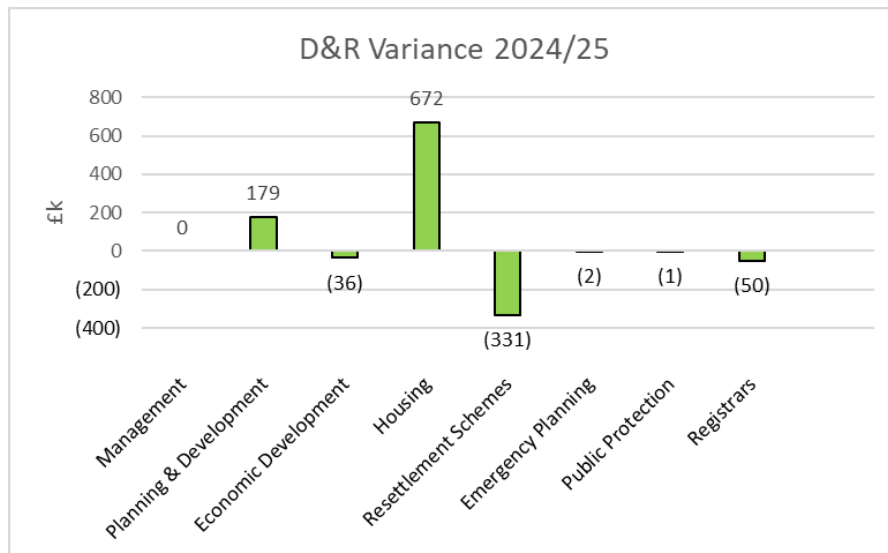
4.1 The Finance, Property & Procurement Service has a forecasted overspend of £536k at Quarter One.



- 4.2 Mitigations have been identified from a review of accruals policy which would amount to a forecast saving of £2.5m, bringing the service in with a £2m saving.
- 4.3 Revenues & Benefits has a £95k forecasted pressure relating to the ICT system which was upgraded and moved to the cloud, and a £115k shortfall in Cost & Penalties income. The pressures created through the system upgrade and penalties income will be addressed through the 2025/26 budget process.
- 4.4 Property Services (Property Management, Investment Properties and Health & Safety) have a forecast £265k overspend. This is largely due to two corporate buildings awaiting sale where savings have been taken in anticipation of the properties being sold. If they are sold within the current financial year then there will not be an impact to 2025/26.
- 4.5 Procurement & Commissioning has a £60k pressure forecasted as the service are unlikely to achieve their full staffing efficiency target. There are growing demands on the team due to the service improvement work due to the upcoming demands of the Procurement Act.
- 4.6 Commercial Property has a loss of income from the sale of a commercial property at the end of the 2023-24 financial year, which hadn't been anticipated at the point the income target was built. This target will be removed as part of the next budget build.
- 4.7 The 2024/25 savings target of £5.7m is £110k red and £5.6m green. The red relates to the corporate buildings awaiting sale.
- 4.8 A review of accruals accounting policy has been undertaken which should lead to an estimated saving of £2.5m.
- 4.9 Other mitigations are shown within the capital financing budgets.

**5. Development and Regulation**

- 5.1 The Development & Regulation Department has a forecasted overspend of £430k at Quarter One. This represents an 7.3% overspend on a net budget of £5.4m.



- 5.2 Planning and Development have a pressure of £230k across Planning Income streams. Planning Applications in the first quarter are down by 16% compared to the same period in 2023/24. Quarter One last year had the highest number of applications, however when comparing the Quarter Four Applications from 2023/24 to the first quarter of this year then applications have increased by 4%. It has been recently reported that there is a national 11% decrease in Planning Applications for the period January to March 2024 in “Planning” Magazine.
- 5.3 The other issues facing Planning Applications Fee income is the nature of the applications that are being made. There has been a reduction in the number of major applications, which attracted the higher fees. As a comparison in the first quarter there were 10 major applications compared to 20 in Quarter One of 2023/24.
- 5.4 The current trends may be a result of a few reasons. New requirements for some applications by way of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), particularly on the larger application types, may be part of the cause in stopping applications coming in until the requirements around BNG are worked up in more detail and become more of a known entity. The other potential issue is that applicants, particularly housebuilders, may be holding off due to the current issues with the economy.
- Following the general election there are clear indications that there will be changes in the near future to the planning system, but no indication of the details or timeline.
  - More locally, the Local Plan Review is going through the Examination. Once the Plan has progressed to being of greater weight/adoption, applicants may be more likely to submit applications where they may have held off before whilst the Plan was in its early stages and was of limited weight in considering proposals.
  - The pressure for Planning Application Fee income will likely continue in the next financial year if there is not an increase in applications, specifically any major applications which would attract a larger fee.

- There are a number of larger applications expected over the next few years but it will be dependent on when the applications are submitted as to whether the income is achieved in 2025/26.
- In December 2023 it was announced that Planning Application Fees are increased on an annual basis in April, linked with CPI. Therefore if demand stayed consistent the budget pressure would narrow due to an increase in fees.

5.5 There is a forecasted pressure of £130k relating to the Local Plan. This forecast is factoring in an estimate for additional work as part of the Examination process. Once the Local Plan is through the Examination process the final costs will be more certain.

- This pressure is being partially offset through underspend of £91k consultancy budgets across the service.
- There is an underspend across the Planning Service of £196k on staffing budgets, of which £82k has been achieved from utilising external grants to fund existing posts.
- Proposals as part of the Service Action Plan which was presented at Star Chamber on 22<sup>nd</sup> July include the potential of further Planning Performance Agreements, an update to Fees & Charges in year to include some more additional chargeable services and looking at vacant posts.

5.6 The Housing overspend is largely from emergency accommodation which is currently forecasted to overspend by £500k due to the level of demand / presentations of families. Last financial year the average presentations per month were 79 households per month. In the first quarter of 2024/25 there have been an average of 63 households per month. The annual budget is based on an average of 25 households per month.

- Currently there are 40 households in emergency accommodation, of which 28 have move-on arrangements in place.
- Within Housing further work is being undertaken in partnership with MHCLG to develop a B&B elimination plan which would significantly reduce the cost of housing families in emergencies by reducing reliance on commercial placements.
- There are also other projects, such as Walnut Close being converted into Temporary Accommodation to help increase capacity and reduce the requirement for B&B placements to support families presenting as homeless.
- Further review of repairs and maintenance of Temporary Accommodation portfolio, where only emergency works will be carried out during tenancies. There will be additional reviews on whether works can be capitalised as part of a larger refurbishment works when properties are void when multiple repairs can be grouped together.

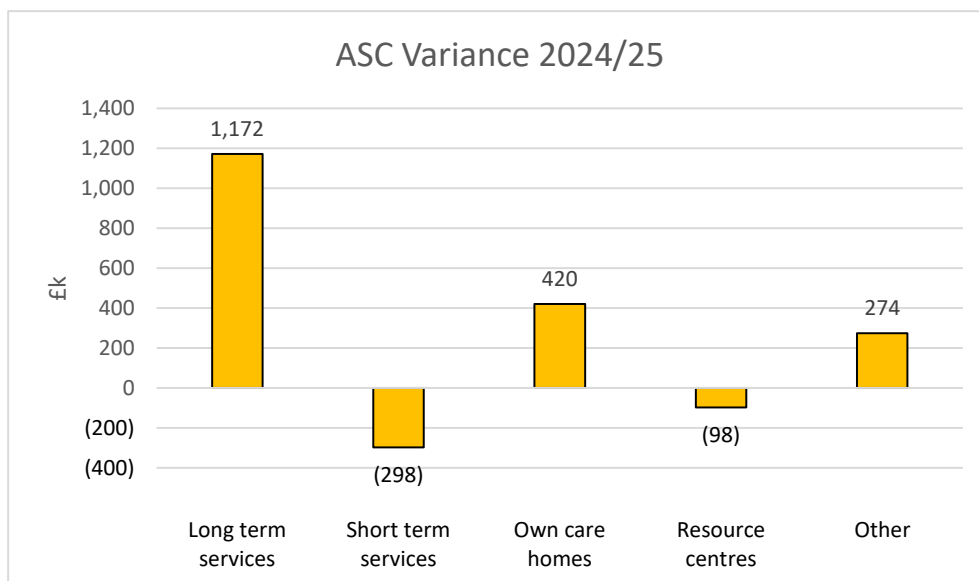
5.7 The 2024/25 savings target of £0.5m is all yellow and green.

5.8 The Department are continuing to explore mitigation options to bring the overspend position down by the end of the Financial Year.

5.9 Finally, there is potential for additional income from the various migration support schemes the Housing Service is providing. Numbers of arrivals are unknown so it is difficult to forecast the potential income to be received, as well as the level of support the arrivals will require.

## 6. Adult Social Care

6.1 The Adult Social Care budget manager forecast is an overspend of £1.5m at Quarter One as shown in the following chart.



6.2 This could be reduced to £391k with the use of £344k Transformation funding and £735k mitigations. Further mitigations are also underway totalling £1m, which would bring the service to an underspend of £0.6m.

6.3 Budget Managers are forecasting an overspend of £1.2m relating to Long term services. This is made up of an additional £2.8m of forecast expenditure offset by additional income of £1.6m, through client contributions. The overspend has been generated by:

- (a) Higher annualised client numbers than modelled, 1950 compared to 1915, at June 2024, which can be attributed to higher levels of new requests for support (mirroring the national picture set out by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services in their Spring Budget Survey and CIPFA publication July 2024 Managing rising demand in adult and children’s social care). This includes a high demand for Mental Health support.
- (b) Lower than modelled occupancy within one of our own care homes has meant clients have been placed in externally commissioned beds.
  - The service will continue to take actions to suppress the demand within the market including reinforcing the 3 conversations model which suppresses the need for long term services. Current performance in the community teams is exceeding the target to manage needs through the provision of information, advice, equipment etc. without the need for funded care.



- Ensuring technology enabled care (TEC) is installed wherever possible. Whilst this will not necessarily reduce the numbers receiving care it will impact on the amount of care being delivered.
- Market Management Lead is working with local providers to ensure supply and demand are better aligned, and consequently offering better value for money to ASC.
- ASC with Accountancy continue to monitor net weekly spend on long term services carefully. All requests for long term services are scrutinised weekly at Good Practice Forum by senior management to ensure Care Act compliance and also make best uses of resources. It is important to note that we cannot refuse to meet eligible care needs for financial reasons.

6.4 Our own care homes have an overspend of £420k. There is a pressure of £648k at Willows due to 13% of posts being vacant and cover required through agency. The home has a high proportion of high needs clients where additional care is required. This overspend includes a savings target of £250k relating to the Care Home transformation project which will not be achieved in year.

- The overspend at Willows is partially offset with underspends at Birchwood (£166k) and Notrees (£62k). Birchwood are currently forecasting an overachievement on income and Notrees on staffing.
- Following a consultation exercise for the Council's 2024/25 budget, the public were asked for their views on the closure or transfer to another provider of the Willows Edge Care Home. Subsequently Members have decided that they want to look to transfer both Willows Edge and Birchwood at the same time. We are in the process of issuing an Invitation to Tender (ITT) for these two homes. The current proposal is to award a contract in November 2024 with final transfer in March 2025.

6.5 There has been an increase in Transport costs from January 2024, causing a pressure of £168k which is currently being investigated.

6.6 There is still a national shortage of Social Workers, Occupational Therapists and Carers and this is contributing to increased costs relating to staffing across some areas of Adult Social Care and within our Care Homes.

- We are continuing to explore options to recruit permanent staff to fill vacancies across the whole of ASC in conjunction with HR.
- We have already increased our sponsorship licence.
- Active work, led by the ASC Workforce board, seeks to encourage new entrants into the workforce including "growing our own". This is in a national context of a very challenging workforce position as highlighted in the recent CQC Annual Report ("State of Care").

6.7 The 2024-25 savings target of £4m is £0.25m red, £0.3m amber, £0.7m yellow and £2.7m green. The red is due to a delay in the care home transformation. The ambers are due to transport charges and learning disability reviews.

- 6.8 An underspend of £298k on short term services is forecast by budget managers due to reduced demand within Physical Support 65+, Mental Health 18-64 and Learning Disability 18-64 mostly due to changes within some transition client's packages where they were forecast to have further educational placements, which are classed as short term, but have now moved onto long term services.
- 6.9 Transformation funding of £0.3m will be applied and mitigations of £0.7m are underway with an action plan to break even being worked on. Other actions include permanent recruitment options and growing our own workforce. The service continues to take action to suppress market demand.
- 6.10 The Joint Service Directors and the senior management team are working on an updated action plan detailing proposals for a breakeven position at year end, of which £1m has been included in the Quarter One forecast.
- 6.11 ASC are seeing an ageing population, with higher acuity as well as increased costs with higher provision of care needed, particularly around future demand in both care homes and domiciliary care provision. ASC will be recommending that our new local MP's lobby central government on these issues.

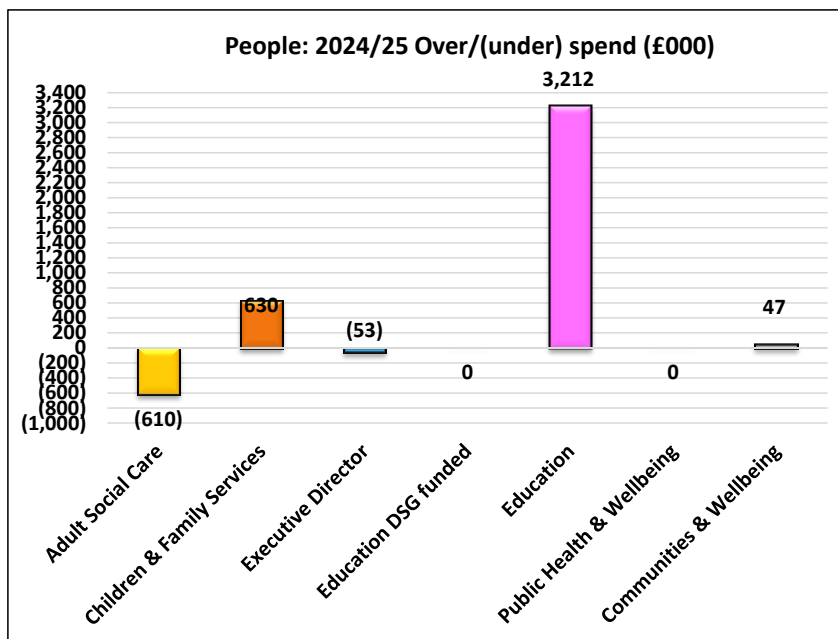
# Appendix B: People Directorate

## 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter One

### 1. Summary

1.1 The People Directorate forecast is an overspend of £4.2m. This is after use of Transformation funding of £1.2m and mitigations totalling £920k. The mitigated overspend represents 3.9% of the £107.4m net budget.

	Current Budget	Net Income/ Expenditure	Quarter One				
			Budget Manager Forecast Variance	Actions to reduce forecast	Forecast variance	Mitigations	Year end forecast variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adult Social Care	69,706	71,176	1,469	(1,079)	391	(1,000)	(610)
Children & Family Services	23,470	24,983	1,513	(883)	630		630
Executive Director	544	544	(0)	(53)	(53)		(53)
Education DSG funded	(444)	(444)	0	0	0		0
Education	11,594	14,806	3,212	0	3,212		3,212
Public Health & Wellbeing	(80)	(80)	0	0	0		0
Communities & Wellbeing	2,626	2,806	180	(133)	47		47
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,417</b>	<b>113,791</b>	<b>6,374</b>	<b>(2,147)</b>	<b>4,227</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	<b>3,227</b>



1.2 The People Directorate 2024-25 savings and income generation programmes are summarised below:

People ASC	Red	Amber	Yellow	Green	Total	Achieved
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	
Director	0	0	0	1	1	100%
Adult Social Care	250	341	733	2,678	4,002	67%
Communities & Wellbeing	0	50	0	127	177	72%
<b>Total 2024-25</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>2,805</b>	<b>4,179</b>	<b>67%</b>

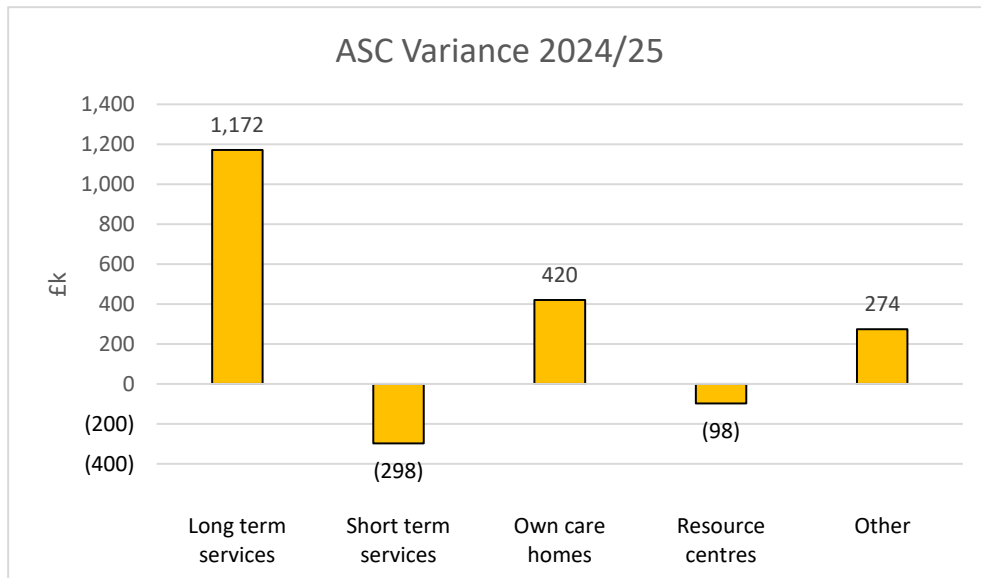
1.3 The red saving is for Care Home transformation – due to a delay to accommodate Willows and Birchwood going out to tender simultaneously this saving will not be achieved in-year.

People CFS	Red	Amber	Yellow	Green	Total	Achieved
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	
Director	0	0	0	1	1	100%
Children & Family Services	500	1042	36	75	1,653	5%
Education	100	548	5	262	915	29%
<b>Total 2024-25</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>1,590</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>2,568</b>	<b>13%</b>

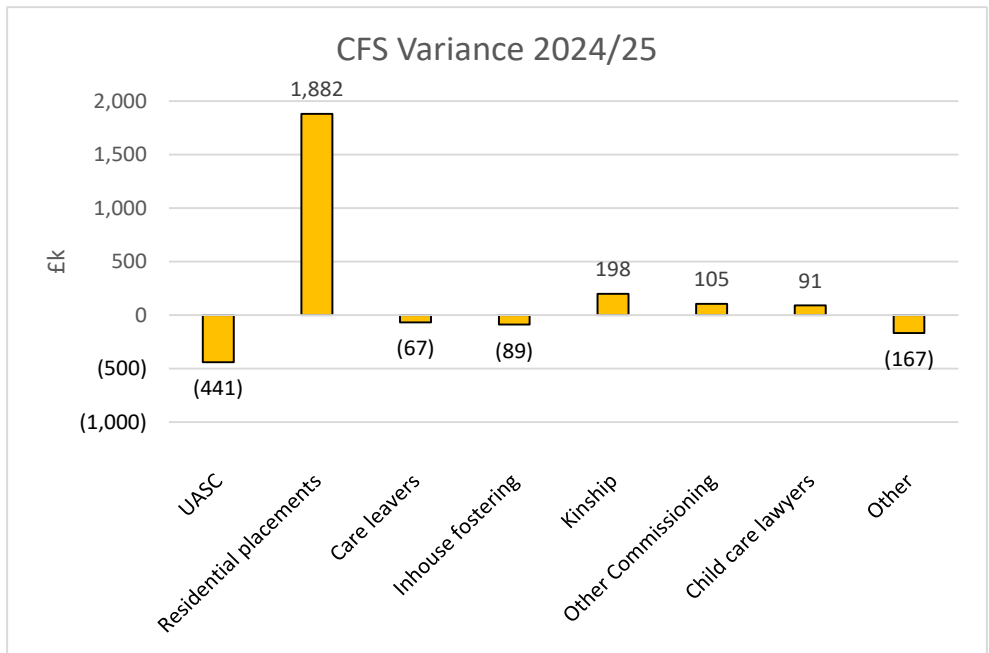
1.4 Red savings are as follows:

- £250k Manage the market and reduce costs with additional commissioning support – this is due to a delay in recruitment to this post, it is considered this role will start to address some of the issues, and recruitment will take place in Quarter Two.
- £250k Reduction to IFA and residential placements through Foster carer recruitment - delay in recruitment has led to this post has not been filled and they will commence employment in Quarter Two.

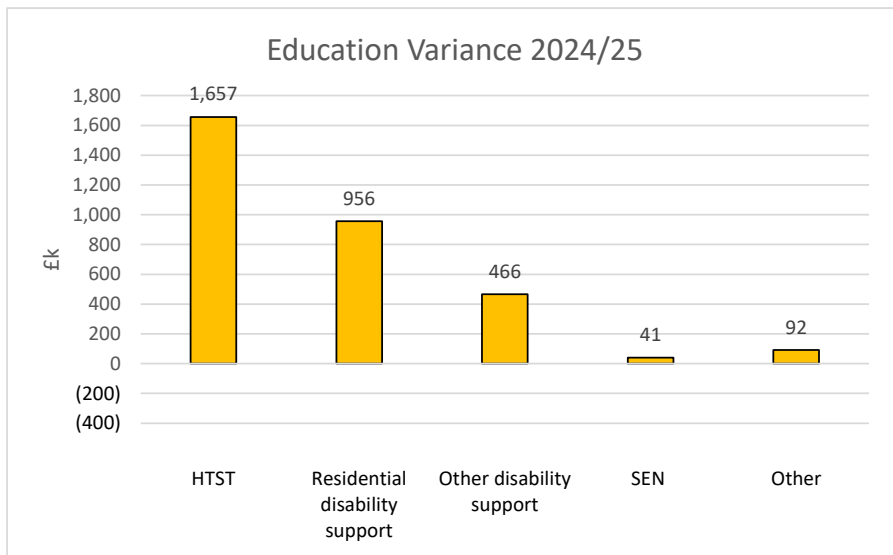
1.5 The Adult Social Care budget manager forecast is an overspend of £1.5m at Quarter One as shown in the following chart. This could be reduced to £391k with the use of Transformation funding and further mitigations.



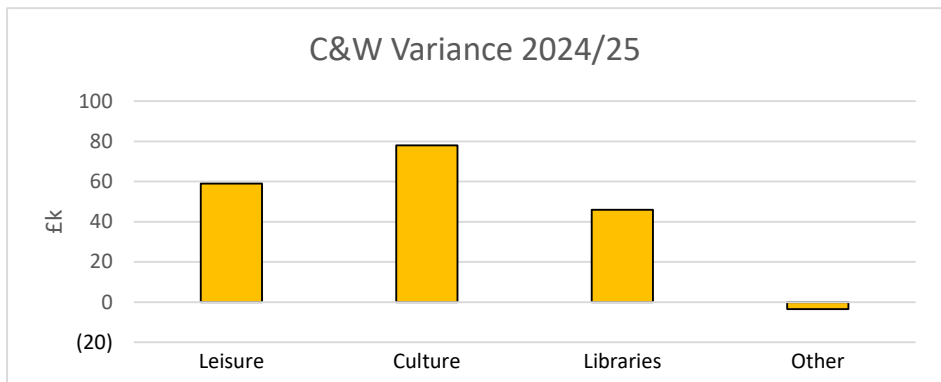
1.6 In CFS, the forecast is a £0.6m over spend, which is 2.7% of the net budget of £23.5m. This is after the use of Transformation Funding of £0.9m. The overspend before these reductions would be £1.5m as shown in the chart below:



1.7 The Education forecast is a £3.2m overspend, which is 28% of the £11.6m budget.



1.8 The Communities and Well Being forecast is an overspend of £180k, which is 6.85% of the £2.6m net budget.



This page is intentionally left blank

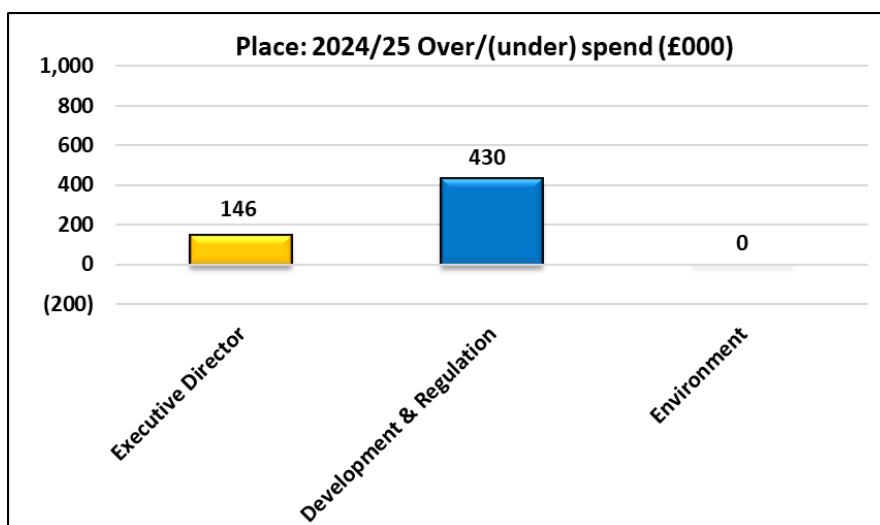
# Appendix C: Place Directorate

## 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter One

### 1. Summary

1.1 The Place Directorate Quarter One budget manager forecast is an overspend of £839k. This could be reduced to £576k overspend after using £263k of earmarked reserves. This represents an overspend of 1.7% of the net budget of £32.7m.

Place	Current Budget £000	Net Income/ Expenditure £000	Quarter One				Year end forecast variance £000
			Budget Manager Forecast Variance £000	Actions to reduce forecast £000	Forecast variance £000	Mitigations £000	
Executive Director	44	189	146	0	146		146
Development & Regulation	5,864	6,294	430	0	430		430
Environment	27,614	27,877	263	(263)	0		0
<b>Total</b>	<b>33,521</b>	<b>34,360</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>(263)</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>576</b>



1.2 The Place Directorate savings and income generation programme is summarised below.

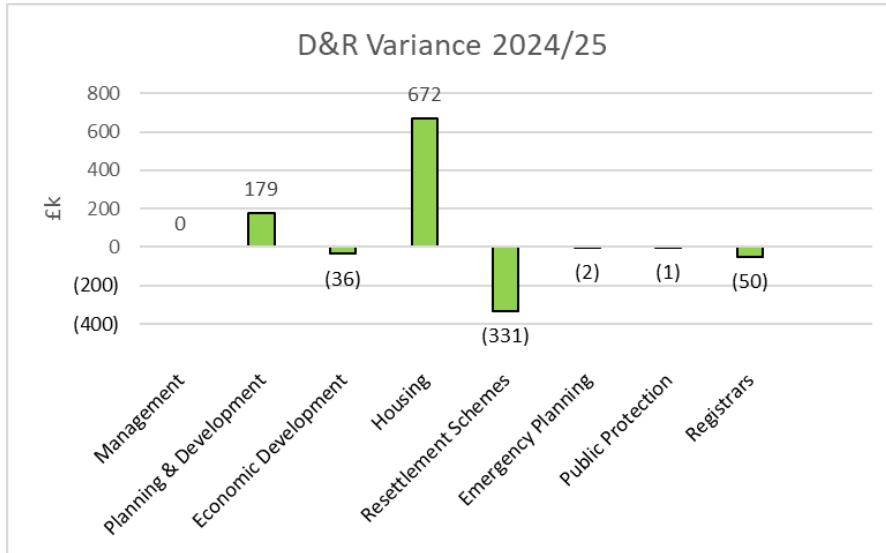
Place	Red £k	Amber £k	Yellow £k	Green £k	Total £k	Achieved
Director	0	146	0	189	335	0%
Development & Regulation	0	0	200	334	534	63%
Environment	104	220	510	459	1,293	35%
<b>Total 2024-25</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>710</b>	<b>982</b>	<b>2,162</b>	<b>45%</b>

1.3 The red savings are as follows:

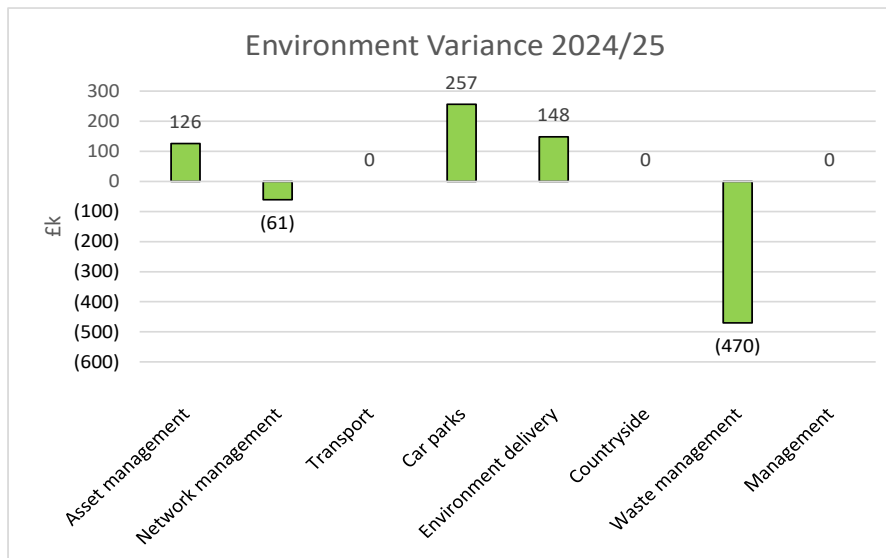
- Bloomfield Hatch Solar Farm £100k – Due to the delay in the project, the solar farm is not scheduled to be completed until May 2025 therefore the part year income which was originally anticipated will not be achieved.

- Reduction in new household bin delivery £4k – Due to redundancies in year one, £4k of the overall saving will not be achieved in year. However, this is being mitigated from underspends across the wider service.

1.4 The Development & Regulation Department has a forecasted overspend of £430k at Quarter One. This represents a 7.3% overspend on a net budget of £5.4m.



1.5 In Environment, the forecast is online.



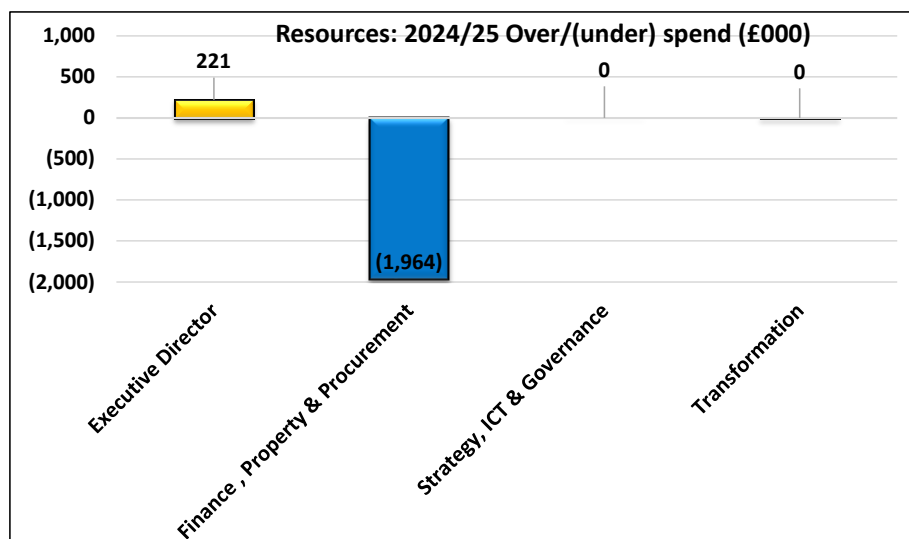


# Appendix D: Resources, Chief Executive & Capital Financing 2024/25 Revenue Financial Performance Quarter One

## 1. Summary

1.1 The Resources Directorate Quarter One forecast is an overspend of £757k, after actions to reduce the forecast comprising use of £100k of earmarked reserves, £1.2m of Transformation Funding and £150k of mitigations. The Chief Executive is forecasted as online.

Resources and Chief Executive	Current Budget	Net Income/Expenditure	Quarter One				Year end forecast variance
			Budget Manager Forecast Variance	Actions to reduce forecast	Forecast variance	Mitigations	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director	216	562	346	(125)	221		221
Finance , Property & Procurement	2,997	3,935	938	(402)	536	(2,500)	(1,964)
Strategy, ICT & Governance	9,063	9,779	715	(715)	0		0
Transformation	0	256	256	(256)	0		0
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>12,276</b>	<b>14,531</b>	<b>2,255</b>	<b>(1,498)</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>(2,500)</b>	<b>(1,743)</b>
Chief Executive	577	577	0	0	0		0
<b>Total Resources and Chief Executive</b>	<b>12,853</b>	<b>15,108</b>	<b>2,255</b>	<b>(1,498)</b>	<b>757</b>	<b>(2,500)</b>	<b>(1,743)</b>



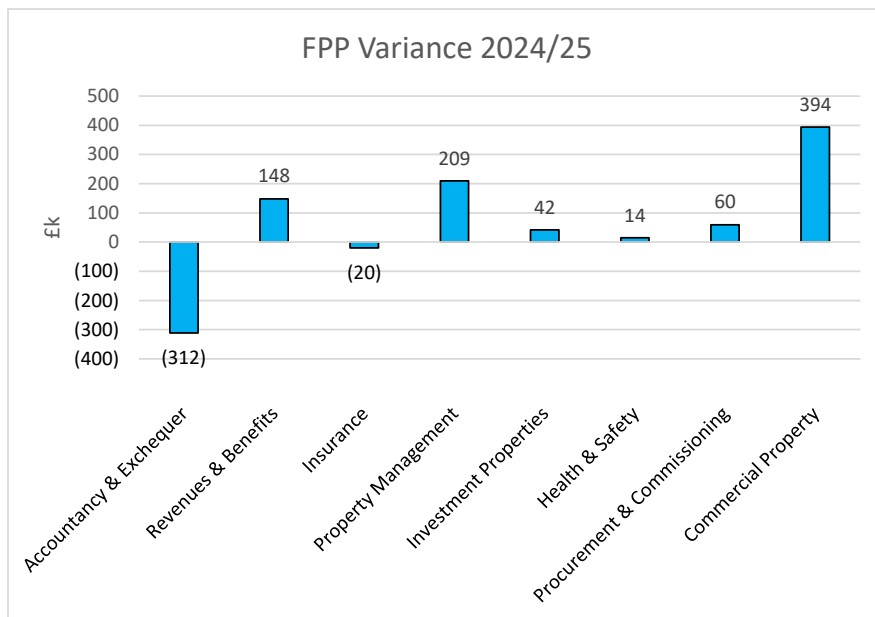
1.2 Further mitigations are proposed totalling £2.5m from a review of accruals policies. This would bring the Directorates to an underspend of £1.7m.

1.3 The Resources Directorate and Corporate savings and income generation programmes are summarised below.

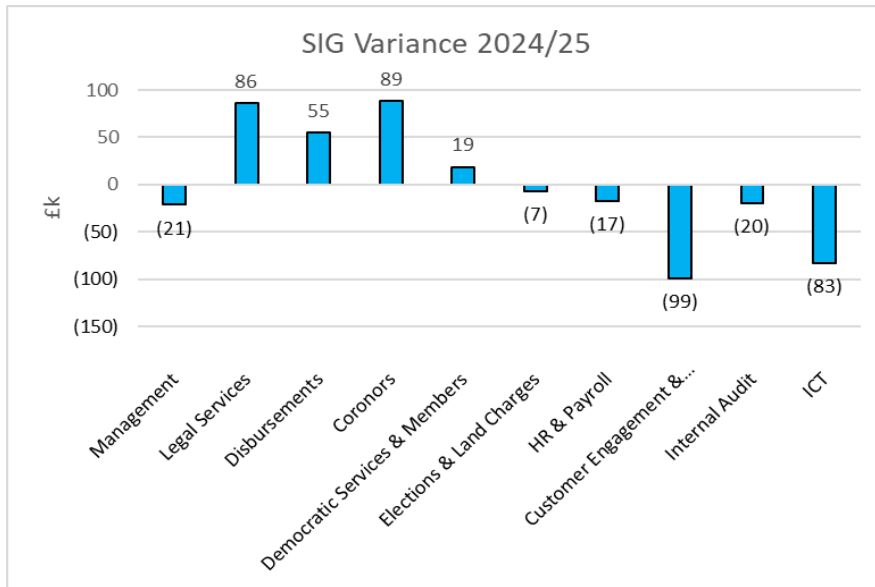
Resources	Red	Amber	Yellow	Green	Total	Achieved
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	
CEX	0	0	0	385	385	100%
Finance, Property & Procurement	110	0	0	5,598	5,708	98%
Strategy, ICT & Governance	0	0	80	422	502	84%
<b>Total 2024-25</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>6,405</b>	<b>6,595</b>	<b>97%</b>

Corporate	Red	Amber	Yellow	Green	Total	Achieved
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	
<b>Total 2024-25</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>0%</b>

- 1.4 The unachieved Resources saving relates to corporate sites looking to be sold in year. If sites are sold earlier than currently estimated, then more of this saving could be achieved in year.
- 1.5 The Corporate saving is from an efficiency review which is not going to generate savings in year, and an updated proposal is currently being considered.
- 1.6 The Finance, Property & Procurement Service has a forecasted overspend of £536k at Quarter One after the use of £100k Self Insurance Fund Reserve, £253k of Transformation Funding and £50k of mitigations. The represents a 17.9% overspend on a net budget of £6.3m.

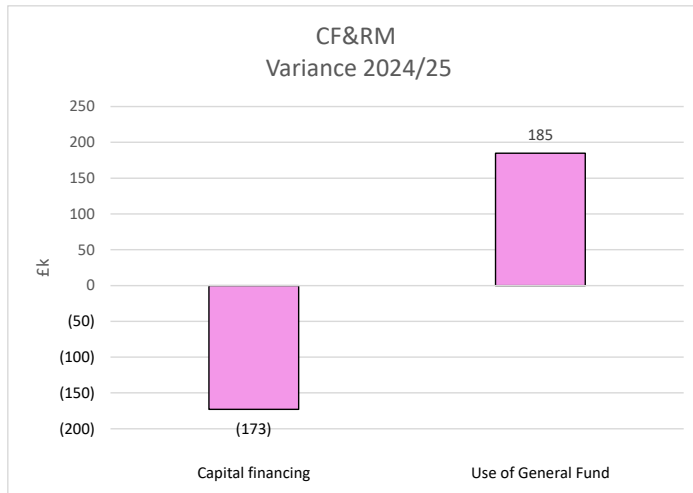


- 1.7 Strategy, ICT and Governance is forecast online.



1.8 The Transformation Service is forecast online after use of transformation funding.

1.9 Capital Financing and Risk Management has an overspend of £12k. Capital Financing is underspent due to performance against the investment and borrowing strategies. Use of general fund relates to funds set aside at the end of 2023/24 to fund our share of the Public Protection Partnership, which have now been released to the service for 2024/25.



This page is intentionally left blank

# Draft Waste Management Strategy

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Stuart Gourley
<b>Report Author:</b>	Daniel Warne, Waste Manager
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4406

## 1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval to publish the draft waste management strategy (enclosed at Appendix A) for public consultation.

## 2 Recommendation

It is recommended that the draft waste management strategy is published for public consultation following potential approval from the Executive on 19 September 2024.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	The strategy contains potential service delivery options which could have significant financial implications as well as other proposals that will only be possible to implement with investment/efficiencies. If relevant projects progress as a result of the acceptance of the waste management strategy, the Council’s Project Management Methodology (PMM) process will be used to seek the required additional funding through the budget-setting process.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	There are no direct HR implications as a result of the waste management strategy development. The delivery of the Council’s waste collections and management has been outsourced under a 25-year PFI contract.  Individual projects may identify HR implications, all of which will be dealt with through the PMM process and any appropriate bids for additional staff resource.

<p><b>Legal:</b></p>	<p>There are no direct Legal implications because of this report. It is however worth noting that Legal input may be required if some of the proposals within the waste management strategy are approved for implementation. This is because the Council may have to confirm compliance with emergency government requirements or undertake contract variation negotiations with the incumbent contractor. Individual projects may identify HR implications, all of which will be dealt with through the PMM process and any appropriate bids for additional staff resource.</p>			
<p><b>Risk Management:</b></p>	<p>The main risks identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some initial public resistance if the option(s) selected for implementation involve significant changes which may be deemed to inconvenience householders. This risk is manageable through continued stakeholder engagement, effective communications and mitigation activity as required.</li> <li>• Funding availability could be a challenge for the implementation of significant changes. Separate business case justification will be completed if specific changes and projects are required.</li> <li>• Implementation of selected options within the emerging strategy will require suitable resource availability of Council and contractor staff.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Property:</b></p>	<p>There are no direct property implications because of this report.</p>			
<p><b>Policy:</b></p>	<p>The proposal relates to the Council’s policy to be Net Zero by 2030.</p> <p>It also links to emerging national Waste and Resource Strategy measures including ‘Simpler Recycling’, extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging, and the deposit return scheme (DRS). It also links to the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) which will see energy from waste facilities included within ETS from 2028.</p>			
	<p><b>Positive</b></p>	<p><b>Neutral</b></p>	<p><b>Negative</b></p>	<p><b>Commentary</b></p>

<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		This report does not propose decisions with significant equality implications. This will be dealt with on a project-by-project basis through the PMM process to ensure delivery does not have a negative impact on equalities. The upcoming public consultation on the draft waste management strategy is expected to tease out any perceived inequalities that consultees may be aware of.
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		<p>This report does not propose decisions with significant impact on people with protected characteristics.</p> <p>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. The upcoming public consultation on the draft waste management strategy is expected to tease out any potential impacts on people with protected characteristics that consultees may be aware of.</p>
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>	X			The waste management strategy will have a significantly positive impact on the environment as it sets out how we can improve our recycling rate, reduce waste generation by householders, and can help reduce associated carbon emissions.
<b>Health Impact:</b>		X		This proposal is expected to have a neutral impact on health. This will be monitored on a project-by-project basis through the PMM process to ensure delivery does not have a negative impact.
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		X		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.

<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		X		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.
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	X			<p>Implementation of the waste management strategy will have a positive impact in supporting the Council priority of Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency by helping to achieve the Council's Net Zero ambitions.</p> <p>This will be supporting this priority by increasing recycling rates, encouraging waste minimisation and reducing carbon emissions.</p>
<b>Core Business:</b>		X		Not applicable.
<b>Data Impact:</b>		X		At this stage it is not envisaged that there will be any significant data impact associated with the implementation of the waste management strategy.
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>A number of activities have been carried out focused on consultation and engagement, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scrutiny Committee 17 July 2024</li> <li>- Environment Advisory Group (EAG) Open Forum updates</li> <li>- Three workshops with members (held on 6 March 2023, 13 March 2023 and 3 July 2023) to gather feedback and foster dialogue.</li> <li>- A public workshop held with residents (on 23 May 2023) to gain valuable community perspectives.</li> <li>- Planned public consultation in autumn of 2024.</li> </ul>			



## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The draft waste management strategy seeks to replace the previous strategy which ended in 2022. This new strategy will cover all aspects of waste management services, including household waste collection and management, litter clearance, street cleaning, and the management of abandoned vehicles and fly-tipping. Our goal is to balance continuity of services with enhancements and innovations through to 2032.
- 4.2 The draft strategy aims to improve the Council's waste management performance by increasing recycling rates, reducing waste generation, and minimising carbon emissions. This involves making household waste collection more efficient and promoting public recycling initiatives. Ultimately, the Council will strive to create a more sustainable and environmentally responsible community.
- 4.3 Modelling undertaken by Eunomia Research & Consulting (enclosed in Appendix 1 of Appendix A) suggests that moving to 4-weekly refuse collection will yield the most positive results in term of increased recycling rate, waste minimisation, carbon emissions reduction and financial savings. However, this option will have a greater impact on residents, so it is not being recommended for implementation. The best practicable environmental option was found to be 3-weekly refuse collections, now that separate weekly food waste collections have been successfully implemented across the district. It is recommended that the option of 3-weekly general refuse collections is considered for adoption within the draft waste strategy.
- 4.4 The report seeks authorisation from the Council's Executive to undertake public consultation for 6 weeks commencing 23 September 2024. This consultation will seek resident and stakeholder feedback to inform the finalisation of the strategy

## 5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 This report is seeking approval to publish the draft waste management strategy (enclosed at Appendix A) for public consultation.
- 5.2 The need for a new waste management strategy is driven by the expiry of the previous strategy at the end of 2022 and upcoming changes in UK legislation and guidance, as outlined in the UK Government's Resource and Waste Strategy and the Environment Act 2021. These changes will significantly impact some of our waste management services, introducing new requirements for recycling, waste reduction, and collecting specific waste types. Our strategy must comply with these evolving regulatory frameworks while also seizing opportunities for service improvement and innovation. The draft strategy includes options for increasing recycling rates, reducing waste production, and minimising carbon emissions to meet the Council's climate change objectives.
- 5.3 The development of a new waste strategy offers numerous benefits to the Council and its stakeholders, including:
  - Providing clear strategic framework for the Council's household waste management practices until 2032;

## Draft Waste Management Strategy

- Increasing recycling rates and reducing waste production, leading to cost savings and potential revenue from recycled materials;
- Increasing opportunities for effective communications with residents to achieve greater resource efficiency, and to reduce littering and fly-tipping offences;
- Enhancing environmental credentials, improving public perception, and supporting broader sustainability targets; and
- Reducing carbon emissions from waste management activities, contributing to the Council's Net Zero goals.

5.4 The new draft waste strategy will focus on services provided under the Integrated Waste Management Contract (IWMC) such as:

- Household waste collections and treatment;
- Litter clearance and street cleansing; and
- Management of abandoned vehicles and fly-tipping removal.

5.5 Out of scope:

The following items are outside the scope of the emerging draft Waste Management Strategy:

- Provision of commercial waste collections;
- Waste processing by third parties outside the current contract;
- Waste management activities not controlled by the Council;
- ; and
- Service delivery post-2032.

5.6 To ensure alignment with community needs and expectations, the Council has actively engaged with members and the public. Key engagement activities completed include:

- Three workshops with members (held on 6 March 2023, 13 March 2023, and 3 July 2023) to gather feedback about member priorities and foster dialogue;
- A public workshop (held on 23 May 2023) to better understand community perspectives; and
- Presentation at the Environment Advisory Group (EAG) meeting (on 27 November 2023).
- Attendance of Scrutiny Committee on 17 July 2024.

## Upcoming Public Consultation and Strategy Finalisation Process

## **Draft Waste Management Strategy**

- 5.7 To ensure that we capture a comprehensive range of insights and feedback regarding the strategy and its anticipated outcomes, a public consultation exercise on the emerging draft waste management strategy will be undertaken commencing 23 September 2024 for 6 weeks. Our goal is to engage as many stakeholders as practicable and to carefully consider all feedback during the finalisation of our strategy.
- 5.8 During public consultation, we will utilise digital and print platforms to facilitate easy access for community members wishing to provide their input.
- 5.9 All feedback provided will be reviewed and analysed. The Council is committed to a transparent process and will categorise and summarise the feedback to identify common themes, concerns, and suggestions. The draft strategy will be refined where possible to take on board constructive suggestions and address relevant concerns. The final strategy will reflect a detailed understanding of community feedback and demonstrate the commitment to incorporating the public input into our decision-making process.
- 5.10 The updated version of the strategy post-consultation will be brought back to the Council's Executive for approval before finalisation and publication.
- 5.11 Detailed delivery plan will follow the finalisation of the strategy post consultation.

## **Proposals**

- 5.12 The timescale for the Strategy is set out in section 5.14. A finalised waste management strategy document, incorporating public feedback, to be officially adopted by the end of 2024/25. This document will serve as the guiding framework for waste management services up to 2032.

## **Strategy Development Timeline**

- 5.13 The timeline for developing the strategy has been outlined below:

- Procurement of Consultants: (September 2022)
- Workshops with Members and Residents: (March – July 2023)
- Production of the First Draft: (July 2023 – June 2024)
- Corporate, Operations and Executive: (July – September 2024)
- Public Consultation: (September – November 2024)
- Final Draft and Strategy Finalisation: (December 2024)
- Approval by the Executive: February 2025 (estimated)
- Completion and Review: The final strategy will be formally presented to stakeholders and published. A review mechanism will be established to monitor the implementation of the strategy and its effectiveness, setting the stage for continuous improvement and adaptation.

## 6 Other options considered

- 6.1 No other options were considered because developing a new waste strategy is essential to meet legislative requirements, to meet the Council's climate change objectives and to ensure continued service improvement. Without a new strategy, the Council could lack strategic direction in waste management practices, potentially leading to non-compliance with upcoming regulations and missed opportunities for service enhancement and environmental benefits.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The development of a new waste strategy is crucial for ensuring that our waste management services remain effective, efficient, and compliant with upcoming legislative requirements. This also is necessary to enable the Council to deliver on its climate change objectives. This strategy not only addresses the immediate need for continuity following the expiration of the previous strategy in 2022 but also sets the foundation for sustainable and innovative practices through 2032.
- 7.2 Through comprehensive engagement with members, the public, and external advisors, we have developed a strategy that is both responsive to community needs and aligned with broader environmental goals. The forthcoming public consultation phase will help to further refine this strategy, ensuring that it benefits from a wide range of perspectives and insights.
- 7.3 The Council's commitment to increasing recycling rates, reducing waste production, and minimising carbon emissions will contribute to operational efficiencies, environmental sustainability, and improved public perception.
- 7.4 The final waste management strategy will provide a clear, actionable framework for waste management services up to 2032, fostering a more sustainable and environmentally responsible community.
- 7.5 In summary, this waste management strategy represents a comprehensive, forward-thinking approach to waste management that prioritises environmental stewardship, community engagement, and continuous improvement within the confines of our current Integrated Waste Management Contract. The Council looks forward to the contributions of all stakeholders in shaping and implementing a strategy that will serve our community well into the future.

## 8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Draft Waste Management Strategy – Attached as a separate document.

