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Question (A)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(A) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing by Paula Saunderson:

"The Latest Authority Monitoring Report that appears on the Web Page is for 2023 prepared in November 2024, therefore where is the one for 2024, will one be prepared for 2025 and if so when will these 2 years be visible to the Public, please, bearing in mind these are no longer submitted to Central Government?"

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing provided a written response:

The Authority Monitoring Reports bring together a set of indicators into one report and includes information on the Duty to cooperate, progress against the local development scheme (LDS) timetable, and housing delivery including five-year housing land supply. The reports are usually prepared annually in arrears. The reports for 2024 and 2025 have not yet been completed but are in development. This has been due to the peaks in workload and timing of the Local Plan Examination in public, adoption of the Local Plan Review in 2025 and the requirement to enter into new Local Plan making in 2026. However, the council has consistently published the annual five-year housing land supply report as a separate document, regularly updates the LDS timetable and updates the website with adopted neighbourhood plans. Therefore, much of this information is already in the public domain.

The AMR reports will be published once complete, but if there is some specific information required, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Planning Policy Team who will be pleased to assist you.

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Question (B)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(B) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources by Paul Morgan:

"In September 2026, the Council borrowed a further £10 million (2 x £5 million) from the Public Works Loan Board with Maturity Dates of 5 April 2028 & 1 June 2028.

Can you please provide a full breakdown of where and how this £10 million will be utilised, for example: capital projects, loan repayment, Capitalisation Directions (EFS), Transformation, other use, etc."

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources answered:

The £10 million borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board in September 2026 was not taken out for a single project or specific purpose. Rather, it forms part of the Council's overall borrowing portfolio and supports the Council's underlying borrowing requirement.

During 2026/27, the Council repaid approximately £27 million of maturing PWLB loans. In managing its treasury position, the Council uses a combination of internal cash resources and external borrowing to fund its capital financing requirement and maintain appropriate liquidity levels.

Borrowing decisions are based on cash flow forecasts, market conditions, treasury risk management considerations, and the Council's approved Treasury Management Strategy.

Therefore, it would not be possible to provide a breakdown demonstrating how the £10 million was spent as treasury borrowing is managed on a pooled basis across the Council's overall financing requirement.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Paul Morgan asked the following supplementary question:

"Is the £10m used to pay unserviced debt rather than going to new Capital Projects?".

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources answered:

As mentioned, it is a combination of working capital requirements, but also when debt matures, we will repay it. As part of the treasury management strategy, no more than

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30 per cent of our borrowing is short term, what we are trying to do is to minimize the weighted average cost of borrowing to us, roughly around 4 per cent.

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Question (C)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(C) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways by Chris Giles:

"Following the fatal crash that occurred on 26th November 2025 between Burghfield Road and the Western Boundary of Reading Borough Council, will the Council urgently review safety measures on the Bath Road between the M4 JUNCTION 12 and Burghfield Road(RBC) including consideration of reduced speed limit to 30 MPH, and enforcing speed limits,improved on and off road signage, and enhanced street lighting! with urgent attention to tree ingress. West Berkshire Council has a major input because of the current boundaries.

In addition, will the Council commit to arranging a urgent multi - agency site meeting with relevant stakeholders to consider pedestrian and cyclist safety, including the use of footpaths, speed management, and signage, particularly in light of the use of cycles, e-bikes and scooters."

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways answered:

Mr Giles, thank you for your question. Following the tragic accident on the A4 at the Reading/West Berkshire Boundary, West Berkshire Council, Reading Borough Council, and Thames Valley Police undertook a joint investigation of the incident to understand how this incident occurred and what measures might be necessary to help prevent similar incidents in the future.

All aspects of the Highway were looked at including road surface condition, footway provision and condition, street lighting levels, road signage and lining as well as speed limits.

As a result of this investigation, there were a number of recommendations made within the Reading Borough side which they immediately addressed. There were no observations made at the time for the West Berkshire side. However, since the incident, we have undertaken measures to deal with vegetation growth along the A4 corridor as a preventive measure.

There are no plans to alter or change the current speed limit along the A4 as a result of the investigation into the incident, especially as excessive or inappropriate speed was not considered a contributary factor in the incident.

Cross border discussions on the promotion of cycle routes and their usage are something we are developing with Reading Borough and is being managed by our Active Travel Team.

Regarding the enforcement of the usage of these facilities, this remains as previously advised to yourself in that it is something out of the control of both neighbouring Highway Authorities and is something you need to continue to raise with the Police.

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The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Chris Giles asked the following supplementary question:

"Why is there no accountability for speed enforcement, road safety, and accident reporting on the Bath Road, between the M4 and Reading boundary".

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways answered:

I have highlighted a number of steps that have been taken between the three parties involved. I do believe there is accountability.

Enforcement of speed is a Thames Valley Police job that we support and provide the highways they require to do that. Both Reading and West Berkshire Council have made the changes needed to the road conditions and layout.

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Question (D)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(D) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing by Paula Saunderson:

"WBC Infrastructure Funding Statements (IFS) issued in December each year, do not include details that are held within the CSV Files which show how much each CIL Qualifying Development is contributing and to which individual Projects/Schemes that funding has been allocated down to the last penny. Hence when a price for a schemes is announced it is not possible to see which Approved Planning Applications are contributing? When the next one is prepared will you be making the CSV Information Available?"

