

## Contents

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### 1. Purpose of Community Forums

- 1.1 West Berkshire Council is committed to working with our residents and communities to ensure that together, we can make West Berkshire an even better place in which to live, work and learn.
- 1.2 Community Forums will provide an opportunity to discuss issues of significance to communities in West Berkshire, and will provide an opportunity for residents, businesses and others to ask questions. These Forums will ensure that the Executive hears the voices of those living, working or learning in the community.
- 1.3 Community Forums will be chaired by one of the Council's Portfolio Holders, and at least one senior officer will attend every Forum, depending on the focus of the discussion topics. Other councillors, and relevant officers may also attend Community Forums.
- 1.4 Community Forums will provide an opportunity for the community to contribute to, and support the Executive in the development of proposals. The Community Forum does not have any decision making powers, and any significant decisions will be taken by the Executive.
- 1.5 Other participants could include:
  - *Local residents*
  - *Local businesses*
  - *Parish Councils*
  - *Local residents associations representatives*
  - *Special interest groups*
  - *Voluntary organisations*
  - *Others - Police / Health*



## 2. **Terms of Reference**

- 2.1 Community Forums will provide an opportunity for open and effective communication between the Council and those living, working and learning in the district on matters of significant interest to them.
- 2.2 By open and honest conversations, the Community Forum will help to identify opportunities for communities to work together and with the Council, to deliver the best outcomes for those communities. Officers will assist these conversations by providing professional advice.
- 2.3 The Community Forum will provide an opportunity for communities to ask questions of Members of the Executive and senior officers, regarding issues that affect them.
- 2.4 The Community Forum will enable the Council to provide information and to engage with the community about significant activities and projects being delivered by the Council.
- 2.5 To consider any other items within the control or reasonable influence of the Council, at the discretion of the Chairman.

## 3. **Roles and Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The Executive Portfolio Holder will consider the items and opportunities discussed at the Community Forum. The Community Forum is not a decision making body any proposals that the Council take a particular action would need to be considered via the appropriate decision making route.
- 3.2 The Senior Officer in attendance will ensure that recommendations are fed back to the Council and given due consideration. Information regarding action taken should be made public so that individuals attending Community Forums are kept updated about progress.
- 3.3 All participants will be expected to behave in a respectful way to others participating in the meeting.

## 4. **Meeting arrangements**

- 4.1 *Meetings will be held at least 4 times per year, and ideally should not last more than 2 hours.*
- 4.2 *Meetings will usually be held at various community locations in West Berkshire.*
- 4.3 *Meetings will be in private but will be recorded and the recordings will be made available for viewing.*
- 4.4 *Any partner body giving a presentation will normally be asked to submit this in advance. Recordings of meetings, and action logs will be made public.*

*The Council will normally respond to any matters raised which are not responded to fully during the meeting, within 4 weeks of the Community Forum taking place. Updates will be provided via the Council website.*

## Document Control

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*This Strategy is not for publication externally*