**Subject to Call-In:**

Yes:       No:

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

**Officer details:**

Name: Daniel Warne  
Job Title: Waste Manager Transport and Countryside

---

This page is intentionally left blank

# Waste Management Strategy

2025-2032



*'Together we can plan for a cleaner, greener West Berkshire'*



# Contents

<b>Forward/ Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Strategy Development	5
1.2 Vision for the Strategy	8
<b>2.0 Local Context</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 The Recycling, Waste and Street Cleansing Services	9
2.2 West Berkshire's Demographics	11
<b>3.0 National Context</b>	<b>12</b>
3.1 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)	12
3.2 Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)	13
3.3 Simpler Recycling	13
3.4 Expanding the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)	14
3.5 Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse (CoPLAR)	16
3.6 Fly Tipping	16
<b>4.0 Key Themes and Interventions</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>4.1 Drive Down General Waste &amp; Increase Recycling</b>	<b>18</b>
Priority One: Reviewing Collection Services	19
Priority Two: Prevent Waste and Increase Reuse	24
Priority Three: Improve Communication and Community Engagement with Regard to Waste Reduction and Recycling	26
Priority Four: Reduce Carbon Emissions Associated with the Collection Services and Improve Air Quality	28
<b>4.2 Improve West Berkshire's Street Scene</b>	<b>30</b>
Priority Five: Improve the Current Recycling, Waste and Street Cleansing Services to Ensure They Help Reduce Litter and Fly-Tipping	30
Priority Six: Improve Communication and Enforcement Against Littering and Fly-Tipping	31
Priority Seven: Reduce Carbon Emissions Associated with the Street Cleansing Services and Improve Air Quality	34
<b>4.3 Lead The Way</b>	<b>35</b>
Priority Eight: Effectively Manage the Council's Own Waste	35
Priority Nine: Embed Social Value	37
Priority Ten: Support Local Businesses In Applying the Waste Hierarchy	37
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>38</b>
Appendix 1: Cost, Performance and Carbon Modelling	38
Appendix 2: Selected service changes	42





## Foreword

I am pleased to introduce West Berkshire Council's new Waste Management Strategy, which sets out our ambitions for sustainable resource management up to 2032. This strategy aligns with the priorities in the Council Strategy 2023 - 2027, specifically in:

- Providing services that we are proud of; and
- Tackling the climate and ecological emergency.

Nationally, we are on the cusp of significant policy changes within the waste sector with initiatives such as Simpler Recycling and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging. This strategy will ensure that, as an authority, we are ready for these emerging changes proposed by the UK government. The strategy outlines how, among other objectives, we can:

- Significantly decrease the amount of waste each resident produces;
- Increase the amount of household waste we send for recycling and composting;
- Improve the local street-scene through avoidance of littering and fly-tipping; and
- Promote education on resource efficiency within our schools and across the district.

In developing this strategy, we have incorporated feedback from residents, community groups, members, Council officers, and our waste contractor, Veolia. We have also used the expertise of our external technical adviser, Eunomia Research & Consulting, to ensure that best practice at national and international levels has been factored into our analyses. We will also consider feedback obtained during the public consultation period before finalising the strategy in early 2025.

Our vision for the Waste Strategy is ambitious yet achievable. In recent years, we have managed to recycle about half of all the waste collected from our householders; this places us within the top third of all English local authorities. We successfully introduced separate weekly food waste collections at the kerbside in 2022; this service enhancement helped us to achieve our highest-ever household waste recycling rate of 53% in 2023/24. However, we aspire to do even better and have set ourselves a target of recycling at least 60% of household waste by 2030. The strategy also aims to reduce the relatively high amount of waste generated per person in our district and increase the types of waste collected for recycling from households across the district, in line with emerging government requirements.

The Council has declared Climate and Ecological Emergencies, and we see sustainable resource management as being integral to the achievement of our environmental protection goals. Complementing the Council's Environment Strategy, the Waste Management Strategy reinforces our dedication to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions through measures such as introducing usage of low-carbon fuels e.g. hydrotreated vegetable oil by our waste collection fleet. We are also partnering with our waste contractor, Veolia to implement a range of environmentally beneficial initiatives at our Padworth Integrated Waste Management Site. These include a proposed installation of roof and ground-mounted solar panels for energy generation, replacement of inefficient on-site

lighting with LED lights, and drilling a borehole to supply water for the in-vessel composting facility.

While the levels of litter and fly-tipping remain low compared to other areas, we cannot become complacent. We will continue to strive to keep West Berkshire a beautiful place to live, work and visit through better communication, deterrence and enforcement against offences.

At the heart of this strategy is you, our resident. We will continue to engage and seek opinions throughout the development of this strategy and beyond. Communication is key, and we will continue to increase our engagement with schools, residents, visitors and businesses as much as practicable.

In conclusion, our Waste Management Strategy reflects our commitment to setting an exemplary standard in resource efficiency, reducing carbon emissions, and making the district an even better place for future generations. Together, we can achieve a cleaner, greener future for all.



**Stuart Gourley**  
Councillor, Member  
for Newbury Clay  
Hill & Executive  
Portfolio Holder  
for Environment &  
Highways





# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Strategy Development

This document sets out the strategic direction for West Berkshire Council to take in managing its recycling, waste and street cleansing services up until 2032.

In developing this strategy, we have focussed on developing priorities and actions that recognise the different types of collections residents of West Berkshire receive, alongside understanding the impact of change within the different communities within West Berkshire.

The process of developing this strategy has been informed by:

- several engagement workshops with residents and elected members of the Council; and

- cost, performance, and carbon modelling (please see Appendix 1) of different options for collecting waste and recycling, which shows how these could contribute towards meeting the Council's targets of increased recycling.

As part of the strategy development process, the Council will be consulting with the public on the key proposals, which will be developed further over the coming months. The consultation will take place in 2024 and run for six weeks. Feedback received from residents will be used to shape the final strategy (see Figure 1-1).

This strategy is intended to complement other existing Council strategies including the Environment Strategy and the associated Environment Strategy Delivery Plan managed

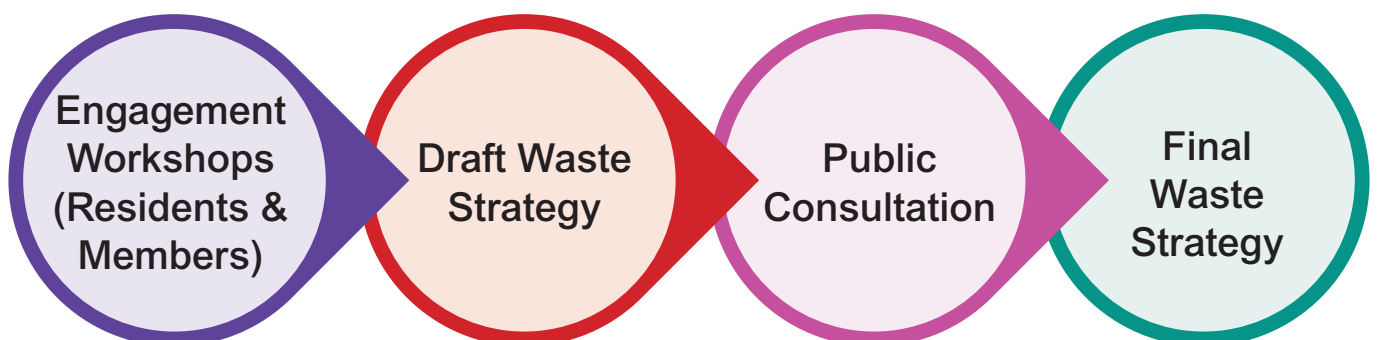


Figure 1.1. Development of the Waste and Resources Strategy

by the Council's Environment Delivery team.  
<sup>1, 2</sup> It is also aligned with the Council Strategy 2023 – 27.<sup>3</sup> The Council Strategy sets out five priority areas and the main ones which will be supported by this strategy are:

**Priority Area 1:**  
 Services we are proud of

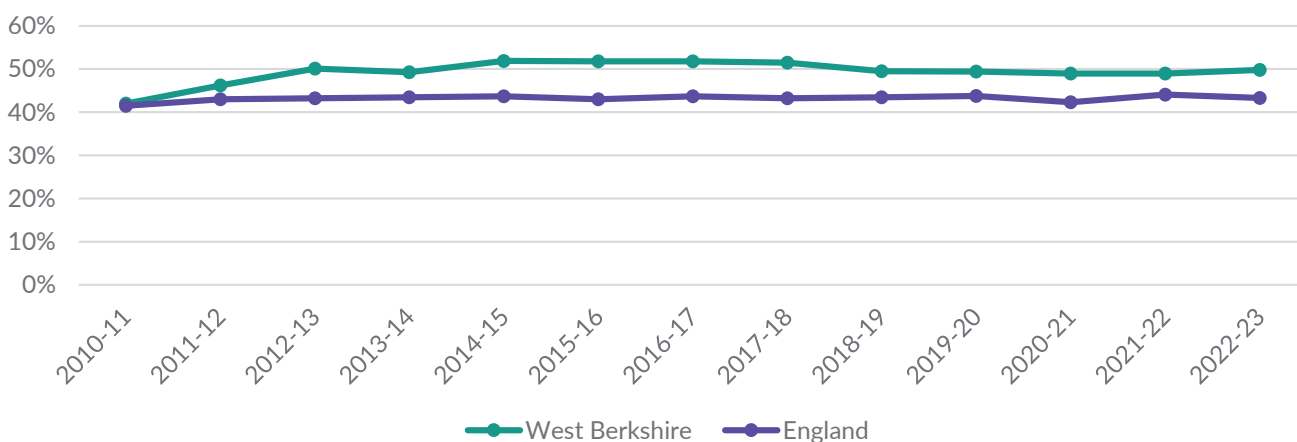
**and**

**Priority Area 3:**  
 Tackling the climate and ecological emergency.

When adopted, the new Waste Management Strategy will replace the Council's previous Waste Strategy 2002 – 2022<sup>4</sup>. A selection of service changes implemented since the previous strategy was published have been set out under Appendix 2.

### Current Performance

In 2022/23 (the most recent year for which published data is available) West Berkshire had a recycling rate of 49.8%<sup>5</sup>, placing it 68th out of the 343 English authorities. This places West Berkshire above the national average for England of 43.3%. A comparison of West Berkshire's current and historic recycling rate



**Figure 1.2. West Berkshire's Current and Historic Recycling Rate Compared to England's Average**

<sup>1</sup> West Berkshire Council (2020). Environment Strategy 2020 to 2030. Available at: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/environmentstrategy>  
<sup>2</sup> West Berkshire Council (2020). Our Environment Strategy Delivery Plan. Available at: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/environmentdp>  
<sup>3</sup> West Berkshire Council (2023). Council Strategy 2023-2027. Available at: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/Council-Strategy-2023-2027>  
<sup>4</sup> West Berkshire Council (2002). A Municipal Waste Management Strategy for West Berkshire Council. Available at: [Waste\\_Strategy\\_2002-2022.pdf \(westberks.gov.uk\)](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/Waste-Strategy_2002-2022.pdf)  
<sup>5</sup> LetsRecycle (n.d). 2022/23 overall performance. Available at: [2022/23 overall performance - letsrecycle.com](https://letsrecycle.com)



**Figure 1.3. Compositional Analysis of the General Waste Bin**



with England’s average is shown in Figure 1 2.

However, compositional analysis of kerbside collected bins in August 2023 found that over 42% of the waste that people put in the residual waste bin could have been recycled – food waste alone made up 22%. Figure 1 3 shows a full analysis of the types of waste found in the average general waste bin in West Berkshire.

Furthermore, a survey undertaken in August 2023 of 280 properties found that only 59% were making use of the separate weekly food waste recycling service, indicating that there is significant potential for residents to recycle more.

West Berkshire also performs well on street cleanliness. West Berkshire’s latest Local Environmental Quality survey was undertaken between April 2023 and March 2024, and found that the level of litter and detritus within the district was relatively low.

The survey found that the percentage of sites that failed to meet acceptable levels for litter was 3.02%, meaning that 96.98% of site were acceptable. The percentage of areas that failed to meet the acceptable standard for detritus was somewhat higher at 11.05%.

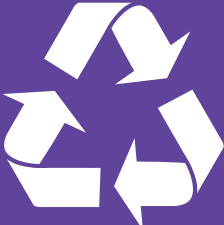
Not all English authorities carry out or publish similar studies, which makes an up to date comparison impossible; however, the most recent national survey by Keep Britain Tidy found that, in 2017/18 <sup>6</sup>, 14% of the 7,200 sites surveyed – chosen to be representative of England – failed to meet the acceptable standard for litter, while 25% failed to meet the standard for detritus (e.g. leaves and mud). West Berkshire is therefore considerably tidier than many other authorities. Another point of comparison is a study by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), which compiled results from 42 English local authorities in 2021/22 and found that “on average 95.46% of the sites inspected were at an acceptable level of cleanliness for litter”<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Keep Britain Tidy (2018). Litter in England, The Local Environmental Quality Survey of England 2017/18. Available at: [https://www.KeepBritainTidy.org/sites/default/files/resource/National%20Litter%20Survey%20201718\\_0.pdf](https://www.KeepBritainTidy.org/sites/default/files/resource/National%20Litter%20Survey%20201718_0.pdf)

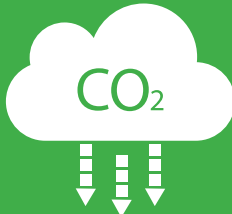
<sup>7</sup> APSE (2023) Street Cleanliness Report. Available at: <https://www.apse.org.uk/index.cfm/apse/research/current-research-programme/street-cleanliness-report/2021-22-street-cleanliness-survey-data/>

West Berkshire outperforms this average, too.


## 1.2 Vision for the Strategy



Increase the Council's recycling rate to **60%** by 2030



Reduce Carbon emissions and contribute towards West Berkshire's pledge to be **carbon neutral** by 2030



Halving residual waste to **120kg per capita / year** by 2042 to align with the Government's aim outlined in the Environmental Improvement plan



Continue to make West Berkshire a great place to live and work, achieving at least a satisfactory level of litter and detritus



Set an example for residents and businesses by improving the Council's own recycling and waste production performance

The aims of this strategy are outlined below.

The strategy defines how the Council can achieve these goals and sets out the steps the Council will take to continue to improve the services it offers, while responding to changing national policies and incentives and feedback from residents. The Council is committed to working together with residents through positive interactions to ensure that the district is a great place to live, work, learn and visit – this is outlined in the Customer Service Charter <sup>8</sup>.

Throughout the lifetime of the strategy, we will engage with our communities, improving waste and recycling services while seeking to improve the local environment through effective communications, education, and enforcement. The performance of these services will contribute towards nation-wide recycling and waste reduction targets. The goals and initiatives outlined in this strategy will also contribute towards the Council's Environment Strategy, which aims for West Berkshire Council to become Net Zero by 2030.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> West Berkshire Council (n.d). West Berkshire Council Customer Service Charter. Available at: [WBC\\_Customer\\_service\\_charter\\_\(January\\_2023\).pdf](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/customer-service-charter) (westberks.gov.uk)

<sup>9</sup> West Berkshire Council (2020). Environment Strategy. Available at: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/environmentstrategy>

## 2. Local Context

### 2.1 The Recycling, Waste and Street Cleansing Services

#### The Recycling and Waste Collection Services

The Council endeavours to provide all West Berkshire residents with equivalent services and access to recycling services, so each resident can recycle the same material whether they have a street-level (kerbside collection) or collections from a shared bin store. However, there are slight differences to the services provided to a very small minority of properties, such as residents living in flats above shops and in hard-to-reach areas. This difference is largely due to practical issues associated with the storage of waste between collections and transporting waste to a suitable collection point. More information about recycling and waste collection services in West Berkshire can be found at [www.westberks.gov.uk/rubbishandrecycling](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/rubbishandrecycling)

In addition to the kerbside recycling and waste collection services, the Council also currently operates nine Mini-Recycling Centres (MRCs) and two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs). The MRCs are located across the district and offer collection points for a variety of materials, including some not currently collected at kerbside, such as:

Textiles | Paper | Card

Small Electrical items

Food and drink cartons

Plastic bottles and cans

Plastic pots, tubs and trays

More information about the mini-recycling centres and where they are located can be found at

[www.westberks.gov.uk/minirecyclingcentres](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/minirecyclingcentres)

The two HWRCs are at Newtown Road, Newbury, in the west of the district and Padworth Lane, Lower Padworth near Aldermaston Wharf in the east. At these centres residents can recycle and dispose of larger bulky items or excess waste that they cannot fit in their bin and items not collected at street-level (kerbside) or communal bin stores, such as:

Furniture | Garden waste

DIY waste | Batteries

Electrical appliances

Non-recyclable waste

Both HWRCs have recently begun collecting coffee pods and vapes for recycling. More information about what can be taken to Newtown Road and Padworth HWRCs can be found at

[www.westberks.gov.uk/HWRCrecycling](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/HWRCrecycling)

The Council also offers to collect large bulky waste items (such as sofas, tables, chairs, mattresses, and beds) from residents' homes. The service costs for 2024/25 is £60 for the collection of up to five items. More information on the Council's bulky waste collection service can be found at [www.westberks.gov.uk/Bulky](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/Bulky)

## The Street Cleansing Service

The Council provides a comprehensive street cleansing service, along 1,303km of public highway and 827km of public footways and cycle paths, which contributes to efforts to make West Berkshire a pleasant place to work and live. The current street cleansing services include:

- Street sweeping
- Litter picking and litter bins
- Weed spray and removal
- Leaf clearance during Autumn
- Abandoned vehicle removal
- Fly tip removal

All the of these services are provided by our waste contractor, Veolia as part of our 25-year PFI contract, which started in 2008.

Our street cleansing service is operated to ensure compliance with the acceptable levels of litter and detritus as set out in the [Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse \(CoPLAR\)](#).

Part of our duty to keep land under our direct control clear of litter and refuse, and highways clean of litter, refuse and detritus includes being responsible for dealing with most types of small-scale fly-tipping on public land. The Environment Agency deals with bigger incidents (generally those involving more than a tipper load of waste), incidents involving organised crime and certain hazardous wastes which have a greater potential to damage the environment. While we do not remove fly-tipping from private land, we will investigate it. Fly-tipping can be reported here [www.westberks.gov.uk/report-litter-and-fly-tipping](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/report-litter-and-fly-tipping)

The Council also has a duty to remove abandoned vehicles from land in the open air (including private land) and from roads. We also provide a free removal scheme for unwanted privately-owned vehicles. Further information can be found at [www.westberks.gov.uk/abandonedvehicles](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/abandonedvehicles)

Further information regarding service provision can be found at [www.westberks.gov.uk/keepwestberkstidy](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/keepwestberkstidy)

To complement the street cleaning services, the Council also provides loans of litter picking equipment and collection to community groups across the district, which plays an important role in not only supplementing our extensive street cleansing service but also in integral engaging with community groups and promoting the anti-littering message.

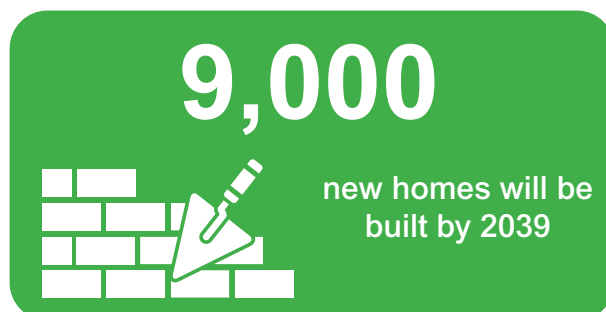
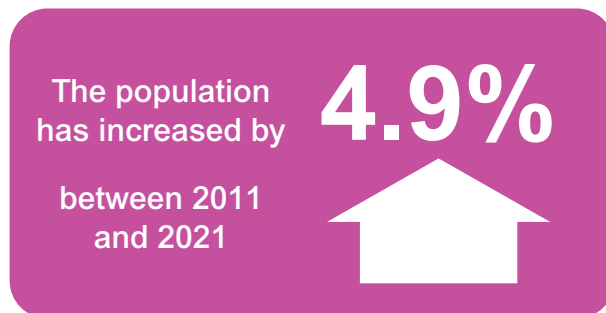


## 2.2 West Berkshire's Demographics

West Berkshire's residents have a higher average age (43 years) than the average in both England (40 years) and the South East (41 years), and is expected to increase in future years<sup>10</sup>. Furthermore, West Berkshire has seen its population increase by 4.9% in the last decade, from around 153,800 in 2011 to 161,400 in 2021<sup>11</sup>. It is therefore essential that this strategy should include ways to identify and communicate with West Berkshire's changing population, including new residents moving into the area, in a way that is simple and easy to understand.

The increase in West Berkshire's population is also driving the need for more housing. The 2022-2039 Local Plan includes proposals for 9,000 new homes in West Berkshire by the end of 2039<sup>12</sup>. As part of thinking about how we develop our waste and recycling services, the Council will need to design schemes that work for all our residents, whilst understanding the challenges they face and what is appropriate for each housing type.

Finally, as of 2021, West Berkshire is the ninth least densely populated local authority in the South East of England, with approximately two people living on each football pitch-sized area of land<sup>13</sup>. The Council is therefore required to take into consideration the relatively large distance between households in rural areas and between residential areas in any future service changes.



<sup>10</sup> Office for National Statistics. Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E06000037/>

<sup>11</sup> Office for National Statistics. Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E06000037/>

<sup>12</sup> West Berkshire Council (2022). The Local Plan Review. Available at: <https://www.westberks.gov.uk/local-plan-review>

<sup>13</sup> Office for National Statistics. Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E06000037/>


# 3. National Context

Alongside considering our local context, as part of the development of this strategy the Council also must contemplate the wider national drivers of change. The UK Government has announced several major policy changes which will affect how waste and recycling is managed

in England, and how services are funded across the UK. These are planned to take effect during the lifetime of this strategy and, if implemented, will significantly influence how waste and recycling is managed in West Berkshire. The four major policies are:




**Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)**



**Deposit Return Scheme**



**Simpler Recycling**



**Emissions Trading Scheme**

*It should be noted that the policies discussed below are still in development by the UK Government. They were proposed but not finalised prior to the general election in 2024, and so amendments to their content or timing may be made by the new Government during the lifetime of this strategy.*

## 3.1 Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)

Expected implementation date: 1 October 2025

Impact: West Berkshire Council will receive funding/payment for operating an 'efficient and effective' household waste service. It is not yet clear how the government will assess local authority performance or the efficiency and effectiveness of household waste services, but it is likely to take into account local circumstances such as geography and deprivation. It is also not clear on the amount of funding that will be received, and how it will affect the overall waste and recycling budgets of each individual Council.

Under the proposals, packaging producers will be responsible for the full net cost of managing the packaging they handle or place on the market. This includes the cost of collecting, transporting, sorting and disposal of packaging waste, whether from households or businesses.

It also includes administration and overhead costs. The scheme will cover packaging waste collected in the recycling and general waste streams, as well as material that is placed in street litter bins.

## 3.2 Deposit Return Scheme (DRS)

Expected implementation date: From October 2027

Impact: West Berkshire is likely to see fewer DRS eligible materials, such as plastic bottles and metal drink cans, placed in household recycling and general waste containers. Experience from other countries indicates that a DRS may also have a positive impact on street litter.

Under a DRS, people who buy drinks in certain kinds of containers will have to pay a small deposit, which they can reclaim when they are finished with their drink. In England, the scheme will target plastic and metal drinks containers between 50 ml and 3 litres. The DRS is likely to lead to a significant improvement in

the proportion of deposit bearing containers that are captured for recycling, while also reducing street litter. It is currently expected that the scheme will involve consumers returning materials to a collection point (which will be located in supermarkets, smaller shops and other locations) to claim their deposit.

## 3.3 Simpler Recycling

Expected implementation date: 31 March 2026

Impact: West Berkshire will be required to:

- Collect food, paper and card, metal, glass bottles and jars, plastic pots, tub and trays, plastic tubes and cartons (including Tetra Pak).
- Collect plastic film (from 2027).
- Provide a separate food waste collection service to properties that do not currently receive them – principally, flats above shops (where practicable).
- Offer an opt-in garden waste collection service

The Government wishes to achieve greater consistency in the materials that are collected for recycling by different English local authorities, and in the way their local services are designed. Following a consultation, the Government published its proposals for statutory guidance on “Simpler Recycling” on 9 May 2024.

The key requirements on local authorities are:

- **To collect a core set of recyclable materials for recycling (March 2026):** The core set of recyclable materials are paper and card, metal, glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles, pots, tub and trays, plastic tubes and Tetra Pak cartons. Plastic film will be required to be collected by March 2027.  
West Berkshire Council already meets most of these requirements, but will be expected to expand kerbside collections

to include:

- Plastic pots, tubs and trays
- Plastic tubes
- Cartons (including Tetra Pak)
- Tetra Pak cartons
- Plastic film (from March 2027).
- **To offer an opt-in garden waste collection service (March 2026):** Local authorities will be required to offer garden waste collections to all households who request it, including communal properties. A council may charge for those collections, but charges should be ‘reasonable’. Householders will be able to make their own decision about whether they wish to use this optional service or make other arrangements. The Council already provides an opt-in chargeable service.
  - The Government recommends that collections are offered over a period

of 36 weeks (between March to October (inclusive) as a minimum. The Government recognises that this may need to vary based upon local circumstances and that the frequency of collections is for waste collection authorities to determine with regard to their individual local circumstances.

- **To separately collect food waste weekly (March 2026):** The Council has already introduced separate food waste collections across the district from October 2022 (see Case Study 1) and is therefore already largely meeting this requirement. The Council will continue work to provide this service to the

properties that do not currently receive it, such as flats above shops, where practicable.

- **Collect residual waste at a minimum frequency of once every two weeks (March 2026):** The Council already collects residual waste at a minimum frequency of at least once every two weeks, so is already meeting this requirement.

These policies were proposed but not finalised prior to the general election in 2024, and so amendments to their content or timing may be made by the new Government during the lifetime of this strategy.

### Case Study 1 - Separate Food Waste Collection service.

The objective of introducing a separate food waste collection service was to comply with emerging government resource management policies, improve recycling performance, and enhance service efficiency. The new service replaced the previous fortnightly commingled garden and food waste collection with a weekly separate food waste collection for all properties.

The implementation of the separate food waste collection service began in October 2022. This initiative was in direct response to government policies requiring local authorities to provide free separate weekly food waste collections. To facilitate this transition, eight new collection vehicles and 120,000 containers were procured and delivered with our waste contractor, Veolia, and the Council engaged in negotiations with them to ensure seamless delivery of the service.

To foster community engagement, a competition was launched in local primary schools to name the collection vehicles. This initiative not only generated excitement but also provided an opportunity to visit the winning schools with the new vehicles, thereby promoting the service in a positive light. An extensive social media communication plan was implemented to keep the public informed and engaged throughout the transition period.



Minor public scepticism regarding the new service, particularly concerns about odours and vermin, was addressed through a comprehensive FAQ and targeted social media communications. Emphasis was placed on the benefits of weekly collections, the use of lockable lids, and the availability of liners to mitigate these concerns. Initial studies indicated that only 46% of residents were using the service, resulting in a weekly collection of 78 tonnes. However, following a summer communication campaign, which included affixing 'no food waste' stickers on every black general waste bin, participation rates increased to 59%, with weekly tonnage rising to 88 tonnes.

In addition to addressing some public concerns about odours, another campaign is due to be launched to highlight the benefits of using the service. A waste compositional study of the black bin conducted in August 2023 shows that 20% of its contents are food waste that could be

recycled as part of our weekly collection. There will also be a trial using bin housing for communal bin stores to improve capture rates and reduce contamination, further enhancing the service's effectiveness.

The introduction of the separate food waste collection service has proven to be a significant step towards increasing the amount of waste recycled within the district. So far 4,500 tonnes of food waste have successfully been diverted from landfill during 2022/23 into our own composting facility, where it is mixed with garden waste collected from residents and turned into soil conditioner used by local landowners and landscapers.

Despite some initial public scepticism, extensive community engagement and effective communication strategies have successfully increased participation rates and the weekly tonnage of collected food waste. The ongoing efforts to address concerns and improve service efficiency underscore the importance of proactive communication and community involvement in achieving sustainable waste management goals. Following the introduction of the separate food waste collection service, the Council's recycling rate has increased from 49% in 2021/22 to 53% in 2023/24.

### 3.4 Expanding the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)

**Expected implementation date: 2028**  
(following a 2-year transition phase)

**Impact:** As West Berkshire Council does not currently own or operate an Energy from Waste facility, there are no changes that the Council must make directly. However, some of the waste the Council collects is sent for Energy from Waste facilities, and it is therefore important that the Council understands the potential costs that may result from the implementation of this policy. The Government is likely to issue further guidance on the pass-through of costs from operator to customers in 2026.

The UK Government is committed to achieving Net Zero by 2050. Thus, emissions of fossil carbon from EfW will need to be reduced. To encourage this reduction, the Government plans to include EfW plants in the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) with effect from 2028<sup>14</sup>, and has recently consulted on how this might be implemented<sup>15</sup>.

Expanding the UK ETS to include EfW will make it more expensive, especially for residual waste that contains significant amounts of non-biogenic (fossil) material that releases carbon dioxide during the process – mainly plastics. The costs will initially fall on EfW operators, but will be passed on to their customers, like the Council, through the fees they charge.

The increased range of plastics that must be collected for recycling by 2027, which will see West Berkshire begin to collect plastic pots, tubs, trays, tubes and film, will help to reduce the amount of plastic in the residual waste. However, the costs of the ETS will increase the financial pressure on the council to make sure that as much as possible of the plastic that householders throw away is recycled rather than entering the residual waste stream. Based on current waste flows we could see disposal costs of general waste "black bin" increase by £1.4million per annum from 2028.

<sup>14</sup> UK Government (2023). Developing the UK Emissions Trading Scheme: main response. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/developing-the-uk-emissions-trading-scheme-uk-ets>

<sup>15</sup> UK Government (2024). UK Emissions Trading Scheme scope expansion: waste. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/uk-emissions-trading-scheme-scope-expansion-waste>

## 3.5 Already Established National Policies

### 3.5.1 Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse (CoPLAR)

In addition to the four main national policies that will impact West Berkshire in coming years, the long-established CoPLAR<sup>16</sup> encourages local authorities to maintain their land within acceptable cleanliness standards. The emphasis is on the consistent and appropriate management of an area to keep it clean, not on how often it is cleaned.

The CoPLAR documents sets out graded standards of cleanliness and what the levels that are expected to be maintained. West Berkshire’s street cleansing service is operated to ensure compliance with the acceptable levels of litter and detritus as set out in the CoPLAR.

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 gives people the right to take legal action to require a council to remove litter on its land where this falls below the acceptable standard set out in the Code for longer than the period specified. If the Magistrates’ Court is satisfied that the

council is in dereliction of its duties, it may make a Litter Abatement Order, requiring the council to clean up the area.

In addition to local authorities’ responsibilities regarding public land, they also have powers to compel businesses, private landowners, occupiers and managers to clear their land of litter.

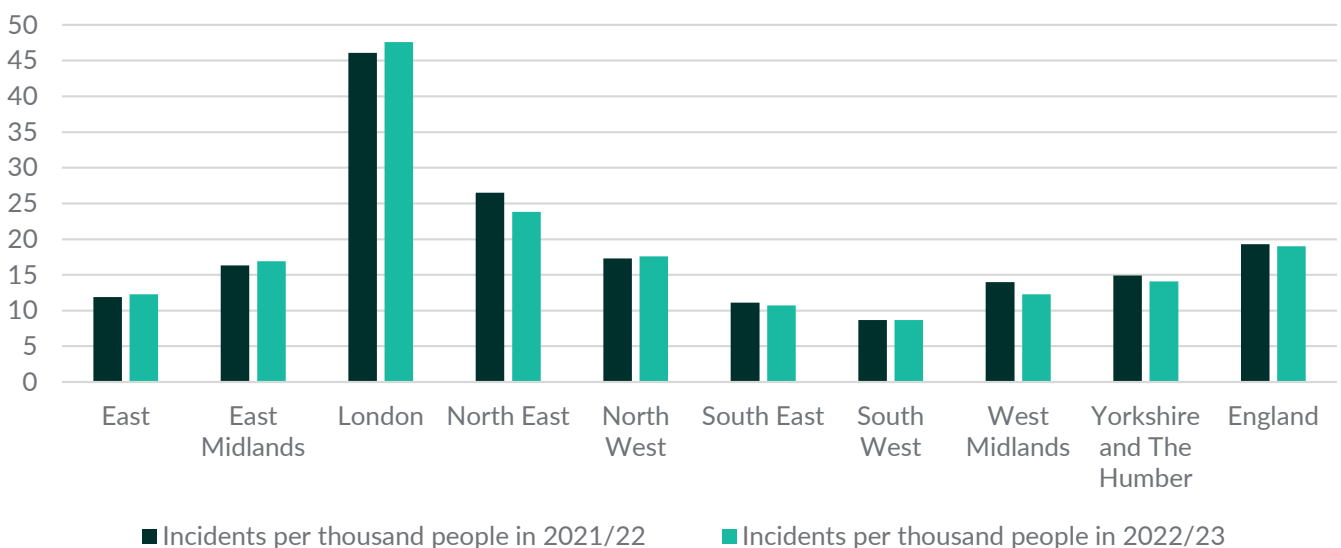
The new packaging EPR scheme extends to packaging waste in litter bins and will therefore provide additional funding to support provision of bin emptying services and may look to encourage greater recycling of packaging that is placed in litter bins.

## 3.6 Fly Tipping

In 2022/23, local authorities in England dealt with 1.08 million fly-tipping incidents, a decrease of 1% from the 1.09 million reported in 2021/22<sup>17</sup>. West Berkshire reported 1,009 fly tipping incidents in 2022/23<sup>18</sup> (6.22 per 1,000 people) which is less than the average in the region of 11 per 1,000 people.<sup>19</sup>

In May 2016, local authorities in England were given the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for fly-tipping. Prior to this

**Figure 3.1: Fly-tipping incidents per 1,000 people in England by region, 2022/23 compared to 2021/22**



<sup>16</sup> UK Government (2019). Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse. Available at: [pb11577b-cop-litter1.pdf](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/pb11577b-cop-litter1.pdf) (publishing.service.gov.uk)  
<sup>17</sup> Defra (2024). Fly-tipping statistics for England, 2022 to 2023. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/fly-tipping-in-england/local-authority-fly-tipping-enforcement-league-tables-for-england-202122>  
<sup>18</sup> Defra (2024). Local authority flytipping league table data 2021-22 to 2022-23. Available at: [Local\\_authority\\_flytipping\\_league\\_table\\_data\\_2021\\_22\\_to\\_2022\\_23\\_revised.ods](https://live.com/Local_authority_flytipping_league_table_data_2021_22_to_2022_23_revised.ods) (live.com)  
<sup>19</sup> Defra (2024). Fly-tipping statistical release figures and tables dataset. Available at: [Fly-tipping\\_statistical\\_release\\_figures\\_and\\_tables\\_dataset\\_revised.ods](https://live.com/Fly-tipping_statistical_release_figures_and_tables_dataset_revised.ods) (live.com)

date, local authorities issued fly-tippers with a range of FPNs, including in relation to littering or anti-social behaviour. Further enforcement powers were given to local authorities and the Environment Agency in January 2019, who can

now issue FPNs for breaches of the household waste duty of care, where householders pass their waste to an unlicensed waste carrier who then goes on to fly-tip it.

**Table 3.1: West Berkshire Fly Tip and FPN Historic Summary** <sup>20</sup>

Year	Total fly tipping incidents	Fixed Penalty Notices issued specifically for fly-tipping	Fixed Penalty Notices issued for Household Duty of Care
2019-20	886	0	0
2020-21	1,151	1	0
2021-22	1,011	5	2
2022-23	1,009	2	11
2023-24*	930*	17*	15*

\*The figures for 2023-24 are provisional until verified by DEFRA.

The Council issued 32 FPN actions in 2023/24 (most recent year national data is not available for comparison). During 2022-23 West Berkshire were ranked 171 out of 309 local authorities for the number of FPNs issued per incident. To combat and reduce the number of fly tips, The

Council has recently increased the amount of FPNs to the maximum amount allowed:

- Fly tipping £1,000.00
- Duty of Care £400.00

<sup>20</sup> Defra (2024). Fly tipping incidents and actions taken, reported by local authorities in England 2012/13 to 2022/23. Available at: [Flytipping\\_incidents\\_and\\_actions\\_taken\\_reported\\_by\\_LAs\\_in\\_England\\_2012-13\\_to\\_2022-23\\_accessible\\_revised.ods](https://live.com/flytipping_incidents_and_actions_taken_reported_by_LAs_in_England_2012-13_to_2022-23_accessible_revised.ods) (live.com)



# 4. Key Themes and Interventions

This section looks at the key principles and priorities that will help move West Berkshire Council towards achieving its targets and vision for this strategy. There are three key principles to this strategy, outlined in Figure 5 1, each of which contains several priorities that are explored in the relevant sections below.

Figure 4.1. The Three Key Principles of West Berkshire’s Waste and Resources Strategy



## 4.1 Drive Down General Waste & Increase Recycling

The first key principle is that the Council should ‘drive down general waste and increase recycling’. Four priority areas have been identified which will help the Council to achieve this:

<p><b>Priority One:</b></p>  <p>Reviewing Collection Services</p>	<p><b>Priority Two:</b></p>  <p>Minimise Waste and Increase Reuse</p>	<p><b>Priority Three:</b></p>  <p>Improve Communication and Community Engagement with Regard to Waste Reduction and Recycling</p>	<p><b>Priority Four:</b></p>  <p>Reduce Carbon Emissions Associated with the Collection Services and Improve Air Quality</p>
--	--	---	---

How the Council plans to achieve these priorities is explored in the following sections.



## Priority One: Reviewing Collection Services

The Council is dedicated to continuing to develop and improve its recycling and waste collection services, increasing the amount of waste it collects for recycling to 60% and beyond, both to suit its residents and meet incoming national requirements (Section 3.0). This may mean changing how recycling and waste is collected in West Berkshire. To explore the possible future options, the Council with the support of Eunomia Research & Consulting has undertaken mathematical modelling of a range of different options for how it might collect waste from households in the district in future, to understand their likely recycling, carbon and financial performance. The Council with the support of Eunomia Research & Consulting has also undertaken engagement with residents to understand residents' points of view, opinions and concerns regarding the current waste collection services and any future potential changes.

### 1. We will explore changes to the frequency of waste collections (2025).

The research and modelling described in Appendix 1 shows that reducing the collection frequency of general waste "black bin" from every fortnight to every three weeks could increase the recycling rate by 5 percentage points (from 51% <sup>21</sup> to 56%) and reducing the collection frequency to every four weeks could increase the recycling rate by 9 percentage points (from 51% <sup>22</sup> to 60%). However, in May 2024, the previous Conservative UK Government issued a consultation response to its Simpler Recycling proposals which reiterated their stance that the minimum service frequency for residual waste collections should be fortnightly (see Section 3.3). However, this policy has not been written into legislation or guidance, and it is not yet clear what stance the new Government that took office in July 2024 will take the same view. The Council will consider any changes in its approach in the light of any new policy announcements.

A reduction in collection frequency would not affect households that share bins (e.g. those living in flats). Changes would be supported by communication and campaign material to

encourage residents to minimise the amount of waste they produce and to recycle everything they can. In addition, the Council would assess how they can address any valid concerns raised by residents. This might include the provision of a separate nappy collection for households with children in nappies, and to continue assessments for a larger general waste bin for large families or households that produce unavoidably large quantities of general waste.

### The Best Practicable Environmental Option

The best practicable environmental option based on the technical analyses is to amend the collection frequency for household general "black bin" waste from fortnightly to once every three weeks (Option 4 in Appendix 1). This option is shown to increase the recycling rate, reduce waste generation by householders, reduce carbon emissions without having as much adverse impact on residents. On the other hand, reducing the general waste collection frequency to every four weeks (Option 5 in Appendix 1) is not deemed practicable at this time due to the potentially significant impact on residents, even though that option could result in even greater environmental benefits.

Under Option 4, the collection frequency for other household waste streams will remain unchanged under the proposed option. This means that dry recycling and garden waste will continue to be collected fortnightly, whilst separate food waste will continue to be collected weekly from the kerbside. The option of collecting general waste once every three weeks has been successfully implemented by selected English local authorities including our neighbours Bracknell Forest Council, and in most Welsh council areas. If approved for implementation, officers will ensure the lessons are learnt from other areas and effective mitigation measures are implemented for selected households who may need assistance. These households could include exceptionally large households and people with young children using disposal nappies.

<sup>21</sup> 22/23 recycling rate

<sup>22</sup> 22/23 recycling rate



Next steps: The Council will consult with residents as part of the adoption of this strategy before implementing any changes to the recycling and waste services. The Council will also endeavour to support any changes to the general waste collections with easy-to-access and understandable guidance to householders about the proposed new service.

## 2. We will review receptacles provided to residents to present their waste for collection (2026).

The majority of residents in West Berkshire have their household recycling collected from two 55L recycling boxes and one 90L reusable green sack. Residents are asked to separate their recycling and place glass in one box, paper and cardboard in the second box and plastic bottles and metal packaging in the reusable green sack, large card can also be presented for collection so long as it is folded flat no higher or wider than a normal wheely bin. During engagement workshops, concerns were raised that problems can arise in the event that residents leave their recycling boxes and reusable sacks outside for collection for extended periods of time, or on windy days: 1) recycling can be blown out of the boxes; and 2) the reusable sacks can blow away because

they are quite lightweight and their design means that they are quite easily caught by the wind.

To prevent litter being caused in this way, the Council may consider the following options:

- **Option A:** Provide residents with nets for the current recycling boxes. These are elastic nets which often attach to one side of the box and stretch over the handles to contain the recycling within the box.
- **Option B:** Provide residents with lids for the current recycling boxes. These are lids which fit on top of the recycling box and prevent recycling from escaping.
- **Option C:** Replace the reusable sacks with boxes or weighted reusable sacks. As the reusable sacks are fairly lightweight and prone to blowing away, the Council could instead provide residents with a third recycling box (with a lid to contain the recycling) or weighted sack.
- **Option D:** Replace the reusable sacks with a wheeled bin. This would ensure that we provide residents with enough capacity to present the wider range of

materials for recycling in line with Simpler Recycling proposals (Section 3.3), rather than providing either another reusable bag or box.

- **Option E:** Supply residents with Troliboc containers. The Troliboc system comprises three boxes that stack on top of each other on a trolley. The system therefore has a small footprint (similar to a wheeled bin) and can help keep waste contained on windy days and is easier for residents to present for collection because it can be wheeled out to the street on collection day. There are flaps in the middle and lower boxes so residents can post material into them without needing to unstack the boxes.
- **Option F:** No change.

For each of the options mentioned above, we will think about the following:

- the impact that it could have on the amount of recycling we collect.
- the impact that it could have on reducing litter and improving the street scene.
- whether there are any operational and logistical challenges.
- the impact that it could have on residents (for example, whether we expect it to be easy or difficult for residents to use).
- the impact on the quality and value of wet paper and card.
- the cost of implementing and maintaining each option; and
- feedback and examples of other local authorities that have implemented similar containers.

### 3. We will consider the implications Simpler Recycling has on the current collection method for collecting recycling (2026).

At present, West Berkshire Council operates a multistream service for the collection of household recycling. To support this service, the Council provides its residents with two recycling boxes (one for paper and card, the other for glass bottles and containers), and a reusable sack (for the collection of plastic bottles and metal packaging).

This collection method aligns with the requirements of the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, and similar incoming

rules under the Environment Act 2021, which require local authorities that collect paper, metal, plastic, or glass to do so separately from one another where it is necessary and practicable to do so. The intention of this requirement is to make sure that recycling is high quality.

However, in May 2024 the Government confirmed its intention to write into statutory guidance that in future it will be acceptable in all cases for councils to provide householders with a “co-mingled” collection service. A co-mingled service allows residents to deposit all recyclable materials into a single container – typically a wheeled bin – which is then collected in one compartment of a recycling vehicle. The mixed materials are subsequently sent to a Material Recovery Facility (MRF) where they are mechanically sorted into different material types. Authorities that adopt co-mingled collections typically do so because they consider the system simpler for residents; and because they anticipate that the logistical efficiencies of using a single vehicle to empty wheeled bins will outweigh the costs of sorting the material at a MRF. However, co-mingled collections tend to suffer from greater contamination with non-recyclable material than multi-stream collections, and MRF sorting can reduce the quality – and therefore the demand for and value of the material collected.

The Government’s policy regarding co-mingled collections has not been written into legislation or guidance and it is not yet clear what stance the new Government that took office in July 2024 will take. While West Berkshire Council may not now face a legal impediment to changing its collection system to mix more, or all, of its dry recycling in a single stream, it is currently under a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) contract with our waste contractor Veolia, which was awarded in 2008 and is set to conclude in 2032. This covers the collection, sorting, recycling, and treatment of waste. Any alteration that the Council wish to make to its waste collection system within the lifespan of the contract would require a contract variation to be negotiated with Veolia and would be likely to result in an increase in contract costs.

Switching from a multistream service to a co-mingled service could have significant performance and financial implications for West Berkshire Council. With this in mind, we



will explore the following in deciding on any changes to the current collection system:

- **Recycling Performance and the Quality of Material Collected:** While it is sometimes claimed that the simplicity of co-mingled collections leads to increased recycling, the best available evidence indicates that, once contamination is excluded from the amount of recycling collected, the differences between the performance of different systems is marginal. Introducing co-mingled collections would therefore not be expected to significantly affect the Council's recycling performance. However, it could result in more of some materials, such as glass and HDPE plastic, being sent to lower grade reprocessing.
- **Collection Costs:** Co-mingled collections are expected to be more efficient and therefore have lower associated collection costs. However, they also require different collection vehicles and systems, necessitating a significant investment in new bins and vehicles, as well as communication with residents.

- **The Material Recovery Facility (MRF):** Co-mingled collections require the mixed recyclables to be sorted at an MRF. This could lead to additional costs as the current MRF is designed only to separate plastic and cans and would require substantial modification in order to ensure it is able to manage a fully co-mingled material stream.
- **Contractual Changes:** West Berkshire Council currently has a contract with Veolia, and changing the collection method would require a contract variation potentially leading to higher costs.

#### 4. We will continue to work towards phasing out the Garden Waste charge with the ambition to make it free for all households (2025).

We remain committed to our goal of phasing out the Garden Waste charge. Significant efforts have already been made to reduce the fee, and we are continuously working to make it more affordable for those in need. While we strive to phase out this charge, we recognise the importance of being financially responsible, as the revenue generated from the Garden Waste charge is crucial in funding vital council

services. Balancing these priorities ensures we can support our community effectively while working towards our ambitious goal.

**5. We will explore installing CCTV at mini-recycling centres (2028).**

The installation of CCTV will allow the Council to identify and monitor anyone misusing the services. This might include people not placing the correct materials in the correct container or fly-tipping. CCTV is already in use at our HWRCs to deter and detect abuse by rogue traders using the services instead of paying for a commercial waste collection.

**6. We will explore expanding the different types of recyclable materials collected at kerbside, as required by emerging government policies (2025).**

This will likely include kerbside collection of plastic pots, tubs and trays and plastic film. The collection of plastic pots, tubs and trays is expected to be introduced by the end of 2024/25, with other specified materials such as cartons and foil by March 2026 and plastic film in 2027, but may be delayed until after the eventual implementation of EPR (see Section 3.0). Any changes to the types of materials collected will be supported by effective communication with residents. It should be noted that the collection of additional materials may be subject to negotiation with the Council's collection contractor.

**7. We will continue to provide an equivalent level of core service across all property types, including the roll out of a food waste recycling service to flats above shops where practicable (from 2026).**

The expansion of the service is necessitated by new legal requirements but will represent an improvement in services for the very small number of residents that do not currently have food waste collections.

**8. We will increase the number of MRCs to collect a range of materials that are not collected kerbside where possible (2028).**

The Council will explore the addition of several mini-recycling centres (MRCs) across the area to expand the current service, and whether additional materials can be collected at the MRCs and/or the HWRCs.

**9. We will explore collecting additional materials (such as small electricals) at kerbside (2029).**

The Council will explore the feasibility of collecting additional materials from kerbside, not currently required by 'Simpler Recycling' (see Section 3.3), such as small electrical appliances.

**10. We will continue to provide guidance for developers and managing agents on communal bin properties (2025).**

The Council currently offers guidance on request to developers or managing agents regarding the provision of suitable waste arrangements at communal bin properties. Publishing this information and seeking to incorporate it into planning and highway processes will help to ensure that developers and managing agents meet minimum standards for the provision of facilities to allow proper waste management in new housing and communal developments. The Council will advise on how these requirements can be met and encourage developers to use the most effective and efficient technology to meet the requirements. We will also continue to comment on relevant planning applications as part of the planning process.

## Priority Two: Minimise Waste and Increase Reuse

The best way to deal with waste is not to generate it in the first place. The benefits of waste reduction and reuse include reduced energy consumption and resource use, and therefore reduced carbon emissions and pollution. Waste prevention is usually achieved through lifestyle changes, which can be facilitated through incentives that encourage behaviour change. It can also be enabled through reuse, so that items go on to have a second life rather than being thrown away. This can be made easier by products being designed for re-use, and by making it attractive, easy and affordable to buy and own second-hand items (communication and behaviour change). There are steps the Council can take to encourage waste prevention and reuse locally.

Priority one above will also play an important role in achieving this priority.

### **1. We will continue to work with local charitable organisations and explore how we can increase the amount of bulky items like furniture we can divert for reuse. (2025).**

We currently work with The Community Furniture Project which is a local charity that re-sell donated items of furniture and other household goods. The Council will continue to communicate and advertise their collection point at our Newtown Road HWRC and their other services that allows residents to have their unwanted bulky items, such as furniture and electrical items collected, enabling them to dispose of their preloved furniture in an accessible and appropriate way. Promoting this service is key to increasing uptake.

### **2. We will explore options to expand our reuse provision with an ambition to provide a donation point and/or reuse shop at our Padworth Lane HWRC. (2029).**

We plan to enhance our reuse services by exploring options to establish a donation point and/or a reuse shop at our Padworth Lane Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC). This initiative aims to promote sustainability and community engagement by providing residents in the east of the district with a convenient way

to donate and repurpose items, reducing waste and fostering a culture of reuse.

### **3. We will continue to promote reusable nappies through the Real Nappy Scheme (2025).**

The Real Nappy Scheme provides reusable nappies for babies in place of the commonly used disposable ones and up to £30 cash back for residents who spend over £60 on real nappies. Switching from disposable items to reusable alternatives has significant impacts on waste reduction and it is therefore important that the Council supports the work of organisations like this that facilitate the switch. The cash back scheme has currently been suspended, however the Council plans to reopen the cash back scheme in April 2025.

### **4. We will continue to encourage home composting (2025).**

To follow and promote the waste hierarchy, we will continue to encourage residents to compost their garden waste at home or as a community through community composting schemes. The Council will continue to support home and community composting through the provision of discounted compost bins. We will explore the possibility of providing free online webinars and workshops to teach residents how to compost efficiently and effectively; attending local events to promote composting; and by answering questions from residents and providing information on composting through social media and leaflets.