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing provided a written response:

The amount of CIL paid in relation to individual developments is not currently published as part of the Infrastructure Funding Statement, although this information can be provided upon request.

However, it would not identify which developments have funded particular infrastructure projects. This is because CIL receipts are pooled and used to fund a wide range of infrastructure projects rather than being attributed to individual schemes.

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Question (E)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(E) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Sport and Countryside by Paul Morgan:

"The Council recently uploaded the Playing Pitch Strategy Delivery Plan (September 2026) that was produced / provided by Stuart Todd Associates (STA). Can you please confirm the costs to the Council for this report."

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Spoirt and Countryside answered:

Thank you for your question. I can confirm that the Council paid Stuart Todd Associates £48,074.89 for the development of the Playing Pitch Strategy and Delivery Plan. That commission also included work on the drafting of the Henwick Worthy Masterplan, reflecting the close relationship between the two projects and the way in which each informed the other. Combing the work provided a cost effective and joined up approach whilst ensuring consistency across the Strategy Delivery Plan and Masterplan.

The Chairman asked: *"Do you have a supplementary question arising directly out of the answer to your original question. A supplementary should be relevant to the original question and not introduce any new material?"*

Paul Morgan asked the following supplementary question:

"So you can't provide a breakdown of how much the playing pitch strategy was part of that? Also, have you looked at the plan they provided".

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Leisure, Spoirt and Countryside answered:

That is a matter for Stuart Todd Associates how they break down those costs. We are not party to that information. And yes, I have.

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Question (F)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(F) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways by Paula Saunderson:

"Students are seeing submission of new Local Transport Delivery Plans (LTDP) to Cabinet/Executive Committee Meetings elsewhere, as these were due to DfT by 18th September, after Drafts were sought in March 2026, therefore will WBC be preparing a Final LTDP, and how, who and when will this be agreed and publicised?"

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways provided a written response:

Ms Saunderson, thank you for your question. The Council will be submitting an updated Local Transport Delivery Plan by the end of the month (31st October) which is the deadline for submission. It will be published once submitted. This will be an updated version of the preliminary submission from March this year. Everything within the submission is subject to approval through the Council's budget setting process and does not require separate approval.

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Question (G)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(G) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways by Paula Saunderson:

"Under the Environment Act of 2021 there is a requirement for English Local Authorities to deliver a Biodiversity Report to DEFRA to comply with Biodiversity Duty, with the first Report, for the period ending 1st Jan 2026, due within 12weeks, after which subsequent reports must be published at least every 5 years. Students cannot find the 1st Report on the WBC Web Site, so has it been prepared and when will it be available for study?"

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Highways provided a written response:

Thank you for the question, Ms Saunderson. The Council continues to implement measures towards protecting and enhancing biodiversity. In addition to working with other Berkshire authorities to develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, West Berkshire Council has been delivering improvements locally. Relevant information can be found on the Council's website at: Biodiversity and the Natural Environment - West Berkshire Council

Reporting on the Biodiversity Duty to DEFRA is a relatively new requirement, and various authorities are at different levels of compliance based on factors such as availability of internal resources and monitoring software. The Council is currently putting together its report, and this will be uploaded on our website and shared with key stakeholders in due course.

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Question (H)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(H) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing by Paula Saunderson:

"Have we missed out on potential Sources Of Funding for Social and Affordable Housing because we have been unable to react to the Homes England New Way of Working which was Outlined in the December 2025 Berkshire Prosperity Board (BPB), and does the Portfolio Holder think the new Pan-Berkshire Proposal put forward at BPB on 21st September 2026 will mean we can increase our supply of Social Rental Housing within West Berks?"

The Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing provided a written response:

No, we have not missed out on potential sources of funding from the Social and Affordable Homes programme. The council is in regular contact with Homes England, who administer the funding and is also receiving support from the Local Government Association to develop our approach to Social and Affordable Home delivery within the District. Should a project be identified that would meet the eligibility for funding, the Council will ensure that it takes the appropriate steps. The proposed pan-berkshire approach is supported by the Council and our presence on the Prosperity Board and input into the work, will ensure that any next steps have West Berkshire's housing needs in focus as well as pan-berkshire with the ultimate aim to increase the supply of affordable and social homes for rent.

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Question (I)	Council Meeting on 15 October 2026

(I) Question not related to an item of business submitted to the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Corporate Programme by Paula Saunderson:

"Are there any plans to improve the RESOURCING & TIMELINE COMMITMENTS required to Agree A Delivery Plan, which Outline the Financial Requirements and the Sources of Funding, the Human Resources requirement , and Physical Resources required, and in which timelines? The recently publicised Playing Pitch Strategy delivery Plan is an example with missing Data."

The Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Corporate Programme:

Thank you for your question.

We agree that delivery plans should, wherever possible, set out the expected financial requirements, funding sources, resource implications and delivery timescales. However, many strategies cover programmes of work that will be delivered over a number of years. In those circumstances, it is not always possible to provide detailed business cases, confirmed costs or fully developed resource plans at the outset. These are often developed as individual projects progress and are subject to future funding decisions and approvals.

Our approach is therefore to include as much information as is reasonably available when a delivery plan is prepared, while developing more detailed proposals as specific projects move into implementation.

In relation to the Playing Pitch Strategy, further detail on costs, funding and delivery arrangements will be developed as individual projects are brought forward through the Council's decision-making processes.