### **5. We will explore more opportunities to introduce reuse schemes for specific waste types. (2029).**

The Council will explore ways it can support in increasing awareness of reuse schemes for specific waste types across West Berkshire. Such as the paint reuse scheme already introduced at our Household Waste Recycling Centres. The Council could also work with campaigns such as Refill which is an initiative covering sellers of food and hot drinks that allow people to bring their own containers, or who make use of minimal packaging.

## Case study 2 – Paint Re-use

In October 2022, the Council joined the Community RePaint scheme, a UK-wide paint reuse network.

The goal of this initiative was to collect leftover paint and redistribute it to benefit individuals, families, communities, and charities. An estimated 50 million litres of the 320 million litres of paint sold in the UK each year go to waste.

This partnership allows residents to drop off paint at either of our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) in the usual way. Householders visiting the HWRCs also can take away paint free of charge. When paint is dropped off, staff at the HWRCs assess its condition to determine if it can be reused. Paint deemed reusable is placed into the Community RePaint area at both HWRCs, where it can be collected free of charge by householders for DIY jobs or local community projects.

The scheme was promoted to the community through various channels such as social media, e-newsletters and from site staff informing visitors about the scheme and its benefits.

Since launching, over 3,000 litres of paint have been redistributed to more than 300 residents. This paint would have otherwise been recycled or sent to landfill.



The Paint Re-use initiative has successfully diverted significant amounts of paint from waste streams, demonstrating the value of reuse over recycling. Partnering with the Community RePaint scheme and actively promoting the program, has made a positive environmental impact while supporting local residents and community projects. This case study underscores the importance of innovative waste management strategies in fostering sustainability and community well-being.

## 6. We will explore ways for the Council to support repair initiatives such as “repair cafes” and the “library of things” in the community and through the HWRCs (2027).

By promoting services and platforms that encourage repair and reuse, the Council aims to foster a culture where extending the lifespan of our belongings through repairs and rehoming preloved items locally is seen as responsible and commendable. The Council will explore ways to support the reuse and repair of things through the HWRCs and the bulky waste service. This may include increasing the materials that can be taken to the HWRCs for reuse or opening a reuse shop at the HWRCs to divert good quality reusable items for reuse and ensure these items are rehomed locally.



## Priority Three: Improve Communication and Community Engagement with Regard to Waste Reduction and Recycling

Communication is an effective way of fostering behaviour change, which is fundamental in contributing to reducing waste and encouraging recycling. Behaviour change is about getting people and communities to change their habits and behaviours for the long term. Behaviour change can be encouraged by making services more user-friendly, changing communication methods to achieve better engagement, education and awareness raising activities and supporting voluntary activities.

**1. We will continue to deliver waste education programmes at schools across the district and aim to increase the number of education programmes delivered across the district (2025).**

The Council is currently actively engaged in work with local schools to encourage children to foster good recycling knowledge and habits at an early age, and to encourage young people to be engaged in the importance of recycling and reducing waste. This approach has been

proving effective in changing household recycling habits, as school children often spread their newly acquired knowledge to their parents. We will continue to deliver our primary school programmes while also investigating how this can be improved and expanded, linking into the Eco-Schools programme managed by the Council's Environment Delivery Team.

**2. We will engage with the Town and Parish Councils across the district to see how we can work better together promoting and facilitating awareness of waste reduction and recycling (2027).**

By fostering stronger partnerships and open communication focusing on educating residents, sharing best practices, and organising local initiatives we can significantly enhance our collective environmental impact. Community litter picking being a great example of where we could increase engagement and awareness.



**3. We will continue to develop a detailed communication plan which will outline key topics that would be beneficial to communicate with residents (2025).**

Ongoing communications are key to maintaining recycling performance and positive behaviour changes. This is especially true in areas with more transient populations, where new residents moving to the area may not fully be aware of or understand the services.

At the workshop with residents, participants suggested that communication would be beneficial regarding:

- what can and cannot be recycled in West Berkshire;
- the impact of littering;
- how to present certain items for collection (e.g., textiles); and
- the difference between 'biodegradable' and 'compostable'.

The Council will explore the best ways to communicate these with residents. Suggested communication methods from the residents' workshop included stickers on bins, email reminders and targeted communications to households that do not recycle.

**4. We will explore enrolling and working with community champions to encourage and promote recycling in their local area (2027).**

The Council will explore introducing a community champion scheme. Community champions would be volunteers that are enthusiastic about waste prevention, reuse, and recycling. They would work with the Council and support in activities such as:

- The promotion of reuse and recycling events in the community.
- The distribution of posters and leaflets within their local community.
- Setting up or promoting events and facilities such as swap shops and the repair café.

**5. We will conduct a review of the Council's website to make it easier for residents to use and ensure the information provided is accessible and easy to understand (from 2025).**

The Council's website is a key tool that residents can use to understand the recycling service. In the workshop, residents suggested that the Council's website should be reviewed to ensure it is user-friendly and that information can be easily found. It was also suggested that the waste and recycling webpages should continue to be updated to ensure information remains current and easy to understand.

**6. We will formalise and enhance the enforcement of the existing 'No Side Waste' and 'Closed Lid' policy for general waste "black bins" (2027).**

Formalising and increasing the enforcement of the 'No Side Waste' and 'Closed Lid' policy for the general waste bins will mean that any additional non-recyclable waste that doesn't fit into the designated container will not be collected on collection day. These policies will restrict the amount of general waste that is able to be placed out.

Since over half of the waste in the black bins is material that could have been recycled, reinforcing these policies will incentivise households both to reduce the amount of waste they produce and separate as much out as possible for recycling, helping to increase recycling, reduce residual waste and meet carbon emissions reduction targets.

## Priority Four: Reduce Carbon Emissions Associated with the Collection Services and Improve Air Quality

Like most UK local authorities, the Council has set goals to reduce carbon emissions and aspires to achieve Net Zero by 2030.<sup>23</sup> The Council is adopting a range of actions to reduce its carbon footprint, looking both at the way it directly delivers its services and across its wider supply chain.

### **1. We will ensure that the recycling and waste collection fleet is compatible with Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil (HVO) and explore using it in place of diesel (2025).**

The UK is increasingly moving away from fossil fuels as the energy source for vehicles. However, the progress in decarbonising HGVs is proving slower than for smaller vehicles like cars, due to the high demands their operation places upon them. The current food waste collection vehicles can be fuelled using HVO and the replacement fleet for the other collections will be compatible with HVO. This technology almost completely eradicates fossil fuel-based exhaust emissions from the vehicle. This reduces overall CO<sub>2</sub> and can also improve air quality. The Council will ensure that the whole recycling and waste collection fleet is compatible with HVO, while also exploring the feasibility of using HVO to fuel the new fleet, mixed with diesel or by replacing it completely as soon as possible.

### **2. We will continue to investigate the feasibility of using electric and or hydrogen powered vehicles (2028).**

Building on our commitment to sustainability and innovation, we will continue to explore the viability of integrating electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles into our fleet. This investigation will encompass thorough testing and evaluation of these vehicles under various conditions to assess their performance, reliability, and cost-effectiveness in partnership with our waste collection contractor. Our objective will be to potentially adopt one of these options for a significant proportion of the fleet from 2032. This initiative reflects our dedication to reducing our carbon footprint and leading the way in the transition towards cleaner, more sustainable transportation alternatives.

### **3. We will explore targeting the increased collection and recycling of carbon-intensive materials, such as electrical appliances and textiles (2028).**

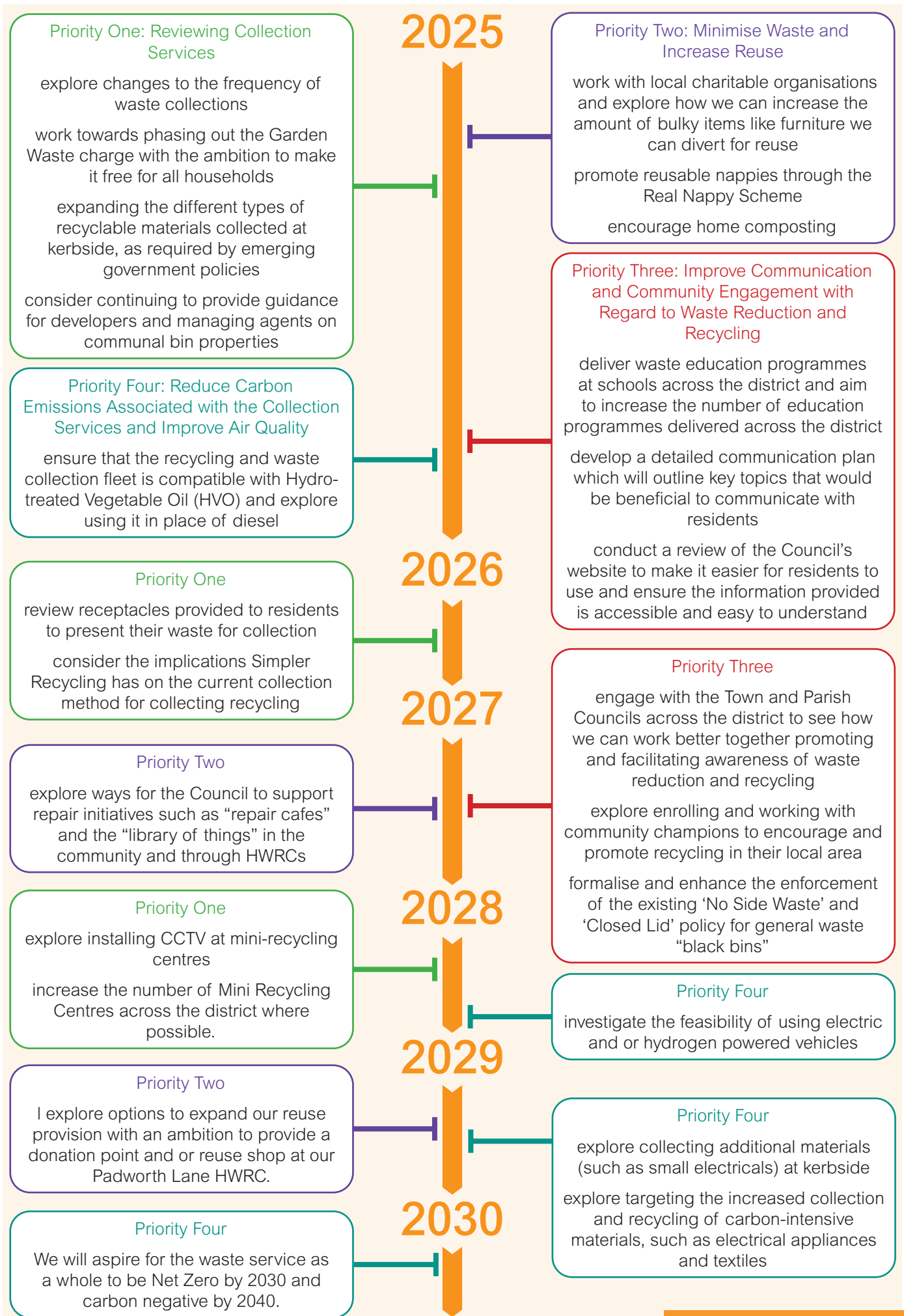
Materials such as electrical appliances and textiles are extremely carbon-intensive to produce. Electrical appliances contain a large number of valuable materials such as precious metals, and many textiles have high potential for reuse. However, their typical recycling rates are low compared with other recyclable materials. The Council has systems in place to target the collection of these materials through HWRCs and MRCs, with textiles also collected from the kerbside, and will continue to promote the use of these services. The Council will also explore new ways to increase the collection and recycling of these materials. Increasing the collection of electrical appliances and textiles and encouraging their refurbishment/repair and resale will help reduce carbon emissions.

### **4. We will aspire for the waste service as a whole to be Net Zero by 2030 and carbon negative by 2040.**

To achieve our aspiration for the waste service to be Net Zero by 2030 and carbon negative by 2040, we are exploring low carbon vehicle alternatives, contingent on technological advancements and affordability. Our waste contractor, Veolia, are also committed to reducing their carbon footprint, having already completed several impactful projects. These include installing LED lighting, installing a borehole at our Padworth facility, conducting efficiency reviews such as the collection day changes in 2021, and partnering with the Council to install solar panels. These initiatives are significantly contributing towards our environmental goals. Actions set out in Priorities one, two and three will also positively contribute to this aspiration.

<sup>23</sup> West Berkshire Council (2020) Environment Strategy 2020-2030. Available at: [https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/49068/Environment-Strategy-2020-2030/pdf/Environment\\_Strategy\\_2020-2030\\_updated.pdf?m=1615892303337](https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/49068/Environment-Strategy-2020-2030/pdf/Environment_Strategy_2020-2030_updated.pdf?m=1615892303337)

Figure 4.2. Timeline to Drive Down General Waste and Increase Recycling



## 4.2 Improve West Berkshire's Street Scene

The second key principle of this waste and resources strategy is to 'improve West Berkshire's street scene'. There are three priority

areas which have been identified that will help the Council to achieve this:

### Priority Five:



Improve the Current Recycling, Waste and Street Cleansing Services to Ensure They Help Reduce Litter and Fly-Tipping

### Priority Six:



Improve Communication and Enforcement Against Littering and Fly-Tipping

### Priority Seven:



Reduce Carbon Emissions Associated with the Street Cleansing Services and Improve Air Quality

How the Council plans to achieve these priorities is explored in the following sections.

### Priority Five: Improve the Current Recycling, Waste and Street Cleansing Services to Ensure They Help Reduce Litter and Fly-Tipping

The Council can manage how the recycling, waste and street cleansing services are run to ensure they are reducing the amount of litter in West Berkshire. Litter may be generated by accident by households that do not have the correct recycling container, or when on-street public litter bins are misused. Litter is also generated on purpose, by residents, visitors and people travelling through the district who have little care for the environment or understanding of the impact their actions have.

#### 1. We will review the location and capacity of litter bins (2027).

We will review the number and size of the on-street litter bins currently in place across West Berkshire and will assess whether they are in the most effective locations. This will include liaising with other internal and external departments who are responsible for litter bin provision in other areas of the district to ensure placement and provision of litter bins are as effective and efficient as possible.

We will also promote taking litter home, to increase the chance of the waste being recycled, as well affirming responsibility on the producer of the litter to ensure that it is disposed of properly.

#### 2. We will consider increasing the number of recycling bins for on-the-go recycling (2028).

'On-the-go' recycling is a method of collecting waste material for recycling away from the home. There is a significant potential to target tourists, visitors and/or commuters in West Berkshire's town centres and high streets and improve recycling performance, provided that the bins are used correctly. Our current on-the-go recycling bins are heavily contaminated, so we will work to promote the correct use of them along with any possible expansion of the service.

#### 3. We will engage with local parish and town councils to see how they can add value to our current litter bin service (2027).

In the Council's ongoing efforts to enhance the effectiveness and reach of our current litter bin service, we plan to actively engage with local parish and town councils. By fostering collaboration and dialogue, we aim to understand how these local bodies can contribute value to our service, potentially through innovative solutions or increased community involvement. This collaboration may also explore the feasibility of devolving responsibility for certain aspects of the litter bin service to these councils, enabling more localised management and decision-making. Such a partnership could lead to more tailored approaches to litter management, reflecting the unique needs and preferences of different communities, thereby improving overall service efficiency and environmental cleanliness.

## Priority Six: Improve Communication and Enforcement Against Littering and Fly-Tipping

We acknowledge the need for increased efforts in both communication and enforcement to enhance the street scene by addressing littering and fly-tipping within our district. While our area fares better than many others nationally, any occurrence is one too many, and we are committed to implementing measures to tackle these issues effectively.

### 1. Strength our commitment to combat littering and fly-tipping (2025).

To decisively address the persistent issues of littering and fly-tipping, the Council will adopt the enforcement strategies listed below. This will involve not only the continuation but also an escalation in the issuance of fines and the prosecution of those found guilty of littering and fly-tipping offences. By reinforcing our enforcement measures, we aim to deter these environmentally harmful practices, safeguarding

the cleanliness and health of our community spaces. This initiative reflects our dedicated effort to foster a cleaner, more sustainable environment for all residents, ensuring that our community remains a beautiful and safe place to live and visit.

- **Increased Monitoring:** Deploy more surveillance cameras in known hotspots for littering and fly-tipping. These cameras can utilise motion sensors and night vision technology to ensure effective monitoring around the clock.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Launch comprehensive public awareness campaigns to educate the community about the environmental and social impacts of littering and fly-tipping. These campaigns can include social media outreach, informational posters in public areas, and community workshops.

### Case Study 3 - Anti Littering and Fly-tipping Campaign.

The goal of this campaign was to raise awareness about the importance of proper waste disposal and to reduce instances of littering and fly-tipping in West Berkshire.

To combat littering and fly-tipping, our anti-littering campaign launched in March 2023 and ran through to the end of summer 2023. The campaign targeted pedestrians in high footfall areas, secondary school children, and motorists. Advertisements were placed in local newspapers and their websites, alongside targeted social media ads, to reach residents across the district.

Posters were strategically placed in key locations, including bus stops near schools and in Newbury town centre, ensuring high visibility for pedestrians. Large posters were also placed along the A4 main road through Newbury and Thatcham to catch the attention of drivers and at a local superstore. Posters were provided to all parish and town councils that opted to participate, enhancing the campaign's reach and community involvement.

To capture attention and drive the message home, the Council developed two impactful slogans: "Littering is for Losers" and "Do not allow your waste to be fly tipped. You could be fined.". These slogans were prominently featured across various media in the locations mentioned above. Eye-catching graphics and bold colours were used to ensure high visibility and engagement. Media provided by the SCRAP<sup>24</sup> campaign was also used on social media, further amplifying the message. This creative strategy effectively communicated the consequences of littering and fly-tipping while encouraging responsible waste disposal practices among the community.



<sup>24</sup> [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environmental-wasteaware-campaigns/lets-scrap-fly-tipping.aspx](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environmental-wasteaware-campaigns/lets-scrap-fly-tipping.aspx)



- Review of reporting methods: Ensure that we allow residents to easily report instances of littering and fly-tipping, including the ability to upload photos and pinpoint the location via GPS. This would streamline the reporting process and facilitate quicker response times.
- Partnerships with Local Businesses and Organisations: Collaborate with local businesses, schools, and environmental organisations to sponsor clean-up events and promote anti-littering messages. Partnerships can also include the adoption of certain areas for regular clean-up and maintenance.
- Enhanced Penalties and Fines: Penalties and fines associated with littering and fly-tipping offences have recently been increased, in line with national guidance, to create a stronger deterrent. This will be publicised to ensure that the community is aware of the serious consequences of such actions.
- Educational Programs in Schools: Implement educational programs in schools to teach children about the

importance of proper waste disposal and the environmental impact of littering and fly-tipping. Encouraging responsible behaviour from a young age can have long-lasting effects.

- Regular Feedback and Reporting to the Community: Provide regular updates to the community about the results of enforcement activities, including the number of fines issued, cases prosecuted, and areas cleaned. This transparency can increase community support and involvement in the initiative.

**2. We will improve the information available on the Council's interactive map and online reporting function (2026).**

To enhance our community's ability to efficiently address issues related to litter bins, we are committed to improving the information accessible through the Council's interactive map and online reporting functions. Recognising the confusion among residents regarding the jurisdiction and responsibility for various public bins—because not all bins

within our area are managed by the Council, with some being managed by parish councils or situated on private land—we aim to bring clarity and convenience to the reporting process. This enhancement will streamline the reporting and resolution process and ensuring that bins are emptied in a timely manner.

### **3. We will continue to support community-led litter picking initiatives (2025).**

The Council is grateful to the local community groups that help to keep West Berkshire litter free. Recognising the support from residents and community litter picking groups, the Council will explore ways in which it can continue to help facilitate community-led litter picking initiatives such as the Great British Spring Clean. This may include the Council working with organisations to provide residents with the necessary litter picking equipment such as litter pickers, gloves, and bags. The Council will also continue to:

- offer community groups health and safety support and guidance; and
- increase use of the Council's social media platforms and the Green Hub to help raise awareness of upcoming events and promote the success of events across the district.

### **4. We will explore the use of innovative technology to help improve the current street scene (2028).**

The Council will conduct a review of how innovative technology, such as smart bins, can be used to help improve the current street scene and improve the aesthetic appeal of a development or high street.

- Smart bins: Integrate smart sensors into on street recycling or litter bins that allow the street cleansing contractor to monitor how full the container is and which alerts them when the bin needs emptying.

### **5. We will explore implementing a 'No Bins on Streets' policy for commercial properties (from 2027).**

Bins stored on pavements or streets can obstruct residents from using walkways and can lead to street clutter, attract fly-tipping and in some cases cause a fire risk.

The Council will conduct a review and explore the pros and cons of preventing businesses and organisations from storing their commercial waste containers on the pavements and streets. Businesses and organisation may therefore be required to ensure any recycling and waste containers are stored away from pavements or streets and on their own property.

To support this the Council will ensure there is adequate funding and resources in place.

## Priority Seven: Reduce Carbon Emissions Associated with the Street Cleansing Services and Improve Air Quality

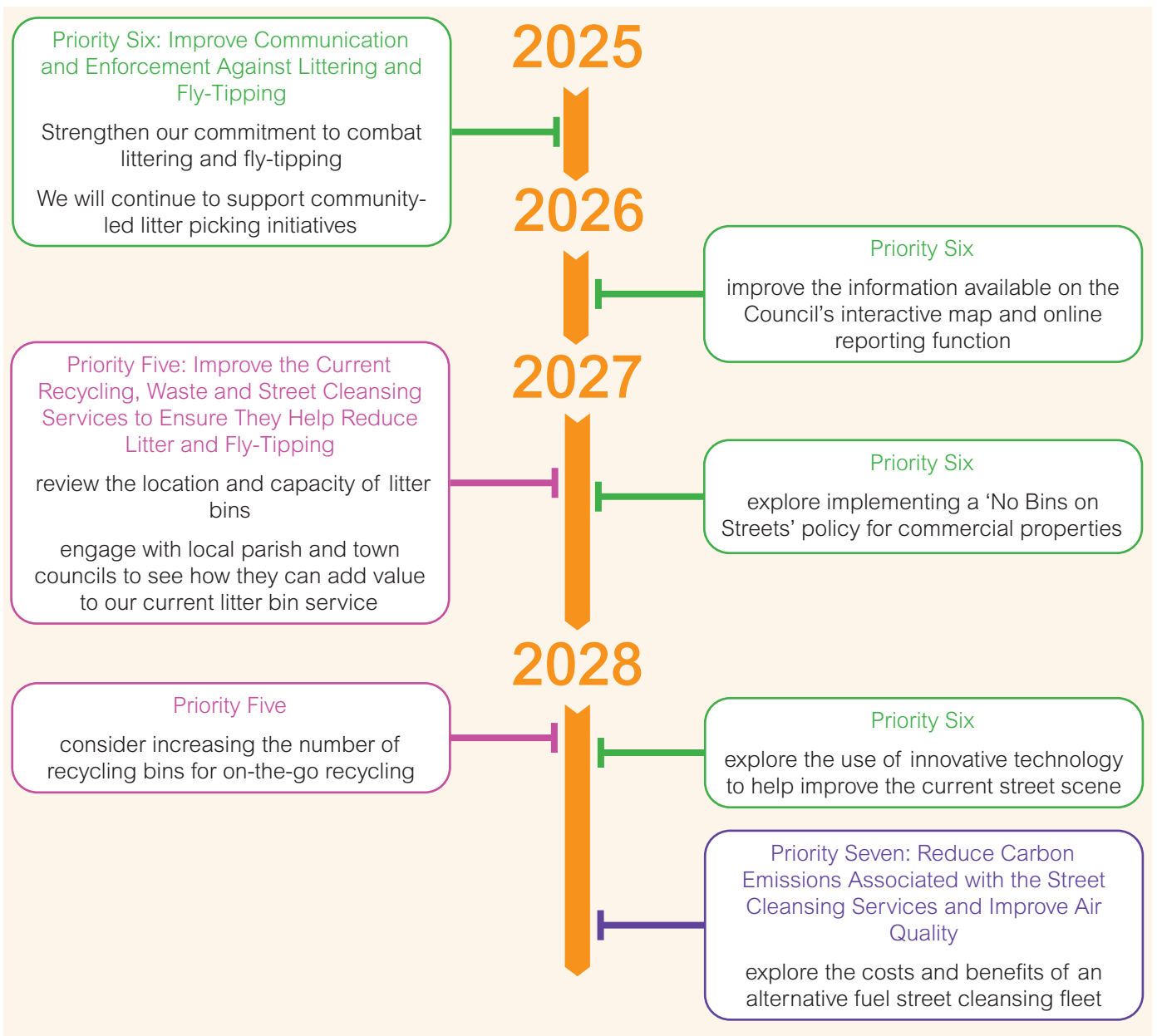
As previously discussed in priority four, the Council will also explore ways in which the street cleansing service can contribute towards reducing the Council’s carbon emissions.

**1. We will explore the costs and benefits of an alternative fuel for the street cleansing fleet (2028).**

As mentioned earlier, the UK is moving away from fossil fuels for vehicles, but decarbonising

HGVs is slower due to their high demands. Current food waste collection vehicles use HVO, eliminating fossil fuel emissions and reducing CO2, improving air quality. The Council will ensure the street cleansing fleet is HVO-compatible and explore using HVO mixed with diesel or as a complete replacement.

**Figure 4.3: Timeline to Improve West Berkshire’s Street Scene**





## 4.3 Lead The Way

West Berkshire wants to lead by example, going above and beyond the minimum it is legally required to do with regards to waste management. It will do this through its support for waste prevention schemes and initiatives, through work with local environmental and community groups on issues such as reuse,

and through entering arrangements to collect additional streams of recycling. However, there are also actions that the Council can take within its own internal systems and its wider policies to enable it to lead the way.

There are three priority areas which have been identified which will help the Council to achieve this:



How the Council plans to achieve these priorities is explored in the following sections.

### Priority Eight: Effectively Manage the Council's Own Waste

To demonstrate the progress that the Council aims to achieve within its own internal systems and policies, the Council will need to collect data and track the success of the implementation of the measures outlined below as well as identify areas for improvement.

#### 1. We will apply the waste hierarchy for Council buildings and at Council events (2026).

The waste hierarchy is an accepted “rule of thumb” that guides waste management. It says that prevention and reuse are preferable to recycling, which in turn is preferable to incineration or disposal in landfill. To demonstrate its commitment to improving waste management, the Council will implementing measures such as:

- Banning or reducing the use of single use items; and
- Requiring the separate collection of food and dry recycling.

Seemingly small measures such as these can be effective in driving behaviour change and raising awareness around common environmental issues. The reduction/banning of single use items can reduce resource consumption and encourage a reuse culture, thereby reducing associated carbon emissions.

The separate collection of recycling and food waste will contribute to national recycling targets and promote the shift towards a circular economy.

#### 2. We will apply a criterion for the procurement of goods which embed the waste hierarchy and contribute towards a circular economy (2027).

Embedding the waste hierarchy into procurement policy is one aspect of adopting a responsible or sustainable procurement approach. The Council will focus on maximising the embedded value in products by seeking to extend the lifetime of products through reuse. The Council will seek opportunities to procure items that are reused, or that have high potential for repair or reuse. By implementing the waste hierarchy into procurement policy, the Council can help to increase demand for different types of products, thereby helping to change market demand, supporting innovation and investment into new business models.

#### 3. We will set up and report on corporate recycling targets (2026).

Setting and reporting recycling targets is important to ensure continuous improvement and is the most effective way to assess the impacts of any new measures.

## Priority Nine: Embed Social Value

The Council aims to produce local social value through its waste and recycling services. 'Social value' is the wider benefit gained by a local community from the delivery of public contracts. Those who benefit can be the community, disadvantaged individuals, minorities, businesses, voluntary, community or social enterprises, as well as the environment.

Social value can be demonstrated through employment and jobs created, community support, contribution to the economy and investment and donations for good causes. Contributing to social value can add immediate and long-term impacts and can be most effective when the Council works in partnership with trusted suppliers and customers to help deliver these goals.

Link to Social Value Policy  
[www.westberks.gov.uk/social-value-policy](http://www.westberks.gov.uk/social-value-policy)

### **1. We will continue to work with local residents, businesses, voluntary groups and charities (2025).**

As discussed in the relevant sections above, the Council will continue to work with local residents, businesses, voluntary groups and charities to encourage waste reduction, reuse and recycling, and support in improving the street scene in West Berkshire through litter reduction schemes. The Council greatly appreciates the work currently done by

residents, businesses, voluntary groups and charities to support waste reduction, reuse, recycling and litter reduction across the borough and will continue to find ways to support the work already being done.

### **2. We will embed social value within the delivery of the recycling, waste and street cleansing services contract let (2032).**

In line with the Council's Social Value Policy, the Council will ensure that Social Value is included as a criterion in all procurement processes involving household waste and recycling services. This will help the Council to secure better outcomes and opportunities for the local community. Social Value in procurement is often split into three areas, all of which the Council will endeavour to secure in greater quantity:

- Social: This could include volunteering within the community or hosting community events.
- Economic: This could include hosting work placements, creating apprenticeships or jobs, employing local people, being a Living Wage employer or using local suppliers.
- Environmental: This could include reducing energy consumption, waste generation or carbon emissions or supporting improvement to local public spaces and parks.

## Priority Ten: Support Local Businesses In Applying the Waste Hierarchy

The Council will take steps to support local businesses to be more responsible in managing their waste.

### **1. We will continue to identify and advise businesses that lack a collection contract or are not applying the waste hierarchy (2025).**

The Council will work with businesses to ensure they have waste collection contracts in place with registered waste carriers in line with their legal obligations. The Council will ensure that commercial waste is dealt with correctly and does not result in fly-tipping, or other forms of illegal disposal that cause environmental damage.

Businesses are also required to apply the waste hierarchy, and show that they have prioritised waste prevention, reuse and recycling over disposal. From 2025, all but the smallest businesses will be required to separate dry recyclable materials and food waste for recycling. The Council will explore whether its approach to enforcement and communication can do more to ensure businesses are dealing with their commercial waste in an environmentally responsible way.

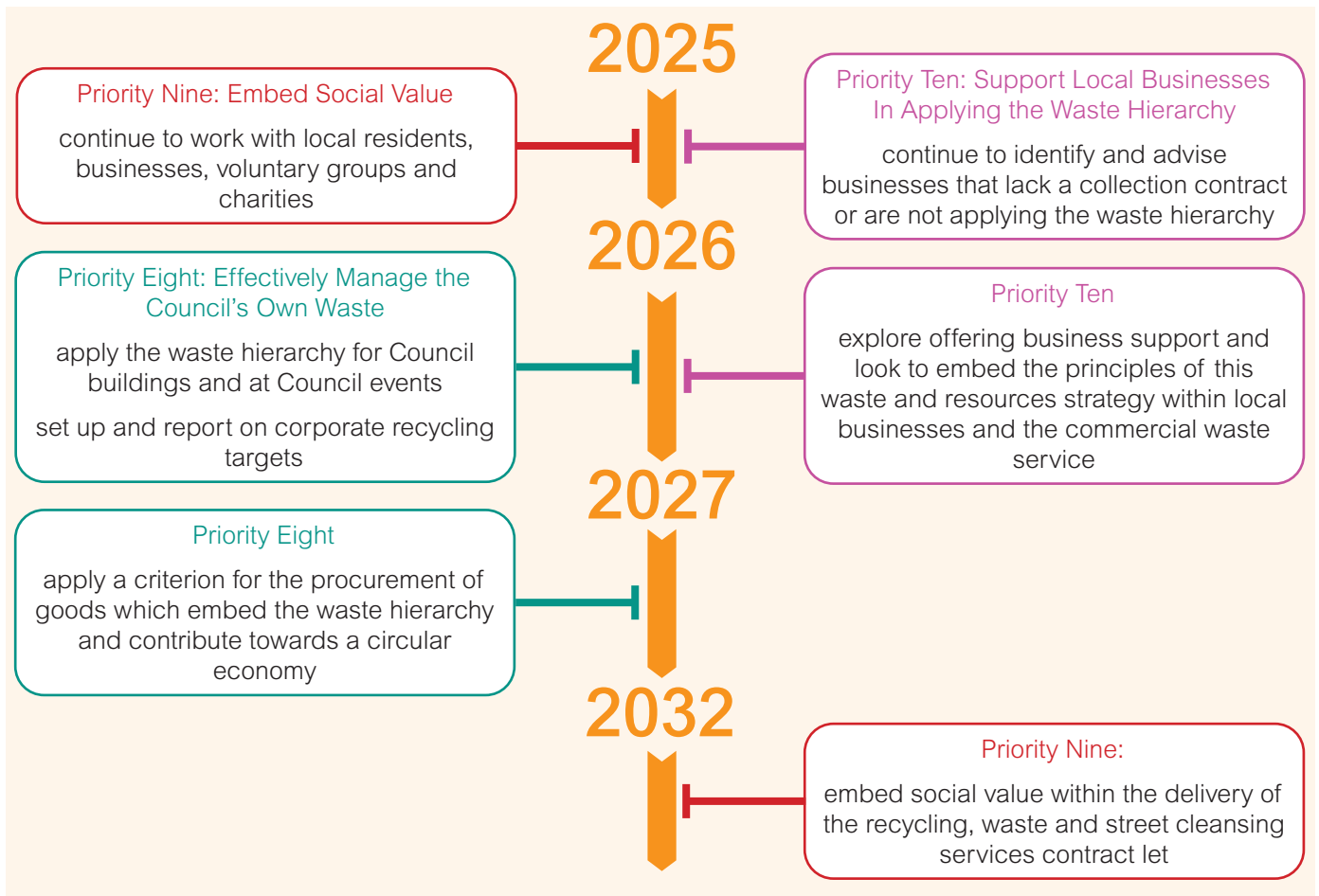
This will be dependent on resource and budget availability within the Council's Waste team.

**2. We will explore offering business support and look to embed the principles of this waste and resources strategy within local businesses and the commercial waste service (2026).**

The Council will ensure that where it offers support and advice to businesses it will promote

practices described in this strategy so that they are being take on board and implemented. To support this, the Council will need to ensure there is adequate funding and resources in place.

**Figure 4.4. Timeline to the Council Leading the Way**



# Appendix

## Appendix 1: Cost, Performance and Carbon Modelling

The Council is dedicated to continuing to develop and improve its services to suit the area's evolving needs, meet the incoming national requirements, increase our recycling rate and become a Net Zero Council by 2030. This may mean changing how recycling and waste services are delivered in West Berkshire.

To consider the possible future options, the Council – with the support of Eunomia Research & Consulting, our external technical advisors - has undertaken modelling of a range of different future options for the design of recycling and waste collections from households, within the framework set by national policy and the Council's contractual commitments. This has helped the Council to understand the impact that any service change could have on recycling, carbon, and financial performance. We are not proposing any changes to how the street cleansing and litter collection service operate as part of this strategy.

These options were developed in conjunction with residents and elected members of the Council at several workshops during the first half of 2023. This helped the Council to understand residents' points of view, opinions and concerns regarding the current waste collection services and any future potential changes.

The options modelled are detailed in Table 0.1 and included:

- The kerbside collection of plastic pots, tubs, and trays (PTT), plastic film, cartons and aluminium foil to comply with requirements set out under Simpler Recycling (see Section 3.3).
- The free collection of garden waste.
- Reducing the collection frequency of general waste, whether to three weekly or four weekly collections.
- Reducing the capacity of black bins used for the collection of residual waste; and
- The use of different types of collection vehicles.

**Table 0.1. Modelled Options and Estimated Impact on Recycling Rate**

	Rubbish	Dry Recycling	Collection Vehicles	Garden Waste
<b>Baseline</b>	Fortnightly	Fortnightly	Current vehicles	Charged
<b>Option 1*</b>	Fortnightly	Plus PTT, film and foil	Current vehicles	Charged
<b>Option 2 &amp; 3**</b>	Fortnightly	Plus PTT, film and foil	Alternative vehicles	Charged
<b>Option 4</b>	Three-weekly	Plus PTT, film and foil	Current vehicles	Charged
<b>Option 5</b>	Four-weekly	Plus PTT, film and foil	Current vehicles	Charged
<b>Option 6</b>	Fortnightly	Plus PTT, film and foil	Current vehicles	Free

\*Option 1 is an enhanced baseline which takes into account the impact of DRS and includes separate weekly food waste collections.

\*\* Option 2 used RRVs and Option 3 used simplified vehicles

The modelling took account of key data, including household numbers, the quantities of each type of waste we collect, vehicle requirements, staffing requirements, costs incurred by the Council to collect and manage waste/recycling, and the types of receptacles/containers that residents will need. To understand the possible impact of the future options, West Berkshire was benchmarked against other, socio-demographically similar, authorities who already deliver such services.

The results of the modelling can be found in Table 0 2.

**Table 0.2. Estimated Impact on Cost, Carbon Emissions and Performance Compared to Enhanced Baseline (Option 1)**

	Cost Impact	Tonnes of CO2e	Estimated Recycling Rate
<b>Baseline</b>	-	-	51%
<b>Option 1*</b>	-	-	52%
<b>Option 2</b>	▲	94	52%
<b>Option 3</b>	▲	140	52%
<b>Option 4</b>	▼	-940	56%
<b>Option 5</b>	▼	-1,980	60%
<b>Option 6</b>	▲▲	-62	53%

As shown in Table 0 1, the modelling indicates that the best performing options were those where the frequency of general waste collections were reduced (Option 4 and 5). Reducing the collection of general waste to every three weeks could increase West Berkshire's recycling rate to approximately 56%, while reducing it to four-weekly could increase the recycling rate to 60%. It is important to note that modelling results provide an indication of potential outcomes based on reasonable assumptions, and actual results following implementation of changes may vary. Furthermore, these values utilise 2022/23 data and may be subject to change with the use of 2023/24 data.

Wherever recycling rates increase, carbon emissions generally decrease, as sending recyclable waste to landfill or to be burnt for energy produces more carbon emissions - as well as typically being more costly. Offering three-weekly residual waste collections could reduce the volume of greenhouse gases emitted by approximately 940 tonnes a year (compared to the enhanced baseline), while offering four-weekly collections would reduce emissions by 1,980 tonnes a year (compared to the enhanced baseline). In addition, moving to three-weekly or four-weekly collections could save the Council money.

Option 6 estimates that the cost of introducing a free garden waste collection service would require investment, as a result of lost income, additional collection costs and additional containers. This option can be combined with any of the other options. The table below shows the marginal cost and impact of CO2e and estimated recycling rate when combining Options 2-5 with free garden waste (Option 6).

**Table 0.3. Estimated Impact on Cost, Carbon Emissions and Performance Compared to Enhanced Baseline (Option 1)**

	Cost Impact	Tonnes of CO2e Compared to Enhanced Baseline	Estimated Recycling Rate
<b>Baseline + FGW*</b>	-	-	52%
<b>Option 1* + FGW*</b>	-	-	53%
<b>Option 2 + FGW*</b>	▲▲	32	53%
<b>Option 3 + FGW*</b>	▲▲	78	53%
<b>Option 4 + FGW*</b>	▲▲	-1,002	58%
<b>Option 5 + FGW*</b>	▲▲	-2,042	62%

*\*Free Garden Waste as per option 6 in table 0.2*

The Council recognises that any reduction in residual waste collection frequency could be challenging for some households and could depend on finalisation of government guidance. However, some of the UK councils with the highest recycling rates have already introduced less frequent collections while still providing services that meet householders' needs and expectations. Examples include:

- East Devon District Council (61.0%)
- Somerset Council (56.2%)
- East Renfrewshire Council (56.0%)
- North Ayrshire Council (55.3%)
- South Ayrshire (54.3%)
- Bury Metropolitan Borough Council (53.8%)
- Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council (53.0%)

Collection frequency is not the only factor influencing recycling performance, and the authorities listed above include some that perform particularly well compared with others that have similar housing, rurality and deprivation. Welsh authorities, many of which have adopted 3- or 4-weekly collections and achieve high recycling rates, are excluded from the list because they measure their recycling rate differently from the rest of the UK.

If any change to collection frequency were to be made, the Council would take steps to avoid undue impact on households that produce unavoidably large amounts of general waste.



## The Best Practicable Environmental Option

The best practicable environmental option based on the technical analyses is to amend the collection frequency for household general “black bin” waste from fortnightly to once every three weeks (Option 4 in Appendix 1). This option is shown to increase the recycling rate, reduce waste generation by householders, reduce carbon emissions without having as much adverse impact on residents. On the other hand, reducing the general waste collection frequency to every four weeks (Option 5 in Appendix 1) is not deemed practicable at this time due to the potentially significant impact on residents, even though that option could result in even greater environmental benefits. Under Option 4, the collection frequency for other household waste streams will remain unchanged under the proposed option. This means that dry recycling and garden waste will continue to be collected fortnightly, whilst separate food waste will continue to be collected weekly from the kerbside. The option of collecting general waste once every three weeks has been successfully implemented by selected English local authorities including our neighbours Bracknell Forest Council, and in most Welsh council areas. If approved for implementation, officers will ensure the lessons are learnt from other areas and effective mitigation measures are implemented for selected households who may need more frequent collections. These households could include exceptionally large households and people with young children using disposal nappies.

**Next steps:** The Council will consult with residents as part of the adoption of this strategy before implementing any changes to the recycling and waste services. The Council will also endeavour to support any changes to the general waste collections with easy-to-access and understandable guidance to householders about the proposed new service.

## Appendix 2: Selected service changes

Implementation	Service changes
Mar 2008	Integrated Waste Management Contract signed.
Jun 2008	Kerbside Collection Service introduced card, plastic bottles & green waste.
Oct 2008	HWRC Newtown Road Newbury opened, replacing Pinchington Lane site.
Oct 2011	Integrated Waste Management Facility, Padworth opened. Including Padworth HWRC (recycling only).
Oct 2011	Kerbside Collection Service introduced food waste & fortnightly refuse.
Sep 2012	Chargeable additional green waste collection service introduced. (1st bin was free, any additional was charged).
Aug 2014	Kerbside Collection Service introduced aerosols.
Dec 2016	Kerbside Collection Service introduced larger cardboard.
Jul 2018	Residual waste accepted at Padworth HWRC.
Sept 2018	Introduction of charge for garden waste collections.
Apr 2019	Increased opening hours Padworth HWRC to align with Newtown Road.
Jun 2020	Glass banks removed from all Mini Recycling Centres (MRCs).
Mar 2021	Plastic pots/tubs/trays collection from recycling banks in HWRCs and selected MRCs.
Feb 2022	Reroute of collection rounds in District, changing collection days for most. Improving efficiency.
Aug 2022	Two new MRC sites installed in Theale & East Garston.
Oct 2022	New weekly separate food waste collection service commenced.
Dec 2022	New MRC installed in Tilehurst.
Jul 2024	HWRCs started accepting coffee pods and vapes
Sept 2024	Kerbside collection service introduced batteries.







---

## West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27

---

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Patrick Clark
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jade Wilder
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4546

---

### 1 Purpose of the Report

This report has been produced for Executive to approve West Berkshire Council's (the 'Council') Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27 ('Strategy'). The Strategy has been produced because it's existing Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-23 and Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23 are subject to review. A Strategy is a statutory requirement under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (the 'Act').

### 2 Recommendation

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

### 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	<p>The financial implications relate to costs associated with commissioning services to address gaps in service provision identified through our local needs assessment. The Council receive an annual non-ring-fenced grant from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government ('MHCLG') to implement Part 4 of the Act.</p> <p>This funding covers two combined aspects; support costs ie commissioning services and increased administration. Monies have been allocated to administration support and the remaining budget will be used to meet the gaps in service provision.</p>

	<p>In 2024/25 the Council received £260,636. The Council also has £255,810 held in Reserves from its allocation in 2023/24 to be used toward this Duty.</p> <p>It is possible that funding could decrease or cease in future years which may cause financial implications for any services commissioned. Funding will be closely monitored by the Domestic Abuse Board ('the Board') and any services commissioned are likely to be short term, in view of the uncertainty regarding government support. MHCLG have only confirmed one more year of funding for 2025/26. Any future funding will be agreed at the next Spending Review.</p> <p>Financial Officer: Lisa Potts</p> <p>Date: 30/07/24</p>
<p><b>Human Resource:</b></p>	<p>No HR implications.</p>
<p><b>Legal:</b></p>	<p>The Council are under a legal duty to meet requirements as set out in Part 4 of the Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) assess, or make arrangements for the assessment of, the need for accommodation-based support in its area,</li> <li>(b) prepare and publish a strategy for the provision of such support in its area, and</li> <li>(c) monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy.</li> </ul> <p>The Domestic Abuse Support (Local Authority Strategies and Annual Reports) Regulations 2021 and the Domestic Abuse Support (Relevant Accommodation and Housing Benefit and Universal Credit Sanctuary Schemes) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 set out further details in relation to the operation of functions.</p> <p>Strategies must be reviewed every 3 years. Strategies should be informed by local needs assessments which are required to be completed in full every 3 years, with a refresh being undertaken on an annual basis to ensure any change in demand or support requirements are adequately captured.</p> <p>The Act at Part 4 generally and section 58 specifically, requires a "relevant local authority" (which includes the Council) to appoint a domestic abuse local partnership board for the purposes of providing advice to the authority about certain functions and aspects of domestic abuse. The West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Board (the 'Board') has been constituted as</p>

	<p>the Council's domestic abuse local partnership board for this purpose.</p> <p>The Act also amends the Housing Act 1996 and Homelessness Code of Guidance, expanding the scope of the Council's housing duties to strengthen support available to victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>There is Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance issued by the Home Office in July 2022 which the Council must have regard to in performing its duties and functions.</p> <p>Legal Officer: Laura Knowles &amp; Beth Varcoe</p> <p>Date: 13.08.2024</p>			
<b>Risk Management:</b>	<p>The main risk identified is in respect of resources to adequately address the support required (as set out in our Strategy) to meet the needs of all victims of domestic abuse given the funding available and risk that this may decrease or cease in the future. This will be managed by the Board who will monitor funding and decide how best the funding should be allocated.</p>			
<b>Property:</b>	<p>The Council are required to ensure a variety of safe accommodation options are available for victims of domestic abuse.</p>			
<b>Policy:</b>	<p>The proposal relates to the <a href="#">Domestic Abuse Act 2021</a> and its <a href="#">Statutory guidance</a> issued under the Act.</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?	X			Please refer to Appendix A, EqIA assessment.

<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 Strategy will have a positive impact on those with protected characteristics and/or complex needs. The Act requires the Council to meet the needs of all victims when providing support and safe accommodation, therefore more victims will be able to access support when they need it.
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Health Impact:</b>	X			The Strategy will have a positive impact on health as victims and their children will be able to flee unhealthy, abusive relationships and seek accommodation somewhere safe. Families will be better supported and have more support options available to them.
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	X			Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes.  The proposal will support this priority because it will ensure all victims of domestic abuse have access to the right support within safe accommodation when they need it so they are not at further risk or harm.
<b>Core Business:</b>		X		
<b>Data Impact:</b>		X		

<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>Patrick Clark (Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health), Heather Codling (Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services), April Peberdy (Service Director, Communities and Wellbeing), Paul Coe (Executive Director, People), Nick Caprara (Housing Service Manger), Alex O'Connor (BCT Team Manager), Lisa Potts (Finance Manager), ), Beth Varcoe (Principal Solicitor – Regulatory and Litigation), Rebecca Wiltshire (Service Director Children's Social Care) and Laura Knowles (Principal Solicitor – People Team, Legal and Democratic Services).</p> <p>Members of the public as part of a six-week public consultation, interviews with victims of domestic abuse, members of the Domestic Abuse Board and Davis and Associates (external consultant).</p>
-------------------------------------	---

## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The Strategy has been produced because the Council's Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020-23 and Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23 is due a review, and following that review a new Strategy is to be developed. It has been developed in line with Part 4 of the Act which requires the Council to:
- a) conduct (or make arrangements for) a local needs assessment to determine the level of need for support within relevant safe accommodation in their area; and
  - b) prepare and publish a local Domestic Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy based on a robust needs assessment.
- 4.2 The Strategy will enable the Council to meet the statutory requirements under Part 4 of the Act and ensure support in safe accommodation is commissioned to meet the needs of victims including their children in line with the local Strategy.
- 4.3 The Council carried out a local needs assessment to inform our draft Strategy during 2023. This involved gathering a range of data from various data providers, both internal and external, as well as victim engagement and interviews. A needs assessment survey went live from 10 May 2023 to 13 June 2023. A total of 56 responses were received to our online survey.
- 4.4 Once the needs assessment had concluded, a findings report was written and presented to the Board. After which, work began on drafting the Strategy and delivery plan which involved workshop sessions with key partners.
- 4.5 The Council furthermore carried out a public consultation on the draft Strategy from 5 April 2024 to 19 May 2024. This was for a period of six weeks which complies with the requirements of the Council's Consultation Policy and statutory requirements to consult. A total of 65 responses were received as part of our consultation and used to inform the Strategy.

- 4.6 It is being proposed that Executive approve the Strategy.
- 4.7 The recommendation to adopt and approve the Strategy should be agreed as it has been developed to meet all legislative requirements and is in response to our local needs assessment which was undertaken. It has also been subjected to extensive engagement with relevant stakeholders and victims of domestic abuse in West Berkshire to ensure it is fit for purpose. The Board have formally signed this off and although it is a Council Strategy, it is not Council-led.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

- 5.1 This report seeks approval to adopt the Strategy.
- 5.2 A draft delivery plan has also been produced which sets out how the Domestic Abuse Board will work with stakeholders to deliver possible activities that will help address the gaps identified and support the identified themes within the Strategy. The Domestic Abuse Board will be agreeing and re-defining what activities are carried forward from this.

### Background

- 5.3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2021. Various duties were included under the Act, but Part 4 refers to the delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse, including children, within safe accommodation. Thus, the Council is required to assess the need for support, and prepare strategies to provide support for, victims and their children, who need to reside, in safe accommodation.
- 5.4 Domestic abuse is defined as any single incident, course of conduct or pattern of abusive behaviour between individuals aged 16 or over who are personally connected to each other as a result of being, or having been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Children who see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse and are related to either of the parties are also considered victims of domestic abuse.
- 5.5 Behaviour is abusive if it consists of any of the following: physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; or psychological, emotional or other abuse. This includes incidences where the abusive party directs their behaviour at another person (e.g. a child). Economic abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on someone's ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services. This incorporates harmful traditional practices for example but not limited to 'honour' killings, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- 5.6 The Council must adhere to all aspects listed below defined as safe accommodation when fulfilling this duty. All support must be provided to victims of domestic abuse, or their children, who reside in safe accommodation and should meet the MHCLG Quality Standards.
- Refuge accommodation;



- Specialist safe accommodation (i.e. dedicated specialist support to victims with relevant protected characteristics and/or complex needs);
  - Dispersed accommodation (i.e. safe self-contained accommodation and self-contained 'semi-independent' accommodation);
  - Sanctuary Schemes;
  - Move-on and / or second stage accommodation;
  - Other forms of domestic abuse emergency accommodation.
- 5.7 Domestic abuse support includes the expert help provided to victims and their children by the specialist staff in domestic abuse support services. The Council must ensure support is provided within safe accommodation which includes the following:
- Overall management of services within relevant accommodation;
  - Support with the day-to-day running of the service;
  - Advocacy support;
  - Domestic abuse prevention advice;
  - Specialist support for victims (i.e. designed specifically for victims with relevant protected as well as unique and / or complex needs);
  - Children's support;
  - Housing-related support;
  - Advice service (i.e. financial and legal support);
  - Counselling and therapy.
- 5.8 The Council receive an annual non-ring-fenced grant from MHCLG since the duty came into force to assist the Council in meeting the requirements under Part 4 of the Act. A clear breakdown of how allocated funding has been spent is reported back annually to the Secretary of State. Funding covers two combined aspects: support costs i.e. commissioning services and increased administration. In 2023/24 the Council received £250,810 which is held in Reserves and has been allocated for future spending. In 2024/25, the Council received £260,686 which will be used towards the duty.
- 5.9 Since the Act came into force in 2021 the Council appointed a local Domestic Abuse Board which is responsible for complying with the requirements of the Act.
- 5.10 A local needs assessment was undertaken in May 2023 to help determine the level of need locally and identify what has changed since our last needs assessment in 2021. This involved engaging with a wide range of key stakeholders and victims themselves via interviews and surveys. The overall provision in West Berkshire is very comprehensive but there are clear gaps in some services which is likely to be as a result of being a small local authority area. The findings have been used to produce our Strategy.
- 5.11 A victim survey was launched from 10 May 2023 to 13 June 2023. A total of 56 responses was received to our online survey. People felt that there were barriers to getting support for domestic abuse, with 32% of victims/survivors not disclosing the abuse to a professional and 42% not disclosing to anyone in their community. We also heard about the positive impact of local specialist support services, with victims/survivors commending the emotional and practical support provided to them. The main message was that more must be done to break the stigma of domestic abuse.

A coordinated community response has to involve the wider community in helping to create societal change and ending domestic abuse.

- 5.12 Once the needs assessment had concluded, a findings report was written, and an initial draft was presented to the Board on 17 July 2023. An exceptional workshop was organised on 22 November 2023 as an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss different sections of the report and give an opportunity as a collective to consider any additional learning or recommendations that the group may want to consider in the final version. The final version of the needs assessment was circulated to the Board during December 2023.
- 5.13 On 18 January 2024, the Board received an options paper which had taken the learning from the needs assessment to develop three options to how the Strategy could be structured. The Board agreed for the Strategy to have an ecological and prevention focus. On 26 March 2024, the Board received the draft Strategy and feedback was provided.
- 5.14 A public consultation went live from 5 April 2024 to 19 May 2024 for the Strategy. This was for a period of six weeks and looked to explore if people felt were planning on focussing on the right areas, if there is anything we have missed and if it is clear, and easy to understand. A total of 65 responses were received as part of our consultation and used to inform the Strategy. Key feedback to come out of the consultation was people felt that the strategy was a positive step in the right direction for West Berkshire, although it felt quite ambitious.
- 5.15 Responses have been considered and feedback reflected (where appropriate) into the finalised Strategy.
- 5.16 An exceptional workshop was organised for 24 May 2024 with partners of the Board, to review the draft delivery plan accompanying our Strategy.
- 5.17 On 20 June 2024, the Board approved the Strategy and delivery plan. The Board will be responsible for monitoring and implementing the delivery plan that accompanies the strategy to ensure any gaps in service provision are being met and funding is utilised effectively. This will be a live working document.

## **Proposals**

To approve the Strategy.

## **6 Other options considered**

Do nothing. This is not recommended because both existing domestic abuse strategies are due for review. It would also result in the Council not meeting statutory requirements of having an effective Strategy in place.

## **7 Conclusion**

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

- 7.2 Whilst it is a Council Strategy, it is not Council led as it involves a variety of partners and has been completed in partnership with the Board.
- 7.3 This report seeks approval to adopt the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27.

## 8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 8.2 Appendix B – West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27
- 8.3 Appendix C - West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27 Delivery Plan
- 8.4 Appendix D – Summary of consultation responses

### Background Papers:

[Delivery of support to victims of domestic abuse in domestic abuse safe accommodation services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

### 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 Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

**Wards affected:** All

### Officer details:

Name: Jade Wilder  
 Job Title: Community Coordinator - Prevention  
 Tel No: 01635 519982  
 E-mail: [Jade.Wilder@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Jade.Wilder@westberks.gov.uk)

# West Berkshire Council Equity Impact Assessment

March 2023

## Contents

Section 1: Summary details .....	11
Section 2: Detail of proposal.....	12
Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics.....	14
Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts .....	15
Section 4: Review.....	16

## Section 1: Summary details

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	People Directorate, Communities and Wellbeing Service
<b>What is being assessed</b> (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	New Strategy part of existing statutory requirements under Part 4 of Domestic Abuse Act 2021.
<b>Summary of assessment</b> Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	<p>Part 4 of the Act requires the Council to assess the need for support and prepare strategies to provide support for victims and their children in safe accommodation.</p> <p>Specifically, under this part of the Act it requires the Council to (a) produce a robust needs assessment regarding accommodation-based support for the victims of domestic abuse, and (b) prepare and publish a local domestic abuse strategy for the provision of such support.</p> <p>The Domestic Abuse Strategy 2024-27 meets our statutory requirements and has been developed because our existing Strategies are required to be reviewed. This has been developed following a robust needs assessment and public consultation.</p> <p>This will have a positive impact for all victims of domestic abuse in West Berkshire, ensuring we are providing support and access to services to allow them to live free from harm regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background.</p>
<b>Completed By</b>	Jade Wilder
<b>Authorised By</b>	
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	29/07/2024

## Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p><b>Context / Background</b></p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The Strategy has been produced because the Council's Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-23 and Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-23 have expired, requiring a new Strategy to be developed. It has been developed specifically in line with Part 4 of the Act which requires the Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) conduct (or make arrangements for) a local needs assessment to determine the level of need for support within relevant safe accommodation in their area; and</li> <li>b) prepare and publish a local Domestic Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy based on a robust needs assessment.</li> </ul> <p>The Strategy will enable the Council to meet the statutory requirements under Part 4 of the Act and ensure support in safe accommodation is commissioned to meet the needs of victims including their children in line with the local Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Proposals</b></p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>It is being proposed that Executive approve the Strategy. This is the best course of action because the Strategy has been informed by an in-depth local needs assessment which included extensive victim engagement to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the needs of victims in the area. It is a multi-agency Strategy and has been signed off by the Board which consist of partners from a range of internal and external agencies.</p>
<p><b>Evidence / Intelligence</b></p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to</p>	<p>The Council carried out a local needs assessment to inform our draft Strategy during 2023. This involved gathering a range of data from various data providers, both internal and external, as well as victim engagement and interviews. A needs assessment survey went live from 10 May 2023 to 13 June 2023. A total of 56 responses was received to our online survey.</p> <p>Once the needs assessment had concluded, a findings report was written and presented to the Domestic Abuse Board for sign off by all partner agencies.</p>

<p>inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	<p>The Council furthermore carried out a public consultation for the draft Strategy from 5 April 2024 to 19 May 2024. A total of 65 responses were received as part of our consultation and used to inform the Strategy.</p> <p>The final Strategy was subject to approval by the Domestic Abuse Board on 20 June 2024.</p>
<p><b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b></p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>No further alternatives have been considered. The Strategy is a statutory requirement under Part 4 of the Act and has been developed following a robust needs assessments and public consultation. It is felt the Strategy accurately reflects the needs of victims of domestic abuse in West Berkshire to help us achieve our overall vision where “West Berkshire will be a place where every individual, family, and community lives unrestrained by domestic abuse, cultivating a haven of safety and well-being by preventing harm as early as possible.”</p>

### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	All victims with protected characteristics as per the Equality Act 2010 must be able to access the support that they need under Part 4 of the Act. The Council will ensure sufficient appropriate support is available within safe accommodation to meet the needs of all victims including those with relevant protected characteristics, additional and / or multiple complex needs, or whose support needs cannot be properly met within non-specialist domestic abuse safe accommodation. Where gaps in such support have been identified, the Council will utilise the funding available address such gaps.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A



### Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Any victims residing in these communities will be able to access support within safe accommodation should they require it.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Areas of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Displaced communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
Care experienced people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A
The Armed Forces Community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		N/A	N/A	N/A

## Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Person Responsible for Review</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Authorised By</b>	<b>N/A</b>

EDI employee related EQiA's should now be sent to Human Resources [hrenquiries@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:hrenquiries@westberks.gov.uk)

# WEST BERKSHIRE DOMESTIC ABUSE STRATEGY

2024-2027

In accordance with part 4 of the the Domestic Abuse Act (2021)



# CONTENTS

**1** What is domestic abuse.

**2** What do we know in West Berkshire.

**3** Our approach.

**4** What we will do to stop domestic abuse.

**5** How we will achieve our priorities.

## A note on terminology:

**Victim/survivor:** We interchangeably use these terms to respect diverse experiences. We recognise that individuals with lived experience may relate differently to these terms. In most cases we have used the term “victim” to reflect ongoing abuse, and “survivor” to reflect victims journeys to recover from abuse. In all instances where we refer to victim-survivors this encompasses all ages, aligning with the DA Act’s recognition of children as victims in their own right.

**Sex/gender:** We acknowledge women are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse. We have used neutral language throughout to recognise anyone can experience abuse. However our delivery plan will include specific approaches based on the needs of different communities.

# FOREWORD

In unveiling this comprehensive domestic abuse strategy, we embark on a critical journey toward fostering safety, respect, and dignity for all individuals in our community. Domestic abuse is a pervasive issue that transcends demographics, impacting people from all walks of life. It is a societal challenge that requires our collective commitment, attention, and a united front to dismantle its roots. Domestic abuse is everyone’s business. This strategy underscores our understanding that only through collaboration, across our communities, organisations, and individuals, can we create a District where no one lives in fear.

Recognising that domestic abuse can happen to anyone, irrespective of socio-economic status or geographic location, is paramount. Even in a relatively affluent, rural area like West Berkshire, we acknowledge that the experience of domestic abuse and the barriers to seeking help may be nuanced. This strategy stands as an affirmation that no community is immune, and our proactive measures are designed to address the unique challenges that may arise in diverse circumstances.

At its core, this strategy adopts a prevention-focused approach. We firmly believe that the most effective way to address domestic abuse is by tackling it at its roots, by fostering awareness, education, and community engagement. However, prevention does not mean turning a blind eye to those who have already suffered or dismissing the gravity of their experiences. This strategy strikes a delicate balance, ensuring that our proactive measures coexist with robust mechanisms to hold those causing harm accountable for their actions.

Central to our approach is the invaluable insight derived from individuals with lived experience. We have listened to their stories, learned from their resilience, and are committed to centering their voices in all facets of our strategy. Their perspectives will continually inform our policies, programs, and interventions, ensuring that our efforts remain grounded in the realities faced by survivors.

As we embark on the implementation of this domestic abuse strategy, we urge every member of society to be an active participant in this transformative process. Together, let us strive for a world where homes are sanctuaries of love and safety, and where no one has to endure the pain of domestic abuse. This strategy is a testament to our shared commitment to ensuring West Berkshire is a place where everyone can live free from fear.

**Patrick Clark**

Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Public Health, and;



**Heather Codling**

Portfolio Holder for Children and Family Services

# WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE

# 1

## Defining domestic abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) introduced the first statutory definition for domestic abuse. Abusive behaviour is defined as:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse. Including behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on a person. Their ability to obtain, use, or maintain money or property, or obtain goods or services
- psychological, emotional or other abuse
- It does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour.

Domestic abuse does not only happen in current romantic relationships. It can occur if the people involved:

- are, or have been, married to each other
- are, or have been, civil partners of each other
- have agreed to marry one another (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- have entered into a civil partnership agreement (whether or not the agreement has been terminated)
- are, or have been, in an intimate personal relationship with each other
- there has been a time when the each have had a parental relationship in relation to the same child
- are relatives\*

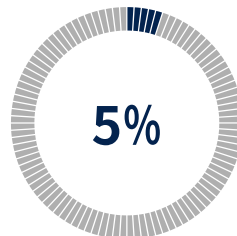
Domestic abuse can affect anyone. Regardless of age, gender identity, sex, race, sexual orientation, wealth, disability or location of the victim or perpetrator.

\*Although the DA Act does not include Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence Abuse (CAPVA) within the definition, our approach in West Berkshire will include this as a specific type of domestic abuse.

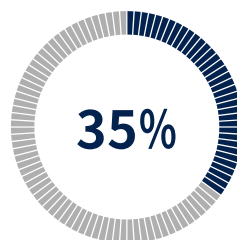
## Did you know?

Domestic abuse is often referred to as a 'hidden crime'. Domestic abuse largely happens behind closed doors or out of sight of others. It's also an under reported crime. Victims may fear not being believed or what might happen if they do report abuse. Or fears they may face barriers in accessing support. Therefore, it's likely that reported statistics will be much lower than real abuse levels.

## How common is domestic abuse?



of people over 16 in England and Wales experience domestic abuse every year.



of all homicides in England and Wales are due to domestic abuse.



the police receive a call relating to domestic abuse.

## Common myths

Myth

Victims can easily leave abusive relationships if they want to.

Fact

Leaving an abusive relationship is complex and can be dangerous. Factors such as fear, financial dependence, and emotional ties may complicate the decision to leave.

Myth

Abusers are always easily identifiable by their appearance or behavior.

Fact

Abusers can present themselves as charming and amiable, making it challenging for others to recognise their abusive tendencies.

Myth

Domestic abuse is a result of stress or anger issues and can be easily resolved.

Fact

Domestic abuse is about power and control, not just a momentary loss of temper. It requires comprehensive intervention and support to address underlying issues.

# WHAT DO WE KNOW IN WEST BERKSHIRE

# 2

Data from agencies

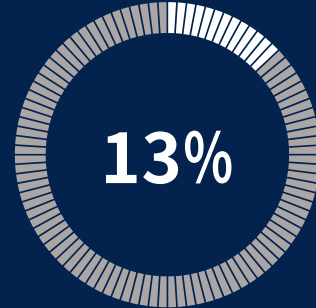


**25,500**

people will experience domestic abuse over their lifetime in West Berkshire

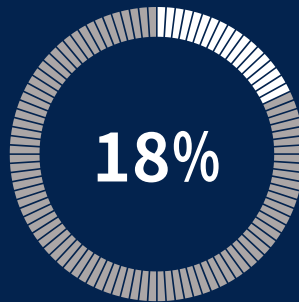
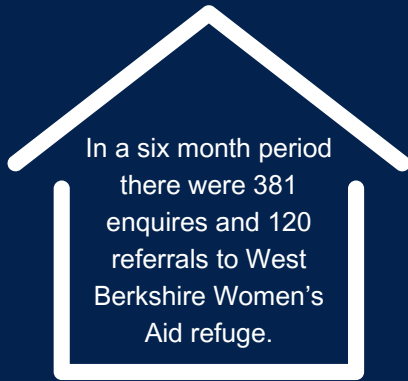
**88**

victims at high risk of harm or homicide were referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).



**13%**

of Children's Services contacts were due to domestic abuse as a primary reason, with many more cases finding it as a feature.



**18%**

of crimes reported to Thames Valley Police were due to domestic abuse.



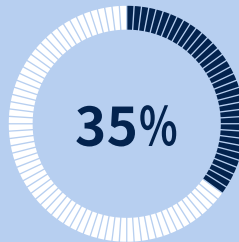
**One in five**

homelessness applications were related to domestic abuse.

Victims experiences

**71%**

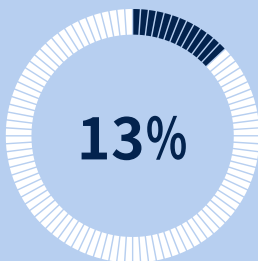
of victims in West Berkshire told us the person abusing them kept track of where they went or how they spent time.



**35%**

of victims said the perpetrator had physically forced them in to sex or sexual activity. This is a crime.

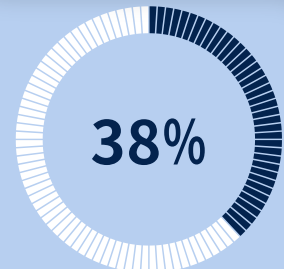
**Adult victim**  
I was scared of losing my friends and them siding with him and not believing me. The main thing was what he would do if he found out.



**13%**

of victims in West Berkshire reported everything to the police.

**Child victim**  
We had to call the police and they sorted it – my Dad ran off when the police came, and they stopped and checked that we were ok, and then went after him.



**38%**

did not think they would be taken seriously if they told people what was happening.

**Adult victim**  
I didn't know it was abuse at the time until the medical staff pointed it out and sign posted me to help.



**93%**

of victims said the most important thing they needed from support was confidentiality.

**Child victim**  
I had about 12 different social workers – I had to tell them what had happened again and again. They didn't write it down and share it with the next one, they had to hear it themselves.

# OUR APPROACH

3

## We will deliver a coordinated community response

The Coordinated Community Response (CCR) is integral to our strategy, emphasising the imperative of collective action in addressing domestic abuse within West Berkshire. We acknowledge that fostering genuine change in our response to and eradication of domestic abuse necessitates effective collaboration among all relevant agencies, residents, and communities

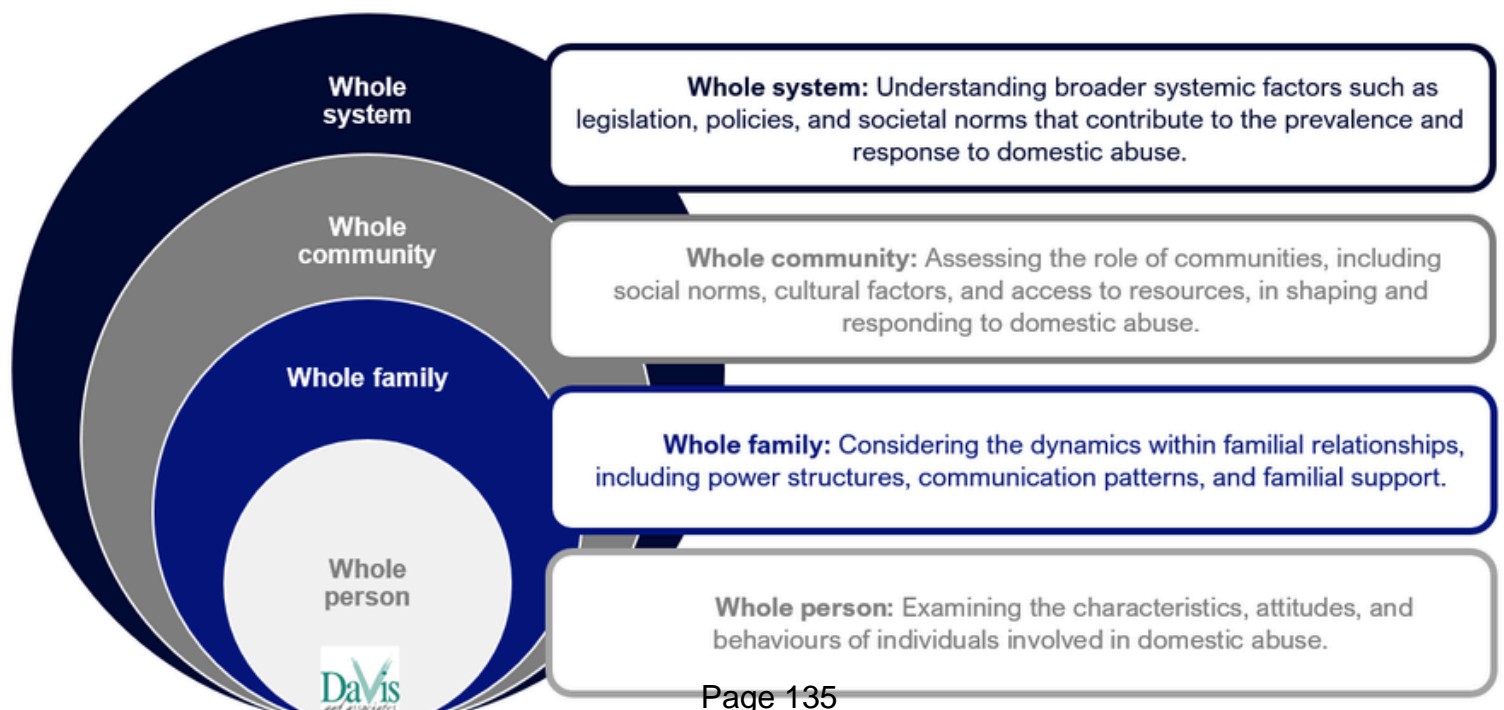
As survivors embark on their journey, they may interact with various services, organisations, and individuals, each holding crucial information pivotal to constructing a comprehensive support system. Our commitment to CCR ensures that survivors are not burdened with navigating an intricate web of services but receive seamless assistance. It involves clarifying the roles of all stakeholders in responding to domestic abuse and establishing cohesive collaboration, creating a unified approach that addresses the entire spectrum of a survivor's needs. We are dedicated to clarifying the roles of all stakeholders and fostering cohesive collaboration to ensure that survivors receive comprehensive support that addresses all their needs.

## We will adopt a trauma-informed approach

Our commitment to a trauma-informed approach lies at the core of our strategy, recognising the profound impact of domestic abuse on survivors and the necessity for sensitivity in our response. We understand that individuals who have experienced trauma may interact with various services and support systems. In adopting a trauma-informed framework, we prioritise creating an environment that fosters safety, trust, and empowerment for survivors throughout their journey. We strive to empower survivors with choice and autonomy, acknowledging the importance of their voices in shaping their recovery. Through this trauma-informed lens, we aim to transform our response into one that not only addresses the immediate needs of survivors but also promotes healing, resilience, and a sense of control over their own lives.

## We will work across all ecological levels

Our approach will use the ecological model of violence prevention to guide all of our work. The ecological model stands as the key to achieving enduring change in addressing domestic abuse by recognising that its multifaceted nature necessitates interventions across all levels—individual, family, community, and local systems—where a complex interplay of factors contributes to its occurrence. By collaborating across these dimensions, we target the broader context of domestic abuse, aiming for long term, cultural change. We strive to create an environment where domestic abuse is increasingly unacceptable, fostering change across different levels and ensuring collective contributions to transform the culture surrounding domestic abuse in our strategy.



# WHAT WILL WE DO TO STOP DOMESTIC ABUSE



## Starting with *why*

We heard from survivors the devastating impact domestic abuse continues to have in West Berkshire. No one should live with these consequences, and that is why we will work with a prevention focus to make long term, sustainable changes. Our 'why' will remain focussed on how we can improve **outcomes** for victims and survivors, including children, keeping them at the heart of all we do.

It was just caving in on me, and I did feel really, really low and started to think, actually, anything's better than being with him anymore and didn't even want to live really, at that point.

It's so subtle in a lot of ways that the combined effect of it all is absolutely devastating. And it changes you as a person, and it destroys everything about you, and the effects of it aren't just gonna last my lifetime. They're lasting my children's lifetimes now.

## Our vision

West Berkshire will be a place where every individual, family, and community lives unrestrained by domestic abuse, cultivating a haven of safety and well-being by preventing harm as early as possible.

### What outcomes are we focussing on?



#### Increasing safety

Being 'safe' is the condition of being protected from or unlikely to cause danger, risk, or injury. This can be physical safety, but we recognise that safety is also emotional and psychological safety.



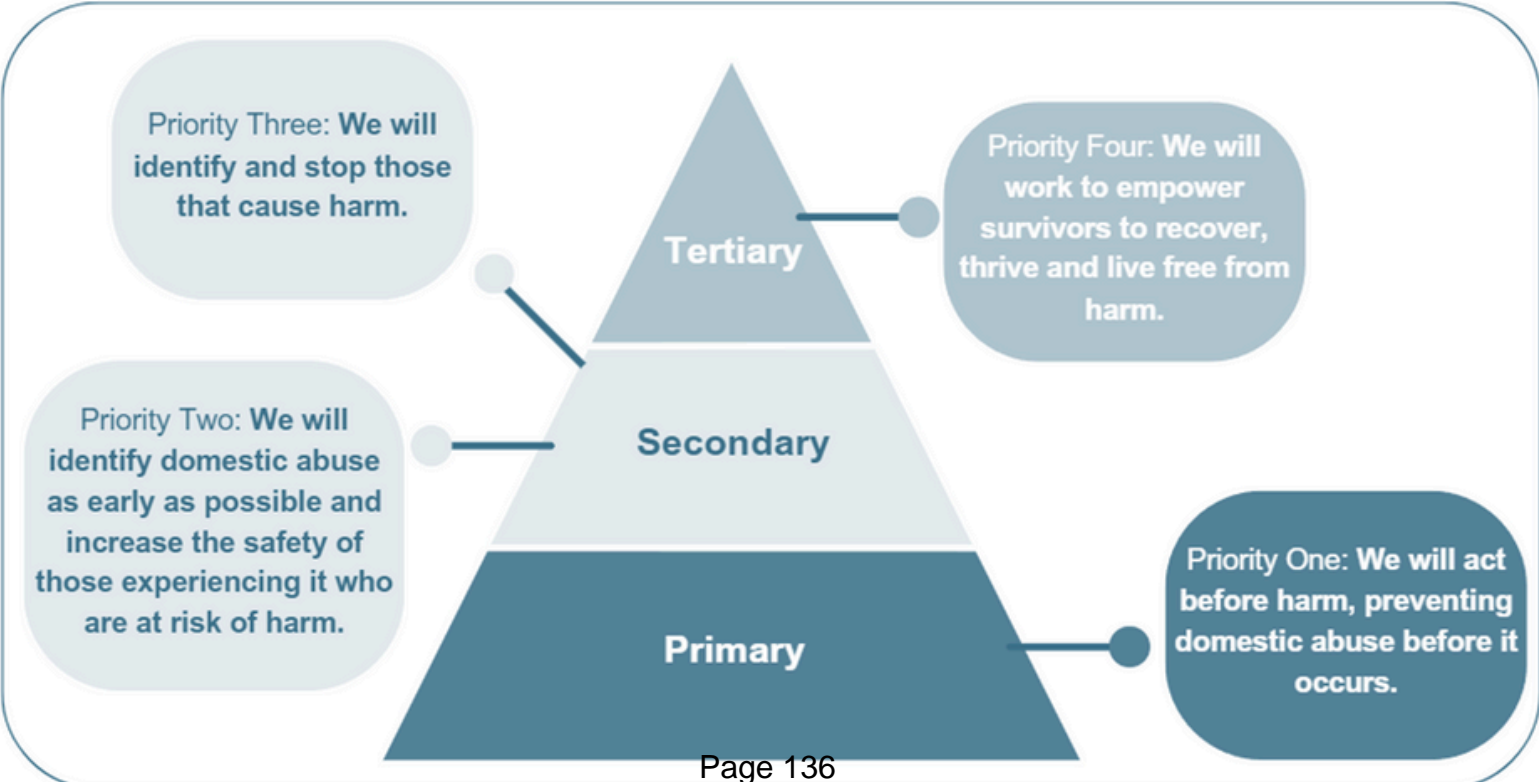
#### Decreasing harm

Harm refers to the negative consequence or impact an individual might experience.

## Our priorities

Our commitment to eradicating domestic abuse within West Berkshire extends beyond a reactive stance; it is rooted in a robust, prevention-focused model that aligns with the principles of the ecological framework. At the heart of our strategy lies the dedication to act before harm, ushering in a new era where prevention is paramount. We recognise that domestic abuse is complex, and experiences are not linear. These priorities are not aimed to be delivered in this way, rather simultaneously to ensure that the intersectionality of experiences is recognised.

This strategy sets out an ambitious long term roadmap for change. It articulates *how* we will approach our response. A practical delivery plan with specific actions will underpin it and be monitored through the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.





# HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR PRIORITIES

# 5

## By working together..

Our strategy recognises the complexity of addressing domestic abuse and emphasises collaboration as a cornerstone of our approach. We are committed to working closely as a partnership including police, probation, health, children's services, educational institutions, community and voluntary organisations, and other stakeholders. Through strong partnerships, we aim to create a united front against domestic abuse, ensuring a coordinated and effective response.

## Our partnership includes:



## with effective governance..

The effective implementation of our strategy relies on a robust governance structure led by the West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Board. This board serves as the cornerstone of our commitment to transparency, accountability, and collaborative decision-making.

### Leadership and Representation:

The Board comprises leaders from key partner agencies, ensuring a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approach.

### Regular Oversight and Collaboration:

To maintain an active and responsive approach, the Board convenes on a quarterly basis. This regular schedule ensures ongoing oversight, facilitates collaboration, and allows for prompt adjustments to emerging needs or challenges.

### Integration within the Local Governance Framework:

The Board operates within the wider governance framework of the West Berkshire Building Communities Together Partnership. As an integral part of this partnership, the Health and Wellbeing Board maintains overall oversight. This alignment reflects our commitment to integrating domestic abuse prevention and support within the broader health and community agenda.

### Community Engagement:

Recognising the importance of community perspectives, the governance structure encourages active engagement with local communities, individuals with lived experiences, and advocacy groups. This inclusive approach ensures that the strategy remains responsive to the diverse needs of our community.

## ..and clear monitoring.

### Monitoring and Evaluation:

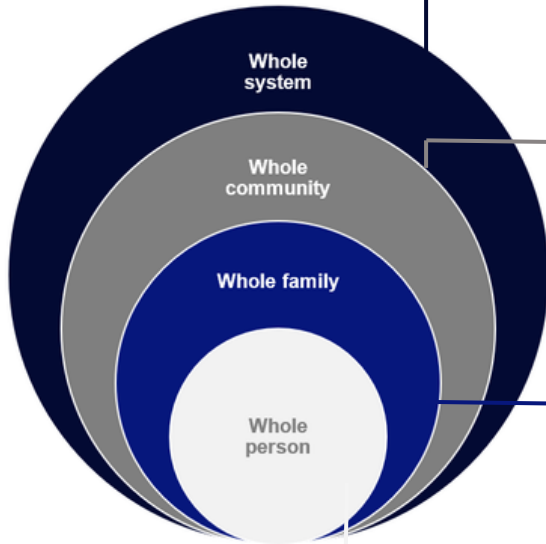
The Board is dedicated to a rigorous monitoring and evaluation process to continually assess the impact of the strategy. Through regular reviews and assessments, we will employ evidence-based decision-making, enabling us to adapt our approach based on real-time insights and emerging best practices.

### Transparent Reporting:

To uphold transparency and accountability, the Board commits to regular and open reporting. Progress updates, key achievements, and challenges will be communicated openly, fostering trust. As part of our commitment to transparency, an annual delivery plan will be established. This plan, following the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) criteria and RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rating system, will comprehensively report progress against objectives through the delivery of specific actions. This annual plan will serve as a dynamic tool, providing a clear roadmap for our endeavours and ensuring accountability to our community.

# 5

## Priority one: Act before harm.



- Implement a coordinated communication and awareness campaign approach targeting societal attitudes and beliefs, fostering a culture that rejects violence.
- Establish a system-level approach for ongoing evaluation and research, assessing the long-term impact of prevention efforts and refining strategies based on evidence.

- Develop and integrate a comprehensive domestic abuse 'whole setting' offer for education settings at the community level, fostering awareness and prevention strategies to cultivate a generation that rejects abusive behaviours.
- Develop and implement prevention strategies at the community level that are culturally competent, addressing the diverse needs of the community, particularly for West Berkshire's largest minority communities.

- Facilitate community-based initiatives at the family level to challenge harmful gender norms and promote healthy relationships.
- Implement a proactive strategy at the family level to identify and offer intensified support to families showing evidence-based domestic abuse risk factors. Focus on early intervention for families experiencing heightened stressors such as family conflict, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and socioeconomic deprivation.

- Implement programs to promote economic empowerment for individuals, fostering independence to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience.

Our objectives

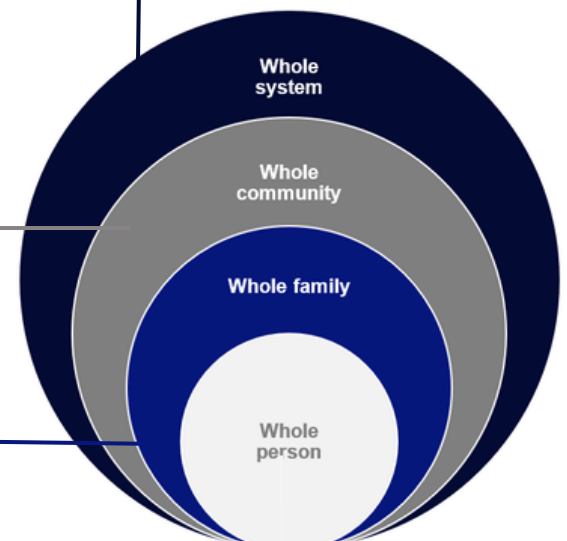
## Priority two: Increasing safety for victims.

- Implement a coordinated education and awareness approach, including colocation where appropriate, for professionals to ensure they can spot the signs, undertake relevant risk assessments and offer information, advice and support.
- Reporting to the domestic abuse Board, develop performance and quality assurance processes across all organisations to ensure an effective response.
- Strengthen the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process to ensure victims at the highest risk are adequately safeguarded.
- Explore how we could create an integrated pathway that seamlessly connects specialist domestic abuse service providers together to coordinate all referrals, assessments and support for victims and survivors through a triage type model so victims get the right support as soon as possible.

- Implement approaches to empower communities across West Berkshire to actively recognise, respond, and intervene when signs of domestic abuse are observed.
- Develop and implement a targeted community-level initiative to reach less visible families, particularly those residing in rural, affluent, and older communities prevalent in West Berkshire.

- Develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated support system to ensure a cohesive and joined-up approach for the whole family to enhance coordination and communication among various support services, providing a seamless pathway for families at risk of domestic abuse to access necessary resources and assistance.
- Enhance domestic abuse training across early intervention touchpoints, ensuring individuals at schools and Family Hubs can adeptly identify signs of domestic abuse and make informed referrals.

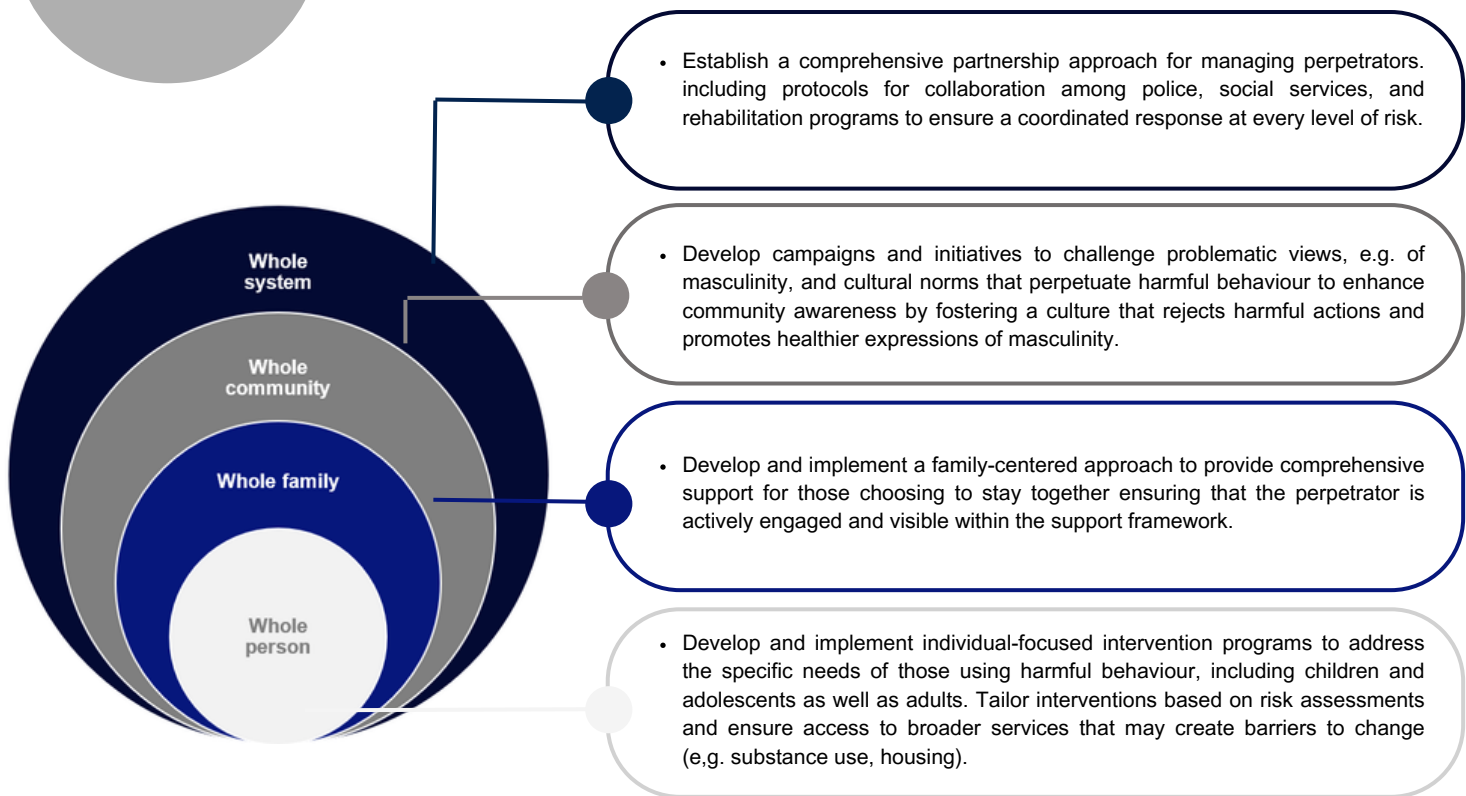
- Enhance the accessibility of support services for victims of domestic abuse by developing comprehensive resources/education and awareness to ensure individuals know where and how to seek help.
- Ensure there are high quality specialist support services for victims including children who are experiencing domestic abuse.



Our objectives

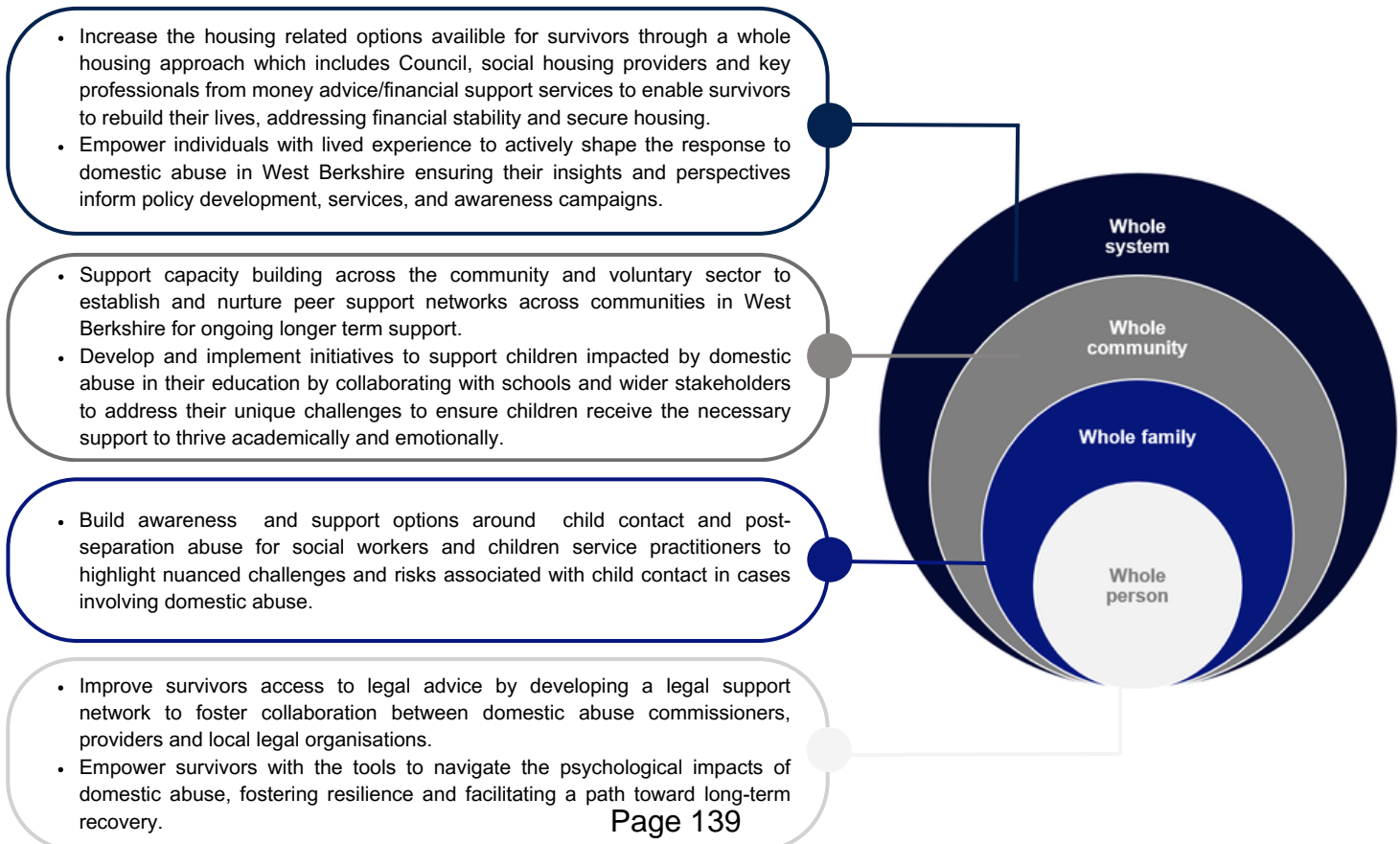
# 5

## Priority three: Stopping those causing harm.



Our objectives

## Priority four: Empowering survivors to thrive.



Our objectives



The development of this strategy was coordinated by Davis and Associates, a specialist violence reduction consultancy service, commissioned by West Berkshire's Domestic Abuse Board, For more information about West Berkshire's domestic abuse response contact [westberksbct@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:westberksbct@westberks.gov.uk).

# West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan

2024-2027

## Introduction

This delivery plan is based on the recommendations from the domestic abuse needs assessment. Those that have been directly identified through the needs assessment are highlighted as high priority deliverables and should be the focus of delivery over the next three years. However, some additional deliverables have been identified which would further strengthen the local response which have been highlighted as standard priority level.

**Timelines:** Activities marked as ‘high priority’ will all begin to be undertaken in the initial year of delivery, but the final delivery date is indicated in the plan as a ‘deadline’ (unless the activity is ongoing). Those that are standard, will have varying timescales.

**Priority one: Act before harm.**  
**We will act before harm, preventing domestic abuse before it occurs.**

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority level	Timescale	Updates			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Whole system	1. Develop a campaign aimed at supporting reporting of non-physical abuse to ensure people are confident in reporting this type of abuse <sup>1</sup> .	Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (with Lived Experience Subgroup once recruitment agreed)	High (DANA recommendation)	Start: Year one.  Campaign live by year 2, and then ongoing.				
	2. Agree key prevention metrics that can be measured across the system and monitored by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.	April, / Public Health Consultant	Standard	Metrics to be developed in year 2.				
Whole community	3. Develop a handbook for education providers signed up to Operation Encompass to provide details of services available (e.g. education) and wider pathways.	Alastair Harsant (BWSCP Business Manager)	Standard	To be developed in year 2, and piloted across schools in year 3.				

<sup>1</sup> Both the national 'Enough' campaign and Thames Valley 'Know this isn't Love' could be used as a blueprint but the campaign should go beyond identifying abuse and include practical guidance on how to record and report this type of abuse.

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority level	Timescale	Updates			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	4. Conduct scoping on the current delivery of the statutory Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education curriculum including how it is delivered (by existing staff, commissioned providers) and schools confidence in delivery	Health and Wellbeing Coordinator in Schools Paul Graham	Standard	To be completed in year 2.				
	5. Develop communication strategies and resources to engage parents and caregivers in discussions about domestic abuse prevention, providing information on warning signs, available support services, and strategies for fostering healthy family dynamics.	Alastair Harsant (BWSCP Business Manager) with Alix/Rachel Berkshire Women's Aid	Standard	To be completed in year 3.				
	6. Consider funding requirement and provide cultural competency training for frontline workers, service providers, and volunteers involved in domestic abuse prevention and response. This training equips them with the knowledge, skills, and awareness needed to effectively engage with and support individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, avoiding stereotypes and misunderstandings.	Jacqui Mukono - Project Salama / Domestic Abuse Partnership Board	Standard	Scoping in year one. Decisions to be made by Q2 of year 2. Potential training by Q4 year 2.				

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority level	Timescale	Updates			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	7. Create screening protocols for early intervention touchpoints, such as Family Hubs and schools, to systematically assess families for domestic abuse risk factors. These protocols can help identify families in need of intensified support and ensure consistent and thorough assessments.	Alastair Harsant (BWSCP Business Manager) / Steph Coomer (Early Response Hub) with specialist providers	Standard	Start: Q2 year 2 to be completed by Q1 year 3.				



**Priority two: Increasing safety for victims.**

**We will identify domestic abuse as early as possible and increase the safety of those experiencing it who are at risk of harm.**

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Updates			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Whole system	8. Consider developing a minimum training standard for all services who provide support to victims and survivors of domestic abuse. This should be tiered similar to safeguarding training. <sup>2</sup>	Domestic Abuse Partnership Board with specialist providers	High (DANA recommendation)	Start: Q4 year 1. Minimum standard to be agreed and implemented by Q1 Year 3.			
	9. Develop local guidance on domestic abuse risk assessment including if/how specific tools should be used and definitions of risk	Alix/Rachel, Berkshire Womens Aid	Standard	By Q1 year 2.			
	10. Undertake quarterly audits on police reported cases of domestic abuse where a risk assessment has not been undertaken to establish an improvement plan which is monitored through the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board	Thames Valley Police Emily Evans	High (DANA recommendation)	To start: Year one, and ongoing after.			
	11. Audit the data that is collected specifically where domestic abuse has been identified by agencies to explore the possibility to agree a minimum data set that all agencies	Domestic Abuse Partnership Board	High (DANA recommendation)	To start: Year one, and ongoing after.			

<sup>2</sup> From level one basic awareness, level two to completing DASH forms and the MARAC process through to level three including as well as safety planning if applicable.

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Updates			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	will collect information on when domestic abuse is identified (e.g. all to record whether a DASH has been completed/the risk level) to create a quarterly domestic abuse performance dashboard for the Board.						
	12. Develop a regional Domestic Abuse Partnership Board Chairs group to meet bi-annually to discuss regional issues and matters.	Paul Coe	Standard	By Q1 year 2.			
	13. Start recording the reasons for non-disclosure in DVDS applications and reporting learning to the Domestic Abuse Board to support an improvement in disclosure rates.	Thames Valley Police (Emily Evans)	High (DANA recommendation)	Year one (immediately).			
	14. Agree MARAC governance mechanism for reporting back to the West Berkshire Domestic Abuse Partnership Board through the MARAC steering group. This should include a MARAC report as a standing agenda item.	Thames Valley Police (Emily Evans)	Standard	By Q1 year 2.			
	15. Map the referral criteria and thresholds for all domestic abuse service provision that clearly outlines which services would meet the needs of which particular groups (e.g. older people, male victims) and create a domestic abuse service directory that is easily accessible to	April Peberdy with Jade Wilder	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q4 year one.			

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Updates			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	the public and professionals. Disseminate the directory electronically (on Council and partner websites) as well as physically through the development of a leaflet.						
	16. Scope appetite and resource for a domestic abuse hub/front door type model which triages referrals to the right service, which is led by domestic abuse services.	Domestic Abuse Partnership Board	High (DANA recommendation)	Discussions to begin immediately year one. Finalise scoping by Q2 year 2.			
	17. Map how a West Berkshire bystander intervention could link with broader campaigns such as Ask Angela and conduct a brief scoping exercise of national/other area community and bystander approaches to domestic abuse (such as J9) to develop a West Berkshire approach.	Jade Wilder / Alex O Connor	High (DANA recommendation)	Finalise mapping by Q3 year 2.			
Whole family	18. Conduct regular (at least annual) audits of children's domestic abuse contacts and assessments where domestic abuse is a factor to ensure relevant risk assessments (e.g DASH) and signposting (e.g. MARAC) has happened and explore any gaps in multi-agency working.	Rebecca Wilshire, Service Director	High (DANA recommendation)	To start immediately, then ongoing.			

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Updates			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	19. Develop a practice briefing for social workers and children service practitioners highlighting the nuanced challenges and risks associated with child contact in cases involving domestic abuse should be disseminated.	Rebecca Wilshire, Service Director With BWA and PACT	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q4 year one.			
Whole person	20. Develop a leaflet (aligned to the Victims Code standard rights, but tailored around domestic abuse) for all victims and survivors of domestic abuse which outlines the standard they can expect from all officers when they report abuse.	Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (with the OPCC)	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q4 year one.			
	21. Revisit scoping the feasibility of the IRIS model to be piloted across GP practices including potential resource implications, or an alternative approach to embed domestic abuse specialism across primary care (e.g. through colocation of existing services).	Louise Pegg, BOB ICB	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q4 year one.			

**Priority three: Stopping those causing harm.**  
**We will identify and stop those that cause harm.**

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Timelines	Updates			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Whole system	22. Scope current risk assessments used to understand perpetrator behaviour across services and agree a standardised approach with guidance	Chantal Foster probation and specialist services	Standard	By Q4 year two.				
	23. Create a service directory of services for people that use harmful behaviour which is accessible to the public and professionals to use	Angelica, Perpetrator practitioner	Standard	By Q2 year two.				
	24. As part of the ongoing data improvement, scope the data and information services collect on perpetrators of domestic abuse (e.g. risk level, relationship to the victim) and how this could be used strategically by the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board to develop a coordinated response	Jade Wilder	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q4 of year one.				
Whole person	25. Identify opportunities to develop, and/or commission, community-based perpetrator provision to support people using harmful behaviour at any level of risk to change their behaviour	Domestic Abuse Partnership Board	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q4 year one.				

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Timelines	Updates			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	26. Monitor and review the implementation of the DRIVE project to understand how it can be best maximised in West Berkshire	Domestic Abuse Partnership Board / Thames Valley Police	Standard	Ongoing.				

**Priority four: Empowering survivors to thrive.**  
**We will work to empower survivors to recover, thrive and live free from harm.**

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Timelines	Updates			
					Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Whole system	27. Create a whole housing subgroup should be set up to report into the Domestic Abuse Board. This should include all social housing providers as well as key professionals from money advice/financial support services.	Gemma Walsh and Nick Caprara	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q4 of year one.				
	28. Scope the potential for a colocation model with specialist domestic abuse services being colocated within the Housing Options team to support them to identify and risk assess homelessness approaches due to domestic abuse.	Gemma Walsh / Nick Caprara with BWA	High (DANA recommendation)	Explore year one, and decision/ action to be completed by Q4 year two.				
	29. Audit of homelessness cases where victims have a disability should be undertaken, led jointly by Adult Social Care and the	Gemma Walsh / Lisa Cleveland	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q2 year two.				

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Updates				
				Timelines	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	housing policy team to identify any gaps within the System							
	30. Developing reciprocal management transfer arrangements for victims within the social sector to safely leave their property whilst maintaining a secure tenancy to ensure they are not penalised by the high private rental costs in West Berkshire.	Whole housing sub group	Standard	Sub group to decide (by Q2 year one) and update action plan.				
	31. Develop a mechanism for continuous recruitment to the lived experience subgroup which ensure a diverse group of people with lived experience are engaged and able to help shape the work of the Board	Domestic Abuse Partnership Board, Jade Wilder with the Live Experience Subgroup	Standard	By Q4 year one.				
	32. Explore how to include people with Lived Experience in the contract monitoring of current services, and commissioning cycle moving forward	April Peberdy	Standard	By Q4 year one.				
	33. Promote the Reducing the Risk Champions Network across the CVS to ensure they are able to sign up and monitor how many CVS champions there are at any time	Reducing the Risk with Jade Wilder	Standard	By Q4 year one.				

Level	Actions	Ownership	Priority	Updates				
				Timelines	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	34. Work with schools and commissioned services to ensure access to support programs specifically designed to address the unique needs of children impacted by domestic abuse.	Melissa Perry / Kathryn Warner	Standard	By Q3 year two.				
Whole person	35. Support the development of partnership collaboration relationships between specialist domestic abuse services with local legal organisations to create a network of legal support options for victims and survivors navigating child contact arrangements through the family court.	Laura Hunt (Flag DV) With Alix (BWA)	High (DANA recommendation)	By Q4 year one.				



# Summary of West Berkshire domestic abuse consultation feedback

## Introduction

### Scope

This report provides an overview of the public consultation carried out as part of the development of the Domestic Abuse Strategy. The consultation sought to gather feedback from residents, community groups, service providers, and local organisations on key aspects of the draft strategy. The insights gained from this consultation have been instrumental in shaping the final version of the strategy, ensuring that it reflects the needs and concerns of the wider community. By incorporating the feedback received, we have worked to create a more inclusive, practical, and effective strategy to address domestic abuse in West Berkshire.

### Who responded

As part of the consultation process, we engaged with a broad range of respondents, including individual residents, council employees, and representatives from local councils and service providers. The following table outlines the breakdown of respondents by category, showing the diversity of perspectives we gathered:

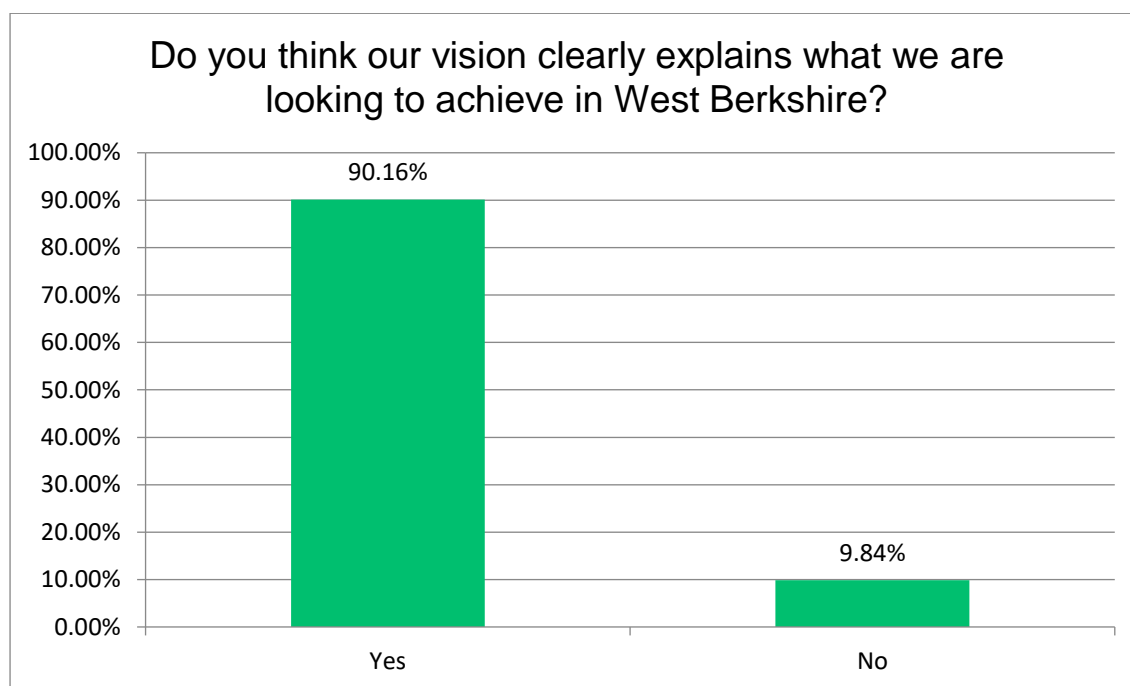
Answer Choices	Responses	
	Percentage	Number
Individual resident of West Berkshire	84.62%	55
Individual non-resident of West Berkshire	1.54%	1
Employed by West Berkshire Council	9.23%	6
Parish or Town Council	3.08%	2
District Councillor	1.54%	1
Service provider	3.08%	2
Partner organisation, e.g. Police / Fire Authority	0.00%	0
Community group	1.54%	1
Charity organisation	1.54%	1
Other - please specify below	1.54%	1
Additional information e.g. group/organisation name (if applicable):		3
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>65</b>

Throughout this report, we will first give an overview of the feedback received in relation to the strategy, and conclude each section by providing a summary of how the feedback has been incorporated in to the final version.

## Feedback on the vision

Overall over 90% of respondents were confident the vision is clear. The feedback on the clarity of the strategy's vision suggests that while the overarching goals are understood, there are concerns regarding the lack of concrete, actionable steps. Several respondents expressed frustration with what they perceive as the use of “buzzwords” and vague language, without clear explanations on how the strategy will be implemented effectively.

### Do you think our vision clearly explains what we are looking to achieve in West Berkshire?



### Key themes from the feedback

**Vagueness and lack of specificity:** Multiple respondents noted that while the strategy talks about tackling domestic abuse, it fails to offer specific, tangible actions. The strategy's reference to domestic abuse as a “hidden crime” was pointed out as a contradiction, as the plan does not clearly explain how it will address something that by its nature is difficult to detect and prevent. One comment highlighted the absence of detail around key preventative measures, such as how the strategy will make residents feel safer or how colocation of services would be made feasible. This lack of specificity leads some to feel that the document is simply paying lip service to the issue.

**Realism and practicality:** There was a strong call for the strategy to offer realistic, concrete solutions. A respondent questioned the effectiveness of the plan in the face of real-world challenges, such as the leniency of sentencing for domestic violence offenders and the rarity of long-term incarceration for these crimes. One suggestion was made to create a public register of abusers, both those with convictions and those who have received warnings. This would offer a tangible, actionable step towards increasing public safety.

**Action vs. Words:** Several respondents expressed frustration with what they see as the strategy’s focus on vision and high-level statistics, rather than clear guidance on what changes will be implemented. One comment noted that “It’s just words...actions are what is needed,” underscoring the sentiment that the strategy must go beyond rhetorical commitments to real, measurable outcomes. Another respondent drew attention to a friend’s experience in a different county, where despite positive-sounding strategies, the police were unresponsive, and the domestic abuse situation was not effectively managed. This highlights a fear that the strategy, while well-meaning, might not translate into effective action.

**Focus on prevention and outcomes:** The lack of clarity around preventative measures was a recurring theme. Respondents expressed a desire to know more about how prevention would be tackled, particularly how the strategy aims to deter domestic abuse before it occurs. There were calls for the strategy to outline more clearly the specific differences it aims to achieve in the community, with a focus on measurable outcomes, rather than remaining a high-level document.

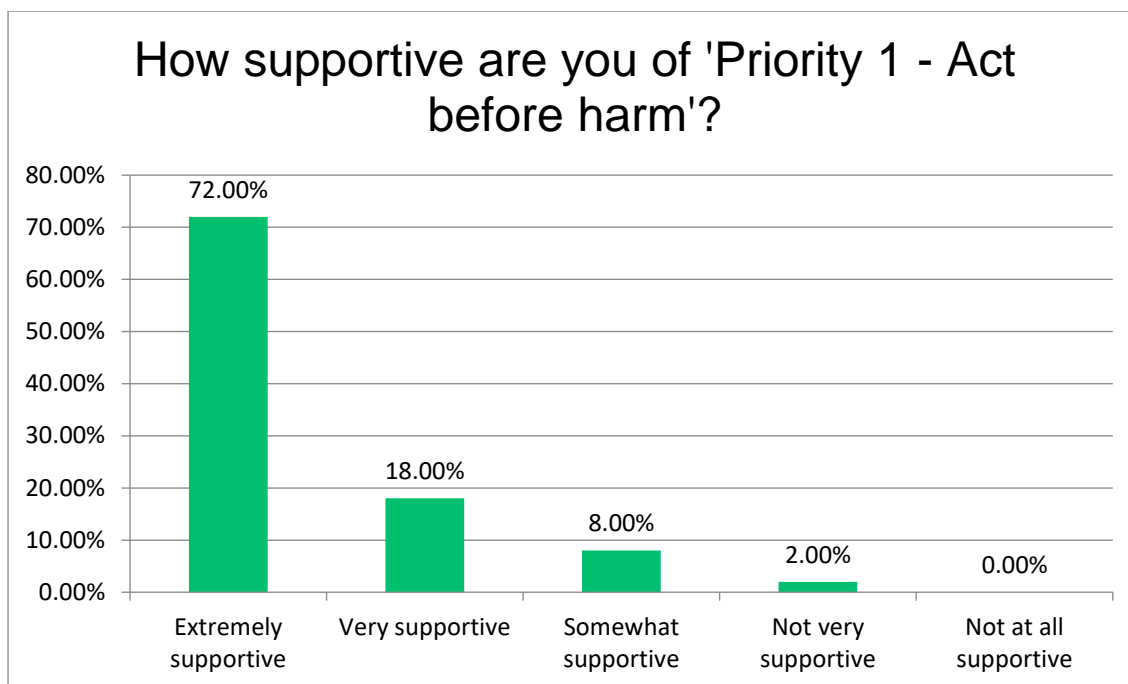
#### How has the feedback been incorporated into the final version?

Overall, the critical feedback on the vision statement, whilst useful is more applicable to the domestic abuse action plan which is supplementary to the strategy. As such all of the comments provided have fed into the development of the delivery plan which sits behind the strategy. As most respondents agree with the vision, no material changes were made. A key learning point moving forward in terms of how this plan is delivered which may like to be considered in terms of alleviating some of the fear that the strategy will not be actionable, will be for the Board to publish annual (or quarterly) reports outlining progress.

## Feedback on our priorities

### Priority one

The feedback on Priority One: Preventing Harm Before it Occurs offers a rich and varied set of perspectives. While there is broad support for the idea of prevention, a minority of respondents raised several important concerns about the practicalities of implementing such a strategy and the barriers that exist in effectively preventing domestic abuse.



### 1. Realistic Implementation and Challenges of Prevention

A recurring theme was scepticism about whether domestic abuse can be effectively prevented, particularly since it often occurs “behind closed doors.” Several respondents expressed concern that harm typically occurs before outside agencies, such as schools, can detect it. They questioned how the strategy plans to act before harm when many victims are too controlled or afraid to seek help.

Respondents also noted that while the strategy’s concept of “acting before harm” is aspirational, it requires strict rules and guidelines to be effective in practice. Without detailed, actionable steps, they fear the strategy remains theoretical, and its lofty goals may be difficult to achieve in the real world.

### 2. Addressing attitudes towards gender and violence experienced by younger people

Several respondents raised concerns about how attitudes towards girls and violence are shaped early on, especially in schools, due to exposure to harmful content on social media, porn, and violent videos. Examples like Andrew Tate videos were cited as influencing young boys, leading to problematic behaviours towards girls. Respondents emphasised the need for immediate action, such as restricting mobile phone use during school hours, to reduce exposure to such content and protect girls from assault and sexual violence in schools. They felt the strategy currently does not address this critical issue.

### 3. Support for Male Victims

A common point raised was the lack of attention given to male victims of domestic abuse. While acknowledging that women are statistically more likely to experience domestic abuse, respondents highlighted the significant number of men affected and the lack of refuge spaces available for them. One respondent pointed out that there are only 12 refuge bed spaces for men in all of England, underscoring the need for the strategy to be more inclusive and provide support for all victims, regardless of gender.

#### **4. Alienation as a Form of Abuse**

Alienation, particularly post-divorce, was another issue respondents felt was missing from the strategy. One respondent shared their personal experience of living with alienation for 19 years, explaining how it affected their family dynamic and relationship with their child. They argued that alienation is a serious issue affecting over 30% of the population and that it needs to be recognised as a form of abuse that has profound effects on families and communities.

#### **5. Practical Solutions for Victims**

Several respondents called for more practical solutions that would allow victims to leave abusive situations without sacrificing their entire lives. One suggested that many victims are deterred from leaving because they fear losing their home, pets, and stability. The feedback stressed the need for a strategy that helps victims without forcing them into hostels, which may not be a viable option for many.

Additionally, respondents expressed frustration with the lack of specific, actionable steps in the strategy. There were calls for a clear implementation guide that explains exactly how the objectives would be achieved in practice, especially for victims and local agencies.

#### **6. Psychological Harm**

Domestic abuse was not only framed as physical violence but also as psychological harm. Respondents emphasised the mental manipulation that often occurs in abusive relationships, particularly by narcissistic individuals. This type of abuse can erode victims' confidence, leading to mental health decline, and in severe cases, suicidal thoughts. The strategy needs to address these psychological dimensions of abuse, which affect both men and women.

#### **7. Focus on Education and Evidence-Based Approaches**

Several respondents felt that the strategy lacked a focus on psychological education. They argued that understanding the psychological roots of abusive behaviour is essential to preventing it and fostering healthier relationships. Additionally, respondents expressed a desire for the strategy to be grounded in evidence-based practices, wanting to see the research and data supporting its objectives. They felt this would provide greater confidence that the strategy's actions would be effective.

#### **8. Addressing Systemic Issues and Perpetrators**

Some respondents were concerned that the strategy does not focus enough on challenging and ultimately ending abusive behaviour by perpetrators. While supporting victims is crucial, they wanted the strategy to address the root causes of abuse and prevent reoffending. This would involve fostering a culture that understands and tackles the underlying causes of violence while promoting healthy behaviours and communication.

Respondents also stressed the need for systemic changes, including addressing the attitudes of authority figures, such as the police. One respondent shared their experience of being discouraged by police from pursuing a prosecution, indicating a need for better training and cultural shifts within services that handle domestic abuse cases.

#### **9. Protection of Families and Legal Rights**

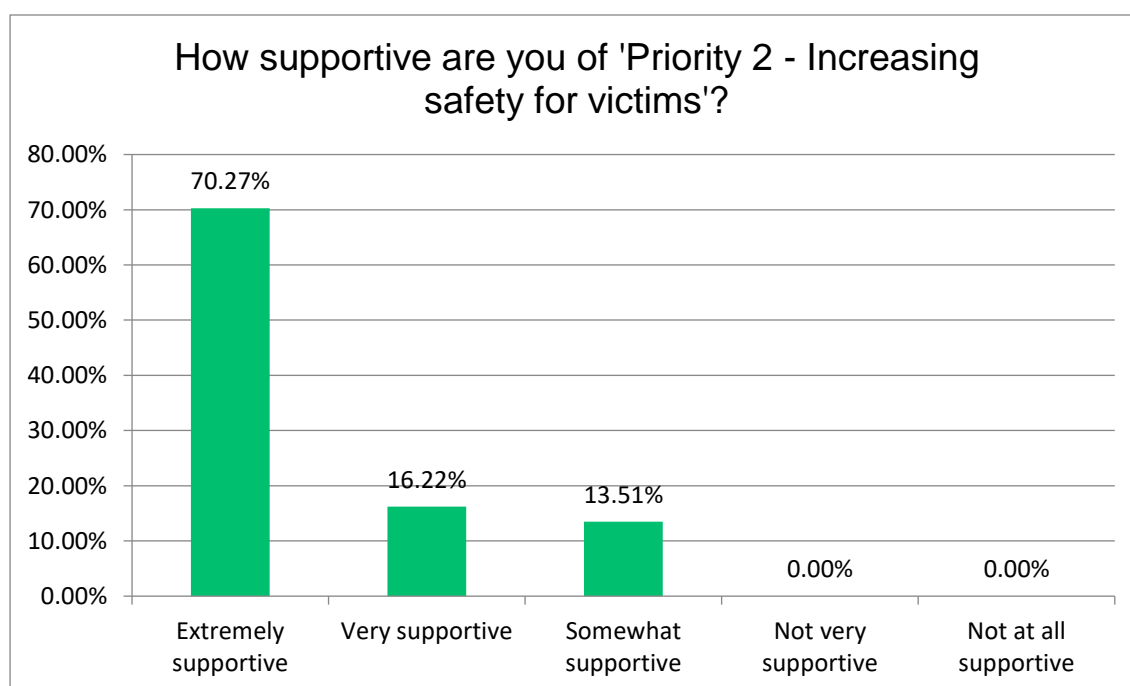
Another key theme was the protection of families, especially ensuring that victims can remain in their homes rather than being forced to move. Respondents highlighted cases where victims had to leave their homes because the abuser had legal rights to the property. This often disrupts children’s lives, forcing them to change schools and healthcare providers. Respondents called for legal reforms to protect victims’ rights to stay in their homes and maintain stability for their families.

### How has the feedback been incorporated in to the final version?

Only 2% of respondents were not supportive of the priority. The feedback received was all invaluable in terms of the development of the delivery plan and has been incorporated into this. Some of the feedback on this priority was focussed around support for victims which has been picked up in other priorities across the strategy.

### Priority two

Feedback on Priority Two highlighted a variety of concerns and recommendations from respondents, emphasising the importance of safety, clear communication, and culturally competent support for victims. Respondents also called for more practical and accessible solutions to ensure that victims receive timely and effective help when they need it.



### 1. Importance of Safety and Support

**Safety is paramount:** Many respondents stressed that safety is the cornerstone of any domestic abuse support system. Victims are unlikely to come forward if they do not feel safe, and if they are not convinced that disclosing their abuse will lead to protection. Without a robust safety framework, respondents believe that the entire strategy will fail.

**Feeling safe before speaking out:** Respondents pointed out that victims who do not feel protected are unlikely to disclose their experiences. Several comments also highlighted the

critical risks faced by victims around the time they leave their abusive relationships, which is often the most dangerous period for them. Respondents emphasised the need for early intervention during this period to ensure victims are adequately supported.

**High levels of support:** Respondents noted that victims of domestic abuse need high levels of support and need to know exactly where and how they can access it. If victims are not aware of the services available or do not believe they will receive appropriate help, they are less likely to reach out.

## 2. Community Involvement and Risks

**Reluctance to intervene:** Some feedback expressed concern that the strategy relies too heavily on the community to speak up and act when they see signs of domestic abuse. In practice, respondents explained that people in some communities are reluctant to get involved due to fear of retaliation or putting themselves and their families at risk, particularly when the abusers are well-known and dangerous individuals within the community. This raised questions about the practical application of community-based interventions and the need for systems to protect those who report abuse.

**Empowering communities to act safely:** While community empowerment is an important goal, respondents stressed the need to ensure that people can report abuse safely, both for the victims and those reporting the abuse. Suggestions included adding the words "effectively and safely" to objectives around empowering communities to intervene when domestic abuse is observed. This would ensure that actions taken by community members do not inadvertently make the situation worse for the victim.

## 3. Cultural Competence and Accessibility of Services

**Cultural competence:** Several respondents expressed concern that the strategy does not adequately address the need for culturally competent services. West Berkshire is becoming increasingly diverse, and victims from minority ethnic backgrounds may face additional barriers to accessing support if they feel that services are not sensitive to their cultural needs. Respondents emphasised the importance of ensuring that victims meet with professionals who understand and respect their cultural differences.

**Visibility of services:** Feedback indicated that victims, especially those in coercive and controlling situations, may not be aware of the services available to them. To address this, respondents suggested increasing the visibility of domestic abuse support services through regular advertising in the press and public campaigns, including the use of simple text numbers similar to the "See it, Say it, Sorted" campaign used by the Transport Police. The aim would be to make services easy to access and highly visible to those who need them.

## 4. Practical Challenges in Supporting Victims

**Safe spaces and housing provision:** A major challenge highlighted in the feedback was the shortage of safe spaces and housing provision for victims, particularly given the broader pressures on housing in the district. Respondents felt that without adequate refuge options, victims may struggle to escape abusive situations, which compromises their safety and ability to recover.

**Coordination between police and local authorities:** Feedback also called for stronger coordination between the police and West Berkshire Council (WBC) to provide more consistent and reassuring support to victims. One respondent shared a recent experience

where communication between services was poor, leading to a lack of support for securing property and uncertainty about the perpetrator's whereabouts. They stressed the need for a clearer, more consistent process to ensure victims feel supported and safe, particularly in the critical hours following an incident.

## 5. Improving Support from Authorities

**Changing attitudes among authorities:** Respondents felt that attitudes among police, judges, and other authorities need to change, particularly when dealing with mental abuse. They emphasized that domestic abuse is not just a physical issue, but also involves psychological and emotional harm. Authorities must be trained to recognise all forms of abuse, and their responses must be sensitive to the complexities of domestic abuse cases.

**Judicial system's role in DA cases:** Some feedback highlighted the need for greater judicial awareness of domestic abuse. Respondents felt that the court system plays a crucial role in protecting victims but is often not held accountable for the outcomes of domestic abuse cases. Suggestions included educating judges on domestic abuse and introducing mechanisms for victims to request a second opinion on judicial decisions, similar to the "Martha's Rule" in hospitals.

## 6. Importance of Early Intervention and Protection of Children

**Early intervention:** Respondents strongly supported the need for early intervention, as delays in recognising or addressing abuse can have serious consequences. In cases involving children, respondents noted that perpetrators often use children to maintain control over the other parent, making early intervention even more critical.

**Protecting children:** Feedback emphasised that children need to feel that they will be believed and supported if they report abuse. Respondents stressed that children are often witnesses or victims of domestic abuse, and their protection must be a key component of the strategy.

## 7. Family-Centred Support and Long-Term Recovery

**Support beyond staying together:** Respondents urged that the family-centered approach should also include support for families who do not stay together. Perpetrators often continue to use children as a means of controlling the other parent, even after separation. As a result, the strategy must account for the ongoing risks and provide support for parents and children in these situations.

**Long-term recovery and mental health support:** Many respondents raised the importance of addressing the long-term mental health impacts of domestic abuse. Recovery from domestic abuse involves more than just escaping the situation—it requires ongoing support to rebuild victims' lives and address trauma. Respondents stressed the need for mental health services to be integrated into the support provided to survivors, ensuring their full recovery and well-being.

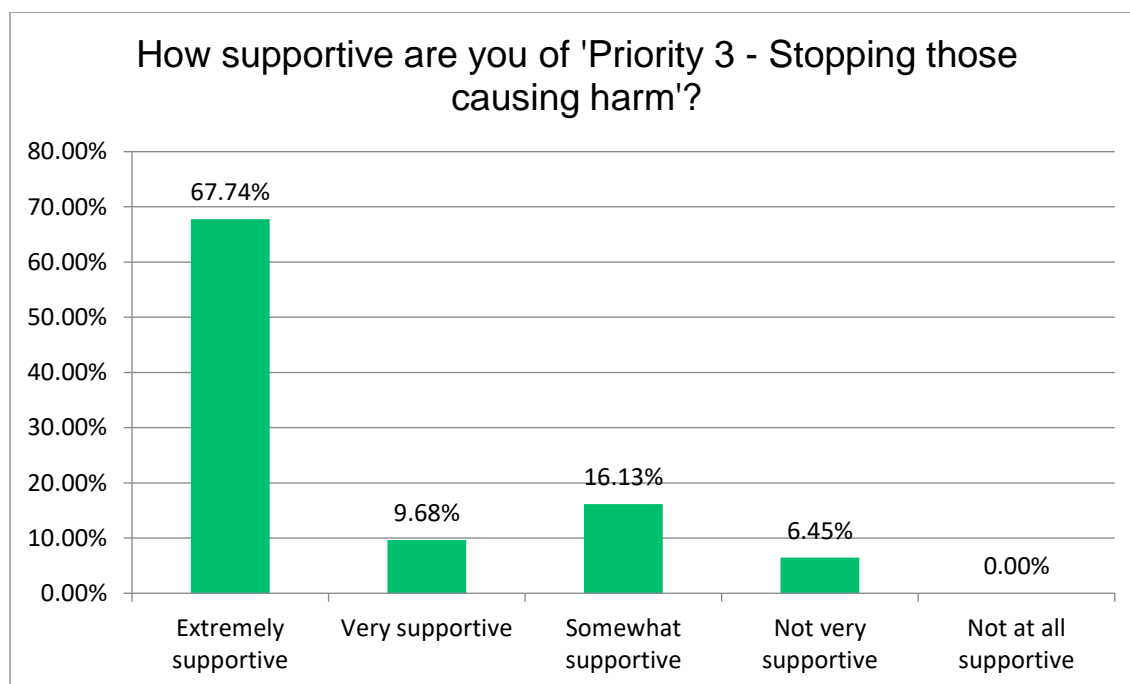
### How has the feedback been incorporated in to the final version?

There were no respondents that did not support this priority. The feedback provided has been considered in the development of the action plan.



## Priority three

Feedback on Priority Three revealed various concerns about how the strategy addresses those who cause harm in domestic abuse situations. Respondents highlighted issues around gender neutrality, the complexities of addressing abusive behaviour, the need for more robust interventions, and the lack of practical steps in the current strategy.



### 1. Gender Neutrality and Acknowledging All Forms of Abuse

**Gender neutrality:** A key concern raised by several respondents is the need for the strategy to be fully gender-neutral. While the strategy acknowledges that women are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, respondents stressed that men can also be victims and that women are also capable of emotional and physical violence. They urged the strategy to avoid reinforcing the perception that only men are perpetrators and called for a more balanced approach that recognises abuse is not gender-specific.

**Challenge problematic language:** Several respondents noted that while the strategy claims to use gender-neutral language, it includes terms such as “masculinity” when discussing problematic behaviours. They felt this undermines the strategy's claim to be neutral and fails to acknowledge that abuse can be perpetrated by either gender, including false allegations by female abusers.

### 2. Understanding and Addressing the Behaviour of Perpetrators

**Trauma-informed approach:** Some respondents advocated for a more nuanced understanding of perpetrators, recognising that many offenders have been traumatised themselves and may be repeating cycles of abuse they have experienced. These respondents called for the strategy to include more focus on the rehabilitation and healing of offenders, rather than demonising them.

**Perpetrators as manipulators:** However, many other respondents expressed strong scepticism about the potential for reform among perpetrators. They highlighted how abusers are often masters of manipulation, putting on convincing façades and continuing their abusive behaviour even after legal action has been taken. Respondents were concerned that the strategy does not adequately address the reality of how difficult it is to change abusive behaviours or ensure perpetrators cooperate.

**Focus on prevention and consequences:** Several respondents stressed the importance of early intervention and clear consequences for perpetrators. They argued that perpetrators need to be made aware that their actions will not be tolerated and will have legal consequences. There was also a call for increased prison terms for domestic abuse offenders to serve as a stronger deterrent.

### 3. Robustness of the Strategy and Practical Implementation

**Lack of detail and practical steps:** A recurring theme in the feedback was the perceived vagueness of the strategy. Respondents noted that while the objectives are well-intentioned, they are often too high-level and lack clarity about how they will be achieved. Statements such as “develop campaigns and initiatives to challenge problematic views” were criticised as being too abstract. Respondents wanted to see more concrete, practical steps, such as removing known offenders from the family home to protect victims and their families.

**Enforcing change:** Many respondents questioned how the strategy could be enforced, especially where children and families are involved. One suggestion was to create mandatory programmes for perpetrators, including therapy, anger management, and psychological testing, before they can be allowed to return to the family home. This would ensure that the risk posed by offenders is properly assessed and mitigated.

**Sharing information between agencies:** There was a call for better systems for sharing information between agencies about high-risk individuals. Respondents felt that without effective communication between the police, social services, and other relevant bodies, it would be difficult to protect victims and prevent repeat incidents of abuse.

### 4. Education and Societal Change

**Education and prevention:** Many respondents agreed that education is key to stopping abuse before it happens. However, they also pointed out that changing societal attitudes is a long-term process, and there needs to be more immediate action alongside efforts to shift cultural norms. Respondents wanted to see the strategy include education on healthy behaviours and relationships, both for those causing harm and for the community as a whole.

**Programmes for families and children:** Several respondents highlighted the need for family-centred interventions that go beyond simply keeping families together. In cases where families do not remain together, respondents emphasised that children are often at increased risk of violence as perpetrators seek revenge on the parent who has left them. The strategy should ensure that children are protected and that the cycle of abuse is not allowed to continue through the next generation.

### 5. Barriers to Reporting and Accessing Support

**Fear of reporting:** Respondents highlighted the challenges victims face in coming forward, particularly when perpetrators have threatened them or their children with consequences if they report the abuse. It was noted that children, in particular, need to feel that they will be believed and kept safe if they come forward about the abuse they are experiencing or witnessing.

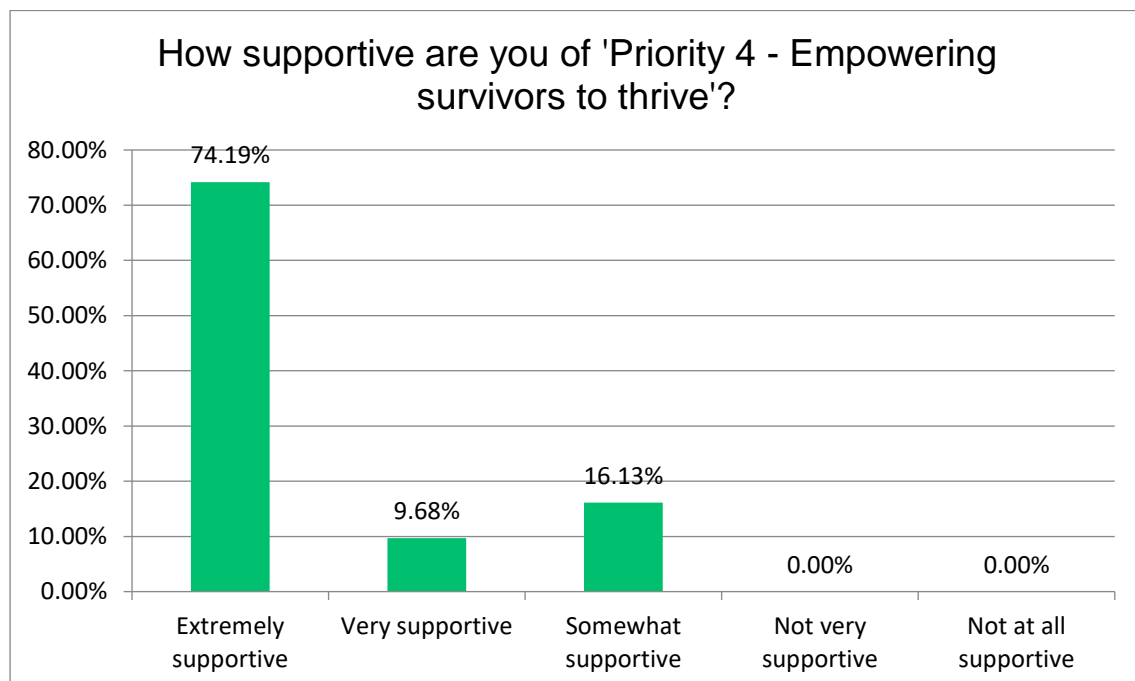
**Support for victims:** Several respondents pointed out that victims need to feel that their situation will not worsen if they report abuse. Guaranteeing that perpetrators will be questioned and dealt with is crucial to ensuring victims feel safe enough to speak up. Without this assurance, victims may remain trapped in dangerous situations, unable to seek help.

**How has the feedback been incorporated in to the final version?**

Overall the vast majority of respondents supported this priority. Based on the feedback we amended under the 'whole person' element of the priority 'adolescents' as a specific group to ensure that the strategy incorporated issues such as Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (CAPVA). Other feedback has been considered in the development of the delivery plan.

**Priority four**

Feedback on Priority Four reflects a deep understanding of the importance of comprehensive, long-term support for survivors of domestic abuse. Respondents highlighted the need for practical, individualised assistance that goes beyond immediate safety to include financial stability, education, and emotional recovery. They emphasised that supporting survivors to rebuild their lives is a crucial part of the strategy.



**1. Personalised, Long-Term Support**

**Individualised approach:** Many respondents stressed that survivors need to be treated as individuals. They highlighted the importance of avoiding a "one size fits all" mentality, as each survivor's experience and needs are unique. Survivors will require varying levels of support, and the strategy should be flexible enough to accommodate this.

**Lifelong safety mechanisms:** Several respondents mentioned the need for lifelong support mechanisms that ensure survivors feel safe and secure, not just immediately after leaving an abusive situation but well into the future. This would help survivors maintain the progress they have made in rebuilding their lives.

**Ongoing support is vital:** Early intervention and long-term support are essential for survivors. Respondents noted that knowing from the outset that ongoing support will be available can provide victims with the confidence to leave abusive situations. Many highlighted the complexity of emotional recovery, stressing that survivors often continue to deal with the effects of abuse long after they have left the relationship.

## 2. Signposting and Access to Services

**Better signposting:** Several respondents felt that, although there are many services available both nationally and in West Berkshire, survivors often struggle to find them. They stressed the importance of clear and effective signposting, so that survivors know exactly where to go for help. Survivors should not have to be overly proactive in seeking out support, as this can be overwhelming, especially in the immediate aftermath of abuse.

**Advocacy and support networks:** Respondents mentioned that some survivors may need advocates to help them navigate the support systems in place. This could be someone who helps them access resources, such as legal advice, housing, and financial support, without the added stress of doing it alone. One suggestion was to introduce an advisor or expanded McKenzie Friend role to help survivors navigate the legal and financial complexities of leaving an abusive relationship.

## 3. Financial Stability and Housing

**Financial planning support:** Respondents identified financial planning as a critical aspect of helping survivors rebuild their lives, especially for those who have experienced coercive control or financial abuse. Many survivors have had their financial independence stripped away and may not know the state of their finances or how to manage them. Suggestions included providing fast-tracked financial support, such as Universal Credit, as well as assistance with budgeting and setting up independent financial systems.

**Housing support:** The strategy's focus on housing was generally welcomed, but respondents raised concerns about how it would be implemented given the already high demand for social housing. Survivors often have to leave their homes and start from scratch, so secure, long-term housing options are essential for their recovery. Respondents also suggested that access to housing should be tied to financial stability, with collaboration between councils, social housing providers, and financial support services.

**Fast-track family courts:** Some respondents proposed fast-tracking cases involving domestic abuse through the family courts, particularly those requiring emergency financial settlements. This would alleviate some of the immediate financial pressures survivors face and provide a smoother transition to independence.

#### 4. Education, Retraining, and Future Growth

**Education and retraining:** One of the most significant points raised was the need for survivors to have access to education and retraining opportunities. Many survivors not only lose their families and friends but also their jobs and financial independence. Respondents suggested that providing education and retraining programmes could help survivors rebuild their lives, offering them hope for the future and the ability to support themselves and their children.

**Empowering survivors:** Respondents emphasised the need to empower survivors by showing them they have the potential to change their lives and grow into the people they want to become. Many survivors have lost their sense of identity, and offering them opportunities to explore personal growth and development would help them regain confidence and self-worth.

#### 5. Mental Health and Therapy Services

**Dedicated mental health services:** Respondents called for a dedicated therapy service for victims of all ages, with early access to mental health support being a priority. They noted that if mental health issues are not addressed early, the long-term effects can be more severe and costly in terms of both the individual's well-being and the demand on public services. Mental health support should be an integral part of the recovery process, with survivors having access to professional counselling and therapy tailored to their specific experiences.

**Understanding trauma:** There was a call to integrate modern scientific understanding of trauma and how it can be healed into the strategy. Survivors need access to psychological tools that help them manage the long-term effects of abuse, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Respondents suggested that the strategy could do more to address the root causes of trauma and offer pathways to healing, not just for survivors but also for perpetrators where appropriate.

#### 6. Social and Community Integration

**Community and socialisation opportunities:** Respondents pointed out that survivors often face isolation after leaving abusive relationships. They suggested that offering survivors access to adult education, hobbies, and social activities, such as sports, would help them rebuild their social networks in a positive environment. These opportunities could be vital for helping survivors regain confidence, form new friendships, and reintegrate into the community.

**Healthy community development:** Some respondents highlighted the importance of developing healthy community connections for survivors beyond their immediate family. This could involve fostering "families of choice," where survivors build supportive relationships outside traditional family structures. Such initiatives could help survivors feel connected, supported, and empowered in their recovery.

#### 7. Legal and Judicial Support

**Legal advice and wider support:** Respondents agreed that access to legal advice is crucial, but questioned whether this should be the only legal support provided. There were calls to expand legal support to include guidance on financial settlements, child contact arrangements, and protection orders to ensure survivors are legally equipped to rebuild their lives.

**Post-separation abuse:** Another area of concern was post-separation abuse, particularly in cases involving child contact. Respondents wanted to see increased awareness among social

workers, the police, and judiciary about the risks associated with child contact in domestic abuse cases, to ensure that children are not used as tools of control by the perpetrator.

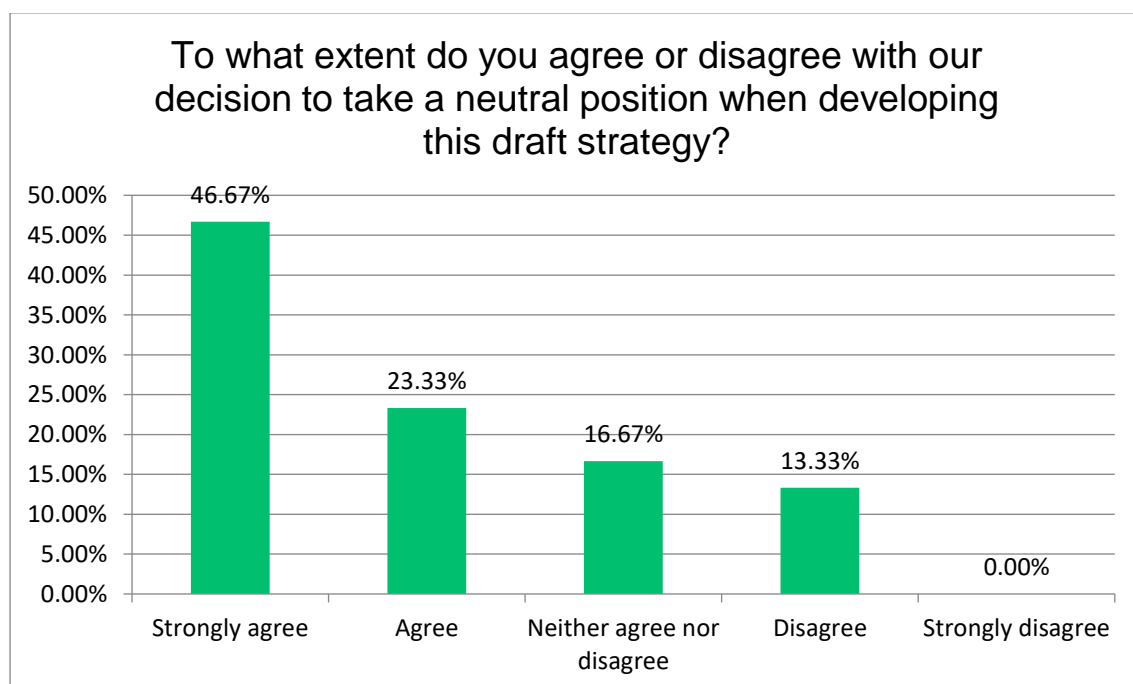
### How has the feedback been incorporated in to the final version?

No respondents disagreed with this priority; however they did provide useful feedback which has been incorporated in to the delivery plan as they focus more on specific deliverables. There was some feedback around children’s education being incorporated in to the strategy and so the following objective was added: Develop and implement initiatives to support children impacted by domestic abuse in their education by collaborating with schools and wider stakeholders to address their unique challenges to ensure children receive the necessary support to thrive academically and emotionally.

## Broader questions and feedback

### To what extent do you agree or disagree with our decision to take a neutral position when developing this draft strategy?

In response to the question about the decision to take a neutral position in developing the domestic abuse strategy, feedback from respondents was mixed, reflecting a broad spectrum of opinions. Some supported the idea of neutrality, while others felt that the strategy should explicitly prioritise certain groups, particularly women and girls, who are statistically more likely to experience domestic abuse.



#### 1. Support for a Neutral Approach

- **Inclusivity for all victims:** Several respondents supported the neutral approach, stating that it is vital for ensuring that support services are accessible to all victims of domestic abuse, regardless of gender. These respondents felt that taking a non-gendered stance would prevent any potential backlash or feelings of exclusion among male victims, who may already struggle to come forward due to societal stigma.

- **Hidden male victims:** Some highlighted that male victims are under-reported, and a gender-neutral approach may encourage more men to seek help. They emphasised that domestic abuse affects all genders and that a neutral strategy would be more inclusive in recognising and addressing the needs of both male and female victims.
- **Supporting non-binary victims:** One respondent pointed out that domestic abuse involving victims who identify as other than female is often hidden within an already hidden crime. They argued that using non-gendered language could encourage more people, particularly those who don't identify as female, to come forward and seek support.

## 2. Concerns About Gender Neutrality

- **Prioritising women and girls:** Many respondents felt that, while a neutral approach is important, the strategy should still recognise the disproportionate impact of domestic abuse on women and girls. Statistics show that the majority of victims are female, and some argued that this needs to be reflected in the provision of services. They felt that centring women and girls does not mean ignoring male victims, but rather addressing the specific, documented needs of the majority.
- **Safe spaces for women:** A few respondents raised concerns about the need for safe spaces for women and girls, particularly those that are exclusively for biological females. They argued that these spaces are crucial for survivors to feel secure and that the strategy should ensure their protection.
- **Acknowledging the difference in violence:** Some feedback stressed that although men can also be victims of domestic abuse, the level of violence and severity is typically higher for women. Respondents felt that while men need support, it is important to recognise the significant disparity in the experiences of men and women when it comes to abuse.

## 3. A Balanced and Nuanced Approach

- **Recognising harmful norms:** A key point raised by several respondents was that the strategy should not only be neutral but also address harmful norms and stereotypes that affect both men and women. While the strategy highlights issues such as problematic masculinity, respondents suggested that it should also acknowledge harmful stereotypes about women and other gender norms that contribute to abuse. They called for a broader, more inclusive discussion about societal expectations and how they perpetuate domestic abuse for all genders.
- **Both abusers and victims need support:** Some respondents went further to suggest that the strategy should recognise the humanity of both abusers and victims. They argued that many abusers are themselves victims of trauma and may need support to break the cycle of violence. A balanced approach would, therefore, not only support those who have been abused but also provide interventions for those who perpetrate harm, in order to help them heal and change their behaviours.

## 4. Statistical Evidence and Targeting Support

- **Data-driven approach:** A few respondents felt that the strategy should be data-driven. If research shows that women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, then the strategy should be designed accordingly, without neglecting male victims. These respondents suggested that services should be targeted where the need is greatest, and that gender-neutrality should not come at the expense of addressing the specific needs of female victims.
- **Equality versus equity:** One respondent noted the difference between equality and equity, arguing that treating everyone equally does not necessarily lead to fair outcomes. Instead, equity—providing more support to those who need it most—should

guide the strategy. They felt that prioritising services for women and girls does not negate the need to support male victims, but reflects the reality that women experience domestic abuse at much higher rates.

### How has the feedback been incorporated into the final version?

This question received the most mixed response in terms of whether people supported our approach to keep the strategy as gender neutral. To balance this we kept the strategy as gender neutral, but included an explanation on this at the beginning of the strategy:

*We acknowledge women are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse. We have used neutral language throughout to recognise anyone can experience abuse. However our delivery plan will include specific approaches based on the needs of different communities.*

As well as this, there was feedback throughout all priorities around the terminology and language used. As such we also added at the beginning the following:

*We interchangeably use these terms to respect diverse experiences. We recognise that individuals with lived experience may relate differently to these terms. In most cases we have used the term “victim” to reflect ongoing abuse, and “survivor” to reflect victims journeys to recover from abuse. In all instances where we refer to victim-survivors this encompasses all ages, aligning with the DA Act’s recognition of children as victims in their own right.*

### Feedback on the Colour Palette

Accessibility concerns were raised regarding the strategy’s original colour palette, which was based on green tones, alongside whites and greys, in line with West Berkshire’s branding. Respondents pointed out that this palette was not accessible for visually impaired individuals. Given this feedback, and acknowledging that this is a **partnership strategy**, the colour palette was revised to a blue colour to improve accessibility and ensure the strategy is inclusive of all audiences.



# Carers strategy

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Patrick Clark
<b>Report Author:</b>	Hannah Cole
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4577

## 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The strategy is a key document in setting out how the council will support carers in the district.
- 1.2 Carers make an invaluable contribution to the lives of people with care needs, often with significant impact on their own wellbeing and quality of life. In doing so, they reduce the burden on statutory services. Consequently, it is imperative that they receive appropriate support from the council.

## 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the attached strategy is adopted.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<p><b>Financial:</b></p>	<p>There are financial costs associated for example on commissioned services: respite provision, not providing these services will result in Carer breakdown subsequently result in greater costs incurred by the council for the cared for person. By providing these services to Carers is also saving the council a lot we don't have to pay for the service they are providing.</p> <p>The Council and Partners already pay for a range of services and there will not be any extra financial costs implementing this strategy.</p> <p>Please see Appendix B for a summary of the Councils current spend on Carers.</p>

	Accelerating Reform Funding grant will be used to deliver more services to carers. A breakdown of the grant funding is also attached in Appendix B
<b>Human Resource:</b>	Officer time will be required to take forward implementation
<b>Legal:</b>	<p>Local Authority duties to Carers are set out in the Care Act 2014. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) To provide and maintain an information and advice service about what can be done to help them (and those they care for) prevent, reduce, or delay the development of longer-term needs for care and support and help them look after their own wellbeing.</li> <li>b) Statutory entitlement for an assessment, support in their own right</li> <li>c) Arranging an independent advocate for any carer who would find it difficult to participate in their assessment and support planning when there is no one else to help.</li> </ul> <p>The adoption of the strategy will support compliance with those Care Act duties.</p> <p>It is important to note that the Care Quality Commission will expect that we have a dedicated Carers strategy which will support the delivery of the local authority's duties towards Carers. During the Care Quality Commission Assessment of West Berkshire Local Authority in February this year, they were keen to speak to between 10 to 30 Carers who had received Carers Assessment within 12 months. This gave an indication of the prominence CQC gives towards Carers to ensure the Local Authority is fulfilling its Care Act duties towards unpaid Carers.</p>
<b>Risk Management:</b>	N/A
<b>Property:</b>	N/A
<b>Policy:</b>	N/A

	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			The Strategy should support improved support to unpaid Carers including those with protected characteristics, e.g. disabilities.
<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 Strategy should support improved support to unpaid Carers including those with protected characteristics, e.g. disabilities.
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Health Impact:</b>	X			Social Care needs are closely related to Health needs; the strategy refers to continued joint working with our health partners.
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	X			The Carers Strategy supports the priorities outlined in the Council's Strategy.
<b>Core Business:</b>	X			The Carers Strategy supports the priorities outlined in the Council's Strategy.
<b>Data Impact:</b>		X		

<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>Consultation has taken place with key stakeholders and organisations during the development of the draft strategy. The partner organisations include representatives from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board</li><li>2. Unpaid representative (with lived experience)</li><li>3. Healthwatch West Berkshire</li><li>4. Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust</li><li>5. Carers Partnership for Reading and West Berkshire</li><li>6. The Advocacy People, Learning Disability Partnership Board</li><li>7. Crossroads Care for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire</li><li>8. Friends of Young Carers</li></ol> <p>Public consultation has not yet taken place.</p>
-------------------------------------	---

## 4 Executive Summary

4.1 There are important benefits to be derived from the publication a Carers Strategy for adults and children. It provides the following:

- Clarity on how the council will work together with partner organisations to identify and improve support for unpaid Carers.
- Clarity on how the council and partner organisations will support unpaid Carers to improve their physical, mental, emotional, and overall wellbeing.
- Clarity on the council's commitment to providing information and advice to unpaid Carers when they need it and at the right time.
- Raise awareness about the role of unpaid Carers and the valuable contribution they make and enabling them to access help and support.

4.2 A draft Carers strategy has been developed and will progress through the governance process before public consultation.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Introduction

5.1 The Carers Strategy 2019-2021 is being reviewed and co-produced. The delay has been due to the Covid 19 pandemic, and the notification received from the Care Quality Commission to assess Adult Social Care.

### Background

5.2 The process for the development of the draft Carers strategy is as follows:

- (a) Formation of a sub-group of the Carers Strategy Group which has reviewed the existing Carers Strategy
- (b) Development of an Action Plan which will be monitored by the Carers Strategy Group in the quarterly meetings.

### Proposals

5.3 The proposal is for the draft strategy to be presented to Operations Board

## 6 Other options considered.

To not develop a Carers' Strategy. This is not advised as it will undermine the support to this important group.

## 7 Conclusion

The adoption of the Carers' Strategy is an important step in ensuring that carers are appropriately supported by the council and partner agencies.

## 8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment stage one

Appendix B- Council's spend on Carers and breakdown of Accelerating Reform Fund Grant 2023-2025

---

### 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

---

## Carers strategy

---

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Officer details:

Name: Hannah Cole

Job Title: Service Manager and Principal Social Worker for Adults

Tel No: 077474787528

E-mail: [Hannah.Cole1@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Hannah.Cole1@westberks.gov.uk)

---

## Appendix A

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

<b>What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:</b>	For the Carers Strategy 2024-2027 be adopted.
<b>Summary of relevant legislation:</b>	The Care Act 2014,
<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>	<b>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></b> <b>If yes, please indicate which priority and provide an explanation</b>
<b>Name of Budget Holder:</b>	Hannah Cole
<b>Name of Service/Directorate:</b>	Adult Social Care /People
<b>Name of assessor:</b>	Hannah Cole
<b>Date of assessment:</b>	25.06.2024
<b>Version and release date (if applicable):</b>	

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

<b>(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?</b>	
<b>Aims:</b>	To carry out an effective consultation to support the development of the Carers Strategy

<b>Objectives:</b>	The Carers Strategy will provide clarity on how the council intend to support unpaid Carers, how it intends to work with partner agencies and staff.
<b>Outcomes:</b>	A strategy that is of benefit to unpaid Carers providing them with opportunities for better outcomes. This will ensure Carers feel more supported in their caring role, are able to improve their wellbeing and have a life outside of caring.
<b>Benefits:</b>	The Strategy will provide clarity for relevant partners.

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

<b>Group Affected</b>	<b>What might be the effect?</b>	<b>Information to support this</b>
Age	Several Carers are older adults caring for loved ones.	
Disability	We do have Carers who care for a disabled child or adult.	
Gender Reassignment		
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Race	We have Carers who come from diverse backgrounds, promoting diversity and quality in the provision of services.	
Religion or Belief		
Sex		
Sexual Orientation		
<b>Further Comments:</b>		

**(3) Result**



<b>Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
The Carers Strategy is an All-Age Strategy supporting inequalities among various service users and Carers groups.	
<b>Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
The proposed decision should have a positive impact on the lives of unpaid Carers, including employees and service users. It should create opportunity for good partnership working with partner agencies.	

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

Name: Hannah Cole

Date: 25.06.2024

**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

## Council's current spends on Carers

Table showing 2023/24 Expenditure Outturn and 2024/25 Month 2 Expenditure Forecast.

	2023/24	Month 2 2024/25
58102 Support to Carer Direct Payments	£51,771	£60,450
58103 Support to Carer Other	£421,436	£522,100
58306 LDS Short Breaks Service	£452,164	£463,670
59213 Adult Respite in the Community	£32,410	£29,270
	<b>£957,781</b>	<b>£1,075,490</b>

Number of Carers currently registered with the Council is 1164 for 2023/24

## Accelerating Refund Fund Grant from the Department of Health and Social Care

Place	March 2023 - 2024			Sept 2024 - 2025	
	RNF 23/24 funding	Consortium floor funding split as agreed by LAs	Total	RNF 24/25 funding	Total
Oxfordshire	£ 71,612	£ 75,000	£ 146,612	£ 218,707	£ 365,319
Buckinghamshire	£ 52,229	£ 75,000	£ 127,229	£ 159,511	£ 286,740
Reading	£ 17,798	£ 50,000	£ 67,798	£ 54,355	£ 122,152
West Berkshire	£ 15,653	£ 50,000	£ 65,653	£ 47,805	£ 113,458
Wokingham	£ 12,550	£ 50,000	£ 62,550	£ 38,327	£ 100,876
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 169,841</b>	<b>£ 300,000</b>	<b>£ 469,841</b>	<b>£ 518,704</b>	<b>£ 988,545</b>

# West Berkshire Council's Carers Strategy

2024-2027(Draft)



# Contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	Purpose	4
3.	National and Local Policies	4
4.	Approach	5
5.	Partner Organizations	5
6.	Our Vision	7
7.	Equality and Diversity	7
8.	Overview of the 6 Priorities	7
9.	Priority 1	10
10.	Priority 2	13
11.	Priority 3	21
12.	Priority 4	23
13.	Priority 5	27
14.	Priority 6	31
15.	Monitoring Arrangements	33
16.	References	33
17.	Appendix 1- Action Plan	34

# Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the West Berkshire Council's Carers' Strategy that covers the period 2024 to 2027.

Unpaid carers provide extremely valued services to the people they care for and to the community. These services are often overlooked and undervalued. This strategy sets out the actions that West Berkshire Council and its partners are planning to do to support carers and young carers. This is to help them in their caring responsibilities and to help them develop their own lives.

The strategy has been developed in conjunction with carers and young carers to ensure that their views were considered.



**Councillor Patrick Clark**  
Executive Member  
for Adult Social Care and  
Public Health,  
West Berkshire Council

DRAFT

# Summary

## The Vision and Purpose of the Strategy:

This strategy explains how Adult Social Care and partner organizations will work together to support carers of all ages over the next three years. Carers make a valuable contribution to the lives of people with care needs. In West Berkshire we want carers to feel recognized, listened to and supported enabling them to carry out their caring roles.

## The Priorities of the Strategy:

1. Raise awareness and increase the identification of carers (including hidden carers) to enable them to access help and support.	2. Provide information and advice to carers and young carers.	3. Enable access to peer support groups for carers and young carers.	4. Support carers to improve their physical, mental, emotional and overall wellbeing.	5. Support carers and young carers to take breaks from caring.	6. Support a life outside caring to enable carers and young carers to achieve their potential.
<p><b>Raise Awareness</b> Reading and West Berkshire Carers Partnership will continue to organize campaign events. The campaigns are to raise awareness of caring and the role of unpaid carers. Various events are organized during the year: National Carers Week (annual event in June) and Carers' Rights Day (annual event in November).</p> <p>Link up with Volunteer Centre, Community Centre, Newbury Library and Citizens Advice to make them aware of these events to promote among unpaid carers.</p> <p>Encourage carers who want to share their stories to do so. Stories can be recorded in audio, or video or translated into different languages.</p> <p>These stories will bring to light the significant contribution carers make and seeing them as experts and working in partnership with them.</p> <p><b>Identification of Carers</b> Training package for both internal and external professionals and partners to enable them to recognize and identify unpaid carers and where to signpost them.</p> <p>Organize workshops to deliver the training. Provide information about how to access the training and course content.</p> <p>Identify and support carers from minority communities, travellers, refugees, asylum seekers. Liaise with Berkshire Volunteer Centre, Citizens Advice, Community Centre to reach out to 'hidden' carers.</p>	<p>Promotion of the West Berkshire Directory to residents and professionals. There are plans to use the Accelerating Reform Funding grant to create a self-assessment service for unpaid carers by Summer 2024. Guidance will be provided to unpaid carers about completing the self-assessment service.</p> <p>To be able to access the carers self-assessment service carers must be digital literate.</p> <p>Promote and provide information about the Young Carers Card and Young Carers Newsletter for young carers in West Berkshire. The Newsletter is published quarterly. Presently the Young Carers Cards are not produced due to funding. We are currently reviewing this to see how we can support young carers.</p> <p>For young carers social media, Facebook, Instagram pages are updated weekly. The Young Carers Newsletter is circulated widely (all schools in West Berkshire, Youth Centres and Library) so that young Carers know where to get support and what the support entails. It is important for young carers to know the benefits of having the young carers card.</p> <p>Partner organizations providing publicizing online resources, e.g. •Joy - Joy   Social Prescribing Software (thejoyapp.com) •SHARON. •E-Learning. •Libraries. •Explore the growing potential of social media via the use of Twitter/Facebook to increase connectivity and highlight available support. Carers have access to good quality information in the carer journey when they need it.</p> <p>Adequate information for carers will continue to be provided through the Carers Partnership contact, and through Crossroads Care Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.</p> <p>Work with Communities to disseminate information about carers, offer advice and to ensure access from diverse communities. We are currently reviewing our translation and interpreting services.</p>	<p>Young Carers Service to continue providing support, advice to young carers.</p> <p>Opportunities for peer network and connections.</p> <p>Young carers are provided with the support they need to learn, develop and enjoying being a young person. Encouraging and Promoting Schools in West Berkshire to be active to take responsibility for young carers in their settings.</p> <p>Recruiting Young Carer Champions within schools.</p> <p>Signposting adult carers to peer support groups.</p> <p>Adult Social Care and the Carers Partnership can signpost carers to appropriate charities, voluntary and private organizations.</p>	<p>Raising awareness of the health impacts of caring.</p> <p>The Carers Partnership, General Practitioner Surgeries, Adult Social Care will help reinforce the importance of carers mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing.</p> <p>Carers will be followed up in writing after a Carers assessment with a clear outcome. The assessment should include consideration of the impact on the caring role on the carer's mental, physical emotional and overall wellbeing.</p> <p>Improve support options for carers so that they can have time for their own appointments to get their own health checks done. Providing a sitting service to allow them time to get these done (this is subject to an individual Carers Assessment).</p>	<p>Working with Commissioners in Adult Social Care to look at the current offer around respite provision and direct payments for carers to enable them to access flexible short breaks and respite'.</p> <p>All school holiday activities for young carers.</p> <p>Honeyport Charity provides overnight respite breaks for young carers up to the age of 13 years.</p> <p>To safeguard against young carers providing inappropriate levels of care. Carers Assessments to be offered. No Wrong Doors procedures in place.</p> <p>Work with the Disabled Children's team to look at the current offer around respite provision and direct payments for parent Carers.</p> <p>An assessment is offered to the parents/families for a parent carer needs assessment by the Children with Disabilities Team. This is dependent on whether the parent meets the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Supporting access to replacement care when necessary.</p> <p>To inform Adult Social Care as early as possible when this is necessary.</p> <p>Identifying sustainable arrangements.</p>	<p>Social care professionals to recognize carers' right to life outside caring.</p> <p>Recognize transition points – becoming a carer, stopping a caring role, moving from being a young carer to an adult carer.</p> <p>Training opportunities through West Berkshire Consortium for young carers</p>

# 1. Introduction

West Berkshire Council Carers Strategy 2024-2027 explains how the council, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) and partner organizations plan to work together to identify, improve support and enable unpaid carers who live in West Berkshire or are providing care to someone who lives in West Berkshire to balance their caring responsibilities with a life outside of caring.

# 2. Purpose

This strategy covers unpaid carers of all ages (including children, and adults living in the West Berkshire Council area. Carers and young carers make a vital contribution to their community by supporting those with care and support needs. The caring role is unique, but carers can be grouped into different categories to ensure we provide the right help and support to match their needs. Some examples include young carers (aged under 18 years), carers aged 18-25 years, working carers, parent carers (providing care to a child with additional needs under the age of 18 years), and carers providing support to someone aged 18 or over as well as unidentified and unknown Carers.

According to NHS England ([NHS - Who is considered a Carer](#)) a carer has been defined as “anyone, including children and adults who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without their support. The care they give is unpaid”.

Throughout this strategy term ‘Carers’ covers all carers including young carers.

The council wants all carers to have the support that they need and when they need it most (in a timely manner) without unnecessary delays. This involves providing the right information available to them at the right time and in a format that is appropriate and accessible to them.

We recognize caring for someone can be a tough job so we want to make sure carers have timely support to ensure they can continue in their caring role and have a life outside of caring.



# 3. National and Local Policies

This strategy is based on the following legislation and relevant National Policies and guidance that support carers:

- [Care Act 2014](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Carers action plan 2018 to 2020](#)
- [National Health Service Act 2006](#)
- [NHS England » Commitment to carers](#)
- [Carers UK - State of caring 2022](#)

Local Strategies, Policies and Guidance include:

- [West Berkshire Council - Berkshire West Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2030](#)
- [Council Strategy 2023-2027](#)
- [Public Health for Berkshire - Berkshire West 0-19s Health Needs Assessment 2020](#)
- [West Berkshire Council - Adult Autism Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022 \(currently being revised\)](#)
- [West Berkshire Council - Adult Social Care Strategy 2022 - 2026](#)
- [No Wrong Doors](#)
- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework \(Dec 2023\)](#)

Other relevant documents that the West Berkshire Carers Strategy is linked to are:

- [Berkshire Policies & Procedures for Safeguarding Adults](#)
- [West Berkshire Council Equality Policy \(Jan 2018\)](#)
- [West Berkshire SEND Strategy - Draft \(2023-2028\)](#)



## 4. Approach

This overarching strategy identifies a set of key priorities and will be supported by a **Carers Strategy Action Plan** which will be owned, monitored and reviewed (quarterly) by the Carers Strategy Group. The Group is made up of:

- Principal Social Worker for Adults – Chair of the group meetings.
- Advocates from the Learning Disability Partnership Board
- Carers Partnership, Reading and West Berkshire
- Carers Lead at Berkshire Healthcare (NHS)
- Outreach Team, The Watermill Theatre
- Unpaid carer with lived experience
- Public Health Team, WBC
- Representative from NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & Berkshire West (BOB ICB)
- Information Coordinator Adult Social Care (WBC)
- Early Help & Prevention Lead for the Children Contact Advice & Assessment Service
- Health Watch, West Berkshire

The strategy has been developed based on feedback from carers and in partnership with organizations listed below.

## 5. Partner Organizations

- Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board
- Unpaid carer representative
- Healthwatch West Berkshire
- Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Carers Partnership for Reading and West Berkshire
- The Advocacy People, LD Partnership Board
- Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Crossroads Care
- Friends of Young Carers



As of 1st November 2022, West Berkshire Council entered a partnership with Reading Borough Council and formed the Carers Partnership for Reading and West Berkshire. The partnership members are made up of four charities; Age UK Berkshire, Age UK Reading, CommuniCare and Reading Mencap.



## The Carers Partnership

- Provides support for carers in their caring role.
- Finds local services and sources of help.
- Looks after your health and wellbeing.
- Connects with other carers.
- Helps you understand your rights.
- Provides Carers Assessments for Reading based carers.

How to contact the Carers Partnership:

**CommuniCare** provides information, advice and support to carers in need in Reading and West Berkshire.

CommuniCare, 233 Kings Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 4LS

Telephone: 0118 926 3941

Email: [Email address for CommuniCare](#)

Website: [Website address for CommuniCare](#)

**Age UK Berkshire** provides support for the carers of older people age 50 plus in West Berkshire.

Age UK Berkshire, Unit 119 Broad Street Mall, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7QE

Telephone: 0118 959 4242

Email: [Email address for Age UK Berkshire](#)

Website: [Website address for Age UK Berkshire](#)

**Reading Mencap** offers support for carers of children and adults with a learning disability and/or autism.

Reading Mencap, 21 Alexandra Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5PE

Telephone: 0118 966 2518

Email: [Email address for Reading Mencap](#)

Website: [Website address for Reading Mencap](#)

**Age UK Reading** offers support to carers of older people over the age of 50 in Reading.

Age UK Reading, Walford Hill, Carey Street, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7JS

Telephone: 0118 950 2480

Email: [Email address for Age UK Reading](#)

Website: [Website address for Age UK Reading](#)

## 6. Our Vision

We want West Berkshire to be a community where:

- Carers of all ages are identified, recognized and valued.
- Carers have access to relevant information and can access the support they need (either practical or emotional) to meet their ongoing needs.
- We want to ensure that intervention and support make a positive difference in our unpaid carers' lives
- Can achieve the desired outcomes that matter to them.

## 7. Equality and Diversity

Carers come from diverse backgrounds: race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, disability (mental or physical). The West Berkshire Equality Policy aims to promote fairness and demonstrate equality of opportunity in the provision of services to all its residents. The needs of carers from these groups may be different. Our Carers Strategy Plan seeks to ensure that carers from ethnic minority backgrounds receive access to relevant information to address any barriers that may have been identified. It will seek to ensure there is fair access to services for carers of all ages irrespective of their ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The Council values the work that carers do and wants to make sure they have the support they need for themselves and in their caring role. This includes providing information about promoting their general health and wellbeing, employment, involving in activities outside of their caring role, training opportunities, having regular breaks and keeping in contact with friends and other family members (networks).

## 8. Overview of the 6 Priorities

In order to achieve our vision, we have identified the following 6 key priority areas:

- 1. Raise awareness and increase the identification of carers (including hidden carers) to enable them to access help and support.**
- 2. Provide information and advice to carers and young carers.**
- 3. Enable access to peer support groups for carers and young carers.**
- 4. Support carers to improve their physical, mental, emotional and overall wellbeing.**
- 5. Support carers and young carers to take breaks from caring.**
- 6. Support a life outside caring to enable carers and young carers to achieve their potential.**

***“For West Berkshire to be a community where carers of all ages are identified, recognized and valued.”***

# Overview of West Berkshire Council Carers Strategy 2024-2027



# Priorities identified by carers

## Carer Key Priorities

Access to respite care –unsure how to access this support?

Emotional and mental health support

Efficient communication from Local authority and other agencies

Impact of caring and quality of life

Information and Advice – not knowing what is available for carers

Help with practical tasks at home (household tasks)

# 9. Priority 1

## Raise awareness and increase the identification of carers (including hidden carers) to enable them to access help and support.

### Why is this important?

Until a carer or young carer has been identified, they cannot access support either emotionally, physically or financially. Most people do not see themselves as a carer.

As stated in the State of Caring 2022 report '71% of carers stated that seeing themselves primarily as a family member or friend was a barrier to identifying themselves as a carer. Half of all carers (51%) took over a year to recognize their caring role, with over a third (36%) taking over three years to recognize themselves as a carer'.

These carers are therefore missing out on help and support that could help them in their caring role and access to information such as carers' groups and benefits advice. They could also be missing out on legal rights, practical help, or rights in the workplace or Technology Enabled Care. Early identification is a key barrier in getting the required support as a carer at the right time. Therefore one of the key actions this strategy will do is to raise the profile of residents in West Berkshire who are involved in a caring role to recognize themselves as a carer at the onset of their caring role. Understanding their rights is crucial which in turn helps them to access support as a carer.

To achieve this we will need support from our health partners, schools and colleges, voluntary sector services, community groups and private organizations.

### What is the picture in West Berkshire?

According to the 2021 Census data for unpaid carers in England and Wales published by the Office for National Statistics on the 19th January 2023 indicates an under reporting of carer status. The explanation given for this is linked to the question asked in the 2021 census which differed to the question and wording in the 2011 census. In the 2021 census 4.4% of West Berkshire residents (aged five years and over)



reported providing up to 19 hours of unpaid care each week. This figure decreased from 7.2% in 2011. These are age-standardized proportions. Source: Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census and 2021 Census.

The overview of support to carers registered with Adult Social Care in West Berkshire is 1273 for 2022/23. This has been noted as a 6% decrease in volume reported in 2021/22 (ASC Statutory Returns 2022/23).

# Priority 1

**Raise awareness and increase the identification of carers (including hidden carers) to enable them to access help and support.** How will this be achieved?

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	<p><b>Raise Awareness</b> Reading and West Berkshire Carers Partnership will continue to organize campaign events. The campaigns are to raise awareness of caring and the role of unpaid carers. Various events are organized during the year: National Carers Week (annual event in June) and Carers' Rights Day (annual event in November).</p> <p>Link up with Volunteer Centre, Community Centre, Newbury Library and Citizens Advice to make them aware of these events to promote among unpaid carers.</p>	<p>Monitor the number of carers who attend these events regularly or on a one-off basis.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Increase in number of carers who attend these events and check whether new carers were identified.</p> <p>According to the latest Office for National Statistics survey results which were published in January 2023 <a href="https://ons.gov.uk/people-in-work/unpaid-care">Unpaid care, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)</a> the number of households in West Berkshire increased in 2021 to 66,700. 92.2% of people aged 5 years and over provide unpaid care in West Berkshire.</p>
	<p>Encourage carers who want to share their stories to do so. Stories can be recorded in audio, or video or translated into different languages.</p> <p>These stories will bring to light the significant contribution carers make and seeing them as experts and working in partnership with them.</p>	<p>Stories can be shared at carer events (with the consent of the carer).</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>More people will be able to identify themselves as carers.</p>

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	<p><b>Identification of Carers</b> Training package for both internal and external professionals and partners to enable them to recognize and identify unpaid carers and where to signpost them.</p> <p>Organize workshops to deliver the training.</p> <p>Provide information about how to access the training and course content.</p>	<p>Evaluation Forms from staff who attend the training to see whether their knowledge and understanding of carers has increased and how to support carers and where to signpost them.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>An increase in the number of people attending the training workshops / sessions. This will also result in the number of carers being identified.</p>
	<p>Identify and support carers from minority communities, travellers, refugees, asylum seekers. Liaise with Berkshire Volunteer Centre, Citizens Advice, Community Centre to reach out to 'hidden' carers.</p>	<p>To use the Office of National Statistics data to inform us about minority communities and languages represented in West Berkshire.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>A fair representation of carers from all backgrounds across West Berkshire.</p>

# 10. Priority 2

## To provide information and advice to carers and young carers.

This will ensure that carers can make informed decisions and access support in an appropriate way.

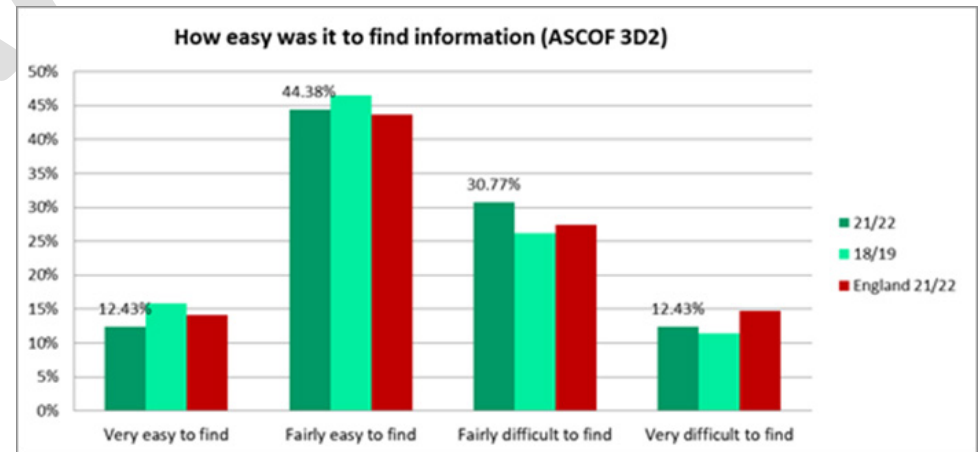
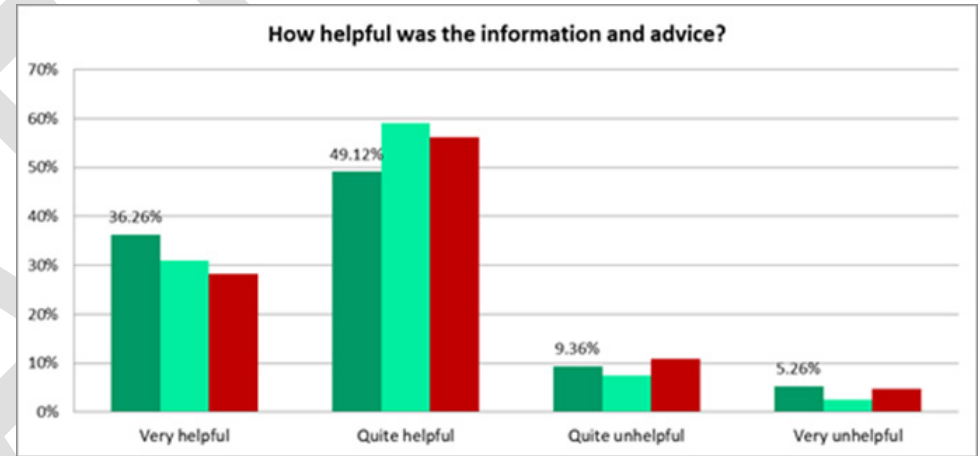
### Why is this important?

To provide personalized support to carers and make sure that the right information provided is accurate and easily accessible and in a variety of formats to enable carers and young carers make informed decisions. Formats to include large prints, PDF formats and translated into various languages on request. Providing information to ensure we are responsive, proactive and offer holistic support in a timely manner.

The Adult Social Care Strategy states clearly the Council’s duty to provide information and advice to all service users which carers should also have access to.

According to the West Berkshire Adult Social Care Caring for Others Survey 2021/22 conducted by Adult Social Care West Berkshire with regards to information and advice quality, 85.4% of carers found information and advice received ‘very’ or ‘quite’ helpful compared with (ASCOF 3D2) where 56.8% of carers found it ‘very easy’ or ‘fairly easy’ to find. The Survey Summary report noted a drop in performance compared to 2018/19.

Adult Social Care Caring for Others survey 2021/22





We also looked at the findings from the Survey of Adult Carers in England 2021/22 in relation to what carers said about information and advice they received. The percentage of carers that used information and advice to help them as a carer dropped from 51.4 % (150,220) in 2018/19 to 49.9% (160,760) in 2021/22. 47.4% (294,750) of carers in 2021/22 did not use information and advice.

**Personal Social Services Survey of Adult Carers in England - NHS Digital**

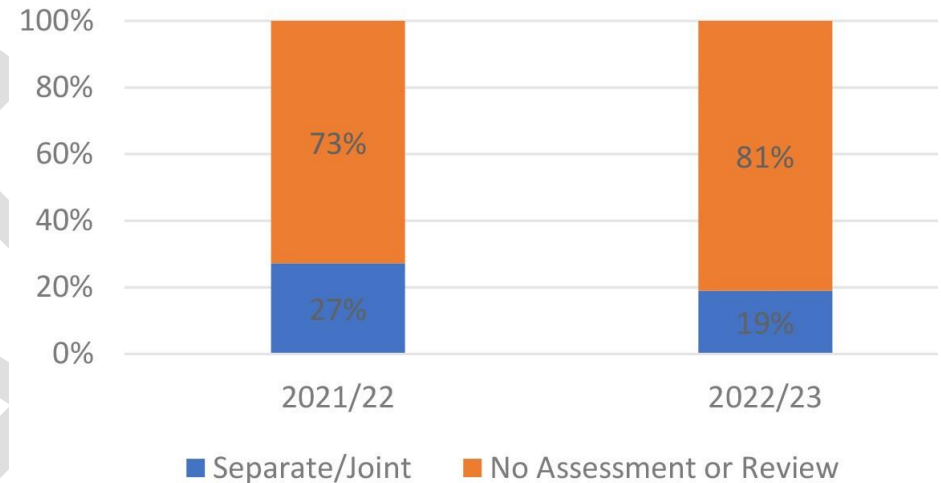
Information and advice is key to ensuring people recognize themselves as carers so that they can access ongoing support. Carers and young carers should have access to various types of support online. Online support is highly valued by some carers although not all carers have easy access to online facilities. The internet provides an alternative way for carers to access information and advice but also peer support whenever it is needed. This can be particularly important for carers who find themselves restricted to the home because of their caring role. Young carers can find support provided online to be useful.

**What is the picture in West Berkshire for Carer’s assessments?**

A Carers assessment is ‘a chance to let your local council or trust know how your caring responsibilities affect you physically and emotionally. They will use the assessment to find out what support you need, whether you’re willing or able to carry on caring, what you want to achieve in your daily life and whether you qualify for help [Carers UK; Having a carer’s assessment](#)).

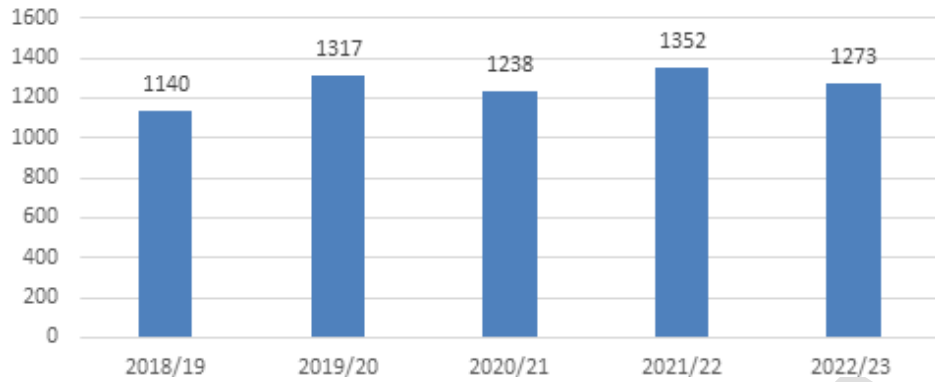
The graph below shows the percentage of Carers Assessment or Reviews completed by ASC from 2021 to 2022/23.

Carers Assessed or Reviewed during the Year



Carers assessed/reviewed has decreased (241 compared to 368 last year). Proportion of carers assessed has decreased to 19% compared to 27% last year’ (SALT ASC Statutory Reporting 2022/23).

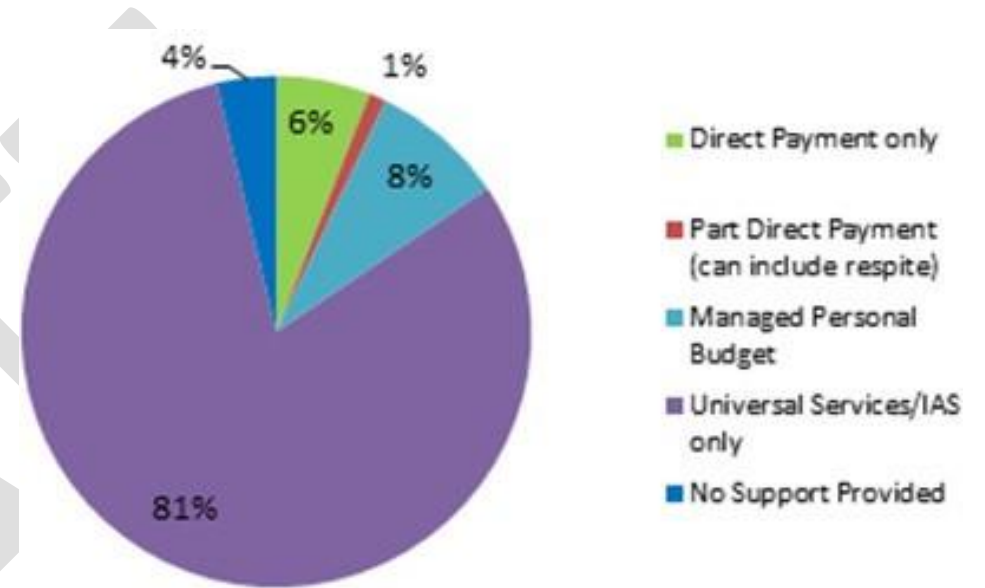
### Distinct Carers supported in the year



#### LTS003: Carers Supported in the Year

- 1273 carers reported, a 6% decrease.
- 81% received Information/Advice/Signposting. The majority of carers are identified as part of the 'cared for' assessment.
- Carers independently assessed/reviewed has decreased (241 compared to 368 last year), more are jointly assessed as part of cared-for assessment.

### 2022/23 Carers support provided in Adult Social Care West Berkshire



*Datasource: LTS003 Carers statutory reports*

## Young Carers Assessments completed by Children and Family Service

### Young Carers Storyboard 1

#### What were the concerns?

Referral received from The Castle School highlighting family struggling with the challenging behaviors of older brother H due to dual diagnosis. Parents felt they were at crisis point and some physical altercations between father and H. S17 assessment led to MFF support with referral to Young Carers for F.

#### Where we were and what was likely outcome?

It was noted that F was a clear source of support for H when he was highly dysregulated and was at times the only one who could calm him down. Parents were struggling with him physically and F was witness to them attempting to manage him physically and F was witness to them attempting to mane him physically with some risk of physical harm. Without intervention both H and F were at risk of further emotional and physical harm.

#### What difference have we made?

F is due to attend weekly groups and be offered holiday activities which will give her some respite from her role in supporting her brother at home as well as allow her to connect with other young carers her own age. She can also attend the Theatre group described as "A weekly drama group for young people who have complications in their life to take time out, connect and play. If you would like some time each week to clear your head, use your imagination, and explore your world, interval could be for you. Each session will be playful, creative, and different, using all the fun of drama with none of the pressure."

#### What have we done differently with Early Response Hub within CAAS Front Door?

MFF referred F for a Young Carers assessment to consider her active role in supporting her brother. It was clear that F does not get to attend any activities outside of school due to the support she offers her brother and how busy her parents are managing his needs. F meets the criteria of being a Young Carer and was offered the weekly youth club and holiday activities. She was also referred to The Water Mills theatre interval weekly group.

## Young Carers Storyboard 2

### What were the concerns?

Some family history and a current referral from the LA's ASD specialist who noted the impact of siblings additional needs on J.

### Where we were and what was likely outcome?

The family present as protective and acting appropriately to manage the needs all children in the home however, J may have struggled with expression emotions or feeling rather burdened by his caring role without support.

### How will this be achieved?

There is a responsibility on each partner organisation making sure that their information and advice to Carers is:

- Clear
- Relevant and appropriate
- Proportionate

Cover areas relevant to Carers e.g. Carers' Rights, welfare benefits, available services and assessment process.

### What difference have we made?

The family have access to community services and support including young carers through the service. This has allowed them to ensure Jake has a break and enjoy activities they could not otherwise access.

### What have we done differently with Early Response Hub within CAAS Front Door?

Young carers assessment noted that J met criteria for services. Whilst he does not attend a weekly youth club he does enjoy holiday activities including a recent sailing trip and any further water based activities will ensure hr is prioritised.

# Priority 2

## To provide information and advice to carers and young carers.

How will this be achieved?

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	<p>Promotion of the West Berkshire Directory to residents and professionals. There are plans to use the Accelerating Reform Funding grant to create a self-assessment service for unpaid carers by Summer 2024. Guidance will be provided to unpaid carers about completing the self-assessment service.</p>	<p>There are plans to upgrade the West Berkshire Directory in 2024.</p> <p>A marketing campaign will commence when the upgrade is complete which should be in the Autumn of 2024. The campaign will focus on residents (including carers), partners and professionals. Face to face focus support can be given to groups how to find information.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Carers can use the directory more easily to find the information they need at the right time.</p>
	<p>To be able to access the Carers Self-assessment Service carers must be digital literate.</p>	<p>Record of how many carers complete the online assessment and how many unable to do so. Alternative options to be provided to carers who are not able to complete the online self-assessments.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Carers will be more digital literate and be able to access online services and support much quicker.</p>

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	<p>Promote and provide information about the Young Carers Card and Young Carers Newsletter for young carers in West Berkshire. The Newsletter is published quarterly. Presently the Young Carers Cards are not produced due to funding. We are currently reviewing this to see how we can support young carers.</p> <p>For young carers social media, Facebook, Instagram pages are updated weekly.</p> <p>The Young Carers Newsletter is circulated widely (all schools in West Berkshire, Youth Centre's and Library) so that young carers know where to get support and what the support entails. It is important for young carers to know the benefits of having the young carers card.</p>	<p>The Young Carers Card is important as it enables access to social activities where the young carer is in a supporting role and may need to identify themselves as a carer. Other instances it may be beneficial to have the card is when a young carer may be collecting medication for the cared for person and identification as a carer is required.</p> <p>To be eligible for a young carers card priority will be given to young carers who provide significant amount of care or may be a sole carer for their parents or relatives.</p>	2024-2027	<p>Increase in requests for Young Carers Card.</p> <p>Increase in number of young carers who participate in the activities /good uptake to the activities organized for young carers.</p> <p>Increase number of followers on social media and interaction from young carers and families.</p>
	<p>Partner organisations providing or publicising online resources, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joy - <a href="https://thejoyapp.com">Joy   Social Prescribing Software (thejoyapp.com)</a></li> <li>• SHaRON.</li> <li>• E-Learning.</li> <li>• Libraries.</li> <li>• Explore the growing potential of social media via the use of Twitter/ Facebook to increase connectivity and highlight available support.</li> </ul>	<p>Increase in online resources for Carers information so it is easy for Carers when they are looking for any information.</p>	2024-2027	<p>Carers have a wider choice of online services and information they can access.</p>

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	<p>Carers have access to good quality information in the carer journey when they need it.</p> <p>Adequate information for carers will continue to be provided through the Carers Partnership contact, and through Crossroads Care Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.</p> <p>Work with Communities to disseminate information about carers, offer advice and to ensure access from diverse communities.</p> <p>We are currently reviewing our translation and interpreting services.</p>	<p>Reading and West Berkshire Carers Partnership submit a quarterly Contract Monitoring Report which outlines the number of carers that have been provided with information and advice.</p> <p>The NHS England-Personal Social Services Adult Social Care Survey (ASCS) takes place every two years. The survey has questions related to Carers being provided with information and advice.</p> <p>Our website, including our support for Carers information <a href="#">Support for Carers - West Berkshire Council</a> can be translated into other languages using Google Translate. Use the 'Websites' tab in Google Translate and paste the url, then choose the language.</p> <p>The Carers Information Booklet can be translated into different languages or formats such as large print on request and can be supplied Digital form or hard copy and posted out. Contact details for requests for different formats are on the back page of the booklet.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Carers can access the information and support that enables them to continue in their caring role.</p>

# 11. Priority 3

## Enable Access to Peer Support Groups for Carers and Young Carers.

### Why is this important?

Peer support groups for carers and young carers provide valuable emotional support. They provide an opportunity for carers and young carers to have a break from caring and can show them they are not alone in their caring role. In addition, carers and young carers can provide each other practical advice having been in the same situation and through attending a group, it can help a carer to escape social isolation. Groups can also support people to develop wider social relationships.

### What is the picture in West Berkshire?

Many peer support groups currently exist for carers and young carers in West Berkshire. These have been identified as being valuable to the carers and young carers they support.





# Priority 3

## Enable Access to Peer Support Groups for Carers and young Carers.

How will this be achieved?

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	<p>Young Carers Service to continue providing support, advice to young carers.</p> <p>Opportunities for peer network and connections.</p> <p>Young carers are provided with the support they need to learn, develop and enjoying being a young person.</p>	<p>Attendance to weekly groups.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Carers and young carers can build peer network and connections.</p>
	<p>Encouraging and Promoting Schools in West Berkshire to be active to take responsibility for young carers in their settings.</p> <p>Recruiting Young Carer champions within schools.</p>	<p>Monitor to get regular updates among schools that are committed to recognizing and supporting young carers.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Increase in numbers of schools that have taken up this role.</p> <p>Currently two schools are actively running weekly groups and there is a key contact person within the school.</p>
	<p>Signposting Adult Carers to Peer support groups.</p> <p>Adult Social Care and the Carers Partnership can signpost carers to appropriate charities, voluntary and private organizations.</p>	<p>We will set a baseline for number of carers attending group sessions.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Benefit from services in the community and expand networks</p>

# 12. Priority 4

## Ensure Carers are supported to improve their Physical, Mental, Emotional and Overall Wellbeing.

### Why is this important?

Caring can have a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of the person providing unpaid care. It is important that a carer and young carer can stay healthy, both for themselves but also to enable them to continue to provide their caring role. It is known that carers often neglect their own health, missing routine health checks and immunizations. In addition, carers often report feeling stressed, anxious and suffering from depression.

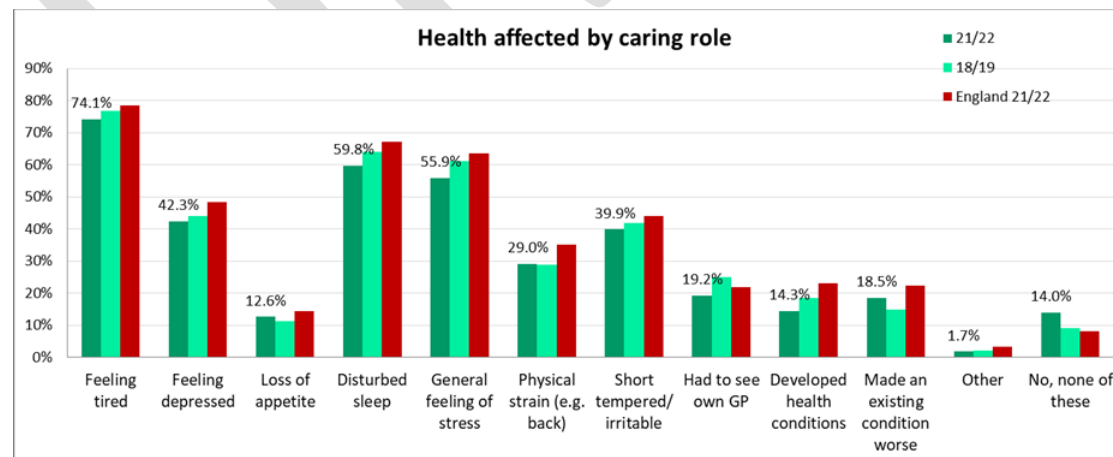
Carers and young carers play a vital role in our society. The Care Act 2014 has strengthened the rights and recognition of carers, giving them the equivalence in law to the people they care for. Carers are entitled to a thorough assessment of their needs with a duty placed on West Berkshire Council to provide help and support to promote the wellbeing of carers.

The Children and Families Act (2014) provides young carers with a similar right to assessment. It is important to acknowledge that although caring can be rewarding and fulfilling it can also have a negative impact on the carer on the physical health, emotional and mental wellbeing. It can lead to carer burn out and the caring role will be put at risk.

### What is the picture in West Berkshire?

The Caring for Others Survey carried out by Adult Social Care West Berkshire Council 2021/22 findings in relation to what carers said about caring affecting their health.

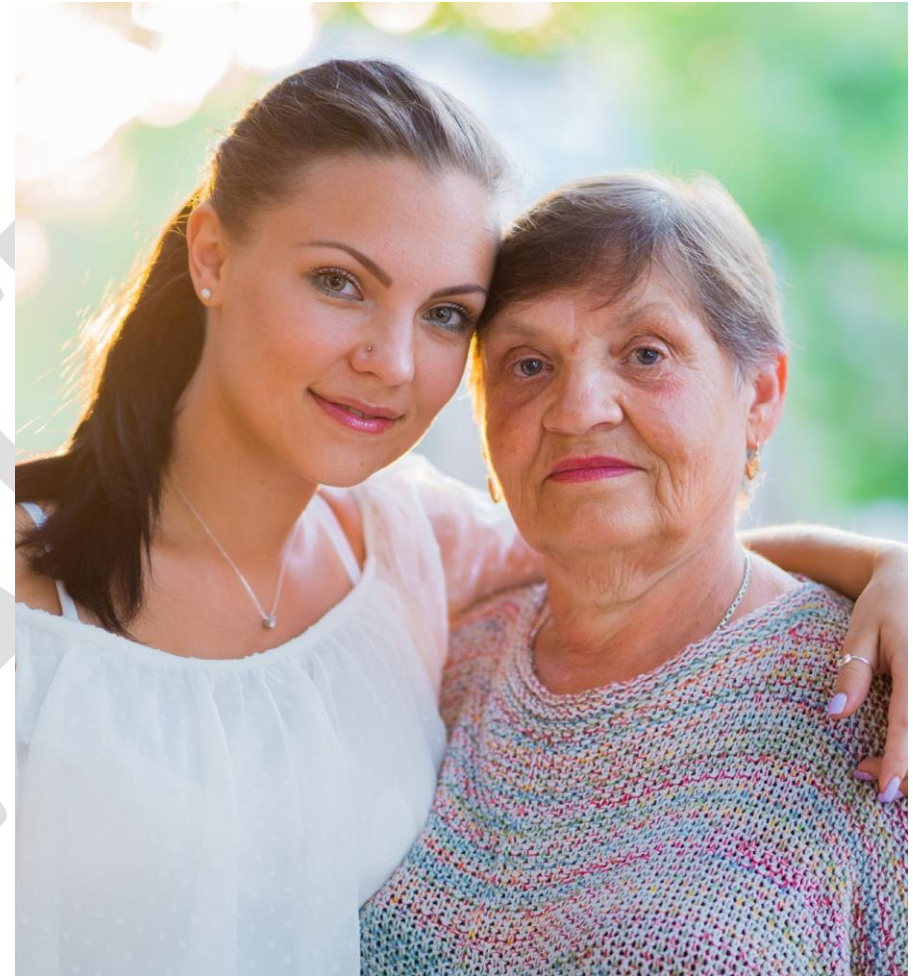
‘Many carers report that their Caring role is impacting on their health, with feeling tired and disturbed sleep the most common impacts (see graph below)’.



Similarly the survey of Adult Carers in England 2021/22 findings showed that the caring role had impacted on Carer's general health, with an increase in proportion of carers reporting general feelings of stress and feeling depressed. However, the survey summary stated that 'the proportion of carers that had to see their own GP had decreased from 29.0 per cent (84,900) in 2018-19 to 21.8 per cent (70,190) in 2021-22. The summary report also stated that the impact of COVID-19 should be considered.

The State of Caring 2022 Survey Report mentions that 'there is increasing evidence that caring should be considered a social determinant of health'. One of the key findings from this survey was that 'over a fifth of carers (21%) said their physical health was 'bad' or 'very bad'. Carers rated their mental health as worse than their physical health, with 30% saying their mental health was 'bad' or very bad' (no change from 2021)'.  
*DRAFT*

***'there is increasing evidence that caring should be considered a social determinant of health'.***



# Priority 4

Carers are supported to improve their Physical, Mental, Emotional and Overall Wellbeing.

How will this be achieved?

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	<p>Raising awareness of the health impacts of caring.</p> <p>The Carers Partnership, General Practitioner Surgeries, Adult Social Care will help reinforce the importance of carers mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing.</p>	<p>We will use census data from the National Carers Survey and Adult Social Care Survey to inform us.</p>	2024-2027	Improvement in carers mental and physical health and overall, wellbeing.
	<p>Carers will be followed up in writing after a Carers Assessment with a clear outcome. The assessment should include consideration of the impact on the caring role on the carer's mental, physical emotional and overall wellbeing.</p>	<p>Carers Assessments to focus on the outcomes for the carers in relation to their health and overall wellbeing.</p>	2024-2027	Carers will be better equipped to continue their caring role should they wish to do so.
	<p>Improve support options for carers so that they can have time for their own appointments to get their own health checks done. Providing a sitting service to allow them time to get this done (this is subject to an individual Carers Assessment).</p>	<p>Carers to be provided with information so they can decide as early as possible and be referred to Crossroads care in advance of the appointments. They will need to be assessed by Crossroads Care who complete Risk assessments and draw up Care plans.</p> <p>Feedback from Crossroads Care for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.</p>	2024-2027	Improvement in carers health and wellbeing (physical and mental health).

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	Ensuring that carers have easier access to local services that can support and contribute to their overall wellbeing. For example, Eight Bells for Mental Health support offer counselling service. West Berkshire directory for more details on support services for carers.	To work closely with primary health care/GP practices and Social Prescribers service to support them to recognize the wider needs of carers which can affect their physical and mental health so that they are referred and signposted to appropriate services for support. For example, Talking Therapies through the health service.	2024-2027	Improvement in carers mental health.
	To explore how carers can be provided with affordable and flexible opportunities which will enable them to participate in activities which promotes and contributes to their health and wellbeing. Working closely with partners such as local Leisure Centre's, community groups (West Berkshire Directory).	West Berkshire directory for more details on support services for carers.	2024-2027	Improvement in carers overall wellbeing Results from the Surveys (National and the Caring for others Survey) will inform us.
	Employers to consider and include support for carers who are in employment as part of their wellbeing strategy.  Carers Leave Act 2023 came into force on the 6th April 2024  Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023 came into force in April 2024.	Dementia Friendly West Berkshire focus on raising awareness and understanding about dementia with employers and encourage local businesses and employers to consider support for carers.	2024-2027	Prevent carers from giving up work and can continue in employment.
	The effect of the cost-of-living crisis is having an impact on carers' particularly those who care for those with a disability. Carers should therefore be supported to access grant funding and capital funding to help them improve their finances.	Additional information is available from West Berkshire Council Cost of Living : Health and Wellbeing <a href="#">West Berkshire Council; Cost of Living: Health and wellbeing</a>	2024-2027	Getting the right information is crucial for carers with regards to their financial circumstances as this can help if they are finding things difficult financially.

# 13. Priority 5

## Support carers and young carers to take breaks from caring.

### Why is this important?

Being a carer or young carer can be challenging, both physically and emotionally. Taking a break from this role is important to allow carers and young carers to focus on their own health and wellbeing. A break from caring can take a number of different forms, it may be an hour each week, a day here or there or a longer holiday away.

### What is the picture in West Berkshire?

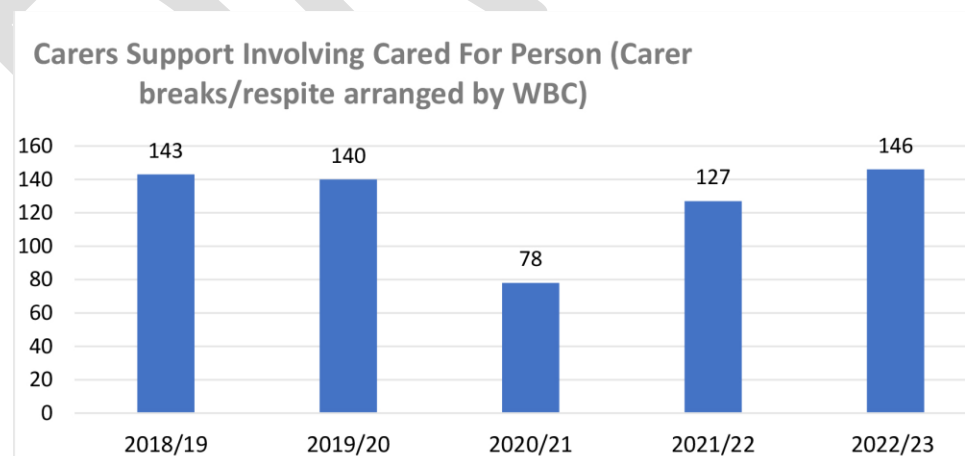
‘Carer Respite/Replacement care:

Respite arranged by LA has increased by 15%’ (SALT ASC statutory Reporting 2022/23). ‘Carers are given the opportunity to discuss with practitioners and support staff the value of having a break from caring and

the options available’. This cannot always be planned. Getting the support early without having to reach a crisis point is paramount.

Access to respite services for carers in West Berkshire is provided by Crossroads Care, covering Oxfordshire and West Berkshire areas. Crossroads Care provides emergency services for carers. Referrals can only be made within office hours to help with carers hospital appointments, carers breakdowns or emergency situation where a carer end up in hospital.

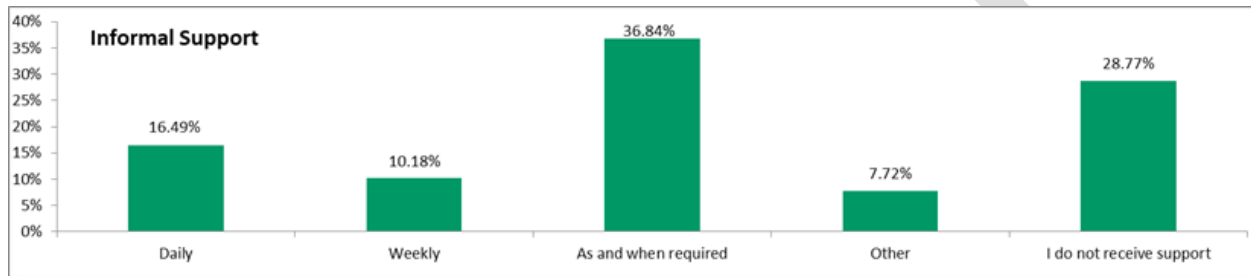
Findings from the Caring for others survey 2021/22 indicated respite care still remains an issue. ‘Respite- many indicated that they could use more respite in order to take long or short breaks from their caring role. Some indicated that they have requested this respite but unable to have it due to availability of carers’.



## Informal Support

27% of respondents indicated that they have daily or weekly informal support to their caring role'.

Comparing this to the wider picture in the State of Caring 2022 report '41% of carers haven't taken a break in the last year. A quarter of carers (26%) haven't tried to take a break because they felt it was too difficult'.



# Priority 5

## Support carers and young carers to take breaks from caring.

How will this be achieved?

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	Working with Commissioners in Adult social care to look at the current offer around respite provision and direct payments for carers to enable them to access flexible short breaks and respite'.	Carers Strategy Group quarterly meetings to get data from ASC on respite provision and direct payments being offered to carers.	2024-2027	Easier access to breaks will affect the quality of care- prevent carer burnt out / carer breakdown
	All school holiday activities for young carers.  Honeyport Charity provides overnight respite breaks for young carers up to the age of 13 years.	Attendance at activities.	2024-2027	Be able to continue in their caring role, this will help to improve their health and wellbeing, having time away from their caring role.  Increase in the number of young carers attending allowing them respite from their caring role. Peer support from other young carers who are in similar situations. Positive impact on their mental and emotional health.
	To safeguard against young carers providing inappropriate levels of care. Carers Assessments to be offered. No Wrong Doors procedures in place.	Children and Family Service to be made aware and follow up on any potential cases.	2024-2027	Reduce possibility of carer feeling burnt out and exhausted



Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	<p>Work with the Disabled Children’s team to look at the current offer around respite provision and direct payments for parent carers.</p> <p>An assessment is offered to the parents / families for a Parent Carer needs assessment by the Children with Disabilities Team. This is dependent on whether the parent meets the eligibility criteria.</p>	<p>Request data from Disabled Children’s Team on respite provision and identify barriers in the process.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Prevent parent carer stress and breakdown.</p>
	<p>Supporting access to replacement care when necessary.</p> <p>To inform Adult Social Care as early as possible when this is necessary.</p> <p>Identifying sustainable arrangements.</p>	<p>Encourage carers to be involved in the procurement process when arrangements are being made for respite breaks.</p>	<p>2024-2027</p>	<p>Reduce crisis and emergency situations but rather plan in advance where this is possible.</p>

# 14. Priority 6

**Support a life outside caring to enable carers and young carers to achieve their potential.**

## **Why is this important?**

It is essential for both carers and young carers to be supported to develop a life outside of caring. This may take the form of employment, volunteering, education or training, or in creating opportunities for socializing and leisure opportunities. This will help carers establish a life for themselves when they are no longer providing a caring role. Young carers in particular are known to have significantly lower educational attainment at GCSE level than their peers and therefore need support to bridge this gap and ensure that they fulfil their potential for achievement.

## **What is the picture in West Berkshire?**

Increased access to adult education was highlighted as a recommendation within the West Berkshire Health Needs Assessment previous years. In addition, the young carers Health Needs Assessment identified that many schools in West Berkshire do not have specific policies or procedures in place to support young carers with only limited provision of training for teachers.



# Priority 6

## Support a life outside caring to enable carers and young carers to achieve their potential.

How will this be achieved?

Link to other priorities	What will we do	How we will measure or monitor progress	When we will do it	The impact we are expecting
	Social Care professionals to recognize carers' right to life outside caring.	Encourage applications for carers support linked to engaging in activities outside of the caring role. For example, Gym membership etc.	2024-2027	Improvement in carer overall wellbeing and can continue in their caring role.
	Recognise transition points – becoming a carer, stopping a caring role, moving from being a young Carer to an adult Carer.	Adult Social Care to encourage a smooth transition within the organization. No Wrong Doors Procedures in place.	2024-2027	Smooth transition from children services to adult services.
	Training opportunities through West Berkshire Consortium for young carers	Work closely to identify young carers not in education, employment and training.	2024-2027	Improved outcomes and opportunities for the young person.

## 15. Monitoring Arrangements

The Carers Strategy Group will lead on delivering the strategy and define: the monitoring arrangements in place. The group reports to the Senior Management Team in Adult Social Care.

An Action plan will be developed which will run alongside the strategy. The Action Plan will reflect the 6 priorities that we have identified and how each of these will be achieved.

- The Carers Strategy Group will continue to meet quarterly. The Action plan will be reviewed at these meetings and identify any barriers or gaps. Regular updates on the Action Plan will be provided to the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- The Carers Strategy Group will find solutions and work together with partner organizations and carers.
- Carers will be able to contribute and participate in the delivery of the strategy through the following channels:
  - unpaid carer representative who is a member of the Carers Strategy Group.
  - the Early Help and Prevention Lead in Children and Family Service who is a member of the Carers Strategy Group.
  - Partner agencies or organizations (voluntary or private).
- The Carers Strategy will be revised every three years (in 2027).

## 16. References

1. ASC Data Zone 2023/23
2. ASC Statutory Report 2022/23
3. Caring for Others Survey WBC ASC 2021/22
4. ONS 2021 Census data for unpaid carers
5. Survey of Adult Carers in England 2021/22
6. State of Caring 2022 report p55

# 17. Appendix 1 - Action Plan (Delivery Plan)

Priority 1: Raise awareness and increase the identification of Carers (including hidden Carers) to enable them to access help and support.							
	Activity	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Lead Organisation (s)	Comments
1.1	West Berkshire and Reading Carers Partnership will continue to organise campaign events. The campaigns are to raise awareness of caring and the role of unpaid Carers. Various events are organized during the National Carers Week (usually takes place in June annually) and Carers' Rights Day (takes place annually in November).	1,273 carers registered with ASC (2022/23)	Work towards 5% increase	Work towards 5% increase	Work towards 5% increase	West Berkshire and Reading Carers Partnership Adult Social Care	Aim to reduce variance between Carers registered with Adult Social Care and Carers on census data. i.e. identify new Carers
1.2	Encourage Carers who want to share their stories to do so. Stories can be shared in Carer related events (with the consent of the Carer).		New 2024/25 – target of 5 stories	June/Nov	June/Nov Increase	West Berkshire and Reading Carers Partnership Adult Social Care	Campaigns to align to Carers Week/Carer Rights Day.
1.3	Training package for both internal and external professionals (partners) to enable them to recognise and identify unpaid Carers and where to signpost them.  Organise workshops to deliver the training.		New 2024/25 – host at least one workshop New 2024/25	Increase delivery to up to 3 workshops per year	delivery to up to 3 workshops per year	Adult Social Care	Based on resources & capacity, increase workshop delivery incrementally.
1.4	Identify and support Carers from minority communities, travellers, refugees, asylum seekers. Liaise with Berkshire Volunteer Centre, Citizens Advice Bureau, Community Centre to reach out to 'hidden' Carers.		– set baseline data	Aim for 2% increase	Aim for 2% increase	Adult Social Care Reading and West Berkshire Carers Partnership	To use the Office of National Statistics data to inform us about minority communities and languages represented in West Berkshire.

**Priority 2: To provide information and advice to Carers and young Carers.**

	Activity	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Lead Organisation (s)	Comments
1.1	Promotion of the West Berkshire Directory to residents and professionals	7600 Directory users in 2023 Establish baseline when the current system is upgraded	Increase by 500	Increase by 500	Increase by 500	Adult Social Care	
1.2	There are plans to use the Accelerating Reform Funding grant to create a self-assessment service for unpaid Carers by Summer 2024.	To clear the current backlog of unpaid Carers waiting to be assessed.	New for 2024/25 – c. 35	Aim for 2% increase	Aim for 2% increase	Adult Social Care	Accelerating Reform Funding ceases in March 2025 Cascading training to substantive staff.
1.3	To provide information to young Carers through the newsletter that is published quarterly.  For Young Carers social media, Facebook, Instagram pages are updated weekly	207 Young Carers currently on the mailing list	Target increase of 50 per year	Target increase of 50 per year	Target increase of 50 per year	Children and Family Service	
1.4	Good quality information, advice and signposting will continue to be provided by Adult Social Care, Reading and West Berkshire Carers Partnership and Crossroads Care Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.	ASC statutory reporting data for 2022/23 81% unpaid Carers received Information/ Advice/ Signposting.	Target 85%	Target 85%	Target 85%	-West Berkshire and Reading Carers Partnership, -Crossroads Care Oxfordshire and West Berkshire -Adult Social Care	
1.5	Work with Communities to disseminate information about Carers, offer advice and to ensure access from diverse communities.	Increase number of events during Carers Week aimed at providing information about Carers.	Target 2 events	Target 3 events	Target 3 events	Adult Social Care	

**Priority 3: Enable access to Peer Support Groups for Carers and young Carers.**

	Activity	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Lead Organisation (s)	Comments
1.1	<p>Young Carers Service to continue providing support, advice to young carers.</p> <p>Carers attending weekly groups.</p>	<p>Number of attendees weekly - 40 for both sessions.</p> <p>2 schools offer weekly carer support groups.</p>	<p>Yearly increase of 2%.</p> <p>Increase from 2 to 5 schools across West Berkshire.</p>	<p>Yearly increase of 2%.</p> <p>Increase by 2 schools per year.</p>	<p>Yearly increase of 2%.</p> <p>Increase by 2 schools per year.</p>	Children and Family Service.	

DRAFT

Priority 4: Carers are supported to improve their physical, mental, emotional and overall wellbeing.							
	Activity	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Lead Organisation (s)	Comments
1.1	Raising awareness of the health impacts of caring. West Berkshire and Reading Partnership, General Practices in West Berkshire, Berkshire Healthcare, Adult Social Care will help reinforce the importance of Carers mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing.		✓	✓	✓	Adult Social Care Reading and West Berkshire Partnership.	Aligns to priority 1 – increases in number of people identifying as carers and accessing help & support.
1.2	Carers will be followed up in writing after a Carers assessment with a clear outcome. The assessment should include consideration of the impact on the caring role on the Carers' mental, physical emotional and overall wellbeing.	To clear the current backlog awaiting a Carers Assessment.	New for 2024/25 – c. 35	Aim for 5% increase	Aim for 5% increase	Adult Social Care	Funding ceases in March 2025 Cascading training to substantive staff.
1.3	Improve support options for Carers so that they can have time for their own appointments to get their own health checks done. Providing a sitting service to allow them time to get these done (this is subject to an individual Carers assessment).		✓	✓	✓	Crossroads for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Adult Social Care	
1.4	Ensuring that Carers have easier access to local services that can support and contribute to their overall wellbeing. For example, Eight Bells for Mental Health support offer counselling service. West Berkshire directory for more details on support services for Carers.		✓	✓	✓	Adult Social Care Reading and West Berkshire Carers Partnership Primary Care -GP Practices	Outcomes linked to Carers Assessments.  Link to priority 2 – West Berkshire Directory.



**Priority 4: Carers are supported to improve their physical, mental, emotional and overall wellbeing.**

	Activity	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Lead Organisation (s)	Comments
1.5	To explore how Carers can be provided with affordable and flexible opportunities which will enable them to participate in activities which promotes and contributes to the health and wellbeing.		✓	✓	✓		Link to priority 2 – West Berkshire Directory
1.6	Employers to consider and include support for Carers who are in employment as part of their wellbeing strategy.		✓	✓	✓		Link to priority 1 – encourage employer to raise awareness and identify working carers e.g. link to carer stories
1.7	The effect of the cost-of-living crisis is having an impact on Carers particularly those who care for those with a disability. Carers should therefore be supported to access grant funding and capital funding to help them improve their finances.		Working towards improving data collection on number of Carers who contact the hub.	Set baseline of data	TBC	TBC	

**Priority 5: Support Carers and young Carers to take breaks from caring.**

	Activity	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Lead Organisation (s)
	Working with Commissioners in Adult Social Care to look at the current offer around respite provision for Carers to enable them to access flexible short breaks and respite'	ASC Statutory reporting -an increase by 15% of Carers who benefited after respite provision	Target 20%	Target 20%	Target 25%	Adult Social Care
	Developing age-appropriate short breaks for young carers.		Number of holiday activities may vary for example 4 activities organised during easter holidays providing 80 spaces	Target between 3-4 activities	Target between 3-4 activities	Children and Family Service
	Work with the disabled children's team to look at the current offer around respite provision and direct payments for parent Carers.		Working towards data collection on number of Carers offered respite provision and direct payments for Carers	Set baseline for data	TBC	Children and Family Service

**Priority 6: Support a life outside caring to enable Carers and young Carers to achieve their potential.**

	Activity	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Lead Organisation (s)
1.1	Social Care professionals to recognise Carers' right to life outside caring.		✓	✓	✓	Adult Social Care
1.2	Recognise transition points – becoming a Carer, stopping a caring role, moving from being a young Carer to an adult Carer.		Target 5 Carers per year	Target 10 Carers per year	Target 55 Carers per year	Children and Family Service Adult Social Care
1.3	Training opportunities through West Berkshire Consortium for Young Carers		2 Training sessions per year	3 Training sessions per year	3 Training sessions per year	Children and Family Service

DRAFT

This page is intentionally left blank

## Briefing Note – Customer Charter Refresh

<b>Produced for:</b>	Executive 19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Iain Cottingham
<b>Service Director:</b>	Sarah Clarke – Service Director, Strategy, ICT and Governance
<b>Briefing Author:</b>	Melanie Best – Service Lead, Customer Engagement & Transformation
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4534

### 1 Purpose of the Briefing

- 1.1 To review and refresh the formal public-facing Customer Charter created in 2022.

### 2 Background

- 2.1 In 2022, the current Customer Charter (Appendix A) was developed as an output of the Communications & Engagement Strategy. Two years on, and considering our current Council Strategy, it is appropriate that we revisit the content and style to ensure it remains aligned with our strategic objectives and we review how well it is embedded in the organisation.
- 2.2 Prior to the introduction of the Charter in 2022, a significant amount of work was undertaken, including a full consultation exercise, to consider the appropriate criteria and service standards which underpin good customer service. This review does not propose any fundamental changes as the content of the Charter remains relevant but despite efforts at the time, it is still not widely referred to or embedded in the authority.
- 2.3 It is proposed that this refresh incorporate a slight rebranding and a supporting communications campaign to revitalise the Charter and ensure that customers remain at the core of all services across the council. The refresh exercise is not subject to consultation given the principles of good customer service remain unchanged there is no requirement to reconsult.
- 2.4 As stated above, the commitments are essentially unchanged and align with our [Priority Area 1 \(Services We are Proud of\) Goal](#) 1A ‘Ensure West Berkshire Council offers good customer service to our residents and business’. The Charter centres on how the council delivers its services to customers and sets out clear service standards which customers can expect, regardless of the method of contact which include;
- Telephone
  - Email or letter
  - Social media
  - At our offices
  - In their homes/ the community

- 2.5 It also sets out how customers can escalate their concerns, compliments, or feedback so that we can resolve issues and use this to further improve service delivery. Most recently we have enabled call recording through our new telephony system which will further aid our training and monitoring capabilities.
- 2.6 The final part of the Charter seeks to outline what we ask of our customers in return to perform our roles effectively and help them in a timely manner.

### 3 Current Status and Refresh Option

- 3.1 The original Charter was rolled out with a view to supporting the culture of good customer service being the responsibility of the entire organisation. All teams interact with customers, either directly with residents and suppliers, or internal customers. Whilst this has been successful up to a point, some two years on as it is not fully embedded in the consciousness of the organisation or our customers. Adult Social Care have created their own Charter which would indicate there is a lack of awareness that the corporate Charter exists, or that they feel they require a specialist version, given the nature of the services they provide but this should complement the council's main customer Charter. There are also other areas of the organisation who have expressed an interest in creating a Charter to enhance their offer to customers so a corporate Customer Charter may well suffice for those services and prevent duplication of effort.
- 3.2 The introduction of the Behaviour Framework provides us with another opportunity to strengthen the status of the Charter across the council and the refresh will remind everyone of our commitment to our communities. The Behaviour Framework will be embedded into the performance framework for the organisation and this too enhances the focus on customer service across all services of the council ensuring everyone commits to delivering good customer service. It is further supported by the Council's Strategic priorities and Delivery Plan as outlined in 2.4.
- 3.3 Customer Focus is one of the three main corporate values in [the Behaviour Framework](#) alongside two main behaviours around **Customer Excellence** for everyone through;
- Working to understand individual customer needs
  - Being proactive and deliver on my promises made to customers
  - Understanding and displaying excellent and consistent customer service
  - Keeping customers informed of progress and;
  - Being honest about what I can deliver to manage customer service expectations
- 3.4 **Responsibility and Accountability** for everyone through;
- Taking responsibility for my own actions and wellbeing and act with integrity and honesty
  - Doing what is right and act in a way that supports WBC as a whole not just my area
  - Acting objectively and take decisions impartially and fairly without discrimination or bias
  - Taking decisions in an open and transparent manner
  - Recognising and understanding the impact of my own behaviours and emotions on others

- 3.5 The Charter also sits alongside other activity designed to transform how customers interact with us through the continuation of digital self-service routes being developed and promoted and understanding the importance of ensuring the experience is consistent, regardless of how they choose to contact us.

## 4 Refresh options

- 4.1 Research across other councils shows that there are many options available in terms of the customer Charter could be presented and feedback indicates that the existing version is very text heavy, so we have opted to simplify it and use graphics to enhance its appeal. It is important to make the Charter eye-catching to draw people's attention to reading the basic messages we wish to convey. The detail of how we will provide that level of service will be contained in a supporting leaflet and available on the website in time.
- 4.2 Appendix B shows a mock-up of the potentially simplified version which still contains the core messages about what the customer can expect and what we expect of them but is less text heavy. It can be displayed in windows, receptions and libraries, as the current version is but the more detailed content could be available in a smaller DL paper leaflet for those who wish to read more, as shown at Appendix C.
- 4.3 By way of background to this paper, other council examples were reviewed and a separate Appendix D (available upon request) was shared with Members and officers setting out different styles, although many have simply opted to have the Charter available on their websites with no other supporting documentation, although Gosport offer a leaflet for customers, as proposed for West Berkshire. The content itself though is similar across all of them and from initial conversations and Operations Board feedback, this style appears to be favoured.

## 5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The existence of a customer Charter which was designed, produced, and agreed upon by all service teams in the council demonstrates our commitment to the communities of West Berkshire. Taking the time to revisit and reflect on its contents and relaunch it also shows we are serious about maintaining the high standards of customer service and supports our council priorities.
- 5.2 The council is facing huge financial pressures and our focus on improving digital services and responding to requests in the most cost effective way continues to drive how we adapt and deliver our services. Throughout all that change, it is important to show the public that we are listening to them and making ourselves available to support them when and how they need us.

## 6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Members review the revised documents (Appendices A-C) and provide approval to proceed with the revised version.
- 6.2 The revised document will be produced, uploaded on the website, printed copies produced for reception, libraries, museums etc at minimal cost to the council.

- 6.3 A small, but targeted communications campaign, will be developed to get the refreshed version out to customers on WhatsApp, Let's Chat, other social media channels and relaunched on our website, amongst other options to assist with embedding the new version and how it links with our behaviour and performance management frameworks.

## **7 Appendices**

- 7.1 Appendix A – the current Customer Charter
- 7.2 Appendix B – the proposed simplified refresh Charter poster
- 7.3 Appendix C – supporting leaflet
- 7.4 Appendix D – available on request but due to the length is not included here.



# West Berkshire Council Customer Service Charter

We want our district to be a great place to live, work, learn and visit, as outlined in our Council Strategy, and for our customers to have the best possible experience. In our Customer Charter we let you know how we will interact with you when you contact us.

## Our commitment to you and how we will work together

We will	In return, we ask that you
be polite and open	treat our staff politely
listen to you and respect your needs	inform us if you are unhappy with the service you receive and let us have feedback if we have done well
treat all customers fairly and equally	treat our offices with respect so that everyone can enjoy them
make sure that our employees are trained to give you the advice that you need	let us know in good time if you need to cancel or rearrange an appointment
use easy to understand language and provide information in other languages or formats on request	tell us if you need information in another language or format
deal with your personal information sensitively and in accordance with data protection requirements	ensure we have up to date details for you and your household
	make use of our online portal, if you can, to carry out transactions

### When you write to us, we will:

- aim to respond within 15 working days by post dependent on mail providers.
- acknowledge receipt of your letter if you provide an email address or contact telephone number

### When you call us, we will:

- answer calls to our switchboard within **2 minutes**
- greet you politely
- tell you who you are speaking to and the name of the service or place you are calling
- put calls through to the right place first time
- arrange a call back if we are not able to put you through
- return your messages within **24 hours**

### When we visit you, we will:

- arrive on time
- wear name badges or carry identification
- provide our contact details and clearly explain follow up actions, where appropriate

### When you e-mail us, we will:

- provide an automatic response to all enquiries received to generic email addresses
- We will respond **within the timescales laid out in this automated response**
- acknowledge your email within **2 working days** and confirm what will happen next when emailing all other council email addresses

### When you contact us on social media, we will:

- provide an acknowledgement where requested
- give you details of who is dealing with your enquiry
- if you ask us a question, we will respond within **24 hours** when our offices are open'

### When you visit us, we will:

- create an environment that is welcoming
- provide clear signage
- make sure you are greeted within **1 minute** of your arrival
- provide self service facilities where appropriate, including access to relevant IT equipment
- provide private areas where you can discuss confidential matters
- start meetings on time

### When dealing with complaints, comments and compliments, we will:

- provide you with information about how to report a complaint, comment or compliment
- record your feedback and use it to improve our services
- respond to complaints within **15 working days**
- treat complaints confidentially and fairly
- inform you how you can take your complaint further if you are not satisfied
- apologise when we are at fault and work to put things right

### We will keep customers informed and involved by:

- publishing accurate, useful and up to date information
- providing information in other languages and formats on request
- publishing customer service performance data
- reviewing our customer standards every year
- using your feedback to help us make decisions

Our services commit to these standards during their hours of operation. If your enquiry is an out of hours emergency, please call 01635 42161 where your call will be answered promptly.

# West Berkshire Customer Charter

*West Berkshire is a great place to live, work and visit*

Our Customer Charter sets out how we will interact with you and value your opinion to ensure we deliver great customer service, value for money and put you at the heart of everything we do.

*This Charter is our commitment to you*



## We promise to...

- Be polite, open, and friendly
- Listen and respect your needs
- Treat all customers fairly and equally
- Be responsive, helpful, and courteous
- Make sure our teams are trained to help with your needs
- Deal with your personal data sensitively
- Use easy to understand language and provide other formats if needed

## In return we ask that you...

- Treat our staff politely and with respect
- Inform us if you are unhappy with the service you receive and let us have feedback if we have done well
- Treat our offices with respect so that everyone can enjoy them
- Tell us if you need information in a different format or language
- Make use of our online portal wherever you can to conduct transactions and seek advice
- Keep us up to date about changes in your circumstance or household

If you would like to know more about our commitment to you or details on how we can support you in all forms of communication visit [www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk)

## Appendix C – proposed supporting leaflet

# West Berkshire Customer Charter

*West Berkshire is a great  
place to live, work and visit*

Our Customer Charter sets out how, when using council services, we will interact with you and value your opinion to ensure we deliver great customer service, value for money and put you at the heart of everything we do.



*This Charter is our  
commitment to you*



### We promise to...

- be polite, open, and friendly
- listen and respect your needs
- treat all customers fairly and equally
- be responsive, helpful, and courteous
- make sure our teams are trained to help with your needs
- offer a variety of ways to access our services, including a quicker and easier online experience
- deal with your personal data sensitively
- use easy to understand language and provide other formats if needed

### When you call our contact centre or switchboard on 01635 551111....

- we will answer your calls within 2 minutes (*please bear in mind this may not be possible during our busy periods, or for our more complex services but we will let you know where you are in the queue and offer you an alternative way to contact us or request a call back*)
- if you request a call back, when we return your call, you can expect our staff to state their first name, their department and their reason for calling.
- we aim to answer your query first time wherever possible
- if we have to transfer your call, we will tell you who we are transferring you to and ensure they are available before connecting you

2

- we may record your call for training and monitoring purposes
- we will be available during our published opening hours
- out of hours, your call will be transferred to our 'out of hours' service for emergencies

### When you call a direct dial number or contact a service directly.....

- we will answer your call within 1 minute
- if your call is unanswered for any reason, you will be able to leave a voicemail. We will respond to your voicemail messages before the close of business on the next working day. If we are out of the office, within 24 hours of our return

### When you visit us and use our face to face services we will....

- welcome you within 1 minute
- ensure our reception areas are comfortable, clean, tidy, and accessible
- provide helpful advice and information
- keep your waiting time to a minimum whenever possible

### When we visit you we will....

- ensure that, where appropriate, it is by prior agreement at a time and place mutually agreeable to both parties
- aim to arrive promptly
- ensure that all staff visiting have an ID badge with the council logo name/team

3

When you contact us by email or letter we will.....

- provide an automatic acknowledgement to all generic email addresses
- respond within the timescales set out in the response email
- confirm how your query will be dealt with and by whom as well as any further steps
- respond to your letters within 15 working days by post (dependent on mail providers)

When using our online services and website, we will....

- ensure our systems are available 24/7
- ensure the information provided is up to date, relevant and easily accessible
- ensure we offer help and support to enable you to use our online services
- consistently review our online services to improve your experience
- encourage your feedback and provide a route for you to do so
- provide you with council news, information and keep you updated with decisions and consultations

4

When you use our social media channels, we will....

- provide an acknowledgement if you have made a service request
- aim to respond within 24 hours when our premises are open (working hours)
- provide you with useful information such as highway closures, or events

When using our social media channels, we ask you to...

- treat our staff and officers with respect
- behave responsibly with regard to offensive language, behaviour, and comments

When dealing with complaints, comments, and compliments, we will:

- provide you with information about how to report a complaint or compliment
- record your feedback and use it to improve our service provision
- respond to complaints within 20 working days
- treat complaints confidentially and fairly
- inform you how to take your complaint further if you are not satisfied

5

- apologise when we are at fault and work to make things right
- ensure that compliments and comments are passed onto the relevant recipient

For Freedom of Information requests, we will.....

- acknowledge receipt of the request
- supply FOI responses within 20 working days, except in exceptional circumstances.
- Reserve the right to decline the request if it will take an unreasonable amount of time to collate the information or it is not available

In return we ask that you

- treat our staff politely and with respect
- inform us if you are unhappy with the service you receive and let us have feedback if we have done well
- treat our premises with respect so that everyone can enjoy them
- tell us if you need information in a different format or language
- make use of our online portal wherever you can to conduct transactions and seek advice
- Keep us up to date about changes in your circumstance or household

6

WBC/CS/MB/0924

---

## Charitable Sector Memorandum of Understanding

---

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Jeff Brooks
<b>Report Author:</b>	Paul Coe
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4597

---

### 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides an update on progress to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between West Berkshire Council (WBC) and the Charitable Sector.
- 1.2 It is proposed that the attached draft MOU will be used for the next stage of wider engagement with both internal and external stakeholders.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that:
  - a) The Draft MOU is noted in principle, subject to wider engagement with the Charitable Sector.
  - b) Wider engagement takes place with the Charitable sector and with WBC internal stakeholders.
  - c) A paper returns to Executive following that wider engagement.

### 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	No direct costs are anticipated. Indirect costs relate to officer time.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	Officer time will be spent on the development of the MOU; no other HR impacts are identified.

<b>Legal:</b>	The MOU consists of a voluntary agreement. Further detail is needed in the final MOU regarding data sharing and potential commercial sensitivity.			
<b>Risk Management:</b>	Relationships between the council and voluntary sector partners will need to be carefully managed.			
<b>Property:</b>	No property impacts identified.			
<b>Policy:</b>	No policy issues identified.			
	<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 MOU should facilitate effective joint working to support the community and improve support to vulnerable groups.
<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 MOU should facilitate effective joint working to support the community and improve support to vulnerable groups.
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Health Impact:</b>	x			The MOU should facilitate effective joint working to support the community and improve support to vulnerable groups.
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		x		

<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	x			The MOU should support the delivery of the Council's priorities.
<b>Core Business:</b>	x			The MOU should support operational delivery.
<b>Data Impact:</b>		x		
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>The draft MOU has been developed in discussion with the following organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer Centre West Berkshire</li> <li>• Greenham Trust</li> <li>• Connecting Communities in Berkshire</li> <li>• Berkshire Community Foundation</li> </ul> <p>Internal engagement has taken place with Legal Services, the Service Lead for Commissioning and the Service Director for Community Services as well as the Corporate Management Team.</p>			

## 4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The February 2024 Corporate Peer Challenge of WBC identified a Recommendation to develop a strategic MOU with the Charitable Sector.
- 4.2 Meetings have taken place with four organisations who play a key role in the Charitable sector locally.
- 4.3 A draft MOU has been developed in collaboration with those organisations in anticipation that they can form an interface between the council and the wider sector.
- 4.4 If the draft MOU is agreed in principle, this can be used to form the basis of the next round of wider engagement.
- 4.5 Further detail will need to be added during the next phase, particularly more specificity about how outcomes will be delivered.
- 4.6 The Charitable sector will expect meaningful engagement by WBC. The nature of the sector (many organisations of varying size and with variable levels of

resource) creates a challenge. The fact that the council does not formally commission an 'infrastructure organisation' is a risk area, albeit that the Volunteer Centre carries out many of the associated functions.

## 5 Supporting Information

### Background

5.1 The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge conducted in February 2024 identified the following recommendation:

Recommendation 11 - Build on strong and positive operational relationships between the council and partners, including contractors, and develop strategic relationships that create opportunities to deliver activity that will support wider council and partner objectives (e.g. apprenticeships, social value). As part of this, develop a strategic Memorandum of Understanding with the Voluntary and Community Sector.

5.2 Exploratory meetings have been held with some internal stakeholders (in Commissioning and Communities & Wellbeing) and with external stakeholders as follows:

- Volunteer Centre West Berkshire
- Greenham Trust
- Connecting Communities in Berkshire
- Berkshire Community Foundation

5.3 These external stakeholders have been identified as either:

- a) organisations with close links to a wide range of voluntary sector organisations
- b) routes to grants/ funding sources.

5.4 These organisations have expressed a preference for the term 'charitable sector'.

5.5 Examples of existing MoUs have been reviewed in order to borrow from best practice models.

5.6 Charitable Sector organisations can be sensitive to the approach of statutory partners and the mode of approach is therefore important. The view of the council is that the development of an MOU, even if imperfect, should represent positive progress to better relationships.

5.7 The draft MOU focuses on more structured, earlier communication between key representatives of the council to support better outcomes.

5.8 The optimal representation by council officers will need to be tested, as there are potential benefits at both strategic and operational level. The aim is for strategic decision-making, grounded in operational realities.



- 5.9 The process for wider engagement will be agreed by the core group. It is likely to consist of a combination of face to face/ hybrid events (making use of existing forums wherever possible) along with a targeted survey.
- 5.10 The draft MOU contains limited detail on data sharing. There will be some benefit in sharing information about priorities, issues and plans. There will also be some benefit in sharing high-level data about demand levels. This can be shared safely. However, there may be benefit in sharing information which includes personal or identifiable data. Information-sharing of this type would require a clear agreement relating to data handling and data protection. Parties will need to ensure that commercially sensitive information is properly managed.
- 5.11 The MOU will also need to be more specific about how outcomes will be delivered, e.g. through the development of an Annual Plan, but this will be developed further during the next phase of wider engagement.

## **Proposals**

5.12 It is recommended that:

- a) The draft MOU is agreed in principle, subject to wider engagement with the Charitable Sector.
- b) Wider engagement takes place with the Charitable sector and with WBC internal stakeholders.
- c) A paper returns to Executive following that wider engagement.

## **6 Other options considered**

- 6.1 A more expansive co-productive model was considered but rejected due to the time and resource required with such a large and diverse sector.
- 6.2 We could publish the MOU without further engagement, but this would not support positive relationship-building with the wider sector in the longer term.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 The recent Peer Challenge gave the recommendation to develop an MOU with the Charitable sector. A draft has now been developed by a small group of stakeholders. The proposed next stage is to take the draft out for wider engagement.

## **8 Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix A – Draft MoU

---

**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 Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months
- Item is Urgent Key Decision
- Report is to note only

**Officer details:**

Name: Paul Coe  
Job Title: Executive Director  
Tel No: 01635 503386  
E-mail: paul.coe@westberks.gov.uk

---

Date XXXX

### Memorandum of Understanding between West Berkshire Council and the Charitable sector in West Berkshire<sup>1</sup>

#### Purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

This document is a written understanding between partners setting out principles to support effective collaborative working between West Berkshire Council (WBC) and partners within the Charitable Sector within West Berkshire.

Charitable sector signatories to the MoU will act as an interface between WBC and the wider charitable sector.

#### Objectives

The Objectives of the MOU are to:

- support information sharing for the purposes of strategic discussions between WBC and representative organisations from the Charitable sector.
- support the council to fulfil its role as a leader in the district.
- support the identification of additional capacity and resources to deliver better outcomes for the residents of West Berkshire.
- support better and earlier communication between partners, providing early notice of new initiatives or plans, creating opportunities to shape early thinking and/ or co-produce solutions, and identify potential for collaboration.
- Enable charitable sector organisations to provide feedback to the council and impact the way it operates.
- Influence the way that commissioning activities are undertaken.

Working together in a way that demonstrates parity of esteem for partners to identify, develop and deliver shared priorities will result in better outcomes for local people.

#### Principles

We recognise the charitable sector is a vital cornerstone of effective local provision across a multitude of areas.

Charitable partners provide important services and hold expert professional intelligence.

They play a particularly important role in the 'early help' space, providing support in a way that reduces the need for local residents to turn to statutory provision. It can also reduce the impact of structural inequalities by providing a non-stigmatising support offer.

---

<sup>1</sup> With acknowledgement to North East and North Cumbria (NENC) Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector (VCSE) in the North East and North Cumbria (NENC)

The charitable sector also plays an important role in delivering services where there is a shortfall in available provision.

The charitable sector employs many people and represents a very significant part of the local economy.

### **Shared values**

All partners agree to act in accordance with a set of shared values that will underpin all work we carry out together as a system:

**Trust** - We will create the space and time needed to develop trusting relationships between our sectors at all levels and will always act with honesty and integrity.

**Impact** - The actions we take will be guided by the needs of the people who live in our district, and will make a substantive and positive difference to our community.

**Collaboration** - We will work in partnership from the outset, assuming good intent, supporting each other, recognising and utilising our skills and talents and analysing problems together as the first step towards taking action.

**Inclusivity** - We will actively listen to all parts of our system including our people and communities, valuing and respecting their expertise, ensuring that we are guided by their input and that information is accessible to all.

**Equity** - We will ensure time to understand each other, that decisions, power, and responsibility are shared by all partners, and that all contributions are meaningful and valued.

**Transparency** - We will be open about our processes, planning, reasoning, and restrictions across all sectors, and will respond positively to challenges.

### **The Charitable Partnership in West Berkshire**

The charitable Partnership provides a mechanism to support connectivity, collaboration, and integration between and within the charitable sector and WBC.

Membership is open to all charitable organisations which are active in the district.

The Partnership facilitates strategic engagement, connection, and co-ordination with the wider charitable sector for WBC.

### **Our Vision for the Charitable sector in West Berkshire**

Our vision is a vibrant, sustainable, and resilient Charitable sector operating within the district, working in partnership with council to support each other's strategic intent.

### **Practical delivery**

- We will meet regularly as a partnership every two months (more frequently in the initial stages of the partnership)
- The agenda will be set collaboratively
- The Chair will rotate between member organisations
- The group will be supported by relevant data and intelligence, e.g. public health indices of deprivation
- We will discuss new concepts openly to support collaborative design.
- We will share feedback openly.
- We will provide a clear and accessible explanation of our shared and individual governance structures.
- We will demonstrably grow and develop communications structures throughout our system to increase reach.
- We will review our MOU regularly to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

### **Data Sharing**

Work relating to the MOU will primarily be at a strategic level and consequently does not require an explicit information sharing agreement/ data protection impact assessment. Where there is further work undertaken by partners, they will ensure that information-sharing agreements are in place as required.

### **Commercially sensitive information**

Additional detail to be added relating to controls to ensure that information which may carry some commercial sensitivity is managed appropriately to safeguard participating organisations.

### **Funding**

There is no funding explicitly attached to the MoU.

### **Resolution of disagreement**

Where there is disagreement between members, this should be resolved in the first instance at working level. If this is not possible, it may be referred through those responsible for the management of this MoU, up to and including the Chief Executive, who will then be jointly responsible for ensuring a mutually satisfactory resolution.

### **Duration and review**

This MoU commences on the date of the signatures below. It is not time-limited and will continue to have effect unless the principles described above need to be altered and/or cease to be relevant.

This MoU will be reviewed every two to three years but may be reviewed at any time at the request of either party. Any alterations to the MoU will require both parties to agree.

All organisations have identified a person responsible for the management of this MoU and these 'Relationship Leads' will liaise as required to ensure:

- a. This MoU is kept up to date.
- b. They identify any emerging issues in the working relationship between the organisations.
- c. They resolve any questions that arise regarding the interpretation of this MoU.

### **Signatories**

This document is adopted under the authority of:

West Berkshire Council:

Volunteer Centre West Berkshire:

Greenham Common Trust:

Connecting Communities in Berkshire:

Berkshire Community Foundation:

*(Signatures will be inserted here)*

# 2024/25 Performance Report Quarter One

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Jeff Brooks
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jenny Legge/Melanie Best
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4540

## 1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 To provide assurance that the priority areas in the [Council Strategy 2023-2027](#) are being managed effectively, and where performance has fallen below the expected level, present information on the remedial action taken and the impact of that action. To ensure effective oversight to Councillors, staff and residents regarding progress made towards the achievement of the outcomes detailed in the Council Strategy Delivery Plan.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To note the progress made in delivering the Council Strategy Delivery Plan 2023-2027, maintaining a strong outcome for many of the measures, and remedial actions taken where performance is below target.
- 2.2 To note the remedial actions.

## 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Legal:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Property:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.
<b>Policy:</b>	To be highlighted and managed by individual services.

	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		
<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			Supports all priorities areas of the Council Strategy 2023-27.
<b>Core Business:</b>	x			
<b>Data Impact:</b>		X		
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	The information provided for this report, has been signed off by the relevant Heads of Service/Service Directors, Executive Directors and Portfolio Holders.			

## 4 Executive Summary

4.1 This paper provides updates for each component of the [Council Strategy Delivery Plan 2023-2027](#):

- Non-targeted influencer measures for context.
- Targeted measures for each priority area.



- Corporate health measures for internal context.
- 4.2 This report highlights the key updates on performance for the quarter rather than duplicating analysis and progress already reported as part of previous quarterly reports. However, full details for all the results to date (including for previous quarters are available for each performance measure from Appendix C and the [Performance Portal online](#). An amended report will be in place for future updates to the Executive.
- 4.3 The **Influencer measures** indicated that the district's economy continued to be robust overall. However, the average house price had decreased, and the number of planning applications received continued on a downward trend. The demand on our adult social care services remained high but decreased for Children's services. Pressure increased in the areas of new requests for ASC support, long term adult social care cases, and anti-social behaviour incidents. Fly-tipping has been increasing gradually over the last four quarters.
- 4.4 The delivery of the outcomes grouped under each Council Strategy Priority Area continued to progress well.
- 4.5 Overall, one priority area target had been achieved and/or exceeded and was rated as Green: (ii) A Fairer West Berkshire with Opportunities for All
- 4.6 Two areas were 5% within target or behind schedule and were rated as Amber: (iv) The Prosperous and resilient West Berkshire and (v) Thriving Communities with a Strong Local Voice
- 4.7 The remaining two areas were more than 5% below target or had not been achieved and were rated as Red: (i) Services We Are Proud of, and (iii) Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency.
- 4.8 Areas of achievement to highlight include:
- number of services/functions digitised.
  - review of the Community Infrastructure Levy customer journey completed.
  - launch of the Berkshire Prosperity Board.
  - reliance on agency staff reduced.
  - plans for an Employee Value Proposition, and recognition of existing staff are on track.
  - recruitment of Shared Lives carers, and foster households continued successfully.
  - over 56% of households recycling their waste.
  - more EV charging points were installed in council owned car parks.
  - the Faraday Road football ground project continued to progress well.
  - a pilot 20mph zone in Theale was consulted on and a report has been prepared for consideration by elected Members.
-

- refurbishments of Hungerford, Kennet and Northcroft were on schedule to be delivered on time.

4.9 Of the measures rated Amber or Red, areas to note include:

- delay of the West Point House project for displaced persons.
- number of days taken to make a decision on new Housing Benefit claims was affected by an influx of new claims following the annual bills being sent out to residents.
- time taken to process Emotional Health Academy assessments was impacted by an increase in demand and staffing pressures.
- a delay in phasing out the garden waste subscription service due to options being considered.
- % of total staff turnover remained high at 15.8%.
- staffing issues affected our contractor's ability to complete pothole repairs in a timely manner.

4.10 The council's **corporate health indicators** highlight focus on resource management and a controlled financial approach to manage service demand. This quarter the budget manager forecast overspend is a £2m overspend.

4.11 Staff turnover was as high as at the end of 2023 (15.8%), which is well above the target of 13% (an average of WBC historic data).

4.12 Sickness absence was relatively high for the season and compared to this quarter in 2023/24 (9.0 v 8.3 working days lost (Annualised)).

## 5 Supporting Information

### Influencer measures

Detailed information on the measures in this report can be found online in the Performance Portal via this link: <https://westberks.gov.uk/strategy-performance>

5.2 Non-targeted measures of influence were monitored to provide context to the work being carried out across council services.

5.3 Overall, the local **economy remained strong**. Empty business rated industrial properties remained at a consistent level and the number of empty non-industrial units dropped. The sale of parking tickets in WBC managed car parks has been at a consistent level for the past 6 quarters, and this quarter was 4% higher than the same period last year. The average house price was lower than the previous three quarters. The number of planning applications has been trending downwards for the last year. Overall, the number of crimes and domestic abuse incidents reported to Thames Valley Police have been reducing. However, an increase in anti-social behaviour incidents was present in West Berkshire figures, in common with the national picture.

5.4 Within the local **social care indicators**, children's social care referral and enquiry numbers were generally fewer than in previous quarters, although numbers of children

in need, and children subject to a child protection plan were higher this quarter. Pressure on Adult Social Care services continued to increase.

5.5 Within the **Environment** indicators, the number reported fly-tipping incidents has been increasing for the last four quarters.

5.6 **Priority Area Measures Performance**

Detailed information on the measures in this report can be found online in the Performance Portal via this link: <https://westberks.gov.uk/strategy-performance>

**Note:**

- Red, Amber, Green ratings are based on a 5% tolerance (variance) from target
- Green star - either complete, on or ahead of schedule
- Red triangle - complete later than scheduled or more than 5% outside of the target
- ? - no actual value for the current period has been recorded
- ?! - no target and actual value for the current period has been recorded
- n/r - no data is expected for the current period e.g. annual measure reporting in Q4
- >> - data is not due to be reported e.g. activity commences in the next year

5.7 **Council Strategy Priority Areas** - Results at the end of this quarter showed that one of the five priority areas were RAG rated as Green (on schedule or delivered), and two as Red (ceased/delayed or more than 5% below target), and two Amber (behind schedule, within 5 % of target).



Chart 1. Overall RAG Rating of Priorities (inner circle) and associated Goals (outer circle)

5.8 **Priority Area 1: Services we are proud of**

5.9 Overall, this priority area was rated as Red, as out of the four goals one was rated as red, two as green and one as amber. The overall rating was impacted by three

measures missing their targets: no of people subscribed to WBC e-newsletters, % of Executive Committee decisions made in private and % of total turnover.

5.10 Following the closure of our accounts for 2023/24, the general fund has been reduced to £4m for that financial year.

5.11 A report was submitted to elected Members at the Executive meeting held on Thursday, 23 May 2024, where Members resolved to adopt the CIL Enforcement Policy and approved the Discretionary CIL Householder Review Scheme.

5.12 The Berkshire Prosperity Board, a Berkshire wide collaboration of all six unitary authorities intended to help the county attract business and investment, was set up and held its first meeting on Monday, 17 June 2024.

5.13 Our reliance on agency staff has reduced and our plans to develop and introduce an Employee Value Proposition and recognition of staff performance were on schedule.

5.14 Our Adult Social Care service was rated 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for its performance in ensuring people have access to adult social care and support following a recent assessment.

5.15 There has been a slight decrease in the number of people subscribed to our e-newsletter database, due to the removal of dormant accounts.

#### 5.16 **Priority Area 2: A fairer West Berkshire with opportunities for all**

5.17 Overall, this priority area was rated as green. The three goals were rated as: one Green, and one each of Red and Amber. There were eight measures reported as Red, and four reported as Amber. The overall rating was impacted by eight measures missing their targets: WBC care-homes not rated as good or better, adoption of the care-home provision strategy, repeat child protection plans, Children in Care with more than three placements, number of rough sleepers, relief duty ending with secure accommodation for at least 6 months, processing time for EHA assessments, and completion of West Point House conversion.

5.18 There were also four measures below target/behind schedule: % of desired outcomes from s42 enquiries, repeat referrals in Children's Social care, being expressed as "fully achieved", and days taken to process new Housing Benefit claims.

5.19 Achievements to note in the quarter were that:

- the recruitment of Shared Lives carers, and foster households continued successfully.
- the percentage of safeguarding enquiries where the risk was identified and reduced was above target at 98.8%, as was the percentage of adults helped at the preventative level of support.
- our Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy was considered at the Executive Committee on 25 July 2024.
- a new development of 119 affordable homes located at the former Sterling Cables site in Newbury was completed. 27 of which have been designated for social rent, 62 for

affordable rent (available those on West Berkshire Council's Housing Register), and 30 are shared ownership properties which will be managed by a housing association.

- we were successful in a bid for £90,000 in government funding to help clear a backlog of planning applications. The funding will be used to clear around 150 applications.

5.20 Challenging areas of work were around our housing for displaced persons, which was delayed due to a requirement for fireproofing the car park, the number of days taken to make a decision on new Housing Benefit claims due to an influx of new claims, and the time taken to process Emotional Health Academy assessments was impacted by an increase in demand and staffing pressures.

### 5.21 **Priority Area 3: Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency**

5.22 Overall, this priority area was rated as Red. Two out of the three goals were rated as Amber, and one as Red. The overall rating was impacted by four measures missing their targets: council fleet being ULEVs, electric car club vehicles, finalise the green waste plans, and standard for energy rating of council's properties.

5.23 Achievements to note in the quarter were that:

- Our work towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions progressed, with more EV charging spaces delivered in council owned car parks, over 56% of households recycling their waste, and the delivery of the cycle route improvements in Thatcham being on schedule.
- We extended the Service 32 (The Link) from Newbury to Basingstoke to operate on Sundays/bank holidays for the first time, with extended evening hours Monday to Saturday, and additional peak time options on weekdays. Combined with new on-demand bus services like West Berkshire Community Connect and Wiltshire Connect, local bus routes continue to evolve to provide a better service.

5.24 Challenging areas of work were around the delay in the installation of on-street EV points for various technical issues. A delay in phasing out the garden waste subscription service was due to options being considered.

### 5.25 **Priority Area 4: A prosperous and resilient West Berkshire**

5.26 Overall, this priority area was rated as Amber. Out of the four goals, one was rated as Green, two as Amber and one as Red. The overall rating was impacted by three measures missing their targets: review of the Adverse Weather Plan delayed, % of permanent pothole/road edge repairs completed to time and the adoption of the Local Plan.

5.27 There was also one measure below target/behind schedule: the adoption of the Local Plan is behind schedule.

5.28 Achievements to note in the quarter were that:

- The Faraday Road football ground project continued to progress, with regular meetings taking place with Newbury Community Football Group. A contract was issued for the design of an astro-turf 3G pitch.

- Modifications have been made to the Local Plan, as requested by the Inspectorate, although slightly behind schedule, it is expected that the process will be completed by the end of June 2025.
- Challenging areas of work were around the delayed review of the Adverse Weather plan, due to the floods over winter. Staffing issues affecting our contractor's ability to complete pothole repairs in a timely manner.

### **5.29 Priority Area 5: Thriving communities with a strong local voice**

5.30 Overall, this priority area was rated as Amber. Out of the four goals, two reported Green and two reported Red. The overall rating was impacted by nine measures missing their targets: the number of community forums held, Activity for Health programme class capacity, adoption of a plan to tackle social isolation, adoption of a renewal plan for council-owned leisure facilities, library figures have not been reported due to a vacant post and so are showing as below target, number of visits to sports and leisure centres, delay in setting up the mental health support initiative with Greenham Common Trust, adoption of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, and the adoption of the Parking Strategy.

5.31 Achievements to note in the quarter were that:

- a pilot 20mph zone in Theale was consulted on and a report has been prepared for consideration by elected Members at the Executive Meeting on [Friday 2 August 2024](#).
- the refurbishments of Hungerford, Kennet and Northcroft were on schedule to be delivered on time. Following an investment of £4.6 million in upgrading Northcroft, works are due to start in September 2024, with completion estimated for June 2025.

5.32 The Challenging areas of work were around the adoption of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan, and which was delayed by election protocols.

### **Corporate Health**

5.33 This quarter the budget manager forecast overspend is £2m as included in the revenue reporting paper to the Executive on the 19<sup>th</sup> September.

5.34 Staff turnover was similarly as high as at the end of 2023 (15.8%), which is above the target of 13% (an average of WBC historic data). The Department with the highest level of turnover was Children's Social Care with (20%).

5.35 Sickness absence was relatively high for the season and compared to this quarter in 2023/24 (9.0 v 8.3 working days lost (Annualised)). ASC was the Directorate with the highest level of absence (14.4 w/d lost).

### **Proposals**

5.36 To note the progress made in delivering the [Council Strategy Delivery Plan 2023-2027](#), maintaining a strong outcome for the majority of the measures, and remedial actions taken where performance is below target.

## 6 Other options considered

None considered.

## 7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This quarter's results show that good progress had been made towards the delivery of the majority of measures under all five Council Strategy Priority Areas. Strong performance levels have been achieved as some of the initiatives listed in the Delivery Plan completed and key services delivered to our district.
- 7.2 Action plans are in place to address performance for a small number of measures rated "Amber" and "Red". Councillors are asked to note these actions, and note the overall performance reported (refer to Appendix C for more detail).

## 8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A: Performance in pictures.
- 8.2 Appendix C: Detailed year to date performance tables.
- 8.3 Appendix D: Influencer measures dashboard.
- 8.4 Appendix E: Purpose and background.

---

### Subject to Call-In:

Yes:  No:

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

### Officer details:

Name: Melanie Best  
Job Title: Acting Service Lead (Customer Engagement and Transformation)  
Tel No: (01635) 519104  
E-mail: [Melanie.Best@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:Melanie.Best@westberks.gov.uk)

---

This page is intentionally left blank



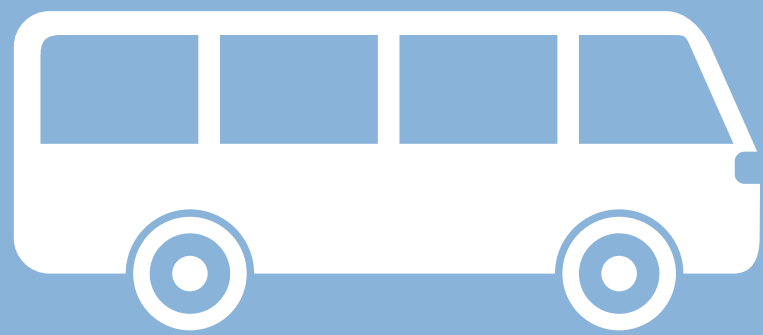
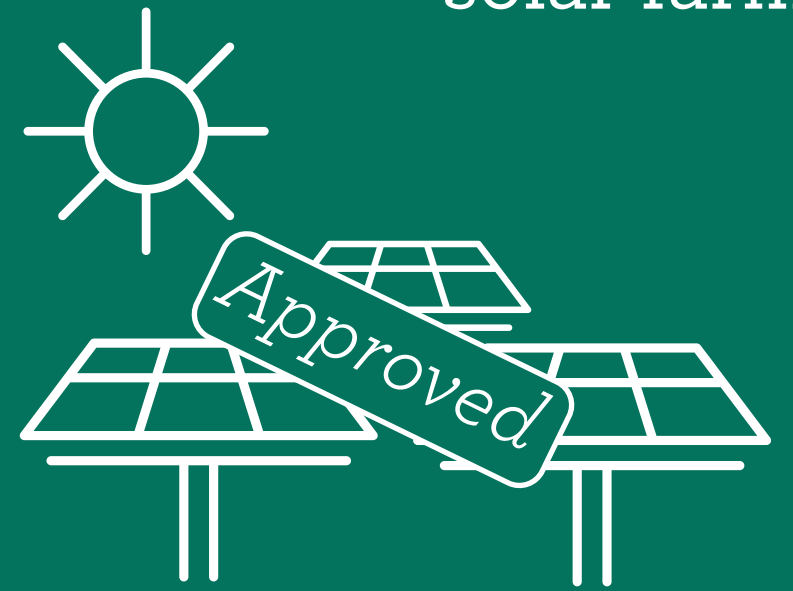
# 2024/25

## April - June

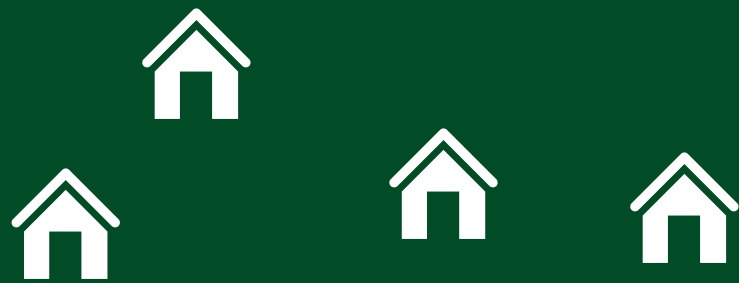


**£90,000** funding to clear planning applications backlog

### Enborne Community-owned solar farm



Expanded bus services connect Newbury to Basingstoke



119 affordable homes built on old Sterling Cables site



'Their Finest Hour' online archive went live



WBC has a WhatsApp channel!

"Good" CQC rating for adult social care and support services



**214** rooftop solar installations completed  
*(Solar Together Berkshire initiative)*



This page is intentionally left blank

# Priority Area Measure (PAMs) Performance



	30 Jun 2024	
	Count	Performance (YTD)
Services we are proud of	19	3 x ▲ 15 x ★ 1 x ?!
A fairer West Berkshire with opportunities for all	29	8 x ▲ 4 x ● 13 x ★ 4 x ?
Tackling the climate and ecological emergency	22	4 x ▲ 10 x ★ 7 x ?! 1 x ?!
A prosperous and resilient West Berkshire	15	3 x ▲ 5 x ★ 7 x ?
Thriving communities with a strong local voice	23	6 x ▲ 10 x ★ 6 x ?! 1 x ?!
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	

## Priority Area Measures (PAMs) by Priority and Goals:

1. Services we are proud of
2. A fairer West Berkshire with opportunities for all
3. Tackling the climate and ecological emergency
4. A Prosperous and resilient West Berkshire
5. Thriving communities with a strong local voice

**PRIORITY AREA: 1. Services we are proud of**

**Ensure West Berkshire Council offers good customer service to our residents and businesses**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
SIG-KPI-017	Strategy, ICT and Governance	% of residents satisfied with the way WBC runs things (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?! (Yellow)			
SIG-KPI-029	Strategy, ICT and Governance	No. of Council services/functions digitised and/or transformed	Quarterly		★ (Green)	8	8	
FPP-KPI-022	Finance, Property and Procurement	Total revenue spend variation compared to net budget set	Annual		▲ (Red)	£3,500,000	£1,000,000	
FPP-KPI-023	Finance, Property and Procurement	Maintain the general fund at the Section 151 minimum (as per budget setting papers)	Annual		★ (Green)	£7,000,000	£7,000,000	
FPP-KPI-024	Finance, Property and Procurement	Amend the Investment and Borrowing Strategy to consider social, ethical and environmental impacts	Annual		▲ (Red)	Delayed (R)	Complete (G)	
SIG-KPI-001	Strategy, ICT and Governance	No. of people subscribed to WBC e-newsletters	Quarterly		▲ (Red)	66,613	76,000	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
FPP-KPI-035	Finance, Property and Procurement	Council Tax collected as a % of Council Tax due	Quarterly		★	28.4%	28.4%	
FPP-KPI-040	Finance, Property and Procurement	Non domestic rates collected as a % of non domestic rates due	Quarterly		★	33.4%	33.4%	
ENV-KPI-068	Environment	Maintain at least a satisfactory level of litter, detritus and graffiti (YTD)	Q2, Q3 & Q4		?		Satisfactory	

**Transform the way the Council works to deliver operational excellence**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
SIG-KPI-010	Strategy, ICT and Governance	Refresh and approve the West Berkshire Vision (31/12/25)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	

**Treat residents with respect, be transparent in our decision making and accountable for our actions**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-006	Development and Housing	Review the Community Infrastructure Levy customer journey (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	Complete (G)	On schedule (G)	
SIG-KPI-006	Strategy, ICT and Governance	Produce and adopt a Council Strategy Delivery Plan to be reviewed annually by end of September	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
SIG-KPI-014	Strategy, ICT and Governance	% of residents reporting they feel they can influence decision making (31/03/2025)	Biennial		>>			
SIG-KPI-052	Strategy, ICT and Governance	% of Executive Committee decisions made in private (Part II)	Quarterly		▲	12.5%	1.0%	
SIG-KPI-053	Strategy, ICT and Governance	% of public questions at formal meetings responded to in writing within 5 w/days of the meeting	Quarterly		★	100.0%	100.0%	
SIG-KPI-054	Strategy, ICT and Governance	% of petitions responded to within a maximum of 4 months	Quarterly		★	100.0%	80.0%	
SIG-KPI-055	Strategy, ICT and Governance	Hold Environment Advisory Group Open Forums	Quarterly		★	1	1	

Page 254

**Make West Berkshire Council an employer of choice**


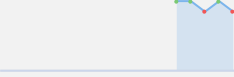

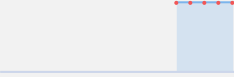

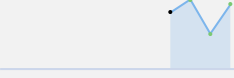
Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
SIG-KPI-093	Strategy, ICT and Governance	No. of posts filled by agency staff at West Berkshire Council	Quarterly		★	145	160	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
SIG-KPI-033	Strategy, ICT and Governance	Employee engagement score recorded in the Employee Attitude Survey	Biennial		>>			
SIG-KPI-034	Strategy, ICT and Governance	% of employees who would recommend West Berkshire Council as a great place to work (EAS)	Biennial		>>			
SIG-KPI-038	Strategy, ICT and Governance	Develop and introduce WBCs Employee Value Proposition (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
SIG-KPI-039	Strategy, ICT and Governance	Review how we recognise staff performance and make changes accordingly (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
SIG-KPI-061	Strategy, ICT and Governance	% of total turnover in West Berkshire Council	Quarterly		▲	15.8%	13.8%	
SIG-KPI-030(i)	Strategy, ICT and Governance	No. of corporate and school staff enrolled onto training funded through the apprenticeship levy	Quarterly		★	46	14	
SIG-KPI-030(ii)	Strategy, ICT and Governance	No. of young people attending/involved in work experience and project work opportunities	Quarterly		★	9	5	

**PRIORITY AREA: 2. A fairer West Berkshire with opportunities for all**



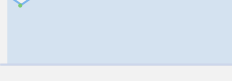


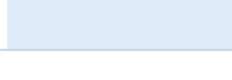
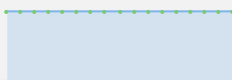
[Top of page](#)

**Prioritise support for those who need it most**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ASC-KPI-005	Adult Social Care	% of S42 safeguarding enquiries where a risk was identified and that risk was reduced/removed	Quarterly		★	98.8%	90.0%	
FPP-KPI-030	Finance, Property and Procurement	Deliver 5 housing units for displaced persons at West Point (31/05/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	Complete (G)	
ASC-KPI-020	Adult Social Care	Increase in the number of shared lives carers (households) compared to Mar 2023	Quarterly		★	37	35	
ASC-KPI-022	Adult Social Care	Adopt the Adult Social Care Home Provision Strategy (31/03/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	Complete (G)	
CSC-KPI-021	Children's Social Care	No. of active fostering households (including family and friends)	Quarterly		★	93	93	
ES-KPI-044	Education and SEND	No. of school holiday sessions (including lunch) delivered	Termly		★	63	52	




Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ES-KPI-055	Education and SEND	No. of weeks taken to be assessed by the Emotional Health Academy (Average)	Quarterly		▲	8	6	
ES-KPI-061	Education and SEND	Refresh and adopt the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy (30/09/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
ASC-KPI-002	Adult Social Care	% of WBC provider services inspected by Care Quality Commission (CQC) and rated as good or better	Quarterly		▲	80.0%	100.0%	
ASC-KPI-003	Adult Social Care	% of desired outcomes of a S42 safeguarding enquiry, expressed by the subject, 'fully' achieved	Quarterly		●	67.4%	68.0%	
ASC-KPI-014	Adult Social Care	% adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family	Quarterly		★	79.2%	78.0%	
ASC-KPI-018	Adult Social Care	% of vulnerable adults supported through the Three Conversations Model - preventative level (Tier 1)	Quarterly		★	92	87	
CSC-KPI-001	Children's Social Care	% of parents receiving support from the Early Response Hub reporting that their concerns had reduced	Quarterly		★	69.0%	65.0%	
CSC-KPI-003	Children's Social Care	% of repeat referrals to Children's Services within 12 months of a previous referral	Quarterly		●	23.0%	22.0%	
CSC-KPI-011	Children's Social Care	% of repeat plans for children subject to a CP Plan for a second subsequent time (within 2 years)	Quarterly		▲	18.0%	15.0%	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
CSC-KPI-014	Children's Social Care	% of Children in Care who've had 3 or more placements during the past year	Quarterly		▲	16.0%	12.0%	
CSC-KPI-015	Children's Social Care	% of our Care Leavers (aged 19-21) in employment, education or training	Quarterly		★	68.0%	60.0%	
DR-KPI-050	Development and Housing	% of verified rough sleepers in West Berkshire offered accommodation when first identified	Quarterly		★	100.0%	100.0%	
DR-KPI-051	Development and Housing	No. of rough sleepers at the end of each quarter (maximum)	Quarterly		▲	18	6	
DR-KPI-053	Development and Housing	% of households where relief duty ended with secure accommodation for at least 6 months	Quarterly		▲	45.9%	55.0%	
FPP-KPI-033	Finance, Property and Procurement	Av. No. of days taken to make a full decision on new Housing Benefit claims	Quarterly		●	18.9	18.5	
CSC-KPI-020	Children's Social Care	Ofsted rating of at least "Good" for our Children and Family Service	Quarterly		★	Good	Good	

Page 258


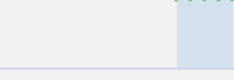

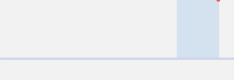

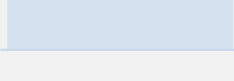


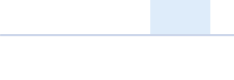
**Deliver more homes that people can afford**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-020	Development and Housing	% of 'Major' planning applications determined within time	Quarterly		★	100.0%	66.0%	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-021	Development and Housing	% of 'Non-Major' planning applications determined within time	Quarterly		★	88.0%	77.0%	
DR-KPI-005	Development and Housing	No. of affordable housing units delivered through partnership working	Ann - Q3		>>			
DR-KPI-011	Development and Housing	% of affordable dwellings (social rent and shared ownership) that are social rent	Ann - Q3		>>			
DR-KPI-063	Development and Housing	Develop a strategy to bring back empty home into use (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
DR-KPI-002	Development and Housing	No. of residential units granted planning permission	Annual		?		538	
DR-KPI-003	Development and Housing	No. of affordable homes granted planning permissions	Annual		?		125	
DR-KPI-004	Development and Housing	No. of affordable homes completed	Annual		★	238	125	
DR-KPI-001	Development and Housing	No. of residential completions	Annual		?		513	

Support our local authority maintained schools to drive up standards

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
-------------------	------------	----------------	-----------------	-------------------------	---------	------------	------------	--------------

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ES-KPI-048	Education and SEND	No. of local authority maintained schools	Quarterly		?		64	
ES-KPI-056	Education and SEND	Produce a plan to support school staff and governors for Ofsted inspections (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	Complete (G)	Complete (G)	
ES-KPI-057	Education and SEND	Review the structure of WBC education provision to maintained schools (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
ES-KPI-058	Education and SEND	Adopt a plan to close the attainment gap focussing on early years and deprivation (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
ES-KPI-015	Education and SEND	% pupils achieving a Good Level of Development (GLD) at Foundation Stage (EYFS)	Academic Year		●	66.5%	67.0%	
ES-KPI-032	Education and SEND	% of all schools (inc. Academies and iCollege) judged good or better by Ofsted	Quarterly		●	93.8%	96.3%	
ES-KPI-036	Education and SEND	Average attainment 8 score (KS4)	Academic Year		▲	49	54	
ES-KPI-037	Education and SEND	Average Progress 8 score per pupil (KS4)	Academic Year		★	0.2	0.0	
ES-KPI-039	Education and SEND	% achieving the national standard for reading, writing and maths combined (KS2)	Academic Year		▲	56.2%	60.0%	


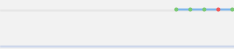

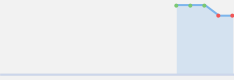

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name ↑	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ES-KPI-041	Education and SEND	% of disadvantaged pupils achieving national standard for reading, writing and maths combined (KS2)	Academic Year		▲	31.7%	43.0%	
ES-KPI-043	Education and SEND	Average attainment 8 scores for disadvantaged pupils (KS4)	Academic Year		▲	32	38	

**PRIORITY AREA: 3. Tackling the climate and ecological emergency**

[Top of page](#)


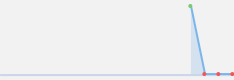

**West Berkshire Council to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and improve biodiversity**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ENV-KPI-002	Environment	% of council light vehicle fleet that are ultra-low emission	Quarterly		▲	54.5%	59.0%	
ENV-KPI-030	Environment	% of total zero carbon tariff electricity used	Annual		?		100.0%	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ENV-KPI-028	Environment	Go live with Grazeley solar farm (31/05/25)	Quarterly		?			On schedule (G)
ENV-KPI-037	Environment	No. of additional kWp installed for generating renewable energy	Quarterly		★	0	0	
ENV-KPI-029	Environment	Update the Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
FPP-KPI-031	Finance, Property and Procurement	Agree a minimum EPC assessment rating for all WBC owned properties (31/12/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	On schedule (G)	
FPP-KPI-032	Finance, Property and Procurement	Develop a plan to ensure all WBC owned properties meet the minimum EPC rating (30/04/26)	Quarterly		»			

Page 262


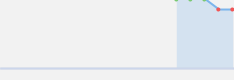
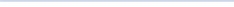
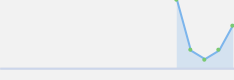

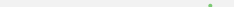

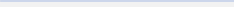

**Help our residents and businesses to save money and the environment**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ENV-KPI-003	Environment	% of all suitable WBC public car parks with 20 or more spaces to have EV charging available	Quarterly		★	36.4%	36.0%	
ENV-KPI-035	Environment	% of Car Club vehicles that are electric	Quarterly		▲	0.0%	16.7%	
ENV-KPI-057	Environment	No. of new EV charging points installed on streets without off-street parking	Quarterly		★	0	0	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ENV-KPI-034	Environment	No. of schemes delivered for residents to install solar panels and other clean energy systems	Annual		★	1	1	
ENV-KPI-033	Environment	No. of schemes delivered for residents to switch to greener energy providers at lower cost	Annual		★	1	1	

**Help to make the whole of West Berkshire net zero greenhouse gas emissions**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-089	Development and Housing	Commence trial of extended pedestrianisation hours Newbury Town Centre (31/03/24)	Quarterly		?			
ENV-KPI-066	Environment	% of household waste recycled, composted and reused	Quarterly		★	56.5%	53.0%	
ENV-KPI-074	Environment	Adopt a Local Transport Plan (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-062	Environment	Adopt the Active Travel Plan (31/12/24)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-060	Environment	Complete a cycle storage audit of the District (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-069	Environment	Complete a full review of kerbside recycling (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	


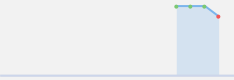

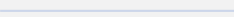

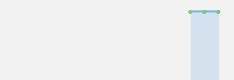

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ENV-KPI-058	Environment	Complete the A4 Crown Mead, Thatcham cycle route improvements (31/03/25)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-070	Environment	Confirm plan to phase out the charge on garden waste collection (30/06/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	Complete (G)	
ENV-KPI-061	Environment	Create a plan to provide new / additional secure bike storage at key locations (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-071	Environment	No. of activities delivered to increase education about recycling	Quarterly		★	5	5	
ENV-KPI-020	Environment	No. of District-wide initiatives to enable local action on carbon reduction	Quarterly		★	1	1	
ENV-KPI-027	Environment	No. of meetings held with Thames Water and Environment Agency to report on activity and investment	Annual		★	1	1	
ENV-KPI-016	Environment	Work with partners to review the AONB strategy for our area (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
FPP-KPI-009	Finance, Property and Procurement	% of contract award reports, for contracts worth £100k+, that included a Carbon Impact Assessment	Quarterly		?!			
FPP-KPI-013	Finance, Property and Procurement	Approve an approach to ensure new contracts over £100k include carbon neutrality plans (30/12/24)	Quarterly		★	Complete (G)	On schedule (G)	



**PRIORITY AREA: 4. A Prosperous and resilient West Berkshire**

[Top of page](#)

**Proactively engage with, attract and support businesses in West Berkshire to grow and thrive**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-027	Development and Housing	% of businesses interested in investing in WB provided with guidance, support and signposting	Quarterly		?		100.0%	
DR-KPI-031	Development and Housing	Complete the first phase of works on Newbury Wharf (31/12/24)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
DR-KPI-039	Development and Housing	Hold a Local Business Conference to promote the district and create more jobs (31/12/24)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
DR-KPI-042	Development and Housing	Launch a mentoring programme for children with local businesses (31/03/24)	Quarterly		?			
DR-KPI-036	Development and Housing	No. of engagement events with our rural cluster businesses to understand key needs and actions	Annual		▲	0	1	
DR-KPI-037	Development and Housing	Pilot first Estate Plan (31/12/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
ES-KPI-046	Education and SEND	No. of residents engaged in WBC funded life-long learning	Academic Year		★	1,386	1,250	

Page 265

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ES-KPI-060	Education and SEND	No. of supported internships for young people with EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plans)	Quarterly		?		4	

**Regeneration of Bond Riverside and build a new community sports stadium**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
CW-KPI-090	Community Services	Agree plans for sports at Faraday Road through working with the local sporting community (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
DR-KPI-033	Development and Housing	Review & update the Bond Riverside regeneration programme, incl. a Place-Making Strategy (31/12/24)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	

**Continue to invest in key infrastructure and public transport**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-088	Community Services	Review Adverse Weather plan to ensure the Drought Framework is up to date (31/05/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	Complete (G)	
ENV-KPI-048	Environment	% of flood prevention and drainage improvement schemes, listed in the capital programme, completed	Quarterly		★	20.0%	20.0%	
ENV-KPI-050	Environment	% of non-principal road network (B and C roads) in need of repair	Annual		★	3.0%	3.0%	
ENV-KPI-052	Environment	% of permanent pothole/road edge repairs completed within 28 days of order date, excl. exemptions	Quarterly		▲	86.6%	95.0%	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
ENV-KPI-049	Environment	% of the principal road network (A roads) in need of repair	Annual		★	3.0%	3.0%	
ENV-KPI-051	Environment	% of the unclassified road network in need of repair	Annual		★	5.0%	5.0%	
ENV-KPI-054	Environment	Adopt the Highway Asset Management Plan (31/12/25)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-055	Environment	Adopt the Potholes Strategy and Plan (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-009	Environment	Adopt the Public Transport Plan (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	Complete (G)	On schedule (G)	

Ensure new housing developments come with suitable infrastructure and enhanced amenities


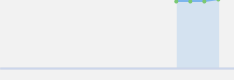

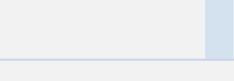

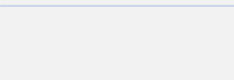
Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-090	Development and Housing	Adopt the West Berkshire Local Plan (01/01/25)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	On schedule (G)	

**PRIORITY AREA: 5. Thriving communities with a strong local voice**

[Top of page](#)


Encourage and support our local communities to take the lead in driving what is important to them

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
-------------------	------------	--------------	-----------------	-------------------------	---------	------------	------------	--------------


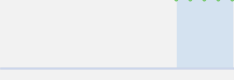

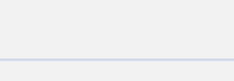

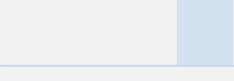

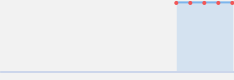

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
CSC-KPI-013	Children's Social Care	% of Children in Care Reviews where the young person contributed to their review	Quarterly		★	96.0%	90.0%	
CW-KPI-100	Community Services	Co-produce a framework for C&YP accessing work experience with local companies (01/06/24)	Quarterly		?		Complete (G)	
CW-KPI-105	Community Services	No. of Community forums held	Quarterly		▲	0	1	
DR-KPI-010	Development and Housing	% of parish/town councils requesting support to develop Neighbourhood Development Plans assisted	Quarterly		★	100.0%	100.0%	
FPP-KPI-014	Finance, Property and Procurement	Retender the outcomes based Voluntary Sector Prospectus (31/03/25)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
SIG-KPI-015	Strategy, ICT and Governance	% of residents 16-24 reporting they feel engaged in decision making (Biennial Residents' Survey)	Biennial		>>		19.7%	

Page 268

**Help our residents lead fulfilled and active lives**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
CW-KPI-099	Community Services	% of physically inactive adults (16+ years old) (as per the Active Lives Survey)	Annual		★	22.0%	21.0%	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
CW-KPI-092	Community Services	Adopt a renewal and re-provision programme for our council-owned leisure facilities (31/12/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	On schedule (G)	
CW-KPI-101	Community Services	Deliver the annual Members Bids funding programme (Annually in November)	Ann - Q3		★	Complete (G)	Complete (G)	
CW-KPI-096	Community Services	Increase accessibility accreditation levels for our sports and leisure facilities (30/06/25)	Quarterly		»»		On schedule (G)	
CW-KPI-010	Community Services	No. of arts-based events provided in community libraries by arts providers	Quarterly		★	26	5	
CW-KPI-102	Community Services	No. of initiatives implemented with partners to reduce and prevent crime in West Berkshire	Quarterly		★	5	1	
CW-KPI-005	Community Services	No. of people attending physical events and activities across Culture and Library Services	Quarterly		▲	3,482	13,000	
CW-KPI-087	Community Services	No. of visits to West Berkshire sports and leisure centres	Quarterly		▲	228,588	250,000	
CW-KPI-098	Community Services	Refresh the Playing Pitch Strategy (30/06/25)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
CW-KPI-097	Community Services	Refresh the Playing Pitch Strategy Action Plan (31/03/24)	Quarterly		?			

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
CW-KPI-095	Community Services	Refurbish Hungerford Leisure Centre (provisionally 30/12/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
CW-KPI-093	Community Services	Refurbish Kennet Leisure Centre, Thatcham (31/03/25)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
CW-KPI-094	Community Services	Refurbish Northcroft Leisure Centre (30/06/25)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-013	Environment	% of newly built playgrounds that have disabled access equipment installed	Quarterly		?		100.0%	
ENV-KPI-075	Environment	Adopt the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (30/06/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	Complete (G)	
ENV-KPI-063	Environment	Implement a pilot 20mph limit zone with a view to District wide roll-out (31/03/25)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
PH-KPI-019	Public Health	% of weekly Activity for Health Programme class capacity being met (quarterly average)	Quarterly		▲	60.1%	65.0%	
PH-KPI-043	Public Health	Adopt a plan to tackle social isolation, especially in rural areas and for young people (31/12/23)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	Complete (G)	
PH-KPI-041	Public Health	Implement a "Health in All Policies" approach at West Berkshire Council (31/03/25)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
PH-KPI-042	Public Health	Set up a new fund with Greenham Common Trust for mental health support initiatives (30/06/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)	Complete (G)	

**Work with the local communities and partners to enhance our main towns and large villages**

Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-043	Development and Housing	Investigate discounted travel through ticketing for activities in town centres (31/12/24)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	
DR-KPI-046	Development and Housing	Resurrect the Kennet and Avon Canal Partnership (31/12/24)	Quarterly		?		On schedule (G)	

ENV-KPI-010	Environment	Adopt the Parking Strategy (31/03/24)	Quarterly		▲	Delayed (R)		
-------------	-------------	---------------------------------------	-----------	--	---	-------------	--	--

**Help our villages to remain vibrant long term**


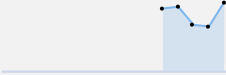





Measure Reference	Dept/Serv.	Measure Name	Reporting Freq.	Period Actual Sparkline	YTD RAG	YTD Actual	YTD Target	Open Details
DR-KPI-041	Development and Housing	Funding available as grants for village halls through Rural England Prosperity Fund	Annual		>>			
ES-KPI-059	Education and SEND	Plan a refreshed offer for Home to School Transport (31/12/24)	Quarterly		★	On schedule (G)	On schedule (G)	
ENV-KPI-064	Environment	No. of Electric Vehicle charging points in our villages	Quarterly		?!			





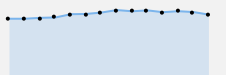
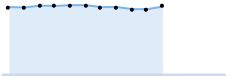
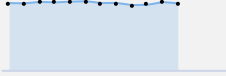

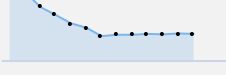
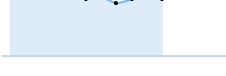


## Appendix D: Influencer Measures Dashboard (Tables)

### Influencer MoV - Economy

Measure Ref ↑	Measure Name	Period Actual Sparkline	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
CW-MoV-001	No. of all crimes reported to Thames Valley Police		2,043	2,043	Thames Valley Police data is not available for Q1 2024/25.	
CW-MoV-002	No. of anti-social behaviour (ASB) incidents reported to Thames Valley Police for WB LPA		408	408	We are seeing an increase in reporting of ASB across all areas and in all locations and this is not just for West Berkshire. Some recent press articles nationally may have encouraged people to report more too	
CW-MoV-003	No. of Domestic Abuse incidents reported to Thames Valley Police (recorded crimes)					
CW-MoV-004	No. of Domestic Abuse incidents reported to Thames Valley Police (non crime)					
DR-MoV-006	No. of valid planning applications received (Total)		468	468		
DR-MoV-006(i)	No. of valid minor planning applications received		46	46		
DR-MoV-006(ii)	No. of valid major planning applications received		10	10		






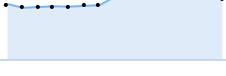


Measure Ref ↑	Measure Name	Period Actual Sparkline	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
DR-MoV-006(iii)	No. of valid other planning applications received		206	206		
DR-MoV-006(iv)	No. of valid non-ps planning applications received		206	206		
DR-MoV-007	% approval rate (planning permissions)		83.2%	83.2%		
DR-MoV-013	Average weekly footfall in Newbury Town Centre					
DR-MoV-014	Average weekly footfall in Hungerford Town Centre					
DR-MoV-015	Average weekly footfall in Thatcham Town Centre					
ENV-MoV-014	No. of parking tickets sold in WBC managed parking spaces		278,725	278,725		
FPP-MoV-015	No. of business rated properties		5,986	5,986		
FPP-MoV-016	No. of empty business rated properties (industrial and non-industrial units)		225	225		
FPP-MoV-017	No. of empty business rated properties (industrial units)		32	32		



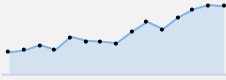





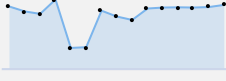
Measure Ref ↑	Measure Name	Period Actual Sparkline	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
FPP-MoV-018	No. of empty business rated properties (non-industrial units)		193	193		
SIG-MoV-Context	Average house price (£k)				Data from June 2022 onward amended. March 2024 is the latest available data.	
SIG-MoV-Context	Average price of a house bought by first-time buyers				Data from June 2022 onward amended. March 2024 is the latest available data.	
SIG-MoV-Context	Economic activity rate (aged 16-64) (12 months ending)					
SIG-MoV-Context	Employment rate (aged 16-64)					
SIG-MoV-Context	Total claimant count (aged 16+) - JSA & Universal Credit					
SIG-MoV-Context	Total claimant count (aged 16-24) - JSA & Universal Credit					
SIG-MoV-Context	Unemployment rate (model based estimate)					



Measure Ref ↑	Measure Name	Period Actual Sparkline	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
SIG-MoV-Context	Unemployment rate England (model based estimate)					
SIG-MoV-Context	Unemployment rate South East (model based estimate)					

### Influencer MoV - Social Care






Measure Ref	Measure Name ↑	Period Actual Sparkline	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
ASC-MoV-010	Current Long Term Support client (LTS All Ages) (incl. community, residential & nursing care)		1,915	1,915		
DR-MoV-024	No. of Household Support Fund applications approved		733	733		
DR-MoV-020(i)	No. of households (all) in self-contained (temporary) accommodation at the end of the quarter		2	2		
DR-MoV-020(ii)	No. of households (single) in bed & breakfast (temporary) accommodation at the end of the quarter		18	18		
DR-MoV-020(iii)	No. of households (families) in bed & breakfast (temporary) accommodation at the end of the quarter		20	20		



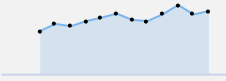

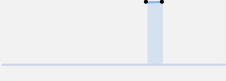
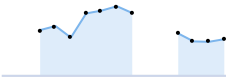
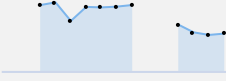
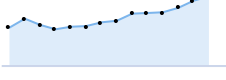
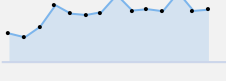
Measure Ref	Measure Name ↑	Period Actual Sparkline	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
ASC-MoV-001	Overall no. of new requests for support (ASC) (excludes Blue Badges)		1,148	1,148	Demand has previously been shown by SALT STS001 reports on 'New requests for support'. Client Leve Dataset (CLD) is replacing SALT and demand will be evidenced via reported 'Requests Events' and concluded 'Assessment / Events'. Route of Access is still recorded against 'Request' events. <i>Whilst we work through the transition to the new reporting and how this maps / supersedes previous reporting we will keep the status quo and report overall demand by Route of Access (as previously reported). Over the next few months we will overlay this with new information.</i>	
ASC-MoV-009	No. of people accessing reablement (Short Term support to maximise independence) (cumulative ytd)		622	622	Relates to a rolling 12 months. CLD now reports a rolling 12 months. Relates to new and existing clients. Decrease relates to change in JCP model where we are targeting reablement	
ASC-MoV-046	No. of adult safeguarding enquiries (S42) opened		162	162		
CSC-MoV-001	No. of children subject to Child Protection Plans (per 10,000 population aged under 18)		59	59		
CSC-MoV-003	No. of Children in Care cases		185	185		
CSC-MoV-004	No. of Children in Care (excl. Un-accompanied Asylum Seeking Children)		159	159		
CSC-MoV-005	No. of Children in Need (CIN) (excluding CiC and CP)		869	869		
CSC-MoV-007	Level of first time entrants into the YJS (per 100,000 under 10 to 17 year olds) (12 month rolling)		134	134	Apr 23 - Mar 24 cohort	

Measure Ref	Measure Name ↑	Period Actual Sparkline	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
CSC-MoV-009	No. of referrals received (as a subset of Contacts) (Children and Family Services)		443	443		
CSC-MoV-010	No. of S47 (Child Protection) enquiries initiated		202	202		
CSC-MoV-012	No. of (LADO) referrals received - (Quality Assurance and Assessment Service (QAAS))		139	139	It is difficult to ascribe a specific reason, or reasons, for the increase in LADO numbers. The figures are following a year-on-year trend of increasing contacts to the LADO, particularly post Covid.	
DR-MoV-016	No. of households prevented (relief duty and prevention duty) from becoming homeless (Total)		140	140		
DR-MoV-016(i)	No. of households prevented (relief duty) from becoming homeless		102	102		
DR-MoV-016(ii)	No. of households prevented (prevention duty) from becoming homeless		38	38		
DR-MoV-020	No. of households in temporary accommodation at the end of the quarter		40	40		
DR-MoV-021	No. of active (qualifying) households on the Housing Register		1,024	1,024		
ES-MoV-014	No. of active involvements receiving intervention from the (EHA)(Total CYP)		260	260		


Measure Ref	Measure Name ↑	Period Actual Sparkline	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
ES-MoV-018	No. of referrals to the Emotional Health Triage (EHT)		169	169		
ENV-MoV-003	No. of people killed or seriously injured on roads in West Berks, incl. National Highways roads		6	6		

### Influencer MoV - Environment

Measure Ref	Measure Name	Period Actual Sparkline ↑	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
ENV-MoV-024	No. of highway related third party claims settled (paid)		0	0		
CW-MoV-054	No. of CiC (and care leavers 18-25 who left care due to age) who access a leisure centre		5	5		
CW-MoV-022	No. of volunteers across Culture and Library Services (Total)		30	30	A continuing vacant post in the Library service, which is under consideration by the Financial Review Panel, means that data for this measure can not be provided at Q1.	
CW-MoV-023(i)	No. of volunteers at Shaw House		30	30		
CW-MoV-024(ii)	No. of volunteers at the West Berkshire Museum					

Measure Ref	Measure Name	Period Actual Sparkline ↑	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
ENV-MoV-023	No. of highway related third party claims received		121	121		
CW-MoV-053/KPI-045(n)(n)	No. of individuals who have attended the Activity for Health programme in previous quarter		127	127	This cohort has seen an increase in the last quarter, due to the outreach work being undertaken by Everyone Active.	
CW-MoV-025(iii)	No. of volunteers in Libraries (including the Mobile and 'At Home' Service)					
ENV-MoV-039	No. of flytips reported		274	274		
ENV-MoV-019	No. of permanent pothole repairs completed (single defects)		918	918		
CW-MoV-051	No. of individuals aged 60+ using a sports or leisure centre in previous quarter		1,904	1,904		
CW-MoV-052	No. of individuals aged under 16 years who have used a sports or leisure centre in previous quarter		3,571	3,571		
CW-MoV-019(i)	No. of e-items borrowed from libraries					
CW-MoV-020(ii)	No. of physical items borrowed from libraries					



Measure Ref	Measure Name	Period Actual Sparkline ↑	Period Actual	YTD Actual	Comments	Open Details
CW-MoV-018	No. of library issues (Total)				<p>A continuing vacant post in the library service, which is under consideration by the Financial Review Panel, means that data for this measure can not be provided at Q1 2024/25.</p>	

This page is intentionally left blank

## Appendix E: Purpose and Background

### Purpose and Background

To set out the Council's performance against a suite of performance measures, called Influencer measures, Priority Area Measures (PAMs), and Corporate Health Indicators e.g. mandatory training, and provide assurance that the priority areas in the [Council Strategy 2023-2027](#) are being managed effectively. Where performance has fallen below the expected level, information on the remedial action taken and the impact of that action will be presented to ensure effective oversight to Councillors, staff and residents regarding progress made towards the achievement of the outcomes detailed in the Council Strategy Delivery Plan.

### Conventions Used

The measure categories are:

<b>Influencer Measures</b>	Non-targeted measures that are reported to either illustrate the demand on a Department/Service, or provide context for the demand, e.g. economic activity.
<b>Priority Area Measures (PAMs)</b>	Targeted measures, reporting as a number, percentage or progress rating. These are taken from measures provided in individual Department/Service Plans, which show the council's progress against the high level Priority Areas in the Council Strategy, e.g. 'A fairer West Berkshire with opportunities for all'.
<b>Corporate Health Indicators</b>	A mix of targeted and non-targeted measures that show performance/levels against a suite of measures, including mandatory training, turnover and establishment, and sickness absence.

In-year, quarterly performance is captured for all performance measures to allow for analysis of actual progress. The RAG rating for number and percentage measures is based on a 5% tolerance from target. For progress rating measures, the RAG rating is based on a service's prediction of whether the target will be achieved by the end of the financial year or target date.

A series of symbols is used throughout the report to illustrate the status of a measure:

Symbol	Description
★	Performance is equal to, or better, than target
●	Performance is just below target, and within the 5% tolerance
▲	Performance is below target, and outside the 5% tolerance
?	No actual value
n/a	Performance scheme is 'No target', e.g. used for Measures of Volume
n/r	Actual value is not reported for that reporting period, as the measure has a different planning pattern, e.g. annually instead of quarterly

The statuses for progress measures (those with a target date) are:

- On Schedule (G) - on target to meet the deadline (Green)
- Complete (G) - completed on time (Green)
- Behind schedule (A) - behind schedule, but is expected to be completed by the deadline (Amber)
- Delayed (R) - the target deadline has been missed (Red)
- Ceased (R) - the activity is no longer being carried out (Red)

A summary of the council's Corporate Health measures are also included, which are a mix of targeted and non-targeted measures that show the organisations performance/levels against, e.g. turnover and establishment, and sickness absence.

This page is intentionally left blank

# Accommodation Review: Proposed Disposal of Unit 1 Turnhams Green Business Park

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Executive
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	19 September 2024
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Vicky Poole
<b>Report Author:</b>	Stacey Bradshaw, Accommodation Review Programme Manager
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	EX4507

## 1 Purpose of the Report

1.1 As part of the Council’s Transformation programme approved by the Executive, the Council is focussing on reviewing its accommodation. One area where a disposal has been identified as a preferred option is in respect of the Council’s offices located at Turnhams Green and the recommendations within this report would see this realised.

1.2 This report seeks approval to:

- (a) dispose of the Council’s Corporate leasehold property known as Unit 1, Turnhams Green Business Park, Calcot (“Turnhams Green”)
- (b) enter into appropriate required documentation relating to the disposal.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council instructs agents to market Turnhams Green.
- 2.2 To delegate authority to the Executive Director of Resources, in consultation with the Executive Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Corporate Services, and the Executive Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property to consider any offers received in respect of the disposal of Turnhams Green and to accept any such offer considered appropriate subject to compliance with the Council’s duty to obtain best consideration.
- 2.3 To delegate authority to the Service Director- Strategy & Governance in consultation with the Service Director- Finance, Procurement and Property to enter into the appropriate disposal documentation for Turnhams Green including any such amendments that are necessary in line with agreed sales heads of terms.

2.4 That the existing Roger Croft meeting room at Market Street, Newbury, is reconfigured to allow the centralisation of Child Protection Conferences, and retained for Executive use on Thursdays and Fridays.

## Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	<p>Disposal of Turnhams Green would result in a net revenue saving of approximately £118k per year and would also release a capital receipt based on the latest valuation and subject to offers through marketing.</p> <p>There will be agent costs incurred through the sale and a capital outlay from existing maintenance budgets is required to reconfigure Roger Croft Room for family conferences at Market Street.</p>
<b>Human Resource:</b>	<p>There is potential for this project to have Human Resource implications as it will change working locations for staff in the People directorate.</p>
<b>Legal:</b>	<p>There will be legal resourcing implications from the disposal of Turnhams Green due to changes to work locations for staff, property appraisals, and disposals which will require support.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty under S123 Local Government Act 1972 (S123 LGA) to secure the best consideration reasonably obtainable on a disposal of its property assets and must be satisfied that it has complied with that duty on the disposal of Turnhams Green.</p> <p>Paragraphs 5.7 to 5.9 of this report refer to the S123 LGA duty.</p> <p>The Council must comply with this duty</p>
<b>Risk Management:</b>	<p>There will be a number of risks associated with the Accommodation Review. These will be analysed and managed using project-based risk registers which will report into the Transformation Delivery Board.</p>
<b>Property:</b>	<p>The proposal has significant property implications as it relates to the use of corporate buildings.</p>

<b>Policy:</b>	The Accommodation Review is one of the six priority projects contained within the Transformation Programme.			
	<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 change to working location isn't significant so it is unlikely there will be an impact.
<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 change to working location isn't significant so it is unlikely there will be an impact.
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>	x			The consolidation of the Council's operations into fewer buildings will have a positive impact on its carbon impact.
<b>Health Impact:</b>		x		No impact
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		x		The disposal of buildings or consolidation of more functions into fewer buildings could require IT capital works over time.  This move will necessitate the relocation of the Disaster Recovery Centre.
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		x		None

<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	x			Delivery of the Transformation Programme is a key component of the Council's commitment to delivering good, sustainable, value-for-money public services.
<b>Core Business:</b>	x			The improvements to customer service and savings realised through realisation of the accommodation review could significantly enhance delivery of core business services.
<b>Data Impact:</b>		x		None
<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	<p>The following officers were informed about plans to dispose of Turnhams Green given the potential impact on their teams or the need for them to support the disposal. Most of these have contributed to the report whilst others are aware of its high-level content:</p> <p>Corporate Board</p> <p>Jo England and Maria Shepherd- Interim Joint Service Directors, Adult Social Care</p> <p>Rebecca Wilshire- Service Director, Children's Social Care</p> <p>Neil Goddard- Service Director, Education</p> <p>Richard Turner- Property Services Manager</p> <p>Andi Blinco- Facilities Manager</p> <p>Karen Turner, HR Business Partner Manager</p> <p>Jon Martin- Finance Manager- Resources and Place</p>			

### 3 Executive Summary

3.1 A desktop review of the Council's existing office accommodation and the implementation of the Timelord 2 project, has highlighted that the Council's Turnhams Green site is under-utilised and that the continued financial outlay of maintaining it represents poor value for money.



- 3.2 Given the Council's very challenging financial position and the emphasis this has put on cost minimisation, disposal of the Turnhams Green site has potential to realise financial benefits.
- 3.3 It must be noted that many of the officers who currently use Turnhams Green are locality workers supporting communities in the East of the district; it is therefore essential to retain some desk capacity in this area. Following appraisal of options, scope has been identified for the Council to take advantage of co-location in nearby buildings belonging to other public sector partners to support a 'one public sector' approach by physically co-locating with another public sector partner.
- 3.4 The Council also has the opportunity to realise a capital receipt through the sale of its long lease of Turnhams Green and it is therefore recommended that agents are instructed to facilitate this.

## **4 Supporting Information**

### **Introduction**

- 5.1 The Accommodation Review is one of the major projects included within the Transformation Programme and will see the consolidation of its estate so that its use is more customer focussed and cost-effective. The disposal of Turnhams Green is one of the options put forward within the review to support this.

### **Background**

- 4.2 The long lease at Turnhams Green was purchased in December 2008 with a lease term of 999 years at a cost of £1.68m. The ongoing revenue cost of the building is £118k per year and the sale of the lease would generate a capital receipt.
- 4.3 Turnhams Green contains 59 desks with occupancy data suggesting the facility is not well-used. The Council introduced a desk booking system in 2021 to facilitate the safe return to the office post-pandemic. Since then, the 59 desks at Turnhams Green have been bookable by officers based in the building. Data collected from this system suggests that over 50% of the desks within the building are unoccupied for the entire day on the busiest days, with up to and exceeding 75% unoccupied all day on quiet days. Of those which are booked, fewer than 10 of these are booked for the entire day by duty officers and desk-based staff, with the remainder of the desks being used as touch-down workspace for locality-based social care staff for parts of the day. Furthermore, the data suggests a downward trend in building use, which reinforces the view that the building provides larger accommodation than required and that an alternative would present better value for money.
- 4.4 The building also contains a number of meeting rooms which are used for family conferences and similar meetings. An average of 5 Child Protection meetings are held each week at Turnhams Green, suggesting that providing alternative space for these at Market Street will be crucial and should be factored into the project plan.
- 4.5 The potential revenue savings and capital receipts are summarised in the table below:

Current Revenue cost of Turnhams	Net Revenue Savings	Potential Capital receipt of sales of Turnhams
£118k	£118k	<i>pt2 information</i>

4.6 There is also likely to be an environmental benefit due to the reduced building footprint and utilities emissions, though this cannot be quantified at this stage.

#### Best Consideration Duty

4.7 The Council has the power to dispose of land in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 (“the Act”) but has a duty to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable unless the Secretary of State has consented to the disposal, or the disposal meets the criteria set out in the General Disposal Consent Order.

4.8 Best consideration is that which has commercial or monetary value to the Council and can be demonstrated by marketing, by obtaining an appropriate independent valuation or by a combination of these methods.

4.9 The Council will consider and comply with its best consideration duty on its disposal of Turnhams Green.

#### Proposals

- That the Council instructs agents to market Turnhams Green.
- That the existing Roger Croft Room at Market Street, Newbury, is reconfigured to allow the centralisation of Child Protection Conferences.

It is expected that the proposals above could offer a number of benefits to residents whilst also ameliorating the Council’s financial position both in revenue terms and in terms of capital receipts.

### 5 Other options considered

5.1 Doing nothing could be considered, however this is not recommended given the need to take action to address the Council’s financial position and the strategic objective to improve the levels of service given to the Council’s customers.

### 6 Conclusion

6.1 The Accommodation Review is one of the six projects that the Executive has agreed should form part of the Transformation Programme.

6.2 In light of the Council’s efforts to address its financial position and its drive to improve services for its residents, the consolidation of its estate has the potential to realise a number of benefits. These could be financial, environmental or relating to service-improvement.

6.3 If successful, the sale of Turnhams Green has the potential to realise revenue savings and a capital receipt. It is therefore recommended that this is allowed to proceed.

## 7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment

7.2 Appendix B- Data Protection

7.3 Appendix C- Part II Confidential Information

---

### Subject to Call-In:

Yes:  No:

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

### Officer details:

Name: Stacey Bradshaw  
Job Title: Accommodation Review Programme Manager  
E-mail: Stacey.bradshaw1@westberks.gov.uk

---

# West Berkshire Council Equity Impact Assessment

TEMPLATE

March 2023

## Contents

<a href="#">Section 1: Summary details</a> .....	9
<a href="#">Section 2: Detail of proposal</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics</a> .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<a href="#">Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Section 4: Review</a> .....	15

---

## Section 1: Summary details

<b>Directorate and Service Area</b>	Transformation
<b>What is being assessed</b> (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	Sale of Turnhams Green
<b>Is this a new or existing function or policy?</b>	Sale of existing corporate building and relocation of officers
<b>Summary of assessment</b> Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community?  (following completion of the assessment).	Proposal to sell the long lease Turnhams Green and centralise Child Protection Conferences to Market Street through reconfiguration of Roger Croft room.
<b>Completed By</b>	Stacey Bradshaw
<b>Authorised By</b>	Gabrielle Mancini
<b>Date of Assessment</b>	8/7/24

## Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p><b>Context / Background</b></p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The Council's building at Turnhams Green is under-utilised and has high running costs considering its low level of occupation. There is scope to make revenue savings for the Council by selling the property's long lease. This will also result in a capital receipt for the Council.</p>
<p><b>Proposals</b></p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sale of Turnhams Green</b></li> <li>• <b>Centralisation of Child Protection Conferences</b></li> <li>• <b>Reconfiguration of Roger Croft room at Market Street, Newbury</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence / Intelligence</b></p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to inform the judgements you make about potential impact</p>	<p>5 Child Protection conferences are held</p> <p>Desk booking data has been analysed</p> <p>Facilities and property budgets for the building have been analysed</p>

**Accommodation Review: Proposed Disposal of Unit 1 Turnhams Green Business Park**

<p>on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	
<p><b>Alternatives considered / rejected</b></p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>Retention of Turnhams Green. This has been discounted as it represents poor value for money and does not allow for partnership working across the public sector.</p>

**Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics**

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			



**Accommodation Review: Proposed Disposal of Unit 1 Turnhams Green Business Park**

<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
<b>Race</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
<b>Sex</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	NoNo impact is expected.			
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
<b>Religion or Belief</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			

**Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts**

<b>Additional community impacts</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Description of impact</b>	<b>Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts</b>	<b>Action owner</b> (*Job Title, Organisation)	<b>Timescale and monitoring arrangements</b>
<b>Rural communities</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
<b>Areas of deprivation</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
<b>Displaced communities</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			

**Accommodation Review: Proposed Disposal of Unit 1 Turnhams Green Business Park**

<b>Additional community impacts</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Description of impact</b>	<b>Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts</b>	<b>Action owner</b> (*Job Title, Organisation)	<b>Timescale and monitoring arrangements</b>
<b>Care experienced people</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			
<b>The Armed Forces Community</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No impact is expected.			

## Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>31/3/25</b>
<b>Person Responsible for Review</b>	<b>Stacey Bradshaw</b>
<b>Authorised By</b>	

EDI employee related EQiA's should now be sent to Human Resources [hrenquiries@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:hrenquiries@westberks.gov.uk)

## 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:	Resources
Service:	Transformation
Team:	Transformation
Lead Officer:	Stacey Bradshaw
Title of Project/System:	Turnhams Green sale
Date of Assessment:	8/7/25

#### 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"/>

Accommodation Review: Proposed Disposal of Unit 1 Turnhams Green Business Park

	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"/>
<small>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</small>		

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.

This page is intentionally left blank

Executive – 19 September 2024

## **Item 15 – Member Questions**

To follow

This page is intentionally left blank



# Agenda Item 17.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank