

Public Document Pack

NOTICE OF MEETING

CABINET

will meet on

THURSDAY, 25TH JUNE, 2020

At 6.15 pm

in the

VIRTUAL MEETING ONLINE ACCESS - RBWM [YOUTUBE](#)

TO: MEMBERS OF CABINET

Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council and Chairman of Cabinet, Business, Economic Development and Property

Councillor Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council, Resident & Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management & Windsor

Councillor Carroll, Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health

Councillor Cannon, Public Protection and Parking

Councillor Clark, Transport and Infrastructure

Councillor Coppinger, Planning and Maidenhead

Councillor Hilton, Finance and Ascot

Councillor McWilliams, Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement

Councillor Stimson, Environmental Services, Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside

Karen Shepherd – Head of Governance - Issued: Wednesday, 17 June 2020

Members of the Press and Public are welcome to attend Part I of this meeting. The agenda is available on the Council's web site at www.rbwm.gov.uk or contact the Panel Administrator **David Cook** 01628 796560

The Part I (public) section of this virtual meeting will be streamed live and recorded via Zoom. By participating in the meeting by audio and/or video you are giving consent to being recorded and acknowledge that the recording will be in the public domain.

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AGENDA

PART I

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vii.	0-19 Integrated Family Hub Model Commissioning Intent.	381 - 456

8. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

To consider passing the following resolution:-

"That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on items 9-11 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act"

PART II – PRIVATE MEETING

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
9.	<p><u>MINUTES</u> To consider the Part II minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 28 May 2020.</p> <p><i>(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)</i></p>	457 - 458
10.	<p><u>CIPFA REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE - FINAL REPORT</u></p> <p><i>(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)</i></p>	459 - 460
11.	<p><u>CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS</u></p> <p>Leader of the Council and Chairman of Cabinet, Business, Economic Development and Property</p> <p>i. Asset Management Review And Action Plan</p> <p><i>(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)</i></p> <p>Deputy Leader of the Council, Resident and Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management and Windsor</p> <p>ii. Leisure Services</p> <p><i>(Not for publication by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)</i></p> <p>Details of representations received on reports listed above for discussion in the Private Meeting: None received</p>	461 - 500
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MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS IN MEETINGS

Disclosure at Meetings

If a Member has not disclosed an interest in their Register of Interests, they **must make** the declaration of interest at the beginning of the meeting, or as soon as they are aware that they have a DPI or Prejudicial Interest. If a Member has already disclosed the interest in their Register of Interests they are still required to disclose this in the meeting if it relates to the matter being discussed.

A member with a DPI or Prejudicial Interest **may make representations at the start of the item but must not take part in the discussion or vote at a meeting.** The speaking time allocated for Members to make representations is at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting. In order to avoid any accusations of taking part in the discussion or vote, after speaking, Members should move away from the panel table to a public area or, if they wish, leave the room. If the interest declared has not been entered on to a Members' Register of Interests, they must notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within the next 28 days following the meeting.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs) (relating to the Member or their partner) include:

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit made in respect of any expenses occurred in carrying out member duties or election expenses.
- Any contract under which goods and services are to be provided/works to be executed which has not been fully discharged.
- Any beneficial interest in land within the area of the relevant authority.
- Any licence to occupy land in the area of the relevant authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where the landlord is the relevant authority, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:
 - a) that body has a piece of business or land in the area of the relevant authority, and
 - b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body **or** (ii) the total nominal value of the shares of any one class belonging to the relevant person exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Any Member who is unsure if their interest falls within any of the above legal definitions should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

A Member with a DPI should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations on the item: 'I declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'

Prejudicial Interests

Any interest which a reasonable, fair minded and informed member of the public would reasonably believe is so significant that it harms or impairs the Member's ability to judge the public interest in the item, i.e. a Member's decision making is influenced by their interest so that they are not able to impartially consider relevant issues.

A Member with a Prejudicial interest should state in the meeting: ***'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'***

Or, if making representations in the item: 'I declare a Prejudicial Interest in item x because xxx. As soon as we come to that item, I will make representations, then I will leave the room/ move to the public area for the entire duration of the discussion and not take part in the vote.'

Personal interests

Any other connection or association which a member of the public may reasonably think may influence a Member when making a decision on council matters.

Members with a Personal Interest should state at the meeting: ***'I wish to declare a Personal Interest in item x because xxx'. As this is a Personal Interest only, I will take part in the discussion and vote on the matter.***

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

CABINET

THURSDAY, 28 MAY 2020

PRESENT: Councillors David Cannon, Andrew Johnson (Chairman), David Coppinger, Samantha Rayner, Stuart Carroll (Vice-Chairman), David Hilton, Gerry Clark, Donna Stimson and Ross McWilliams

Also in attendance: Councillors Taylor, Jones, Hill, Price, Hewer, Baldwin, Singh, Rayner, Knowles, Davies, Bhangra, Del Campo, C Da Costa and Taylor.

Officers: Russell O'Keefe, Adele Taylor, Louisa Dean, Barbara Richardson, Kevin McDaniel, Ruth Watkins, Hillary Hall and David Cook.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received. It was noted that the Managing Director could not attend.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meetings held on 30 April 2020 and 21 May 2020 were approved.

APPOINTMENTS

Lead Member responsibility for Revenue and Benefits was passed from the Leader to the Lead Member for Finance and Ascot.

The Lead Member for Public Protection and Parking informed that Cabinet that he had initiated an investigation into residents parking permits following information from Cllr Tisi this week regarding the planned introduction of charges for residents parking permits that were currently free. Legal advice had said that the Council had been in error and he therefore he apologies for the confusion caused to residents. Current parking permits would remain in force until they expire. Anyone who had already paid for a permit before their expiry date would be reimbursed and all effected residents would be contacted. The new fees would only apply for renewals or new applications. The revenue predictions will now be for two years rather than just 2020.

FORWARD PLAN

Cabinet considered the contents of the Forward Plan for the next four months and noted the changes made since last published including the following amendments:

- Borough Wide Design Guide being added to June 2020 Cabinet.
- Arboricultural Contract award will be delayed pending the tender process.
- New Provision for Children and Young People with Special Education Needs to move to August 2020 Cabinet.

CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

A) CLIMATE STRATEGY

Cabinet considered the report seeking approval to the draft Climate Strategy and action plan to be taken forward to Full Council.

The Lead Member for Environmental Services, Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside informed Cabinet that in June 2019 the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead declared an Environment and Climate Emergency. It was brought about through the urging of the RBWM's Climate Emergency Coalition, a group formed to convince the council to declare this emergency. A motion was passed at Council, and it was agreed to establish a cross party working group, undertake a review of our own carbon footprint, and together with local stakeholders and partners, to bring about a draft strategy before full council within the year.

Cabinet were informed that Theresa May, who, as Prime Minister, that same month, pledged to introduce a legally binding target forcing the UK to end its contribution to climate change by 2050. Hitting net zero, a 100% cut in emissions. This would mean an end to heating of homes with traditional gas boilers, more green electricity, and a switch from petrol and diesel cars to electric vehicles, and more provision for walking and cycling. This legislation would also create legally binding targets on biodiversity, air quality, water, resource and waste efficiency.

During the course of the past twelve months, our environment had continued to suffer and emissions had continued to rise. We recognise the possibility that, within a few decades at most, our planet could warm to an extent that would make life difficult for many and impossible for some and that could drive the life of many species up to and beyond the point of extinction.

Over the last 12 month we had sought out best practice, looked at ways of reducing our own emissions, and with four stakeholder workshops, developed a vision of a future borough to actionable next steps, and then to the groupings that led to the strategic framework of the four key themes.

The vision was to be a borough where the community collectively worked together to achieve a sustainable future, protecting and enhancing our natural environment, and achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

We had structured our strategy around four key themes:

- Circular Economy, how to reduce waste, and increase repair, re-use and recycling in the borough.
- Renewable Energy, how to reduce energy consumption and decarbonise supply.
- Natural Capital, how to improve the natural environment and establish the principle of biodiversity net gain.
- Sustainable Mobility, enabling sustainable transport choices.

Against each of these areas were 44 actions and measures for the next five years.

This action plan needed to be worked into a prioritised delivery plan, with carbon reduction targets, timelines and accountabilities. It needed to be taken from the cabinet paper and turned into a document that speaks to our residents about its intent and encouraged actions such as 'provide opportunities for people to grow their own food' or 'remove barriers to walking and cycling through delivery of cycle action plan'.

It had been said that the document had not gone far enough. There had been engagement with input from over 80 individuals. The strategy included objectives and actions. Further

collaborate was required and a new Stakeholder Advisory Board would be formed to help improve the strategy prior to Council and public consultation. The Stakeholder Advisory Board would also monitor implementation.

Cabinet were asked to note the report and approve the strategy to be taken to full Council for approval and consultation. With the additional recommendation being subject to the delegation authority to the Executive Director in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside to make further refinements to the draft strategy, as required, prior to consideration by Council and public consultation.

The Leader informed that this was a landmark strategy for the local authority but it was not a static strategy and needed to be ever evolving. This was a good starting place to build upon.

Cabinet were addressed by two members of the public:

Fiona Hewer, Chair of Wild Maidenhead, addressed Cabinet and informed that she was speaking for biodiversity activists in the six community wildlife groups that now covered the whole of the borough: Wildlife in Ascot, Wild Cookham, Wild About Datchet, Wild Eton & Eton Wick, Wild Windsor and Wild Maidenhead.

Windsor and Maidenhead urgently needed a Climate Strategy to reduce carbon emissions to net zero, and increase biodiversity. As the draft climate strategy itself says, it is not yet a detailed plan and much further work was needed to develop the specific actions.

The six groups had jointly submitted constructive suggestions in writing for improving the draft, but only some of the requests had been adopted. This left them feeling that the strategy was not fit for purpose.

They felt that there were two fundamental problems, that the main biodiversity goal was to write a plan within 12 months and that the carbon reductions excluded the major emitters.

She informed Cabinet that the strategy needed practical actions to deliver its aims and questioned where were the objectives, some of which could have been taken from Wild Maidenhead's 2018 Biodiversity Action Plan such as:

- Wild About Gardens Awards scheme for the whole borough.
- Woodland management.
- Wildflower roadside verges.
- Wild areas in public parks.
- Wilder waterways and wetlands.
- Protection and management of Local Wildlife Sites.

They felt that there were plenty of examples from other authorities that the council could have used such as:

- Surrey Council had a Climate Commission of public, private and civic society groups.
- Stroud District Council had written an Implementation Plan to deliver net zero by 2030.
- Kirklees Council is using authoritative, independent carbon budgets from the Tyndall Centre.
- Leeds Council had an action plan to halve its emission by 2025.

They felt that if the constructive advice given and the examples mentioned it was possible to make amendments and deliver an interim strategy in time of June 2020 Council. Actions to increase biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions should begin immediately, and the final strategy should follow in the next few months.

Cabinet were informed that she had spoke with Cllr Johnson and Cllr Stimson yesterday evening about these concerns and hoped they would be actioned.

Cabinet were also addressed by Paul Hinton, Climate Emergency Coalition, who informed that as mentioned earlier they had met with the Leader and Lead Member yesterday to discuss their concerns.

He informed that 12 months ago the Council declared an Environment and Climate Emergency supported by all councillors. The then Lead Member introduced it as “possibly the most important motion ever put to Council” and yet today Cabinet were presented with a strategy which would not have confirmed its target path to net zero until 7 months from now, 18 months after the Emergency was declared. In the interim, the strategy proposes a straight-line trajectory, which will mean the Borough breaches its per capita carbon budget in 2028.

The strategy was a draft and subject to improvement but a key action that sets a 10% reduction in energy demand from council sources by 2023, would reduce the Borough’s annual carbon emissions by just 0.07% in 3 years.

Mr Hinton made reference to recently used phrase “Build back better” and felt that out of the current crises came opportunity. The Council now had the opportunity to be bolder, go faster and think bigger.

Constituents looked to the Council to provide leadership and to recognise the magnitude of the problem. He felt that the strategy did not currently contain a governance structure, a community engagement plan, or a vision that the community could work with. As a result, they believed that the risk to stakeholder engagement was high.

Despite their reservations they had no wish to slow the process down further. They request that Cabinet accepted the current draft of the strategy subject to a commitment in writing, to work collaboratively with current stakeholders to agree and commence key actions now and produce an interim strategy for full Council approval at the June meeting.

They recognised the difficulties of the Council’s financial position, but felt that a great plan was an investment. A world-class climate strategy would position RBWM as ‘funding ready’. Investment will inevitably flow towards areas who were ready to go. They therefore also requested that Cabinet committed to work with professionals and academia to produce a final strategy by the end of 2020.

The presenting Lead Member thanked the speakers for their comments and said that when we were challenged we produced greater results and thus the feedback was welcome. The draft strategy may not be perfect but they did not want a further delay.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Resident and Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management and Windsor informed that the groups mentioned had helped bring communities together. The Braywick Leisure Centre would use 20% less energy than the Magnet Centre and that TVAC were installing solar panels. She wished to see more walking and cycling and mentioned that the Council had switched to an electric supplier whose energy came from renewable sources.

The Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children’s Services, Health and Mental Health said that he agreed that the council had to continue to challenge ourselves. He mentioned the importance of youth engagement and encourage further engagement be undertaken. Both ward members had been contacted by their constituents who were keen to participate. He thanked Sarah Bowden for her continued work in his ward. This report was another step in the right direction but further work was always required.

The Lead Member for Planning and Maidenhead said that in 2011 he used to be the chairman of the Sustainability Panel and we had come a long way from trying to save money to trying to save the planet. He would be bring to Cabinet a Maidenhead Vision and Charter that would

say Maidenhead would be a green town. There were a number of strategies moving in the same direction.

The Lead Member for Transport and Infrastructure thanked the Lead Member and the working group for producing such a complex plan. There had been open dialogue and the aim was to get carbon zero as soon as possible.

The Lead Member for Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement informed that he had participated in one of the working groups about our built environment and principles within the strategy would be taken into the Housing Strategy. He gave examples of groups and activities such as keeping Cox Green Clean and Maidenhead Matters and also the importance of ongoing youth engagement. This would set a bar that future strategies could be measured against.

The Leader of the Council and Chairman of Cabinet, Business, Economic Development and Property reported that we see the delivery of climate change and strategy as being fundamental to the overall process of C-19 recovery as a council and economic unit. The current awful crisis had produced a few benefits such as better air quality, reduced carbon based emissions and the opportunities that have been forced upon us such as challenging how we travel, live and work. The crisis had accelerated fundamental shifts that had been started for example about 80% of staff were broadly working from home where possible. He informed that more had to be done regarding recycling levels across the Royal Borough. We needed lessons learnt from the crisis and a flexible strategy. Cabinet were informed that who would have seen such a crisis and changes a year ago, that Heathrow expansion would be delayed by a further 18 months and people questioning the need for more air travel when modern technology could be used. He thanked the two speakers for their time and candid feedback.

Cllr C Da Costa addressed Cabinet and commented on the mention of youth engagement and recommended that the Corporate Parenting Panel could be used as there was excellent engagement with children. She asked if Cabinet would make the commitment in writing that the biodiversity plan would be made more ambitious and measurable to see if we are achieving. She reported that Cllr Da Costa could not attend this meeting but had asked Cabinet to engage with experts he had been in contact with and that that the cross party working group also be continued. She also said that Cllr W Da Costa had emailed in a number of comments and asked if they had been incorporated within the paper. The Lead Member who held responsibility for children's services said he would not only raise the issue with the Corporate Parenting Forum but he would also write to all head teacher to see if focus groups could be remotely set up so ideas and opinions could be put forward. The presenting Lead Member informed that she had contacted Cllr W Da Costa about his comments and would look at incorporating them in the Council report.

Cllr Hill reported that he was very impressed by the strategy and the residents who had spoken. He had heard a lot about the working party. With the climate strategy it was important to keep trees and wildlife and thus he raised concern about the proposed development on the Maidenhead Gold Club that contained trees important in absorbing carbon admissions. The proposed strategy and development plans were in conflict. Apart from this conflict there was also the impact of C-19 with a number of shops and offices not being required and potential being converted into dwelling reducing the need for housing development on the golf course.

The Leader responded that the point about more on line shopping was valid with regards to shops closing but this would also result in more traffic from delivery drivers. With regards to the golf course he looked forward to debating this later on the agenda but he did mention that Cllr Hill had been a cabinet member when the project started, Cllr Hill replied that his opposition was a reason why he was no longer a cabinet member. With regards to housing the Leader said that there remained a need to deliver them and the council had been set hard targets by the Government that had financial implications.

Cllr Bhangra asked if the Lead Member would be happy to meet with Boyne Hill residents over Zoom and some residents have asked how to be more 'green'.

Cllr Brar said that she felt the report needed to be reviewed and brought back taking on board the issues raised by the public speakers. There needed to be training for staff and councillors.

Cllr Davies reported that she had been a Liberal Democrat members representative on the working group and new how hard the Lead Member had worked and therefore was disappointed that the strategy was not yet completed and she assumed that the Lead Member would be working with stakeholders to get it to council.

Cllr Price felt that as it was due to go to Council in a couple of weeks it should be delayed to allow the amendments to be made.

The Lead Member for Environmental Services, Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside thanked everyone for their views and said that meetings would be set up with residents as requested and that there would be further youth engagement. There was no need to delay the report as work on issues raised had already started and this included training that was in the plan.

The Lead Member read out the amended recommendation prior to Cabinet voting on the resolution.

Resolved that: Cabinet notes the report and approves the strategy to be taken to full council for approval, subject to the delegation authority to the Executive Director in liaison with the Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside to make further refinements to the draft strategy, as required, prior to consideration by Council and public consultation, and to present the strategy document to full council in June 2020.

(Cllr Rayner abstained from the vote as she reported that she had lost connectivity during the part of the deliberations)

B) OUTTURN REPORT FOR 2019-20

Cabinet considered the report that set out the final outturn position for revenue and capital expenditure against budget for the financial year 2019/20.

The Lead Member for Finance and Ascot informed Cabinet that the report before them asked Cabinet to:

- i) Note the council's projected outturn position for 2019-20.
- ii) Note the budget movements since the January 2020 reported as part of the budget setting process in February 2020.;
- iii) Approves Capital programme slippage and variances as detailed in Appendix D.

The Lead Member highlighted errors on page 73 of the report. It was planned to bring the Treasury Management paper to Cabinet in May but this is delayed to June and in the text in para 13.0 Tables 4 and 5 should read 17 and 18 respectively.

Cabinet were informed that the costs associated with C-19 were shown separately for all services so there was transparency between the outturn and the impact of the crisis. This was additional work for the Finance team but 2020/21 Finance update reports would continue with this methodology.

MHCLG required a monthly return on C-19 costs and It was important to the Administration that we delivered the budget set earlier this year and therefore considered the impact of COVID 19 separately.

He informed that as mentioned since he had become the Lead Member transparency within the reports was important and thus there were 40 pages or appendices that contain considerable detail.

The Lead Member made reference to appendix G which presented variances for services. Before he considered these he asked Cabinet to note that the approved revenue budget was overspent by £4,224,000 but £1,827,000 of this is directly related to C-19 and is paid for by the first £2,753,000 of funding from MHCLG. The balance of this and a further £4,149,000 of funding had been placed into earmarked reserves.

The budget papers presented at Council in February forecasted reserves of £6.521,000 but reserves have increase by £1.71 M and now stand at £8.231M

In January Adult Social Care forecast an overspend of just over £1M but this had been turned round and there would have been a modest surplus had we not to taken a COVID related provision of £157K for bad debt. In a challenging year this would have been a pleasing result for the Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning.

In Children's services an overspend of £1,94 M was reported some £325K higher than in January. However, Achieving for Children had recently been rated as Good by OFSTED so they are now in exactly the right place to drive their transformational programme forward.

With regards to the Managing Directors portfolio parking, the biggest income generator, saw revenues down £900K before the impact of C-19 which further reduced income by £422K. Highways declared an overspend of £617K which was made up of licensing income, subsidised bus routes, street lighting energy and planning. The impact of COVID was £140K. These costs were offset by considerable savings on Waste collection and disposal of £579K resulting in a total overspend of £1,566 K

Commissioning, Support and Central Services included concessionary fares, Management, Communications & Marketing, Human Resources, Law & Governance and Finance. The outcome was an overspend of £40K but after C-19 related costs of £305K this increased to £345K.

Communities Directorate report an overspend of £549K mostly associated with IT and Revenues and Benefits but this had increased to £1.23M by C-19 related issues including a significant loss of leisure income.

The Place Directorate delivered a balance budget but for C-19 related costs of £21k for rehousing in temporary accommodation and a provision of £68K against commercial debtors. The Housing overspend, £511K of this related to a number of debts and bad debt provisions.

Cabinet were also informed that In the past year the Finance team had been working through a number of legacy issues. Some of this work had led to the acceptance of liabilities such as in Housing but for many others the outcome had been positive.

With regards to Capital Cabinet were informed that in December slippage in the capital programme had been £7.2M of the nett £57.7 m. budget. The outturn report now shows slippages to be £32m. £14M of this slippage related to a number of significant projects that were delayed related to COVID issues. Due to these issues a review of the capital programme had been instigated.

The Leader thanked the Lead Member and all those associated with producing such a comprehensive report. There had been a lot of work being undertaken to close down the

overspend , there had been savings produced and excellent transformation initiatives. C-19 has had a huge impact on all authorities. He welcomed the detail and transparency of the report.

The Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health reiterated that there had been excellent work under his portfolio and if it was not for the current crisis performance against the pressures had been well met. There had been excellent work with NHS colleagues especially with adult social care. He acknowledged the good work undertaken by children's services that resulted in the rating mentioned. There had been good progress around high cost placements and he reminded that they had been rated in the top 15 across the country for adult social care.

Cllr Jones mentioned that she welcomed the increased transparency contained within the report and the cipfa concerns. She reported that there were a number of concerns that she would discuss off line but she was concerned about the budget modelling as there were large variances outside C-19. She questioned if the public health funding had already been allocated, if the savings for children's survives in 2020 could be achieved and if high needs block savings should be built within the budget rather than being a challenge.

Cllr Baldwin questioned if the level of reserves were adequate as they had been set pre C-19 and he also questioned the level of reserves set for business rates as this seemed very low. In response he was informed that the level set for business rates was set on the previous year so the current situation would form next years level.

The Leader informed that they continued to lobby government and C-19 continued to have a major impact on the councils finances.

Cllr Tisi asked for further information on the impact of parking revenue but was happy to discuss this off line.

Resolved unanimously: That Cabinet:

- i) Notes the council's projected outturn position for 2019-20.**
- ii) Notes the budget movements since the January 2020 reported as part of the budget setting process in February 2020.;**
- iii) Approves Capital programme slippage and variances as detailed in Appendix D.**

C) HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2020-21

Cabinet considered the report that recommends the implementation of the highways capital works programme.

The Lead Member for Transport and Infrastructure informed Cabinet that the budget for 2020 / 2021 was £5.5 million, £400k for one off schemes and £1.3 million for bridge works. £3.22 million was set aside for the annual works programme contained within the report. The local transport plan set out our objectives and this was supported by the works programme that had been development by taking into account comments from residents, local businesses and parish councils. £2.697 million had been secured from the Department of Transport and £1.076 million from corporate commitments. It was anticipated that there would be £1.5 million being awarded for pot hole repairs.

The Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health welcomed the excellent resurfacing work that had been undertaken within his ward.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Resident and Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management and Windsor reported that she disappointed that there were no works scheduled for her ward in Windsor, especially given the importance of tourism. She

also asked what would be done regarding cycling and walking. In response the Lead Member reported that here were works planned for Old Windsor and technical assessments help determine what areas were on the list. He acknowledged the importance of cycling and walking and was awaiting details from government on additional support in this area. Funds would be used to support the cycling action plan.

The Lead Member for Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement informed of the need to resurface Cox Green lane.

Cllr Knowles raised the poor legacy of some road treatments in the past and that there had been mention of a trial of a new surface in Bray but he had not heard anything about this progressing. He was also concerned about the practice of continuing to add new road surfaces upon one another rather than dealing with the underlying problem with the road. This also impacted on the safety for cyclists. The Lead Member informed that we did tell our contractors not to do quick fixes and that the level of work matched requirements. Temporary resurfacing can be put in place pending more comprehensive works.

Cllr Hill requested that that Fane Way and Larchfield Road be looked at as they were on a main bus route and residents had reported damage to their cars. The Lead Member requested that Cllr Hill send him the locations so he can get them inspected.

Cllr Jones reported that she was pleased to see that the report's recommendations had been based on robust technical information and supported adopted policy.

Resolved unanimously: that Cabinet notes the report and:

- i. **Endorses the implementation of the programme of work set out in Appendix A and Appendix B**
- ii. **Delegates authority to the Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning, (in consultation with the Lead Member for Transport and Infrastructure) to agree amendments to the approved schemes.(within approved budgets) and to implement reserve or alternative schemes should this become necessary.**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public were excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion took place on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

The meeting, which began at 6.15 pm, finished at 9.15 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

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CABINET

FRIDAY, 12 JUNE 2020

PRESENT: Councillors David Cannon, Andrew Johnson (Chairman), David Coppinger, Samantha Rayner, Stuart Carroll (Vice-Chairman), David Hilton, Gerry Clark and Ross McWilliams

Also in attendance: Councillors C Da Costa, Hill, Del Campo, Bhangra, Sharpe, Tisi, Singh, Baldwin, Hill, Taylor, Knowles and Werner.

Officers: Hillary Hall, Fatima Rehman, Ben Smith, Louisa Dean, Adele Taylor and David Cook.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rayner.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

APPOINTMENTS

None.

CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

A) COVID-19 RECOVERY: PARKING CONCESSION TO SUPPORT RETAIL AND TOWN CENTRE REOPENING

Cabinet considered the report that recommended that Advantage Card holders were able to park free of charge for up to 3 hours in Royal Borough car parks from Monday 15th June to Sunday 12th July 2020.

The Lead Member for Public Protection and Parking informed Cabinet that the purpose of the report was to assist the recovery of our town centres and retail outlets. Parking enforcement was recommencing as more people are traveling to work and furlough was being relaxed. There was a need to keep roads safe by enforcing yellow lines and allowing residents to be able to park near their homes. The government's third phase of recovery was allowing more retail stores to open and there was a need to support residents being able to visit town centres. It was proposed that Advantage Card holders could display their cards on their dashboards for 3 hours free parking. He believed that this was a realistic, beneficial and affordable move for the first month.

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Resident & Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management & Windsor said that she supported the proposals as Windsor was an important shopping and tourism centre. There was a need to support retail by shopping local and staying local, it was important to support businesses as part of our partnership with them.

The Lead Member for Transport and Infrastructure endorsed the paper as the right measures at the right time to stimulate residents and support business. There would also be measures being put in place for roads and pavements to assist social distancing.

The Lead Member for Planning and Maidenhead reported that prior to C-19 there were signs of growth and development within Maidenhead and this would now continue, for example a few days ago there had been an application for the Nicholson's Centre.

The Leader reiterated what had been said and informed that during these times we had to be flexible and act accordingly to support local businesses and hence the urgency of this report. He believed that this was the best for residents.

Cllr Werner reported that he was supportive of plans to help residents and business, however he did raise concerns of the financial viability and that it was only for 4 weeks. He questioned if savings would have to be made to support the proposal and raised that the Section 151 officer did not support the report and asked if this brought her closer to issuing a Section 114 notice.

The Lead Member replied that they had been clear that this was for a 4 week period and that it was affordable and that if the opposition think it should be for a longer period he welcomed their plans to how it would be financed. There was a balance between revenue and supporting our residents.

The Section 151 officer informed that she had not endorsed the paper as it had not yet been identified where the money to cover the costs would be coming from. It had been suggested that the money from central Government to support our highstreets could be used but this had not yet been confirmed.

The Lead Member for Finance and Ascot said he supported the views of the Section 151 officer as when there was proposals for additional spend the funding should be identified. In this instance there was a balance between the budget pressure and supporting local business and he believed the actions would pay back the £35,000 many times.

Cllr Price said that she supported the initiative to help the local economy, however store would reopen slowly and restaurants and pubs were not due to open until July 2020. She suggested that instead of the proposed free parking Advantage Card holders could be given a discount as this would allow them to continue to use their card in stores to get discounts and allow flexibility on the length of time. The Lead Member replied that it had been considered but it would have cost more to reprogram the parking machines and taken longer to introduce.

Cllr Jones questioned why the costs could not be covered by the council's reserves long term and as this was a policy decision it would not be covered by the Governments grants regarding C-19. She found it difficult to see where the money was coming from if not reserves. The Lead Member informed that the £35,000 was a revenue that would not be coming in, this was an assumption of costs that may be lower.

The Lead Member for Finance and Ascot said that there was about \$4.9 million in the C-19 bucket and it could come out of this. He supported the views of the Section 151 officer that if we wished to spend money above the budget then the funding should be identifiable.

Cllr Jones also raised concern that the proposals had been put on social media before information had been sent to councillor to help them understand the proposals.

Cllr Sharpe said that it was important that we support our highstreets and that this was being done in an open and transparent way.

Cllr Hill said that he also had concerns were the funding was coming from and suggested that the proposals be delayed until funding had been identified.

The Chairman noted the concerns but said that the administration wanted to get the proposal adopted in line with the town centre opening.

Resolved unanimously: that Cabinet notes the report and approves the implementation of free parking of up to 3-hours for Advantage Card holders in all Royal Borough operated car parks from 15th June 2020 to 13th July 2020 (inclusive).

The meeting, which began at 1.00 pm, finished at 1.36 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....

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Agenda Item 5

CABINET

FORWARD PLAN - CHANGES MADE SINCE LAST PUBLISHED:

ITEM	SCHEDULED CABINET DATE	NEW CABINET DATE	REASON FOR CHANGE
Emergency Duty Services for Social Serves	n/a	July 2020	New item
CIPFA Review of AFC and Optalis	n/a	July 2020	New item
Council values	n/a	July 2020	New item
Council Vision	n/a	July 2020	New Item

FORWARD PLAN OF CABINET DECISIONS

NB: The Cabinet is comprised of the following Members: Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council and Chairman of Cabinet, Business, Economic Development and Property, Councillor Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council, Resident and Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management and Windsor, Councillor Carroll, Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health, Councillor Cannon, Public Protection and Parking, Councillor Clark, Transport and Infrastructure, Councillor Coppinger, Planning and Maidenhead, Councillor Hilton, Finance and Ascot, Councillor McWilliams, Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement, Councillor Stimson, Environmental Services, Climate Change, Sustainability, Parks and Countryside

The Council is comprised of all the elected Members

All enquiries, including representations, about any of the items listed below should be made in the first instance to Democratic Services, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead. Tel (01628) 796560. Email: democratic.services@rbwm.gov.uk.uk

FORWARD PLAN

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information? See categories below.	Short Description	Key Decision, Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
24 Emergency Duty Service for Social Services – Adults and Children	Open -	Direct contract award for Emergency Duty Service for Social Services to Bracknell Forest Council.	yes	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health (Councillor Stuart Carroll)	Hilary Hall	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Jul 2020	
Finance Update	Open -	To receive the latest financial update.	No	Lead Member for Finance and Ascot (Councillor David Hilton)	Adele Taylor	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Jul 2020	

N.B. All documents to be used by the decision maker to be listed in the report to Cabinet

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information? See categories below	Short Description	Key Decision, Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings.	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
Council Interim Strategy 2020-21	Open -	To clarify the current strategic objectives of the Council in light of the impact of the Covid19 pandemic on previous plans and priorities.	No	Leader of the Council and Chairman of Cabinet, Business, Economic Development and Property (Cllr Johnson)	Duncan Sharkey	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Jul 2020	
Proposal to introduce new organisational values 25	Open -	To seek Cabinet endorsement of Our Values, the collectively agreed Values and Behaviours that we want to demonstrate and see within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council.	No	Lead Member for HR (Cllr S Rayner)	Adele Taylor	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Jul 2020	
CIPFA reviews of Achieving for Children and Optalis	Open -	To endorse the reports from CIPFA following their review of the delivery arrangements through Achieving for Children and Optalis	No	Cllr David Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot Cllr Stuart Carroll, Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health	Hilary Hall	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Jul 2020	

N.B. All documents to be used by the decision maker to be listed in the report to Cabinet

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information? See categories below	Short Description	Key Decision, Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings.	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
New Provision for Children and Young People with Special Education Needs	Open -	Review the outcome of the consultation and evaluation of options.	Yes	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health (Councillor Stuart Carroll)	Kevin McDaniel	Internal Process	Cabinet 27 Aug 2020	
Financial Update	Open -	To consider the latest financial update.	No	Lead Member for Finance and Ascot (Councillor David Hilton)	Adele Taylor	Internal process	Cabinet 24 Sep 2020	

ITEM	Private Meeting - contains exempt/confidential information? See categories below	Short Description	Key Decision, Council or other?	REPORTING MEMBER (to whom representations should be made)	REPORTING OFFICER / DIRECTOR (to whom representations should be made)	Consultation (please specify consultees, dates (to and from) and form of consultation), including other meetings.	Date and name of meeting	Date of Council decision (if required)
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DESCRIPTIONS OF EXEMPT INFORMATION: ENGLAND

1	Information relating to any individual.
2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.
3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).
4	Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.
5	Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.
6	Information which reveals that the authority proposes (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.
7	Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.

N.B. All documents to be used by the decision maker to be listed in the report to Cabinet

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Report Title:	CIPFA REVIEW OF GOVERNANCE - FINAL REPORT
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	Part I – Main Report Part II - Appendix A Not for publication by virtue of paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
Lead Member:	Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet 26 th June 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Duncan Sharkey, Managing Director Adele Taylor, Director of Resources
Wards affected:	None

www.rbwm.gov.uk



REPORT SUMMARY

1. CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) undertook a review of governance during 2019 and early 2020. This report is the full, final report from CIPFA.
2. CIPFA have identified a wide range of issues that need to be considered by the Authority. Many changes have already been implemented during the course of the review nevertheless an action plan should be prepared to ensure the Authority ensures that all identified issues are resolved.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) **Requests Officers prepare an Action Plan for Cabinet to consider in July 2020.**
- ii) **Refers the report and Action Plan to Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel and asks them for commentary on the Report and Action Plan in time for the July Cabinet meeting.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Note the Report and instruct an Action Plan is prepared for consideration at Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel.	This will allow the Authority to continue to make improvements and learn lessons from the CIPFA Review.
This is the recommended option	
Refuse to note the Report.	-

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 CIPFA were engaged by the Council to consider some apparent issues with governance and financial management.
- 3.2 This report contains a significant number of issues for the Authority to address. Whilst many issues have been resolved there are still a small number to be concluded.
- 3.3 In summary CIPFA found:
- a lack of financial transparency and Medium Term Financial Planning over a number of years.
 - a poor officer culture and lack of physical capacity and capability coupled with dominant members. This led to no appropriate challenge or recognition that challenge is a good thing.
 - poor standards of financial capacity and capability within the financial support services.
 - little differentiation between officer and senior member roles and responsibilities.
 - several issues relating to financial governance.
 - an unacknowledged and unreported poor culture including limited understanding of governance.

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 Whilst the report details a number of financial and value for money issues there are no direct financial implications of the recommended decision.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Authority is a creature of statute and must obey legislation, act within the guidance and regulations issued and ensure probity and compliance with ethical behaviour. The report highlights a number of issues of governance that demonstrate the Authority has not lived up to the standards required.
- 5.2 For legal reasons, relating to a contractual agreement, an element of the report (part of section 2.34 is redacted and presented in appendix A, which will be considered in Part II of the meeting).

6. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 6.1 Equalities.

There are no implications arising from the recommendation.

6.2 Climate change/sustainability.

There are no implications arising from the recommendation.

6.3 Data Protection/GDPR.

There are no implications arising from the recommendation.

7. APPENDICES

7.1 This report is supported by two appendix:

- CIPFA Report
- Appendix A (Part II)

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- None

9. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Cllr Hilton	Lead Member for Finance	12/6/20	14/6/20
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	-	-
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources/S151 Officer	12/6/20	15/6/20
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	12/6/20	15/6/20
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer	12/6/20	15/6/20
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance	12/6/20	15/6/20

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Review of Financial Governance

June 2020

Contact details

In the first instance please direct all enquiries to:

John O'Halloran, Director Business Advisory and Consultancy – CIPFA

020 7543 5600 / john.o'halloran@cipfa.org



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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. CIPFA were appointed by the Managing Director and the Section 151 Officer at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM), in July 2019, to review the governance, approval and management processes in relation to the Clewer and Dedworth Neighbourhood Improvements capital scheme, which was approved at an estimated cost of £350K for the 2018/19 budget.
- 1.2. The Managing Director was concerned that the scheme failed to meet RBWM's overall objectives, that it was not subject to a proper prioritisation process, that no business case or plan had been produced regarding the scheme's deliverables and that there was no plan to demonstrate how it would be managed.
- 1.3. The results of this work were included in an initial report to Members in August 2019, our overall conclusion was that there was a lack of transparency around the financial implementation of capital schemes.
- 1.4. The issues raised in the first phase of our work highlighted further concerns about financial monitoring in RBWM, as well as the effectiveness of financial governance and the role of the finance function in overseeing the financial governance of RBWM. As a result, we were commissioned to assist RBWM in resolving some of the issues raised, to assist in the preparation of the 2020/21 budget and in the production of a new Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Managing Director also requested that any further governance or compliance weaknesses should be highlighted and included in a further report at the end of the assignment. This work commenced in September 2019 and details of the tasks undertaken are provided in Appendix B.
- 1.5. In the second phase of our work we have recommended that RBWM needs to address a large range of issues in relation to governance and financial management in order to demonstrate that it is managing its finances in a legal, transparent, professional and competent way. These issues and those subsequently found are set out in the report.
- 1.6. Section 7. below contains a List of Improvements Implemented in Response to Initial Recommendations
- 1.7. Our overall concern that the lack of financial transparency and Medium Term Financial Planning over a number of years has masked the financial problems that RBWM were facing and that, potentially, could have been avoided. For example, Council Tax was either reduced or frozen over a number of years. It is difficult to be precise over the exact basis of decision making but it was apparent that there had been a poor officer culture and lack of physical capacity and capability coupled with dominant members. This led to no appropriate challenge or recognition that challenge is a good thing.
- 1.8. Although RBWM has pockets of deprivation it is still one of the least deprived councils in the country with the benefits of a high council tax base,

increasing business rates, high land prices and high income levels could easily have been self-sustaining. However, despite setting a challenging budget for 2020/21 and developing a medium term financial strategy it is now facing an uncertain future, having to identify large savings in a short space of time due to the impact of Covid19. With this added pressure potentially meaning it may have to issue a S.114 notice and may not be able to set a legal budget in future years.

- 1.9. The standards of financial support within the Council were not at an appropriate level and must be improved further. This was underpinned by repeated removal of capacity from the organisation that left it weak and unable to deliver basic good governance or change successfully. This was coupled with a lack of corporate or team working culture.
- 1.10. There appeared to be little differentiation between officer and senior member roles and responsibilities, who appeared to be treated as senior executives rather than elected members. There was no recognition of the problems in governance this would likely create.
- 1.11. In summary, the financial governance issues that need to be addressed include:
 - Reporting and transparency, including revenue and capital budget setting, monitoring and medium term financial planning;
 - Treasury Management approval, reporting and monitoring;
 - Debt collection and appropriate provision for bad debt;
 - The change in council culture required to achieve more transparency over decision making and compliant governance;
 - Reviewing the Member protocols that govern relationships between Members and officers;
 - Changing the culture and ability of the finance function to one that is more challenging and prepared to ensure greater accountability of decision making and a substantially higher level of compliance.
 - Addressing the "silo" culture amongst officers where significant decisions have not been taken in a corporate or collegiate way
- 1.12. Our work has been focussed on the budget reports in 2018/19 and 2019/20 and limited examination of previous years when the decisions to reduce Council Tax were made. In reading these reports the risks of low reserve levels, the lack of medium term financial planning and alternative options are not set out clearly in the reports for Members and the Public. The poor governance, culture and any issues, including those between Officers and Members were not set out in the Annual Governance Statements.
- 1.13. The Council, prior to COVID-19 had started to make progress under new political and officer leadership, the new robust approach to the Medium Term Financial Strategy had been welcomed and Members had commented on improved transparency in financial reporting. Difficult decisions were made in putting forward the 2020/21 budget, including removing car parking discounts for residents and reducing the Council Tax Reduction scheme discount for working age claimants.

- 1.14. Officers and Members were considering future strategies with financial planning, particularly climate change.
- 1.15. The report is written while RBWM, like all others, has had to deal with the impact of COVID-19. There is uncertainty as to whether the additional costs and lost income caused by the pandemic will be fully covered by additional government funding.
- 1.16. We would like to thank the management team and the finance team, with whom we worked closely in undertaking this review, for their support and cooperation and willingness to take on board the changes recommended. A list of those interviewed in the first phase of our work is provided at Appendix A.

2. Financial Reporting

- 2.1. Following our initial report to Members, CIPFA were commissioned to assist RBWM in resolving some of the issues raised in setting the 2020/21 budget and in the production of a new Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). We were also asked to highlight and report on further governance, reporting and compliance weaknesses.
- 2.2. In carrying out the work, which commenced in September 2019, we referred back to the processes and procedures in place for both 2018/19 and 2019/20 where we found a number of weaknesses that required urgent attention. We are pleased to be able to report that these have been largely addressed in the Budget Report for 2020/21, the MTFS, the Treasury Management Strategy and the Capital Programme. These documents have the full support of the Leader, Managing Director, the Cabinet and the Corporate Leadership Team.
- 2.3. We set out below the key findings from our work under separate headings for ease of reference.

Revenue Budget Approval

- 2.4. Section 25 of The Local Government Act 2003 includes the following statutory duty in respect of the budget report to Council:

“the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of the authority must report to it on the following matters:

 - a) the robustness of the estimates made for the purpose of the calculations; and
 - b) the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves.”
- 2.5. The Council is required to take this report into account when setting the annual budget. Section 26 of the same Act, places an onus on the CFO to ensure that RBWM has established a minimum level of reserves to be retained to cover any unforeseen demands that could not be reasonably defined when finalising the proposed budget.
- 2.6. The Revenue Budget for 2019/20, approved by RBWM in February 2019, did not comply with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003. More specifically the RBWM budget reports for 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20, approved by RBWM, failed to include a statement from the CFO on the robustness of estimates. Although the reports do refer to the level of reserves they state only that reserves are above the level required and that RBWM is in a strong position to deal with the risks it faces for the forthcoming year.
- 2.7. We also found an issue in relation to “Special Expenses” charged to residents in the Windsor and Maidenhead town areas. Special expenses are costs incurred for the provision of an amenity or service that is primarily for

the benefit of one locality which, elsewhere, would be provided by a town or parish council. The powers to incur "Special Expenses" are set out in Section 35 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. In addition, these costs should be listed separately in the budget report and should be approved by RBWM as if the costs were managed by a Parish Council. There was a lack of understanding, within RBWM, as to how these costs should be approved and hence the finance team simply changed that part of the precept covering the "Special Expenses" in line with the changes to the Band D precept. This appears to have been standard practice from when RBWM first became a Unitary in April 1998 and was a principle carried over from the previous District Council.

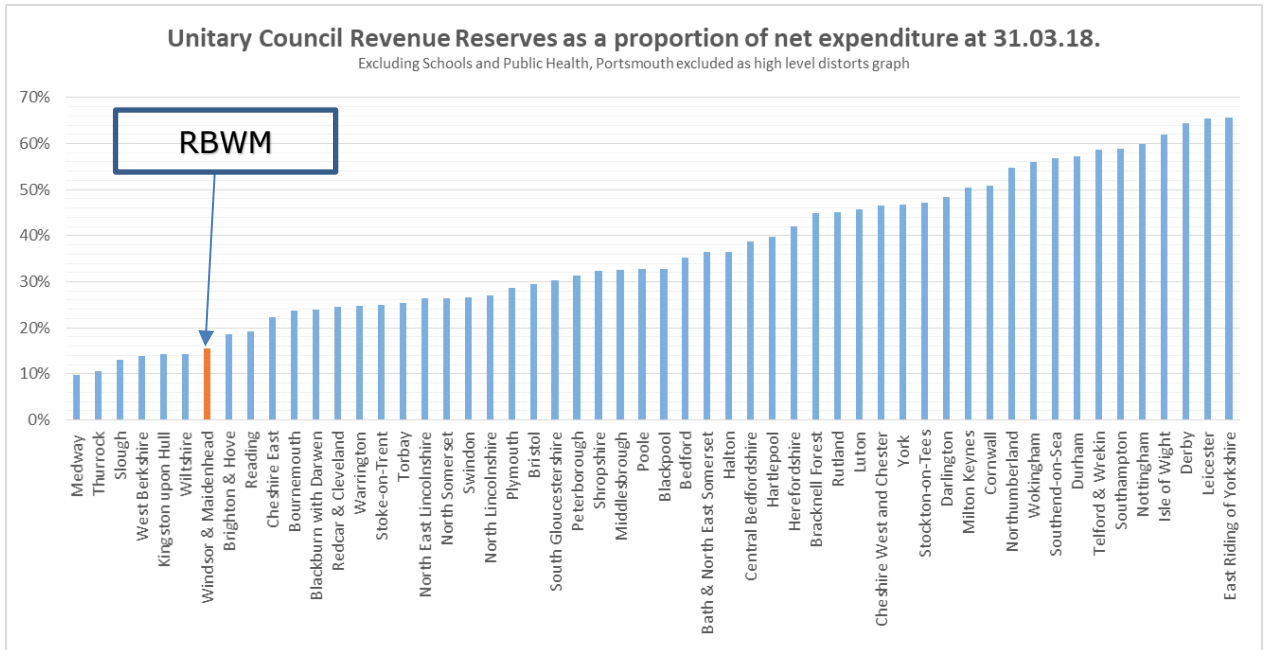
- 2.8. Turning to the level of the precept proposed for the 2019/20 budget we found that the amount proposed was too low rather than too high. In 2019/20 RBWM approved the maximum increase of 2.99% in Council Tax. Anything above this level would have required a referendum. However, the increase was calculated on the Council Tax element excluding the Adult Social Care precept whereas the 2.99% maximum can be based on the total Council Tax including the Adult Social Care precept. This meant that the actual increase applied in Council Tax was 2.77% which is the percentage used for comparison purposes with other councils by MHCLG.
- 2.9. If the full 2.99% increase had been applied, as approved by Members, Band D Council Tax would have increased by a further £2.23, increasing Council Tax income by an additional £0.152m in 2019/20. This amount would have been included in Council Tax bases in future years. The finance team had planned to use the same methodology throughout the MTFS period to 2024/25, assuming a 2% p.a. increase each year. This would have had the effect of reducing the level charged by approximately £0.669m in the final year of the MTFS.
- 2.10. The key issues are that:
 - Key budget decisions did not comply fully with statutory requirements (e.g. revenue budget s25 report):
 - Budget reports lacked detail and only provided a cursory assessment of the robustness of reserves and spending projections that did not reflect the complexity of RBWM's business;
 - Key items within the budget (e.g. special expenses) lacked transparency and annual review;
 - The precept increase was calculated incorrectly, which resulted in a potential loss of council tax income of £152,000 in 2019/20.

Inadequate Reserves

- 2.11. The overall level of reserves in a council is based on an analysis of potential financial risks combined with a need to balance the annual budget. Risks considered by RBWM included the potential non-delivery of savings and possible increases in Children's safeguarding costs. The risks set out showed that there was an over-reliance on the use of the general fund reserve, rather than an expectation that RBWM would manage within its

annual budget. For example, there was no provision for the possible slippage or non-delivery of savings and there was little assessment of the level of reserves required to sustain future budget deficits.

2.12. The overall level of usable reserves, compared with those of other Unitary Councils is very low, something that is not made clear in the budget report. The point is illustrated in the chart below.



2.13. The level of reserves is a concern given the risks facing RBWM in relation to the delivery of large savings, the reliance on assumed capital receipts, the uncertainty of future government settlements and the impact of Covid-19. Failure to address these risks would risk the financial sustainability of RBWM.

2.14. Our overall assessment of the process for setting reserves is that it was flawed in that:

- Whilst the assessment considered potential service risks it did not take into account the level of reserves that may be required to balance the budget over two to three years;
- There was insufficient explanation about how RBWM was managing one of the lowest level of reserves nationally.

Robustness of Estimates

2.15. Our review of the budget estimates for 2018/19 or 2019/20 revealed little evidence of robust examination. Specifically, we found that:

- A number of budgets were unrealistic or were sustained by one-off underspends;
- Some savings, approved in the 2019/20 budget, were abandoned very early in the financial year and the anticipated amounts to be delivered were unrealistic;

- Savings were not reported separately and there was no corporate challenge or overview, despite all of the savings being RAG rated as green in the budget report;
- Additional items not approved in the budget were added during the year, via Cabinet reports, and were charged to the General Fund reserve. No other options were presented or compensating savings offered. Examples of additional items in 2019/20 include £365K for "24 Hour Pot-Hole Commitment", £32K for "Make Maidenhead Marketing Strategy" and £100K for "Waste Mobilisation";
- Redundancy costs projected for future years, for example £585k provided for in 2018/19, would be charged to the general fund reserve rather than included as a specific budget. This was not set out in the budget report.

2.16. In terms of Business Rates the 2019/20 budget report estimated that £16.312m would be gained from business rates and that there would be a surplus carried forward of £3.545m. The NNDR 1, a return to government included as an annex to the same report, assumed business rates of £21.902m and a surplus of £0.512m a difference of £2.557m in total.

2.17. An element of the difference could be attributed to a prudent provision for potential deficits. However, this should have been made clear in the budget report. It is apparent that there was limited understanding of the business rates collection fund and, as a result, the Management Team and Cabinet members had not been made aware of the future risk of business rate volatility. Considering the size and risk relating to this funding stream we found it surprising that this area was not prioritised in finance reports.

2.18. Business Rates income experienced major variances in forecasts in both 2018/19 and 2019/20. The initial estimate for gross business rate income in 2019/20 was £93.995m. This was reduced to £92.687m in October 2019, to £89.840m in January 2020 and the outturn was only £86.638m. The budget estimate for 2020/21 was based on the January 2020 figure. Overall, there was a reduction of £7.357m or 7.8% from the January 2019 estimate. The net figure per RBWM's NNDR1 form was £21.902m after a large tariff and levy on the surplus above the amount gained since the localisation of business rates. The impact of the increased deficit will impact on the 2021/22 budget as the amount credited to the revenue account is based on the NNDR 1 form with the difference carried forward. These dramatic reductions, with little explanation, raise questions about the robustness of the process, which is clearly in need of further review.

2.19. The budget also assumed the use of one-off resources of £1.148m that were not highlighted in the budget report. The amount was netted off the costs of capital financing in the budget report, reducing its cost. The amount is only apparent by examining the detailed medium term financial planning forecast in appendix N of the report where it is referred to as a revenue contribution from capital. Given that the annex was not referred to in the report it was unlikely that the amount would be challenged. There was no working paper to support this assumption and it appears that it was a decision of the s151 officer and the then deputy s151 officer to include this

value without the knowledge of other members of the finance team, the Management Team or Cabinet.

2.20. Turning to Housing Benefit, if a Council makes overpayments in Housing Benefit payments, mostly caused by late notification of changes in circumstances, it may retain the benefit of the additional income. RBWM's budget for this assumed that the level of income would be £0.966m in 2019/20. As invoices are raised the full benefit of the income is included in the accounts. The level of outstanding debt from this source at 31 March 2019 was £5.109m but the provision for bad debts was just £0.794m, despite more than 50% of the debt being older than three years and with some debt going back to 2001/02.

2.21. Housing Benefit debt is difficult to collect when it goes over 12 months in age and it is normal practice to provide a prudent level of bad debt provision. We found no sound basis for the calculation of the provision. A more realistic provision of £1.970m was calculated with the finance team at the end of February 2020 an increase in the provision by £1.176m. This amount was planned to be transferred to an unreconciled housing benefits balance due to be credited back into the accounts. Without this increase there would have been an additional charge on the 2019/20 revenue budget. Provisions for bad debts should be reviewed and challenged as part of normal practice in advance of budget setting to ensure that the budget is robust. In closing the 2019/20 accounts the finance team decided, with, we are told, the agreement of the external auditor, to only provide for £0.756m of bad debt provision as they hadn't had time to review the final position and would update it in 2020/21. This does mean there remains a significant under-provision for bad debts for this area at 31.03.20.

2.22. We have major concerns that:

- Budget reports were overly optimistic about the achievement of savings;
- Reserves were used during the year to meet the cost of "unforeseen" in year pressures, rather than looking at ways to manage these pressures within the allocated budget. This further weakened RBWM's financial position;
- Council Officers did not fully understand the risks surrounding business rates retention or consider how these could impact on the budget and its reserves;
- Key assumptions were not set out clearly within budget reports i.e. the use of one-off resources. This meant that the necessary approval to use these resources was not sought;
- Bad debt provisions were inadequate and unrealistic given the level of outstanding debt. Their potential impact on reserves was not highlighted or taken into account when the level of reserves was assessed.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 2.23. The MTFS reporting to Members prior to the 2020/21 budget was limited. A table of projected income and expenditure for the period 2020/21 – 2022/23 was included as an appendix to the 2019/20 budget report but it isn't referenced in the report. No mention is made about potential risks arising from the fair funding review, business rates review and Comprehensive Spending Review. Potential savings of £4.2m were identified as required in 2020/21 but no explanation is given of how these will be achieved or the plan to deliver them which we consider to be a major weakness.
- 2.24. The basis for forecasting costs beyond the subsequent financial year was confined to the finance team, it omitted potential increased costs and it was not triangulated with other initiatives that RBWM was undertaking such as the regeneration in Maidenhead. This meant that in both the 2018/19 and 2019/20 budget reports there was a significant under-estimate of the savings required in future years.
- 2.25. RBWM had, in previous years, reduced its council tax resulting in it having by far the lowest charge in the country outside of London. This matched Members' objectives but budget reports did not highlight the risks of pursuing this. However, the 2019/20 budget report recommended that RBWM should increase Council Tax by the maximum amount.
- 2.26. The estimated funding gap for 2020/21, included in the February 2019 budget report, had a number of optimistic assumptions, particularly around savings and not fully reflecting some pressures. Others couldn't have been anticipated. This meant estimated pressures for 2020/21 increased by £9.8m between February 2019 and February 2020.
- 2.27. Cumulative savings required for the period 2020/21 – 2022/23 in the February 2019 budget report increased from £1.9m to £14.5m in the February 2020 report.
- 2.28. The Medium Term Financial Strategy should be linked to the Corporate Plan. In RBWM there was no linkage prior to the report being approved by Council in February 2020. It appeared that RBWM was just managing its finances on a year to year basis.
- 2.29. The estimates made no assumption of pay increases for staff, bar some one-off payments, meaning staff pay would fall behind those in neighbouring authorities increasing recruitment and retention problems. The same assumption was made for its partner organisations, Optalis and Achieving for Children where the recruitment of Social Workers is particularly difficult. This assumption was not documented, nor does it appear to be widely known in key departments of RBWM.
- 2.30. With regard to the MTFS we found that:
- RBWM did not have a robust and transparent medium-term financial strategy;

- There was a lack of clarity over the medium to long term financial position facing RBWM;
- The projections that existed were overly optimistic and did not highlight the significant funding risks faced by RBWM;
- There was no clear context for the medium-term financial projections to link them to the overall objectives of RBWM as set out within the Corporate Plan.

Budget Monitoring

- 2.31. Early budget monitoring in 2018/19 identified significant variances to the approved budget. These were highlighted to the Management Team and informally to Cabinet but not formally reported openly or publicly until the budget monitoring report to Cabinet on 22nd November 2018.
- 2.32. Total service overspends at year-end were reported as £8m, over 10% of RBWM's net revenue budget and more than the level of opening general reserves of £7.4m. Services reduced overspends from additional savings and one-off measures to £4.1m. The overall position was further mitigated to £2.1m by one-off income relating to the Business Rate pilot.
- 2.33. In the RBWM July 2018 Budget Monitoring report the aggregated usable reserves were described as being in a healthy position at £8.7m, in excess of the £5.9m recommended minimum level set at the Council meeting in February 2018. Given the risks to the budget position and uncertainty for future years this position appears to be hard to justify, particularly as overspends of £8m were being identified at this point, although not being reported.
- 2.34. The s151 Officer explained that he had not reported the full position publicly to all Members in his reports in July, September and October [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] He did not seek advice from CIPFA, the LGA or the Monitoring Officer in dealing with this issue.
- 2.35. The s151 Officer has a statutory role and guidance is provided by CIPFA in "The Role of the Chief Financial Officer" in fulfilling the responsibilities of the post. The finance team, and the wider organisation, was not taking account of this. Budget monitoring and reporting was therefore inadequate and risked the credibility of the finance function in undertaking its role.
- 2.36. The finance team's main focus is reporting, through the final accounts process and budget monitoring. Given the amount of input and therefore costs of this monthly process the outcomes and use of the information was and still is limited.
- 2.37. The budget monitoring report to September 2019 Cabinet was reported in draft to Cabinet Members with a forecast £0.5m overspend. This ignored known overspends in departments and, following a review requested by the Managing Director and undertaken by CIPFA, was increased to £4.2m. Officers and Members, appeared to be reluctant to report the correct position, replicating the previous year's issues.

2.38. The overspend in Adult Care reduced during the year, as in previous years, partly as a result of pro-active management, but there appears to have been a trend of large overspends being forecast in September and October albeit reduced at outturn. It is unclear what causes this and it is recommended that further work on profiling the budget is undertaken to predict spending in this area more accurately.

2.39. Our comments in relation to budget monitoring are that:

- RBWM did not receive frequent and transparent budget monitoring information;
- There were delays in reporting budget variances and risks to members;
- Financial reporting was overly reassuring;
- Officers appeared overly sensitive in providing bad news about RBWM's financial position and the poor publicity that it would bring to RBWM.

Treasury Management Strategy

2.40. In recent years RBWM has increased its borrowing substantially to invest in the regeneration of the borough, pending some significant land sales. This means that the Treasury Management Strategy has even greater significance for RBWM.

2.41. CIPFA's Treasury Management code of practice requires that RBWM will receive:

- An annual report on the strategy and plan to be pursued in the coming year;
- A mid-year review;
- An annual report on the performance of the treasury management function, on the effects of the decisions taken and the transactions executed in the past year, and on any circumstances of non-compliance with the organisation's treasury management policy statement.

2.42. We found that RBWM did not comply with the code of practice in that no mid-year review of Treasury Management was reported to Members, although cash-flow statements are published as part of budget monitoring reports. Also, no separate annual Treasury Management report was published. Some overall highlights of borrowing were published but as part of the following year's Treasury Management Strategy and they failed to fulfil the requirements of the code of practice.

2.43. The Treasury Management Strategy, approved by RBWM in February 2019, did not explain how the Finance team was intending to finance £341m of planned capital spending to 2035/36 in the short term. In the longer term this was to be financed from anticipated capital receipts but £167m of temporary borrowing would be required by 2021/22, which is the minimum forecast period required by the Prudential Code.

- 2.44. The approved 2019/20 Treasury Management Strategy explained how at 31 March 2018 RBWM had £57m of external long-term borrowing and £20m of short-term borrowing that was repaid in May 2018. However, it did not explain the forecast short-term debt of £88m at 31 March 2019 or the intention to increase temporary borrowing to £124m during 2019/20, which is a major omission.
- 2.45. The cost of the additional borrowing is not explained in the strategy nor is the current intention to borrow all of it on a short-term basis. No alternative strategy is proposed or discounted for this large increase in debt or the risk to RBWM of an increase in short-term interest rates above the 1% assumed.
- 2.46. The Treasury Management Code of Practice requires local authorities to make reasonable estimates of the total capital financing requirement at the end of the forthcoming financial year and the following two years. These prudential indicators will be referred to as the estimates of capital financing requirement.
- 2.47. RBWM in their prudential indicators only quoted 2019/20 and 2020/21, not 2021/22 as is required or 2022/23 which in the MTFS appendix of the budget report was when debt charges were forecast to reduce.
- 2.48. The non-disclosure of key information on planned borrowing was a significant omission and did not enable Members to undertake their role in assessing the risks to RBWM when approving the Treasury Management Strategy for the year.
- 2.49. The spreadsheet that estimated the cost of debt charges in the MTFP was flawed in that it assumed the short-term debt was only required for six months of the year. The calculation resulted in the cost of borrowing £168m in 2020/21 showing as less than the cost of borrowing £88m in 2018/19. The spreadsheet has now been updated to correct the error and for other changes in assumptions. This one error represented an estimated underestimate of £700K of interest in 2020/21 above that assumed in the MTFP.
- 2.50. Despite RBWM's plan to increase borrowing significantly in 2019/20 it had not taken any external advice from Treasury Management advisers on the assumption that short-term borrowing rates would remain low. The risk of increases in interest rates had not been modelled nor had a strategy of fixing an element of the borrowing, to reduce risks to RBWM, been considered.
- 2.51. Following guidance from CIPFA RBWM appointed Treasury Management Advisers but this coincided with the Government decision to increase PWLB rates by 1%. As such the advice was to continue with the strategy of short-term borrowing. If the advisers had been appointed earlier RBWM would have been able to fix an element of its debt at historically low levels. It has transpired that interest rates have continued to remain low but this risk was not being managed.
- 2.52. Our key findings in relation to the Treasury Management Strategy are that:

- RBWM did not have a compliant Treasury Management Strategy;
- The Treasury Management Strategy did not highlight the significant risk of borrowing plans which involved £167m of temporary borrowing by 2020/21;
- There was no in year report on borrowing levels and the risks associated with them;
- Information on Treasury Management and borrowing levels was not set out in sufficient detail within a standalone report;
- Reports were not transparent about the level of additional borrowing that RBWM was undertaking or the impact of that borrowing on the medium-term financial plans;
- Council Officers did not seek external professional advice on borrowing levels, even when the increased level of borrowing presented a significant financial risk to RBWM;
- This meant that officers missed the opportunity to reduce financial risks by converting more council borrowing to fixed rates. (The Covid 19 national emergency means that this has not caused any loss to RBWM).

Capital Strategy

- 2.53. In recent years RBWM has made considerable capital investment within the borough. CIPFA's Prudential Code requires all councils to approve a Capital Strategy as part of their budget process. Its intention is to provide a high level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services; along with an overview of how the associated risks are managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It should show how revenue, capital and balance sheet planning are integrated.
- 2.54. The strategy should be informed by RBWM's priorities and links to other key strategy documents notably the Corporate Plan, Medium Term Financial Plan, Treasury Management Strategy, Asset Management Strategy and Property Investment Strategy.
- 2.55. The RBWM Capital Strategy is an appendix to the budget report and at just three pages long, is not a strategy document. It does not show how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management link together or what the associated risks of the strategy are to RBWM or how they are being mitigated.
- 2.56. In our opinion RBWM's Capital Strategy was not compliant with CIPFA's Prudential code and the budget report did not reference affordability in relation to its capital plans, a requirement of the 2003 Local Government Act.
- 2.57. The Prudential Code supports the system of capital investment in local authorities. It is integrated within the wider statutory and management processes of local government. These should be significant considerations when council's take decisions on capital investment, i.e. the level of capital

investment that can be supported is subject to tests of affordability and sustainability.

- 2.58. The Local Government Act 2003 refers to affordability and the requirement that local authorities keep under review the amount of money they can afford to borrow for capital investment.
- 2.59. RBWM has ambitious investment and regeneration plans, building a new leisure centre, spending additional money on roads above that provided by government grant, investing over £200m in new schools and facilitating new housing in the Royal Borough. The intention is that this spending will be financed by capital receipts and grants of £425m over the period to 2035/36. This plan was not articulated in the Capital Strategy approved by Members. There has been no consideration of the risks to the capital programme and revenue budget of not achieving the assumed level of capital receipts.
- 2.60. RBWM's capital investment plans are not linked to affordability. The budget report does not set out the ongoing costs of the capital programme, how it is intended to be financed and the risks to RBWM's future financial sustainability.
- 2.61. Our concerns over the Capital Programme are that:
- RBWM did not have a compliant Capital Strategy;
 - The Capital Strategy did not clearly set out RBWM's investment plans and now they aligned to its Corporate Plan and objectives;
 - The Strategy failed to show how it would prioritise competing demands for capital investment or set a long-term vision for capital investment;
 - The Capital Strategy failed to assess the affordability and deliverability of capital investment plans.

3. Clewer and Dedworth Capital Schemes

- 3.1. Two schemes were approved as part of the 2018/19 capital programme in the Clewer and Dedworth Ward:
 - PAVE Dedworth £100k;
 - Clewer & Dedworth Neighbourhood Improvements £350k.
- 3.2. The PAVE scheme was approved through the normal Council prioritisation process and had an outline of what could be delivered for £100K in terms of improvements to pavements. Some of the pavements are owned by local shop-keepers who rejected the request to contribute to the cost of the scheme. Based on advice from the Executive Member for Highways the scheme was reduced and the actual spend was £43K.
- 3.3. The £350K of neighbourhood improvements was a late request from the Ward Member that had no business case and was not part of the Highways Teams' prioritisation process. This proposal was agreed to be included in the Capital Programme for 2019/20 by the Member Budget Steering Group. No detailed scheme was agreed prior to the funding being approved by Council in February 2019.
- 3.4. In March 2018 the Ward Member made a further request to spend an additional £70K on two new schemes that he discussed with the then Managing Director. These were improvements to Sutherland Grange and Osgood Park (2 x £30K) and refurbishment and security works at the Spencer Denney Centre. None of these is a highways scheme.
- 3.5. The Managing Director appears to have agreed the spending but no approval or governance process was put in place around the proposed scheme. Officers included a breakdown of how the £350K should be spent in the Highways and Transport Investment Programme 2018-19 report approved by Cabinet on 24 May 2018. This involved 16 carriageway schemes, mostly re-surfacing and patching, and seven footway schemes. The breakdown in the report did not include the additional schemes requested by the Ward Member.
- 3.6. Officers assumed that an implied instruction in an email to the Ward Member from the Managing Director was sufficient authority to progress the new schemes.
- 3.7. The additional schemes were progressed in 2018/19 with £48K of additional expenditure authorised by the Manager for the £350K Neighbourhood Improvement scheme, causing it to overspend. A £56K overspend was reported in the Capital Outturn Report to 30 May 2019 Cabinet meeting as – "Scope of works increased".
- 3.8. Officers have stated subsequently that the unspent funds on the £100k PAVE scheme can be "vired" for use on the Parks schemes. They assumed that the Managing Director had the authority to do this and that they had, in essence, used her authority to do so. This is incorrect, they did not have this authority.

3.9. Officers assumed this authority to use funds flexibly was delegated to the Managing Director from one of the recommendations in the Highways and Transport Investment Programme 2018-19 report to Cabinet on 24th May 2018 which states:

"Delegate authority to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Deputy Leader of RBWM, and Lead Member for Highways, Transport and Windsor, to agree minor amendments to the approved schemes (within approved budgets) and implement reserve or substitute schemes should this become necessary."

3.10. Cabinet does not have the power to supersede the Constitution approved by Council and a minor amendment to a Highways and Transport programme does not include spending £70K on new Parks schemes, virement rules do not cover this spending either.

3.11. The email from the then Managing Director is not explicit in agreeing the new scheme and no Officer Decision notice was published to agree the spending.

3.12. The Senior Manager with overall responsibility for the scheme wrote to the Executive Director and the s151 Officer advising that the scheme was progressing and asking for clarification on what budget to use. Neither replied.

3.13. When the position was explained by CIPFA to RBWM's Monitoring Officer she agreed that there was no authority for the expenditure on the Parks schemes and that officers were acting beyond the authority set out in RBWM's constitution. This raises the question of whether the action is Ultra Vires and this should be reviewed.

3.14. She also felt that the approval process for the £350K neighbourhood improvement scheme was questionable in that the expenditure avoided a prioritisation process to the benefit of one ward.

3.15. There was generally a lack of understanding of individual authority in respect of capital and this is referred to in section 4. below. Members seemed unaware of this as there has been no challenge from Officers on the appropriateness of the expenditure.

3.16. Overall we have concerns that:

- Members were able to circumvent RBWM's approved policy framework to include additional schemes in the capital programme without appropriate challenge from officers;
- This indicates a lack of clarity and clear division between member and officer roles;
- Schemes appeared in the Capital Programme with no business case;

- Officers lack of awareness of basic governance procedures and not raising concerns with RBWM's Monitoring Officer, or asking for advice led to procedures being by-passed;
- There was a lack of action by the s151 Officer when it became apparent that non-approved expenditure in Parks was being charged to the scheme. The failure to consider that officers could be acting beyond the authority set out in RBWM's constitution is also an area of great concern and raises questions regarding potential Ultra Vires expenditure;
- Some Members believed this is how council business should be conducted.
- Overall, there was a lack of transparency around the financial implementation of capital schemes.

4. Capital Programme Approval and Monitoring Process

- 4.1. The Clewer and Dedworth schemes, set out in section 5. above highlight major weaknesses in the capital approval and monitoring process in RBWM. We set out below our detailed findings.
- 4.2. The overall process for authorising spend has been examined. It does not appear that there is a consistent business case approach to agreeing capital spend or that the finance team are involved in calculating necessary expenditure.
- 4.3. There are numerous schemes where spend approval is rolled forward without considering whether this is necessary. It is reported that approvals are vired to other schemes although this has not been examined as part of our review. Nor have we considered whether the virement process used is compliant with the Constitution. The lack of rigour and challenge of older schemes where unspent approval is carried forward by the Finance team is an area of concern.
- 4.4. Capital Monitoring is included in the monthly finance updates to Cabinet but has a lot less profile, detail and explanation than revenue monitoring which is inconsistent with best practice.
- 4.5. Even when approval processes appear to have been followed appropriately the lack of a comprehensive business cases meant that the Council spent considerable amounts on schemes when it was not clear they were affordable. It is questionable whether the approved costs were fully challenged and, for example, spend of £36m on a new leisure centre would appear to be considerable higher, by a large margin, than other facilities built by other councils.
- 4.6. In-year capital monitoring and reporting was unsatisfactory, for example the report to Cabinet in November 2018 shows no variance or slippage across the whole programme. However, the report in March 2019 identified slippage of £23m across the programme. The report itself gives no explanation of the variances or slippage. Major schemes have a line of detail with the rest of the programme reported in summary in an appendix.
- 4.7. In the final outturn report in May 2019 slippage in the capital programme was reported as having increased to £33m, 39% of planned spend although this was not broken down by scheme or explanations given.
- 4.8. Variances were reported against 85 completed schemes in the capital outturn but the table does not show the variance to the approved budget. No outturn information is given for 184 schemes that are in progress or are part of ongoing programmes.
- 4.9. Not all spending is accompanied by an official Purchase Order, a significant financial control weakness.

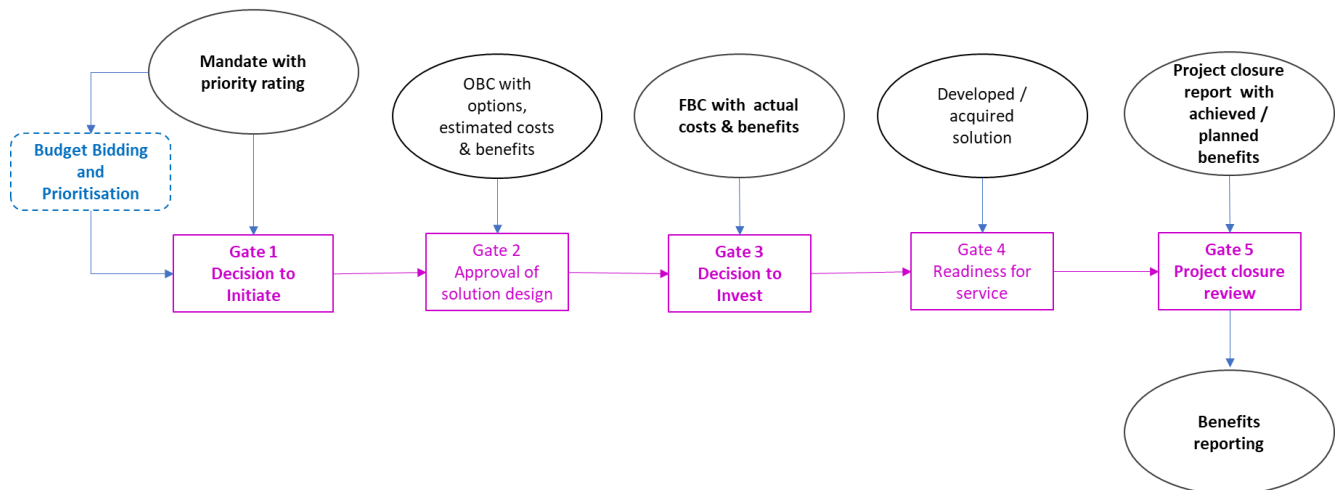
- 4.10. Approval by Council as an item in the capital programme in many cases was taken as adequate, despite there only being a line of detail in the report to Council and no published officer reports.
- 4.11. There was no de minimis to items placed in the capital programme. Also the financial implications of the schemes, interest and MRP (effectively the principal repayment) were charged centrally. As there was pressure on revenue budgets officers were keen to charge amounts to capital. This had a number of implications. The cost of capital was rising steadily, some items were charged to capital that should have been charged to revenue and the programme had become unmanageable.
- 4.12. Some areas of capital, around improvements to roads, bridges and buildings are necessary for Health and Safety purposes and, given the scale of the estate, recur year on year. RBWM had partly recognised the repetitive nature of the work in a corporate budget for revenue contributions to the capital programme, which was a sign of prudence. The budget was £1.6m in 2015/16, reduced to £1.1m in 2016/17, £0.4m in 2017/18 and zero in 2018/19 to achieve savings.
- 4.13. A de minimis level of £20k was put in place in September 2019 for future schemes. Officers were provided with training on capital expenditure and certain items were re-classified as revenue where necessary.
- 4.14. New governance arrangements have been put in place for 2020/21 to ensure appropriate approval is sought for each capital scheme, schemes above £500k requiring a Cabinet report and those between £50k and £500k a published Officer Decision report that are in the approved capital programme.
- 4.15. This means that there are now two "gateways" (decision points) for projects - the approval to make budget provision for projects over £20k either in the annual budget setting process or as a special in year item; and the approval to spend.
- 4.16. There were, however, some clear strengths in the previous arrangements:
- All projects had an owner who sat at CLT (Executive Director or Head of Service);
 - There were some project and programme boards in place. There were some professional project management resources and methods being used, particularly for the larger capital projects;
 - Effort and resourcing applied on project / programme management overheads was economical for an Authority of this size;
 - A new prioritisation method has been applied for the 2020/21 provision of capital budgets.
- 4.17. At the same time there are several weaknesses that potentially need to be addressed:

- There is no corporate visibility of the full projects' portfolio. This makes it difficult to monitor the full picture on status, progress and delivery;
- Projects are largely managed in isolation and there is limited management of dependencies;
- There is little in the way of attention to programme management focused on the delivery of specific outcomes, such as manifesto commitments;
- The use of a variety of different PPM methodologies, (in some cases ad hoc), makes it difficult to assure the quality of the project management;
- The lack of documented procedures adds to complexity and uncertainty. For example, some projects have a project board, and some do not. There needs to be consistent policy on when a project board is required;
- As well as the absence of documented procedures, roles (such as the responsibilities of the Senior Business Owner) are not defined;
- More control is needed in the form of a gateway process that will help ensure delivery of the right solutions, as well as staying within budget, throughout the project lifecycle;
- The absence of formal "gates" creates the risk that problems are not recognised and addressed early enough and that there is not enough challenge about options and the proposed solution;
- There is no clear corporate guidance on benefits realisation or project closure;
- There is limited use of business cases to justify project decisions, for the smaller projects;
- Key information about risks (RAG ratings) are missing in many instances and there is a lot of ad hoc verbal reporting, with subjective and selective content.

4.18. In addressing the weaknesses, there are several issues, practical factors and constraints to consider:

- There is limited resourcing and funding available for project management;
- These are several factors that will limit the scope for full standardisation across RBWM project management approaches and methods;
- Any changes have to be shaped by "the pull from the top". The form and extent of that pull has still to be assessed;
- It is most likely that RBWM will want to apply any planned changes for capital projects to other RBWM projects;

Project Lifecycle Controls:



- There are three important documents that will support the project lifecycle decision making:
 - The Mandate provides a brief preliminary description of the project and is designed to introduce the basic project concept and identify key issues at the earliest stages of project development,
 - The Outline Business Case (OBC) and Full Business Case (FBC) will build on and extend the Mandate contents for projects. Templates will be on-line, requiring minimal administrative effort, and scalable to the complexity/risk and value;
- The administrative burden for the gateway checks will be minimised by delegating more of the gate checking and approvals process. The extent of checking will be proportionate, for example, Readiness for Service checks for low risk and low value projects will be a decision only by the SBO, whilst Decision to Invest checks for high value or high risk projects will require approval from Senior Business Owner / Project Board, CIPB, CLT and Cabinet;
- There is a range of recurring annual provision items (for example: road resurfacing and traffic management schemes) which are essentially a programme of works rather than a one-off project. In terms of the gateway checks and the reporting procedures, it makes sense to treat the programme of works as a single project, with individual stages in order to avoid excessive administration with minimal risk impact;
- All projects with a total value in excess of £100K and for high risk projects less than £100K, the project manager will complete an on-line project report. The information captured at the corporate level will be accessible and available on-line to the project

manager, the SBO, the project board, the CIPB, the CLT and Cabinet.

- 4.19. The Senior Business Owner will be accountable for achieving the project benefits. RBWM will maintain a register of project financial / efficiency savings (savings tracker). The information will be captured from the Full Business case and updated from the Project Closure report together with any subsequent actions identified in the Closure report.
- 4.20. The general approach to the implementation of these proposals should follow "agile principles" in order to ensure that any changes are practical, as simple as possible, add real value (particularly in terms of reduced risks) and avoid unnecessary effort. It will be implemented in a phased build up over time.
- 4.21. The use of external as well as internal project management roles will continue. However, there will be additional commercial guidelines to ensure compliance with the RBWM project / programme management principles and procedures.
- 4.22. The main system components needed to support the new approach, and to minimise administrative burden, will need to be defined but are likely to include:
 - A corporate project register;
 - A mechanism for capturing project status reports;
 - A common structured repository for associated project documents including completed reports, business cases etc.;
 - Guidance on the procedures and templates, online;
 - Project information access and retrieval facilities;
 - Report generation provisions;
 - Dashboard for summary, highlights and exceptions across the corporate projects' portfolio.

5. Management of the Berkshire Pension Fund and Partnership Arrangements

The Berkshire Pension Fund

- 5.1. RBWM is responsible for administering the Berkshire Pension Fund. As part of the annual audit of the fund the external auditor raised a number of concerns relating to the valuation of the fund and financial governance.
- 5.2. In respect of governance the concerns raised were:
- The minuting of meetings not being undertaken with appropriate rigour;
 - Interests not being appropriately registered;
 - Appointment of advisers not being transparent;
 - Roles and responsibilities of advisers not clear;
 - Electronic meetings not being adequately recorded;
 - Member level governance of the Fund is not clear.
- 5.3. RBWM agreed that the concerns needed addressing and appointed a local authority pension fund expert recommended by the LGA to determine a way forward. Following this work RBWM has appointed an experienced pension fund manager on an interim basis to oversee the improvements in governance required.

Partnership Arrangements

- 5.4. RBWM has a number of partnership arrangements in place that in some cases have been put in place quickly without appropriate consideration of value for money and how these can be reviewed. The governance arrangements are also unclear.
- 5.5. To address this the Managing Director commissioned a series of additional work-streams during the latter part of 2019/20 to determine that the most appropriate arrangements are put in place.
- 5.6. The partnerships under review are set out below.

Optalis

- 5.7. Optalis is a jointly owned company with Wokingham Borough Council that delivers Adults Social Care to both councils.
- 5.8. The service level agreement (SLA) for the services provided by Optalis and the shareholder agreement are unclear and the original business case for RBWM purchasing shares in the company has not been fulfilled.
- 5.9. Given that this company is responsible for the largest area of Council spending the arrangements need to be reviewed to ensure it is providing

value for money and is the most appropriate delivery model for the future. The SLA and shareholder agreement needs to be reviewed.

Achieving for Children

- 5.10. Achieving for Children is a Community interest Company providing services to Kingston, Richmond and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.
- 5.11. RBWM has benefited from being part of the company in that service standards have improved to such an extent that Ofsted rated them as good in 2020.
- 5.12. There does though need to be more clarity over the financial arrangements with the company and how financial information is reported.
- 5.13. Since the services have transferred to the company the quality of the service has improved significantly with formally OFSTED recognising the improvements. However the service has significantly overspent and savings haven't been delivered.
- 5.14. RBWM has subsequently commissioned a review of delivery options for AfC and Optalis to assist it in developing a more robust medium term financial strategy.

6. Conclusions

Revenue Budget Approval

- 6.1. Key budget decisions did not comply fully with statutory requirements (e.g. revenue budget s25 report);
- 6.2. Budget reports lacked detail and only provided a cursory assessment of the robustness of reserves and spending projections that did not reflect the complexity of RBWM's business;
- 6.3. Key items within the budget (e.g. special expenses) lacked transparency and annual review;
- 6.4. The precept increase was calculated incorrectly, which resulted in a potential loss of council tax income of over £152,000 in 2019/20.

Inadequate Reserves

- 6.5. The assessment of the required level of financial reserves was flawed;
- 6.6. While the assessment considered potential service risks it did not take into account the level of reserves that may be required to balance the budget over two to three years;
- 6.7. There was insufficient explanation about how RBWM was managing one of the lowest level of reserves nationally.

Robustness of Estimates

- 6.8. Budget reports were overly optimistic about the achievement of savings and almost never reflected negative issues or highlighted problems;
- 6.9. Reserves were used during the year to meet the cost of "unforeseen" in year pressures, rather than looking at ways to manage these pressures within the allocated budget. This further weakened RBWM's financial position;
- 6.10. Council Officers did not fully understand the risks surrounding business rates retention or consider how these could impact on the budget and its reserves;
- 6.11. Key assumptions were not set out clearly within budget reports i.e. the use of one-off resources. This meant that the necessary approval was not therefore sought to use these resources;
- 6.12. Bad debt provisions were inadequate and unrealistic given the level of outstanding debt. Their potential impact on reserves was not highlighted or taken into account when the level of reserves was assessed.

Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 6.13. RBWM did not have a robust and transparent medium-term financial strategy;
- 6.14. There was a lack of clarity over the medium to long term financial position RBWM faced;
- 6.15. The projections that existed were overly optimistic and did not highlight the significant funding risks that RBWM faced;
- 6.16. There was no clear context for the medium-term financial projections to link them to the overall objectives of RBWM as set out within the Corporate Plan;
- 6.17. The lack of a robust medium-term financial strategy made it difficult for RBWM to make sound medium-term financial decisions.
- 6.18. Forecasting of future capital receipts was wildly optimistic and had no relationship to what happened. Future receipts were assumed and used to justify spend in advance of being delivered.

Budget Monitoring

- 6.19. RBWM did not receive transparent budget monitoring information;
- 6.20. There were delays in reporting budget variances and risks to members;
- 6.21. Financial reporting was overly reassuring;
- 6.22. Officers appeared overly sensitive in providing bad news about RBWM's financial position and the poor publicity that it would bring to RBWM.

Treasury Management

- 6.23. RBWM did not have a compliant Treasury Management Strategy (TMS);
- 6.24. The TMS did not highlight the significant risk of borrowing plans which involved £167m of temporary borrowing by 2020/21;
- 6.25. Information on Treasury Management and borrowing levels was not set out in sufficient detail within a standalone report;
- 6.26. Reports were not transparent about the level of additional borrowing that RBWM was undertaking or the impact of that borrowing on the medium-term financial plans;
- 6.27. Council Officers did not seek external professional advice on borrowing levels, even when the increased level of borrowing presented a significant financial risk to RBWM;

6.28. This meant that officers did not take the opportunity to reduce financial risks by converting more council borrowing to fixed rates. (The Covid 19 national emergency means that this has not caused any loss to RBWM).

Capital Strategy

6.29. RBWM did not have a compliant Capital Strategy;

6.30. The Capital Strategy did not clearly set out RBWM's investment plans and now they aligned to its Corporate Plan and objectives;

6.31. The Strategy failed to show how it would prioritise competing demands for capital investment or set a long-term vision for capital investment;

6.32. The Capital Strategy failed to assess the affordability and deliverability of capital investment plans;

Clewer and Dedworth capital scheme

6.33. Members were able to circumvent RBWM's approved policy framework to include additional schemes in the capital programme without appropriate challenge from Officers;

6.34. This indicates a lack of clarity and clear division between member and officer roles;

6.35. Schemes appeared in the Capital Programme with no business case;

6.36. Officers lack of awareness of basic governance procedures and not raising concerns with RBWM's Monitoring Officer or asking for advice led to procedures being by-passed;

6.37. There was a lack of action by the s151 Officer when it became apparent that non-approved expenditure in Parks was being charged to the scheme. The failure to consider that officers could be acting beyond the authority set out in RBWM's constitution is also an area of great concern and raises questions regarding potential Ultra Vires expenditure;

6.38. Overall there was a lack of transparency around the financial implementation of capital schemes.

7.Improvements already implemented in response to initial findings

7.1. RBWM put in place measures that ensure that they comply with all applicable local government financial legislation, regulations and codes of practice

- The [2020/21 budget report, Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Strategy](#) now comply with financial legislation, regulations and codes of practice. As does the requirement to produce a Treasury Management Outturn report and six month review.
- It is a robust budget and includes a contingency for unforeseen items and cover against slippage or non-delivery of savings.
- The budget report also set out the appropriate approval of Special Expenses for non-parished areas.
- The increase in Council Tax and the Adult Care precept was properly applied.

7.2. A fundamental review of the financial resilience of RBWM was undertaken that includes both the medium term financial plan and the capital programme

- This review was undertaken as part of the budgeting and medium term financial strategy process. A review was also undertaken of the capital programme and only essential works agreed. The budget report set's out in its introduction:
 - RBWM is facing a significant financial challenge
 - The position for the Royal Borough is more acute than other councils, due to its very low level of reserves. These are barely adequate to cover its current risks and are insufficient to cover future projected funding shortfalls in 2021/22 and beyond
 - If RBWM cannot set a balanced budget in 2021/22 or if its financial position markedly deteriorates in 2020/21 to a point reserves did not cover any overspend, RBWM S151 Officer would have to issue a s114 notice
- Staff and Members, through internal communications and presentations are fully aware of the financial position of RBWM. Something that was not apparent prior to September 2019.
- RBWM is embarking on a radical transformation programme with support from CIPFA and the LGA in order to address its financial challenges going forward.

- RBWM's MRP policy and capitalising interest for schemes in progress meant a saving in 2019/20 of £1.7m and £1.9m in 2020/21.
- The use of flexible capital receipts and approval of a transformation fund also meant that RBWM could charge redundancy costs linked to its savings in 2019/20 and 2020/21. This reduces the charge on revenue by £0.3m in 2019/20 and £0.5m 2020/21.
- These two initiatives enabled RBWM to maintain its general reserve level at £7.9m at the start of 2020/21 rather than reduce it further to an inadequate £3.5m.
- As part of its COVID-19 response it had early discussions with MHCLG on the financial risks the crisis would have on its finances.
- Although the financial position is difficult RBWM is now doing all it can to ensure its future financial resilience.

7.3. The role and support to the s151 Officer is reviewed

- RBWM implemented a new management structure in October 2019 which included a new Strategic Director of Resources with s151 responsibility with the same status as the other Strategic Directors. This was in addition to the Head of Finance post that operated at a lower, Head of Service level. In addition a further £100k was added to the finance team's budget for additional posts previously deleted. The finance team will undergo a further review in 2020/21 to ensure it meets the needs of the organisation.

7.4. A detailed review of the way financial management operates within the Royal Borough is undertaken as a matter of urgency

- A series of work was carried out over the period September 2019 – March 2020 to coincide with the start of the new Director of Resources at the end of February. A lot of improvements have been implemented, particularly in respect of improved transparency of financial reporting and compliance. This has been recognised by senior members from all political groups. It is recognised that this will be an iterative process and there is an expectation that things will continue to improve over the course of 2020/21, particularly when the new Head of Finance starts in June 2020.
- The Finance team have been pro-active in organising budget manager training sessions for both revenue and capital.
- Financial Regulations have been updated, although greater awareness and compliance needs to occur going forward.

8. Further Recommendations

- 8.1. RBWM has made good progress in resolving the weaknesses in financial governance but it will take time and a change in culture to embed the changes. Members have been understanding of the improvements required but there is an expectation of continuous improvement over the next 12 months, led by the new Director of Resources and Head of Finance. Together they will oversee the improvements and outstanding actions set out below.

Review of Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 8.2. The strategy needs to be updated to take account of the impact of Covid-19, the decision of government to delay the implementation of Fair Funding and the increased business rate deficit.
- 8.3. It is likely this will put further pressure on RBWM, increasing the current estimate of savings above £4m, potentially significantly above available reserves.
- 8.4. Many other councils will be in similar positions and it is to be determined whether government will give further support to Local Government in these unprecedented times.
- 8.5. RBWM though needs to be clear of its budget gap going forward and how much it can deliver from transformation, service reductions and efficiency savings.

Transformation Resource

- 8.6. The Council agreed to invest in Transformation resources to enable it to identify additional efficiencies through new ways of working. It needs to embed this work and pursue its commitment through the course of the year.

Capital Programme Management

- 8.7. A new Capital Programme board needs to be established, chaired by either the Director of Resources or Head of Finance to drive through the improvements in governance.
- 8.8. The capital programme is reviewed to ensure all schemes have appropriate and robust business cases, have clear delivery outcomes and that risks are appropriately managed. These improvements will be part of the changes overseen by the capital programme board.
- 8.9. Reporting of slippage in spending needs more pro-active challenge from the finance team through the year and managers need to be accountable for failing to deliver schemes to agreed timescales and not reporting slippage in spend.

Further Review of Financial Management

- 8.10. This will be undertaken by the new Head of Finance and will build on the work already undertaken, particularly in respect of challenge and compliance.
- 8.11. RBWM has a good IT system to manage its finances that has been implemented successfully by the finance team. A series of training programmes has been started with budget managers to ensure that they use the systems appropriately. This work needs to be embedded.
- 8.12. Only around 25% of transactions have a purchase order raised. For a number this is not necessary, foster care payments and utility bills for example. A review though needs to be undertaken to ensure that all goods requiring a purchase order have one.
- 8.13. A new financial model for the medium term financial planning needs to be developed for forecasting costs, savings and different scenarios. The current model was developed some years ago and understanding of how it works is limited to one individual. There are a number of linked cells, various linked work-sheets, some errors in particular cells and any update requires the use of the goal seek function to ensure the spreadsheet balances. The risk of error is high and understanding of what assumptions have been taken low.

Control Account Reconciliations

- 8.14. There are two large unreconciled balances over £1m relating to bank reconciliation and Housing Benefits that go back a number of years. One a credit and one a debit. The finance team and Internal Audit have undertaken significant work to resolve the differences and given the lack of historical records cannot go any further. The amounts need to be written back to the revenue account and reported to Members.
- 8.15. A further review of bank reconciliations and control accounts need to be undertaken to ensure that they are regularly balanced and there is independent verification and assurance that they do.

Debt Management

- 8.16. Debt is managed through the Revenues and Benefits team. There is limited reporting and review by services and the wider finance team. Provisions for bad debt are not regularly reviewed for appropriateness, e.g. Housing Benefit overpayments. There is a lack of resources and senior oversight of debt.

Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Fund

- 8.17. There is a lack of understanding in the finance team of how the collection fund operates. RBWM have commissioned a separate review of how this is being managed, the recommendations of which will need to be taken forward when completed.

Equalities Impact Assessments

- 8.18. Equalities impacts are produced for each of the budget proposals. These were produced late on in the budget process and CIPFA had to provide support to produce a cumulative equality impact assessment for the budget report. Something that hadn't previously been undertaken.
- 8.19. A central equalities resource needs to be established to ensure that the assessments are completed in a timely, consistent manner and that a cumulative assessment is undertaken that can be reviewed as part of the scrutiny process.

Management of Partnership Arrangements

- 8.20. The reviews of the Pension Fund, Optalis and AfC need to be completed and their recommendations implemented.
- 8.21. RBWM need to consider some of their other partnership arrangements not subject to procurement to ensure that they are providing value for money and that this is kept under review. These should include the wholly owned Property Company and the shared Internal Audit service. Despite the weaknesses in the control framework neither the Internal Audit Service, nor until the recent change, the External Auditor highlighted the problems covered in this report.

Member Oversight

- 8.22. The report highlights a lack of clarity between member and officer roles. It is essential that this clarity exists to enable RBWM to operate effectively. Accordingly it is recommended that the current Protocol Governing member and officer relationships is reviewed in the light of this report and additional training is provided to all officers and members once this protocol has been revised.
- 8.23. The audit committee was merged with the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny panel. Given the number of financial governance issues and the different roles of Scrutiny and Audit it is recommended that an independent Audit Committee is established, potentially with an independent chair.

Key Members and Officers Interviewed for initial work

Officers

Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director
Rob Stubbs	Head of Finance (s151 Officer)
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer
Andy Jeffs	Executive Director of Communities
Hilary Hall	Director of Strategy and Commissioning
Ruth Watkins	Chief Accountant
Zarqa Raja	Corporate Accountant
Stuart Taylor	Lead Accountant – Adults & Health
Ben Smith	Head of Commissioning
Vikki Roberts	Principal Communities Officer
Catherine Hickman	Lead Specialist, Internal Audit

Members

Councillor Dudley	Leader of RBWM
Councillor Hilton	Lead Member for Finance
Councillor Targowski	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny

Further Work From September 2019

Further Work

Further work commenced in September 2019 with a number of CIPFA specialists assisting the finance team in improving financial governance, compliance and ensuring more transparent reporting. This work culminated in supporting RBWM approve a new Medium Term Financial Strategy and a more transparent budget report that was welcomed by both the lead and opposition parties. Additional areas of work included:

- Revising the content and format of budget monitoring reports
- Identifying additional gaps in the planned 2020/21 budget enabling RBWM to consider additional savings
- Revised Annual Governance Statement for 2018/19
- A new Treasury Management Strategy, outturn report for 2018/19 and mid-year report for 2019/20
- Update and publication of planned capital receipts supporting the capital programme
- Update of RBWM's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy, approved at December 2019 Council
- Re-prioritisation of the capital programme
- Recommended improved governance procedure for capital
- Capital Training for finance and managers
- Re-classification of revenue spend incorrectly coded as capital
- Pensions fund governance
- Re-writing financial regulations

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Report Title:	Borough-Wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document – Regulation 14 Adoption
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	No - Part I
Lead Member:	Councillor Coppinger, Lead Member for Planning and Maidenhead
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet - 25 June 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Russell O’Keefe, Executive Director Adrien Waite, Head of Planning
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies the creation of high quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It also expects councils to provide maximum clarity at an early stage about their design expectations using visual tools such as design guides.
2. Broad direction of what high quality design means for the Council is set out in various policies in the adopted and emerging development plans but the Council does not have any detailed and comprehensive guidance on what it expects high quality design and design excellence to look like across the Royal Borough. The Borough-wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (BWDG SPD) has been prepared to provide this clear, detailed and specific design guidance to support both Council decision making on development applications and the emerging Borough Local Plan (BLP).
3. Publication of a draft version of the BWDG SPD for consultation took place in 2019. The responses received have been reviewed and a number of small changes are recommended to be made to the SPD as a result.
4. This report seeks approval for the adoption of the Borough-wide Design Guide, incorporating the recommended changes.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves the adoption of the final Borough-wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document set out in Annex 1.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
<p>Not adopt the Borough-wide Design Guide with the recommended changes.</p> <p>This is not the recommended option.</p>	<p>Officers do not consider this would be the right approach to this important matter. This would leave the Council without the detailed guidance on what constitutes high quality design in the Borough and undermine the Council's ability to secure design excellence in new development and to resist poor quality development.</p>
<p>Adopt the Borough-wide Design Guide, but without including the recommended changes.</p> <p>This is not the recommended option.</p>	<p>Officers do not consider this would be the right approach to this important matter. This would result in the adoption of a document that ignored the valuable input of statutory stakeholders, development industry and the local community. This would minimise support for the adopted document.</p>
<p>Delay adoption of the Borough-wide Design Guide.</p> <p>This is not the recommended option.</p>	<p>Officers do not consider this would be the right approach to this important matter. This option would leave the Council with no detailed guidance to inform the development industry and local residents of the nature of the high quality development that it seeks in the Borough. This would make it more difficult to encourage high quality design and resist poor quality development during this time.</p>

- 2.1 The NPPF identifies the creation of high quality buildings and places as being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It also expects Councils to provide maximum clarity at an early stage about their design expectations by using visual tools such as design guides. The preparation of a Borough-wide Design Guide helps the Council meet the Government's expectations for clarity on its design expectations.
- 2.2 The Council Plan 2017-2021 has a vision of building a borough for everyone with opportunities for all and has identified priorities of creating:
- Attractive and well connected borough;
 - Healthy skilled and independent residents;
 - Safe and vibrant communities;
 - Growing economy, affordable housing.

- 2.3 The ambitions set out in the Council Plan for the achievement of high quality development are also reflected in the design policies set out in the Council's adopted, 'Made' and emerging development plans. These policies set out a broad or generalised direction of what high quality design means for this Borough. However, they do not provide detailed, comprehensive and locally specific guidance on what the Council expects high quality design to look like across the Royal Borough. The production of a Design Guide bridges this gap. It will provide clear, detailed and specific design guidance to support Council decision making on development applications and the emerging BLP. It will also provide clear demonstration to the development industry of the Council's design expectations and give local communities and neighbourhood planning groups a detailed framework for design within which they can prepare their locally specific policies and guidance.
- 2.4 The first stage in the preparation of the Borough-wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document Design Guide was the publication of the draft Design Guide (under Regulation 13 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended) for consultation purposes in March 2019. This stage facilitated development of the Design Guidance with local communities, ultimately encouraging ownership of the document across the Royal Borough. The consultation draft Borough-wide Design Guide can be seen on the council's website at https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201027/planning_guidance/1441/emerging_supplementary_planning_documents_spd/2
- 2.5 The draft Borough-wide Design Guide was generally well received and representations were made on all aspects of it. A wide range of representative groups made comments including statutory stakeholders, Parish and Town councils, developers, agents and landowners, special interest groups and individuals. In total 82 consultation responses were received from 62 interested persons and bodies. The key themes emerging from the representations were:
- a) Strong support for the production of the guide and for its scope, quality and content
 - b) Concern that the document is too generic
 - c) Concern for lack of biodiversity enhancement
 - d) Further clarity needed in relation to Tall buildings and parking design
 - e) Concern that the guide does not go far enough in relation to non-residential design
- The statement on the consultation, which includes details of the consultation points raised, is contained in Appendix A.
- 2.6 Following a detailed review of the consultation responses a number of changes have been proposed to the Borough-wide Design Guide to enable it to be adopted. None of the changes are considered substantial with most being along the lines of clarifications, small additions and corrections to layout. The recommended changes are set out in Appendix B. These changes have been incorporated into the final version of the BWDG.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Adoption of the Borough wide Design Guide	BWDG not adopted	BWDG adopted on 25 June	n/a	n/a	June 2020

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

There are no financial implications to this paper. The production of the Design Guide is being funded through the Planning Delivery Fund Design Quality funding.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal implications to this paper. The NPPF (Paragraph 126) expects Councils to use tools such as design guides to provide maximum clarity about its design expectations.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
The Council is unable to resist poor quality new development as it does not have detailed, locally specific guidance as to what constitutes high quality design in the Royal Borough.	HIGH	Adopt the Borough wide Design Guide in June 2020.	LOW

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
The Council is unable to provide Neighbourhood Plan Groups preparing their locally specific design policy and guidance with clarity of what the Council is seeking at the Borough wide level in terms of design expectations.	HIGH	Adopt the Borough wide Design Guide in June 2020.	LOW
A plethora of design related documents is created at various levels that are not co-ordinated or seeking the same design quality expectations	HIGH	Adoption of the Borough-wide Design Guide in summer 2020 to provide an overarching and co-ordinating design document.	LOW

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 Adoption of the BWDG-SPD will improve the ability of the Planning Department to negotiate for high quality design in the Borough. It will also assist with securing more sustainable development and the Borough's Climate Change Objectives. No other potential impacts are anticipated.
- 7.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out for the emerging BLP which included a number of design related policies. No potentially adverse impacts were identified for any particular group arising from the BLP. As the Design Guide will only provide further detail and guidance on the adopted and emerging policies, rather than create new policy, it is not considered necessary to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) specifically for the Design Guide.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Borough wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document has been through both internal and external consultation including a 6 week consultation period in March 2019 under Regulation 13 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Implementation date, if not called in, is contained in Table 4.

Table 4: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
June 2020	Adoption of the final Borough-wide Design Guide and publication on the website, along with associated evidence base documents

10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by 3 appendices:

Appendix 1 - Borough-wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

- Appendix A - Consultation Statement on the draft Borough-wide Design Guide Regulation 13 consultation
- Appendix B – Table of Recommended Changes to the draft Borough-wide Design Guide

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

10.2 This report is supported by the following background documents:

- Council Plan, available at:
https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/file/3320/2017-2021_-_council_plan
- The Council's adopted and 'Made' Development Plan Documents, available on the Council website at:
https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200209/planning_policy/591/development_plan
- The draft Borough-wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document at:
https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201027/planning_guidance/1441/emerging_supplementary_planning_documents_spd/2
- The Council's emerging Borough Local Plan, available on the Council website at:
<https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/blp>
- The National Planning Policy Framework 2019, available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

11. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Cllr Coppinger	Lead Member for Planning	02/06/20	03/06/20
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	02/06/20	08/06/20
Russell O'Keefe	Director of Place	29/05/20	01/06/20
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources/S151 Officer	02/06/20	
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services	02/06/20	04/06/20
Hillary Hall	Director Adults, Commissioning and Health	02/06/20	02/06/20
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	02/06/20	04/06/20
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer	02/06/20	04/06/20
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	02/06/20	04/06/20
Louisa Dean	Communications	02/06/20	02/06/20
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance	02/06/20	03/06/20
Adrien Waite	Head of Planning	02/06/20	02/06/20
	Other e.g. external		

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To Follow item?
Key decision	No.	
Report Author: Helen Murch, Planning Policy Manager, 07816 535890		

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD

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Royal Borough
of Windsor &
Maidenhead

Borough Wide Design Guide

25 June 2020



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1 Setting the Scene





1 SETTING THE SCENE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (Royal Borough) recognises the vitally important role that the design of places, buildings and spaces have on people’s quality of life. Poorly designed development and places can contribute to poor physical and mental health, whilst well designed, high quality development can generate wellbeing and pride.

1.2 The Council is committed to ensuring the design of development underpins the making of distinctive, sustainable and attractive places that will provide for better health and wellbeing and high quality environments for all who live, work, play in and visit the Royal Borough.

1.3 The preparation of the design guide has been undertaken to help deliver **design excellence** to secure the Council’s vision of ‘building a borough for everyone’ and its priorities of:

- Attractive and well connected borough;
- Healthy skilled and independent residents;
- Safe and vibrant communities;
- Growing economy, affordable housing.¹

The requirement for **design excellence** is at the heart of the borough’s vision for the future.

1 Building a Borough for everyone – Council Plan 2017 - 2021

2 This Guide does not specifically address the design of traveller and minerals and waste developments. This will be picked up in Development Plan Documents that deal with these particular forms of development.

Purpose

1.4 The Design Guide supports Local Plan policies by setting out in detail what the Council considers to be design excellence in the Royal Borough. The Guide has two main purposes:

- To help guide a major step change improvement in the quality of new development and places created across the Royal Borough.
- To provide guidance to council members, officers, developers and local communities on how to ensure future development has the required high quality and inclusive design to create beautiful places that function well.

Scope

1.5 The Guide relates to the majority² of landuses in the borough and includes

- Residential development , encompassing
 - New housing units - in the form of infill through to new neighbourhoods;
 - Conversions and residential intensifications of existing buildings;
 - Householder improvements (e.g. extensions & curtilage developments).



- Employment & retail development;
- Recreational, infrastructure, and other forms of development.

1.6 The Guide applies to all places in the borough – urban, semi rural, rural, waterways and subterranean.

1.7 The Guide covers all types of development including new buildings, extensions, demolition, changes of use, intensification and alterations. It also relates to all scales of development. For the purposes of this document development has been classified into 4 different scale categories:

Table 1.1: Scales of development covered by this guide

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		Residential	Non-Residential
XS	Extra small	Householder development - typically, alterations to dwellings	Very small development involving de minimus or no floorspace –e.g. new fire escapes, shop front changes, flues etc...
S	Small	Sites of 1-9 units	New single buildings, extensions, mezzanine floors or infill development up to GIA 1000sqm
M	Medium	Sites up to 100 dwelling units	New total floorspace of more than 1000sqm up to 5000sqm
L	Large	Sites over 100 dwelling units	Total new floorspace more than GIA 5000sqm

1.8 The Guide only addresses those areas of design where there are specific Royal Borough requirements. It does not provide guidance on matters already addressed by national Building Regulation requirements (e.g. energy and water efficiency and disabled access).

1.9 This document provides an overarching borough wide framework for detailed guidance on design related matters. Sitting alongside this guidance is a range of detailed topic and locally specific design documents. These include the design policies in ‘Made’ neighbourhood plans, detailed design related supplementary planning documents (including Green & Blue Infrastructure, Parking & Tall Buildings), and conservation area appraisals. This Design Guide should be read in conjunction with them. An up-to-date list of all the applicable design related policy and guidance can be viewed on the Council’s website at https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201039/non-development_plan/1442/design

Status

1.10 This document is a borough wide design guide that has been prepared as a supplementary planning document (SPD) under Regulation 14 of the Town & Country Planning Regulations (Local Plan) 2012, as amended. The Guide supports policies within the adopted Local Plan³ and has also been prepared to support emerging policies in the draft Borough Local Plan.⁴

3 RBWM Local Plan, adopted 1999, incorporating 2003 saved policies.



- 1.11 The Borough Wide Design Guide will be adopted as an SPD to support policies within the adopted Local Plan³. It has also been prepared to support emerging policies in the draft Borough Local Plan(BLPSV)⁴.
- 1.12 Developers will be expected to take the Design Guide into account, along with the requirements of any use or locally specific design policies in adopted, made, or emerging plans and in other SPD's when designing any form of new development in the Royal Borough. Where Design and Access Statements (DAS) are required to be submitted as part of a planning application they will be expected to set out how the standards detailed in this Guide have informed the design of the residential scheme.
- 1.13 The Borough Wide Design Guide will be a material consideration to be taken into account by the Council when considering pre-application proposals, determining planning applications, and at appeals.
- 1.14 It is recognised that innovative, high quality design solutions may come forward that do not fully comply with the requirements of the Guide. In order to provide for a flexible approach in applying the Guide, where applications depart from the Guide's principles, the Council will look to applicants for robust design justification for this departure. This justification may be taken into account as a material consideration when considering the design merits of such proposals.

4 The emerging Borough Local Plan is currently at Examination.

BACKGROUND

Planning Policy context

- 1.15 The Government sees good design as key aspect of sustainable development and creates better places in which to live and work. It is also seen as making development acceptable to communities.

The Government's policy guidance on design

- 1.16 Creation of high quality buildings and well designed places is seen in the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF) as fundamental to what the planning process and development should achieve.
- 1.17 The Government expects local authorities to be clear about design expectations and how these will be tested (Para 124). They also expect authorities to develop design policies with local communities so they reflect local aspirations (Para 125). In order to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides. These are seen as providing a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design (Para 126).
- 1.18 Local Planning authorities are expected to ensure that development:
- Functions well and adds to the overall quality of the area;



- Are visually attractive;
- Are sympathetic to local character and history;
- Establishes or maintains a strong sense of place;
- Optimises the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain appropriate amount and mix of development;
- Create safe, accessible and inclusive places which promote health and well being (Para 127).

1.19 This Borough Wide Design Guide is a direct response to the Government’s ambitions for design. It is grounded on the principles set out in Para 127 of the NPPF, provides clear, visually rich guidance about the Royal Borough’s design expectations, how proposals will be judged and is being prepared in conjunction with local communities.

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1.20 Para 130 of the NPPF states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards, codes or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents.

Other Government guidance

1.21 In addition to policy the government has recently published a series of guidance documents on design. The most recent include the 2019 National Design Guide and the 2020 Living with Beauty - Promoting health, well-being and sustainable growth. The 10 principles of the National Guide have helped

inform the local design principles set out in this document. Other national design guidance of importance include Manual for Streets, Secured by Design and Active Design - Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity.

1.22 Local adopted borough wide design policies can be found in the saved policies of the adopted Local Plan. The principle design related policy is DG1 -Design Guidelines which sets out 11 overarching principles that apply to all forms of new development. These design principles relate to reducing crime through layout, inclusive design, scale and design of buildings, townscape and strategic views, landscaping, parking and access, traffic and character. Other policies in the adopted Local plan relating to design include:

- DG1 Design Guidelines
- N1 Areas of Special Landscape Importance
- N2 Setting of the Thames
- N3 Landscape Enhancement Area
- SF1 Guidelines for Shopfronts
- SF2 Blinds on Shopfronts
- SF3 Security Shutters
- ADV1 Display of Adverts
- ADV2 Display of Adverts
- E10 Design and development Guidelines (Business and Industrial development)
- H10 Housing Layout and Design
- H11 Housing Density
- H12 Subdivisions and Conversions



- H14 House extensions
- T5 New Developments and Highway Design
- P4 Parking within Development
- WTC4 Townscape and redevelopment

1.23 The policies in this adopted plan are expected to be replaced by a new Local Plan in due course.

1.24 There are a number of other adopted development plan documents that provide design guidance for specific local areas, including the Maidenhead Town Centre Area Action Plan (2011), and 'Made' neighbourhood plans. These documents provide locally specific policy detail in addition to the principles set out in this guide.

1.25 The Council has also produced other design documents in the form of SPD's and conservation appraisals and strategies. The Borough Wide Design Guide is intended to be read and used as a companion document to these other Council publications.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.26 The Council undertook a screening assessment under Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 on whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment was required for this SPD. It was concluded from this assessment that an environmental assessment was not required.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

1.27 The SPD is not expected to adversely impact on European level nature conservation sites and therefore further work, including an Appropriate Assessment, is not required under the Habitats Regulations.



2 How to use the Guide



2 HOW TO USE THE GUIDE



- 2.1 This guide sets out the over-arching specific design considerations for all scales and types of residential development. It works from strategic design principles down to detailed matters. The Guide’s structure reflects the sequence by which successful places are designed, setting the broad strategic considerations of overall layout before thinking about the details of buildings and spaces. Particular attention should be paid to the specific principles set out in the coloured boxes in Chapters 3 - 11.
- 2.2 All developments will need to be designed in light of the Council’s strategic design principles set out in Chapter 3. Table 2.1 should also be used to determine which of the specific guidelines in Chapters 4-12 are likely to be applicable to a particular development.

DESIGN CHECKLIST

- 2.3 Developers must also refer to the design checklist contained in Chapter 13 of this document. For small to large scale developments⁵, applicants will be expected to submit a completed checklist with their applications. This should be included with any Design & Access Statement, where these are required.
- 2.4 The checklist will be used by the planning authority to help assess planning applications. It is strongly recommended that developers use it at the early stages of the design process to help guide and inform the development of the project.

⁵ As set out in Table 1.1 of this Guide

Table 2.1: How to use the Borough Wide Design Guide

Design Matter	Householder	Extra small non residential	Small development	Medium development	Large development
Strategic design themes	X	X	X	X	X
Design Process					
Need for Vision	X	X	X	X	X
Concept Plans			X	X	X
Master and plot plans			X	X	X
Community involvement	X	X	X	X	X



Design Matter	Householder	Extra small non residential	Small development	Medium development	Large development
Character – creating identity and sense of place	X	X	X	X	X
Layouts					
Connectivity			X	X	X
Street design			X	X	X
Open spaces			X	X	X
Blocks			X	X	X
Plots			X	X	X
Defining public/ private space	X	X	X	X	X
Parking	X	X	X	X	X
Backland development			X	X	X
Built form					
Density			X	X	X
Uses & mix			X	X	X
Building positioning	X		X	X	X
Solar design and climate change	X		X	X	X
Building scale, massing and form	X	X	X	X	X
Active frontages		X	X	X	X
Minimum internal space standards	X		X	X	X
Adaptable development	X	X	X	X	X
Architectural detailing	X	X	X	X	X



Design Matter	Householder	Extra small non residential	Small development	Medium development	Large development
Amenity					
Privacy	X	X	X	X	X
Outlook	X	X	X	X	X
Daylight and sunlight	X	X	X	X	X
Private outdoor amenity space	X	X	X	X	X
Curtilage development					
Boundary treatments	X	X	X	X	X
Provision for cycles and bins	X	X	X	X	X
Hard standing and vehicle cross-overs	X	X	X	X	X
Further guidance for householder development					
Extensions	X				
Roof alterations	X				
Conversion and subdivisions	X		X		
Further guidance for specific locations and for non-residential development					
Design in flood risk areas	X	X	X	X	X
Rural and edge of settlement	X	X	X	X	X
Employment uses		X	X	X	X
Mixed-use developments		X	X	X	X



3 Strategic design themes for the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead



3 STRATEGIC DESIGN THEMES FOR THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD



3.1 Drawing upon national and local policy context, this Guide is underpinned by the following broad design themes:

Image 3.1

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

The places in the Royal Borough where people live, work and play are important in maintaining physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. They provide for activity, rest, sanctuary, recreation and social interaction, and are powerful influences in helping people shape their own identities. Poor quality developments have a considerable negative impact on people's quality of life, life chances and sense of community and identity. It is vitally important that the design of development in the Royal Borough is human scale, supports human health and wellbeing and places people, communities and safety at the heart of decision making on design, rather than cars, or short term commercial gain.





Image 3.2

DELIVERING SUSTAINABLE PLACES

New development represents an opportunity to help people live, work and play in a more sustainable and healthier manner. This includes bringing nature back into places where people are, establishing mixed communities and creating places where walking and cycling are the preferred means of getting around for short trips. It also means providing mixes of uses within walking distances to support communities, minimising flood risk, ensuring that development supports biodiversity and protects important ecosystems and maximising opportunities to reap the benefits of passive solar design.

Image 3.3

CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE

The Royal Borough has a vibrant mixture of landscape environments ranging from the heaths of the Sunnings, the extensive expanse of the Royal parks, pastoral landscapes of the Thames Valley and the waterside towns and villages. Despite the rich diversity of places, the over-riding themes of Royalty and history, the presence of the River Thames and associated tributaries and the expanse of green landscapes dominate the borough. Every development should draw on the opportunities presented by the immediate local context to create a sense of place but also reflect the broad overarching themes of **Royalty**, **River** and **Green**. This will involve using landscape, streets, open spaces, buildings and fine details to create or reinforce places of excellence with a strong positive identity.



IMPROVING QUALITY

Creating a borough where there are opportunities for all is one of the key priorities of the Council. Significantly improving design quality and local distinctiveness in the Borough is part of this priority. All new development in the Royal Borough will be expected to aim to deliver design excellence, with high quality design being the minimum standard. The Council will also encourage innovation in design. New developments will also be expected to support the maintenance of existing good quality design in the locality of a site and take opportunities to improve design quality where it is lacking.



Image 3.5

Image 3.4



PRINCIPLE 3.1

Designers will be expected to demonstrate how their design has addressed the Council's 4 strategic themes of:

- Putting people first
- Creating a sense of place
- Delivering sustainable places
- Improving quality

3.2 The remainder of the SPD sets out specific areas of detailed design which designers and decision makers should give particular attention to.



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4 Design Process Expectations





4 DESIGN PROCESS EXPECTATIONS

4.1 The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead expects development proposals seeking planning permission to have evolved through a logical and iterative design process. No matter the type of development all small, medium and large schemes will be expected to demonstrate that they have followed all of the steps.

4.2 The Council requires the design of large projects (see table 1.1) to have been the subject of review by Design South East (D:SE). There is also a mandatory requirement for D:SE design review for schemes of 40-100 units in designated areas such as conservation areas. Developers of other medium sized schemes will also be encouraged to consider D:SE review to facilitate achievement of good local design.

This would normally be expected to be undertaken at pre-application stage and be funded by the developer. Further information on this process can be found on the council's website at https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201039/non-development_plan/1442/design.

THE NEED FOR VISION

4.3 All developments need a vision. Successful developments are underpinned by a guiding design vision. Once established and agreed by everyone involved, the vision anchors and guides the design team and enables it to communicate clearly and simply what the development is seeking to be and to achieve.

Table 4.1: Design process steps.

STEP 1	Site and context appraisal	Analysis of site and context
		Character appraisal
		Opportunities and constraints
		Understanding planning policy context
STEP 2	Interpreting the brief	Vision setting
		Concept plan
STEP 3	Engagement	Community and neighbour engagement
		RBWM pre-application discussions
		D:SE Panel Review (where applicable)
		Statutory consultee engagement
STEP 4	Detailed design	Concept refinement
		Masterplanning
		Plot plans
		Detailed design
		Further pre-application discussions
		Preparation of Design and Access Statement
STEP 5	Planning application	



- 4.4 The applicant's team should develop their design vision early in the design process, and then clearly articulate it to the local authority in pre-application discussions.

THE CONCEPT PLAN

- 4.5 For medium and larger schemes (as set out in table 1.1) the vision should be supplemented by a high level concept plan. The aim of the concept plan is to show in a simple and clear way the key design features that drive the layout of the proposed development and how it relates to surrounding areas. It should include an indicative high level layout and illustrate the key components. These features will be specific to each individual

site, but may typically include: gateways and access points, focal points, key building frontages; broad street layouts, location of open space; retained and proposed landscape features; landmarks; and key view corridors. A concept plan is a higher level strategic tool than a masterplan. It sets the principles for the masterplan and is an important tool for engagement.

- 4.6 Together the vision and concept plan should sum up what kind of place is being created. This allows the developer, local authority and local communities to discuss the basic structure of the proposals and how they can be evolved and improved to achieve excellence.

Figure 4.1: Illustration of a Concept Plan.



PRINCIPLE 4.1

All small, medium and large developments will be expected to set out the guiding vision for the development. Medium and large developments should also provide a Concept Plan in the Design & Access Statement.

PROVIDING MASTERPLANS AND PLOT PLANS

- 4.7 Further detail will be provided in masterplans. For medium and large developments, developers will be expected to provide plot plans as part of their application. This is to clearly distinguish the plot boundaries and the extent of public and private ownership.





Figure 4.2: Illustration of a plot plan.

PRINCIPLE 4.2

Medium and large developments will be required to provide plot plans to clearly identify ownership boundaries and public/private spaces.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

4.8 Developers and designers will be expected to seek the views and opinions of the local community to help inform

preparation of proposals. The council will be particularly interested in understanding how the views of various people, groups and organisations have shaped the proposals it is being asked to make a decision on.

4.9 Whatever the scale of the application, applicants should set out what engagement has been undertaken, with whom, what issues were raised and how the proposals respond to the issues. For householder applications, this could be simply set out in a letter. For small and medium size schemes, the Design and Access Statement (DAS) could include a chapter on engagement. For large-scale schemes, the DAS could be appropriate or, if the issues are complex, a separate Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) may be necessary.

Image 4.1



5 Character - creating identity and sense of place



5 CHARACTER

CREATING IDENTITY AND SENSE OF PLACE



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5.1 One of the council’s strategic design themes is the creation of place and identity. Developments should not only reflect the strategic characteristics of the borough identified in Section 3, but also local identities.

5.2 The character of a place comes from different elements – large and small – that collectively result in a distinct identity. These elements are principally:

- Strategic landscape elements such as topography, forests, water bodies, geology and other natural elements;
- Connections and the networks of streets and open spaces;
- Layout of development blocks and plots;
- Arrangement and forms of buildings;
- Architectural details;
- Design of curtilage development such as boundary treatments, bin and cycle stores, amenity areas
- Presence and type of trees, vegetation, water and other natural elements.

5.3 The Royal Borough has a rich history and diversity of land and townscapes ranging from heathlands, forests, pastoral countryside, parkland, riparian areas, historic towns and

villages and modern suburbs and industrial estates. The borough has 27 conservation areas, 956 Listed Buildings and structures (including 23 Grade I and 72 Grade II* Listed buildings and structures) and a range of international wildlife designations. The richness of the borough’s character is captured in the Townscape Assessment (2010) which identified 17 distinctive townscape types and the Landscape Assessment (2004) which revealed 14 distinct landscape types and 32 discrete character areas.

5.4 Unfortunately, many recent developments in the borough are similar, have a bland feel and could be anywhere in the United Kingdom. They undermine, rather than re-inforce the sense of local identity and place. The richness and diversity of place is a key feature of the borough and valued by local communities. The council wishes to support local communities in securing quality new development that enhances their places and unique identities. Accordingly, whatever the scale or type of development, the council will expect development proposals to enhance and respond to the borough’s strategic character themes and positive local character elements in order to create identity and root the proposed development in local places.

5.5 Developers should draw on their site surveys and other planning documents to identify local character and identities

6 This will include the borough’s landscape & townscape assessments, Neighbourhood Plan policy and character SPD’s and design documents produced by Neighbourhood Planning groups.





Image 5.1: New development on the right of the street complements the character of the historic development on the opposite side.



Image 5.2: Example of a good response to a riverside and historic Windsor location.

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at an early stage to underpin the development proposals⁶.

5.6 There are essentially three ways of responding to character:

- create a design that blends in seamlessly with the existing character, so reinforcing it; or
- using cues from the local area to create a design that is sympathetic to the character, while providing a contemporary interpretation – e.g. using similar form and composition with contemporary materials;
- Defining a new and distinctive character. This is more likely to be more appropriate for larger developments.

5.7 Developers will need to decide which approach is the best for their proposals. However, where a new character is being proposed, the council will expect this to be fully justified.

Image 5.3: New development integrating with heathland landscape.



PRINCIPLE 5.1

1. All new development must be designed to maintain or enhance the special place characteristics of the Royal Borough. The council will expect development to draw upon the following elements in the local area to create positive character and locally specific identity:
 - Strategic landscape elements;
 - Connections and the networks of streets and open spaces;
 - Layout of development blocks and plots;
 - Arrangement and forms of buildings;
 - Architectural details (including colour and materials);
 - Design of curtilage development;
 - Presence and type of trees, vegetation, water and other natural elements.
 - Features of historical interest
2. Where the local context is strong, high quality and positive, new development should reflect local urban design characteristics. Where the local context has a weak or negative character, new development will be expected to improve the quality of the area.
3. All new development will be expected to integrate existing features such as:
 - Topography,
 - Waterbodies (including the River Thames, streams and ponds),
 - Mature trees, forests, hedgerows, plantings and other ecological features;
 - Views to and from the site to important features (including Windsor Castle, River Thames, The Moor in Cookham);
 - Listed buildings, archaeology, historic parks and gardens and buildings and features of cultural, historic heritage and/or townscape merit.
4. New development should remove unattractive or inappropriate buildings, elements or features that detract from the quality and/or character of the site and its surroundings.
5. Where a development site is adjacent to a water body, the development should respect the water frontage and present a positive frontage to it. Particular consideration should be given to improving views of the waterbody and public access to it, as well as creating a soft interface to provide enhanced biodiversity and extend the green corridor network.





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6 Layouts



6 LAYOUTS



6.1 The large structural elements of a development are vital in terms of setting whether it functions well and is visually appealing. These structural elements include strategic landscape features, street and open space networks, block and plot layouts, use mixes and building layouts. Carefully thought out layouts create the permanent connected 'bones' upon which great places can be created and maintained. Poor layouts create poor places which are difficult to correct going forward.

6.2 Designers should pay particular regard to the following layout matters to ensure that beautiful places that function well can be created:

- Connectivity
- Street design
- Open spaces
- Blocks
- Plots
- Defining public/private space
- Parking
- Backland development

CONNECTIVITY

6.3 Woven through both the urban and rural areas of the Royal Borough is a network of public spaces made up of streets,

parks, public open spaces and paths. This framework allows people to get to where they want to go, with a choice of how they do so. It also creates public spaces where people can spend time outdoors and physically encounter and meet others. Good public places encourage positive interaction and are community spaces, as well as providing movement corridors. Maintaining and improving this network of connections is vitally important in creating high quality places in the Royal Borough.

6.4 Some parts of the Royal Borough have dense networks of connected spaces and routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles that are easy to understand and navigate. Other areas are poorly connected and less permeable with streets and estates isolated by cul-de-sac layouts and lack of connections to surrounding areas (Fig 6.1). Developers may find local character guidance set out in Neighbourhood Plans and other SPD's useful in identifying whether the development site lies in an area of well or poorly connected streets.

6.5 All new development will be expected to connect into the surrounding route and space network in a high quality, accessible and safe way. Larger developments may create a new hierarchy of street space whilst small proposals have the ability to enhance existing streets, for instance by addressing them positively or adding new connections.



6.6 Layouts should be designed to encourage walking, cycling and public transport in preference to the private car for local journeys. This can be achieved by:

- Creating an integrated, permeable network of streets, paths, parks and public open spaces that offer accessible, safe and convenient connections between streets within the site as well as to neighbouring areas;
- Providing pedestrian and cycle routes along key desire lines, linking to existing communities, facilities, shops, schools, employment, public transport interchanges and other destinations;
- Carefully considering the potential to support commercially viable bus routes to, from and through the site, with larger developments including appropriate bus priority measures to reduce journey time, improve service reliability and enhance connectivity; and
- Controlling the speed and routing of motor vehicles such that permeability is maintained, without vehicle movements dominating the development and detracting from the sense of place.

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6.7 Where new street spaces are being created these are expected to be designed for people and be highly connected, especially through walking and cycling routes. They should demonstrate excellence in design. In historic areas developers should also draw upon Historic England's "Streets for All". In existing poorly connected places designers of schemes should look for opportunities to improve the number and quality of connections.

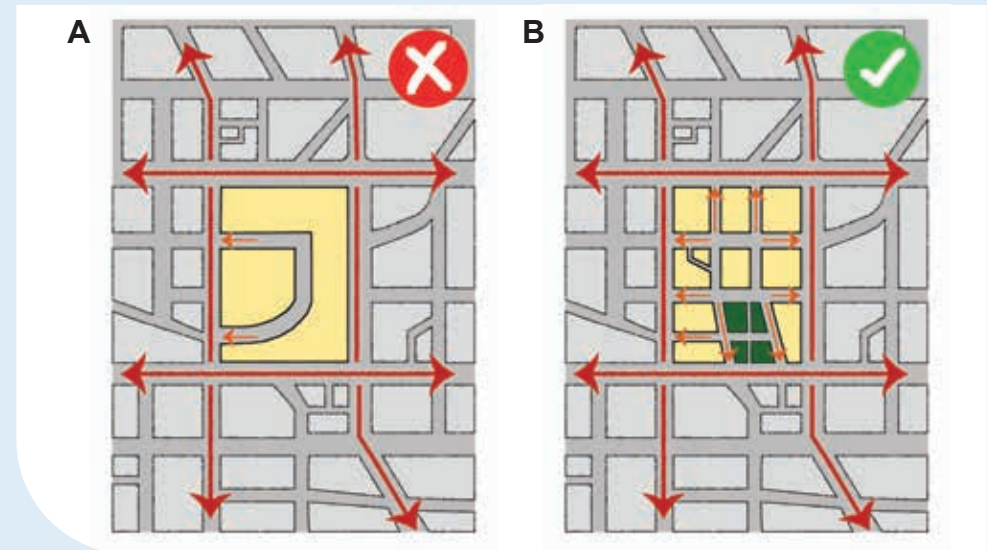


Figure 6.1: Illustration of a poorly connected layout (A) and well connected streets (B).

Image 6.1: A good quality green footpath link.



6.8 New footpaths/cycleways should provide high quality connections, acting as corridors for green and/or blue infrastructure. Routes through green infrastructure should generally be lit by low level solar powered lighting.

PRINCIPLE 6.1

All new development should:

- Connect into and strengthen the existing network of routes and public open spaces.
- Create or maintain connections that are direct, legible and safe.
- Ensure connections for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport are given the highest priority in the hierarchy of spaces.
- Make walking and cycling more attractive and convenient for short trips than using the private motor car. Distances by foot and cycle should be shorter and more direct than by car.
- Respect existing desire lines and public rights of way and make connections to local destinations, such as schools, shopping and employment areas.
- Look for opportunities to create connections into/through neighbouring land so that a well connected network can be created in the event of future land release and development.

STREET DESIGN

6.9 Streets (be they urban or rural) are the bedrock of places and make up a significant part of the public spaces within the Royal Borough. They allow people access in, out, and through places, are spaces of social interaction and are vital in creating and maintaining the character of an area. Street quality has a significant impact on how those living, working and visiting the Royal Borough experience the area. It is therefore vitally important new development helps to create high quality streets with distinctive character that are easy to navigate, safe and attractive places to be in.

6.10 A significant number of the Royal Borough's existing streets have a strong green character reflecting the rural nature of much of the borough. Another defining characteristic

Image 6.2: Borough streets with a strong green character.



Image 6.3: Borough streets following the River Thames.



of the Borough is the number of streets which provide views of water, either in the form of waterways or fountains. The council wishes to perpetuate and enhance this green and blue character in its streets to re-inforce the special characteristics and identity of the borough. Designers will be expected to make use of green infrastructure in the form of street trees, planted verges, green walls and gardens in new residential development to help maintain the strong green character of the borough. Strong encouragement will also be given to the incorporation of blue infrastructure into the borough's streets in the form of SUDS, water based public works of art and vistas of water based features, especially the River Thames and its tributaries. Provision of public access to the borough's blue infrastructure through new street networks will be expected.

Image 6.4: Borough streets incorporating fountains.





Image 6.5: An example of a semi-rural street with hedges, trees and wide verges providing a strong soft green character. Along with the tall set back buildings the street is attractively enclosed.

6.12 Streets should usually have building height to street width ratios that provide for a good sense of enclosure without overwhelming people who are using the streets. Street design should fall within the following height to width ratios⁷.

	MAXIMUM	MINIMUM
Mews	1:1.5	1:1
Streets	1:3	1:1.5
Squares	1.5	1:4

Image 6.6: An attractive urban street that is well enclosed by buildings, boundary treatments and landscaping, with a strong green character and space for both cars and pedestrians.

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6.11 Street frontage and enclosure to streets help to create a sense of place and character. In most cases, streets are defined by buildings. In some rural or particularly leafy areas, green infrastructure may be the dominating enclosure element in streetscenes. All development will be expected to contribute to the creation, maintenance and enhancement of the greenness of the borough's streets. In new streets, designers will be expected to include space for street trees, including adequate space to accommodate large street trees. Long term maintenance and adoption of green infrastructure in streets should be considered early on in the design process.



⁷ Street widths should be measured from the front of the building on one side of the street to the front of the building on the other side of the street. This will mean front gardens, pavements, cycle lanes, verges and road carriageways are included in the street width.





Image 6.7: Colour, materials, street furniture, water, and vegetation create a very high quality and visually interesting street design which provides attractive public spaces for socialising.

Image 6.8: A street where people rather than cars dominate.



Image 6.9: An attractive street with a strong rural character.

Image 6.10: An unattractive street dominated by cars.





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Image 6.11: A hard street lacking greenery.

6.13 It is important that streets feel safe. Whatever size or function, routes should be safe and well over looked by active building fronts, particularly where pedestrian and cycle routes lie adjacent to site boundaries. The creation of active frontages will be vital to maintain a sense of safety, as well as creating visually and socially interesting streets.

6.14 It is also important that streets should be designed so as to achieve vehicle speeds that are appropriate to the local context. This will depend on the relative importance of place and movement for each street.

Image 6.12: Long inactive frontage created by the high fences and no windows or doors fronting onto the street. Lack of street lighting and parked cars on pavements leaves street users feeling unsafe.



PRINCIPLE 6.2

All developments should enhance existing streets or create new streets that:

- Are primarily designed as places for people to walk, cycle, socialise and play. In streets needing to carry high levels of vehicle movement particular attention will need to be given to designing for people;
- Create a legible hierarchy of streets based on street character and form. New street layouts dominated by cul-de-sac type layouts will be resisted;
- Make walking and cycling more attractive and convenient for short trips than using the private motor car. Distances by foot and cycle should be shorter and more direct than by car;
- Use focal points, enclosure, setbacks, pressure vacuums, deflections and other townscape features to create visually interesting streets. Streets will be expected to be visually rich and create a sense of excitement and drama for people using them;
- Design in spaces within the street to facilitate social interaction. This could include pause points, small amenity spaces, seating and squares;
- Strengthen the green/blue infrastructure network of the borough and enhance wildlife and biodiversity. Trees, vegetation, gardens and open spaces should be used to create a strong, soft green character to streets. Development should not result in the loss of existing street trees and developers should look to include street trees wherever possible.
- Create animated and active streets by using fine grain development and designing strongly active frontages on the network of streets and other routes. Blank or poorly active frontages (including buildings that turn their side or backs onto the street) will be resisted;
- Do not contain overly engineered streets led by highway requirements. Street clutter should be avoided and street furniture placed with care to create attractive and vibrant spaces;
- Are safe places with the needs of vulnerable users considered by providing active frontages, good lighting, clear, obstacle free routes for pedestrians and designing in traffic calming measures to restrict vehicle speeds.
- Street furniture will be expected to be high quality that is of a scale and design that fits in with positive local character, particularly historical references.



OPEN SPACES

6.15 Together with the streets, open spaces form the structural framework on which the Royal Borough has been built. The borough has a diverse and high quality network of open spaces including natural and semi natural greenspaces, parks and gardens, playing fields, amenity green spaces, private gardens, rights of way, allotments, cemeteries and graveyards

Image 6.13: A pond set in a landscaped open space will not only drain a development but may also provide habitat for wildlife, be a recreational asset for the local community, act as a visual focal point in the local townscape and provide a space to help with physical and mental health and wellbeing.



and areas for water management including SUDS, rivers, streams and ponds. This network of blue and green spaces and links is especially valued by local residents and visitors and is an integral part of the character of the borough.

6.16 These open spaces are vitally important to provide space for nature and for the health and well-being of people who are living working, playing and visiting the Royal Borough. Very often these spaces have multifunctional roles further enhancing their value to communities.

6.17 The benefits of open space are wide ranging including improved health benefits, opportunities for active lifestyles, visual amenity, recreational activities, waste water management and food production.

6.18 The health and wellbeing benefits of people having access to nature and natural elements within their living and working spaces is well documented. The Council is committed to ensure that nature is integrated into new development. This will be particularly important in expanding and intensifying urban areas.

6.19 The council intends to provide more detailed guidance on incorporating biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure into developments through a separate companion Green & Blue Infrastructure SPD. Further information on open space provision in the Borough is set out in the council's Open Space Study (2019)⁸.

⁸ Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead – Open Space Study; 2019 https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200209/planning_policy/489/open_space_study



Image 6.14: High quality open spaces.

PRINCIPLE 6.3

1. Development proposals will be expected to provide high quality new open space at levels and types appropriate to their size and use type.
2. The role and function of public spaces must be clearly defined. Spaces should robustly connect with the existing network of streets and relate well to the wider context.
3. Public spaces should add to the existing blue and green infrastructure and include high levels of access to nature for people.
4. To be high quality, new public open spaces should:
 - Be based on existing local high quality landscape characteristics and appropriate in terms of character;
 - Contain generous amounts of green infrastructure, and where appropriate, blue infrastructure;
 - Be multifunctional and well connected;
 - Reduce environmental development impact;
 - Enhance biodiversity;
 - Be accessible and safe for all; and
 - Be functionally and visually attractive.



Adoption and maintenance of streets and open spaces

- 6.20 Adoption or an alternative management regime is critical to ensure the successful delivery and long term maintenance of new streets and open spaces within the borough.
- 6.21 The adoption of trees and SUDS features within the public realm can be difficult. Where conflicts arise the council does not consider it acceptable to revert to a lower design standard and, for example to omit street trees. The landscape character is one of the principle characteristics of the borough and applicants will need to work with the council to identify suitable management strategies, such as the use of maintenance companies or community land trusts in order to ensure the desired quality.
- 114 6.22 For further detail applicants should refer to the Borough's Highway Design Guide, which sets out further detail on adoption and highway design. The Open Space study also contains some information on the maintenance of open spaces. The matter will also be addressed in the Blue/Green Infrastructure SPD. In every case this would be secured as part of a planning application.

BLOCKS

- 6.23 Within the networks of streets and open spaces lie blocks of development. Well connected and distinct places rely on a clearly defined block structure. The size of blocks influences the degree of permeability. Larger blocks provide fewer opportunities for connections and often rely

on internal courtyards or cul de sacs. Small blocks create a higher degree of connectivity. The shape and size of blocks are an important consideration for larger developments.

PRINCIPLE 6.4

Large developments should incorporate blocks that:

- Create a clearly defined street network;
- Avoid deep blocks or overly large blocks that reduce connectivity and/or lead to the use of cul de sacs or rear courtyards;
- Reflect local characteristics;
- Consider micro-climate, such as prevailing wind direction and solar orientation

PLOTS

- 6.24 Plots are important elements in the character of an area. Their sizes, especially the widths along a street frontage are key determinants of the rhythm of buildings and spaces along a street, how active it will be and the grain of development in an area.
- 6.25 Streets with regular, clearly defined plot rhythms that are fine grain create the most interesting and attractive street scenes. Development that disrupts the rhythm of existing plots can create unattractive, inactive streetscenes and



reduce visual interest.(Fig 6.2). As a result, the council will generally resist plot amalgamation that results in the loss of historic plot rhythms and visual richness in the street scene.

Figure 6.2: Examples of acceptable and unacceptable plot rhythms.



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PRINCIPLE 6.5

1. All development will be expected to respond to the size, shape and rhythm of surrounding plot layouts. Plot layouts that are out of context with the surrounding character, will be resisted. In particular, the creation of large plots that are out of character with surrounding smaller grain plot patterns will not be supported.
2. Fine grain plot divisions will be supported and encouraged, particularly in intensifying urban areas. Loss of fine grain or historic plots layouts will generally be strongly resisted.
3. All plot boundaries will be expected to be clearly and strongly defined, especially those to the front of the site. Proposals with weak or absent plot definition will be resisted.

DEFINING PUBLIC/PRIVATE SPACE

- 6.26 It is important that the boundaries between public and private space are clearly defined. Poorly defined spaces create confusion as to ownership and use. This can lead to both public and private spaces becoming neglected, avoided and unattractive. This not only damages the streetscene, but also fosters a sense that the place is not safe.

Image 6.15: Traditional streets where public and private space is very clearly defined by walls and hedges.



Image 6.16: Poor quality developments in terms of private public space definition.



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PRINCIPLE 6.6

1. In all new developments the boundaries between public and private space need to be clearly defined by either planting, walls, railings or fencing. Boundary will need to be of good quality and enhance green infrastructure wherever possible. Around access points, boundary treatments should not obscure visibility for vehicles emerging from properties and will need to provide for adequate site lines.
2. Developments that leave space with unclear ownership will be resisted.

PARKING

1
1
6.27

6.27 Space to park cars places a significant burden on the design of development layouts. Balancing the expectations of residents, workers and visitors for adequate parking spaces near to properties with the need to ensure parking does not unduly impact on the street scene and safety and amenity of people is a key design consideration.

6.28 In order to create attractive and well functioning layouts it is important that the space to park vehicles is carefully considered at the early stages of the design process.

General standards

6.29 The Royal Borough is dominated by its countryside and tree assets and it will be expected that parking solutions will

reflect this green nature with significant use of soft green landscaping. Parking solutions involving unrelieved and large areas of hard surfacing will be resisted.

6.30 It is also expected that the quality of parking solutions will be very high. Use of high quality hard and soft landscaping to provide appealing and functional parking spaces will be required. Developers will be expected to use porous surfacing for parking areas and encouraged to use different materials and colours to delineate parking bays and road carriageways.

6.31 Parking can be provided in a number of ways:

- On plot;
- In communal mews/parking courts;
- On street.

6.32 The Council accepts that different parking layouts are likely to be required in different locations and developments may need a mix of solutions. Low density schemes, for instance will find it easier to predominantly accommodate parking on-plot whilst higher intensity schemes in more urban locations may need to use solutions involving undercrofts or on street provision. Whatever solution is used, it is important that it is high quality and that the development layout is not visually and functionally dominated by parked cars.





Image 6.17: Generous green infrastructure, varied and quality materials, attractive lighting and street furniture create a high quality parking layout.

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Image 6.18: On plot frontage parking that does not dominate the street scene and provides space for softening vegetation.



PRINCIPLE 6.7

1. Parking layouts should be high quality and designed to
 - Reflect the strong sylvan identity of the borough. All parking arrangements should be softened with generous soft landscaping to enhance the borough's green infrastructure networks. No design should group more than 3 residential parking spaces together without intervening landscaping unless an alternative, justified approach would provide a better quality contribution towards green infrastructure, useable amenity space and visual amenities.
 - Ensure developments are not functionally and visually dominated by cars;
 - Maintain activity in the street without adversely affecting the attractiveness of the streetscene;
 - Minimise impact on the amenity of residents;
 - Be safe, overlooked and convenient for users;
 - Be spaces that are visually and functionally attractive in the streetscene

2. Where undercroft parking forms part of the parking strategy, the council will expect:
 - Blank ground floor facades to be avoided where they face the street or other routes;
 - Entrances to residential units on upper floors to be prominent and stand out in the frontage;
 - First floor windows and balconies to provide surveillance and a sense of overlooking through the provision of large and frequently spaced windows and balconies.
 - Visible cycle parking areas and other activities at ground floor level to provide animation.





Image 6.19: Domination of frontages by car parking leading to a loss of enclosure and green character.



Image 6.20: A poor on street parking solution that does not delineate bays, create safe spaces for pedestrians or provide good levels of softening green infrastructure.



Parking space standards

- 6.33 6.28 For details on the number and sizes of parking spaces in proposed schemes developers should consult the borough's most recent Parking Strategy SPD https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/download/187/parking_strategy.

On-plot parking

- 6.34 On-plot parking can occur to the front, side or rear of dwellings. It may include integral or stand-alone garages and carports.
- 6.35 The council's preference is for parking to be to the side or rear where adverse impacts on the street scene and amenities can be more effectively managed. Where parking has to be provided to the front it is important that the visual impacts are mitigated as far as possible. Potential solutions include landscaping, staggered buildings, separation and use of boundary treatments. It is also important that buildings are set back far enough from the road to enable cars to be comfortably parked in front. Enclosure of front on-plot parking areas with vegetation will be strongly encouraged.
- 6.36 On-plot parking generally requires many crossovers onto the highway. In heavily treed landscapes the landscape screen along plot boundaries is a key element of local character. In such locations a single shared drive may be required from the street to serve dwellings with on plot parking.



PRINCIPLE 6.8

1. On-plot parking should generally be provided to the side or rear of the property or underground. Underground parking will be encouraged, provided the site is not subject to flood risk.
2. Where front of plot parking is proposed this should be enclosed with soft landscaping. For large parking areas, parking bays should also be regularly interspersed by significant landscaping areas. Front of plot parking should not:
 - Dominate the appearance of the plot or the street scene with extensive hard surfacing or multiple or over wide vehicle cross overs; or
 - Result in vehicles overhanging the public highway or lying hard up against habitable rooms
 - Consider micro-climate, such as prevailing wind direction and solar orientation

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Parking courts

- 6.37 Communal parking courts are private car parking areas, typically positioned either to the front or rear of dwellings. Parking courts are used for flats and intense terraced housing.
- 6.38 Parking courts should be designed as attractive, busy, safe spaces in their own right.



Image 6.21: A parking court with a variety of surface treatments and with soft landscaping enclosing the court and interspersing between clusters of parking bays.



Image 6.22: Hard and unattractive parking court with non-permeable surfaces and no green/blue infrastructure.

PRINCIPLE 6.9

1. Car parking courts should be safe and busy places that are overlooked and which accommodate a number of activities and uses.
2. Parking courts should be attractive places with high quality hard and soft landscaping.
3. Where parking courts are provided to the front of development they should not be dominant elements in the streetscene. The council will expect front parking courts on all types of development to be enclosed with strong soft landscape screens.
4. Where there are more than 5 parking bays on parking courts, the council will expect soft landscaping to intersperse every 3 bays on residential schemes and every 5 bays on all other types of development.
5. Dwellings with frontages onto streets should not have their main frontage to rear parking courts.

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On-street parking

- 6.39 If well designed, on-street parking can add to the vibrancy and variety of a street scene. The council's preference is for visitor and non-allocated parking to be provided on-street where possible and appropriate to local character.
- 6.40 Where on-street parking is proposed, then the street must be purposefully designed to accommodate it. Parking bays may accommodate parallel, perpendicular or angled spaces.



Image 6.23: A lack of space for on-street parking, no marking of parking bays and lack of softening landscaping creates an unattractive, poor street environment that is unsafe for pedestrians.

Image 6.24: Attractive on-street parking solutions in a landscaped setting.



PRINCIPLE 6.10

1. Where provided, on-street parking will be expected to be high quality in terms of layout and materials.
2. On-street parking should not dominate the street scene and must be integrated with other street features.
3. Positioning of on-street parking should not dominate adjoining plots and residential uses.
4. Street car parking will be expected to be placed in a landscaped street setting utilising hard and soft features of a very high quality. Where bays are provided, they should accommodate no more than a cluster of 3 cars.
5. Where the width of the road has been increased to accommodate on-street parking designers will be expected to employ features such as increasing building height, street trees or other planting to ensure that the street is well enclosed.

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BACKLAND DEVELOPMENT

- 6.41 New development that occurs at the back of plots and blocks can have a detrimental impact on character, amenity and functionality if not treated sensitively. Such development can result in the loss of trees and vegetation, affect the amenity of surrounding development and disrupt the rhythms and character of the street scene, particularly if access ways are wide.

- 6.42 It is therefore important that backland development remains subordinate to existing buildings on the street frontage and is not overly prominent in the character and appearance of the area. It is also important that backland development does not result in a net loss of green or blue infrastructure, and that it enhances biodiversity and connects well into the surrounding area.

PRINCIPLE 6.11

All backland development should be subordinate to the existing buildings on the street frontage and not overly prominent in the character and appearance of the area. It should ensure that:

- Does not harm the existing character of the local area;
- Relates positively to the existing layout and urban form;
- Maintains the quality of the environment and does not result in the loss of green or blue infrastructure;
- Creates or maintains satisfactory amenities for the occupiers of both the new and the existing surrounding properties.
- Does not result in unacceptable noise and disturbance for properties adjacent to accessways serving the backland development.





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7 Built Form



7 BUILT FORM



DENSITY

- 7.1 The Royal Borough has a limited supply of land for housing and thus it is important that this resource is used efficiently to deliver the new development that the borough needs. This will involve intensifying the urban fabric both in terms of the amount of built mass and amount of houses or bedrooms and commercial floorspace (density).
- 7.2 Building at higher density creates a more intense environment which can be visually and socially exciting. It can also allow for additional populations (residents, workers and visitors) to help maintain and support vital local facilities such as public transport systems, local shops and community centres.
- 7.3 Denser development at locations which are sustainably located will be encouraged provided it is very high quality, protects amenity, enhances the streetscene, is supported by generous green and blue infrastructure and allows people access to external space and nature.
- 7.4 The presence of green infrastructure is vital in denser developments and developers will be expected to provide a mix of green infrastructure which could include pocket parks, roof gardens, green walls, community gardens and communal amenity space. The council will be preparing a blue/green infrastructure SPD to provide further detail on this matter.

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PRINCIPLE 7.1

1. Housing development should be sustainable and seek to make effective use of land without:
 - Adversely impacting on the amenity of neighbours,
 - Creating unsatisfactory living conditions for future occupants of the new development; or
 - Compromising local character, the environment (including biodiversity) or the appearance of the area.”
2. All development will be expected to provide green infrastructure in accordance with the latest council standards. Provision of generous green infrastructure provision in higher intensity locations will be particularly important for visual amenity, biodiversity and human health and wellbeing.

USES AND MIX

- 7.5 Mixed and balanced communities are seen as being important in delivering the sustainable, very high quality places for the Royal Borough. A mix of uses helps to ensure that places are well-used and occupied at all times. Places with a mix of densities, uses, types, sizes and tenures are vibrant, convenient and feel safe to use. Development with homogenous use classes, densities, tenures and sizes should be avoided. However, it



is recognised that similarity of tenure may be acceptable in certain instances for specialist facilities e.g. bespoke housing for defined groups such as disabled, homeless and the elderly.

- 7.6 Residential developments over 100 net new units will be encouraged to incorporate a range of non-residential uses such as shops, schools, community, leisure and health facilities, as well as employment uses. Homogenous business parks without ancillary uses and facilities for workers should be avoided.
- 7.7 Designers are encouraged to discuss with the Borough at an early stage the specific nature of the mixes that a development site should look to deliver.

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PRINCIPLE 7.2

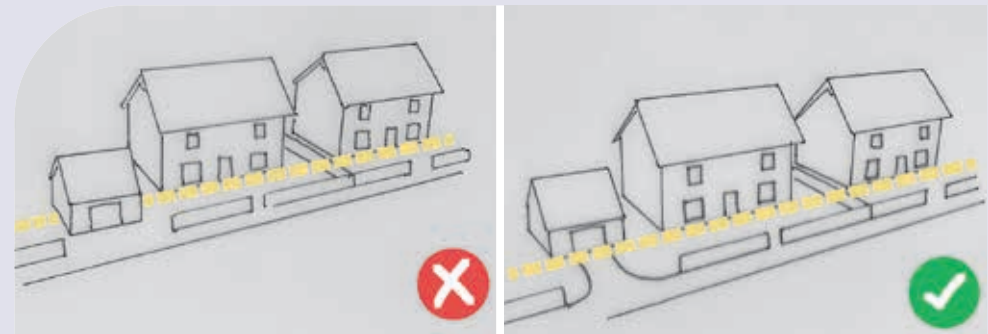
1. All small, medium and large development should contribute to the provision of balanced communities through the provision of a mix of uses, densities, forms, sizes and tenures.
2. Without good design justification, development which promotes very similar tenures and sizes across the development site will be resisted.
3. Larger development sites will also be expected to deliver a mix of uses.

BUILDING POSITIONING

Building lines

- 7.8 Front building lines help to define the street and the degree of street enclosure (Figure 7.1). Rear building lines are important in protecting neighbour amenity, especially at 2 storey levels. Where dwellings are detached or semidetached, building lines along the side walls can help maintain visual gaps and protect the amenities of neighbours.
- 7.9 The council will expect new developments to give careful consideration to all forms of setbacks.
- 7.10 Occasional variation from a common front building line may provide opportunities to add visual interest to townscapes. Developers may consider using this as a design feature where positive opportunities arise and no adverse impact on neighbour amenity would be likely to arise.

Figure 7.1: A common front building line.



PRINCIPLE 7.3

Building lines in new developments should complement the streetscene, avoid impacting on neighbour amenity and allow for suitable landscaping and open space. Setbacks that erode character, street enclosure and amenity of neighbours will be resisted.

SOLAR DESIGN AND CLIMATE CHANGE

7.11 The council strongly encourages designers to design buildings to minimise energy consumption by taking advantage of the sun's energy. This opportunity should be considered at the early stages of the design process.

7.12 Passive solar design involves orientating buildings to maximise the entry of low winter sun for passive solar heating. (Fig 7.2). Facades with generous fenestration with no overshadowing need to be orientated within 30 degrees of due south to gain from solar heating. When employing passive solar design designers will also need to consider how to maximise solar collection during winter and minimise overheating during summer months.

7.13 Active solar gain uses building facades and roofs to collect solar energy for conversion into electricity or hot water. Any aspect within 30 degrees due south is ideal (Fig 7.3). The council is generally supportive of active solar micro renewable technologies where they do not have a detrimental impact on sensitive historic environments and the appearance of the building and streetscenes.

7.14 Tree planting and ultimate tree heights and spreads will need to be taken into account to avoid future shading of solar panels. In some cases, this may mean solar panels will be inappropriate.

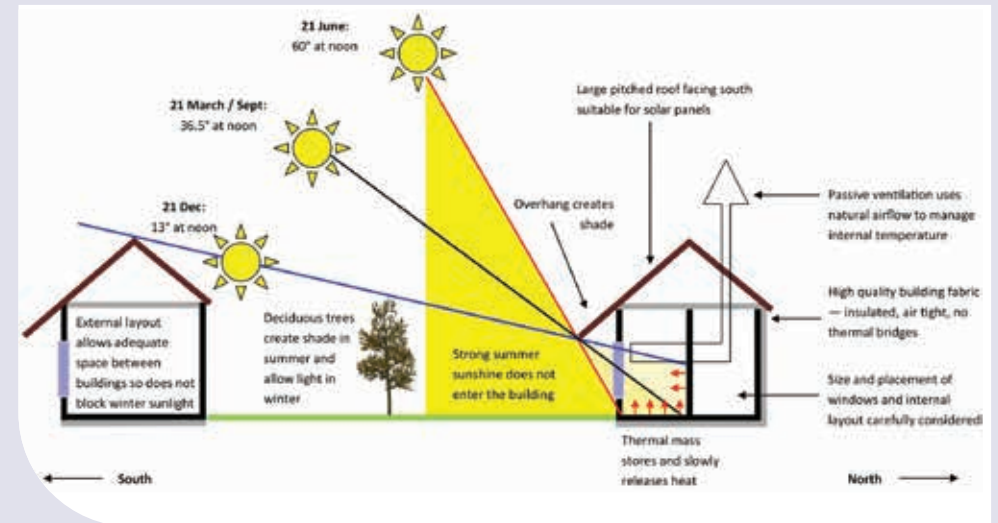
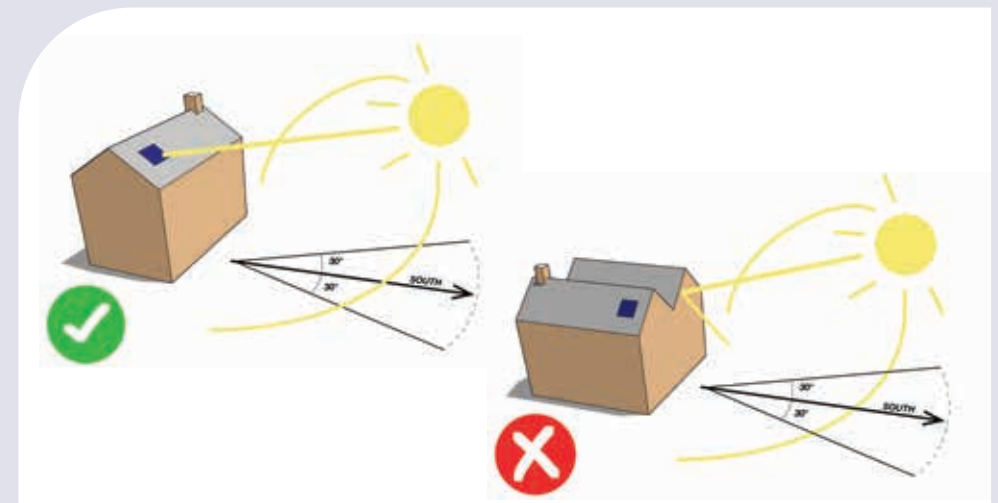


Figure 7.2: Principles of passive solar design.

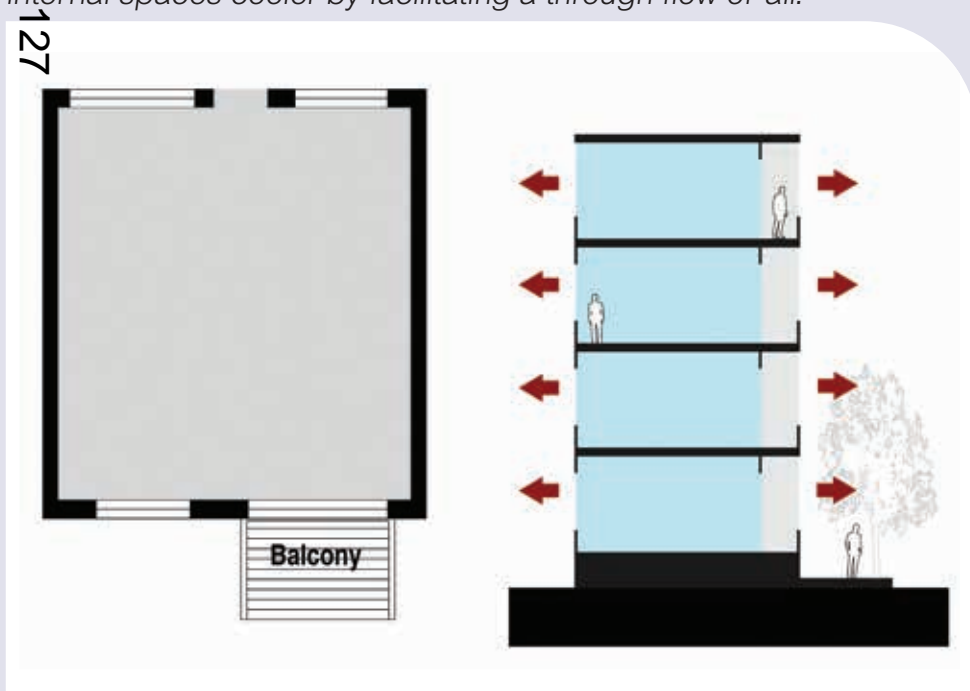
Figure 7.3: Active solar design principles.



Building cooling

- 7.15 With hotter summers likely to become more prevalent, it is important that buildings are not only warm in winter, but can be kept cool in summer without the need to resort to resource hungry air conditioning. Provision of dual aspect accommodation enables occupants to have some measure of control over the cooling of their internal spaces by allowing through currents of air (Figure 7.4). Without this ability to produce a refreshing through air currents, buildings can become stiflingly hot and the council seeks to resist this type of single aspect accommodation.

Figure 7.4: Dual aspect accommodation enable occupants to keep internal spaces cooler by facilitating a through flow of air.



PRINCIPLE 7.4

1. The Council will expect all new residential developments to make optimal use of natural light and warmth so as to minimise the use of energy for lighting and heating.
2. Proposals that fail to incorporate passive solar design will be resisted unless there is strong justification for not integrating it into a building or site.
3. Active solar systems will be supported where they do not have a detrimental effect on the character and visual appearance of the area and on neighbour amenities.
4. Developments that overshadow existing light dependant micro-renewable technologies (e.g. photovoltaics, and solar hot water panels) on neighbouring properties will be resisted.
5. Dual aspect accommodation will be strongly encouraged for all types of development to facilitate cooling of internal spaces through natural airflows. Single aspect development that relies on air conditioning to keep internal spaces cool will be strongly resisted.

BUILDING SCALE, MASSING AND FORM

Height

- 7.16 The height of a building has an important impact on the character and enclosure of a streetscene. Buildings that are too low in relation to the width of a street provide low levels of enclosure and unsatisfying street scenes, whilst buildings that are too high in relation to the width of a street create dark, overwhelmed spaces that do not feel human scale.



7.17 Buildings that are out of context with their neighbours in terms of height may also create unsatisfactory visual and physical relationships. There is also a greater likelihood of an overly tall building having adverse impacts on the amenity of occupiers of adjoining buildings and reducing the quality of adjoining public spaces through the loss of light and sunlight.

7.18 Building heights across the borough are generally low, with the majority of residential areas being 1 or 2 storeys in height (Image 7.1). This low height is a strong defining element in the character of these places and the council will seek to maintain this.

Image 7.1: Two storey suburban residential accommodation in the Royal Borough.



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7.19 Heights increase at town centres with notable tall buildings being Berkshire House in Maidenhead, Windsor Castle and the Ascot Racecourse Grandstand building. The borough is experiencing an increasing number of proposals for developments that are at a scale significantly above context height. This is particularly so for Maidenhead Town Centre. Such schemes have the potential to significantly alter the character of town centre areas.

7.20 An in depth analysis of the heights of buildings across the borough can be found in the Tall Buildings Technical and Baseline Study, 2019⁹. This provides an overview of the context building heights found in the towns and villages, where there are existing tall building landmarks and information on building heights above ordnance datum. The companion Tall Buildings Strategy¹⁰ identifies potential locations for tall buildings across the borough and within Maidenhead Town Centre.

7.21 Given the impact that tall buildings may potentially have on skylines, character, infrastructure and amenity developers will need to ensure that such development is designed carefully and is of exemplar quality. Developers should refer to the detailed guidance and information provided in the Tall Buildings Study, 2019 and the Tall Buildings SPD.

7.22 Tall buildings that reflect city scale development are likely to result in a significant increase in density. Unless

9 Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Tall Buildings Study - Tall Buildings Technical and Baseline Study, 2019

10 Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Tall Buildings Study - Tall Buildings Strategy, 2019



designed carefully and of exemplar quality, such city scale developments can have significant adverse impacts on character, amenity and infrastructure provision. Developers should refer to the separate Tall Buildings SPD for further detailed design guidance on such tall building proposals.

PRINCIPLE 7.5

1. The council will expect building heights to help enclose the street without overwhelming it. Upper floor set backs should be used where appropriate to maintain light to public and private realms.
2. Building height should not result in adverse impacts on:
 - Skylines and the character of the area;
 - The amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties; and
 - Public realm environments;
 - The natural environment.
3. When considering height of new development detailed attention should be paid to context height. Tall buildings may be acceptable in certain locations provided they are of exceptional quality and comply with the location and detailed design standards set out in the Tall Buildings Study 2019 and the Tall Buildings SPD.
4. Tall buildings will be expected to contribute at ground and upper levels to biodiversity and blue/green infrastructure networks and comply with the detailed standards set out in the Green and Blue Infrastructure SPD.



Image 7.2: Taller mixed use development in a tighter Royal Borough environment .

Scale & massing

7.23 The footprint that a building makes on the ground, along with its height, and the amount of space around it determines the mass of a building and the impact it has on the street scene.

7.24 Most existing areas in the borough have discernible patterns of massing and it would be expected that new development would reflect this pattern. Many locations are historic and contain fine grained development. Insertion of large floorplates and bulky developments into such patterns (for example offices, care homes and large format retail stores) generally create strong juxtapositions in bulk and massing and are unlikely to be acceptable because of their damaging impact on neighbour amenity and the quality of the streetscene. The following approaches may allow buildings with large scale and mass to be integrated into fine grain environments in a sensitive and high quality manner:

- Articulating the form of the building as illustrated in Figure 7.6;
- Breaking down single use buildings by introducing a mix of uses and/or locating active and more public uses on the ground floor to create active frontages;
- Drawing on local characteristics in terms of rhythm of facades, plot width, materials, details and building articulation.

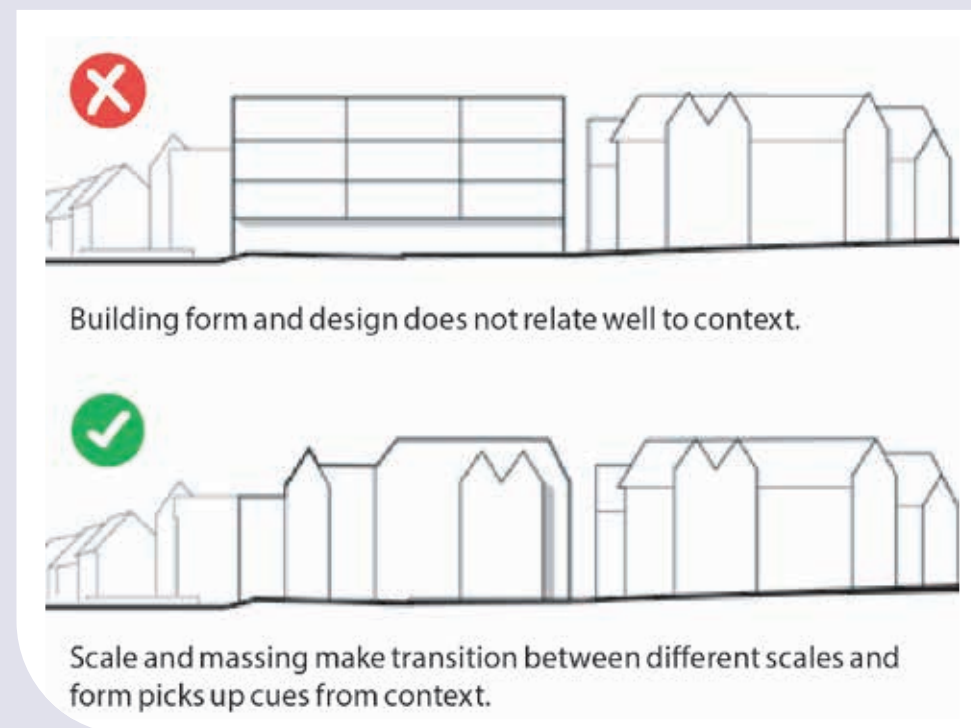


Figure 7.5: Integrating large bulky buildings.
Large bulky buildings can be broken down through either the massing or elevation treatment.

7.25 Significant differences in height and/or bulk between neighbouring buildings are difficult to integrate sensitively and avoid issues of overlooking, overshadowing, loss of privacy and being overbearing. The form and mass of buildings can be manipulated to ease the change and moderate the perceived scale of buildings.

PRINCIPLE 7.6

1. New development should reflect and integrate well with the spacing, heights, bulk, massing and building footprints of existing buildings, especially when these are local historic patterns.
2. The council will resist proposals where the bulk, scale and mass adversely impacts on the streetscene, local character and neighbour amenities.

Roofscapes

7.26 131 Rooflines, roof shapes and chimneys can have an important influence on the character of a street scene. Designers should consider this aspect of their proposals carefully and look to use the roofscapes they create to enhance buildings and townscapes. In higher intensity environments, developers will be expected to demonstrate that all opportunities for incorporating green infrastructure on roof spaces have been considered.

7.27 In the Royal Borough traditional residential roof forms are based on pitches with hips and gables with various forms of dormers. More contemporary styles have explored flat and curved roof forms.

7.28 Buildings that are overly deep were historically bridged with a double pitched roof (Figure 7.7). More contemporary approaches have been to propose a large element of flat roof behind short pitches to span the depth, often leaving unattractive and contrived roof forms.

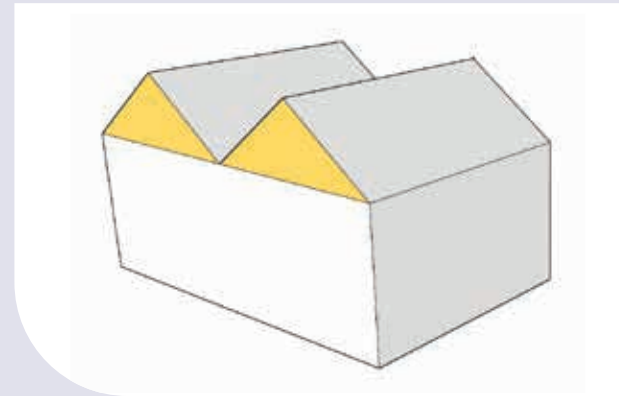


Figure 7.6: Historic double pitched form.

Image 7.3: Example of a good corner roofscape.





Image 7.4: A richness in new townscape can also be achieved through the use of strong roof rhythms along with some variation to provide visual interest.

ACTIVE FRONTAGES

- 7.29 There should be a strong relationship between the street and the buildings and places that frame it. Buildings should front onto the street and animate it with 'active' frontages to provide interest, life and vitality to public realm.

Image 7.5: Example of poor roof design with unattractive bridging flat roof section, awkward angles and poor treatment to top of bay window.

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PRINCIPLE 7.7

1. Proposals to introduce roof forms on development that diverges from the prevailing character will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the proposals would make a positive contribution to the streetscape.
2. Where a building has been designed to reflect traditional pitched roof forms, flat roofs should not be used as a means of spanning overly deep buildings.
3. Developers should use the opportunities presented by corner plots to introduce variations in height to create visual interest





Image 7.6: Example of a place with frequent doors and windows onto a commercial street.



Image 7.7: A quiet residential street with many doors and windows creating an active frontage.

7.30 Active frontages mean:

- Frequent doors & windows, with few blank walls;
- Narrow frontage buildings, giving vertical rhythm to the streetscene;

- Articulation of facades, with projections such as bays and porches;
- Key habitable rooms fronting onto the street so that lively internal uses are visible from the public realm.





Image 7.8: An inactive frontage with no openings at street level.

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MINIMUM INTERNAL SPACE STANDARDS

7.31 In 2015 the Government produced national internal space standards covering dwelling sizes and storage requirements¹¹. Developers will need to take these into account when designing new residential developments.

PRINCIPLE 7.8

As a minimum, the council will expect all new housing development to comply with the national internal space standards.

¹¹ DCLG; Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard; March 2015

¹² <http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/pages/lifetime-homes-principles.html>

¹³ https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/Building%20for%20Life%202012_0.pdf

ADAPTABLE DEVELOPMENT

7.32 The council considers it important that development is flexible enough to adapt to the changing needs of occupants over time. Building regulations give practical advice and technical criteria for designing housing that can meet the needs of people throughout their lives. Lessons may also be learnt from historic housing forms such as Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian houses, which have proved very adaptable to evolving lifestyles and modern living.

7.33 Adaptability may include the ability to combine or to subdivide the space to allow it to be occupied in a different manner and by different uses. Buildings must also be adaptable to climate change threats such as flooding, and therefore vulnerable buildings or developments, especially those that contribute to flooding, will be resisted.

7.34 The council encourages applicants to consider applying the Lifetime Homes Standards to residential developments¹². These standards look to create dwelling spaces that are accessible, adaptable and flexible. The council also encourages applicants to consider criteria for Building for Life¹³ in their development design schemes.

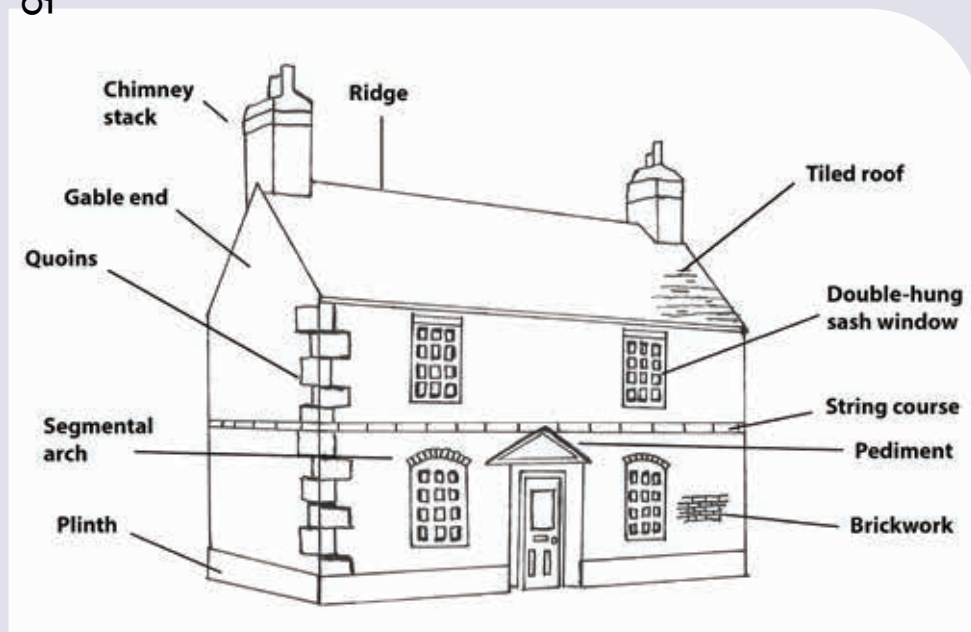
ARCHITECTURAL DETAILING

7.35 Architectural detailing has an important role to play in setting the quality of a development. It is also important in setting or re-inforcing the character of an area.



- 7.36 Architectural details include windows proportions and style, doors, chimneys, eave lines, cills, window to wall ratios, string courses, corners, fenestration, roof overhangs, colour, materials, gables & hips, pediments and brickwork styles (Figure 7.8).
- 7.37 The council will expect developments to exhibit high quality architecture which reinforces the design vision for the scheme. The design should be carefully considered to create a rational, coherent whole with a visually pleasing balance of proportions. The use of high quality materials will be an added important element in creating an architecturally satisfying development.

Figure 7.7: Pictorial glossary of architectural features to consider when designing built form.



- 7.38 Developments can take a contemporary or traditional approach, but should be sympathetic to local character or street scene. Attention to detail is vital to ensure that a development is successful. Buildings where the elements have been well put together will be pleasing to the eye, will last well and will complement the spaces they face, whatever the style of architecture.
- 7.39 Architectural honesty is expected. Pastiche designs that incorporate a mix of historic styles and detailing will generally be resisted as this typically creates a confused, poor quality visual appearance that does not specifically relate to any specific building style or age. If a traditional/vernacular language is being applied it is important that details (such as windows and doors) are convincing. Where designers seek to mix architectural styles to create a contemporary approach, the council will look for attention to detail and high quality with strong architectural justification for the proposals.

- 7.40 Developers will be expected to incorporate features into developments to encourage biodiversity. This could include bat, swift or other bird boxes.
- 7.41 The quality of new development can be spoilt by poor attention to detail. Wherever possible, designers should take cue from historic buildings and features in the area, as well as the natural environment. Careful consideration should be given to the design of and positioning of items such as roofs, windows, doors, porches, flues, gutters, pipes and other rainwater details, ironmongery and other decorative details.





Image 7.9: Poor architectural detailing on contemporary dwelling .

PRINCIPLE 7.9

1. Designers should use architectural detailing to create attractive buildings that positively contribute to the character and quality of an area.
2. Buildings that employ architectural detailing that is unattractive, low quality or is not honest or legible will be resisted.
3. Developers will be expected to incorporate features into building design to encourage biodiversity.

Image 7.10: Householder changes that have resulted in a loss of historic detailing on one half of the building.



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Windows

- 7.42 Windows are particularly important detailed features on a building. Designers will be expected to pay particular attention to window proportions, positioning, symmetry, frame and glazing bar thicknesses, recessing/projection and surrounding decoration (e.g brickwork arches). If a traditional vernacular design language is being applied it is important that details are as convincing, rather than paying lip service to tradition.
- 7.43 Window to wall ratios will also need to be considered. Public facing elevations that have large areas of blank wall with limited amounts of glazing will be unacceptable.



7.44 Ground windows that are distinctly taller than fenestration on upper floors help to maintain balance and harmony and create pleasing compositions. Additionally recessing windows, or enabling them to project beyond a façade provides an elevation with articulation and visual richness.

Image 7.11: A good example of a building where taller ground floor windows make for a pleasing composition.



Image 7.12: An example of good window design on modern development.

PRINCIPLE 7.10

1. Window design visible in the public realm should be high quality and create visually balanced and harmonious compositions. Poor quality window design will be resisted, especially where it will be visible in the street scene.
2. Large areas of blank wall with limited glazing should be avoided on elevations visible from the public realm.



Materials & colour

7.45 Materials and colour have a significant influence on people's perceptions of the quality of a building or place, as well as the durability of a building. They are also significant components in the local character of a place. The choice of colour and materials for a scheme should be derived from an analysis of local context, in order to ensure local distinctiveness is maintained or enhanced.

PRINCIPLE 7.11

The choice of materials must be carefully considered and justified. Proposals must demonstrate the following design principles have been met:

- Materials that need little maintenance to retain a quality appearance are preferred.
- Changes in material should have some other clearly identifiable role in the design and must not be random;
- Where materials and details are used to reflect traditional building forms or vernacular architecture, then they should be a genuine reflection of those traditions rather than 'stick-on' features. For instance, chimneys should relate to fireplaces, and weatherboarding should be timber;
- Using materials and colour to help distinguish special character areas within larger developments;
- Providing three dimensional detailing to add depth to the facade.





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8 Amenity



8 AMENITY



8.1 Residential amenity, in the form of light, privacy, outlook and provision of outdoor amenity space, is a detailed but important design matter that has a very strong influence on the quality of people's living environments. Natural light and access to outdoor amenity space are also important design matters for places where people work.

8.2 New developments should provide future occupiers with high quality amenities and not undermine the amenities of occupiers of neighbouring properties, especially where these are residential properties.

PRIVACY

8.3 It is important that people are able to enjoy a degree of privacy which makes them feel comfortable inside their dwellings and also able to enjoy their private outdoor spaces without feeling overlooked or overheard. Areas of particular sensitivity are habitable rooms, the first 3m of private space behind a rear elevation and balconies or terraces which are the sole source of private outside space for a home.

8.4 Developers will be expected to use one or more of the following design solutions to maintain privacy in new development and with neighbouring properties:

- **Distance**

A minimum distance of 20m is this Council's generally accepted guideline for there to be no material loss of privacy between the rear of two storey buildings directly facing each other (i.e. a back to back relationship). For two storey rear to side relationships it may be possible to reduce the separation distance to 15m.

However, there are instances where this minimum separation distance to maintain privacy may not be appropriate. Extra separation may be needed where there are significant changes in level between buildings, or where new development is greater than 2 storeys in height.

Equally, in more compact contexts (e.g. in centre of towns and villages, mews arrangements or infill plots), or where the development is single storey, it may not be appropriate to provide the conventional separation distances. Alternative design solutions to maintain privacy will be needed in such instances.



Table 8.1: Rule of thumb separation distances for residential development.

1 and 2 storeys:	Front to front across street: 10m
	Rear to rear of dwelling: 20m
	Flank wall to rear of dwelling: 12m
Above 2 storeys	Front to front across street: 15m
	Rear to rear of dwelling: 26m – this measurement increases to 30m where the relationship is between 2 storey houses and a block of flats above 2 storeys
	Flank wall to boundary: 2m
	Flank wall to rear of dwelling: 15m

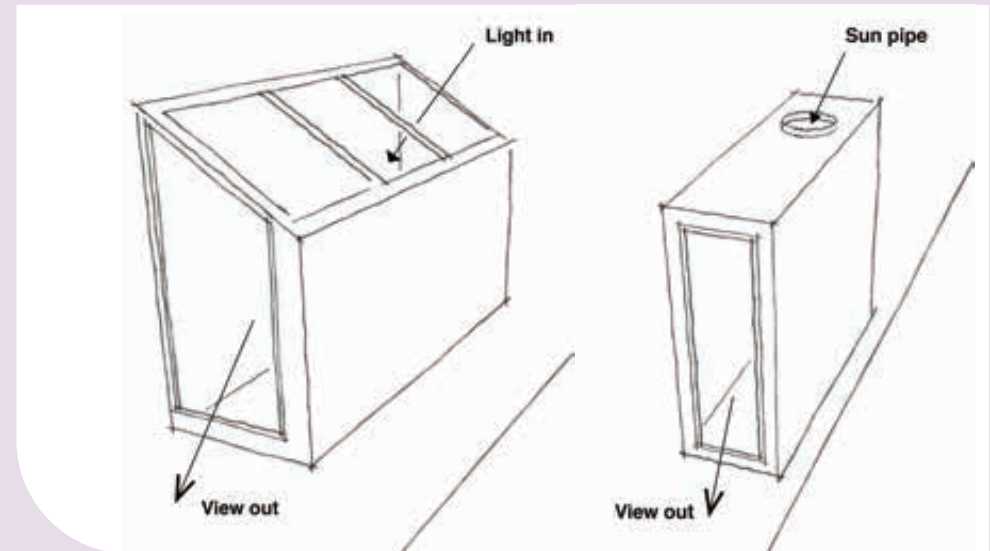


Figure 8.1: Oblique window solutions.

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- **Oblique angles**

Positioning of buildings and angled windows to create oblique views are useful tools to reduce overlooking (Fig 8.1). Where buildings are angled at more than 30 degrees from each other separation distances can often be reduced to 15m. Angled windows need to be designed to maintain adequate light levels to the rooms they serve.

- **Window design**

Roof lights, slit windows, high level windows and smaller vertically proportioned windows can be used to maintain privacy as well as provide adequate internal light levels (Figure 8.2). However, it is important to ensure that the design and positioning of windows does not compromise the need for light.

Figure 8.2: High level windows.

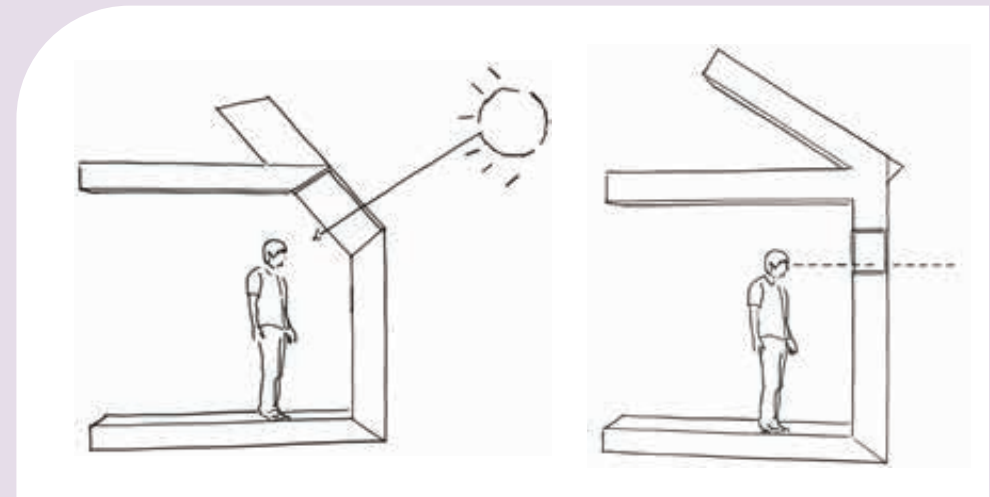




Image 8.1:
Domestic kitchen lit by slit
windows and rooflights.

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- **Obscure glazing**

Obscure glazing will be appropriate for bathrooms and exceptionally can be considered for other rooms provided that there is clear glazing to another window in the room which does not overlook another property. Obscure glazing will not be appropriate to habitable rooms.

- **Screening**

Provided it does not create significant overshadowing small ground floor extensions, walls, fencing, hedges, trees and general landscaping can be used to provide screening to private spaces.

- **Gardens**

Use of small front gardens can help maintain privacy for habitable rooms facing the street (Figure 8.3).

- **Room layout**

Designing the internal layout to concentrate habitable rooms away from adjacent properties where overlooking may be an issue.

Figure 8.3: Screening provided by an extension and wall.

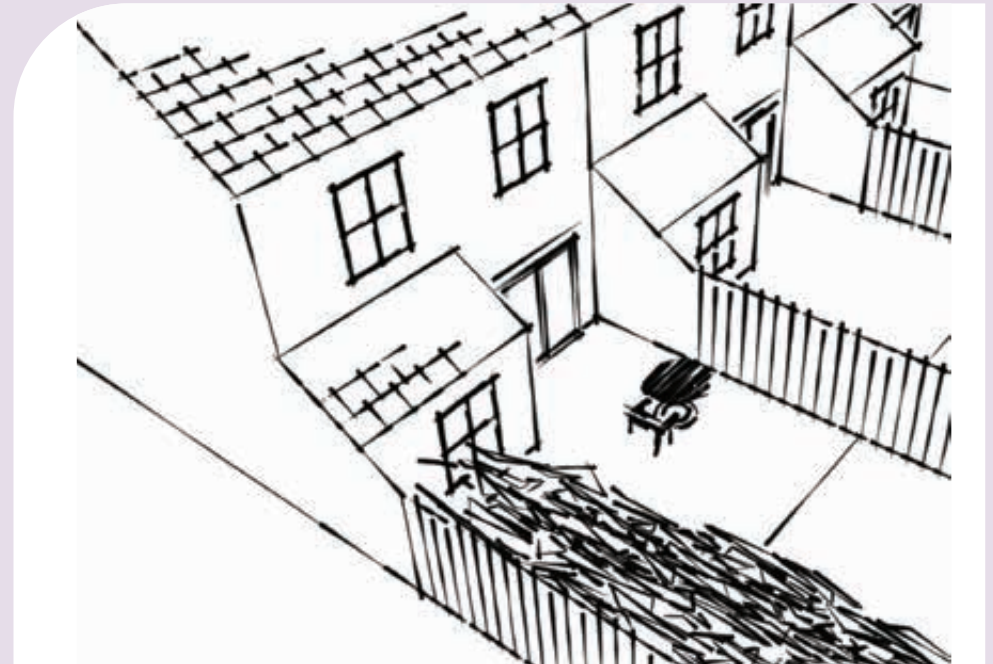




Image 8.2: Small enclosed front gardens providing privacy to habitable rooms.

143 PRINCIPLE 8.1

1. All new development incorporating residential use should be provided with a reasonable degree of visual privacy to habitable rooms and sensitive outdoor amenity spaces using one or more of the following tools:
 - Distance separation;
 - Window design;
 - Obscure glazing;
 - Screening;
 - Front gardens;
 - Room layout.
2. Developments which provide a poor level of privacy for their occupants, or which have a significant adverse effect on the privacy of neighbouring properties will be resisted.

OUTLOOK

- 8.5 Although there is no right to a view, residents should be able to enjoy good quality outlook to the external environment from habitable rooms, without adjacent buildings, walls, parked vehicles or storage materials being overbearing or visually intrusive. Outlook from the home to exterior spaces keep people in touch with their wider surroundings, the prevailing weather and the rhythm of the day and seasons. Contact with nature and the social life of the community people live in has been shown to be important in maintaining human health and mental wellbeing.
- 8.6 A poor outlook relationship is caused when the height and bulk of buildings, walls & fences or the proximity of parked vehicles, dense high vegetation or storage materials, significantly dominate the outlook of a habitable room or area. Topographical changes can also create overbearing relationships and poor outlooks.
- 8.7 Poor outlook is also created when rooms are only served by:
 - obscurely glazed windows;
 - roof lights that only provide a small sky vista;
 - Small oblique windows.

Such design solutions to provide outlook are considered inadequate and should be avoided.



PRINCIPLE 8.2

1. All habitable rooms in new residential development should maintain at least one main window with an adequate outlook to external spaces. In order to maintain visual interest and light the outlook should be attractive and not dominated by overbearing or visually intrusive man-made features such as blank walls, fences or parked cars.

DAYLIGHT AND SUNLIGHT

- 8.8 Access to warm, sunny places are important to people's health and wellbeing. Daylight and sunlight animate and enhance people's enjoyment of interior spaces. Good natural light reduces the energy needed to provide light for everyday activities, while controlled sun penetration can also help to meet part of the winter heating requirement. Public spaces that are well lit by natural light and sunny tend to be well used, encouraging people to spend time outdoors and enhancing community activity and interaction.
- 8.9 Conversely, spaces that are poorly lit by natural light and are not sunny discourage use and encourage higher levels of energy consumption. Where people have to reside in spaces with poor or no natural light or sun for long periods of time, this can be injurious to mental health and physical wellbeing.

Daylight access to dwellings

- 8.10 It is important that habitable rooms in people's homes are well lit by natural daylight to facilitate a range of daily activities. Building Regulation requirements will set the standards for internal illuminations in new dwellings but it is also important that designers consider lighting of outdoor spaces and the impact of the development on the amount of daylight reaching habitable rooms and external spaces of neighbouring dwellings.
- 8.11 Design solutions to achieve good quality internal lighting of new homes include:
 - providing glazing areas in habitable rooms that is not less than 20% of internal floor area of room;
 - dual aspect dwellings;
 - Ensure that habitable rooms comply with current/up to date BRE guidance on daylighting, currently contained in 'Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice'.
- 8.12 One or all of these solutions may be required to ensure people will have comfortable light levels in their habitable rooms.
- 8.13 Potential design solutions to prevent material loss of daylight to neighbouring windows and overshadowing of habitable external spaces include:
 - Applying a 25 degree vertical angle from a point 2 m above the floor at the façade is not obstructed. (Fig 8.4). This typically results in separation distances of 10m;



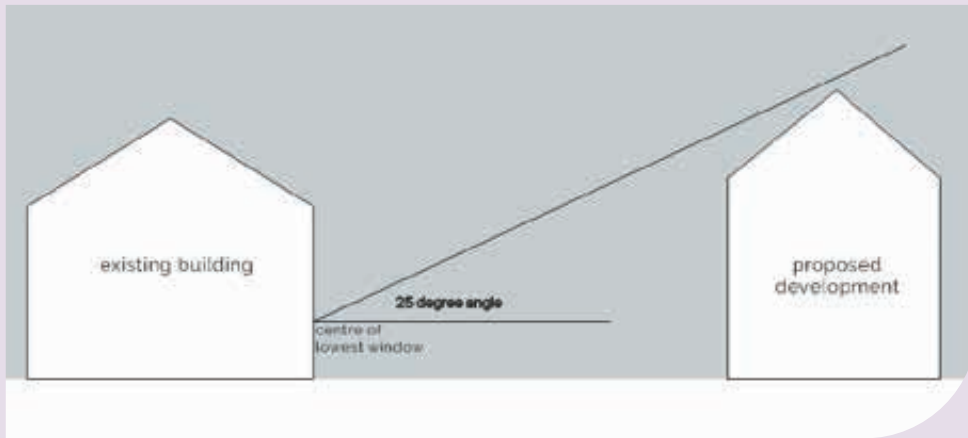
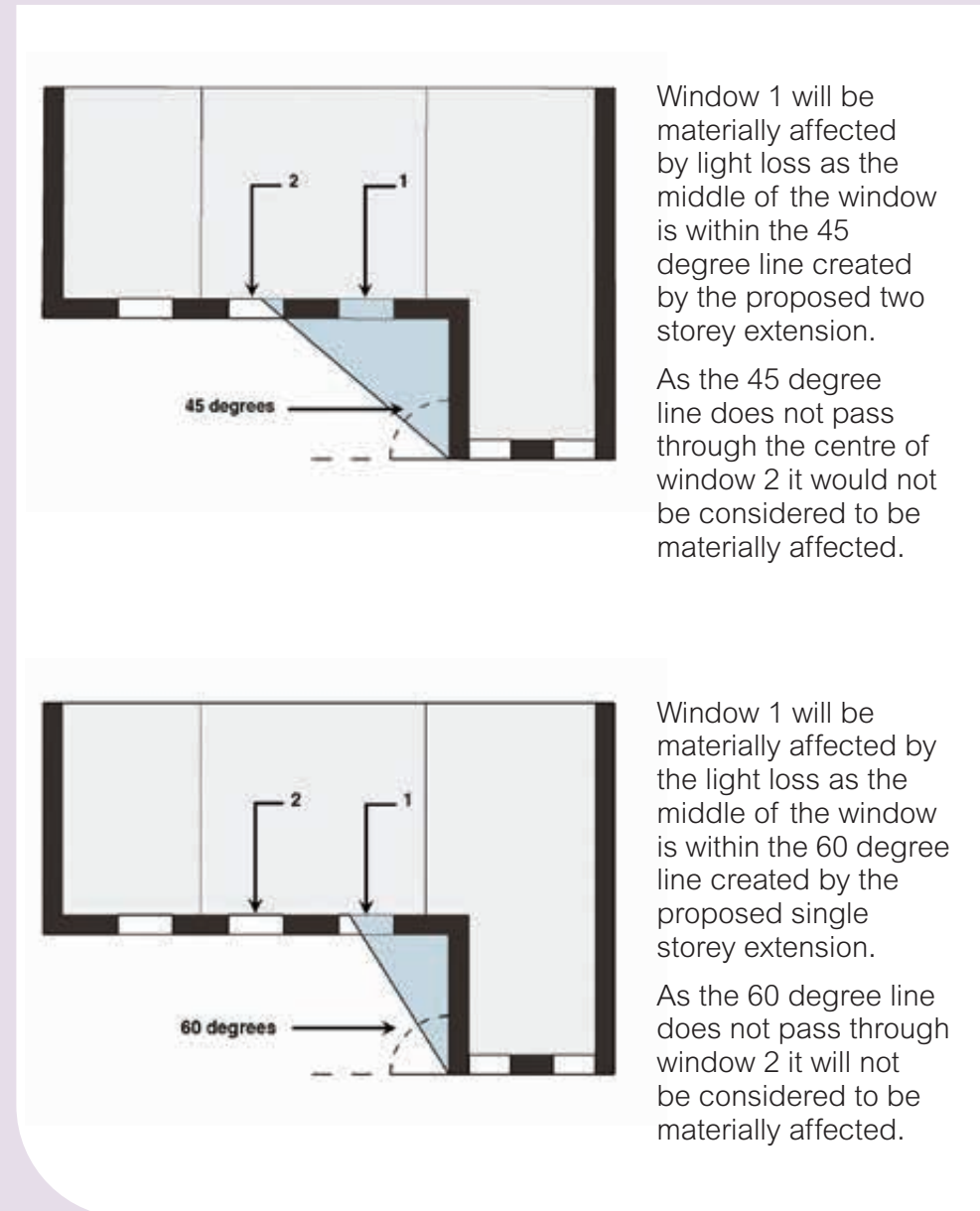


Figure 8.4: The 25 Degree Rule (Source: BRE Guide to Daylighting & Sunlighting)

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- Avoiding obstruction to light by ensuring that the centre of an existing window serving a habitable room does not fall within 45 degrees of a line drawn from the edge of an extension or a new development (Fig 8.5).

The 45 degree rule is applicable to 2 storey extensions. A 60 degree rule is typically applied by this authority for single storey extensions. Designers should note that the 45/60 degree rule is only an indicator and the acceptability of a development proposal will also be dependent on ground levels on site and the orientation of buildings.



Window 1 will be materially affected by light loss as the middle of the window is within the 45 degree line created by the proposed two storey extension.

As the 45 degree line does not pass through the centre of window 2 it would not be considered to be materially affected.

Window 1 will be materially affected by the light loss as the middle of the window is within the 60 degree line created by the proposed single storey extension.

As the 60 degree line does not pass through window 2 it will not be considered to be materially affected.

Fig 8.5: The 45 Degree Rule (Source: BRE Guide to Daylighting & Sunlighting)



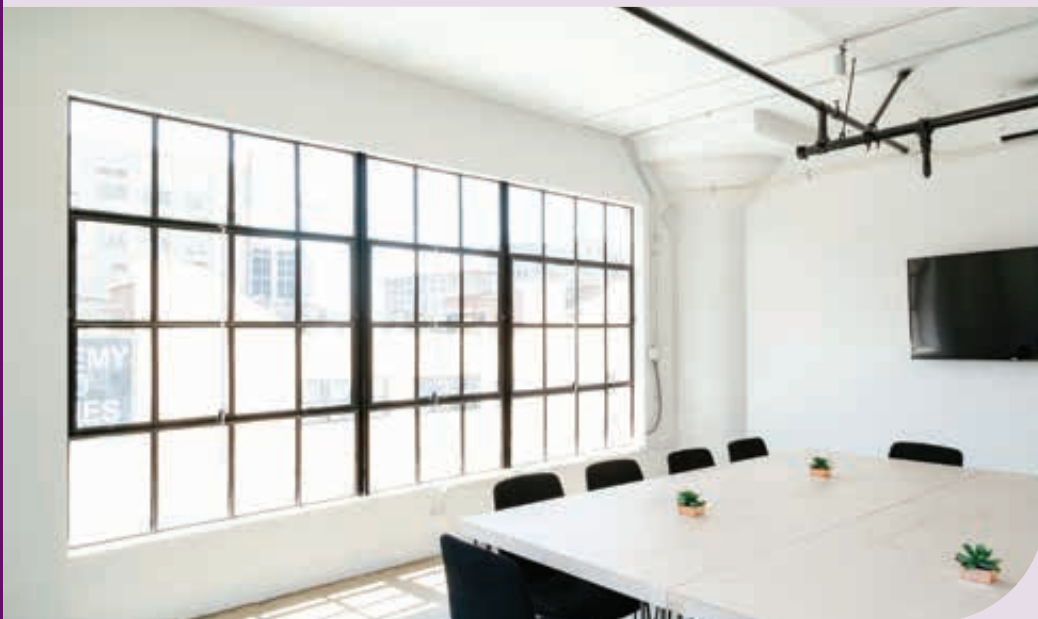


Image 8.3: An employment building with good natural light to internal spaces

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Daylight access for workplaces

- 8.14 Many people spend much of their daytime at work. Where these places have little or no natural light people are working during much of the day under artificial lights and are separated from natural light rhythms and conditions. Not only is this energy inefficient, the lack of natural light can cause negative health effects.
- 8.15 It is therefore important that designers consider the provision of natural light in workplaces and seek to maximise this as far as possible.

Sunlight access

- 8.16 Provided it can be controlled, people love sunlight and likewise, its absence has a damaging effect. Neighbours will often be particularly distressed if new development threatens their existing private sunny spaces.
- 8.17 Accordingly, when drawing up their plans developers should consider the following sunlight needs:
- sun access for habitable indoor spaces of both new and existing neighbouring development. The needs for people who spend a large proportion of their day indoors, (including older people), will require particular consideration.
 - Sun access to habitable residential outdoor spaces of both new and existing neighbouring development;
 - Provision or maintenance of good sunlight to public realm social spaces and focal points such as squares, pause points, gardens and pocket parks.
- 8.18 Potential design solutions to provide good quality solar access include:
- Providing for direct sunlight to enter at least one habitable room for part of the day through-out the year. Dual aspect dwellings will assist with this;



- Providing private external spaces (patios, gardens, balconies, roof terraces) that receive direct sunlight for part of the day in the period between 1st April and 30th September;
- Providing public realm social focal point spaces with direct sunlight for a good part of the day in the period between 1st April and 30th September.

8.19 Sunlight has a significant impact on thermal comfort and energy consumption. In winter it can make an important contribution to heating, but excessive solar gain can cause discomfort in summer. Careful design can control sunlight to maximise the benefits of solar access whilst minimising overheating. Further information on passive and active solar design is contained in Chapter 7.

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8.20

Where there is doubt about the quality of daylight or sunlight access to new dwellings and public realm focal point spaces, or the maintenance of light access to existing neighbouring development, developers may be required to produce plans illustrating sky components and shadow paths at the winter solstice and spring/autumn equinox.

PRINCIPLE 8.3

1. The occupants of new dwellings should be provided with good quality daylight and sun access levels to habitable internal rooms and external spaces.
2. Dual aspect dwellings are strongly encouraged. Where single aspect dwellings are proposed, developers should demonstrate how good levels of ventilation, daylight and sun access will be provided to habitable spaces. Single aspect residential units that are north facing should be avoided.
3. New public realm social focal point spaces should be provided with direct sunlight for a good part of the day in the period between 1st April and 30th September.
4. Developments should not result in occupants of neighbouring dwellings or nearby public realm social spaces suffering from a material loss of daylight and sun access.



PRIVATE OUTDOOR AMENITY SPACE

Residential uses

- 8.21 This council considers the provision of high quality, private open space to serve homes to be a necessity. This form of space serves a number of important household functions including allowing people contact with nature as part of their home life, clothes drying, growing food and pursuing domestic leisure activities. It is considered vitally important for people's physical and mental wellbeing.
- 8.22 In the context of increasing intensification of residential development and the specification of minimum internal space standards, it is important to ensure that this private outdoor amenity space is provided in adequate amounts and is of a high quality. Accordingly, the council has established minimum space standards for the provision of external private amenity space in all forms of property. Developers will be encouraged to exceed these standards where the site allows for this. Where developments are not able to meet the minimal outdoor amenity space standards the council may consider accepting lower standards provided this is robustly justified and it can satisfy itself that the outdoor amenity space provided will be of a very high quality.
- 8.23 The amount of garden space (including front, side and rear spaces) may vary widely but new houses must provide for a minimum amount of private amenity space in the form of gardens. The minimum amount will vary depending on the orientation of the house. Homes with private amenity spaces

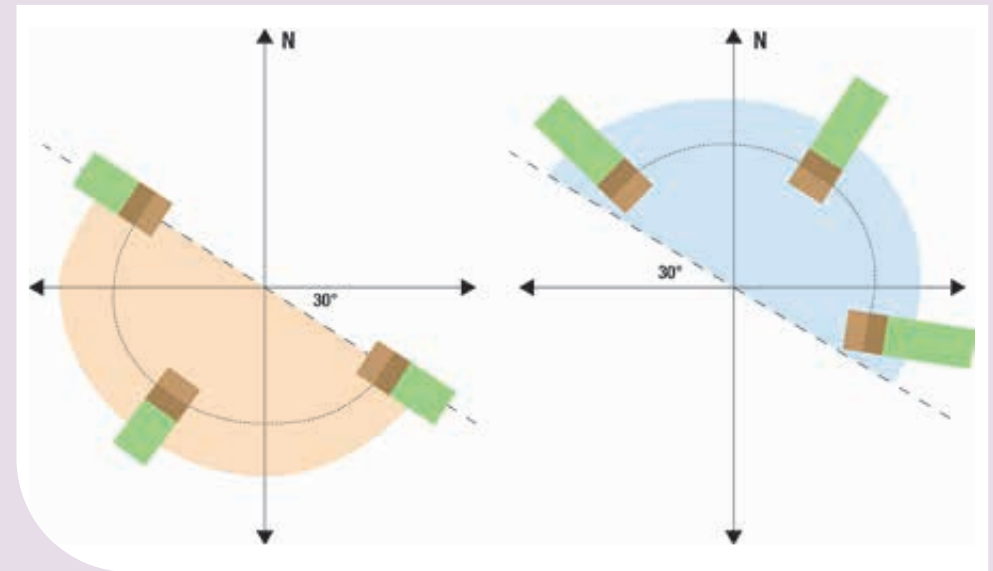


Fig 8.6: Differing garden space requirements depending on orientation

facing predominantly north will need to provide larger private gardens than those facing the sun with a predominantly southern orientation (Figure 8.6 & Table 8.2).

- 8.24 As a general rule, front gardens will not count towards private amenity space as they tend to be too small and do not provide the appropriate level of privacy. In lower density areas, where houses are set back within their plots and well screened, front gardens may contribute towards private amenity.
- 8.25 Gardens should be of sufficient size to include trees and other structural planting, which at maturity will not adversely affect the reasonable enjoyment of the property by future occupiers.

PRINCIPLE 8.4

Table 8.2: Minimum outdoor amenity space size standards for houses (sqm).

House size	Minimum standard/unit for outdoor amenity spaces facing predominantly south (sqm)	Minimum standard/unit for outdoor amenity spaces facing predominantly north (sqm)
1 bed	40	50
2/3 beds	55	65
4+ beds	70	85

Private outdoor garden spaces should:

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- Be roughly rectangular in shape;
- Screened by fences or walls to provide privacy;
- Receive direct sunlight;
- Able to accommodate bin and cycle storage;
- Not be heavily overshadowed by trees and tall hedges;
- Directly accessible from habitable rooms;
- Have level access from the home.

Garden spaces that are separated from the dwellings they serve will generally be resisted.

Outdoor amenity space standards for flats & maisonettes

- 8.26 Provision of high quality outdoor amenity space on flatted developments is very important, especially in tight urban environments. The council expects flatted developments to provide both private and communal amenity space.
- 8.27 Private space can take the form of small contiguous gardens for ground floor flats and private balconies for flats above ground. Balcony spaces should be large enough to accommodate chairs, tables, planting areas and space for drying of clothes (Figure 8.7). To encourage use, private spaces should provide privacy for occupants, be large enough to accommodate outdoor activities and be located in sunny, quiet positions with a good outlook. Screens, recesses and orientation are potential design solutions to provide for privacy.

Fig 8.7: Minimal standards for private outdoor amenity space in flats.



8.28 Residential care homes will be expected to provide private amenity space at the same level as flatted developments.

PRINCIPLE 8.5

1. Flatted developments will be expected to provide high quality private outdoor amenity space for each unit.
2. All ground floor flats should have access to a well-defined private area of amenity space which:
 - a. Directly adjoins and is accessible from the flat;
 - b. Has a minimum depth of 3m;
 - c. Is as wide as the dwelling it serves;
 - d. Is clearly identified by boundary treatments, including railings, low wall or a hedge;
 - e. Has a privacy screen between dwellings.
3. Unless conservation, privacy or heritage issues negate against the use of balconies, all flats above ground floor should be provided with balconies which:
 - a. Are a minimum of 2m deep and are wider than their depth;
 - b. Provide a minimum floor area of 5 sqm metres for 1-2 person homes and an extra 1 sqm for each additional occupant;
 - c. Provide for privacy;
 - d. Are not overshadowed and have good access to sunlight;
 - e. Have a good outlook;
 - f. Are well related to internal accommodation;
 - g. Be well related to the architecture of the building on which they are placed.
4. Predominantly north facing balconies with no access to sunlight during the year, or balconies in close proximity to adjoining main roads which will be materially affected by noise and air pollution will not be considered to have fulfilled the obligation to provide high quality private outdoor amenity space for flat occupants.

8.29 Communal gardens provide the opportunity to provide adequate space for sustainable tree planting. Designers should provide attractive communal amenity space which serves all residents. All too often, communal amenity spaces in flatted developments become neglected, unused low

quality spaces which serve flat occupants poorly and make little positive contribution to townscapes.

8.30 Communal space may include balconies, roof terraces, podiums and ground floor gardens. It is vital that such spaces



benefit from good levels of sunshine and microclimate (including air quality) and are placed on the quiet side of the building wherever possible.

- 8.31 It is also important that all types of outdoor amenity space in flatted developments relate well to the architecture of the building, play a visually positive role in the street scene and allow for informal opportunities for play. Private and communal outdoor space should not compromise the privacy of adjoining dwellings.

Image 8.4: Roof top courtyard with community garden for food production.

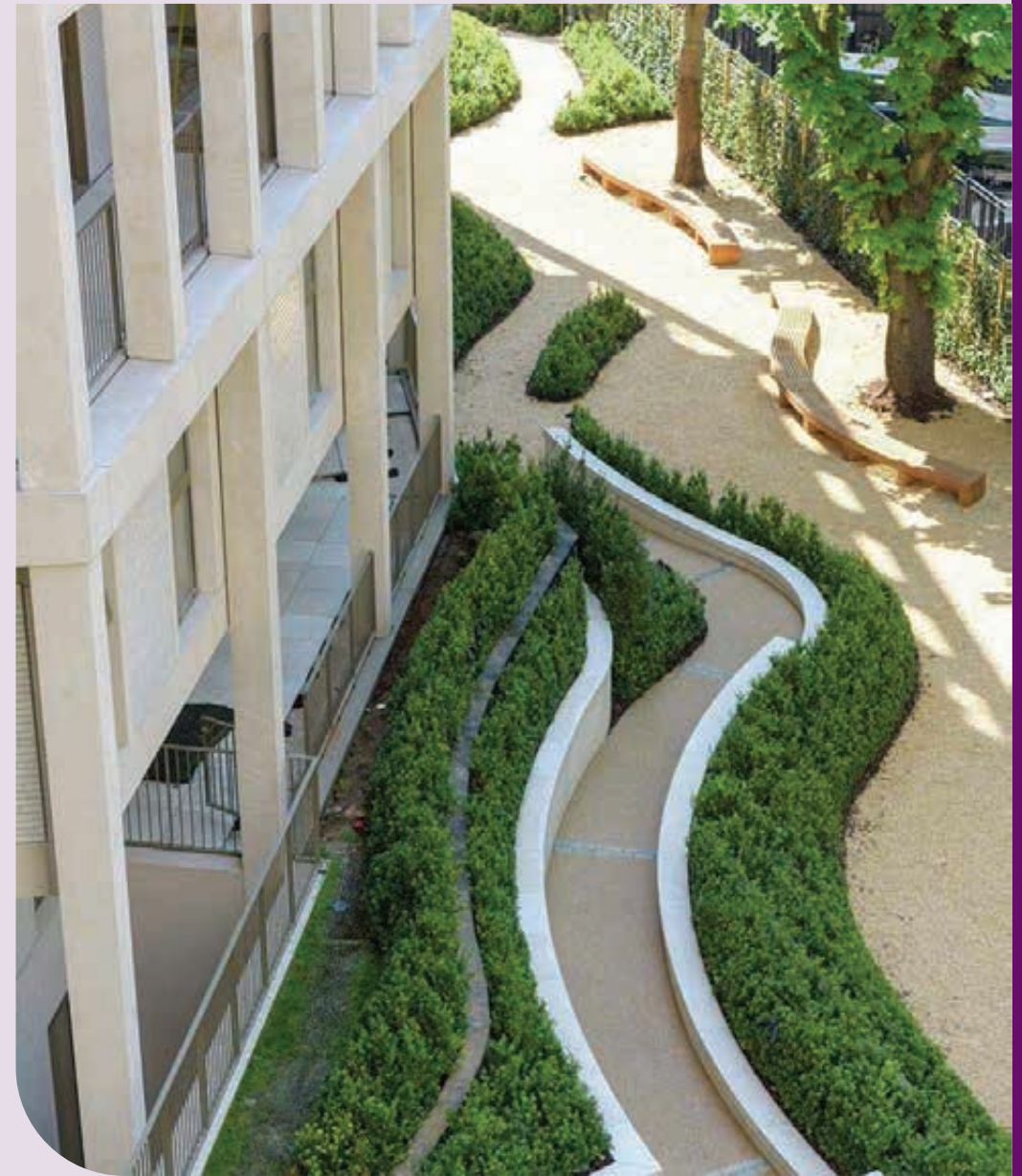


Image 8.5: A high density scheme with communal space at upper levels and balcony provision.

PRINCIPLE 8.6

1. A minimum of 10 sqm of communal outdoor amenity space per flat must be provided.
2. Communal outdoor amenity space will be expected to be:
 - a. Connected to the building;
 - b. Easily accessible to all residents;
 - c. Screened from public view;
 - d. Quiet and free of vehicles;
 - e. Located to receive sunlight for a substantial part of the day and to have a good microclimate;
 - f. Actively overlooked to provide surveillance and security;
 - g. Dominated by planting; and
 - h. Allow for sustainable tree planting.

Amenity space for employment uses

- 8.32 Provision of outdoor amenity space for workers to use at lunchtime is important, particularly where workplaces are on estates with limited or no access to public open space, water features and nature.



*Image 8.6:
Sunny outdoor
amenity space for
workers with green
infrastructure and
good facilities for
sitting and eating
outside.*

PRINCIPLE 8.7

1. High quality outdoor amenity space should be provided on all new employment development over 1000 sqm.
2. Employment outdoor amenity space will be expected to be:
 - Purpose built and well designed;
 - Provide space for workers to sit and eat outside in a green infrastructure setting;
 - Quiet and free of vehicles;
 - Located to receive sunlight for a substantial part of the day and to have a good microclimate;
 - Well integrated into the design of the building and site;
 - Actively overlooked to provide surveillance and security; and
 - Be accessible to all.



9 Curtilage & utility development



9 CURTILAGE & UTILITY DEVELOPMENT



BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

- 9.1 Boundary treatments are important in helping to define defensible space, establishing the boundaries between public and private space and setting the character of a street.
- 9.2 The cumulative effect of boundary treatments in a street is a very significant component of street character and quality. Good quality boundary treatments define the pattern of plots and frontages along a street and create visual interest through the provision of rhythm and variety of materials and form.
- 9.3 Poor quality boundary treatments erode street character and quality and can create environments that feel unsafe. This can result from:
- A lack of strong front and side boundary treatments;
 - Absence, or very weakly present boundary treatments;
 - Partial removal of boundary treatment to accommodate parking;
 - Erosion of existing boundary treatments by the insertion of ill-considered new styles of treatments that are out of keeping;
 - Long unbroken stretches of high, blank walls or fences; and



Image 9.1: Boundary treatments helping to define the plots and create a strong unified character.

- Use of poor quality boundary treatments materials (e.g. close boarded fencing) fronting public realm areas.
- Boundary treatments that obscure visibility for vehicles emerging from properties.



9.4 Given the importance of boundary treatments in setting the quality of a development and streetscene the council will expect developers to consider this aspect of their designs very carefully and provide a high quality design response. Particular consideration will need to be given to boundaries which are visible in the public realm. Figure 9.1 illustrates the typology of boundary treatments to public realm areas that the designers should draw upon when developing their schemes.

9.5 Where existing boundary treatments make a consistent and positive contribution to the character of the street, this design should be adhered to.

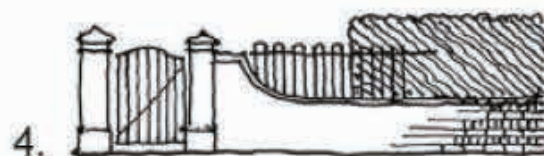
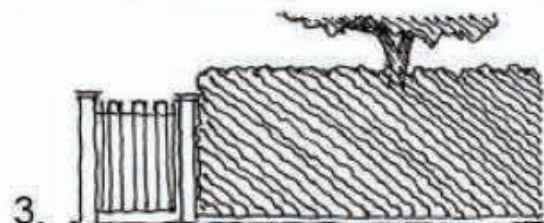
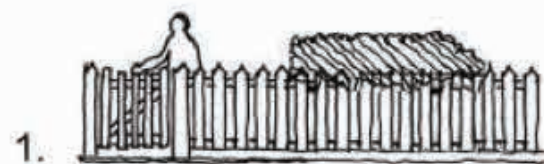
Image 9.2: Inactive, unrelieved boundary treatment that deadens the street scene.



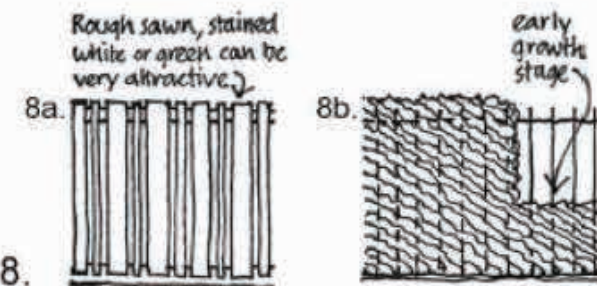
PRINCIPLE 9.1

1. All boundary treatments will be expected to be high quality, reflect the positive character of the surrounding context and draw upon local design references, including historical references.
2. Treatments to the public realm will be expected to be visually interesting and very high quality.
3. Long lengths of unrelieved hard boundary treatments will be resisted. Wooden shiplap or panel fencing will be discouraged when visible from the public realm.
4. Boundary treatments should be safe and not obscure visibility for vehicles emerging from properties.

Figure 9.1: Potentially acceptable forms of boundary treatments to public realm areas



1. **Picket fence:** usually in village setting. Matching timber gate
2. **Low wall with hedge:** usually in suburban contexts
3. **Full height hedge:** usually in well established suburban settings. Often associated with extensive tree planting, creating a predominantly 'arcadian' streetscape. Timber or railing gates.
4. **Wall with railings and/or hedge:** usually with substantial gate piers and the wall 'swept' to full height at the piers. Mainly in towns or well established suburbs although sometimes at a large house or village.
5. **Full height wall:** usually with substantial gate piers and intermediate piers. Brick (English garden wall bond is appropriate) with copings. Mainly in towns or well established suburbs.
6. **Full height railings:** a 'formal' boundary usually appropriate in town contexts.
7. **Full height close boarded fence:** normally more appropriate as side or rear boundary. This can present a 'dead' frontage to a streetscape.
8. **Some other design solutions:** (a) thick and thin alternate open boarded fence. Visually more attractive and less wind resistant than close boarded full height fencing and less formal than railings. (b) railings set behind hedge planting to give a softer appearance.



PROVISION FOR CYCLES & BINS

Waste and recycling storage

- 9.6 It is important that the design of bin storage is considered at an early stage in the design process and that a high quality response is achieved.
- 9.8 The Royal Borough currently has a weekly domestic waste collection service.
- 9.8 It is important that the waste storage requirements are handled in purpose built spaces that are sufficient in size, easily accessible both to residents and waste and recycling collection vehicles and which do not generate offensive smells or negatively impact on street scenes. The Borough's specific standards for waste facilities for all types of uses, including flats or care homes are set out in the council's current waste management advice¹⁴.
- 9.9 The council's strong preference is for refuse storage areas to be located to the rear or side of dwellings, including apartment buildings, where they are invisible in the public realm, but still easily accessible for refuse and recycling collection vehicles. Bin stores in front of dwellings or flats, even when well screened, have a poor negative visual impact on the street.
- 9.10 Early discussion with the LPA during pre-application discussions is recommended so that waste management is considered as an integral part of the design process.

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Image 9.3: Poor quality waste storage provision that dominates the street scene and erodes its quality.

Cycle storage

- 9.11 This council actively supports the development of cycling as a sustainable transport mode. Good quality space to accommodate the safe and secure storage of bikes is expected to be specifically designed in at an early stage for each dwelling. This can be external or internal space but it is important that cycle parking is additional to space used for other uses (e.g. balconies, lobbies and hallways). Cycle storage facilities on balconies or in hallways will not be acceptable.

¹⁴ Currently set out in https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/4272/waste_management_planning_advice.pdf





Image 9.4: High quality cycle storage solutions that reflect and blend in with the building design.

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9.12 Cycle storage facilities should be easily accessible to occupiers and wherever possible, be integral to the design of the residential development. Where external cycle facilities are provided they should be constructed of durable materials, relate to the design of the main residential building, be easily accessible and not have a detrimental impact on the street scene.

9.13 Within apartments or commercial buildings it is important that space for cycle parking is secure and room for cycle maintenance is considered. In commercial premises a shower should be provided to support those willing to cycle to work. Developers should refer to the Parking SPD for additional guidance on the design and layout of cycle parking.

PRINCIPLE 9.2

1. All new development will be provided with on-plot space for bin and cycle storage in accordance with the council's current waste storage and cycle parking standards.
2. Space for bin and cycle storage must be very high quality and function well. The council will resist bin and cycle storage development that is:
 - Poorly integrated into the design of the development;
 - Not easily accessible or secure;
 - Unattractive and visually prominent;
 - Constructed in a manner that compromises the design of the main building in terms of colour, materials and form and erodes the visual amenities of the street scene.

HARD STANDING AND VEHICLE CROSS-OVERS

- 9.14 If not carefully designed, driveways and hardstanding areas can create hard, unattractive environments that break down the rhythm of plot definitions and landscaping, increase flooding and reduce biodiversity. If inadequate space is available in front of a dwelling for parking, it can result in:
- Vehicles hanging over pavement areas, potentially causing problems for pedestrians, mobility scooters and buggies, and/or
 - Cars lying hard up against habitable rooms, affecting outlook.



9.15 Provision of new vehicle crossings can result in a loss of front boundary definitions and open up unsightly holes in the streetscene.

9.16 It is important for this council that new vehicle crossings and areas of hardstanding on residential properties do not contribute to a deterioration of the streetscene, a loss of biodiversity, reduced pedestrian safety or increased risk of flooding.

9.17 Potential solutions for minimising adverse impacts of hardstanding include:

- Using porous materials such as gravel or blocks;
- Keeping driveways and parking areas only as large as necessary;
- Integrating areas into the overall landscaping schemes;
- Ensuring the spaces is enclosed as much as possible by soft planting, walls or other boundary treatments which are in keeping with the character of the area.



Image 9.5: Hardstanding area that dominates the front of the property and has resulted in the loss of soft landscaping and plot enclosure.



Image 9.6: Enclosed green approaches to hardstanding that make positive contributions to the street scene and help to reduce the potential for flooding.

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PRINCIPLE 9.3

1. New hardstanding areas will be expected to be constructed in porous materials and cover only the minimum space necessary. Hardstanding that is not integrated into a soft landscaping scheme, or which results in a deterioration of the streetscene, will be resisted.



UTILITIES AND OTHER MINIMAL DEVELOPMENT

Meter cabinets

9.18 It is recognised that utility companies prefer meter cabinets to be located on external elevations that are easily accessible from the street. However, it is also important that the meter cabinets do not undermine the attractiveness of buildings and the street scenes by virtue of their design and positioning.

Image 9.7: Visually dominant meter cabinets that are unattractive features on the building and in the street scene.



9.19 Meter boxes need not be standard white units and the council would encourage a bespoke approach that fits in with the character of the building they are positioned on and the wider area. However, they should be designed to and positioned to ensure a balance between accessibility and unobtrusiveness.

Other small development

9.20 Buildings and their curtilages can become cluttered and unsightly from small scale development such as aerials, satellite dishes, rainwater goods, telephone lines, electricity cabling, multiple drainage runs and manhole covers. It is important that these small but functionally important features are considered and designed into the whole development to create a visually pleasing appearance.

PRINCIPLE 9.4

1. Utilities related development and other small infrastructure requirements should be well integrated into the design of the building and/or curtilage in conveniently accessible positions.
2. All such development should be designed in a high quality manner to function well and minimise visual prominence.



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10 Further guidance for householder development





10 FURTHER GUIDANCE FOR HOUSEHOLDER DEVELOPMENT

- 10.1 This section provides additional guidance for those looking to extend or alter their existing homes.
- 10.2 Although some householder development will benefit from permitted development rights and permission will not be required, designers and home owners are encouraged to follow the principles and guidance set out in this section and elsewhere in the Design Guide to achieve a development that functions well and looks good.

EXTENSIONS

General guidance on extensions

- 10.3 Extensions to houses, both individually and cumulatively can have a profound effect on the appearance of an area and on the amenities enjoyed by the occupiers of adjoining properties.
- 10.4 Inappropriately designed extensions can result in a loss of privacy, be overbearing and over shadow adjoining properties. Chapters 8 sets out a series of design solutions that designers of extensions can use to ensure that neighbour amenities are protected.

- 10.5 Extensions also have the potential to erode the amount and quality of existing amenity spaces on the property. Designers should ensure that even with the proposed extension, occupiers are left with good quality amenity space that is adequate in size and functions well.
- 10.6 Extensions can also erode garden spaces and gaps which contribute to visual amenity and character. Designers should pay careful attention to the character of the area and the nature of the gaps between buildings and plot boundaries to ensure that streetscenes and general character is not undermined.
- 10.7 Extensions also need to respect the main building they relate to in terms of style, form and detailing. They also need to be subordinate.
- 10.8 Design solutions to achieve subordination and consistency in extensions include:
- Using lower ridge heights, setbacks and extensions widths no more than half the width of the existing dwelling;
 - Using the existing building as the main reference point for appearance, materials and details such as ridge, eave finishes, head and cills, rainwater goods, brick coursing, dressing and quoin work;



- Using a roof form & slope that reflects the main building. Flat roofed extensions will generally be resisted;
- Matching window style, form and positioning;
- Matching brickwork of the existing house in terms of colour, type, size and brick bond and mortar joints;
- Matching roofing materials in terms of colour, type, size;
- Copying windows, joinery and doors detailing in terms of design, proportions, recessing and positioning.

PRINCIPLE 10.1

1. Extensions will be expected to be subordinate and respond positively to the form, scale and architectural style & materials of the original building. Developments that are over-dominant or out of keeping will be resisted.
2. Extensions should not result in a material loss of amenity to neighbouring properties as a result of overshadowing, eroding privacy or being overbearing.
3. Extensions should not result in properties having inadequate or poor quality amenity space.
4. Extensions which erode garden spaces and gaps which contribute to visual amenity and the character of the street scene will be resisted.

- 10.9 The following sections provide detailed guidance for common forms of extensions to houses.

Front extensions

- 10.10 Although consideration needs to be given to amenity issues, the primary consideration for the design of front extensions (including porches) will be the impact on the streetscene and local character.
- 10.11 Generally front extensions will only be acceptable where the building is set well back from the street frontage in a large plot, or where the building is set back further from the street than the prevailing building line.

PRINCIPLE 10.2

1. “Front extensions should not break the main street building line, or be prominent in the street scene.
2. Two storey front extensions will only be acceptable where the building is set back an adequate distance from the street and the scale of the extension would not appear harmful.

Side extensions

- 10.12 Amenity issues and impact on the street scene and local character are both important considerations for the design of side extensions.
- 10.13 Side extensions should remain subservient to the main building and maintain the design of the original main building (Fig 10.1).



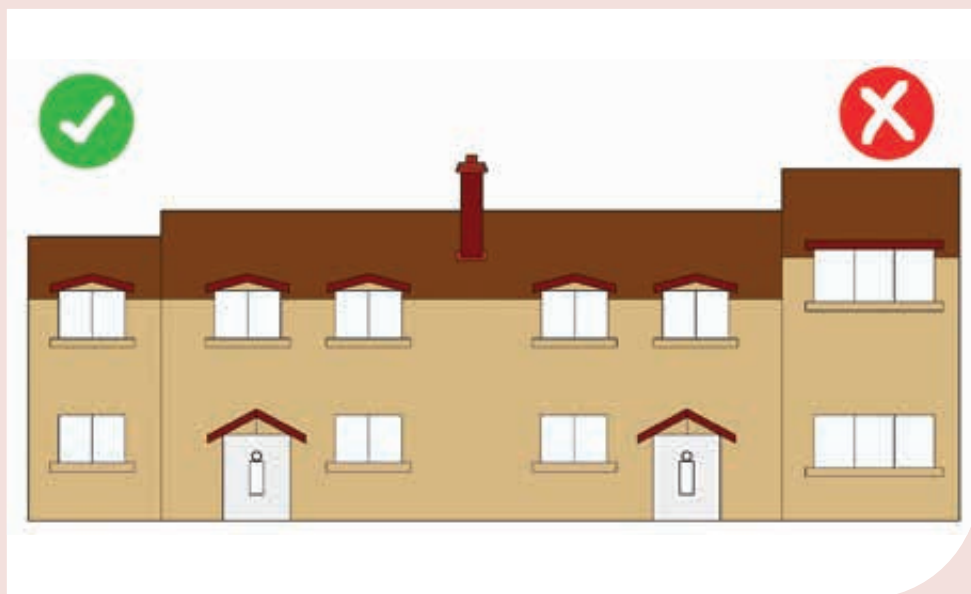


Figure 10.1: Acceptable and unacceptable side extension designs.

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Figure 10.2: Sympathetic single storey rear extensions.



10.14 In many areas of the Royal Borough gaps between buildings are important components of street scenes and the character of the area. Locality specific design documents for the borough should also be consulted when designing side extensions as they will often identify and detail the nature of important gaps in residential areas. Gaps between buildings are also important for amenity reasons. Typically, a gap of 1m from a building side to the boundary is needed to allow for adequate light, servicing and rear access.

PRINCIPLE 10.3

1. Side extensions should not erode neighbour amenities or the character of the street scene and local area. Proposals should remain sympathetic and subservient to the main building and not project beyond the building line on the street.
2. Important gaps between buildings should be maintained. A minimum gap of 1m between the building and the side boundary should normally be retained to provide for light, access and servicing.

Rear extensions

10.15 Amenity issues will be the primary considerations in the design of rear extensions.

10.16 Rear extensions should be sympathetic and subservient to the original design of the building (Fig 10.2). Particular



regard needs to be given to potential overshadowing and loss of privacy, outlook and light of adjoining properties. This is especially important with 2 storey extensions which can create an unacceptable sense of enclosure or have an overbearing impact and are likely to adversely affect light and sunlight access to neighbouring properties.

- 10.17 Use of flat roofed rear extensions as balconies will not generally be acceptable.

PRINCIPLE 10.4

1. Rear extensions should not materially erode neighbour amenities.
2. Proposals should be sympathetic and subservient to the design of the main building.
3. Eaves heights of single storey extensions should not exceed 3m within 2m of a side or rear boundary.

ROOF ALTERATIONS (INCLUDING DORMERS)

- 10.18 Additional residential space in existing dwellings can sometimes be created by altering and increasing roof spaces through the use of dormers, roof lights and extension of gables and ridge and eave heights.
- 10.19 Changes to roofscapes can have a detrimental impact on character, especially if they are visible in the streetscene

or other public locations. As such, it is important that their design is well considered and high quality. In conservation areas, or locations where overlooking would be material, roof alterations may not be appropriate.

- 10.20 Acceptable design solutions for converting roof spaces include:

- Positioning dormer windows within the main roof, by being set back from eaves, hips and ridgelines (Fig 10.3);
- Ensuring dormers do not dominate the roof or existing building. They should be the same size or preferably smaller than the windows below and occupy no more than half the width or depth of the roof slope (Fig 10.4);
- Aligning dormers with windows below (Fig 10.5);
- Keeping dormer cheeks as narrow as possible and finished in lead, tiles, slates or other traditional materials;
- Using gable end extensions where full gables are part of the existing street character;
- Raising roof and eave heights, but only where appropriate to local context;
- Using roof lights that are flush with the roof slope and located on rear roof slopes. Roof lights should not dominate roofscapes that are visible in the street scene.





A - A good quality response to dormers – proportionate, set back from the eaves, aligning with fenestration of the façade and reflecting historic vernacular.



B - A poor quality response – dormer windows that are asymmetrical and misaligned.



C - A poor quality response – This wrap over dormer is out of proportion, unattractive and out of keeping with the design of the dwelling.

Image 10.1

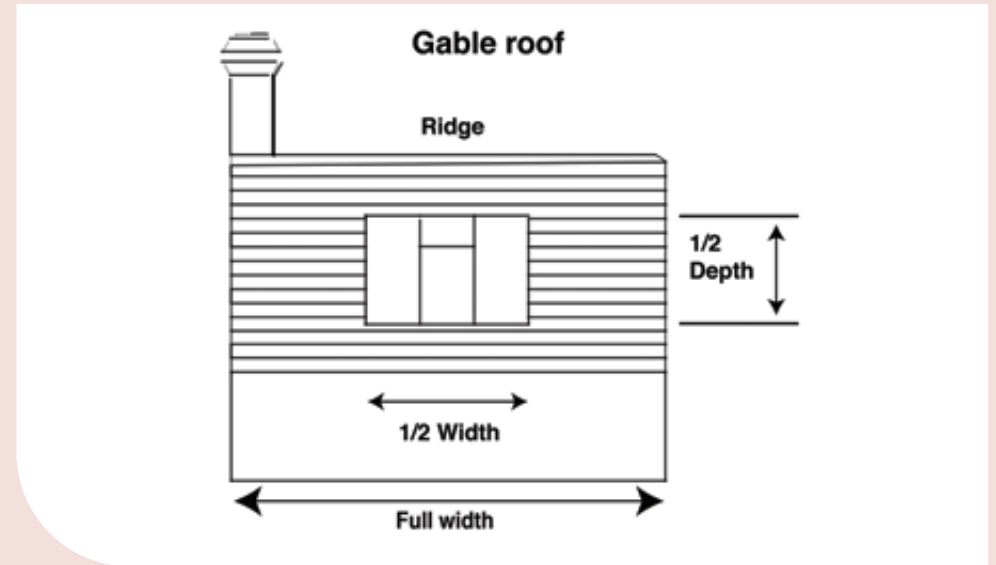


Figure 10.3: Dormers should be of an appropriate size and position.

Figure 10.4: Relationship to existing roof design and bulk is important.

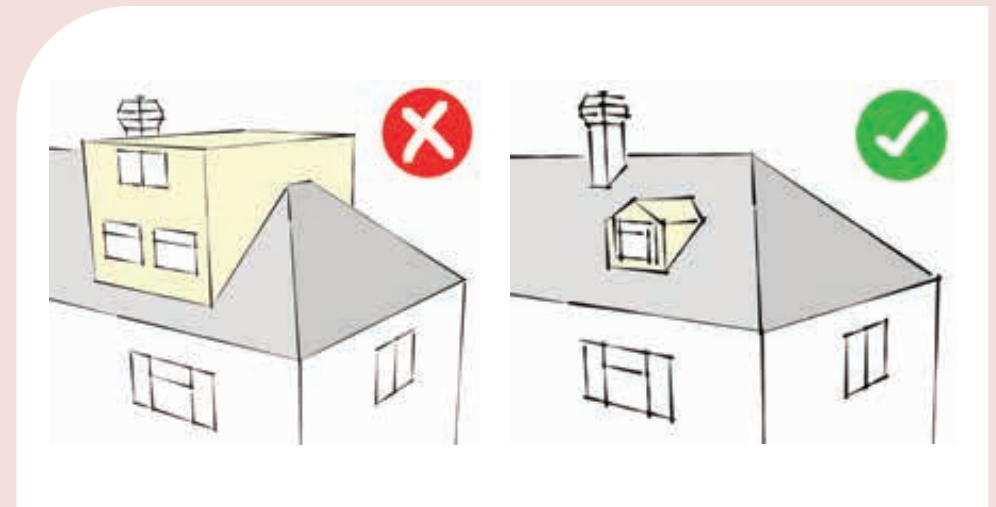
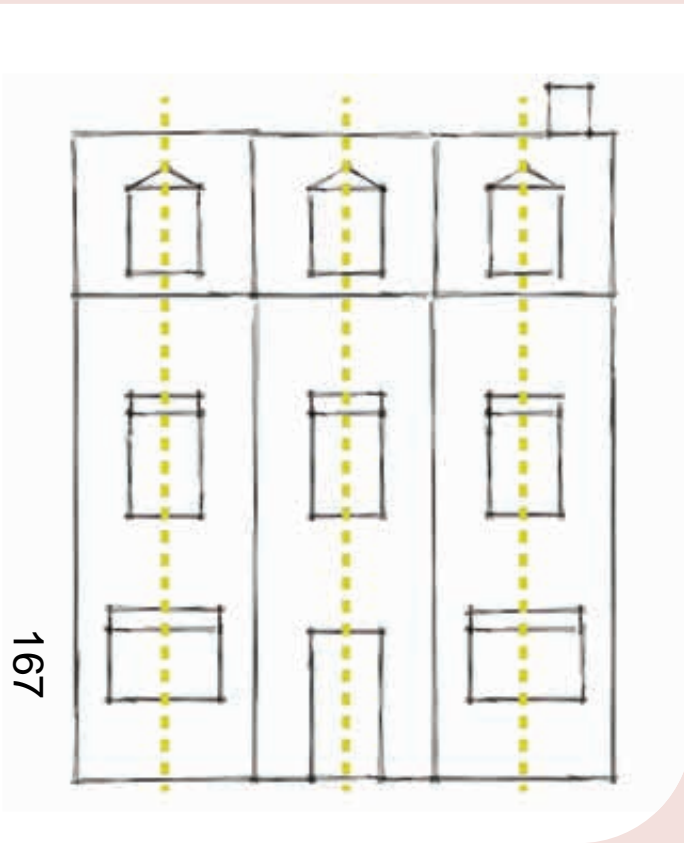


Figure 10.5:
Dormer
windows need
to complement
and align with
the fenestration
of the façade.



CONVERSION AND SUBDIVISIONS

- 10.21 Conversions and subdivisions of buildings can help to intensify development in an area, adding vibrancy and additional use to support activities and functioning of places. However, the increased use can also bring negative impacts, straining infrastructure and eroding character and amenity.
- 10.22 It is important that additional parking can be accommodated without a negative impact on the character and streetscene. The new use should be provided with adequate amenities, including outdoor space and it should not compromise the amenities of adjoining development. The newly created units will also need to comply with guidance on internal space standards as set out in Chapter 7.

PRINCIPLE 10.5

1. Roof alterations should be sympathetic and subservient to the design of the main building and not undermine the visual amenities of an area when viewed from public spaces such as streets and public open spaces.
2. All types of dormers must be set back from the sides and ridgeline of the roof and not occupy more than half the width and depth of the roof slope.

PRINCIPLE 10.6

1. Conversions and subdivisions to buildings should provide good quality amenities and space standards for future occupants of the new space. They should also not erode the amenity of neighbouring properties
2. Conversions and subdivisions should not undermine the streetscene or local character.
3. Parking should be well integrated and meet the standards from Chapter 6





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11 Further guidance for specific locations



11 FURTHER GUIDANCE FOR SPECIFIC LOCATIONS



DESIGN IN FLOOD RISK AREAS

- 11.1 The River Thames, its tributaries and other watercourses create a beautiful setting for many existing homes and places in the Royal Borough. However, fluvial and other forms of flooding affect wide areas of the borough and place existing and new development at risk, especially more vulnerable uses such as housing.
- 11.2 The consideration of flood issues in the design of new development is relevant to all types and scales. Although it is vitally important for new development to be designed to be flood safe and flood resilient in flood risk areas, it is also important that this does not lead to design solutions that are unattractive, undermine existing positive characteristics or create inactive frontages. Consultation with both the Environmental Agency and the Local Planning Authority at the earliest point in the design process is strongly recommended to ensure proposals are developed with full knowledge of flood constraints¹⁵.
- 11.3 There is an increasing trend for new and existing houses to being raised in order to lift the living areas above flood levels. There are three standard approaches to this:
- building a higher foundation;
 - creating undercroft for storage, and/or car parking that can be submerged in a flood event; and

- integrating less vulnerable uses on the ground floor, such as commercial, retail and office space.

Designers should consult with the Local Planning Authority and the Environment Agency as to which of these approaches would be the most appropriate. Whichever strategy is used, it is important that the design does not erode local character, visual appearance and the safe functioning of the area.

- 11.4 Development proposals in flood risk areas must avoid:
- Creating blank ground floor frontages and street scenes;
 - Ground floors dominated by undercroft parking and service areas;
 - Unsightly undercroft areas;
 - Creating inactive frontages; and
 - Blocky, unattractive upper floors on platforms above the flood plain.
- 11.5 Where blank walls and edges at ground floor level cannot be avoided these must be:
- Limited in length and height;
 - Compensated with large windows, balconies and animation on first floor;
 - Designed to reduce the impact of blank walls, by using a mix of attractive materials and landscape; and

¹⁵ Developers should consult the council's Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the Environment Agency's published Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea).



- Avoid unsightly holes to allow water to pass through. These details must be as well designed as the remainder of the building.

11.6 Large development sites that adopt a strategic approach to flood mitigation must ensure that the sites integrates well with the surrounding area and avoids:

- Unsightly and arbitrary steps in ground levels; and
- Blank walls and façades – backs or fronts – onto adjacent streets and plots.

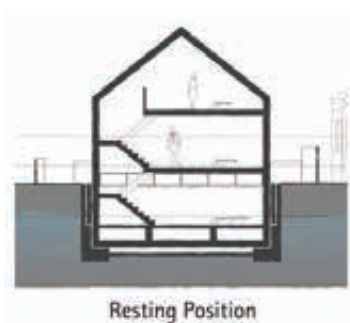
Image 11.1: A local and historic response to flood risk that provides for water compatible uses on the ground floor and more vulnerable residential accommodation above.



11.7 Because the wastewater network may surcharge to ground level during storm conditions all subterranean/basement development should incorporate a positive pumped device or other suitable flood prevention device to avoid the risk of sewage backflow causing sewer flooding.

11.8 In recent years more innovative approaches to building in flood zones have been developed, such as floating houses that have the capability to float upwards in an event of flooding (Figure 11.1). The council welcomes innovative approaches that overcome flood constraints and allow designs to be attractive and in keeping with existing characteristics.

Figure 11.1 Innovative example of a floating house that floats itself upwards to escape flooding on the River Thames. Marlow, Buckinghamshire by Baca Architects.



TRADITIONAL BOAT HOUSES – A DESIGN INFLUENCE

Replacement buildings that adopt a historic / traditional architectural approach to flood risk should take on board design influences from the historic boat houses that can be found alongside the Thames: The design principles are:

- Clearly defined articulation of upper floors (living areas) and adoption of different architectural approach;
- Articulated transition between residential floors and flood zone, e.g. balconies and terraces; and
- ‘Lighter’ more open architecture on upper floors.

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Image 11.2: A high quality design that has raised floor levels and provided void space in a visually pleasing and historically sensitive manner.

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Lifting buildings above flood levels

11.9 The council is receiving an increased number of applications to improve flood resiliency of existing buildings by using replacement dwellings or raising the existing accommodation above predicted 1 in 100 year flood levels. Proposals for replacement houses or raising of existing dwellings must be carefully considered otherwise the lifting of the groundfloor can lead to massing that is not proportionate, bulky and does not relate positively to the character of the local area.

11.10 The existing areas that see the most development pressure for improving flood resilience fall within the following townscape character areas¹⁶:

- Leafy Residential suburbs;
- Villas in Woodland Setting; and
- Victorian/Edwardian and Riverside Villa suburbs.

These areas contain a large number of detached houses that lend themselves to be replaced on an individual basis to make them flood resilient.

11.11 For replacement homes in flood zones designers will be expected to:

- Assess, illustrate and justify any increase in height in regard to the existing character;
- Avoiding unsightly undercroft areas;
- Ensuring the whole house, its massing and proportion remains a well balanced and attractive building, whilst employing design solutions to flood risk;
- Reflect the varied built vernacular, particularly the roofscape character and detailing;
- Take account of spacious plot and block sizes in the new design;
- Provide internal flood resilience measures (e.g. sockets at higher levels);
- Conserve and use trees to retain the leafy characteristics, avoiding the loss of boundary planting, retain existing mature trees and allow space for planting to mature.



11.12 Sensitive contemporary design to address flooding concerns which responds to its immediate context will be appropriate, where it makes reference to existing building height, scale and massing and proportion, or stylistic references. Reference to existing materials and traditional boat house architecture may also be appropriate.

Image 11.3: Contemporary example with the ground floor raised above flood levels of the floodplain. This clearly distinguishes the living areas from the floodzone, by raising the house on stilts.



PRINCIPLE 11.1

1. All development subject to flood risk must provide high quality architectural design, as well as appropriate mitigation measures in line with Environmental Agency guidance.
2. The Council will not accept poor design of buildings or a negative impact on the streetscene or character of the area as a result of flood mitigation measures.
3. Existing or replacement buildings raised out of flood plain areas should not:
 - Undermine the amenities of adjoining developments;
 - Create inactive frontages or unattractive void areas; or
 - Create hard or unattractive street scene;
 - Undermine the character of the area, including its greenness and scale.
 - Be of low quality materials
4. Contemporary approaches to raising buildings above flood plains will be welcomed where they are able to be sensitively integrated into the surrounding character and context. In conservation areas there will be a presumption that traditional materials and design will be used to maintain the character and appearance of the area.
5. Where the design approach elevated buildings on stilts the architecture should include large openings to allow floodwaters to easily pass through.

RURAL AND EDGE OF SETTLEMENT

11.13 The majority of the area within the Royal Borough is designated as Green Belt and is rural in nature. Therefore, the design of development in countryside areas and on the edges of settlement has a particular importance in the character of the borough. This section provides guidance on how to sensitively integrate development within the existing landscape character where development complies with policy requirements. This section does not define whether development is acceptable or not.

11.14 Development in rural areas and on the edge of settlements will be expected to:

- Respond to the unique character and setting, including a thorough understanding of the settlement pattern, its setting within the wider landscape and how this has developed over history; and
- Celebrate what is distinct and positive in terms of rural characteristics and topography in each locality.

11.15 Design solutions to achieve this include:

- Relating proposals to the defined landscape character areas set out in the Landscape Character Assessment¹⁷;
- Retaining, enhancing and incorporating characteristics of the existing settlement pattern – in particular where development is located in existing villages;
- Not harming the setting (where this is positive) of the village or existing building in the landscape;

- Carefully composing the design in relation to views in and out of the settlement edge as well as to key buildings such as church spires;
- Responding to typical buildings forms, materials, details and colours; and
- Retaining the landscape character by:
 - Maintaining gaps between buildings;
 - Retaining features that contribute to the landscape character;
 - Retaining characteristic soft vegetation, such as verges and hedgerows;
 - avoiding urbanisation through highway features, such as white lining, pavement and street lighting;
 - ensuring the relationship between private and public, including boundary treatments relate to the existing character; and
 - Not undermining the wider landscape character, in particular in woodland areas, by removing mature trees along plot boundaries and replacing them with immature and/or non-native species. Appropriate space must be provided to allow replacement and new trees to mature to their full height.

¹⁷ Landscape Character Assessment for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead; 2004



PRINCIPLE 11.2

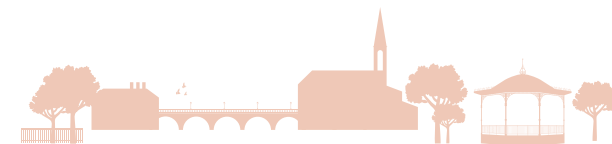
1. Developers will be expected to fully assess the landscape character and biodiversity of the site and its context. New development and associated landscaping should fully respond to local landscape and biodiversity features and retain, incorporate and enhance these through their development proposals. Designers will be expected to pay particular attention to:
 - Landscape character including settlement patterns, field and lane patterns, trees, hedgerows & verges, water bodies and wetlands and topography,
 - Typical species of vegetation and characteristic local habitats
 - Landscape settings of villages or existing buildings and views in and out of settlements as well as to key buildings such as church spires;
 - Historic elements; and
 - Gaps between buildings
2. New development should avoid urbanisation through highway features. This will include avoiding excessive openings onto the highway through hedgerows and soft boundaries, over-engineering of new roads, street lighting and street furniture and use of white lining.
3. The form, or massing of replacement dwellings should relate well to its context and to local character. The relationship between the form of the building, the topography and landscape, will be of particular importance.





12 Further guidance for non-residential development





12 FURTHER GUIDANCE FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

12.1 Non-residential development includes a wide range of uses, including employment, retail, community, education, health and leisure. The design principles outlined in the proceeding sections of the Design Guide apply to these non residential uses and Table 2.1 in Chapter 2 provides further clarification on the applicable principles by scale of the development. In addition, this section provides further specific guidance on detailed and common design considerations around non residential uses, in particular mixed use and employment developments.

12.2 Common design issues for non residential uses include ensuring being ‘good neighbours’ and integrating often large floorplate uses into the townscape or landscape positively.

12.3 Well-designed new employment development of a variety of types is a key strand in sustaining existing communities and to supporting the diversification of the economy.

12.4 High quality employment development will:

- Ensure complementary facilities and services are easily accessible. People at work also need to be able to reach other facilities and services, for instance public transport, shops, cafés, sports and leisure facilities, child care and schools.
- Encourage people to walk and cycle to and from work and from work to local amenities instead of driving. For example, by providing convenient and direct pedestrian

& cycle routes to nearby facilities, showering facilities and places to safely store cycles (See also Chapter 9).

- Arrange developments so that it is easy for a visitor to find their way around and to create a positive impression on arrival;
- Consider the needs of people arriving by all means of transport, not just the car;
- Integrate servicing and infrastructure sensitively into the design of the building i.e. storage, tanks, refuse and other servicing requirements should not dominate on arrival;
- Ensure buildings front onto the street so that it is well supervised by windows and entrances. Where buildings are set back from the street tree planting or other landscape will be required to enclose the street space – see Chapter 3;
- Consider building height, bulk and scale in relation to the existing context. The scale of business development is almost always greater than that of dwellings in terms of plot size, footprint and, in some cases, height – see also Chapter 3;
- Choose the material carefully in relation to views and use of the buildings;
- Position car parking unobtrusively, well designed and landscaped as well as connected to entrances via attractive pedestrian routes. In general, limited areas of car parking for the use of visitors should be positioned between the building and the street frontage. Where parking is provided on the street frontage, then high

EMPLOYMENT USES



quality boundary treatments will be required to the street frontage (See also Chapter 6);

- Provide good natural internal lighting and ventilation; and
- Provide external and green amenity space for employees to use (See Chapter 8).

12.5 Health impact assessments will be encouraged for large new employment developments covering construction and operational phases. These will be expected to consider the impact of the schemes design on the health of surrounding occupiers.

floors are residential providing private amenity space wherever possible, potentially in the form of roof terraces (where ground floor uses are deeper in floor plan) or alternatively balconies;

- Ensuring good levels of natural light and ventilation; and
- Ensuring that there is adequate noise insulation between different uses.

12.7 When considering the design of new shopfronts designers should consider locally specific guidance in neighbourhood planning documents, detailed local design guides and the Maidenhead Business and Shopfront Design Guide (2013).

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS

12.6 Mixed-use development will mostly be appropriate within centres where a greater mix of uses contributes to the vitality and viability of the centre. A variety of uses within a single building is likely and encouraged. To create a successful mixed-use building designers will be expected to:

- Carefully plan the building and surrounding environment for all occupants and appropriate for each use;
- Ensuring that services, such as mechanical ventilation, or lifts, are integrated into the scheme from the early stages, so that plant and ducting are well considered and do not have any adverse impact (noise, vibration or visual) on the upper floor use, particularly where this is residential;
- Minimising the visual impact of service areas upon the public realm and private amenity for nearby residents should be minimised through locating them sensitively and screening;
- Making sure that the entrance to upper floor uses is safe, convenient, attractive and easy to find, preferably from a street frontage of the building; where the upper

Integrating large floorplate uses

12.8 Large floor plates are common for retail uses, such as supermarkets and out of town shopping areas and industrial development. In particular supermarkets are challenging to integrate into what is often a context with a finer urban grain, such as town centres. A positive integration can be achieved by:

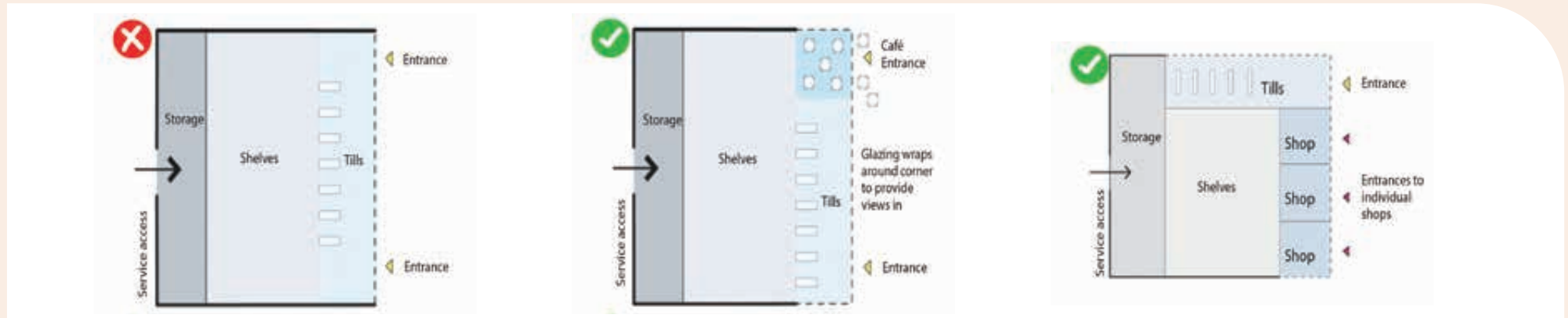
- Introducing a mix of uses, for example:
 - Upper level use may introduce additional entrances and more supervision than would be possible for a single use development; or
 - A mix of uses or unit types can be used to wrap the perimeter, so avoiding blank walls onto the street, or screening service areas;
- Locating active internal uses, such as a café or dining area to animate the street frontage;
- Reducing the visual impact of large elevations by the use of materials of colours to break down the scale and relate it to other buildings in the surrounding area;
- Providing internal natural lighting.



PRINCIPLE 12.1

1. In addition to complying with the design principles set out in other chapters of this document, all non-residential development will be expected to:
 - Integrate other complimentary facilities and services, or have them easily accessible by public transport or direct walking or cycling routes;
 - Encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport;
 - Integrate servicing and infrastructure sensitively into the building;
 - Provide good natural light and ventilation to internal spaces;
 - Minimise the impact of service areas on the public realm and private space; and
 - Ensure entrances to the building are easy to find, safe and attractively designed.
2. Large floorplate uses will be expected to be integrated into existing environments by:
 - Providing a mix of uses;
 - Reducing visual impact by using architectural detailing, articulation, materials and colour to break up large elevations;
 - Avoiding blank elevations and inactive frontages;
 - Providing internal natural lighting; and
 - Adding additional doors and entrances to service upper floors.

Figure 12.1: A mix of uses helps to integrate this supermarket into its context, creating an urban scale of development and providing more activity and supervision of the public realm than a single use development.



13 Design checklist



13 DESIGN CHECKLIST



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Check Point Number	Principle	Description	FULLY YES (with design justification provided)	PARTIALLY YES (with design justification provided)	NO (with design justification provided)	N/A
1	3.1	Do the 4 RBWM strategic design themes underpin the proposal?				
2	4.1	Is there a guiding vision for the proposal and has this been set out in the application?				
3	4.2	Has the vision been translated into a high level concept plan?				
4	4.2	Where relevant, has a plot plan been provided?				
5	5.1	Does the development create positive character and locally specific identity?				
6	6.1	Does the development connect and strengthen the existing network of streets and spaces?				
7	6.2	Does the development create streets that have a green character, are attractive, legible, designed for people and with strong active frontages?				
8	6.3	Does the development contain high quality new open space that is robustly connected, well defined, adds to the blue/green infrastructure network, attractive and enhances biodiversity?				
9	6.4	For large developments - Do blocks create a defined street network that reflect local characteristics and maintain connectivity?				



Check Point Number	Principle	Description	FULLY YES (with design justification provided)	PARTIALLY YES (with design justification provided)	NO (with design justification provided)	N/A
10	6.5	Does the development respond positively to the size, shape and rhythm of surrounding plot layout? Are fine grain plot layouts provided and existing fine grain or historic plot layouts maintained?				
11	6.6	Has the development established clear boundaries to define public and private spaces?				
12	6.7	Do car parking layouts provide intervening landscaping between every 3 parking spaces?				
183	13	Is onplot parking provided to the side or rear of the property? If not, is the front parking enclosed with soft landscaping and its impact minimised on the streetscene.				
	14	Have the car parking courts been designed as attractive, safe, multipurpose and busy places?				
	15	6.10 Where provided, is onstreet parking high quality, integrated with other street features and landscaped.				
16	6.11	If backland development, is it subordinate and maintaining of existing character and amenity?				
17	7.1	Does the design achieve the high density possible without negatively impacting on local residents, future residents, amenities, character and environment?				
18	7.2	Does the development provide a mix of uses, densities, forms, sizes and tenures?				
19	7.3	Do the proposed buildings lines maintain character street enclosure and amenity of neighbours?				



Check Point Number	Principle	Description	FULLY YES (with design justification provided)	PARTIALLY YES (with design justification provided)	NO (with design justification provided)	N/A
20	7.4	Has the development incorporated passive solar design?				
21	7.5	Does the building height enclose the street without overwhelming it?				
22	7.5	For buildings over v10 storeys, is the design exemplar?				
23	7.6	Does the new development reflect and integrate well with the spacing, height, bulk, massing and footprints of existing buildings?				
24	7.7	Does the proposed roof form make a positive contribution to the street scene				
25	7.8	Does the development comply with national internal space standards?				
26	7.9	Is the architectural detailing attractive, high quality, honest, legible and does it incorporate features to enhance biodiversity?				
27	7.10	Are the window designs high quality, visually balanced and harmonious and have large areas of publically visible blank walls with limited or no glazing been avoided?				
28	7.11	Are the materials in the development justified and honest?				
29	8.1	Has the development been provided with a reasonable degree of privacy?				
30	8.2	Do habitable rooms have adequate outlook to external spaces that are not dominated by visually intrusive features?				



Check Point Number	Principle	Description	FULLY YES (with design justification provided)	PARTIALLY YES (with design justification provided)	NO (with design justification provided)	N/A
31	8.3	Are occupants provided with good quality daylight and sun access to habitable rooms. Has material loss of daylight and sunlight to neighbouring dwellings been avoided?				
32	8.4	Have the minimum outdoor amenity space standards been provided?				
33	8.5	Have flatted developments been provided with private outdoor amenity space at the specified quality and amount?				
34	8.6	Has at least the minimum amount of communal amenity space been provided at the specified amount and quality for flatted developments?				
185 35	8.7	For employment uses, has outdoor amenity space been provided at the specified standard and quality?				
36	9.1	Have high quality boundary treatments been provided that reflect local character and meet the required standards?				
37	9.2	Have high quality bin and cycle storage facilities been provided that meet the Council's current standards?				
38	9.3	Are new hardstanding areas constructed from porous materials and only cover the minimum necessary amount?				
39	9.4	Are utility related developments well integrated into the design of the building and/or curtilage?				
40	10.1	Are extensions subordinate, do they respond positively to the character of the original building and area and do they preserve neighbour amenity?				
41	10.2	Is the front extension behind the building line?				



Check Point Number	Principle	Description	FULLY YES (with design justification provided)	PARTIALLY YES (with design justification provided)	NO (with design justification provided)	N/A
42	10.3	Does the side extension maintain neighbour amenities and the character of the area? Are important gaps maintained?				
43	10.4	Does the rear extension maintain neighbour amenities and the design of the building?				
44	10.5	Are the roof alterations sympathetic to the design of the building and street scene? Are dormers set back from the sides and ridgeline?				
45	10.6	Does the conversion/subdivision maintain local character and neighbour amenities				
46	11.1	Does the development provide high quality architectural design that supports the character of the area, as well as appropriate flood risk mitigation in line with Environmental Agency guidance.				
47	11.2	Does the rural development incorporate features that contribute toward landscape character and biodiversity?				
4.8	12.1	Does the non-residential development act as a good neighbour and has it been designed to provide good amenities for users?				





13 Glossary

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13 GLOSSARY

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Active frontages	Frontages that provide an active visual engagement between those in the street and those on the ground floors of buildings. This quality is assisted where the front façade of buildings, including entrances and windows, open towards the street.
Building line	A limit beyond which a house must not extend towards a street. Building lines can exist along the front and rear of a line of buildings.
Bulk	The combined effect of the arrangement, volume and shape of a building or group of buildings. Can also be referred to as massing.
DAS	Design and Access Statement
Daylight	Volume of natural light which enters a dwelling to provide sufficient illumination of internal accommodation between dawn and dusk.
Density	The number of buildings or floorspace in relation to a given area of land. In this Guide, density is more than just the number of residential units/ha.

Design principle	An expression of one of the basic ideas guiding the design of a development.
D:SE	Design South East
Dual aspect building	A building that has been designed with openable windows on two or more walls, allowing for greater daylight provision and views in more than just one direction.
Focal point	A building, structure, tree or other element that stands out from its background by virtue of height, size or some other aspect of design.
Grain	The pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings and their plots in a settlement and the size of street blocks and junctions.
Habitable rooms & areas	Defined as living and dining rooms, conservatories, kitchen, bedrooms and those frequently used garden areas such as patios close to the house
Householder development	Developments within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse which require an application for planning permission and are not a change of use.



Human scale	The practice of measuring and designing things to match the characteristics of humans. This includes ranges of time, speed, weight, temperature, force, energy, pressure, distance, attention span and perception that humans can comfortably or safely withstand.
L	Large scale development
Layout	The physical pattern of paths, buildings and open spaces.
Lifetime Homes	This refers to 16 design criteria that together create a flexible blueprint for accessible and adaptable housing in any setting. The standard is managed by Habinteg Housing Association and the criteria are set out in full on www.lifetimehomes.org.uk .
M	Medium scale development
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework, 2019
Pressure vacuums	An opening out and closing/squeezing in of street spaces to create visual and physical interest.
Private realm	Privately owned space that is not usually open to the public.

Public realm	Those parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) available, for everyone to use. This includes streets, squares and parks.
S	Small scale development
Scale	The impression of a building when seen in relation to its surroundings, or the size of parts of a building or its details, particularly as experienced in relation to the size of a person.
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement
Sense of place	Either the intrinsic character of a place, or the meaning people give to it, but, more often, a mixture of both.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
Sunlight	Direct light from the sun
Vertical Sky Component	The Vertical Sky Component (VSC) is a measure of the amount of visible sky available from a point on a vertical plane. The reference point used for the calculation is usually the centre of the vertical face of the window.
XS	Extra small scale development



www.rbwm.gov.uk



Royal Borough
of Windsor &
Maidenhead

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Town Hall,
St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF



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Royal Borough
of Windsor &
Maidenhead

Borough Wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

Consultation Statement 2019

December 2019

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In late 2018/early 2019 the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM) prepared a draft design guide covering all types of development and in all locations of the borough. The purpose of the guide is to help deliver design excellence by supporting Local Plan policies.
- 1.2 The draft Borough Wide Design Guide (hereafter referred to as the BWDG) was consulted on in early spring 2019. This document is a Statement of Consultation for the BWDG. Its purpose is to explain how the Council has complied with its Statement of Community Involvement and Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.3 This statement sets out the methods RBWM used to engage with both stakeholders and the community in the preparation of the BWDG, including the following:
- Which bodies and persons were invited to make representations;
 - How those bodies and persons were invited to make representations;
 - How information was made available to be viewed;
 - A summary of the key issues raised through representations;
 - How those issues have been addressed in the document.
- 1.4 This statement should be read in conjunction with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement 2016 ("SCI").

2. Regulation 12 Consultation

- 2.1 The Council published the Regulation 13 draft of the BWDG for public consultation from Thursday 14 March 2019 until 6pm on Thursday 25 April 2019.
- 2.2 The purpose of the consultation was to invite feedback on the proposed approach set out in the guide and specifically the chapters, sections and design principles that were set out in it.

Consultation Methodology

- 2.3 A range of methods were used to engage with all potentially interested parties during this period, in order to ensure the opportunity to make a representation. This included email, letters, website, newspaper ads, social media and provision of hard copies in libraries.
- 2.4 The following table provides details about each method used to distribute information about the consultation:

Table 2.1. Consultation methods

Method	Information distributed
Email Sent to all relevant organisations, groups and individuals on the Planning Policy consultation database.	Notification of consultation Reminder sent part way through consultation
Letter Sent to all relevant organisations, groups and individuals on the Planning Policy consultation database where no email address is known.	Notification of consultation
Newspaper	The consultation was advertised in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maidenhead Advertiser – 21st March 2019 • Bracknell News – 20th March 2019 • Windsor Express – 22nd March 2019 • London Gazette – 22nd March 2019
Council website	The BWDG has a specific page on the Council's website and the consultation was advertised on

Method	Information distributed
	this. The website had banners on the Planning, Planning Policy and Council Consultation pages notifying users and pointing them to the consultation documents via links.
Social Media	Notification of consultation start posted on the Council’s Facebook and Twitter accounts followed by regular reminders.
Hard copies	Hard copies were made available at libraries and Parish Council offices across the borough.

2.5 The council has an extensive consultation database for planning policy work. The list includes individual residents, developers, businesses, Parish Councils, neighbourhood plan groups, community and voluntary groups, infrastructure providers, industry contacts, neighbouring authorities, government agencies and elected members. For the BWDG a total of 3396 people and organisations were contacted via the consultation database. Appendix 1 sets out the specific statutory stakeholders and community and business groups that were approached.

Material consulted on

2.6 The following documentation was consulted on during the consultation period:

- Reg 13 draft Borough Wide Design Guide;
- SEA screening statement & responding views from Historic England and Natural England. No response was received from the Environment Agency.

2.7 The above documentation was made available via:

- The Council’s website on the dedicated Borough Wide Design Guide page (https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201027/planning_guidance/1441/emerging_supplementary_planning_documents_spd); or
- The online consultation portal - <http://consult.rbwm.gov.uk/portal/spd/dg/dg>
- Hard copies at the Council’s libraries and Parish Offices.

Responding to the consultation

- 2.8 Interested persons and bodies were able to submit representations via a number of means including:
- Online via the consultation portal;
 - Emailing; and
 - Post
- 2.9 Respondents were encouraged to use a standardised representation form, or to utilise the consultation portal which allowed representations to be made against specific parts of the BWDG.
- 2.10 No comments were received on social media platforms Facebook and Twitter.

3. The consultation response

Number of Representors

- 3.1 A total of 62 interest persons and bodies made Regulation 12 representations. The breakdown of the representors is as follows:

Representor group	No.
Statutory stakeholders	6
Parish and Town Councils	5
Neighbourhood Plan Groups	2
Developers, agents or land owners	8
Special interest groups	9
Individuals	32

As can be seen, the majority of those responding were individuals. A full list of respondents is contained in Appendix 4.

Number of Representations & Representation Points

- 3.2 A number of the representors made more than one representation. In total, 82 representations were received.

4. Summary of main issues raised in response to the consultation

- 4.1 Representations were made on all aspects of the BWDG and these are summarised in Appendix 5 on a topic basis following the same format as the Design Guide. The summary contains details of the numbers of representors making the points, as well as the council's response.
- 4.2 The key themes emerging from the representations were:
- a) Strong support for the production of the guide
 - b) Strong support for the scope, quality and content of the guide
 - c) Concern that the document is too generic
 - d) Concern for lack of biodiversity enhancement
 - e) Further clarity needed in relation to Tall buildings and parking design
 - f) Concern that guide does not go far enough in relation to non-residential design
- 4.3 Details of the consultation points raised, and the council's response to them, are contained in Appendix 5.

Appendix 1:

List of Statutory Consultees consulted:

Thames Valley Police	National Grid
Sport England	Network Rail
Natural England	Bracknell Town Council
Historic England	Spelthorne Borough Council
Runnymede Borough Council	Highways England
Greater London Authority	Reading Borough Council
MOD	The Crown Estate
Slough Borough Council	Wycombe District Council
Environment Agency	West Berkshire Council
Wokingham Borough Council	Home Office
Cabinet Office	MHCLG
Dacorum Borough Council	Office for Nuclear Regulation
Bucks County Council	Thames Water
South East Water	London Borough of Hillingdon

List of Parish Councils consulted:

Marlow Bottom Parish Council	Bray Parish Council
Cox Green Parish Council	Datchet Parish Council
Hurley Parish Council	Old Windsor Parish Council
Windlesham Parish Council	White Waltham Parish Council
Colnbrook & Poyle Parish Council	Warfield Parish Council

Winkfield Parish Council

Wraysbury Parish Council

Horton Parish Council

Binfield Parish Council

Chobham Parish Council

Dorney Parish Council

Taplow Parish Council

Waltham St Lawrence Parish Council

Sunningdale Parish Council

Bisham Parish Council

Eton Town Council

Shottesbrooke Parish Meeting

Sunninghill & Ascot Parish Council

Appendix 2: Media adverts

London Gazette:

ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

**CITY OF LINCOLN COUNCIL
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (CONTROL OF
ADVERTISEMENTS) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2007**

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (the "Secretary of State") has had a proposal made to him by City of Lincoln Council, as the local planning authority, that deemed consent for the display of advertisements relating to the letting of premises specified in Class 3A of Schedule 3, Part 1, to the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 ("the regulations") should be withdrawn in the West Parade area, Sincil Bank area, Monks Road area, Union Road and Waterloo Street, Lincoln.

The proposal has been publicly advertised by the Secretary of State in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations.

Having considered the proposal, the Secretary of State in the pursuance of the powers conferred in him by the Regulations, hereby directs that the provisions of the Regulations shall not apply to the display of advertisements specified in the Schedule to this direction in the areas specified above.

A copy of the direction and a map defining the areas may be seen during office hours of 9.00am – 5pm (4:30 pm on Fridays) at the City of Lincoln Council, City Hall, Beaumont Fee, Lincoln, LN1 1DF, or by visiting the City of Lincoln Council web site.

This Direction shall have effect for a period of five years from 8th April 2019 when it comes into force in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations. (3238992)

**DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

The Secretary of State gives notice of an Order made under Section 247 of the above Act entitled "The Stopping up of Highway (North West) (No.15) Order 2019" authorising the stopping up of a length of Burnley Road; two car parking areas at Burnley Road and an irregular shaped area of highway comprising carriageway, footpath and verge, all at the former Reeds Holme Works site at Rawtenstall, in the Borough of Rossendale, to enable development as permitted by Rossendale Borough Council, reference 2016/0267.

Copies of the Order may be obtained, free of charge, from the Secretary of State, National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR or nationalcasework@df.gov.uk (quoting NATTRAN/NW/S247/3395) and may be inspected during normal opening hours at Rossendale Borough Council, One Stop Shop, The Business Centre, Futures Park, Bacup OL13 0BB.

Any person aggrieved by or desiring to question the validity of or any provision within the Order, on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the above Act or that any requirement or regulation made has not been complied with, may, within 6 weeks of 22 March 2019 apply to the High Court for the suspension or quashing of the Order or of any provision included.

S Zamenzadeh, Casework Manager (3238993)

**DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

The Secretary of State gives notice of an Order made under Section 247 of the above Act entitled "The Stopping up of Highway (West Midlands) (No.14) Order 2019" authorising the stopping up of an area of highway verge to the north of number 52 Cheswick Close at Winyates Green, in the Borough of Redditch, to enable development as permitted by Redditch Borough Council, reference 18/01161/FUL.

Copies of the Order may be obtained, free of charge, from the Secretary of State, National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR or nationalcasework@df.gov.uk (quoting NATTRAN/WM/S24/3609) and may be inspected during normal opening hours at Planning Services, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch B98 8AH.

Any person aggrieved by or desiring to question the validity of or any provision within the Order, on the grounds that it is not within the powers of the above Act or that any requirement or regulation made has not been complied with, may, within 6 weeks of 22 March 2019 apply to the High Court for the suspension or quashing of the Order or of any provision included.

S Zamenzadeh, Casework Manager (3238994)

**DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

The Secretary of State gives notice of the proposal to make an Order under section 247 of the above Act to authorise the stopping up of an unnamed area of highway as lies off Rochford Road comprising its access to the former Rochford Road garage site at Southend-on-Sea in the Borough of Southend-on-Sea.

If made, the Order would authorise the stopping up only to enable development as permitted by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, under reference 17/00680/BC3M.

Copies of the draft Order and relevant plan will be available for inspection during normal opening hours at Southend Borough Council, Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue SS2 6ER in the 28 days commencing on 22 March 2019, and may be obtained, free of charge, from the address stated below (quoting NATTRAN/E/S247/3667).

Any person may object to the making of the proposed order by stating their reasons in writing to the Secretary of State at nationalcasework@df.gov.uk or National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR, quoting the above reference. Objections should be received by midnight on 19 April 2019. Any person submitting any correspondence is advised that your personal data and correspondence will be passed to the applicant/agent to be considered. If you do not wish your personal data to be forwarded, please state your reasons when submitting your correspondence.

G Patrick, Casework Manager (3238995)

**ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (LOCAL PLANNING)
(ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012 (AS AMENDED)
BOROUGH WIDE DESIGN GUIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING
DOCUMENT
DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION MARCH 2019**

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is preparing a Borough Wide Design Guide which supports Local Plan policies by setting out in detail what the Council considers to be design excellence in the Royal Borough. The Design Guide will help guide a major step change improvement in the quality of new development and places created across the Royal Borough and provide guidance to council members, officers, developers and local communities on how to ensure future development has the required high quality and inclusive design to create beautiful places that function well.

The consultation will run from **Thursday 14 March 2019 until 6pm on Thursday 25 April 2019**.

Documents can be viewed in the following locations:

- On the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead website at https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201027/planning_guidance/1441/emerging_supplementary_planning_documents_spd
- At all local libraries and Parish Councils within the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Comments can be made in the following ways:

- Online via our consultation portal (<http://consult.rbwm.gov.uk/portal/spd/dg/dg>)
- Or by completing a representation form and sending it to planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk or by post to Planning Policy, The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1RF

Comments must be received no later than 6pm on Thursday 25 April 2019.

If you have any further enquiries, please contact Planning Policy on planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk or by telephone at 01628 796357. (3238989)

**SUEZ RECYCLING AND RECOVERY SURREY LTD
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2015
NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 13 OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING
PERMISSION**

Proposed development at and on land adjacent to the Charlton Lane Waste Management Facility / Eco Park on land off Charlton Lane, Upper Halliford, Shepperton, Surrey, TW17 8QA.

I give notice that the application is being made by SUEZ Recycling and Recovery Surrey Ltd.

Is applying to: Surrey County Council, County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, London, KT1 2DN.

LONDON GAZETTE | CONTAINING ALL NOTICES PUBLISHED ONLINE BETWEEN 22 AND 24 MARCH 2019 | 5251

The Windsor Express:

Public Notices / News

Pedestrian killed in hit-and-run

WRAYSBURY: Flowers have been laid at the scene of a hit-and-run in which a 35-year-old man died. Police said that, at about 9pm on Sunday, a vehicle driving along the B876 Wrayisbury Road was in a collision with a male pedestrian and failed to stop. The pedestrian, from Staines, died at the scene.



Flowers at the scene of Sunday's fatal crash. Ref:131080-7

The road was closed for several hours while police officers examined the scene. The vehicle has not been recovered but its registration plate was found, police said. Three men from Kent - aged 19, 20 and 21 - have been arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving and remain in police custody. Inspector Simon Hills, of the Joint Operations Unit for Roads Policing based at Bicester, said: "The registration plate left at the scene of the collision suggests that the vehicle is a silver Ford Ranger 4x4 double cab vehicle. "I am appealing to the public that if they see a vehicle of the type described, with front end damage and a missing registra-

tion plate, to contact police. "I am also appealing to anybody who has CCTV at their premises or from any driver who may have dash-cam footage to get in touch." A petition has been launched on the Royal Borough website calling for the speed limit in Wrayisbury Road to be cut from 40mph to 30mph. It also demands the installation of zebra crossings and speed cameras. Anyone with information about the crash should call police on 101 quoting ref number 43190081977. Alternatively, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Society calls for tree preservation order

WINDSOR: The Windsor and Eton Society is calling for a tree preservation order (TPO) to be placed on land targeted for development in Alma Road. Developer Salmon Harvester Properties wants to build 217 flats and a five-storey office block on the former Imperial House site. Councillors refused planning permission in June but an appeal has been lodged to the Planning Inspectorate as the council failed to make a decision before its target date of April 13. The society, which seeks

to preserve and celebrate the heritage of Windsor and Eton, says the development represents a serious threat to the trees on the site both during construction and in the future. The society said in a statement: "Even though the trees on this site appear to meet the criteria for making a TPO the council has oddly declined the society's request instead relying on the discretion of the developer to retain them with a possible reassessment of a need for a TPO once the development is nearing completion.

"In our experience this is highly risky and often too late to remedy."

A public inquiry into the development is due to start at Windsor Racecourse on Tuesday.



Public Notices



Public notices are important and may affect you!

- Road closures
- Planning consent
- Licences
- Parking



Slough Traffic Quarter's Licence
The Traffic Commissioner for the South East of England is inviting applications for a licence to use a motor vehicle for hire or reward in the Slough Traffic Quarter. The licence is valid for a period of 12 months from the date of issue. Applications should be made to the Traffic Commissioner at Folkestone, Kent, LE15 2JF. The application form and supporting documents can be downloaded from the Traffic Commissioner's website.

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE
J R Bailey's Limited of 20 Willow Edge, Kings Langley, WD4 8NE is applying for a licence to use *Speedway Farm*, *Coventry* *Byways* Slough, Berkshire, SL3 9EA as an operating centre for 6 goods vehicles and 0 trailers. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings near the operating centre) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at *Halifax House 386 Harrogate Lane Leeds LS9 9NF*, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004 TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (LOCAL PLANNING) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012 (AS AMENDED) BOROUGH WIDE DESIGN GUIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION MARCH 2019

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is preparing a Borough Wide Design Guide which supports local Plan policies by setting out in detail what the Council considers to be design excellence in the Royal Borough. The Design Guide will help guide a major 566 change improvement in the quality of new development and spaces created across the Royal Borough and provide guidance to council members, officers, developers and local communities on how to ensure future development has the required high quality and inclusive design to create beautiful places that function well. The consultation will run from Thursday 14 March 2019 until 6pm on Thursday 25 April 2019. Documents can be viewed in the following locations:
• On the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead website at http://www3.rbw.gov.uk/info/201827/borough-wide-guidance/1441/submitting-supplementary-planning-documents_33d
• At all local libraries and Parish Councils within the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.
Comments can be made in the following ways:
• Online via our consultation portal (<http://consult.rbw.gov.uk/portal/spd0909>)
• Or by completing a representation form and sending it to planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk or by post to Planning Policy, The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1NF.
Comments must be received no later than 6pm on Thursday 25 April 2019. If you have any further enquiries, please contact Planning Policy on planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk or by telephone at 01628 796357.

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (RTTA 1984) and Regulation 3 of the Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) (Procedure) Regulations 1997. SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL (Fleete Road) ORDER 2019 (Proposed Order)

- SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL (Council) gives notice that it proposes to make an order under section 14(1) of the RTTA 1984 and any other enabling powers.
- If made, the Proposed Order will prohibit any vehicle using Fleete Road, Slough.
- The Proposed Order is needed:
 - because works are or are proposed to be carried out on or near the road; and
 - because of the likelihood of danger to the public, or of serious damage to the road, or to works on or near the road.
- A draft of the Proposed Order shall come into operation 00:01 hours on Saturday 20th April 2019 for a period of 10 months, or until the works have been completed. All works are expected to be completed by 22:59 hours on Saturday 4th May 2019.
- An alternative route will be available for use while the Proposed Order is in force with a local diversion sign at the location. Advanced returning notices will be carried out. Notices will be maintained for all local residents and businesses.
- A copy of this draft Order and Plan may be inspected free of charge at the locations listed below between normal working hours (excluding bank holidays and public holidays):
 - St Martins Place, 51 Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 3UF;
 - My Council, Landmark Place, High Street, Slough, SL1 1JL; and
 - The Curve, William Street, Slough, SL1 1XY
- If you have any queries regarding the proposed work or alternative route please contact: Head of Transport, Slough Borough Council, St Martins Place, 51 Bath Road, Slough, SL1 3UF.

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL Section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Regulation 22 of the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. THE BOROUGH OF SLOUGH (VARIOUS ROADS) EXPERIMENTAL BUS LANE ORDER 2019 (Order 16 of 2019)

- SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL gives notice that it has made an experimental Order under section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ("the Act") and any other enabling powers.
- The effects of this Order are:
 - to introduce a full-time bus lane at the following location:-
 - Wellington Street (Eastbound) - from a point 68 metres east of its junction with Dolphin Road westwards for a distance of 245 metres.
 - to introduce part-time bus lanes (Monday to Friday, 7:00-10:00am and 3:00-7:00pm) at the following locations:-
 - Bath Road (Eastbound) - From a point 33 metres west of its junction with Salt Hill Avenue westwards for a distance of 178 metres.
 - London Road (Eastbound) - From a point 39 metres east of its junction with Lynwood Avenue eastwards for a distance of 130 metres.
 - London Road (South-eastbound) - from a point 51 metres south-east of its junction with Blandford Road South south-eastwards for a distance of 1304 metres.
 - London Road (North-westbound) - from a point 163 metres south-east of its junction with Upton Court Road south-eastwards for a distance of 680 metres.
- to restrict the following length of road to northbound buses only:-
 - Bath Road (link road between Bath Road (A4) and northern service road approximately 112 metres northwest of its junction with Ipewich Road) - for its entire length.
 - Link road between Bath Road (A4) and Galvin Road - for its entire length.
 - to restrict the following length of road to eastbound buses, pedal cycles, motorcycles and taxis only:-
 - High Street - from a point 40 metres east of its junction with William Street eastwards for a distance of 8 metres.
- to renew the existing legal provisions for the two southbound bus lanes on Farnham Road.
- This Order comes into force on 1st April 2019.
- A copy of the Order as made, plans showing the parts of the highway affected and a statement of the traffic authority's reasons for making the Order may be inspected free of charge at the locations listed below during normal working hours (excluding bank holidays and public holidays):
 - St Martins Place, 51 Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 3UF;
 - My Council, Landmark Place, High Street, Slough, SL1 1JL; and
 - Library @ The Curve, William Street, Slough SL1 1XY
- In due course the Council will consider whether the provisions of the experimental Order should be continued in force indefinitely.
- Any person wishing to challenge the Order or that any requirements of that, or any instrument made under it have not been complied with may apply within six months following the date the Order was made. Any objection must be in writing, state the grounds on which it is made and be sent to the address below. Service Lead - Planning and Transport, Slough Borough Council, St Martins Place, 51 Bath Road, Slough, SL1 3UF 22nd March 2019

The Maidenhead Advertiser:

10
The Advertiser, March 21, 2019
01628 680680

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE
ECO-PAN LIMITED OF HIGH ROAD, THRONWOOD, EPPING, CM16 6LJ is applying to use **UNIT 6, HOWE LANE FARM, BINFIELD, MAIDENHEAD, SL6 3JP** as an operating centre for 1 goods vehicle and 0 trailers. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 336 Harthill Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of the notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE
Mill Trans Limited of 1 Musgrave Walk, Stonechurch, High Wycombe, HP14 3RY is applying to change an existing licence as follows: To add an operating centre to keep 2 goods vehicles and 2 trailers at **Chris's Cafe, Wycombe Road, Studley Green, High Wycombe, HP14 3WB**. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 336 Harthill Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

highways
england

A404 TRUNK ROAD - NEAR MARLOW
TEMPORARY TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS
Notice is hereby given that Highways England Company Limited has made an Order in the A404 Trunk Road in the County of Berkshire and the Unitary Authority of Windsor & Maidenhead, under Section 141(1A) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 because works are proposed to be executed on the road.

The effect of the Order is to authorise, in particular:

- the overnight closure of:
 - the northbound carriageway of the A404 between Burchetts Green Interchange (A109) and Bisham Roundabout (A309);
 - the northbound carriageway of the A404 between Bisham Roundabout (A309) and Handy Cross Interchange (M40 Junction 4);
 - the southbound carriageway of the A404 between Handy Cross Interchange (M40 Junction 4) and Bisham Roundabout (A309);
 - the road leading to the northbound carriageway of the A404 at Burchetts Green Interchange (A410);
 - the road leading to and from both carriageways at the A404 at Marlow Interchange (A4156);
 - the road connecting the northbound carriageway of the A404 to the westbound carriageway of the M40 at Handy Cross Interchange (M40 Junction 4A421); and
 - all of the side roads at junction with the carriageway described in a) above; and
- the 24-hour closure of all the lay-bys adjacent to the carriageways described in 1) a) of above.

These measures are in the interests of road safety while the contractors undertake re-signing, road marking, sign replacement, surface surveys and all associated works.

It is expected that the work will last for approximately 8 weeks starting on or after Monday 18 April 2019. The overnight closures will take place between 21:30 and 05:00 (minimum period).

The Order will come into force on 30 March 2019 and have a maximum duration of eighteen months. Light traffic affected by the closures in 1) above will be diverted using the A4130, A4155 and Wycombe Road. The diversion in operation will vary according to the closure in force. Heavy Goods Vehicles will be diverted using the A404, A404M, M4, M25, and M40. The Bisham Roundabout will remain open for local east-west traffic.

The temporary closures and diversion routes will be clearly indicated by traffic signs when they are in operation during the works period.

J Dewhirst, an Official of Highways England Co. Ltd.
Ref: H15C2019M4042

Highways England Company Limited
(Company No. 9245633). Registered Office: Bridge House, Walnut Tree Close, Gifford, Surrey, GU14 2Z.
A company registered in England and Wales.
For enquiries, please contact the Customer Contact Centre on 0300 123 5060 or info@highwaysengland.co.uk
<https://www.highwaysengland.co.uk>

Public Notices

Department for Transport

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

The Secretary of State gives notice of an Order made under Section 247 of the above Act entitled "The Stopping up of Highways (South East) (No.15) Order 2019", authorising the stopping up of the whole of Colliers Passage and a western part width of Queen Street, comprising footways at Maidenhead, in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. This is to enable development as permitted by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council under planning permission.

Copies of the Order may be obtained, free of charge, from the Secretary of State, National Transport Casework Team, Dunside House, Silverburn Road, Newcastle, Swansea, Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 7AR, or alternatively by email to quill@tpgiving.dft.gov.uk and may be inspected during normal opening hours at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead SL6 1RF.

Any person aggrieved by an decision to question the validity of an any provision within the Order, in the grounds that it is not within the power of the above Act or that any requirement or regulation prescribed has not been complied with, may, within 6 weeks of 21 March 2019 apply to the High Court for the suspension or quashing of the Order or of any provision included.

S Zameerulah, Casework Manager 04492270

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD
Town and Country Planning Act 1990
(as amended)

The Council has received the following planning applications:

19/0083/FULL - Single storey detached outbuilding - St Johns The Evangelist, Bath Road, Little Wymondley, Slough, Berkshire.

19/0081/ADW - Consent to demolish 2no. formerly furnished residential but out letting (industrial) - Rising Sun, High Street, Hurley, Maidenhead. (Development Affecting the Character and Appearance of a Conservation Area)

19/0079/FULL - 2 single storey front extensions, 2x single storey front extension with wood over, 2x single storey rear extension, replacement rear patio steps, 2x single storey rear extension with first floor balcony over and new first floor - Westfield, Country Road, Maidenhead. (Development Affecting the Character and Appearance of a Conservation Area)

19/0068/FULL - Alterations to shopfront to include repainting and erection of a single paneled shopfront - Sals Salt, 2, Passford Street, Windsor. (Development Affecting the Character and Appearance of a Conservation Area)

19/0066/FULL - Replacement of windows and doors - Snowdens Barn, Snowdens Road, White Waltham, Maidenhead. (Development Affecting the Setting of Listed Building)

19/0065/LBC - Consent to install alterations to shop front, turner works to re-part shop front and new signage - Arnd, 36 Passford Street, Windsor. (Listed Building Consent)

19/0065/LBC - Consent for replacement doors and windows and internal alterations to form a utility room, installation of under floor heating system - Snowdens Barn, Snowdens Road, White Waltham, Maidenhead. (Listed Building Consent)

19/0015/FULL - New vehicular access with new gates and alterations to the boundary - Bourne Bridge House and The Coach House, Keston Road, Hayport, Maidenhead. (Development Affecting the Character and Appearance of a Conservation Area)

19/0062/FULL - Part demolition of shop front facade to include glass, repaint shop front and fascia lettering (retrospective) - Avanti, 63 Passford Street, Windsor. (Development Affecting the Character and Appearance of a Listed Building)

19/0059/FULL - Demolition of existing house and erection of 2 replacement detached houses - Priory Cottage, Church Place, Old Windsor, Windsor. (Development Affecting the Character and Appearance of a Conservation Area)

If you wish to comment on these applications, then you must do so within 21 days from the date of this notice to the address below. You may inspect the application and plans on our website at <http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/pam/search.asp> or during office hours at the Maidenhead Library, Bachelors Acre, Windsor.

Date: 21 March 2019

Public Notices / News

Charity NOTICEBOARD

If your charity has some news, is holding a fundraiser or wants to celebrate the achievements of its supporters, email news@baylismedia.co.uk



Taeppa's Tump performing in Maidenhead High Street

MAIDENHEAD: A craft fair will take place at Cox Green Community Centre on Saturday afternoon. There will be lots of stalls, including cards, gifts, stained glass, leather goods and jewellery. Admission to the fair is 50p, with children admitted free. It will run at the Highfield Lane centre from noon-3pm.

MAIDENHEAD: Berkshire Vision is holding a fun day of activity for visually impaired people and their families on Saturday, April 6. All ages and abilities are invited to try activities including tandem cycling, goal-ball, golf, acoustic shooting, yoga, bocci, arts and crafts and more. Jade Cartwright, Berkshire Vision's Sports and activities officer said: "Exercise is fun and a great way to meet new friends. "Come and join in, have a great day out and learn how empowering sport can be." Refreshments will be available as well as information points for visually impaired people and their families and friends. The event will be held at Sports Able in Braywick Road between 10am and 6pm. Contact Jade sports@berkshirevision.org.uk or call 0118 9872803 to find out more, book a place or to volunteer.

MAIDENHEAD: Maidenhead Archaeological and Historical Society will hold its next meeting on Wednesday at Maidenhead Community Centre in York Road. Speaker Colin Oakes will talk about Bryant & May's Match Girls Strike 1888. Tickets cost £3 and can be bought on the night. Doors open at 7.45pm for a 8pm start. Call 01628 630924 for more information.

MAIDENHEAD: Morris dancers from Taeppa's Tump will begin this year's outdoor season with a traditional spring dance in Maidenhead High Street on Saturday, March 30. Dancers will be entertaining shoppers between 11am and 1pm to raise funds for the Maidenhead-based group's chosen charity for the year, which is the Oesophageal Patients Association.

THAMES VALLEY: Bucks Search and Rescue, Family Friends in Windsor and Maidenhead, the Dash Charity and Slough Homeless Our Concern are among the organisations benefiting from the Police Property Act Fund this year. The fund, which is jointly managed by Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld and Chief Constable Francis Hagood, is created from money recovered by the police and the proceeds from the sale of items, including those seized from criminals. More than £100,000 has been dished out, with 32 organisations receiving sums between £1,000 and £6,000.

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Public Notices

Know what's going on in your local area

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD
PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (LOCAL PLANNING) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2012 (AS AMENDED)
BOROUGH WIDE DESIGN GUIDE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT
DRAFT FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION MARCH 2019

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is preparing a Borough Wide Design Guide which supports Local Plan policies by setting out in detail what the Council considers to be design excellence in the Royal Borough. The Design Guide will help guide a major step change improvement in the quality of new development and places created across the Royal Borough and provide guidance to council members, officers, developers and local communities on how to ensure future development has the required high quality and inclusive design to create beautiful places that function well. The consultation will run from **Thursday 14 March 2019** until **5pm on Thursday 25 April 2019**.

Documents can be viewed in the following locations:

- On the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead website at https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/201027/planning_guidance/1441/emerging_supplementary_planning_documents_spd
- At all local libraries and Parish Councils within the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

Comments can be made in the following ways:

- Online via our consultation portal (<https://consult.rbwm.gov.uk/portal/pd/dlg>)
- Or by completing a representation form and sending it to planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk or by post to Planning Policy, The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1JF

Comments must be received no later than 5pm on **Thursday 25 April 2019**. If you have any further enquiries, please contact Planning Policy on planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk or by telephone at 01628 79327.

BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL (HIGH STREET, BRACKNELL)
PROHIBITION OF LEFT HAND TURNING ORDER 2019

Notice is hereby given that Bracknell Forest Borough Council has made an Order, in accordance with Section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the effect of which is to prohibit any vehicle turning left into High Street, Bracknell from turning left into Market Street.

The alternative route for all vehicles affected will be via Stamped Hill Lane (southbound), a cul-de-sac round the roundabout and Salford Hill Lane (northbound).

The purpose of this Order is to protect the workforces and public whilst repairs to underground telecommunications equipment are carried out.

The Order will come into operation on the 21st March 2019 and its maximum duration will be 6 months. However it is currently planned that the restriction will be in force overnight from 9pm (21/03) to 6am (04/04) on 21st & 25th of March.

The prohibitions contained within the Order shall only apply when the appropriate signs and markings are displayed in the road.

Dated 20th March 2019
Andrew Hunter
Director - Place, Planning & Regeneration

BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL (CHINEY DOWN ROAD (BIRCHWOOD ROAD), WINDSOR)
(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) ORDER 2019

Notice is hereby given that Bracknell Forest Borough Council intends to make an Order, in accordance with Section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the effect of which will be to prohibit any vehicle from proceeding along Chiney Down Road (Birchwood Road).

The purpose of this Order is to protect the workforces and public whilst works are carried out on underground water supply pipes.

The proposed Order will come into operation on the 1st April 2019 and its maximum duration will be 12 months. However, it is currently planned that the closure will be in place between 1st & 5th April 2019.

This Order shall only apply when the appropriate signs and markings are displayed in the road.

Dated 20th March 2019
Andrew Hunter
Director - Place, Planning & Regeneration

BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL (A3095 BACKSTRAW ROAD, SANDHURST)
(TEMPORARY 20MPH SPEED LIMIT & PROHIBITION OF RIGHT HAND TURN) ORDER 2019

Notice is hereby given that Bracknell Forest Borough Council has made an Order, in accordance with Section 14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the effect of which is to:

- prohibit any vehicle from proceeding at a speed greater than 20mph along A3095 Backstraw Road, Sandhurst between its roundabout junctions with Magdalen Road and Aldington Road/Noctis Avenue;
- prohibit any vehicle travelling along South Road from turning right onto A3095 Backstraw Road.

The alternative route for all vehicles affected by prohibition (ii) will be via A3095 Backstraw Road (southbound) and a cul-de-sac at the roundabout junction of A3095 Backstraw Road and Fawcett Avenue.

The purpose of this Order is to protect the workforces and public whilst highway improvement works are carried out.

The Order was made on 19th March 2019 and will come into operation on the 25th March 2019. Its maximum duration will be 18 months, however it is currently programmed that the restrictions will be in place from 25th March to the middle of May.

The prohibitions contained within the Order shall only apply when the appropriate signs and markings are displayed in the road.

Dated 20th March 2019
Andrew Hunter
Director - Place, Planning & Regeneration

Notice is hereby given that Lightfoot (Est. 1977) Ltd has applied in respect of the Budgets, Lightfoot Filling Station, John Niles Way, Bracknell RG12 8TN for a variation to the premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003 for the following: This is an application to vary the layout and design of the premises in accordance with the submitted plan (drawing dated 25.01.19). Any part of the variation application that changes the layout of the premises to be of no effect until the work has been completed. Locations of fire safety and other safety equipment subject to change in accordance with the requirements of the responsible authorities or following a risk assessment. Any detail shown on the plan that is not required by the licensing plans regulations is indicative only and subject to change at any time. The opening times and licensable activities authorised by the existing Premises Licence to remain unaltered. All other aspects of the existing premises licence to remain unchanged by this application. Representations to this application must be made in writing by the end of 10th April 2019 to the Bracknell Forest Borough Council Licensing Authority at Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD where the register of licensing applications can be inspected during office hours and/or at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk>

It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with the application. Penalties will be liable on summary conviction to an unlimited fine.

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DRIFT SARAH WILLIAMS
(Maidenhead Council) (Unsuccessful)

Pursuant to the Transfer Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the Bank named, are of 153 Portsmouth Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, Companies PO14 3JZ, England. Persons affected 2 13, Avenue, Stoneville, Hampshire PO7 5SG, England, who died on 20/11/2008, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 21/05/2019, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Christylin Charles Lewis, CO
Michael White LLP, 77 Windsor Road, Reading, Hampshire RG2 3DZ, England. Ref: PAV190326

GENIE MARGALITA WILLIS
(Unsuccessful)

Pursuant to the Transfer Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the estate named, are of 40 Kilmilly Drive, Malborough RG40 1EL, who died on 24/01/2018, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 21/05/2019, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

James Michael White, 2 Helios Court, Wokingham RG40 2ZL.

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Bracknell Forest Borough Council
LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1992
NOTICE OF COUNCIL TAX 2019/20

Notice is hereby given that on 27 February 2019, Bracknell Forest Borough Council, in accordance with section 30 of the Local Government Act 1992, set the amount of Council Tax for the financial year commencing 1 April 2019 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Part of Council's Area	Valuation Bands					
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F
Binfield	1085.30	1286.18	1447.07	1627.95	1869.72	2351.49
Bracknell	1156.70	1291.15	1475.60	1660.05	2028.95	2397.85
Crowthorne	1102.50	1286.25	1470.00	1653.75	2021.25	2388.75
Sandhurst	1099.75	1283.08	1465.39	1649.68	2016.28	2382.87
Werkfield	1077.80	1257.43	1437.07	1616.70	1975.97	2335.24
Winkfield	1102.56	1286.32	1470.05	1653.84	2021.36	2388.85

Dated this 12th Day of March 2019
T R Wheadon
Time Square, Market Street, RG12 1JD

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Appendix 3: Objective landing page

Borough Wide Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead is preparing a Borough Wide Design Guide which supports Local Plan policies by setting out in detail what the Council considers to be design excellence in the Royal Borough. The Design Guide will help guide a major step change improvement in the quality of new development and places created across the Royal Borough and provide guidance to council members, officers, developers and local communities on how to ensure future development has the required high quality and inclusive design to create beautiful places that function well.

The Design Guide is now subject to consultation. The consultation commences on **Thursday 14 March** and will run until **6pm on Thursday 25 April 2019**.

All comments received will be considered as part of the process for preparing the final document. We will be publishing a summary of all comments received on our website in due course as part of the consultation statement.

Viewing the document:

To view the Design Guide:

- click on the document entitled "Borough Wide Design Guide_R13 Consultation Draft" under the 'Supporting Documents' tab below; or
- click on the 'View and Comment' button below which will open a form from where you can download the Design Guide.

A number of additional documents are also available via the 'Supporting Documents' tab below. These include the SEA screening report and the Response form.

Making comments:

Click on the 'Login/Register' at the top of this page. Once logged in clicking on the "View and Comment" button will open up a form to complete and submit online.

Alternatively, complete the representation form (available in the Supporting Documents tab below) then return it to us either

- By email to planning.policy@rbwm.gov.uk or
- By post to Planning Policy, Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF

All comments must be received by the council by 6pm on Thursday 25 April 2019.

Appendix 4: People and groups responding

Consultation Body Type	Name of responding individual or organisation
Neighbouring Authorities	Nil
Statutory Consultees	Highways England Sport England Thames Water Historic England Natural England Transport for London
Parish and Town Councils	Old Windsor Parish Council Horton Parish Council Hurley Parish Council Bray Parish Council Sunninghill & Ascot Parish Council
Neighbourhood Plan Development Groups	Datchet Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Windsor Neighbourhood Plan
Developers and landowners	The Clewer Group Bellway Homes Salmon Harvester Properties Turley – Ascot High Street Consortium CBRE - Royal London Mutual Insurance Society Turnberry – Ascot Racecourse Shanly Homes Boyer Planning
Resident and Interest Groups	The Fisheries Residents Association RBWM Residents Action Group (RRAG) Maidenhead Civic Society Wild Maidenhead Access Advisory Forum Windsor and Eton Society Berks, Bucks, Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) Office for Nuclear Regulation Project Centre

Consultation Body Type	Name of responding individual or organisation
Individuals	32 individuals made representations

Appendix 5: Main issues raised by respondents to Regulation 19 BLP publication – by topic

This appendix is extensive and has been produced as a stand-alone document.

BWDG consultation statement

Appendix 5

General whole document comments

Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
No comments	3	Noted
Waste of time	3	Noted
Document considered good/very good	12	Encouraged to note
Document easy to read	3	Encouraged to note
Document is considered too generic	6	The Guide is not policy. Rather than being prescriptive, it needs to be flexible and allow for evolving practice and innovation.
Document is considered prescriptive	4	The document is not considered prescriptive. Instead it is considered to provide the appropriate level of flexibility and preciseness to ensure that the high quality design that the Borough aspires to can be secured.
Question the timing of the document, years after the Adopted Local Plan and before the Emerging Borough Local Plan is adopted	2	Document is intended as a supplementary planning guide that will support the emerging BLP. However, until the BLP is adopted the Guide will support the existing adopted Local Plan.
The SPD is to build upon policies in the Adopted Local Plan and not introduce new planning policies into the development plan	2	The SPD does not introduce new policies into the existing and emerging development plan. It will provide further detail and guidance for the implementation of the policies in the Local Plans.

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Document does not apply equally to rural and urban areas	1	The Guide relates to the design of all development, be it in rural or urban areas. In recognition of the particular design challenges of rural locations, the Guide contains a section that deals specifically with rural and edge of settlement development.
Document very housing focussed	3	The majority of development taking place in the Borough is housing related and it usually attracts the highest degree of scrutiny by local communities and other stakeholders. As such, the Guide has had to give particular focus to this development form. However, many of the sections of the document and the guiding principles relate to all forms of development. There are also specific sections of the Guide that provide additional guidance for non residential uses.
Guide is largely focused on new build developments rather than addressing the bigger issues of existing housing/building stock and redevelopment	1	This is incorrect. The Guide addresses all forms of development including redevelopment and changes of use for existing development.
Document is light on how to mitigate climate change	1	Noted. The Guide is intended to provide an overarching framework for design matters, including responses to climate change. Much greater detail and guidance will be provided through a specific SPD related to climate change adaption and mitigation.
Pleased to see that BREEAM is no longer part of the policy.	1	Encouraged to note
Traffic congestion will increase	3	This relates to the quantum of development which is dealt with through the Local Plan process. However, the Guide seeks to deliver design that will minimise the effects of car use by encouraging provision of walking and cycling and human scale walkable environments. It also seeks to provide high quality, attractive facilities and infrastructure for vehicles.
Imprecise statements should be replaced by closer definition	2	Noted
Concerns of unauthorised development	2	Unauthorised development is an enforcement issue

Visually there is a poor choice of photo in several sections which are either poorly lit, out of focus or would seem irrelevant to the section they are in	1	Noted. The quality of the photos will be reviewed and improved wherever possible.
No reference to the need for wildlife-sensitive artificial lighting and the reduction of light pollution, or the designing-in of dark spaces and corridors for wildlife	1	Noted
Document doesn't do enough to encourage enhancement of biodiversity	3	Noted

Chapter 1: Setting the scene

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
1.6	Thames Water requests that all subterranean/basement development incorporates a positive pumped device or other suitable flood prevention device to avoid the risk of sewage backflow causing sewer flooding. This is because the wastewater network may surcharge to ground level during storm conditions. Such measures are required in order to comply with the NPPF which highlights the need to avoid flooding and also in the interests of good building practise as recognised in Part H of the Building Regulations.	1	Noted. Document will be updated to reflect this.
1.7	New development does not appear to be defined for non housing. Would a school extension block count as new development, or just a brand new school?	1	Noted. Further clarification will be provided.
1.8	Point 1.8 states “it does not provide guidance on matters already addressed by national building regulation requirements e.g. energy water efficiency and disabled access.” There is some related guidance on page 58 point 7.34 “The council encourages applicants to consider applying the Lifetime Homes Standards to residential developments. These standards look to create dwelling spaces that are accessible adaptable and flexible.” Could the guidance about encouraging applicants to consider applying Lifetime Homes Standards be also included in the status section at the start of the Design Guide.	1	Section 7.34 is considered the most appropriate location to refer to the Life time Homes Standards. Reference is also made to Lifetime Homes in the Glossary.
	It is disappointing that existing documents such as the Townscape Assessment and Landscape Character Assessment are barely referred to. The Guide should make clear that the Description, Evaluation and Key Characteristics in the Townscape Assessment, and the Landscape Character Assessment, must underpin the design approach. Development that is not consistent with these documents cannot be regarded as enhancing the character of the area or providing design excellence and consequently will be resisted.	5	Both the Townscape Assessment and Landscape Character Assessment are referenced through the document where relevant.

1.9	The link given does not provide the publications for this paragraph.	1	Noted. Document will be linked to list of all applicable design related policy and guidance
1.9	Section 1.9 states that the BWDG “ <i>provides an overarching borough wide framework for detailed guidance on design related matters.</i> ” It then references related supplementary planning documents. It would be useful to add the specific references throughout the BWDG in the relevant sections e.g. we presume that Sections 7.11 to 7.15 relate to the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. This SPD hasn’t been read in detail for the purposes of our response to this consultation, however, it is noted that it was written in 2009 and so may be in need of updating.	1	The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD still holds relevance and should be read in conjunction with the Borough Wide Design Guide until it is updated.
1.11	Para 1.11 suggests that the Guide is intended to relate to the existing Borough Local Plan (BLP) and the draft BLP that is currently the subject of Examination (BLPSV). This is inappropriate since the two documents contain different design policies. This needs to be changed with any necessary amendments made to the Guide. The Guide should be structured so that it supplements the BLPSV if/when that document is implemented. It makes no sense for it to be linked to a document that RBWM expects to be superseded.	1	The guide has to be written to support policies that currently are adopted. However, the Guide does also need to recognise the emerging BLP policies, which provide more detailed design guidance than the adopted Local Plan. The Guide has been prepared to deal with this evolving policy situation.
1.12	Can the following be added to Para 1.12 the end of the sentence “and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users.” That wording is taken directly from Government guidance on Design and Access Statements (within Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 Revision date: 06 03 14).	1	This is a detailed point that would not be appropriate to add in this over-arching paragraph about the relationship between DAS and the BWDG.
1.14	I expect that 1.14 would allow the diversity in Architectural design that would allow the type of diverse housing allowed at Graven Hill in relation to self build. If you consider the local vernacular then you will end up with the boring bland designs that you are seeking to avoid. Relaxed planning regulations would allow a street scene where each property is completely different and diverse as championed by Grand Designs "the Street" and NaCSBA.1	1	This is addressed in the paragraph where it states that the Council will seek robust design justification of applications that depart from full compliance of the guide.

1.21	Suggest that paragraph 1.21 also refer to Policies CA1, CA2, CA6, LB2 and HG1 of the adopted Local Plan as these also relate, at least in part, to design.	2	Noted. Document will be updated to reflect this.
	The design guide seems to largely be committed to design principles encompassing the towns and larger villages within the Borough. We are concerned that there is little mention in the guide of village character or protection. Taking the three neighbouring Villages of Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury, the characteristics are substantially different and diverse. It would therefore be more meaningful and helpful if the Design Guide includes reference to and acknowledgement of the Neighbourhood Plans for those villages (albeit Datchet's is yet to be produced).	1	The Design Guide should not be thought of as isolated guidance for specific places, it is instead general guidance for the whole borough. Design for specific places can be elaborated from this guide in Neighbourhood Plans or locally specific Design Guides..
	Notwithstanding our support for the design principles contained within the Guide as helpful guidance for development within the Royal Borough, the racecourse is a unique form of development. Its development typologies are far too specific to the needs of the racecourse for the Design Guide to apply in any meaningful sense. Our client requests that text is added to the 'Scope' section in Chapter 1 to explain that Ascot Racecourse is not covered by the Guide owing to its unique development needs.	1	We welcome the support of the design principles, but specific sites will not be uniquely excluded from the guidance of the Design Guide.
	The guide lacks a link between design and the composition of the population who live and work in the Borough – what kind of population does the Borough serve in the main – young professionals/families/retirees?	1	The Design Guide has a purpose to serve all demographics of the borough.
	We would suggest that reference to the use of planning conditions to enable control over future development, i.e. changes in site layout, building design, landscaping, is therefore vital in order to maintain important features and overall high quality of these sites.	1	The NPPF states that planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and planning conditions are used only where appropriate on planning permissions.

Chapter 2: How to use the document

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
Table 2.1	There are some concerns that developers could use the checklist as an argument that the development is appropriate, even when it is not. The method of using the table is not incredibly clear. More of an explanation should be given.	1	Noted. The table, along with the checklist in chapter 13, are intended to be a useful guide for the LPA in determining planning applications. Developers will also need to provide a Design and Access Statement where required.
Table 2.1	Looking at Table 2.1 which lists the Design Matters covered by the guide (particularly considering the content of, and drivers behind, these sections) and the Design Checklist, the majority of the Guide is focussed on matters of aesthetic design	1	Noted.

Chapter 3: Strategic design themes

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
	The Design Guidance talks about 3 overarching themes Royalty, River, Green. Why Royalty? Tourists clog up Windsor and RBWM make no effort to distribute wealth across the borough. The Royal Parks severely limit the amount of accessible open space in the Borough. Royalty is not a benefit to RBWM. Suggestion of 'History' instead	4	The suggestion of 'history' instead of 'royalty' is noted. However, many places around the borough have history but royalty is such a unique, fundamental and important part of the identity of the borough. No change proposed.
	There are many things in this document which are positive. In particular, we welcome the overarching themes of Royalty, River and Green which will give prospective developers a high-level view of the expectations the Borough has of them in working up proposals. Indeed we believe that more might be made of these themes in the body of the document as at present they appear somewhat detached from most of the text and are not embedded in it as they might be	2	Noted.

	We welcome the principle of the broad design themes of Delivering Sustainable Places and Creating a Sense of Place, but are disappointed that neither include any reference to the historic environment. Paragraph 8 c) of the National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is an integral part of achieving sustainable development and historic buildings and places often provide a strong sense of place.	1	Noted. 'History' and the historic environment are major features to creating a sense of place and we will reflect this in updating the document.
	Section 3 of the Guide needs complete rewriting without political spin and gratuitous subjective observations: why is the commitment to design excellence suddenly watered down to "high quality design is the minimum standard"?; why is it considered appropriate to demonise cars on the first page of this section? Like it or not cars are, and will remain in the foreseeable future, a widely used method of transport. To suggest otherwise is absurd; why is passive solar design prioritised over other sustainable options?	1	Noted. The intention is to encourage travel options that are more sustainable and healthier. Passive solar design is just one of the sustainable design options.
	Within the broad design themes (putting people first, creating a sense of place etc.) it would be helpful to see some emphasis on "visual attractiveness" and "sympathetic to local character and history", to ensure that good design responds to the context.	1	Noted. Reference to visual attractiveness and historical assets will be strengthened through-out the document and in the broad design themes.
Image 3.5	A different image should be chosen. This design is not broadly considered to be good, or high quality. The words in the neighbouring paragraph "The council will encourage innovation in design" suggest that this image is an example of innovative architecture which is not considered the case.	1	The council are of the view that this building makes a good and positive contribution to the Maidenhead Townscape. No change proposed.

Chapter 4: Design Process expectations

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
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Table 4.1	Table refers to need for two sets of pre-application discussions. Would this be required for school applications?	1	Schools as a non-residential type of development will be required follow the table steps.
Table 4.1	Would consultation with the school only count as community engagement? Neighbours would usually only be consulted after submission of an application - unless a large school scheme.	1	Schools, as a non-residential type of development, will be required follow the table steps as far as they are applicable to the proposed development. Para 4.1 will be amended to make this clearer.
Table 4.1	<i>Design Process Steps</i> omits any ecological or biodiversity appraisal. This is needed to ensure the SPD complies with the requirements for net gain in biodiversity specified in the NPPF (and recently emphasized by the Chancellor's Spring Statement	2	There are many components of a site, including biodiversity and it would not be practicable to mention them all in this table, which is essentially a summary. The analysis of what should be covered in a site and context analysis would be something the developer would explore with the Local Planning Authority, statutory consultees and the local community.
Fig 4.1	The illustration of a concept plan refers to 'primary roads'. This terminology is confusing, since primary roads are major A-roads that connect to the strategic road network.	1	The use of 'primary roads' as terminology in concept plans is common practice. The concept plan is an indicative layout proposal illustrating key components, so the use of primary roads as terminology may be replaced if appropriate.
Principle 4.1	Principle 4.1 only states that "medium and large developments should also provide a Concept Plan". We consider they should be a requirement. If not provided there is no Community consultation at all on the development.	2	Noted.
Principle 4.1	I would encourage the Royal Borough to incorporate our Active design guide as part of the process for developers to consider when creating schemes. Sport England & Public Health England's Active Design guidance	1	Noted. Reference will be made to the Active Design Guide.
Fig 4.2	This is an OS map	1	The map shows clear plot boundaries for a plot plan.

4.2	Paragraph 129 of the NPPF (2019) acknowledges that design review is one of the tools and processes for assessing the design of a scheme and there are other measures such as assessment frameworks and community workshops. The NPPF does not, however, mandate the use of the design review process for all large-scale/major proposals. It is possible for schemes to be screened for suitability for design review or other measures to assess design quality at pre-application stage or planning application stage without this being an SPD requirement. We would therefore advise this requirement is altered to be recommended best practice.	2	The council is committed to ensuring that new large scale development in the Borough is of the highest design quality and the D:SE design review process is considered an essential part of this.
4.2	This requirement imposes significant costs as well as impacting the planning timescale and should only be required where the development might have an effect on a conservation area or protected landscapes for example.	1	Noted. However, the council is committed to ensuring that new large scale development in the Borough is of the highest design quality and the D:SE design review process is considered an essential part of this.
4.3	We seek Design South East comments on many schemes of less than 100 units. This should be re-considered as there are key examples where schemes of 40-100 units where this process has added value. Should you mention the weight NPPF (2019) gives to the value of pre-app process and innovative design?	1	Noted. Guide will be amended to reflect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mandatory requirement for D:SE design review for schemes of 40-100 units in designated areas such as conservation areas. • In all other areas the council will encourage for smaller schemes (40 – 100) to use Design South East review processes to help deliver higher quality design
4.8	The community engagement envisaged by Paragraph 4.8 must be mandatory. It is pointless for it simply to be a recommendation that a developer can (and will) choose to ignore.	2	Noted. Para 4.8 to be amended to add weight to requirement for community engagement
	Whilst a development would be required to follow the requirements of the Design Guide to achieve a high standard of development and sense of place etc. there does not seem to be anything about maintaining the finished scheme. Future changes could erode the	1	Future changes to post development will have to adhere to the guidance of the design guide and may be subject to conditions on planning permission.

	carefully planned scheme and all the effort put into achieving the final the design could be lost.		
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Chapter 5: Character

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
Principle 5.1	We welcome the reference to listed buildings etc in Principle 5.1, although we suggest that “Features of historical interest” could be included as an element in part 1 of the Principle.	1	Noted. Text to be amended to include features of historic interest.
Principle 5.1	(5) can the wording be reconsidered so that biodiversity enhancement should form an integral part of this? NPPF (2019).	4	Noted. Document will be updated to reflect this
5.3	“Many Listed Buildings”... this should read “956 Listed Buildings and structures. This includes 23 Grade I and 72 Grade II* Listed buildings and structures”	1	Noted. These additional details will be added.

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Chapter 6: Layouts

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
	Thames Water support the creation of more public realm as long as 24/7 access is retained to our water supply/sewerage infrastructure e.g. manholes, which have historically been located within the highway. At present Thames Water can access their water supply/sewerage network infrastructure via normal roadworks / parking suspensions and seek assurance that any proposals will not create additional access restrictions.	1	Noted.
	Numbering paragraph error 6.1-6.5	3	Noted. Errata will be fixed

6.1	Advice should reflect guidance set out in CIHT's 'Buses in Urban Developments' ¹ . Routes should strike an appropriate balance between catchment and directness. Stops should be located every 300 - 400m depending on service frequency and should be located so as to serve key facilities and be served by local walking route networks.	1	Noted. Chapter 6 will be amended to ensure reference to use of streets by public transport and the layout infrastructure needed to support this.
Principle 6.1	Street design should not be about vehicle movements. Streets should be designed for people – cars should be allowed; not the other way around. You make this point as a design principle but you fail to mention how you might do this? You specifically rule out cul-de-sacs, as these restrict 'flow'. They wouldn't if you allowed cycling/walking through them. This would also make cycling/walking shorter than driving (again another principle you fail to say how you would do this). You also don't talk about one-way streets. Nor changing the design principles based on the use (residential, through-routes, main road) - although 6.2 mentions a hierarchy of streets (but no mention of the actual design principles)	2	Noted. Chapter 6 will be amended to strengthen the concept of streets being designed for people and the need to connect cul-de-sac layouts through walking and cycling networks.
Principle 6.1/6.2	Section 6 must be redrafted to include connectivity for wildlife and habitats, as well as humans. In particular Principles 6.1 and 6.2 need additional points to ensure that wildlife, e.g. Common Toads accessing their breeding ponds in Riverside ward, is offered safe passage and that opportunities to connect habitats through blue/green corridors or stepping stones are taken.	2	Noted. Further opportunities for connecting wildlife and habitats will be addressed in the upcoming Green and Blue Infrastructure SPD
Principle 6.2	Support for increased tree planting	1	Noted.
Principle 6.2	In order for the public sewers and water supply network to operate satisfactorily, trees, and shrubs should not be planted over the route of the sewers or water pipes.	1	This is a specific detail that will be picked up in the forthcoming Blue Green Infrastructure SPD.
Principle 6.2	An area is often defined by the scale and quality of street furniture and whilst we agree with the concept we would like to see more detail regarding street furniture.	1	Noted. More detailed reference to high quality street furniture to be included.

Principle 6.2	To allow for a degree of flexibility and consideration of local context, we would advise that this paragraph is worded in a more positive manner	3	Noted. However, the Principle is already written in a
Principle 6.2	Principle 6.2 refers to developments using 'pressure vacuums' to create visually interesting streets, however it is not clear what is meant by this terminology. A definition of 'pressure vacuums' should be included within the Glossary to provide clarification.	2	Noted. 'pressure vacuums' will be added to the glossary.
6.3	Suggest changing wording to 'walking and cycling routes'. It is not clear why walking and cycling routes have been singled out for 'low level solar powered lighting'. Walking and cycling routes need to be adequately lit to ensure the safety and security of users. Solar lighting can be useful for wayfinding purposes in certain circumstances, but they do not provide the same levels of illumination as powered lighting and may struggle to provide illumination throughout the night, particularly in winter when cold weather and shorter days affect battery life.	1	Noted. Text will be clarified to indicate low level solar lighting relates to green infrastructure areas.
6.21	Whilst we understand the desirability of defining public/private space, where a certain form of frontage or boundary treatment is a particular characteristic of a conservation area. It is likely to be more appropriate to respect that. This point is also relevant to Principle 9.1.	1	Noted.
	We suggest that Section 6 of the Guide includes a reference to Historic England's " <i>Streets for All</i> "	1	Noted. Document will be updated to reflect this.
	The Design Guidance talks about connectivity and good roads. The roads around Maidenhead and in the town centre are a complete mess. The town centre has a variety of road surfaces all of which are broken, uneven and dangerous. This reinforces the slum appearance of Maidenhead. The development on Braywick has NO development of the road infrastructure around it. Braywick Leisure will cause total gridlock for this part of town at all times. The creation of a new town on the Golf Course will further exacerbate this because again RBWM has NO intention of developing any roads around the golf course.	1	This is considered to be a Local Plan policy matter and outside the remit of the design guide.

	States high traffic congestion in Maidenhead will get worse with Crossrail, suggests a park and ride and development further from the centre	2	This is considered to be a Local Plan policy matter and outside the remit of the design guide.
6.24	The parking requirements set out in paragraph 6.24, which require soft landscaping to be included between every three spaces in new developments, may not always be feasible if space is constrained. We consider that this should either be only applicable to new, suburban developments, where spacious parking would be expected, or that the policy is worded to enable this to be applied flexibly for town centre proposals.	1	Parking schemes in high density urban locations may need to use solutions involving undercrofts or on street provision.
	This SPD could consider making provision for Green Infrastructure (GI) within development. This should be in line with any GI strategy covering your area.	1	Green infrastructure is referenced throughout the guide and there is requirement for provision for GI in principle 7.1. Further GI detail and guidance will be provided in the upcoming green and blue infrastructure SPD.
	This SPD could consider incorporating features which are beneficial to wildlife within development, in line with paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework. You may wish to consider providing guidance on, for example, the level of bat roost or bird box provision within the built structure, or other measures to enhance biodiversity in the urban environment.	1	Noted. References to design to maintain and enhance nature will be strengthened in the document. Detailed guidance on specific design features for biodiversity enhancement will be provided in the upcoming green and blue infrastructure SPD
	Landscape characterisation and townscape assessments, and associated sensitivity and capacity assessments provide tools for planners and developers to consider how new development might makes a positive contribution to the character and functions of the landscape through sensitive siting and good design and avoid unacceptable impacts. For example, it may be appropriate to seek that, where viable, trees should be of a species capable of growth to exceed building height and managed so to do, and where mature trees are retained on site, provision is made for succession planting so that new trees will be well established by the time mature trees die.	1	Noted.

	Section 6 should be rewritten so as not to refer to the word "block" which has the implication of a large, and often uniform, building of poor design.	3	'city block' designs and the term 'block' are not meant with negative implications, but instead are urban design terms to describe functioning layouts in a network
6.5	Whilst we welcome the inclusion of this paragraph on green infrastructure we feel that the designing-in of green infrastructure in all new developments should be mandatory in order to contribute to measurable biodiversity net gain and to provide lasting multifunctional benefits for the Borough.	1	Noted. Section will be strengthened.
Principle 6.5	This principle is too prescriptive and it is the role of a Design and Access Statement to set out the justification for the design approach being proposed. No consideration is given to where fine grain plots may be less appropriate in design terms given the site context. As proposed, the principle merely 'restricts the scope of the designer' where a high quality design could be delivered without reinforcing a fine grain plot.	4	Fine grain plots are fundamentally important in maintaining human scale, richness and diversity in the local environment. The Principle is not worded as an absolute requirement and flexibility is provided through the design checklist (Chapter 12, Check point 10) for designers to depart from the requirement provided there is suitable justification.
6.6	We recommend amended wording: <i>"In new streets, designers will be expected to include adequate space to accommodate large street trees."</i> This statement strengthens the requirement to address space needs for trees, clarifies the requirement to accommodate large growing species that will ultimately provide many social, cultural and environmental benefits	1	Noted. Consideration will be given to ensuring space for larger trees will be provided. However, although large species are important for biodiversity, there are also issues related to overshadowing, tree deposits and undermining of foundations to be considered.
Principle 6.6	Need to ensure that boundary treatments do not obscure visibility for vehicles emerging from properties. Reference standards for sight lines (i.e. 0.6m max height around accesses).	1	Noted. Document will be updated to reflect this
Principle 6.6	There should not be a requirement in Principle 6.6 for boundaries to be at least 1 metre in height. This is unduly prescriptive. There are many ways of defining public and private space without such a requirement which will often be out of keeping with the character of the area.	4	Noted. Document will be updated to reflect this

6.7	Para 6.7, the table mentions specific building height to street width ratios. On what evidence are these ratios based? Surely this should vary according to context?	5	These ratios are derived from Table 5.2 of the Urban Design Compendium published by English Partnerships. While no longer updated, it still provides a useful resource for built environment professionals and is supported by an extensive library of case studies. The table provides minimum and maximum standards and a range of locations thus giving flexibility and variability depending on context.
Principle 6.7	There are inconsistencies between Principle 6.7 and Principle 6.9 in terms of the number of spaces where landscaping is required. Also, the proposed standard for landscaping will have major implications for the footprint of large car parks (e.g. LEGOLAND, and office parks).	1	Noted. The two principles will be made consistent.
Principle 6.7	The first criterion is restrictive requiring soft landscaping to interspace every 3 parking bays which offers limited flexibility and consideration of the site constraints (such as size and shape) and surrounding context – whether central, urban, suburban, rural or transitional. In some instances, it would be preferable to maximise opportunities to deliver usable amenity space as far as possible within the site, rather than create large parking areas – as a result of the requirement to integrate unusable areas of soft landscaped areas. In relation to the second criterion to allow for a degree of flexibility and for consideration of context, we would advise that this paragraph is worded in a more positive manner, as an example ‘active frontages should be maximised and inactive frontages minimised on the ground floor of buildings where they face the streets or other routes, in order to provide natural surveillance.’	2	Noted. Principle 1 will be given more flexibility and Principle 2 provides specific design detail to provide for active frontages. The suggested text would lose the detail that is felt necessary to achieve a good design for what are often difficult types of development to integrate successfully into a place.
Principle 6.8	Final bullet refers to ‘pavement’ which is a type of construction rather than the part of the public highway allocated to pedestrians.	1	Noted. Will be amended to refer to the public highway.

	Suggests number of issues related to parking including pressures of parking provision and standards throughout the Borough. Seen as an opportunity for RBWM Parking SPD to be updated	16	Noted.
Principle 6.11	Unsure what 'subordinate means' does this mean to existing buildings on the street frontage or not being overtly prominent in the C&A of the area. Just needs clarifying. A section in para 6.36 should also include explanation about them not being overly prominent. <u>Net</u> loss of green or blue infrastructure? May need to consider this further as arguable most rear garden development results in loss of green infrastructure as it builds on gardens. Need to mention that the impact on amenity includes any proposed accesses (I.e. a access path of backland development which runs immediately adjacent the host dwelling can cause loss of amenity due to noise and disruption.	1	Noted. Further clarification to be provided
Image 6.11	This is not necessarily a hard and unattractive street. The buildings appear to have some age and are therefore part of the heritage of the borough. The street looks slightly ad hoc because none of the original windows or doors survive. These replacements have made the terrace look uncared for, but the terrace itself has historic interest. This image should be changed to suit.	1	Noted. Description of image will be amended to reflect hardness and lack of greenery and interesting visual variation.
6.14	I have not been able to locate the Open Space Study 2019 referred to in paragraph 6.14. BBOWT would welcome the opportunity to review this document.	1	Noted. The link to the Open Space Study 2019 will be updated.
	The location of pictorial examples in this section, and elsewhere, are not identified and appear to be from outside of the Borough. It would be helpful to see some specific examples identified from within the area, at least identified as to area (e.g. Maidenhead area, Horton and Wraybury area).	1	Due to the sheer volume of images, there are images that are not located in the borough in order to display the best examples and illustrations which are not always found locally
6.17	We wish to emphasise in relation to car parking and other forms of hard standing that embedding green infrastructure in design goes beyond 'softening' the appearance; design should take every opportunity to make features multifunctional, such as incorporating permeable paving which allows for direct surface drainage and small	1	Noted. These concepts will be picked up in detail in the forthcoming Green & Blue Infrastructure SPD.

	plants to grow in gaps, as well as providing a suitable surface for vehicle parking.		
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Chapter 7: Built form

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
Principle 7.1	Principle 7.1 is simply an encouragement for developers to over-develop sites. Prescribing the "highest density possible" is neither consistent with the NPPF which requires the efficient use of land nor Policy HO5 of the BLPSV.	4	Noted. Para 1 text will amended to reflect NPPF wording.
Principle 7.1	The openness of the Green Belt is a matter of planning policy and any proposed developments within the Green Belt will need to give due consideration to the requirements of The Framework/ Local Policy. As such, this element of the principle is not required with the Design Guide. Consideration can be given to the local character, the environment and the appearance of the area which would be explored through a Design and Access Statement in any event. That said, reference needs to also be made to the sustainability achieving the highest density possible especially in the most sustainable locations in line with para 122 of The Framework.	3	Noted. Reference to Green Belt to be removed.
Principle 7.1	Further clarification is also required under Point 2 in relation to the definition of 'higher intensity and quantifying the term 'generous' in terms of green infrastructure provision. This has not been quantified and should be considered against the existing open spaces provision within a locality to ensure that an efficient use of land is achieved in sustainable locations where higher density and intensity of development is likely to be more appropriate.	3	Noted. Text will be amended to refer to standards to be set out in the forthcoming green/blue infrastructure SPD.
Image 7.2	Is this the image which needs to be used? Those balconies are a poor example of design where we failed to deal with how they look underneath. What about the flats north of Kidswell Park?	1	This image is about mixed use in a tall building and is considered appropriate. However, images will be re-evaluated in any further potential review of the SPD.

Principle 7.2	In point 2- You need include something about justification for similar tenures maybe considered appropriate for certain specialist facilities. I'm talking about homeless bedsits, YHA accommodate of bespoke housing for certain groups.	1	Text to be amended to allow for greater flexibility
Principle 7.2	It is not considered to be of benefit to introduce additional uses if these would not be viable and result in empty units. There is little to be gained from creating space for which there is no demand. Therefore it proposed that the wording of this principle is changed to allow for the circumstances where this may be unviable due to the current market.	3	Text to be amended to allow for greater flexibility.
Principle 7.3	Would argue that building lines forms part of layout and should be moved in section 6- after principle 6.5. In any case it's not just about set back, it is more about how developments forward of established building line disruption the street frontage and appear overtly prominent.	1	No change proposed. Section considered to sit more comfortably in Section 7.
Principle 7.4	We recommend that Paragraph 4 of Principle 7.4 is re-worded to refer to dual aspect accommodation being encouraged for all types of development, unless justification is provided for otherwise. This would ensure that the Principle allows for an appropriate degree of flexibility.	1	The current wording is considered appropriate and sufficiently flexible.
Principle 7.4	Active solar gain should be mandatory on any new residential development. There is no excuse for not including this.	1	Noted. Reference will be made to active solar technology.
Principle 7.5	There is no reference to the inclusion of green roof features to enhance biodiversity in high rise buildings.	1	Noted. Document will be updated to reflect this and the Tall Buildings Strategy and emerging tall building policy.
Principle 7.5	Principle 7.5 should be brought into line with 7.19.	1	Noted. Text to be updated to ensure consistency between Principle, paragraph, Tall Building Strategy and emerging policy
Principle 7.5	The second paragraph here could be interpreted as encouraging the erection of buildings up to 10 storeys high in Windsor and Eton town centres. Assuming that this is not what is intended, some stronger qualification is necessary, making it clear that in Conservation Areas and other places close to heritage assets, development on this scale is	1	Text to be made consistent with Tall Building Strategy and emerging policy

	unlikely to be approved. Some increases in height may be acceptable even in sensitive historic environments but are likely to be limited to a single additional storey and will need to be very carefully considered to ensure that the additions are not harmful to nearby heritage assets or to the character of historic town centres.		
Principle 7.5	This principle states that higher buildings (mid-storey) will generally be acceptable in urban locations such as local and town centre environments. Building heights should be informed by their context. There may be sites in urban locations where tall buildings may not be appropriate and sites in other locations which could accommodate height and where it may be appropriate to do so. We would advise that this sentence is reworded to omit the reference to tight urban and town centre locations and make it clear applications for taller buildings will be assessed on a case by case basis and local context and character taken into account.	2	Text to be made consistent with Tall Building Strategy and emerging policy
Principle 7.5	The suggestion that building heights should be 3+ storeys in the town centre is considered to be modest and unambitious. Given the significant land constraints of the borough resulting from the large amount of the borough that sits in the Green Belt and the introduction of Crossrail to Maidenhead which will enhance its sustainability it is considered that the Council should be actively encouraging higher density developments in Maidenhead Town centre which will inevitably lead to an increase in storey heights. This section of the document and the associated principle 7.5 are currently negatively worded and give the impression that higher density development will be permitted as an exception to the rule. It is considered that this is a clear conflict with Section 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework which promotes the effective use of land and at paragraph 119 requires local authorities to be proactive in helping to bring forward land that may help meet development needs.	2	Text to be made consistent with Tall Building Strategy and emerging policy
7.5	Supports buildings of 3+ storeys in town centres, but Principle 7.5 allows heights above 3 storeys in tight urban locations such as local	1	Text to be made consistent with Tall Building Strategy and emerging policy

	and town centre environments (with qualifications). This will allow heights above 4 stories in both Sunninghill and Ascot.		
7.39, 7.41 Principles 7.6, 7.9 and 7.11	We welcome Principles 7.6, 7.9 and 7.11. We also welcome paragraphs 7.39 and 7.41, although we suggest that this sub-section on architectural detailing could include a reference to taking cues from historic buildings.	1	Noted. Text to be amended to refer to historic buildings
	This design guide gives no comfort in respect of building work conducted without planning permission, and for which retrospective planning is then demanded by enforcement. Buildings and boundary walls erected by this process, have been allowed to remain despite opposition on grounds of these design principles.	2	This guide does not touch upon planning enforcement issues
Principle 7.7	This principle is too restrictive and seeks to stifle innovation by indicating that all development should appear the same as the existing character. The PPG is clear that innovative design should not be discouraged with para 126 of The Framework recognising that there should be a degree of a variety for design. The drafting of Points 1 and 3 directly conflict. The principle requires clarification or should be removed.	1	Adequate protection for innovative roof form is considered to have been provided in Bullet point 1. No change considered necessary.
Principle 7.8	I personally think it would be useful to include a chart with internal space standards i.e. minimum size for a bedroom, living room etc.	1	The National Space Standards have been referred to in Principle 7.8 and as these may change over time, it is not considered appropriate or necessary to include the current standards in the SPD.
Principle 7.8	The principle seeks to introduce residential space standards as a new policy requirement that goes beyond those in the Council's adopted or emerging local plans. Paragraph 008 (Reference ID: 61-008-20190315) of the NPPG (2019) states 'supplementary planning documents (SPDs) should build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted local plan. As they do not form part of the development plan, they cannot introduce new planning policies into the development plan. They are however a material consideration in decision making. They should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development.' Reference to	4	The National Space Standards are Government guidance on minimum acceptable living spaces. It is not considered inappropriate to refer to them.

	national space standards should therefore be omitted from the SPD on the basis that it is contrary to Government guidance to introduce such requirements as part of an SPD and there is no evidence that the Council has followed the necessary steps set out in the NPPG that must be followed to justify the introduction of space standards.		
	We strongly support the idea of maintaining the norm of 2-storey (occasionally 3) in rural and suburban areas. We agree that Town centre heights can be more varied, subject to certain conditions, but that upper storeys should be set back wherever possible.	1	Noted
	Our preferred approach would be for the Design SPD to contain a very clear statement that the Borough expects affordable and/or social housing to be tenure blind and completely indistinguishable from any other type of housing in terms of design e.g. styles, materials, finishes, parking allocation, amenity space, minimum room sizes etc. Such a statement really would go some way to convincing us that RBWM is truly committed to delivering what residents want and need.	3	This is a matter that will be picked up in detail in the forthcoming affordable housing SPD.
Principle 7.9	Include specific reference to features such as bird and bat nest boxes, and swift bricks.	1	Para 7.4 already refers to bat, swift and bird boxes. It is not considered necessary to repeat them in the Principle as they are only several examples of a range of features that can be used to encourage biodiversity.
7.10	Paragraph 7.10 shows pictorial example of building lines, but these are confusing in the context of paragraph 7.10 which suggests that variations from the building line can be encouraged in certain circumstances.	2	Para 7.10 states the occasional variation from a common front building line may provide opportunities, whilst the picture (figure 7.1.) displays a typical common front building line
Principle 7.11	This principle is onerous and overly-prescriptive and does not allow for new ideas or concepts to be explored through the design process. It is considered that references to chimneys be removed as these can be a feature and contribute to the streetscene without an internal fireplace being provided. In addition, in terms of materials, the quality and finishing of materials is constantly evolving and as such specifying requirements for timber weatherboarding is not justified given there	2	Reference to brick vs timber cladding will be deleted. It is considered wasteful and disingenuous to have stick-on chimneys with no associated functioning fireplace. Accordingly, no change to this text proposed.

	may be alternative appropriate materials that represent a better alternative for a scheme.		
7.13	7.13 should be redrafted. Climate change is a real and pressing emergency. Where solar panels can be fitted they should be whether or not they are "detrimental in appearance." It appears here that RBWM considers appearance as more important than mitigating climate change which is an unusual approach.	1	Solar panels can have a very detrimental impact on the appearance of the street scene and visual amenity. It is important that this important technology does not undermine local character, particularly in sensitive historic environments. Text to be amended to include reference to historic environments.
7.19	Building heights - very little is made of the impact of this on heritage issues and context.	2	Reference to be made to Tall Buildings Study
7.19	Well-designed buildings should respond to the local character, buildings with a setback may not be suitable in every location, in particular where there is a consistent scale and form. We would advise a caveat is included to make clear that set backs will be encouraged where they are appropriate.	1	Noted. Text to be amended to refer to encouragement of setbacks where appropriate.
	I am very pleased to see you are taking note of the positioning of new high rise buildings with regard for sunlight and green spaces and are considering climate change and the need to cut down on energy thus using more natural light, however very tall buildings would have a massive negative impact on natural light for the existing buildings and indeed the lower floors of high rise buildings.	1	Noted
7.24	We object to this paragraph. This is too prescriptive and does not reflect the different floorplate requires for different uses. There is a still a requirement for RBWM to plan for offices, care homes and retail and such a restrictive policy will not allow for high quality mixed use developments to come forward where larger floorplates will be required. Such a design approach will restrict certain forms of development coming forward in locations where they are acceptable, or where an applicant has justified the requirement. In addition, where a proposed use requirement a greater requirement for bulk and massing to address its operating requirements, appropriate	1	The paragraph provides examples of how large footplates can be integrated into fine grain environments. This calls for innovation and a local bespoke response rather than inserting standardised templates into an area with no regard for the local environment. No change proposed.

	design responses can be achieved that will preserve neighbouring amenity and can create visual interest in the street scene. As proposed, this would stifle innovative design and undermine the delivery of alternative uses in appropriate locations.		
7.26	We suggest that this wording could be strengthened along the lines of “developers will be expected to demonstrate that all opportunities for incorporating green infrastructure on roof spaces have been considered.”	1	Text to be strengthened as suggested
7.34	We consider that the encouragement that dwellings be designed to Lifetimes Homes standards represents a ‘policy’. The Principle does not ‘build upon’ policies in the Local Plan but instead establishes a standalone requirement which has not been tested.	1	The text is written as encouragement rather than a prescription. Reference is also made in emerging policy to homes needing to be adaptable to take account of changing life circumstances. No change required.
7.38	This paragraph should read as follows “developments can take a contemporary or traditional approach, but should be sympathetic to local character or street scene”	1	Additional clarification to be added.
7.39	Consider that the wording of this paragraph is very open to interpretation and that because ‘pastiche’ is such a loaded term, it should be avoided.	1	No change considered necessary.
7.40	Whilst we welcome the sentiment with which this statement is intended, we feel it is overly narrow in scope and not very ambitious. Biodiversity features that can be embedded into the built form are many and varied, serve many ecological functions (beyond just artificial roosting or nesting sites for birds and bats) and recommendations should be location- and context-specific. Accordingly we recommend this statement is modified along the lines of “Developers are encouraged to take every opportunity to embed features that encourage biodiversity into building design.”	1	Agree. Text to be amended.

Chapter 8: Amenity

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
Table 8.1	The table refers to 2 storey developments in both categories. Needs clarification	2	Table to be amended to clarify that 2 storeys only sits in first row.
Table 8.1	The 10m front to front distance is not necessarily compatible with the street enclosure proportions on page 32 which requires less than this for a mews for example.	1	This table is described as Rule of Thumb so not prescriptive. Text in 3 rd para in Distance section to be amended to refer to mews type development.
Principle 8.1	Principle 8.1 is inconsistent with the preceding text. An adequate distance is a pre-requisite and should not be traded away by developers using other design solutions such as obscure glass.	1	The principle relates to maintaining visual privacy. Separation distances and obscure glazing are two possible tools for maintaining visual privacy and it will depend on site and development specifics as to which tools are best for that situation. There is no trade-off. No change required.
Principle 8.1	It is considered that with modern day living and the requirement for an efficient use of land on development sites, there may be circumstances where separation distances may not be achievable. As such, it should be explicit that this is a guide and there may be circumstances where deviation from these distances is acceptable. Further clarification needs to be given to this principle. Obscure glazing may be appropriate depending on the number of windows serving that room and the purpose of it being proposed.	1	The principle relates to maintaining visual privacy. Separation distances is one possible tools for maintaining visual privacy. No change required.
Principle 8.1	8.1 should also reference access to nature and biodiversity as part of whole public benefit amenity. Health & wellbeing – this is beyond just “amenity space”. There are national guidance targets on access to natural open space distances Natural England’s greenspace standard	1	Principle relates to maintaining visual privacy. It would not be appropriate to include nature and biodiversity in the Principle.
Principle 8.2	Principle 8.2 requires that all habitable rooms in new residential development should maintain at least one window with adequate outlook to external spaces. Whilst this is aspirational, it may not always be feasible in practice, particularly for new town centre	4	A habitable room without windows to external spaces is not aspirational, it is essential for human health and well-being. It is also important that external features are

	developments. Therefore, we are of the opinion that greater flexibility should be included to take account of site-specific constraints which may face developments in town centres.		not so overbearing to reduce light or visual interest. Further clarification to be added.
Principle 8.3	With regards to daylight and sunlight, Principle 8.3 (4) states “Developments should not result in occupants of neighbouring dwellings or nearby public realm social spaces suffering from a material loss of daylight and sun access”. We are of the opinion that this policy should refer to new developments being assessed in accordance with the BRE guidance and should take account of the site’s context. We consider it to be arbitrary to apply the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) percentage of no less than 27% across all habitable rooms in all development contexts, particularly given paragraph 123(c) of the NPPF which states that local authorities should take a flexible approach to daylight and sunlight where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site.	2	No change considered necessary. The explanatory text and Principle is flexible and it is important that new development does not erode existing daylight and sunlight access as these are important to human health and wellbeing.
Principle 8.4	It is imperative to include the need for hedgehog highways via suitable holes in fences between adjoining gardens to enable them to work their way around housing estates.	1	This is a detailed biodiversity matter that would not be appropriate to cover in this principle.
Principle 8.4	Treat bin and cycle storage separately. Add ‘...where it is not provided within the main building, garage or outbuilding’ to the bullet about cycle parking.	1	There will be greater guidance on cycle storage/parking in the emerging Parking SPD
8.4 / Table 8.1	This table sets generic/prescriptive separation distances for residential development to avoid harmful amenity impacts from new development. A rear to rear measurement of 26-30m is excessive in general and offers limited degree of flexibility and consideration of context.	4	As stated, table 8.1 is a generic table used as a ‘rule of thumb’ for separation distances.
Principles 8.5-8.7	Whilst supportive of the aspiration to provide amenity space for residential accommodation and separate outdoor space for employment uses, in practice, it may not be feasible to provide this quantum when delivering high density, mixed-use, development on constrained town centre sites. We therefore recommend that these policies are amended to allow for flexibility to be introduced where	4	These are minimum standards. Recent events have shown how important the provision of outdoor space for people and biodiversity is vital to health and wellbeing. Erosion of these standards would be unacceptable.

	site constraints or other site-specific considerations do not permit this amount of private, communal or open space to be provided.		
	Can we add something about overbearing impact? Just because a development accords with the above it is not to say that it may not still result in an overbearing and visually intrusive impact?	1	Overbearing and visually intrusive impact is noted in principle 8.2
Principle 8.5	Section 3 needs to include wider justification for why balconies may not be used- for instance they may over hang the highway and create delivery vehicle issues or for microclimate issues. –can this wording please be re-considered.	2	Balconies in flatted developments provide necessary outdoor amenity space which give positive health opportunities to habitants and therefore take priority
Principle 8.6	Part 1 of Principle 8.6 may not be appropriate and is not always going to be viable in certain locations. This could apply to development in town centre locations. It is considered that some flexibility should be introduced into this principle and consideration be taken of the accessibility of nearby public amenity space.	2	These are minimum standards. Recent events have shown how important the provision of outdoor space for people and biodiversity is vital to health and wellbeing. Erosion of these standards would be unacceptable.
8.11	This paragraph makes reference to the vertical sky component test for daylight tests but does not mention the other tests contained in the BRE's 'Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice' that can be used to assess the impacts of daylight. We would advise that this sentence is reworded to make it clear that daylight assessments should conform to current/up to date BRE guidance.	1	Agreed. Text to be amended.

Chapter 9: Curtilage & utility development

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
Fig 9.1	Fig 9.1 doesn't support low railings in villages, yet they are a popular feature in Sunninghill.	1	Figure 9.1 is to illustrate just some of the potentially suitable options for boundary treatments
Fig 9.1	Point 5: It is misleading to specify the exact brick bond as this may not be appropriate in all contexts, especially historic contexts when the existing type of brick bond will vary and could be really important in demonstrating the historic character of the street. It is suggested that the reference to "English garden wall bond" is removed.	1	Noted. The figure is titled 'potentially acceptable forms of boundary treatment' and is not prescriptive. Principle 9.1 refers to the need for boundary treatments to reflect the character of development and surrounding context. However, the Principle will be amended to reference historic environments and positive character.
Principle 9.1	It is considered that there is no evidence to demonstrate that such fencing is not acceptable. Further clarification is required on this matter.	1	Hard boundary treatments cause inactive frontages that negatively impacts the street scene
Paras 9.2 and 9.3	Paragraphs are identical – need to delete one and re-number the rest.	1	Noted. One of the Paragraphs to be deleted and re-numbering to take place.
	The following paragraph should be included in the Guide: <i>"It is the responsibility of a developer to make proper provision for surface water drainage to ground, water courses or surface water sewer. It must not be allowed to drain to the foul sewer, as this is the major contributor to sewer flooding."</i>	1	This is a detail that would be expected to be covered in conditions on a planning application
Principle 9.2	Principle 9.2 states that all new development should be provided with on-plot space for bin and cycle storage. However, it is not clear how this would work in terms of apartment buildings. This principle should be amended to state that bin and cycle storage needs to be provided at an appropriate proximity to the relevant plot and should recognise	1	Bin and cycle storage for flats would be expected to be provided on-plot. If they are not on-plot, this would imply that they would be provided in the public realm which would be unacceptable.

	that private refuse collections have different requirements to Local Authority collection requirements.		
Principle 9.3	Any areas of hardstanding need to be considered in light of other technical considerations that would guide a proposed development. Hardstanding may be required as part of other works besides a soft landscape scheme and therefore is overly restrictive.	1	Noted, text to be amended to “integrated in soft landscaping”
Principle 9.4	This is a technical requirement and such a principle is overly prescriptive. Such a principle could affect the layout of new dwellings. We do not support this principle.	1	Provision of utilities is an important design consideration as poorly designed and located utilities infrastructure can have an overly significant negative impact on the appearance and quality of a development and the streetscene. No change proposed.
Image 9.4	Replace the photograph with an alternative design showing more traditional horizontal storage solutions.	1	Image is just an example and is not prescriptive.
9.13	Include further guidance to state that cycle parking should not be located so that it is tucked away out of sight. Instead, it should be located close to property entrances such that it is at least as convenient as car parking and that convenient access routes should be provided from the street. Cycle parking designs should be sympathetic to the design of the building and use appropriate materials. Indicate that developers should refer to the Parking SPD for additional guidance on the design and layout of cycle parking.	1	Para 13 to be revised in light of suggestions
	All boundary treatments should allow access for small wildlife, i.e. holes large enough for hedgehogs but not dogs.	2	This is a detailed matter for the forthcoming SPD which includes biodiversity

Chapter 10: Further guidance for householder development

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
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Principle 10.2	'Front extensions should not protrude forward from the main building line, or be prominent in the street scene'. I feel that this statement is ambiguous. We don't normally support front extensions. Do you mean side extensions should not protrude forward of the principle building line?	1	Principle to be amended to refer to main street building line.
Principle 10.4	Can acceptable indicative depths for terraced, semi-detached and detached properties be suggested? It can be useful especially when limiting development on small terraced dwellings.	1	This approach is considered too prescriptive.
Principle 10.5	I think no 2 could be worded better. I feel like residents will struggle with this.	1	Figures 10.3-10.5 are there to illustrate the points in this principle for clarity.
10.18 & Principle 10.5	The section on roof alterations which starts at paragraph 10.18. It is not clear to us if this section is meant to apply to all roof dormers or only to those on the front elevation of a property. If it applies to front dormer windows only, then the stipulations at Principle 10.5 look appropriate. If, however, the section is designed to cover rear dormers as well, we would consider them too restrictive.	1	Rear dormers can have detrimental impacts in terms of character and overlooking and, if visible from public spaces, on streetscenes. As such it is important that they are included in the text. Para 10.19 and Principle 10.5 to be amended to make clear that it refers to all locations.

Chapter 11: Further guidance for specific locations

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
Principle 11.1	Point number three: a bullet point could be added to state that the materials should not be of low quality. Point number four: Even if the building needs to be raised, a contemporary design is not always appropriate. In Conservation Areas, there is still a presumption that traditional materials and design will be used to maintain the character and appearance of the area. Bisham Conservation Area is a good example of people seeking to alter their properties near the river in a modern way which is not appropriate to the character of the area.	1	Noted. Bullet points to be amended to take account of comments.
Principle 11.2	The contextual text that precedes this includes 6 bullet points setting out specific guidelines; however the wording of the Principle itself is	1	Point 1 of the Principle to be extended to be more specific taking account of Para 11.4.

	vague and woolly. We all know what will be argued by developers and planning consultants in these circumstances!		However, Para 11.4 is not an exhaustive list of design solutions and it will not be possible to ensure that the Principle covers every possibility.
11.12	The Design Guide repeatedly refers to “landscape character” as a key element for consideration in design (e.g. para. 11.12). However the existing Landscape Character Assessment for the Borough is out of date (2004). An updated LCA is required to inform the strategic objectives for landscape design and conservation in the Borough alongside the forthcoming Borough Local Plan.	1	Noted.
	This chapter only refers in detail to flood plain. We would like to see more detailed consideration to be given to green belt, setting of the Thames and conservation areas as these take up such a significant area within both the Borough and Bray Parish.	2	Noted.
	Proportionately considerable space is given to innovative approaches to flood-risk areas (eg floating houses etc) – surely this would affect a very small proportion of the local residents who could afford both homes with river frontage and the cost of these solutions?	1	Noted. The waterways are considerable to the identity of the borough, and so design for flood risk areas will need some form of representation

Chapter 12: Guidance for non residential development

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
	Meeting national guidelines – Would this include school guidance from the DfE.	1	Yes
	Would be helpful to make a stronger separation between things that really apply to non-housing developments	1	Noted.
	Could education buildings of 3 storeys or less be exempt from some of the guidance?	1	The design guide aims to be relevant to all types of developments and therefore no development should feel exempt from the guidance.

	This could usefully include a reference to the Maidenhead Business and Shopfront Design Guide (2013)	1	Noted. The reference will be provided
	The Design SPD contains very little detail on non-residential design, and where it is included it is not particularly helpful. And yet non-residential design is frequently just as, or even more, controversial than residential design by virtue of its size and bulk and potential impact, especially when residential and commercial development is co-located in town centres or on the edge of settlements	4	The non-residential guidance is additional to that provided in the SPD and this is stated in Para 12.1. However, it is accepted that further clarification on this point would be useful and additional text about the relevance of other chapters will be provided at Para 12.1
Figure 12.1	This is overly prescriptive. The Design Guide should not be dictating how the internal layout of proposed retail units should be laid out. This is not a planning matter.	1	Figure 12.1 is an illustration only to indicate various ways an active frontage could be provided. It is not prescriptive.

Chapter 13: Design checklist

Specific reference	Summary of comments	Number suggesting	RBWM response
	The checklist is very useful, but also very onerous for school applications, in that many lines would be NA, as it is geared towards housing.	1	Many of the requirements would be applicable to educational developments and it is important that designers have considered all aspects of the design that the Council considers important to creating high quality places. Where they are not applicable it would be acceptable to tick the checklist column marked N/A.
	The check list approach has real risks. It is essential that it does not become simply a tick box exercise. The Guide must emphasise that it is the underlying principles that must be complied with and that a tick in the box does not, of itself, indicate compliance with the requirements of the Guide. It must be made clear that developers must state how the requirements of the Guide have been met and	1	Noted. This will be a matter for the DM team to enforce

	that RBWM will verify this and will not simply rely on a tick (or cross) in a box. The check list must be an aid and not an end in itself.		
	The design checklist is not required and merely reiterates the requirements of a Design and Access Statement. This approach has time and cost implications for applicants and is unduly onerous given such matters will be demonstrated through application material.	1	The design checklist is a tool for developers and the DM team to ensure that all the principles of good design for the Royal Borough have been considered and incorporated into design at an early stage.
	A separate section on biodiversity is needed in the checklist to ensure that net gain in biodiversity can be achieved. It might refer to the intended Blue and Green Infrastructure Plan, or better yet Local Biodiversity Action Plan objectives (which has been written by Wild Maidenhead). The checklist also needs to include good lighting design that the advantages of Dark Skies for wildlife can be realised where appropriate.	2	The design checklist is a general guide checklist for developers to apply the principles provided in the document. The Upcoming Green and Blue infrastructure will be able to elaborate on biodiversity net gain.

Table of proposed changes to BWDG to enable adoption

April 2020

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Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
Front Cover	-	-	-	Delete text “Regulation 13 consultation draft February 2019” Replace with “Regulation 14 April 2020”
Information on consultation	2	-	-	Delete all text and replace with “ This SPD was adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document on XX April 2020 under powers delegated to the Head of Planning.
Table of Contents	3	-	-	Page numbers to be updated
1	7	Table 1.1		For non residential column amend as follows: S – Small – “New single buildings, extensions, mezzanine floors or infill development up to GIA 1000sqm M – Medium – New total floorspace of more than 1000sqm up to 5000sqm

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				L – Large – Total new floorspace more than GIA 5000sqm”
1	7	Para 1.9		Delete last sentence and replace with: “An up-to-date list of all the applicable design related policy and guidance can be viewed on the Council’s website at _____ web reference to be inserted
1	7 & 8	1.10 & 1.11	-	Delete paragraphs and replace with the following: 1.10 This document is a borough wide design guide that has been prepared as a supplementary planning document (SPD) under Regulation 14 of the Town & Country Planning Regulations (Local Plan) 2012, as amended. The Guide supports policies within the adopted Local Plan ³ and has also been prepared to support emerging policies in the draft Borough Local Plan. ⁴
1	8	Footnote 4	-	Delete existing footnote and replace with the following: The emerging Borough Local Plan is currently at Examination.
1	8	1.13	-	Delete “residential” from the sentence.
1	9	-	-	Insert new heading and paragraphs after existing 1.20 as follows: “Other Government guidance”

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				<p>In addition to policy the government has recently published a series of guidance documents on design. The most recent include the 2019 National Design Guide and the 2020 Living with Beauty - Promoting health, well-being and sustainable growth. The 10 principles of the National Guide have helped inform the local design principles set out in this document.</p> <p>Other national design guidance of importance include Manual for Streets, Secured by Design and Active Design - Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity.</p> <p>Re-number the following paragraphs.</p>
3	17	Creating a sense of Place	-	<p>Amend 3rd sentence as follows:</p> <p>“Despite the rich diversity of places, the over-riding themes of Royalty and history, the presence of the River Thames ...”</p>
4	20	Para 4.1	-	Remove 4.1 at beginning of first sentence
4	20	Para 4.1	-	Delete last sentence and replace with “No matter the type of development all small, medium and large schemes will be expected to demonstrate that they have followed all of the steps.”
4	20	Para 4.2	-	After first sentence add the following:

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council requires the design of large projects (see table 1.1) to have been the subject of review by Design South East (D:SE). There is also a mandatory requirement for D:SE design review for schemes of 40-100 units in designated areas such as conservation areas. Developers of other medium sized schemes will also be encouraged to consider D:SE review to facilitate achievement of good local design.
4	22	Para 4.8	-	<p>Amend first sentence as follows:</p> <p>“Developers and designers will be expected to seek the views and opinions of the local community to help inform preparation of proposals.”</p>
5	24	Para 5.3	-	<p>Amend second sentence as follows:</p> <p>“The borough has 27 conservation areas, 956 Listed Buildings and structures (including 23 Grade I and 72 Grade II* Listed buildings and structures) and a range of international wildlife designations</p>
5	26	-	5.1	<p>Add the following to the bullet point list in para 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Features of historical interest
5	26	-	5.1	<p>Amend last sentence of Para 5 as follows:</p>

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				“Particular consideration should be given to improving views of the waterbody and public access to it, as well as creating a soft interface to provide enhanced biodiversity and extend the green corridor network.
6	29 - 46	Paragraph number	-	Paragraph numbering incorrect as repeats numbering on page 28. Para 6.1 on page 29 should be Para 6.6. Amend all subsequent para numbering.
6	29	New para 6.7	-	Delete first sentence of new para 6.7 and replace with the following: Where new street spaces are being created these are expected to be designed for people and be highly connected, especially through walking and cycling routes. They should demonstrate excellence in design. In historic areas developers should also draw upon Historic England’s “ <i>Streets for All</i> ”. In existing poorly connected places designers of schemes should look for opportunities to improve the number and quality of connections.
6	29	New para 6.8	-	Amend new para 6.8 as follows: New footpaths/cycleways should provide high quality connections, acting as corridors for green and/or blue infrastructure. Routes through green infrastructure should generally be lit by low level solar powered lighting.

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
6	31	New Para 6.10	-	Amend 4th sentence as follows: “Designers will be expected to ...”
6	32	New para	-	Delete 4 th sentence and replace with the following: In new streets, designers will be expected to include space for street trees, including adequate space to accommodate large street trees.
6	34	Image 6.11	-	Amend description to: “A hard street lacking greenery.”
6	35	-	6.2	Insert additional bullet point <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street furniture will be expected to be high quality that is of a scale and design that fits in with positive local character, particularly historical references.
6	35	-	6.2	Remove bullet point 6 and replace with the following: Strengthen the green/blue infrastructure network of the borough and enhance wildlife and biodiversity. Trees, vegetation, gardens and open spaces should be used to create a strong, soft green character to streets. Development should not

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				result in the loss of existing street trees and developers should look to include street trees wherever possible.
6	36	Footnote 8	-	Amend footnote as follows: Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead – Open Space Study; 2019 https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200209/planning_policy/489/open_space_study
6	41	-	6.6	Amend para 1 as follows: In all new developments the boundaries between public and private space need to be clearly defined by either planting, walls, railings or fencing. Boundary will need to be of good quality and enhance green infrastructure wherever possible. Around access points, boundary treatments should not obscure visibility for vehicles emerging from properties and will need to provide for adequate site lines.
6	42	-	6.7	Amend Para 1, second sentence of bullet point 1 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All parking arrangements should be softened with generous soft landscaping to enhance the borough’s green infrastructure networks. No design should group more than 3 residential parking spaces together without intervening landscaping unless an alternative, justified approach

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				would provide a better quality contribution towards green infrastructure, useable amenity space and visual amenities.
6	42	-	6.8	Amend Para 2, Bullet point 2 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Result in vehicles overhanging the public highway or...”
6	46	New para after old Para 6.36	-	Add a new paragraph as follows: It is therefore important that backland development remains subordinate to existing buildings on the street frontage and is not overly prominent in the character and appearance of the area. It is also important that backland development does not result in a net loss of green or blue infrastructure, and that it enhances biodiversity and connects well into the surrounding area.
6	46	-	6.11	Amend as follows: All backland development should be subordinate to the existing buildings on the street frontage and not overly prominent in the character and appearance of the area. It should ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... • ... • ...

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not result in unacceptable noise and disturbance for properties adjacent to accessways serving the backland development.
7	48	Para 7.3	-	Remove full stop after “encouraged” in first sentence.
7	48	-	7.1	<p>Amend para 1 as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> “Housing development should be sustainable and seek to make effective use of land without: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compromising local character, the environment (including biodiversity) or the appearance of the area.”
7	48	-	7.1	<p>Amend Para 2 as follows:</p> <p>All development will be expected to provide green infrastructure in accordance with the latest council standards. Provision of generous green infrastructure provision in higher intensity locations will be particularly important for visual amenity, biodiversity and human health and wellbeing.</p>
7	48	Para 7.5	-	Add the following additional sentence at the end of the paragraph:

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				However, it is recognised that similarity of tenure may be acceptable in certain instances for specialist facilities e.g. bespoke housing for defined groups such as disabled, homeless and the elderly.
7	49	-	7.2	Amend bullet point 2 as follows: 2. “Without good design justification, development which promotes very similar tenures and sizes across the development site will be resisted.
7	50	7.13	-	Amend the 3 rd sentence as follows: The council is generally supportive of active solar micro renewable technologies where they do not have a detrimental impact on sensitive historic environments and the appearance of the building and streetscenes.
7	51	-	7.4	Add a new para after Para 2 as follows: 3. Active solar systems will be supported where they do not have a detrimental effect on the character and visual appearance of the area and on neighbour amenities. Re-number following paras as required.

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
7	52	Para 7.18 – 7.22	-	<p>Delete paragraphs and replace with the following:</p> <p>7.18 Building heights across the borough are generally low, with the majority of residential areas being 1 or 2 storeys in height (Image 7.1). This low height is a strong defining element in the character of these places and the council will seek to maintain this.</p> <p>7.19 Heights increase at town centres with notable tall buildings being Berkshire House in Maidenhead, Windsor Castle and the Ascot Racecourse Grandstand building. The borough is experiencing an increasing number of proposals for developments that are at a scale significantly above context height. This is particularly so for Maidenhead Town Centre. Such schemes have the potential to significantly alter the character of town centre areas.</p> <p>7.20 An in depth analysis of the heights of buildings across the borough can be found in the Tall Buildings Technical and Baseline Study, 2019⁹. This provides an overview of the context building heights found in the towns and villages, where there are existing tall building landmarks and information on building heights above ordnance datum. The companion Tall Buildings Strategy¹⁰ identifies potential locations for tall buildings across the borough and within Maidenhead Town Centre.</p> <p>7.21 Given the impact that tall buildings may potentially have on skylines, character, infrastructure and amenity developers will need to ensure that such development is designed carefully and is of exemplar quality. Developers should</p>

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				refer to the detailed guidance and information provided in the Tall Buildings Study, 2019 and the Tall Buildings SPD.
7	52	Figure 7.5	-	Delete figure and re-number subsequent figures.
7	52	Footnote 9	-	Delete footnote text and replace with the following: Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Tall Buildings Study - Tall Buildings Technical and Baseline Study, 2019
7	52	Footnote 10	-	Delete footnote text and replace with the following: Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Tall Buildings Study - Tall Buildings Strategy, 2019
7	53	Image 7.1	-	Move image closer to new para 7.18
	54	-	7.5	Delete existing principle text and replace with the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The council will expect building heights to help enclose the street without overwhelming it. Upper floor set backs should be used where appropriate to maintain light to public and private realms. 2. Building height should not result in adverse impacts on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skylines and the character of the area;

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties; and • Public realm environments; • The natural environment. <p>3. When considering height of new development detailed attention should be paid to context height. Tall buildings may be acceptable in certain locations provided they are of exceptional quality and comply with the location and detailed design standards set out in the Tall Buildings Study 2019 and the Tall Buildings SPD.</p> <p>4. Tall buildings will be expected to contribute at ground and upper levels to biodiversity and blue/green infrastructure networks and comply with the detailed standards set out in the Green and Blue Infrastructure SPD.</p>
7	55	Para 7.26	-	<p>Delete final sentence and replace with the following:</p> <p>In higher intensity environments, developers will be expected to demonstrate that all opportunities for incorporating green infrastructure on roof spaces have been considered.</p>
7	59	Para 7.38	-	<p>Amend first sentence of para as follows:</p>

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				“Developments can take a contemporary or traditional approach, but should be sympathetic to local character or street scene. Attention to detail is ...”
7	59	7.40	-	Delete existing paragraph and replace with the following: “Developers will be expected to incorporate features into developments to encourage biodiversity. This could include bat, swift or other bird boxes. “
7	59	7.41	-	Amend para as follows: 7.41 “The quality of new development can be spoilt by poor attention to detail. Wherever possible, designers should take cue from historic buildings and features in the area, as well as the natural environment. Careful consideration should be given...”
7	60	-	7.9	Amend Para 3 as follows: “Developers will be expected to incorporate ...”
7	62	-	7.11	Amend first bullet point as follows: Materials that need little maintenance to retain a quality appearance are preferred.
8	64	Para 8.4	-	Amend 3 rd paragraph of first bullet point as follows:

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				“Equally, in more compact contexts (e.g. in centre of towns and villages, mews arrangements or infill plots), or where ...”
8	65	Table 8.1	-	Amend second row, first column to the following: “Above 2 storeys”
8	68	-	8.2	Amend principle as follows: All habitable rooms in new residential development should maintain at least one main window with an adequate outlook to external spaces. In order to maintain visual interest and light the outlook should be attractive and not dominated by overbearing or visually intrusive man-made features such as blank walls, fences or parked cars.
8	68	Para 8.11	-	Amend 3 rd bullet point as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ensure that habitable rooms comply with current/up to date BRE guidance on daylighting, currently contained in ‘Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: a guide to good practice’.
9	78	Para 9.2	-	Delete para (it replicates para 9.3). Re-number subsequent paras.
9	79	Para 9.4	-	Add additional bullet point:

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary treatments that obscure visibility for vehicles emerging from properties.
9	79	-	9.1	<p>Amend point 1 as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> All boundary treatments will be expected to be high quality, reflect the positive character of the surrounding context and draw upon local design references, including historical references.
9	79	-	9.1	<p>Add additional point 4:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary treatments should be safe and not obscure visibility for vehicles emerging from properties.
9	82	Para 9.13	-	<p>Add following sentence on to end of para:</p> <p>Developers should refer to the Parking SPD for additional guidance on the design and layout of cycle parking.</p>
9	83	-	9.3	<p>Amend 2 sentence as follows:</p> <p>“Hardstanding that is not integrated into a soft landscaping scheme, or which”</p>
10	87	-	10.2	<p>Amend as follows:</p>

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Front extensions should not break the main street building line, or be prominent in the street scene. 2. Two storey front extensions will only be acceptable ..."
10	89	Para 10.19	-	<p>Amend para as follows:</p> <p>"Changes to roofscapes can have a detrimental impact on character, especially if they are visible in the streetscene or other public locations. As such, it is important that their design is well considered and high quality. In ..."</p>
10	91	-	10.5	<p>Amend point 1 as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roof alterations should be sympathetic and subservient to the design of the main building and not undermine the visual amenities of an area when viewed from public spaces such as streets and public open spaces. 2. All types of dormers must be ...
11	95	New para	-	<p>Add new para as follows:</p> <p>11.7 Because the wastewater network may surcharge to ground level during storm conditions all subterranean/basement development should incorporate a positive pumped device or other suitable flood prevention device to avoid the risk of sewage backflow causing sewer flooding.</p>

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
				Re-number subsequent paragraphs
11	98	-	11.1	Amend bullet point 4 in Point 3 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undermine the character of the area, including its greenness and scale.
11	98	-	11.1	Add additional bullet point to Point 3 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be of low quality materials
11	98	-	11.1	Delete point 4 and replace with: Contemporary approaches to raising buildings above flood plains will be welcomed where they are able to be sensitively integrated into the surrounding character and context. In conservation areas there will be a presumption that traditional materials and design will be used to maintain the character and appearance of the area.
11	98	-	11.1	Add new point 5 as follows: Where the design approach elevated buildings on stilts the architecture should include large openings to allow floodwaters to easily pass through.
11	98	11.14	-	

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
11	99	-	11.2	<p>Amend point 1 as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developers will be expected to fully assess the landscape character and biodiversity of the site and its context. New development and associated landscaping should fully respond to local landscape and biodiversity features and retain, incorporate and enhance these through their development proposals. Designers will be expected to pay particular attention to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Landscape character including settlement patterns, field and lane patterns, trees, hedgerows & verges, water bodies and wetlands and topography, ○ Typical species of vegetation and characteristic local habitats ○ Landscape settings of villages or existing buildings and views in and out of settlements as well as to key buildings such as church spires; ○ Historic elements; and ○ Gaps between buildings 2. New development should avoid urbanisation through highway features. This will include avoiding excessive openings onto the highway through hedgerows and soft boundaries, over-engineering of new roads, street lighting and street furniture and use of white lining. <p>Renumber subsequent points.</p>

Chapter	Page number	Paragraph, table figure or image reference	Principle No.	Proposed change
12	102	Para 12.1	-	Amend second sentence as follows: The design principles outlined in the proceeding sections of the Design Guide apply to these non residential uses and Table 2.1 in Chapter 2 provides further clarification on the applicable principles by scale of the development. In addition, this section provides further specific guidance on detailed and common design considerations around non residential uses, in particular mixed use and employment developments.
12	103	New para	-	Add new para after 12.6 as follows and renumber subsequent paras: “When considering the design of new shopfronts designers should consider locally specific guidance in neighbourhood planning documents, detailed local design guides and the Maidenhead Business and Shopfront Design Guide (2013).”
Glossary	113	Table	-	Add new definition to glossary as follows: Pressure vacuums - An opening out and closing/squeezing in of street spaces to create visual and physical interest.

Report Title:	Refreshed Homelessness Strategy Action Plan including name change
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	NO - Part I
Member reporting:	Cllr Ross McWilliams, Lead Member for Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 25 June 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Tracy Hendren – Head of Housing & Environmental Health
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

1. The report requests approval for a refreshed action plan for the homelessness strategy and changing the name of the strategy to Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy, which will continue to guide the Council's approach to the provision of homelessness and rough sleeping services in the Borough over the next three years working with partners.

1 DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves the refreshed homelessness strategy action plan and the name change to Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The strategy guides the Council's approach to the provision of homelessness and rough sleeping services in the Borough over the next three years working with all internal and external partners.
- 2.2 The updated action plan sets out how the priorities in the strategy will be achieved and this will be refreshed and updated with new actions each year.
- 2.3 The refreshed action plan for the strategy has been developed through:
 - ▣ Desktop review of homelessness statistics, trends and issues, both quantitative and qualitative.
 - ▣ Consideration of national and local policy, current and proposed.
 - ▣ Analysis of best practice from across the country.

- ▣ Engagement and discussion through a virtual focus group with partners including voluntary organisations such as Driven Forward, Salvation Army and the Windsor Homeless Project, housing providers such as Radian and Housing Solutions, health service providers, statutory agencies and Thames Valley Police.
 - ▣ Survey results from customers being supported through homelessness
- 2.4 The strategy action plan continues to set out a collaborative approach to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping over the next three years working closely with partners from the statutory and voluntary sectors.
- 2.5 The Council believes the most effective way to deal with homelessness and rough sleeping is to prevent it from happening and it places great emphasis on this approach through the provision of specialist housing advice and assistance to those in housing difficulty in the Borough.
- 2.6 The vision for this homelessness strategy is that:
'The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is a place where agencies work effectively together to support those who are or may become homeless guided by a focus on prevention and early help.'
- 2.7 The strategy focuses on working collaboratively with partners on the following five key priorities:
1. Reducing the numbers of people becoming homeless.
 2. Reducing the numbers of households in temporary accommodation and improving the quality of that accommodation.
 3. Supporting people into good quality, affordable and sustainable accommodation options.
 4. Reducing rough sleeping and supporting those who find themselves on the street.
 5. Improving the customer service provided to people approaching housing services.
- 2.8 The proposed updated actions fit within the original key priorities above, therefore the additional actions will sit within the already agreed priorities for the strategy.
- 2.9 The Council will continue to monitor delivery of the key actions in the strategy and the impact on key performance measures including:
- ▣ Number of homeless preventions per quarter.
 - ▣ Numbers of young people presenting as homeless.
 - ▣ Number of people placed into temporary accommodation.
 - ▣ Average cost of temporary accommodation.
 - ▣ All temporary accommodation passing requirements.
 - ▣ Numbers of people accommodated in private rented accommodation.
 - ▣ Number of approaches from people threatened with homelessness.
 - ▣ Producing the Housing Service Score Card with key stats and data
- 2.10 The strategy and action plan is to be reviewed, refreshed and updated on an annual basis, with the first review due at the end of 2019, this review has only just taken place in 2020 due to a large turnover of staff within the housing service. The review is both to measure performance and also to ensure that

the actions continue to be the right ones to meet the five key priorities of the strategy.

2.11 The refresh will enable the authority and its partners to make use of the latest statistical data, include any relevant good practice and reflect on ongoing relationships with partner organisations whilst ensuring RBWM;

- ☐ Continue to the deliver against the actions that are still relevant.
- ☐ Remove the actions that have been delivered against and are not ongoing.
- ☐ Include new actions emerging from the focus group, feedback responses and emerging trends.

Table 1: Options

Option	Comments
To approve the name change and refreshed actions for the homelessness strategy Recommended option	This ensures an up to date policy framework for the Council's housing services.
To not approve the name change and refreshed actions for the homelessness strategy Not recommended	This would not ensure an up to date policy framework for the Council's housing services.

3 KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Key implications of the recommendations are set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Key implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Refreshed action plan delivered	Actions not delivered	Actions delivered in line with timescales	Actions delivered in advance of timescales	N/A	March 2022

4 FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. The homelessness and rough sleeper strategy sets out how we allocate our services and resources along with our partners in both the statutory and voluntary sectors with a particular focus on early intervention and prevention. By working collaboratively we will ensure that the services offered are value for money and that we can target our resources appropriately. The costs to the Council of individual services will be managed and monitored through our usual, regular budget monitoring processes.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 imposes a duty on local housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review in their area and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on its results every five years. Housing authorities must keep their homelessness strategy under review and continue to update the actions annually to ensure they are appropriate and up to date, reflecting local need and national policy.
- 5.2 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published a Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2018 stating that they would work with the Local Government Association and local authorities so that by winter 2019, all local authorities update their strategies and rebrand them as homelessness and rough sleeping strategies.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 Key risks associated with the recommendation are shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks Uncontrolled	Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
Homelessness strategy action plan not delivered	Medium	Effective management of action plan	Low

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Consultation was carried out with key stakeholders, customers and partner agencies which informed the updating of the action plan. More information on this is set out in appendix D.

8 TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Activity	Timescale
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy refresh approved by Cabinet	June 2020
Updated action plan delivered	March 2022

9 APPENDICES

- 9.1 Appendix A – Renamed Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy including the refreshed Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan
- 9.2 Appendix B – Desk top review of homelessness statistics
- 9.3 Appendix C – Completed Equality Impact Assessment
- 9.4 Appendix D – Presentation (including high level survey results)

10 CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date issued for comment	Date returned with comments
Cllr Ross McWilliams	Lead Member for Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement	09/06/2020	12/06/2020
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	09/06/2020	09/06/2020
Russell O'Keefe	Executive Director	08/06/2020	08/06/2020
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer)	09/06/2020	12/06/2020
Hilary Hall	Director of Adult Services	09/06/2020	09/06/2020
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children Services	09/06/2020	
Nikki Craig	Head of HR and Corporate Projects	09/06/2020	
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer	09/06/2020	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	09/06/2020	10/06/2020
Louisa Dean	Communications	09/06/2020	

**Royal Borough Windsor & Maidenhead
Homelessness & Rough Sleeping
Strategy**

2018-2023

SECTION	CONTENT	PAGE
1	INTRODUCTION	
2	PURPOSE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THIS STRATEGY	
3	LEGISLATIVE AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT	
4	LOCAL CONTEXT	
5	WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?	
6	HOW WILL WE GET THERE?	
7	HOW WILL WE KNOW?	
APPENDIX A	ACTION PLAN	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out a collaborative approach to tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead over the next five years working closely with partners from the statutory and voluntary sectors.
- 1.2 The Council believes the most effective way to deal with homelessness and rough sleeping is to prevent it from happening and it places great emphasis on this approach through the provision of specialist housing advice and assistance to those in housing difficulty in the Borough.
- 1.3 An early help approach has been shown to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping but also to achieve wider outcomes such as improved health and wellbeing and better job opportunities. There is a big opportunity for all partners in the area to deliver services in different, co-ordinated ways so that a 'no wrong door' approach delivers outcomes that meet customer needs.
- 1.4 The Council will also work with partners to tackle the root causes of homelessness and rough sleeping by working with people to improve their life opportunities to prevent them from becoming homeless again in the future.

2. PURPOSE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGY

- 2.1 This strategy guides the Council's approach to the provision of homelessness and rough sleeping services in the Borough over the next five years working with its partners.
- 2.2 An action plan, see Appendix A, sets out how the priorities in this strategy will be achieved and this will be refreshed and updated with new actions each year.
- 2.3 This strategy has been developed through:
 - ▣ Homelessness review, trends and issues, both quantitative and qualitative.
 - ▣ Consideration of national and local policy, current and proposed.
 - ▣ Analysis of best practice from across the country.
 - ▣ Engagement and discussion with partners including voluntary organisations such as Brett Foundation and the Windsor Homeless Project, housing providers such as Radian and Housing Solutions, health service providers and Thames Valley Police.

3. LEGISLATIVE AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

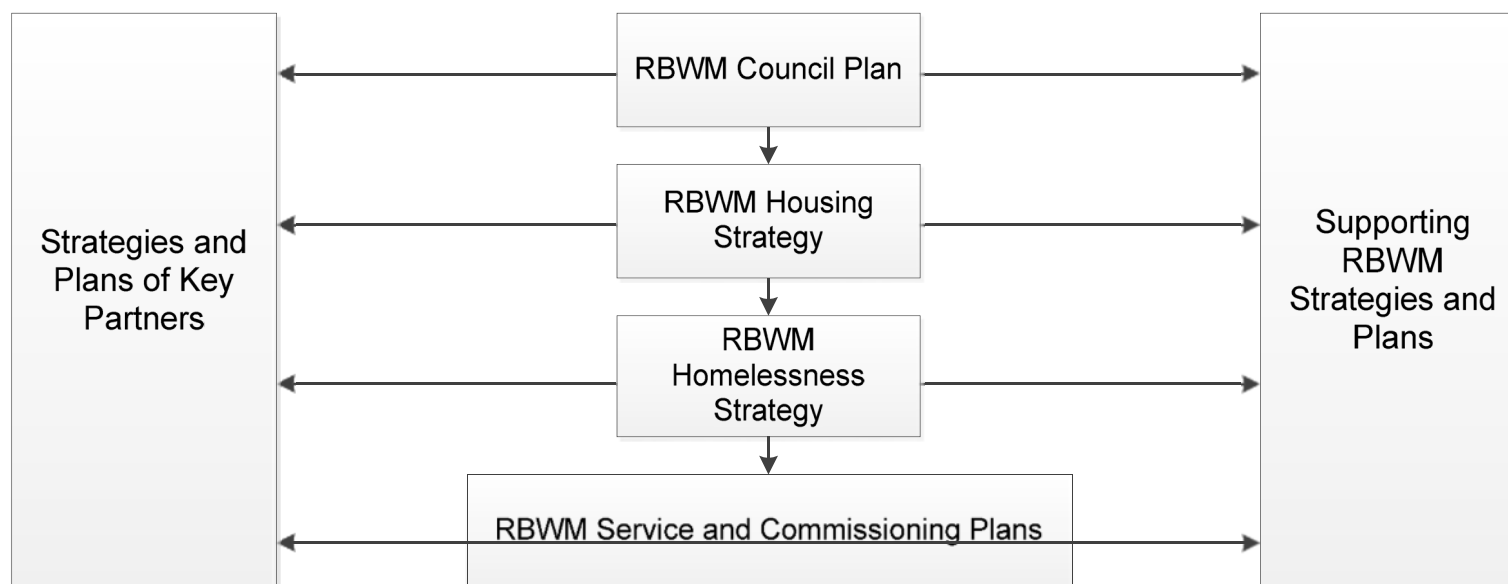
3.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 imposes a duty on local housing authorities to carry out a homelessness review in their area and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on its results every five years.

3.2 A homelessness strategy is defined in Homelessness Act 2002 s3(1) as one formulated in order to:

- a) prevent homelessness in an authority's area
- b) secure accommodation that is and will be available in that area for people who are or may become homeless; and
- c) provide support for such people or those who have been homeless and need support to prevent it recurring.

3.3 The strategic context for this strategy is set out in the diagram below:

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4 LOCAL CONTEXT

Homelessness applications, prevention and early help

- 4.1 Homeless applications and acceptances have increased in recent years and there has been a reliance on high levels of temporary accommodation. This strategy aims to address the causes and effects of homelessness, offering appropriate support and solutions to prevent and reduce homelessness through an early help approach while minimising reliance on temporary accommodation.

Rough sleeping

- 4.2 The Council carries out an annual rough sleeper count and takes action to help those identified back into secure and sustainable housing. The Council recognises that Windsor currently has specific challenges with rough sleeping. The Council is committed to preventing rough sleeping and will dedicate significant resources, working with partner organisations, to preventing rough sleeping, as well as providing support to anyone who finds themselves on the street. This includes the employment of a specialist Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) coordinator to provide intensive support and assistance to rough sleepers, the funding of supported accommodation, reconnection to home areas, and provision of support, accommodation and advice through our newly formed Rough Sleeper Pathway.

Temporary accommodation

- 4.3 The Council has previously had a high number of households in temporary accommodation. As services have improved recently this number has reduced significantly. In future the Council aims to have a small pool of good quality temporary accommodation for those who need emergency accommodation.

Private rented sector

- 4.4 There are opportunities for the private sector to play an even more important role in delivering new supply but there are serious concerns over access and affordability. This strategy aims to work with the sector, supporting landlords to deliver supply that meets required standards of management and maintenance and is accessible to people on a range of incomes in a market that is well regulated and offers appropriate protection to tenants and landlords.

Partnership working

- 4.5 There are many areas of overlap between the priorities and the successful provision of these services requires collaborative working with local public, private and voluntary services. To support this, the Council will actively engage with its partners in the development and delivery of services and encourage collaborative working wherever possible.

Allocations policy

- 4.6 An updated allocation was agreed in 2018 to ensure the legislative changes within the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, implemented on the 3rd April 2018, were adopted and included with the policy. The allocations policy sets out in detail who is eligible for housing and the priority they will receive for social housing the Council has nominations right to.

5 WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

- 5.1 This vision for this homelessness strategy is that:

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'The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is a place where agencies work effectively together to support those who are or may become homeless guided by a focus on prevention and early help.'

- 5.2 The Council will to do this by working collaboratively with our partners focusing on five key priorities:

- ▣ Reducing the numbers of people becoming homeless.
- ▣ Reducing the numbers of households in temporary accommodation and improving the quality of that accommodation.
- ▣ Supporting people into good quality, affordable and sustainable accommodation options.
- ▣ Reducing rough sleeping and supporting those who find themselves on the street.
- ▣ Improving the customer service provided to people approaching housing services.

6 HOW WILL WE GET THERE?

6.1 The Council working with our partners will carry out the following refreshed actions to achieve our priorities:

Priority 1: Reducing the numbers of people becoming homeless.	Priority 2: Reducing the numbers of households in temporary accommodation and improving the quality of that accommodation.	Priority 3: Supporting people into good quality, affordable and sustainable accommodation options.	Priority 4: Reducing rough sleeping and supporting those who find themselves on the street.	Priority 5: Improving the customer service provided to people approaching housing services.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Carry out a review to determine the potential for implementing a mediation service to assist with helping to maintain people in their existing accommodation. <input type="checkbox"/> Increase enforcement activity with landlords who maintain private rented properties in poor coordination or do not follow proper tenancy processes <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct a gap analysis of homelessness prevention education delivered through schools, colleges and youth organisations and refine the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increase partnership working with local landlords through a forum and exploring an accreditation scheme. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a smaller dedicated pool of temporary accommodation providers. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue the cyclical programme of temporary accommodation inspection. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to ensure effective safeguarding for those in temporary accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Increase the supply of TA and supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review the potential for a private sector scheme to give people more private rented options <input type="checkbox"/> Work with environmental health to ensure the correct advice to people in accommodation with disrepair issues. <input type="checkbox"/> Improve pathways for young people leaving care to ensure sustainable accommodation and that tenancies are maintained. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop and adopt an RBWM score card sharing key stats with our stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a multi agency forum to jointly review cases and develop integrated individual plans <input type="checkbox"/> Explore models from elsewhere that include holistic approaches involving accommodation, learning and employment. <input type="checkbox"/> Carry out a feasibility study for the potential for future supported accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Build on the success of bringing all rough sleepers off the streets <input type="checkbox"/> Implement an alternative giving scheme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Improve the quality of information available to housing option clients on housing options and service arrangements through multiple channels <input type="checkbox"/> Improve quality assurance processes within case management <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure partnership working is at the heart of service delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Implement a Homelessness Forum reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a prison

<p>approach accordingly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Work with partners to improve pathways for young people leaving care to ensure sustainable accommodation and that tenancies are maintained. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a joint hospital discharge policy to prevent homelessness and bed blocking. 	<p>accommodation in the Borough</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Actively bid for all relevant future funding streams and support partner bids <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt the MEAM principles throughout service delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Develop a response to harassment and illegal evictions <input type="checkbox"/> Review the 'offer' for armed forces personnel within RBWM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Embed and share the success of the Rough Sleeping Pathway 	<p>release protocol</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Map and promote homeless services across the Borough <input type="checkbox"/> Review the need for a Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Promote the duty to refer and wider partnership approach to referrals
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7 HOW WILL WE KNOW?

7.1 The Council will monitor delivery of the key actions and the impact on key performance measures including:

- ▣ Number of homeless preventions per quarter.
- ▣ Numbers of young people presenting as homeless.
- ▣ Number of people placed into temporary accommodation.
- ▣ Average cost of temporary accommodation.
- ▣ Numbers of people accommodated in private rented accommodation.
- ▣ Number of approaches from people threatened with homelessness.
- ▣ Numbers of people sleeping rough.
- ▣ Waiting times for housing advice.

7.2 The strategy and action plan will be reviewed, refreshed and updated on an annual basis both to measure performance and also to ensure that the actions continue to be the right ones to meet the five key priorities of the strategy.

7.3 Where identified, new key areas of action to meet priorities will continue to be introduced as part of the review which will be carried out with partners and key stakeholders.

APPENDIX 1: ACTION PLAN (Proposed new actions under the existing 5 key priorities)

Priorities		Key Actions	Target date	Key Performance Measure	Officer/Agency Lead
1	Reduce the numbers of people becoming homeless	1.1 Review options for mediation services to assist with helping to maintain people in their existing accommodation.	Dec 2020	Number of homeless preventions per quarter	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		1.2 Increased enforcement activity with landlords who maintain private rented properties in poor condition or do not follow proper tenancy processes.	Ongoing	Number of complaints from tenants	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		1.3 Conduct a gap analysis of homelessness prevention education delivered through schools, colleges and youth organisations and refine accordingly.	March 2021	Numbers of young people presenting as homeless	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		1.4 Work with partners to improve pathways for young people leaving care to ensure sustainable accommodation and that tenancies are maintained.	Ongoing	Reduced numbers of young people presenting as homeless	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		1.5 Develop and agree with	March 2021	Number of homeless preventions per	To be agreed at

		partners a joint hospital discharge policy.		quarter	the homeless focus group
2	Reduce the numbers of households in temporary accommodation and improve the quality of that accommodation	2.1 Increase partnership working with local landlords through a forum and exploring an accreditation scheme.	March 2021	Number of people placed into temporary accommodation	HSM & EHSM
		2.2 Develop a smaller dedicated pool of temporary accommodation providers.	March 2021	Average cost of temporary accommodation	HSM
		2.3 Continue the cyclical programme of temporary accommodation inspections.	Ongoing	All accommodation passing requirements	HSM
		2.4 Continue to ensure effective safeguarding for those in temporary accommodation	Ongoing	Any concerns appropriately investigated and addressed	HSM
		2.5 Increase the supply of TA and supported accommodation in the Borough	March 2022	Number of people placed into temporary accommodation	HSM
3	Support people into good quality affordable and sustainable accommodation options	3.1 Review the potential for a private sector access scheme to give people more private rented options	March 2022	Number of homeless preventions per quarter	HSM
		3.2 Work with environmental health	March 2021	Number of homeless	HSM & EHSM

		to ensure the correct advice to people in accommodation with disrepair issues.		preventions per quarter	
		3.3 Improve pathways for young people leaving care to ensure sustainable accommodation and that tenancies are maintained.	March 2022	Number of homeless preventions per quarter	HSM & Children Services Lead
		3.4 Develop and adopt an RBWM score card sharing key stats with our stakeholders	July 2020	Implementation of score card	HOH&EH
		3.5 Actively bid for all relevant future funding streams and support partner bids	Ongoing	Number of homeless reliefs per quarter	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		3.6 Adopt the MEAM principles throughout service delivery	Ongoing	Number of homeless preventions & reliefs per quarter	MEAM Coordinator
		3.7 Develop a response to harassment and illegal evictions	March 2021	Number of homeless preventions per quarter	HOH&EH
		3.8 Review the 'offer' for armed forces personnel within RBWM	March 2021	Number of homeless preventions & reliefs per quarter	HOH&EH

4	Reduce rough sleeping and support those who find themselves on the street	4.1 Establish a multi agency forum to jointly review cases and develop integrated individual plans	Sept 2020	Number of homeless reliefs per quarter	HSM
		4.2 Explore models from elsewhere that include holistic approaches involving accommodation, learning and employment.	Ongoing	Number of homeless preventions & reliefs per quarter	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		4.3 Carry out a feasibility study for the potential for future supported accommodation.	March 2021	Number of homeless preventions & reliefs per quarter	Enabling Officer/Property Company
		4.4 Build on the success of bringing all rough sleepers off the streets	Ongoing	Number of homeless reliefs per quarter	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		4.5 Implement an alternative giving scheme	Sept 2020	Reduction in street activity	HOH&EH
		4.6 Embed and share the success of the Rough Sleeping Pathway	Ongoing	Number of homeless reliefs per quarter	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
5	Improve the customer service provided to	5.1 Improve the quality of information available to	Ongoing	Number of homeless	To be agreed at the homeless

	people approaching housing services	housing option clients on housing options and service arrangements through multiple channels		preventions per quarter	focus group
		5.2 Improve quality assurance processes within case management	Ongoing	Customer satisfaction results	HSM
		5.3 Ensure partnership working is at the heart of service delivery	Ongoing	Homeless Forum	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		5.4 Implement a Homelessness Forum reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board	Sept 2020	Implementation of forum	HOH&EH
		5.5. Adopt a prison release protocol	Dec 2020	Number of successful cases per quarter	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		5.6 Map and promote homeless services across the Borough	March 2021	Publication of services	To be agreed at the homeless focus group
		5.7 Review the need for a Gypsy & Traveller Liaison Officer	Sept 2020	Agreed protocol for illegal encampments & development of liaison role	HOH&EH
		5.8 Promote the duty to refer and wider partnership approach to referrals	Dec 2020	Increase in referrals	HOH&EH

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Homelessness Review 2020

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Introduction

Preventing and tackling homelessness is a key priority for The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. We have undertaken significant amounts of work across partnerships and with our customers, to challenge the way we do things and maintain a focus on achieving continuous improvement.

In that context, this review builds on the work undertaken by the Council since the last homelessness strategy was published and seeks to inform the refreshed homelessness strategy key priorities that will drive the Council forward and ensure it continues to deliver effective and truly modern housing services.

This review has been developed in accordance with the Council's duties under the Homelessness Act 2002, including the duty to consult. It will inform the Council's homelessness strategy refreshed action plan for preventing and tackling homelessness in future years.

The review has considered a wide range of local factors including, but not exhaustively, the way housing services are delivered in the area, current levels of homelessness, who is becoming homeless locally and why. It has reviewed available accommodation and support services to identify gaps in provision. It has encompassed a varied programme of consultation including a partnership focus group, member focus group, customer engagement and staff engagement.

Aims of the review

The primary aims of this review were to understand the current situation in Windsor and Maidenhead, identify key aims and objectives that will inform the strategic direction of homelessness services, and to agree refreshed actions that would effectively prevent and tackle homelessness between now and 2025.

This includes reviewing the service considering the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the changes that this has meant for the way Councils deliver services to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The review was delivered through partner engagement across statutory and voluntary sectors to capture thoughts and ideas from different perspectives, about local pressures and what services could sensibly do to meet those challenges effectively, efficiently and proactively.

This review provides the foundation of knowledge that will underpin the Council's Preventing Homelessness Strategy action plan from 2020-2025

National agenda and policy links

The welfare reform agenda is ongoing. Housing markets in London and the South East continue to present specific affordability challenges for low income households, with some of those impacts now being felt in other parts of the country. Against this backdrop, the government remains committed to tackling rough sleeping with a range of funding announcements since 2015.

This review is being undertaken in the context of the 2015, 2017 and 2019 general elections, which saw the Conservative Party move from a parliamentary majority in 2015 to a minority

government formed with support from the Democratic Unionist Party of Northern Ireland in 2017 and subsequently a return to parliamentary majority in 2019. With a referendum held on 23rd June 2016, resulting in 51.89% of voters supporting the principle of the United Kingdom leaving the European Union. The snap general election called on 12 December and subsequent Brexit deal. The desk top review has also been undertaken within the unprecedented current times of Covid 19 and the true impact of the way in which local authorities respond to housing demand and deliver homelessness services is unknown. The housing and homelessness services are statutory function for the local authority and will need to be delivered however, changes to delivery will need to be made to ensure customers can still access the service.

In respect of local policy, this review has been conducted in the context of, and with due regard to, the following policies and strategies:

- Housing Allocation Policy 2018 - 2021
- Borough Local Plan
- Empty Property Strategy 2017
- Council Plan 2017 - 2021

The Council's strategies and plans for preventing and tackling homelessness are developed in a complex policy environment. We recognise that preventing and tackling homelessness represents a responsibility that falls across Council services.

The Council has had regard to these interdependent policy approaches to ensure a coherent and effective strategic approach to housing matters, and to ensure that innovation is targeted at improving the customer experience in an efficient and effective way.

Approach to the Homelessness Review 2019

The Homelessness Review has been conducted over a period of 6 months. During that time a timeline has been set for delivering the new Preventing Homelessness Strategy. The Council has been mindful to offer a range of consultation opportunities using various approaches to ensure all partners have had a range of opportunities to contribute directly. The consultation process has had some limitations due to Covid 19 and was extended due to the unprecedented times, however all partner agencies and internal services have been able to engage through virtual meetings and survey responses.

Introducing Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Windsor and Maidenhead lies 25 miles west of London and is a unitary authority comprising of 12 political wards. The borough consists of:

- Belmont
- Bisham and Cookham
- Boyn Hill
- Bray
- Cox Green
- Furze Platt
- Hurley and Walthams

- Oldfield
- Old Windsor
- Pinkney's Green
- Riverside
- St Mary's

Windsor and Maidenhead is one of the least deprived areas of the country (ranked 304 out of 326 local authorities in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019)¹. However, due to the high cost of living in the borough, there are significant challenges for low income households and more vulnerable residents.

Windsor and Maidenhead currently has approximately 60,943 properties within the Borough with 68% of these being owner occupied. This proportion is higher than the national average of 63%. 16% of households in Windsor and Maidenhead reside in private rented sector accommodation, this is lower than the national average of 18%.²

There is already a much higher proportion of detached housing in the borough (31%) compared to the national average (22%). Semi-detached housing has also shown a reduction in growth rate compared to the previous 10 years. At 25%, the proportion of semi-detached housing is much lower than the national average of 31%. Terraced housing forms 19% of accommodation in the borough which is lower than the national average of 24%. Flats, apartments and maisonettes have continued to increase in the borough and at 25% form a significantly higher proportion of accommodation in the borough than the national average of 19%.³

The average house price in Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is £481,493⁴ compared with £251,233 in England. However average property prices in the borough decreased by 2% between August 2018 and August 2019. The median house price to workplace earnings ratio in the borough now stands at 11.59⁵

Demographic context

Population

The population of the borough has grown from 87,231 in 1951 to 145,100 by 2011 when the last census was carried out. The 20 year period from 1951 to 1971 saw a population increase of around 40,000. The borough's estimated midyear 2019 population was 151,200 and this is projected to rise by midyear 2039 to 158,100.⁶

The population in Windsor and Maidenhead is relatively young (median age 40) and whilst only 18% of the population (28,400) is aged 65 or over, this is expected to grow to 26% (40,400) by 2039 when the borough population is expected to be 158,100. More importantly, the growth in the over 85 cohort is expected to rise from 4,500 currently to 8,400 by 2036 with significant implications for health, housing and social care going forward.

83% of people in the borough are economically active in comparison with 82% in the South East and 79% in Great Britain. Of those who are employed, 62% work in managerial or

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> - Accessed 27 November 2019

² https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2011_ks/report?compare=E06000040 – Accessed 22 December 2019

³ https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2011_ks/report?compare=E06000040 – Accessed 22 December 2019

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-house-price-index-england-august-2019/uk-house-price-index-england-august-2019> - Accessed 27 November 2019

⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoresidencebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian> - Accessed 27 November 2019

⁶ ONS, Population projections for local authorities: Table 2

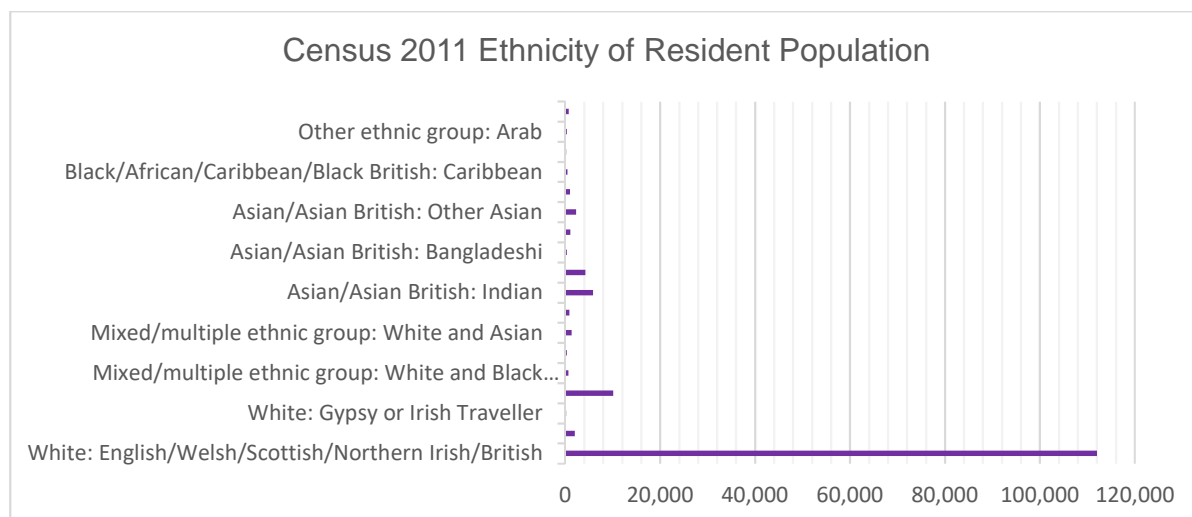
professional occupations with only 7% of households in the borough classed as workless. The average gross weekly earnings based on residence in November 2019 was £776.⁷

The number of people claiming job seekers allowance in Windsor and Maidenhead has fallen from a peak of 2.3% in August 2009, to 0.5% in November 2016.⁸ The figure remains lower than both the national and South East averages (0.7% and 1.1% respectively).

Race and ethnicity

Ethnicity data from the 2011 Census indicates that the majority of people living in Windsor and Maidenhead describe themselves as White British (78%). This compares with 85% in 2001. The Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population in the borough has decreased slightly over the past decade from 15% in 2001 to 14% in 2011.

The largest BME group living in Windsor and Maidenhead in 2011 is Asian or Asian British (10%). There is also a growing number of people (7%) who classify themselves as 'Other White'. The proportion of people from this ethnic group living in Windsor and Maidenhead is greater than there is nationally and within the South East region.⁹



The chart above shows ethnic groups within the resident population of Windsor and Maidenhead.

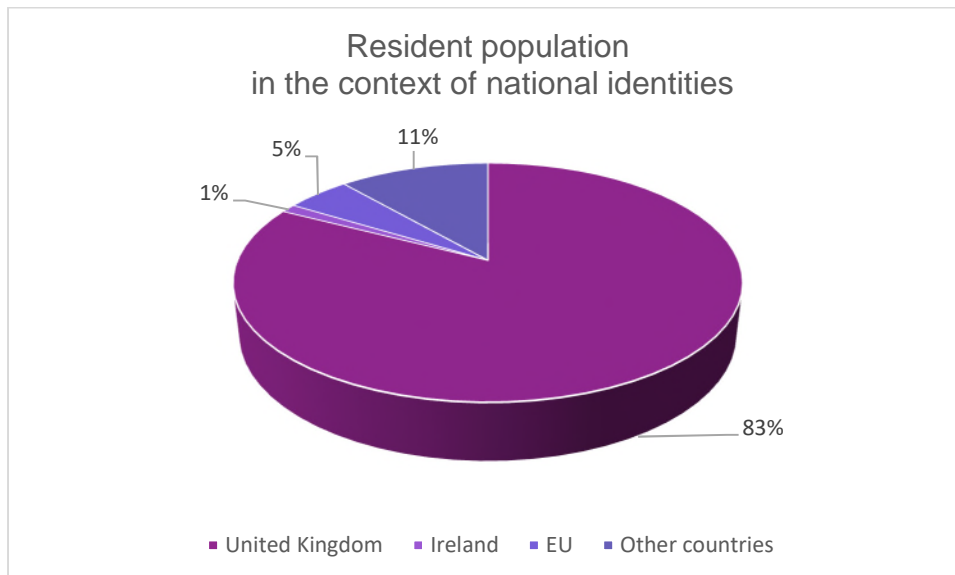
83% of the Windsor and Maidenhead population were born in the UK. The next biggest region represented in the local population is other countries at 11% followed by Europe at 5%.¹⁰ The table below expresses the proportions of Windsor and Maidenhead's resident population in the context of national identities:

⁷ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157289/report.aspx#tabearn> – Accessed 27 December 2019

⁸ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157279/report.aspx#tabwab> – Accessed 26 November 2019

⁹ ONS, Usual resident population, local authorities England and Wales, Table ID KS201EW

¹⁰ ONS, Country of Birth, Local Authorities in England and Wales, Table KS204EW



It is important for the Council to recognise any specific needs within its diverse communities in the context of developing strategies and plans.

Gypsies and Travellers

At the time of the 2011 Census, 219 people (0.05%) in Windsor and Maidenhead described themselves as being from the Gypsy or Irish Traveller ethnic group.¹¹ This proportion is on par with three of the six boroughs in Berkshire and slightly higher than the proportion of those describing themselves as being from the Gypsy or Irish Traveller ethnic group resident in the South East (0.17%).¹²

Disability

At 2011, 12%¹³ of Windsor and Maidenhead residents had a long-term health problem or disability which limited their day-to-day activities. This is lower than the South East at 15.7%¹⁴.

For 4.9%¹⁵ of Windsor and Maidenhead residents, day-to-day activities were limited a lot. This is lower than the South East at 6.7%.

According to the 2011 Census, 9.2% of all usual residents in households in Windsor and Maidenhead provide unpaid care. This is lower than the South East at 9.8%.¹⁶

1.5% of all usual residents in households in Windsor and Maidenhead provided 50 or more hours of unpaid care a week. This is lower than the South East at 2%.¹⁷

¹¹ ONS, Ethnic Group by Measures, Table KS201UK

¹² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/datasets/2011census-small-population-tables-for-england-and-wales> - Accessed 04/12/2019

¹³ ONS, Official Labour Market Statistics, Long-term health problem or disability by tenure by age, Table LC3408EW

¹⁴ ONS, Official Labour Market Statistics, Long-term health problem or disability by tenure by age, Table LC3408EW

¹⁵ ONS, Official Labour Market Statistics, Long-term health problem or disability by tenure by age, Table LC3408EW

¹⁶ ONS, Official Labour Market Statistics, Long-term health problem or disability by tenure by age, Table LC3408EW

¹⁷ ONS, Official Labour Market Statistics, Long-term health problem or disability by tenure by age, Table LC3408EW

Economic context

The following tables and charts provide an overview of the local labour market:

	Windsor and Maidenhead (%)	South East (%)	Great Britain (%)
Economically Active	83.3	81.6	78.9
In employment	81.1	79.0	75.6
Employees	86.6	66.8	64.6
Self Employed	12.2	11.9	10.7
Unemployed	2.6	3.1	4.1

Census 2011, Table QS601EW

	Windsor and Maidenhead (%)	South East (%)	Great Britain (%)
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	16.3	12.5	11.1
Professional occupations	24.2	22.7	21.0
Associate Professional and Technical	21.6	16.1	14.8
Administrative and Secretarial	11.8	10.2	9.8
Skilled Trade Occupations	5.8	9.2	10.0
Caring, Leisure and other Service occupations	6.5	8.5	9.0
Sales and Customer Service	5.5	6.9	7.3
Process plant and machine operatives	2.2	4.7	6.3
Elementary occupations	5.7	8.9	10.2

Census 2011, Table QS601EW

Housing Market, Demand and supply Affordability

Home ownership

The average income for all Windsor and Maidenhead residents working full time is £743.20 per week (gross). This breaks down to £890.70 per week for males and £595.90 per week for females.¹⁸

The lower quartile property in Windsor and Maidenhead is £465,000. Households in the borough therefore require an income of £109,500 to afford one of these properties (based on 30% of gross income spent on a mortgage). Achieving home ownership in Windsor and Maidenhead is a challenge; even for people earning above the average income.

¹⁸ ONS, Earnings and hours worked, place of residence by local authority: ASHE Table 8

Average house prices and comparisons

	2018	2013	2008	% change 5 years	% change 10 years
Windsor and Maidenhead	£465,000	£338,000	£307,000	38	51
South East	£321,113	£234,000	£215,000	37	49
England	£240,000	£188,000	£173,950	28	40

As indicated in the chart above, average house prices have increased by 48% over the last 5 years and 51% over the last 10 years.

The increases over this time frame have been higher than those experienced regionally and nationally. Whilst the Bank of England suggested that the impact of Britain's exit from the European Union could impact property prices by as much as 30%, currently there are no clear indications that house prices will reduce in the borough.

According to the UK house price index the average house price across England was £247,886 in December 2018. The average house price in the South East was £324,729. The table above shows the average house prices in Windsor and Maidenhead are significantly higher than the rest of the country (excluding London).¹⁹

Access to home ownership is a major challenge for people looking to secure owner occupation in Windsor and Maidenheads. This is not only true for those on low incomes, but also those for whom earnings exceed the average national income and average income for the area.

Market rents

The tables below identify that residents in Windsor and Maidenhead require an annual income of £26,863 to access a lower quartile private rented sector property in the borough with rental costs equating to 54% of their income:

Private rent December 2018 (all properties)	Windsor and Maidenhead Average Mean rent
Monthly rent	£1252
Annual rent	£15,024
Affordability threshold: 30% gross income on rent	
Annual income required to rent affordably	£50,080

ONS, Private rental market summary statistics in England: October 2018 to September 2019

¹⁹ <https://landregistry.data.gov.uk/app/ukhpi> - Accessed 02/12/2019

	Lower quartile annual pay	Lower quartile annual rental costs	Rental costs as % of earnings
Windsor and Maidenhead	£26,863	£14,400	54%

ONS, Private rental market summary statistics in England: October 2018 to September 2019

Average Mean Private Rent (monthly) by property size, 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

	Room	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
Windsor and Maidenhead	£521	£950	£1202	£1468	£2111
South East	£436	£718	£916	£1131	£1873
England	£411	£731	£800	£916	£1611

VOA, Private rental market summary statistics: April 2018 to March 2019

Average private rented figures in Windsor and Maidenhead are substantially higher than both the South East and England, which will impact on the amount of affordable private rented accommodation locally. As there is a lack of affordable market rented properties in Windsor and Maidenhead, any decline in properties available could result in a rental price increase reducing the affordability of private rented properties in the future.

Affordable housing

Registered Providers (RPs) charge Affordable Rents set at up to 80% of the open market rent in keeping with the MHCLG and HCA Affordable Homes Programme Framework.

Due to changes in the welfare system which includes extending the Local Housing Allowance Cap (LHA) to social landlords, capping benefits at £20,000 (£13,400 for single people), reducing the amount of Housing Benefit the under 35s with no children will be entitled to (from a 1 bedroom flat to a room in a shared house), and the high cost of 4-bedroom properties in Windsor and Maidenhead, this impacts on the affordability of wider Registered Provider properties.

In Windsor and Maidenhead, the cost for a single person aged under 35 years renting a 1-bed property with a registered provider is on average £121 per week.²⁰ With the referenced changes to LHA the rate applicable for a shared room rate of just £66 per week²¹. This leaves a potential shortfall for the resident to pay of £220 per month.

The Council is continually working with Registered Provider partners to try to address the ongoing affordability issues within the borough.

In addition, it is apparent that for households affected by the Benefit Cap, becoming economically active must be a priority. Employment for 16 hours or more per week triggers exemption from the Benefit Cap.

There is a very real risk for out of work households, and particularly larger out of work households; that all available housing options in Windsor and Maidenhead will become too

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-rents-lettings-and-tenancies> - Accessed 17/12/2019

²¹ https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200237/local_housing_allowance/348/local_housing_allowance_rates/2 - Accessed 03/01/2020

expensive. This could result in households having to move to other areas in order to secure housing they can afford.

Shared ownership

Shared Ownership properties are the main source of intermediate housing in Windsor and Maidenhead. These are a way of households that cannot afford to buy on the open market to staircase into home ownership. The recent government changes to the 'Help to Buy' criteria, applicants can now apply for properties of any size with a maximum joint income of up to £60,000

One and two bedroom properties are by far the most sought-after property with a range of households interested including single people, couples and families. The popularity of these units, along with the average incomes of successful households, demonstrates the financial pressure that is experienced by people who may even be earning above average incomes. This also, by extension, clearly emphasises the affordability struggle impacting those on average or lower than average incomes in Windsor and Maidenhead for whom owner occupation in the borough may not be possible without significantly improved earnings.

Demand for housing

The Windsor and Maidenhead Housing Register

The Windsor and Maidenhead Housing Register provides an indication of the current housing need within the borough. The register is composed of households seeking housing association rented accommodation and housing tenants who are not tenants or either Radian or Housing Solutions.

In December 2019 there were on average 900 applicants on the housing register. Of these, just under 30% were registered as requiring 1 bedroom accommodation.

This table shows a breakdown of Windsor and Maidenhead's Housing Register as of December 2019:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed
Households registered Dec 2019	292	456	103	30	nil	nil

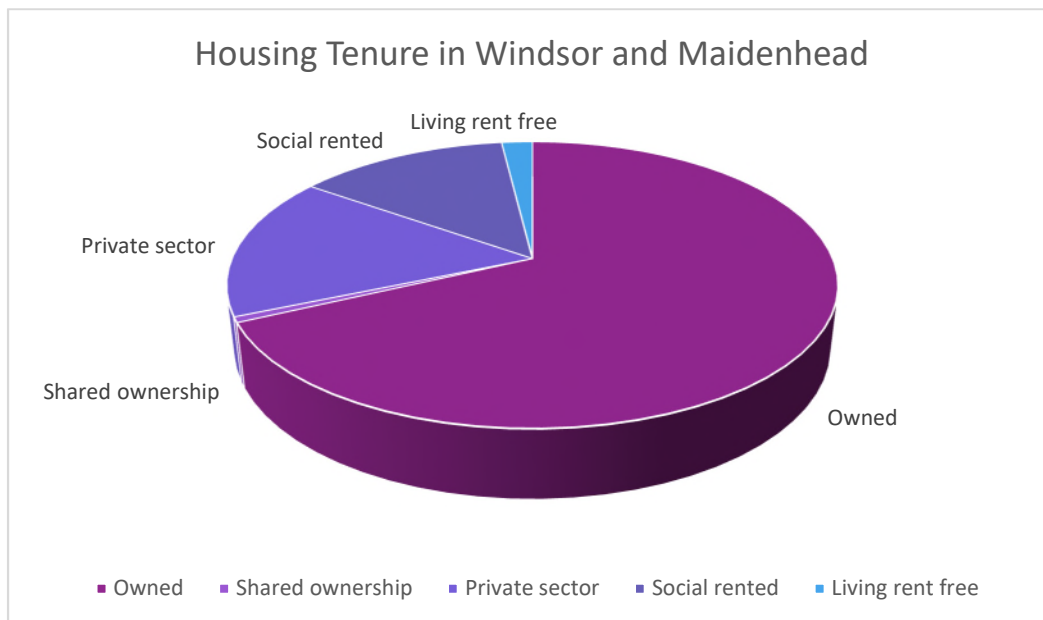
70% of applicants on the housing register have dependent children, with over 50% of households being registered for 2 bed accommodation.

The statistics above do not correlate with the current accommodation types being offered, 62% of nominations are for 1 bed roomed accommodation, 16% for 2 bed, 13% for 3 bed and only 12% registered for sheltered accommodation.

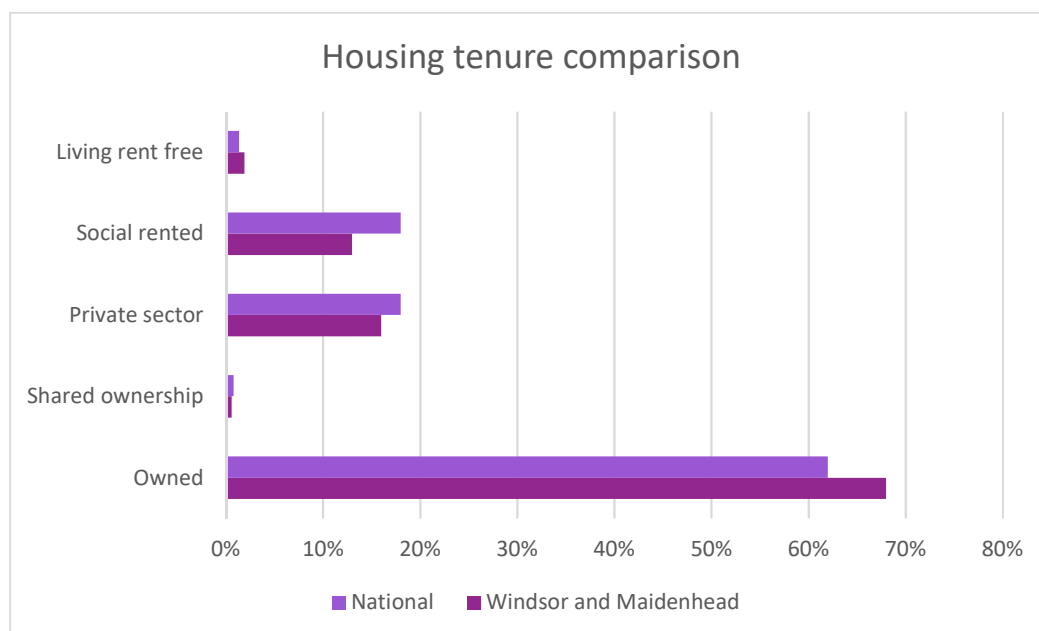
RBWM are currently reviewing the housing register and the data that is available, with a new housing register going live, the ability for forecast and compare statistical information moving forward.

Stock profile

The table below shows that Windsor and Maidenhead has a higher number of owner occupiers compared with the national figure.



Source: Census 2011, Table KS402EW



Source: Census 2011, Table KS402EW

Tenure Change Over 10 Year Period (2001 – 2011) (% Change)

	Owned	Private Rented	Social Rented
Windsor and Maidenhead	0.7%	77%	15%
South East	-1%	57%	6%
England	-1%	63%	-1%

Source: Census 2001 and 2011, Tables KS010 and KS402EW

Between 2001 and 2011 there has been little change in the number of households living in owner occupied accommodation in Windsor and Maidenhead however the nominal increase contrasts with the South East and National trends.

The number of households living in private rented sector accommodation in Windsor and Maidenhead has increased by 77% between the years 2001 and 2011. This increase is significantly higher than the increase in the South East and across England at 57% and 63% respectively.

Households living in the social rented sector in the Borough increased by 15% from 2001 to 2011. This increase is more than double that of the South East at 5% and contrasts the National figure which decreased by 1% during the same 10 year period.

Number and % of Bedrooms in Homes of Different Tenures and Dwellings:

	Windsor and Maidenhead		South East	
Owner occupation				
1 bed	1,316	3%	111,660	5%
2 bed	7,328	19%	540,080	22%
3 bed	15,743	40%	1,066,120	44%
4 bed	10,683	27%	539,230	22%
5 or more bedrooms	4,498	11%	186,620	8%
Total	39,568	100%	2,443,800	100%
Private rented				
1 bed	1,941	19%	152,550	24%
2 bed	4,230	40%	232,160	37%
3 bed	2,745	26%	166,900	27%
4 bed	1,073	10%	49,830	8%
5 or more bedrooms	485	5%	22,760	4%
Total	10,474	100%	634,200	100%
Social rented				
1 bed	2,973	39%	158,080	32%
2 bed	2,146	28%	160,750	33%
3 bed	2,338	30%	150,650	31%
4 bed	161	2%	14,740	3%
5 or more bedrooms	40	1%	3,250	1%
Total	7,658	100%	487,470	100%

Source: Census 2011

N.B. Figures have been rounded.

Average Waiting Times in Months for Allocations of Social Rented Housing

The average wait times for social housing can only be collected for 2019/2020 due to the limited data available.

The average wait time of a 1 bed need household in band A is 9months, with the a 2 bed need household on the housing register in Band A, having a an average wait time of 2 years, and average of 1 year for 3 bed need. It is not possible to provide a true average for a four bed needs due only having 1 four bed property to nominate within the timeframe but sheltered housing households in band A are waiting on average 9 months for a nomination, however often the accommodation is not suitable due to being above floor level, with no lift or on some occasions being a studio property that is not a desirable accommodation option for sheltered residents.

Over-crowding in RBWM

Recorded Overcrowding (all tenure types) on the Windsor and Maidenhead Housing Register equate to 236 households lacking one bedroom or more.

Empty homes

All vacant dwellings in Windsor and Maidenhead, Berkshire and England

	2016	2017	2018
Windsor and Maidenhead	1718	1675	1715
Berkshire	6970	6699	7220
England	240,587	244,611	258,412

Source, MHCLG, Live tables on dwelling stock (including vacants), Table 615

All vacant dwellings in Berkshire

	2016	2017	2018
Bracknell	930	984	1075
Reading	1617	1420	1399
RBWM	1715	1657	1715
Slough	655	623	843
West Berkshire	911	743	802
Wokingham	1139	1272	1386

Source, MHCLG, Live tables on dwelling stock (including vacants), Table 615

The tables above illustrate that Windsor and Maidenhead has the highest number of empty homes in Berkshire with the figure increasing slightly from 2017 to 2019. It should be noted, however, that this mirrors the pattern in all but one local authority in Berkshire.

Bringing empty homes back into housing use is a key priority for the council, recognising that empty homes represent a wasted resource, adding to the pressures on housing need locally and also potentially creating concerns for those who live nearby.

In May 2017 the Royal Borough's cabinet approved an Empty Homes Strategy setting out a commitment to tackle empty homes in the borough, the intention is to refresh and review this strategy in line with the key priorities in the Homeless Strategy.

The council offers support to owners to achieve this, from advice on the legal and technical work needed to bring a property onto the market, to helping those who have had bad experiences of renting to find the right tenants, and identifying temporary options to bring homes back into use while plans to redevelop a site are being progressed.

This work with landlords has seen a total of 118 properties being brought back into use as much-needed housing.

All Long-Term Vacant Dwellings in Windsor and Maidenhead, Berkshire and England

	2016	2017	2018
Windsor and Maidenhead	711	826	814
Berkshire	2325	2557	2714
England	77,684	80,124	84,839

Source, MHCLG, Live tables on dwelling stock (including vacants)

Long term empty homes are classed as those which have remained empty for more than 6 months and excludes second homes. The level of long term empty homes has fluctuated across recent years with a reduction of empty properties from 2017 to 2018. The council remains committed to tackling the issue within available resources.

Homelessness in Windsor and Maidenhead

Causes of homelessness

The causes of homelessness are often complex, the reasons for statutory homelessness recorded by Windsor and Maidenhead are detailed below, although they do not consider the wider causes of homelessness.

Homelessness is caused by a complex interplay between a person's individual circumstances and adverse 'structural' factors outside their direct control.²² Structural causes of homelessness are social and economic in nature and are often outside the control of the individual or family concerned. The structural causes of homelessness include poverty, lack of affordable housing and policy changes.

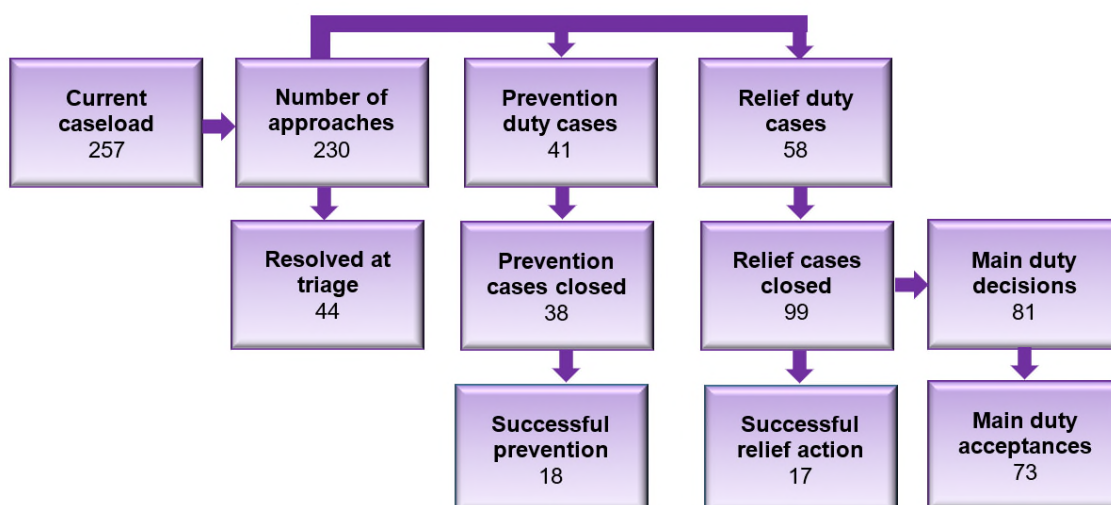
There are often multiple and complex reasons for the loss of a home, but common causes of homelessness acceptances amongst applications to the council are: end of assured shorthold Tenancy (AST), relationship breakdown or friends or family no longer able to accommodate.

In Windsor and Maidenhead in 2018/19, the main reasons for approach were rooted in the end of an AST with interpersonal issues such as relationship breakdown or friends and family no longer or willing to accommodate being the next largest reason for approach.

²² http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why_we_campaign/tackling_homelessness/What_causes_homelessness - Accessed WHEN

Causes of homelessness – RBWM Score Card showing approaches between January 2020 – March 2020

Housing Options statutory decisions workflow



Causes of homelessness – Loss of settled accommodation

Loss of last settled accommodation	
Reason for loss of last settled accommodation	Total
Mortgage repossession	1
End of private rented tenancy – AST	32
End of private rented tenancy – Non AST	3
End of social rented tenancy	5
Eviction from supported housing	2
Family no longer able to accommodate	49
Friends no longer able to accommodate	7
Relationship with partner ended (non-violent)	27
Domestic abuse	18
Racially motivated violence or harassment	0
Non-racially motivated violence or harassment	2
Left institution with no accommodation available	3
Left HM forces	1
Required to leave accommodation provided as asylum support	0
Fire, flood or other emergency	1
Other	63
Property disrepair	3
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The statistical data above supports the authority to determine the actions moving forward required within the refreshed action plan for the Homelessness Strategy.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR & MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION										
Item being assessed (Please tick):	Strategy	X	Policy		Plan		Project		Service/Procedure	
	Responsible Officer: Tracy Hendren				Service: Housing & Environmental Health		Directorate:			
STAGE 1: EqIA SCREENING (MANDATORY)					STAGE 2: FULL ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)					
Date created:	08/06/20				Date created:					
					Date reviewed by Law & Governance:					
Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:	"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."									
	Signed:		Tracy Hendren							
	Date:		08/06/20							

GUIDANCE NOTES

What is an EqIA and why do we need to do it?

The Equality Act 2010 places a 'General Duty' on all public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.
- Fostering good relations between those with 'protected characteristics' and those without them.

EqIAs are a systematic way of taking equal opportunities into consideration when making a decision, and should be conducted when there is a new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure in order to determine whether there will likely be a detrimental and/or disproportionate impact on particular groups, including those within the workforce and customer/public groups.

What are the “protected characteristics” under the law?

The following are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010: age; disability (including physical, learning and mental health conditions); gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

What's the process for conducting an EqIA?

The process for conducting an EqIA is set out at the end of this document. In brief, a Screening Assessment should be conducted for every new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure and the outcome of the Screening Assessment will indicate whether a Full Assessment should be undertaken.

Openness and transparency

RBWM has a 'Specific Duty' to publish information about people affected by our policies and practices. Your completed assessment should be sent to the Strategy & Performance Team for publication to the RBWM website once it has been signed off by the relevant manager, and/or Strategic, Policy, or Operational Group. If your proposals are being made to Cabinet or any other Committee, please append a copy of your completed Screening or Full Assessment to your report.

Enforcement

Judicial review of an authority can be taken by any person, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) or a group of people, with an interest, in respect of alleged failure to comply with the general equality duty. Only the EHRC can enforce the specific duties. A failure to comply with the specific duties may however be used as evidence of a failure to comply with the general duty.

STAGE 1: SCREENING (MANDATORY)

1.1 What is the overall aim of your proposed *strategy/policy/project etc* and what are its key objectives?

The overall aim of the strategy is to set out a framework for how the borough will prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, clearly demonstrating the priorities and actions to delivered in partnership across the borough.

The strategy has already been approved and this is a review and refresh of the actions witin the strategy to ensure the actions are still relevant and take into account emerging trends and challenges.

1.2 What evidence is available to suggest that your proposal could have an impact on people (including staff and customers) with protected characteristics?

*Consider each of the protected characteristics in turn and identify whether your proposal is **Relevant** or **Not Relevant** to that characteristic. If **Relevant**, please assess the level of impact as either **High / Medium / Low** and whether the impact is **Positive** (i.e. contributes to promoting equality or improving relations within an equality group) or **Negative** (i.e. could disadvantage them). Please **document your evidence** for each assessment you make, **including** a justification of why you may have identified the proposal as “Not Relevant”.*

Protected characteristic	Relevance	Level	Positive / Negative	Evidence
Age	Relevant	Low	Positive	Impact of not tackling homelessness and rough sleeping will have a negative impact on all ages. Taking action will have a positive impact for all households threatened with homelessness or rough sleeping.
Disability	Relevant	Low	Positive	The over arching strategy and the actions are not expected to have a specific impact on those with disabilities over other groups, however if it is highlighted through the actions that there is a higher proportion of households with disabilities approaching as homeless or rough sleeping then positive action can be taken.
Marriage and civil partnership	Not relevant			There are no actions suggested within the strategy that will impact this group compared to others. Individual projects can

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				be assessed as they are developed and taken forward to ensure this continues to be the case.
Pregnancy and maternity	Relevant	Medium	Positive	The strategy highlights the support and advice that is offered to those with a priority need status, this includes pregnant households. Therefore the impact on those households who are pregnant or have young children is positive.
Race	Not relevant			There are no actions suggested within the strategy that will impact on a particular race compared to others. Individual projects can be assessed as they are developed and taken forward to ensure this continues to be the case, with statistical data being monitored and reviewed to ensure BME groups are not disadvantaged .
Religion or belief	Not relevant			There are no actions suggested within the plan that should specifically impact any religion but again statistical data will be monitored and reviewed to ensure no religion or belief is disadvantaged
Sex	Not relevant			The over arching strategy and the actions are not expected to have a specific impact on sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment over other groups, however if it is highlighted through the actions that there is a higher proportion of households from this group including LGBTQ groups approaching as homeless or rough sleeping then positive action will be taken.
Sexual orientation	Not relevant			
Gender reassignment	Not relevant			

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OUTCOMES, ACTION & PUBLIC REPORTING

Screening Assessment Outcome	Yes / No / Not at this Stage	Further Action Required / Action to be taken	Responsible Officer and / or Lead Strategic Group	Timescale for Resolution of negative impact / Delivery of positive impact
Was a significant level of negative impact identified?	Not at this stage	Ensure projects and other policies developed as a	Tracy Hendren	Any projects that result from the strategy.

		result are screened and assessed for equalities impact. This can also be reviewed at the homeless focus group on a quarterly basis		
Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact?	Not at this stage	Not at this stage	N/A	N/A
If you answered yes to either / both of the questions above a Full Assessment is advisable and so please proceed to Stage 2. If you answered “No” or “Not at this Stage” to either / both of the questions above please consider any next steps that may be taken (e.g. monitor future impacts as part of implementation, re-screen the project at its next delivery milestone etc).				

3
3 All completed EqIA Screenings are required to be publicly available on the council’s website once they have been signed off by the relevant Head of Service or Strategic/Policy/Operational Group or Project Sponsor.

STAGE 2: FULL ASSESSMENT	
2.1	SCOPE & DEFINE
2.1.1	Who are the main beneficiaries of the proposed strategy / policy / plan / project / service / procedure? List the groups who the work is targeting/aimed at.

2.1.2 Who has been involved in the creation of the proposed strategy / policy / plan / project / service / procedure? List those groups who the work is targeting/aimed at.

2.2 INFORMATION GATHERING/EVIDENCE

2.2.1 What secondary data have you used in this assessment? Common sources of secondary data include: censuses, organisational records.

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2.2.2 What primary data have you used to inform this assessment? Common sources of primary data include: consultation through interviews, focus groups, questionnaires.

Equality Duty Statement	Protected Characteristic	Advancing the Equality Duty		Negative impact		Explanation & Mitigations
		Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Does the proposal disadvantage them (Yes / No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	
						Please provide explanatory detail relating to your assessment and outline any key actions to (a) advance the Equality Duty and (b) reduce negative impact on each protected characteristic

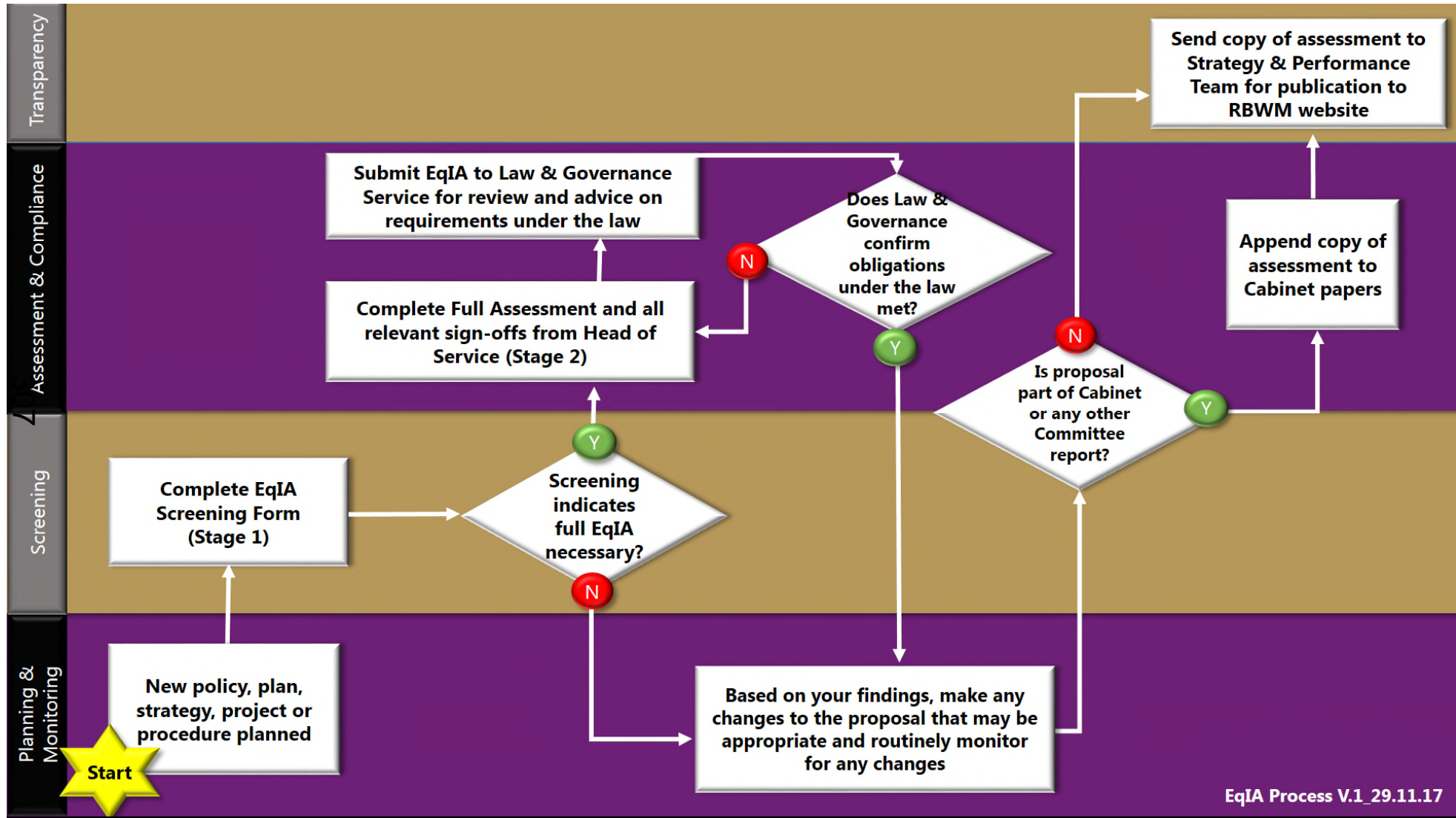
		characteristic (Yes/No)				
Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation	Age					
	Disability					
	Gender reassignment					
	Marriage and civil partnership					
	Pregnancy and maternity					
	Race					
	Religion or belief					
	Sex					
	Sexual orientation					
305 Advance equality of opportunity	Age					
	Disability					
	Gender reassignment					
	Marriage and civil partnership					
	Pregnancy and maternity					
	Race					
	Religion or belief					
	Sex					
	Sexual orientation					
Foster good relations	Age					
	Disability					
	Gender reassignment					

	Marriage and civil partnership					
	Pregnancy and maternity					
	Race					
	Religion or belief					
	Sex					
	Sexual orientation					

2.4 Has your delivery plan been updated to incorporate the activities identified in this assessment to mitigate any identified negative impacts?
These could be service, equality, project or other delivery plans. If you did not have sufficient data to complete a thorough impact assessment, then an action should be incorporated to collect this information in the future.

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EqIA Process



Homelessness Strategy update

June 2020



Agenda

- Context
- Survey outcomes
- Current priorities
- Proposed updates to the strategy
- Next steps
- Q&A
-



Context Legislation



Homelessness Act 2002

- Places a duty on local authorities to formulate a homelessness strategy by initially carrying out a homelessness review for the district and publishing a Homelessness Strategy
- Housing authorities must keep their homelessness strategy under review and modify it accordingly
- Circumstances that might prompt modification of a homelessness strategy include but not be limited to:
 - The composition of homelessness and/or the risk of homelessness in the Borough
 - Changes to the delivery of the strategy
 - Changes to the relationships or the housing organisational structure
 - The ongoing review of the actions on an annual basis and updating



MHCLG Rough Sleeper Strategy 2018

We will work with the Local Government Association and local authorities so that by winter 2019:

- *All local authorities update their strategies and rebadge them as homelessness and rough sleeping strategies*
- *Strategies are made available online and submitted to MHCLG; and*
- *Local authorities report progress in delivering these strategies and publish annual action plans*
- *Where local authorities do not follow these changes, we will take action*



Survey outcomes

Partners and Councillors



Key messages

- ✓ 93% of respondents think our five priorities are correct
- ✓ 87% of respondents would like to be actively engaged in the strategy moving forward
- ✓ 50% of respondents think we need to include additional priorities

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Additionally we asked;

What groups/issues should the council focus on moving forward?

Covid 19, singles, domestic abuse, parental evictions, gypsy & travellers, veterans, multiple needs, rough sleepers, multiple dis-advantaged, ex-offenders, care leavers, landlords (to access properties)



Key messages

Additionally we asked;

What more could the council do and what additional priorities should we adopt

1. Covid 19 – Build on the success of bringing all rough sleepers off the streets – including support, training, education funded through an alternative giving scheme
2. Ensure we have suitable Temporary accommodation and supported accommodation in borough
3. Engage with all partners internal and external – working together to deliver services
4. Adopt a meeting/forum with partners to monitor the homelessness strategy action plan including targets and KPI's



Key messages

We also asked;

What additional actions could the council adopt to prevent rough sleeping/returning to rough sleeping

1. One step would be to record the number of our homeless residents more accurately
2. Provide more support to the homeless once they have been given accommodation with employment, support, training and activities – linked to an alternative giving scheme
3. Ensure RBWM are the first in the field to benefit from any funding and initiatives from central government
4. Map all current provision across the borough and link into all partners and services
5. Ensure early engagement to prevent rough sleeping including early referrals from prisons and hospital



Survey outcomes

Customers



Quotes

Our issue was dealt in a professional and a friendly manner

She went above and beyond to help me she was great and very professional I couldn't thank the council enough

Communicate with people better, even just a simple email once a week to say that we haven't been forgotten about would be highly appreciated

The officer in question stepped in to negotiate directly with the landlord with great effect. I am most appreciative of her help



Current priorities



Current priorities

- 1 Reduce the numbers of people becoming homeless
- 2 Reduce the numbers of households in temporary accommodation and improve the quality of that accommodation
- 3 Support people into good quality affordable and sustainable accommodation options
- 4 Reduce rough sleeping and support those who find themselves on the street
- 5 Improve the customer service provided to people approaching housing services

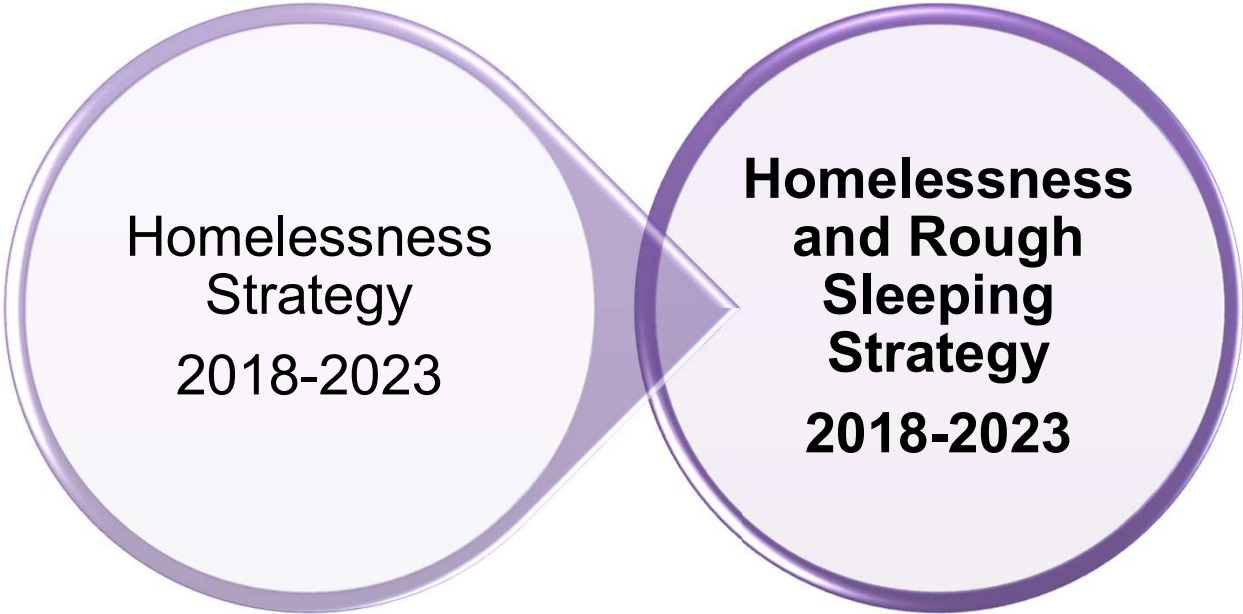


Proposed updates



Title change

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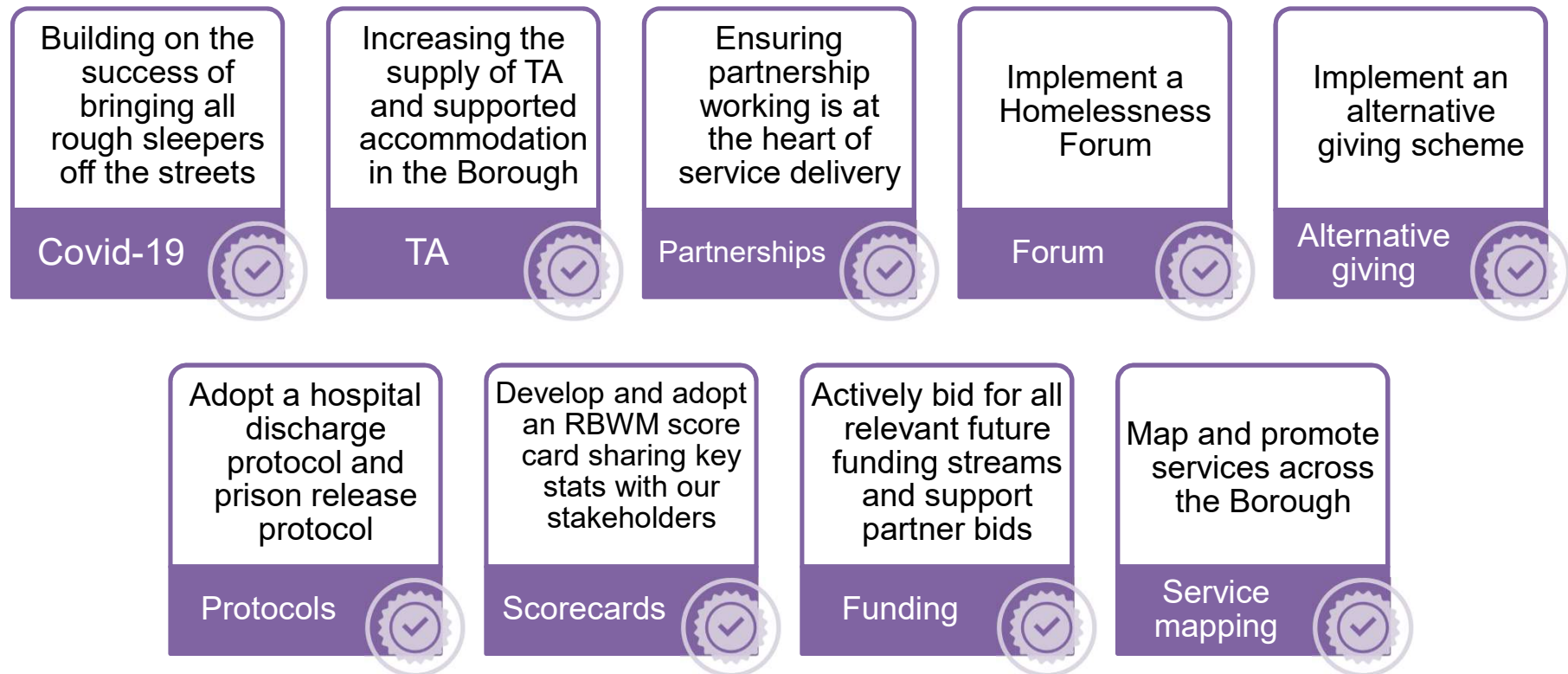


Building on the 5 key priorities



Updating the 5 key priorities

Include the newly emerging themes within the existing 5 key priorities:



Next steps



What happens next?

- Include feedback from Leaders Board
- Complete Quality Impact Assessment
- Present report to Cabinet in June 2020 with proposed changes
- Publish updated Strategy June/July 2020





Questions



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Report Title:	Appointments to Outside and Associated Bodies
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	No - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor Johnson, Leader of Council
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet - 25 th June 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Duncan Sharkey, Managing Director and Karen Shepherd, Head of Governance.
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

1. This report deals with the appointment of representatives to serve the Council on a number of associated and outside bodies, see Appendix 1.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- Appoints representatives to serve on the organisations listed in Appendix 1.**
- Delegates authority to the Head of Governance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Leaders of the Opposition Groups, to fill any ad hoc vacancies that might arise through the year from nominations received or make any changes to appointments as required.**
- Requests the Democratic Services Team Manager to contact organisations as identified as being suitable to have a reduced or no council representation, to seek feedback on the proposal.**
- Following receipt of feedback, delegates authority to the Democratic Services Team Manager, in consultation with the Leader of Council, to permanently reduce council representation on specific associated and outside bodies as appropriate.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Appointments to a number of outside bodies are made through the Council. The schedule attached at Appendix 1 details the appointments due in June 2020 and indicates the nominations received for each body. Where organisations have stipulated, or have expressed a preference that the representative appointed be a serving Councillor, this is indicated.
- 2.2 Following an Electoral Review by the Local Government Boundary Commission's Electoral Review the number of elected Councillors reduced from 57 to 41 following the local elections in May 2019. It was acknowledged

that this reduction would increase the workload on ward councillors therefore the number of vacancies will be monitored. All vacancies arising during the year subsequent to the appointment of representatives by virtue of this report will be advertised to all Members via Group Leaders or directly in the case of Members not in a political group. If nominations are not forthcoming, the organisation will be contacted about a possible reduction or deletion of appointees. Any reduction would be agreed by the Democratic Services Team Manager under delegated authority as detailed in recommendation iii).

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
To appoint representatives to the outside bodies as detailed in Appendix 1 and review any vacancies.	Group leaders and councillors not in a political group have been asked to put forward nominations for appointments.
The recommended option.	
Not to appoint representatives to the outside bodies as detailed in Appendix 1.	Not appointing would mean the Council was not represented on a number of outside bodies within the local authority.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
% Council representation on outside and associated bodies where it is considered appropriate to have a representative	Less than 80%.	80-90%.	91-95%.	96-100%	June 2020

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report that are not already covered by existing budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's Constitution stipulates that the Cabinet shall make appointments to external bodies in accordance with paragraph 19 of Schedule 2 of the Local Authorities (Functions & Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 as amended.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled risk	Controls	Controlled risk
Lack of representation on relevant outside and associated bodies	Medium	Promotion of all available appointments to all councillors. Careful consideration of feedback from organisations where a reduction in representation is proposed	Low

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 Members appointed to associated and outside bodies ensure good governance and promote partnership working within the Royal Borough.
- 7.2 Reduced or cessation of Member representation on individual associated and outside bodies could require the organisation to amend their constitution or terms of reference.
- 7.3 Equalities. All Councillors are able to be nominated for appointment. Where allowed by the organisation's constitution, a council representative can be a non-Councillor. A full EQIA is not considered necessary for the purposes of this report.
- 7.4 Climate change/sustainability. No impacts identified.
- 7.5 Data Protection/GDPR. Contact details for all appointees are shared with the relevant organisation in accordance with the relevant [Privacy Notice](#).

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 All Group leaders and Members not in a political group have been given the opportunity to put forward nominations for appointment.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 Implementation date if not called in: Immediately.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 This report is supported by one appendix:
- Appendix 1 – Proposed nominations to outside and associated bodies (To Follow).

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 The Council's Constitution – Part 7E – Advice to Members (Duties on Outside Bodies).
- 11.2 Annual Reports – Council Representatives on Outside Bodies 2019/20. (Available on request).

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Councillor Johnson	Leader of the Council	01/06/20	01/06/20
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	27/05/20	03/05/20
Russell O'Keefe	Director of Place	28/05/20	
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources/S151 Officer	28/05/20	29/05/20
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	28/05/20	01/06/20
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	28/05/20	28/05/20
Louisa Dean	Communications	28/05/20	
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services	28/05/20	28/05/20
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer	28/05/20	02/06/20
Hilary Hall	Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning	28/05/20	28/05/20

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Key decision	Urgency item? No	To Follow item? No
Report Author: Mark Beeley – Democratic Services Officer, 01628 796345		

Report Title:	Q4 and End of Year Performance Report
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	No - Part I
Lead Member:	Cllr Rayner, Lead Member for Resident and Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management and Windsor
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet, 25 June 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Hilary Hall, Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

1. The council's 2019/20 performance management framework has 43 key measures aligned to the strategic objectives in the Council Plan 2017-21. There are 22 measures that have been identified as being of particular strategic importance and these are reported to Cabinet at the end of quarters two and four (Appendix A).
2. Performance is reported to relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panels each quarter to enable oversight of all performance measures with as a whole and an ongoing performance dialogue.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Notes the Q4 and End of Year Performance Report in Appendix A.**
- ii) Requests relevant Lead Members, Directors and Heads of Service to maintain focus on improving performance.**
- iii) Delegates authority to Directors in conjunction with Lead Members to amend and confirm the Strategic Performance Management Framework for 2020/21.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Endorse the evolution of the performance management framework, focused on embedding a performance culture within the council and measuring delivery of the council's six strategic priorities.	The council's focus on continuous performance improvement provides residents and the council with more timely, accurate and relevant information; evolving the council's performance management

Option	Comments
This is the recommended option	framework using performance information and business intelligence ensures it reflects the council's ongoing priorities
Failure to use performance information to understand the council, improve and maintain performance of council services and develop reporting to Members and residents.	Without using the information available to the council to better understand its activity, it is not possible to make informed decisions and is more difficult to seek continuous improvement and understand delivery against the council's strategic priorities.

- 2.1 The 2019/20 framework has 43 different measures aligned to the strategic priorities in the Council Plan 2017-21.
- 2.2 Performance of relevant measures is reported to Overview and Scrutiny Panels each quarter to enable oversight of the framework as a whole and an ongoing performance dialogue. There are 22 measures that have been identified as being of particular strategic importance and these are reported to Cabinet at the end of quarters two and four.
- 2.3 Appendix A sets out the Q4 and End of Year performance for all 22 measures and related business intelligence. It shows that:
- 14 of the 22 measures met or exceeded target,
 - 5 measures fell just short of target, although still within the tolerance for the measure,
 - 3 measures were out of tolerance and require improvement.

Further refinement of the layout of the summary element of the performance report is being undertaken for Q1 reporting to take account of comments received from the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

- 2.4 An annual review of indicators in the Performance Management Framework is being undertaken as routine good practice. The indicators in the 2020-21 framework will be confirmed between Directors and relevant Lead Members.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The key implications of this report are set out in table 2.

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
The council is on target to deliver all six strategic priorities	< 100% priorities on target	100% priorities on target			31 March 2020

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The risks and their control are set out in table 3.

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled risk	Controls	Controlled risk
Poor performance management practices resulting in lack of progress towards the council's agreed strategic priorities and objectives.	HIGH	Robust performance management within services to embed a performance management culture and effective and timely reporting.	LOW

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 There are no Equality Impact Assessments or Data Protection Impact Assessments required for this report. There are no climate change or data protection impacts as a result of this report.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 Ongoing performance of the measures within the Performance Management Framework 2019/20, alongside other measures and business intelligence information is regularly reported to the council's four Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Comments from the Panels are reported to Lead Members and Heads of Service as part of an ongoing performance dialogue.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 The full implementation stages are set out in table 4.

Table 4: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
Ongoing	Comments from Overview and Scrutiny Panels will be reviewed by Lead Members and Heads of Service.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by one appendix:

- Appendix A: Q4 and End of Year Performance Report 2019/20

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is supported by one background document:

- Council Plan 2017-21:
https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/downloads/file/3320/2017-2021_-_council_plan

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Cllr Rayner	Lead Member for Resident and Leisure Services, HR, IT, Legal, Performance Management and Windsor	28/05/20	04/06/20
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	28/05/20	
Russell O'Keefe	Director of Place	28/05/20	
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources/S151 Officer	28/05/20	29/05/20
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services	28/05/20	28/05/20
Hilary Hall	Director of Adults, Health and Commissioning	28/05/20	28/05/20
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	28/05/20	01/06/20
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer	28/05/20	02/06/20
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	28/05/20	01/06/20
Louisa Dean	Communications	28/05/20	02/06/20
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance	28/05/20	29/05/20

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To Follow item?
Non-key decision	No	No
Report Author: Rachel Kinniburgh, Strategy and Performance Team Leader, 01628 796370		

Performance Management Framework (PMF)

Q4 and End of Year Performance Report 2019-20 (January – March 2020)

Date prepared: 30 April 2020

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**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Cabinet has oversight of the council's Performance Management Framework (PMF) which encompasses 22 performance measures and relevant business intelligence relating to the Council Plan 2017-21.

1.2 As at 1 April 2020 performance of all PMF measures can be summarised as:

Q4 RAG Status	No.	Measure
Red (Needs improvement)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delayed transfers of care rate (per 100,000 pop.) attributable to RBWM • Percentage of children subject to a Child Protection Plan for 2+yrs on ceasing • No. homeless households in temporary accommodation
Amber (Near target)	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of care-leavers in education, employment or training • Tivoli Contract: Consolidated performance score • Average number of days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits) • Percentage collection rate for Council Tax • Percentage collection rate for Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates)
Green (Succeeding or achieved)	14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. permanent admissions to care for those aged 65+yrs • Percentage of rehabilitation clients still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital • Percentage safeguarding service-user satisfaction • No. carers supported by dedicated services directly commissioned by RBWM • Percentage of eligible children receiving a 6-8wk review within 8wks of birth • Percentage of re-referrals to CSC within 12mths • No. households where prevention duty has ended successfully • Percentage household waste sent for reuse, recycling • Percentage of Major planning applications processed in time • Percentage of Minor planning applications processed in time • Average number of days to process new claims (Housing Benefits) • Percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds • Percentage of calls abandoned after 5 seconds • Percentage of potholes repaired within 24hrs (<i>up to Feb-20</i>)
Total	22	

2. Key activities and milestones achieved

The 22 performance measures give an indication of performance in relation to specific activities of the council but do not capture the full range of activity in which it is engaged. This section, therefore, gives a brief overview of key activities and milestones achieved by the council in the second half of the year.

Item	Q3-Q4 Achievements and key milestones
Healthy, skilled and independent residents	
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment was published following approval by the Health and Wellbeing Board. Work is now underway on the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy; this has been delayed due to Covid-19 and is due to be approved in the autumn.
Integrated Care System	The Frimley Integrated Health and Care System Five Year Strategy has been published, called <i>Creating Healthier Communities</i> . There are six ambitions focused on improving the health and wellbeing of the population.
Safe and vibrant communities	
New safeguarding arrangements	Following implementation of the new safeguarding arrangements, replacing the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Safeguarding Adults Board in September 2019, priorities for the partnership are being developed following the annual conference in February 2020.
Ofsted inspection of Children's Services	During January and February 2020, the local authority's children's services were inspected by Ofsted for the first time since 2015. The service overall was graded Good, a significant improvement from the previous Requires Improvement. There is still work to do to further improve services for care leavers and children in our care, however this grading, achieved one cycle ahead of target, provides a strong base on which to build. A targeted action plan will be provided to Ofsted during the first quarter of 2020/21.
Covid-19: Community Response	<p>The Covid-19 Community Response was established to support residents across the borough during the Covid-19 pandemic. A coordinated team of staff drawn from all services in the council maintains regular contact with residents who are shielding and takes any action that may be appropriate to ensure that these individuals' needs continue to be met.</p> <p>The council has also encouraged community groups that were either already established or newly-formed in response to the pandemic to identify themselves to the council, and a database of all contacts was quickly compiled to support a public-facing online directory of Covid-19 Support Groups to which residents may turn for particular needs.</p> <p>The council has worked with WAM Get Involved and key local partners and organisations to coordinate and organise volunteers across the borough to deliver services to residents who may need help but who are not necessarily shielding.</p>
Covid-19: Grant funding	Within the first week of lockdown a Covid-19 grant fund was made available to which local community groups could apply for £500 to support them in the set-up and/or continuation of

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Item	Q3-Q4 Achievements and key milestones
	<p>their operations during the pandemic. To date the council has made £10,000 of grants enabling groups to cover a range of services including bespoke support packages for vulnerable residents, purchasing phone systems for befriending calls, essential items for babies, and PPE for volunteers. A further £10,000 has been paid out to Foodbanks (£5,000 each).</p>
CCTV upgrade	<p>During Q4 the CCTV control room continued to operate on a 24/7 service, albeit incorporating revised working patterns, reflective of reduced availability of trained personal due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But through the support of the community wardens' team, the service has been maintained. Work has continued developing the use of the new CCTV network to address community safety and resident confidence in our public spaces.</p>
Climate Change	<p>Council approved a motion in June 2019 declaring a climate emergency. A cross-party working group has been established to agree a strategy for the borough to become carbon neutral by 2050. We have been engaging with stakeholders and the community on the development of the strategy and a draft copy of the strategy document has been shared with key stakeholders. The strategy will be brought forward for approval by Full Council in June 2020.</p>
Community and leisure	<p>Braywick Leisure Centre: Works on site continue to program with internal finishes now well underway, with large plant and equipment installed and commissioned. All major service connections being completed. Tiling of the pool areas and internal walls nearing completion and pool filling is due to commence in mid-June. Works on the external pitches, external landscaping and service accesses have commenced. Wates Construction Limited have continued work through Covid-19 with modified working arrangements. They have experienced some disruption due to limited material supplies but have reprogrammed work to minimise the negative impact. Revised completion dates are now being reviewed as the construction industry and supply chains return to a near normal arrangement. The operators are working with Public Health England and Sports England to develop safe operating regimes when restrictions are lifted.</p> <p>A pilot section of desilting of a stretch of watercourse has been completed at both Battlemead Common and Marsh Meadow, Cookham. This has enabled an assessment of water flow at these sites to proceed.</p>
Growing economy, affordable housing	
Maidenhead Regeneration and Infrastructure	<p>York Road development: known as The Watermark, will deliver 88 of the 229 new homes built as affordable homes in partnership with Countryside. The project recently closed due to Covid-19 but has now re-opened again with effect from 18 May. Social distancing on site will mean a slower programme</p>

**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

Item	Q3-Q4 Achievements and key milestones
	<p>to that originally planned, so has a potential delay of between 3-6 months.</p> <p>St Clouds Way: the second Council regeneration project, will see a planning submission target for Autumn 2020, a delay on the previous timetable of 3-4 months, due to Covid-19 impacts. The site is likely to deliver subject to planning up to 446 new homes, 30% of which will be affordable.</p> <p>The delay in planning submission will see a knock-on effect with a new potential start on site targeted for April 2021.</p> <p>Maidenhead Vision: substantial public consultation has taken place on the vision charter for Maidenhead, due to the impacts of Covid-19, and the need to gather all final comments to the draft, this is likely to be delayed by 4-6 months. Once approved it will be launched as part of the “Make Maidenhead” brand.</p> <p>Nicholson’s Town Centre: public consultation has already taken place, led by Areli Real Estate and JTP. Planning is targeted for submission in June 2020, which will see an outline application for the whole site with a detailed plan for phase I, which will include a new multi-storey public car park.</p> <p>Maidenhead Golf Course: preparation for the start of the public consultation are on hold due to Covid-19.</p>
Attractive and well-connected borough	
<p>Maidenhead Rail Project</p>	<p>The Maidenhead Station Project is currently in the construction phase with highway works substantially complete with the creation of a 300-space cycle hub in progress. The project aims to enhance pedestrian and cycling access to the town centre with wider footways and easier crossing points. It will also aim to improve the attractiveness of the railway station whilst integration between bus and rail services for the additional one million passengers a year predicted as part of the opening of Crossrail (Elizabeth Line).</p> <p>The 300 Space cycle hub has now been installed and is due to be opened at the beginning of June 2020. The next phase of the project is due to commence in Summer 2020, subject to Network Rail sign off. This will focus on the removal of the long stay parking from the station forecourt and remodelling to repave, and landscape making the area more attractive for all users.</p>
An excellent customer experience	
<p>Covid-19: Communications</p>	<p>Since lockdown restrictions were announced on Monday 23 March 2020 the Communications Team has delivered key messages to residents across the borough to reiterate central government advice, notify residents of changes to operational service delivery and respond directly to residents’ concerns and questions. There have been over 500 new sign-ups to the residents’ newsletter and a significant increase in social media followers, engagement and reach, alongside the expected increase in website visits following the closure of libraries on Wednesday 18 March.</p>

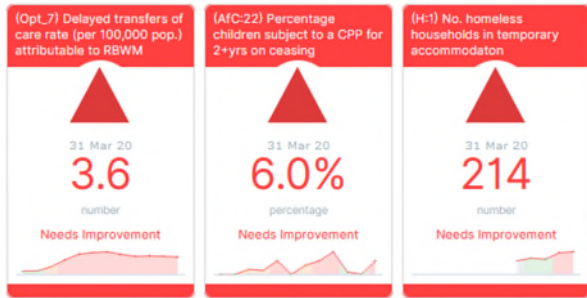
**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

Item	Q3-Q4 Achievements and key milestones
Procurement of new CRM	The contract for the current CRM provider was due to end in July 2020 and, following a thorough procurement process through G-Cloud, a new supplier has been appointed. The CRM will be in place from August 2020 and there will be communications shared with residents and stakeholders during the implementation process.
Film Unit	The film unit had an income target of £11,000 for this financial year. We achieved this target in December 2019. We have been promoting the film unit through the website as well as on social media. We have also been taking an active role in the Berkshire Film Office who work across the whole county to promote filming in the area.
The Guildhall	Following a change in personnel, the packages for the Windsor Guildhall have been refreshed and changed. There has also been closer working with Facilities, the Museum and Property to ensure that the Guildhall delivers a better service for our customers. This has seen an increase in income. The Guildhall has also introduced a calendar of events to showcase the building which has seen an increase in customers visiting the building and paying for events.
Well-managed resources delivering value for money	
Annual Report of Commissioned Services	The second Annual Report on commissioned services was published, including progress to date against 2018-2020 priorities.

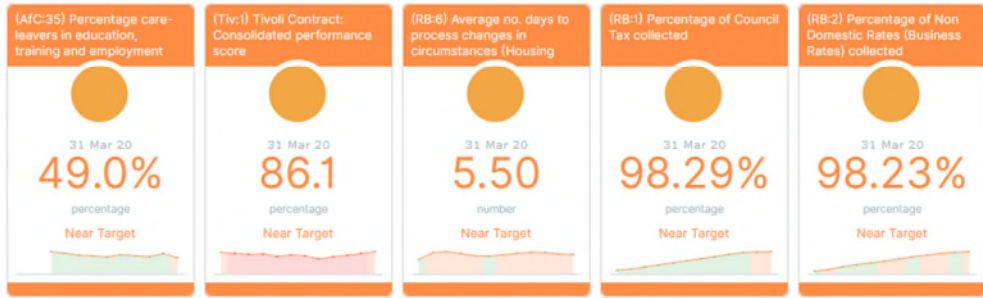
**Cabinet PMF:
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3. PMF Performance Summary Report (YTD)

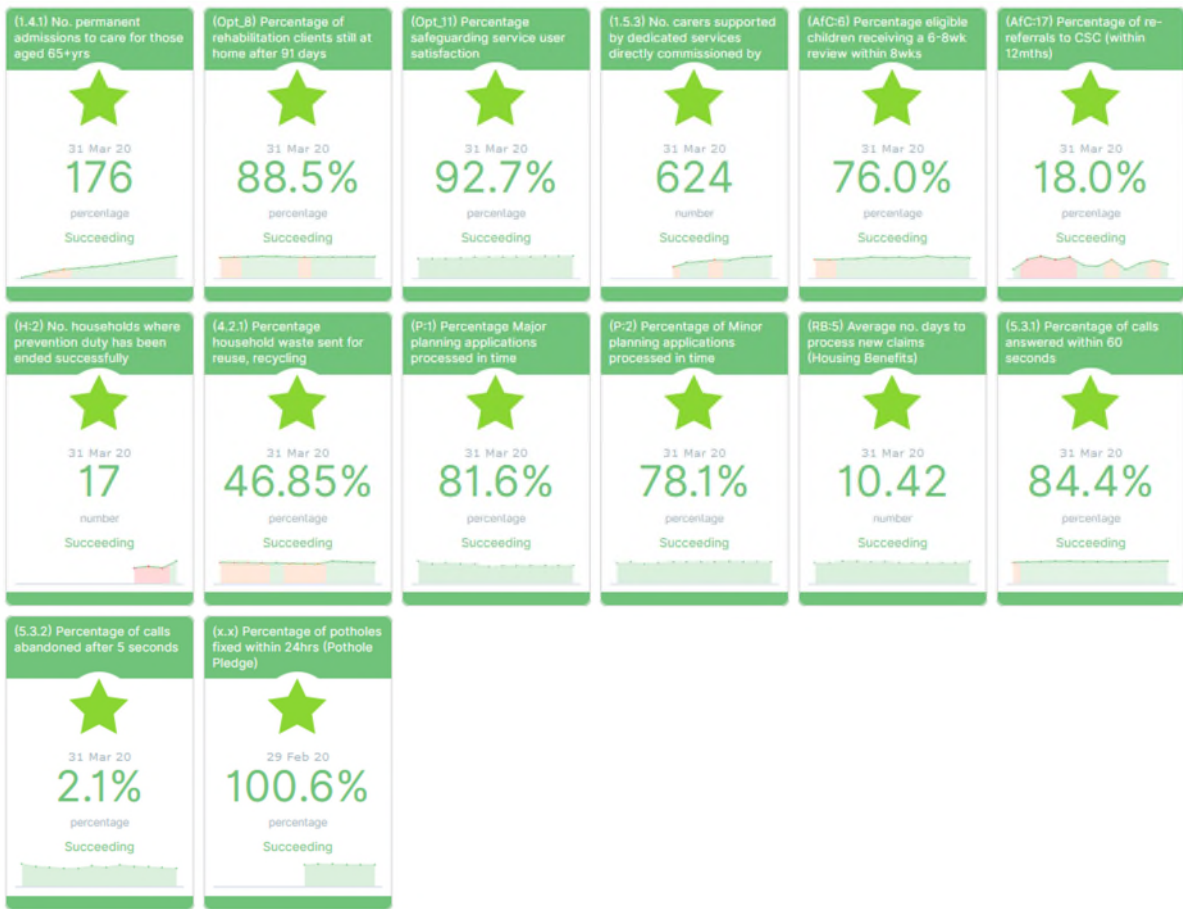
Needs Improvement



Near Target



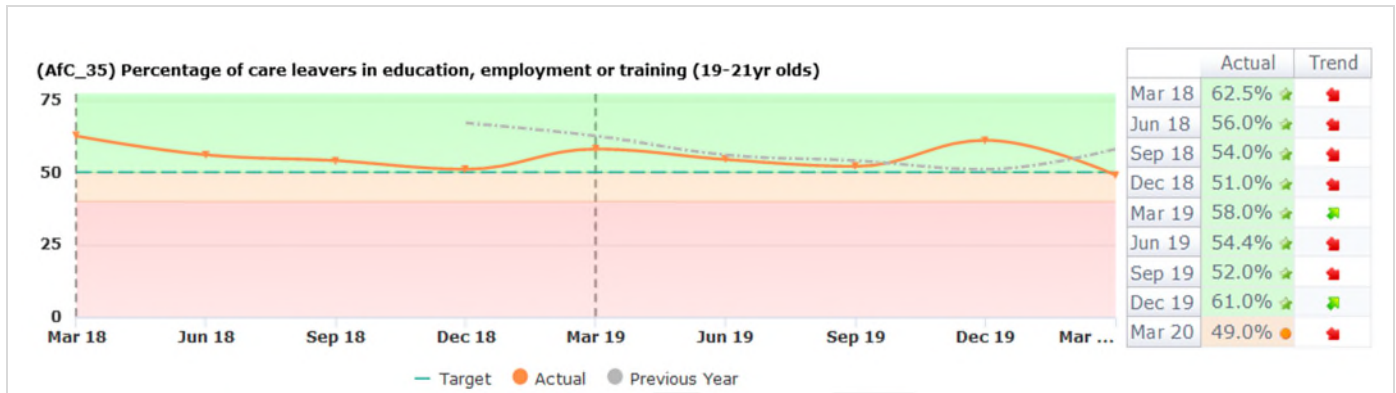
Succeeding



**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

4. Healthy, skilled and independent residents: Detailed Trends and Commentary

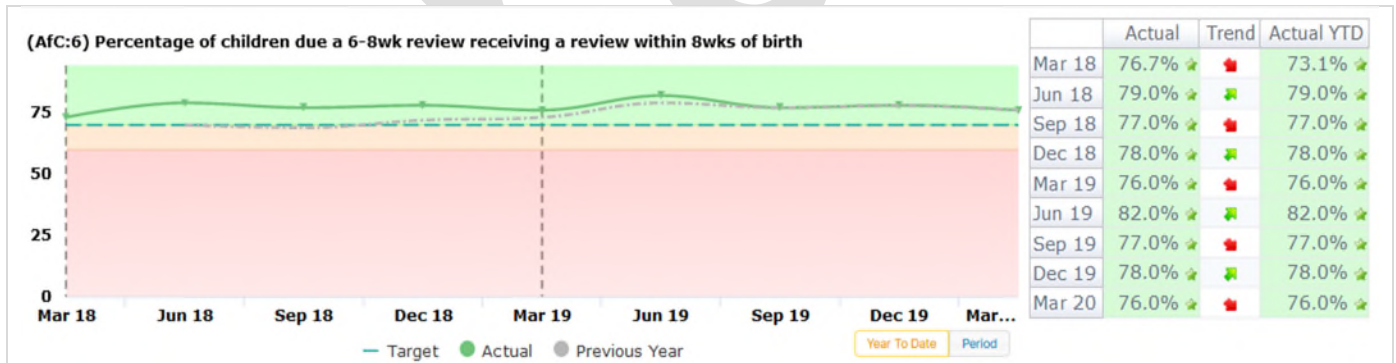
4.1 Care leavers



Q4 and End of Year Commentary

The end of quarter performance was hampered by a number of young people who lost employment in the low pay sector as the Covid-19 pandemic began to impact the economy. A number of young people were also enrolled in training to start after Easter which was cancelled. The care leavers service continues to focus on ensuring these young people are able to access accommodation and food during the pandemic, however this number is not expected to bounce back until education and employment opportunities re-open in sufficient volume in late 2020 or early 2021.

4.2 Health visiting

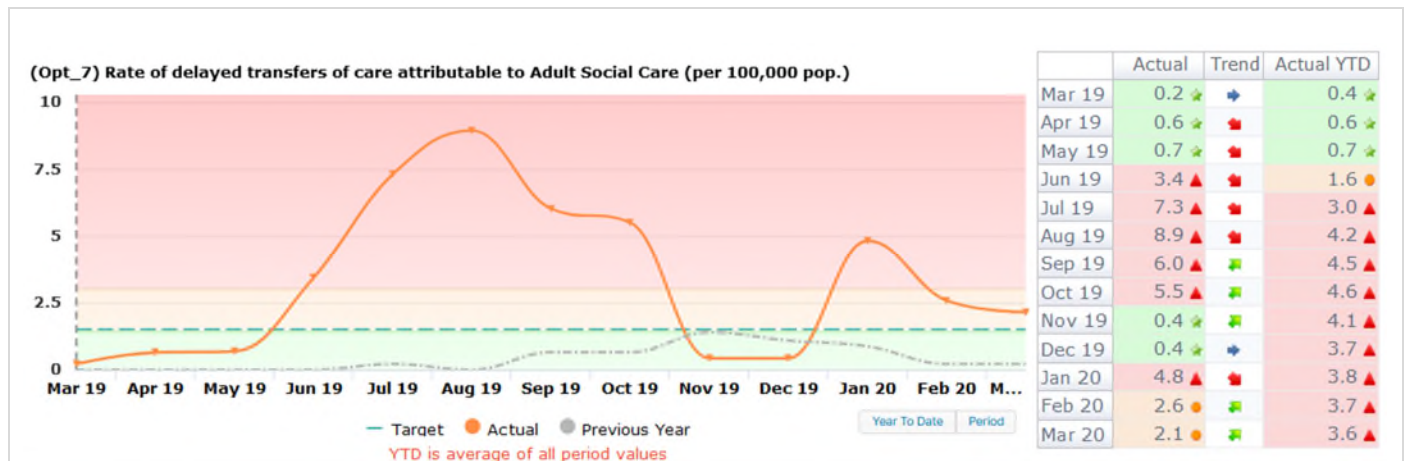


Q4 and End of Year Commentary

All families eligible for a review up to the second week of March 2020 were offered a review with the take-up comparable to the same season last year. Performance is expected to be significantly down in Q1 due to reduced service availability as a result of Covid-19 restrictions.

**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

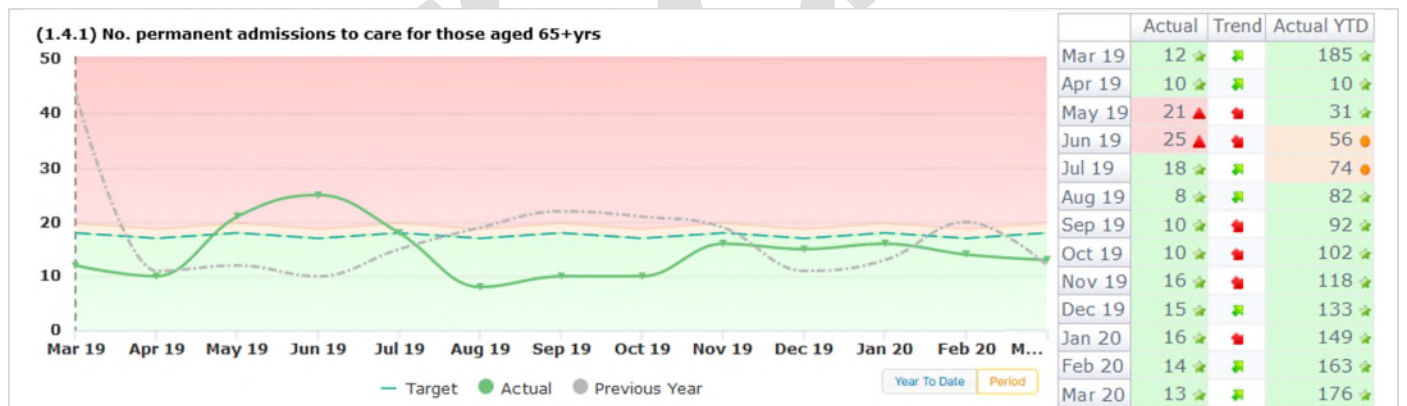
4.3 Delayed transfers of care



Q4 and End of Year Commentary

As at the close of Q4 the average rate of delayed transfers of care attributable to Adult Social Care (per 100,000 population) is 3.6. Performance has fluctuated throughout the year, largely due to lack of capacity within homecare, and reached its highest rate in August (8.9). This increase has been mirrored across the South East and nationally. New providers have been sourced and Q3 (Oct-Dec) saw improvements in performance as a result and which have contributed to bringing the average rate down to its lowest point since August.

4.4 Permanent admissions to care

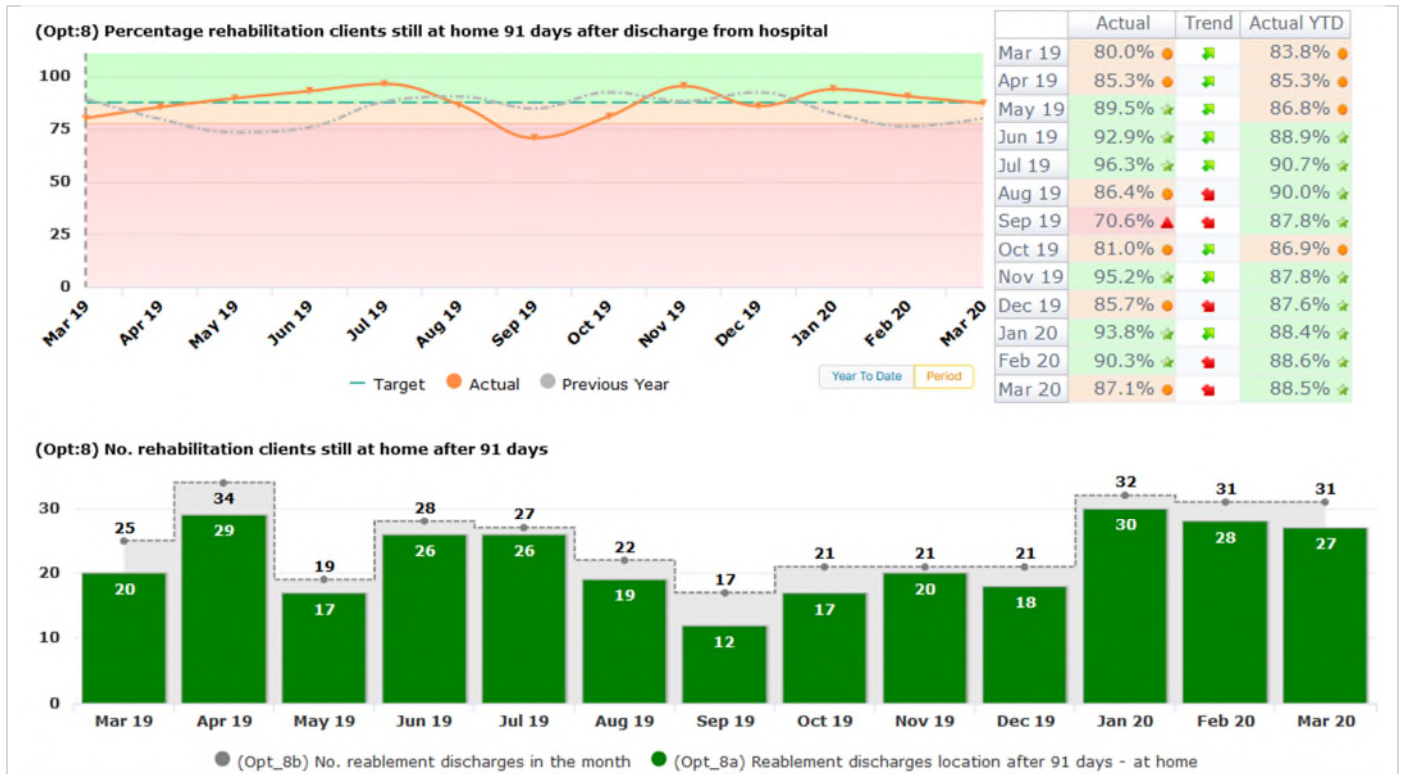


Q4 and End of Year Commentary

As at the close of Q4 the number of permanent admissions to care for older people stands at 176, a reduction on 2018/19 year-end figure (185). Across 2019/20 performance has stayed within target with the exception of Q1, where numbers reached their highest level (25) in June and related primarily to nursing and nursing dementia placements. Permanent admissions are generally expected to increase in the winter period, and this has occurred at a steady rate. The focus on prevention and keeping people living in their own homes is having a positive impact on admissions to care, although when they are subsequently assessed as needing care their needs are higher and more complex.

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 Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report

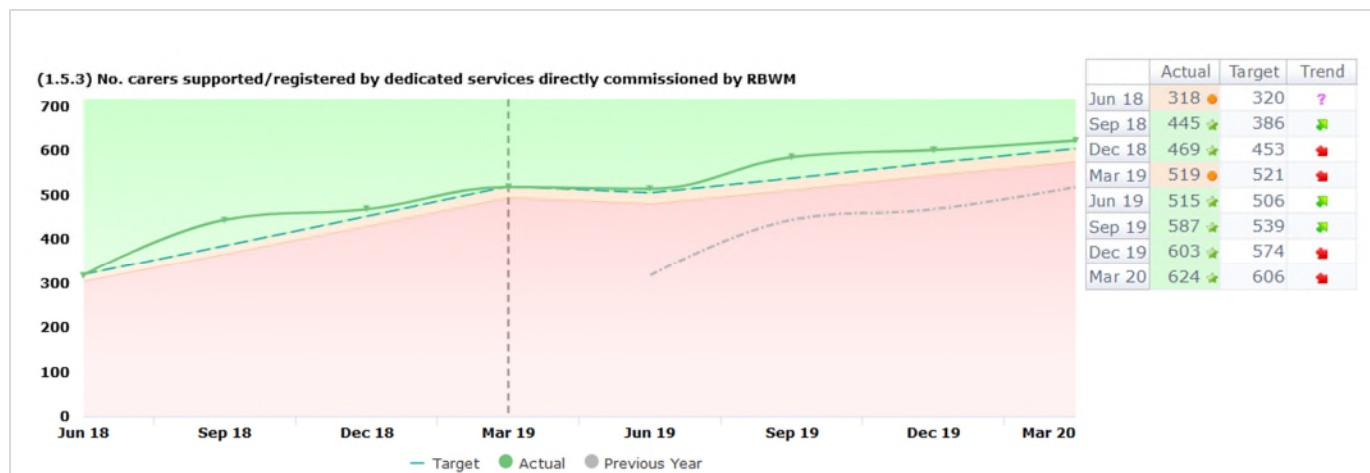
4.5 Reablement



Q4 and End of Year Commentary

As at the close of Q4 the year-to-date percentage of rehabilitation clients still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital stands at 88.5%, above target (87.5%) and an improvement on year-end performance for 2018/19 (83.8%). Whilst monthly performance has fluctuated through the year – and with a pronounced downward trend across Q2 (Jul-Sep) – it has tracked closer to target across Qs3-4. Generally the cohort of individuals have particularly complex needs and frailties, and outcomes are heavily influenced by this. It is therefore encouraging that year-to-date performance across the year has consistently remained on target.

4.6 Support for carers

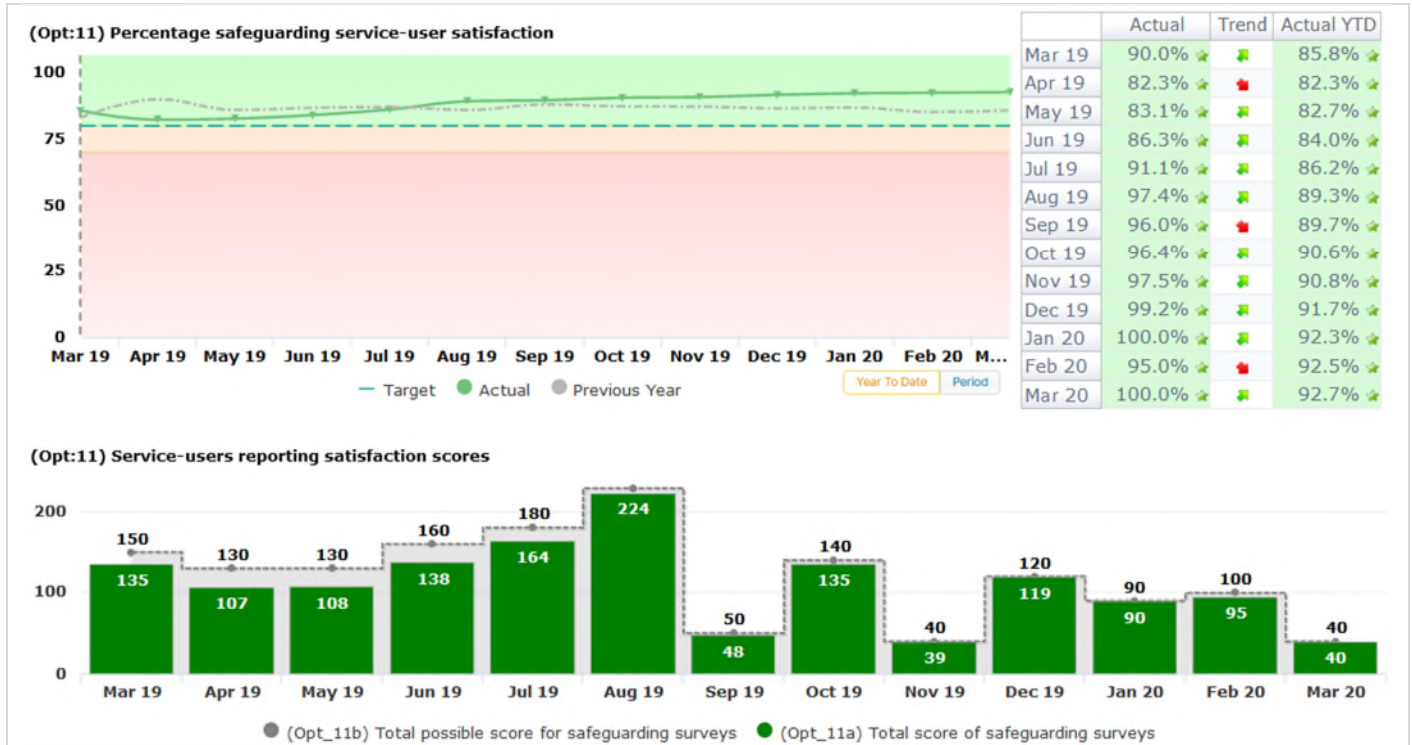


Q4 and End of Year Commentary

This measure reports the number of carers identified and registered and support refers to appropriate services, events and opportunities available for carers. Performance throughout the year has consistently tracked in line with the target set and the total figure of 624 for the close of 2019/20 is above target (606) by 18. This includes the number of in-borough young carers that have received support (including attending events) from RBWM and the number of adult carers identified and registered who are referred to appropriate services, events and opportunities. It is acknowledged that the service went into lockdown on Tuesday 17 March 2020, necessitating cancellation of group sessions, drop-ins and one-to-ones for the remainder of the March whilst suitable remote working solutions were put in place. Assessments, one-to-ones and group sessions were quickly resumed in April and there is weekly and fortnightly contact to ensure that families' immediate needs are being met.

5. Safe and vibrant communities: Detailed Trends and Commentary

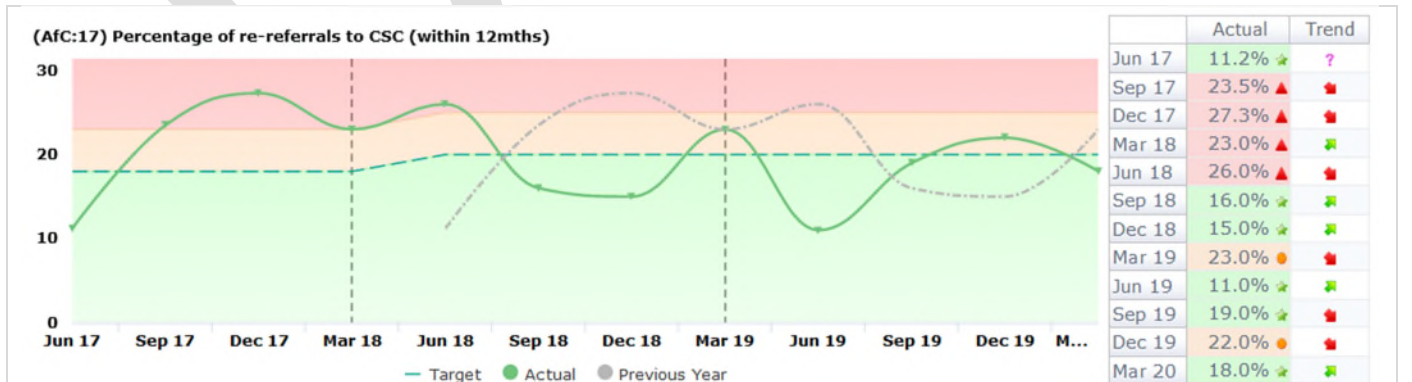
5.1 Adult safeguarding



Q4 and End of Year Commentary

This measures the satisfaction of residents at the end of a safeguarding investigation and process. As at the close of Q4 2019/20, YTD performance stands at 92.7% (1307 / 1410), an increase of 6.9% when compared with Q4 2018/19 (85.8%, 1081/1260). The consistent performance above target (80%) is an encouraging indication that existing processes are sound.

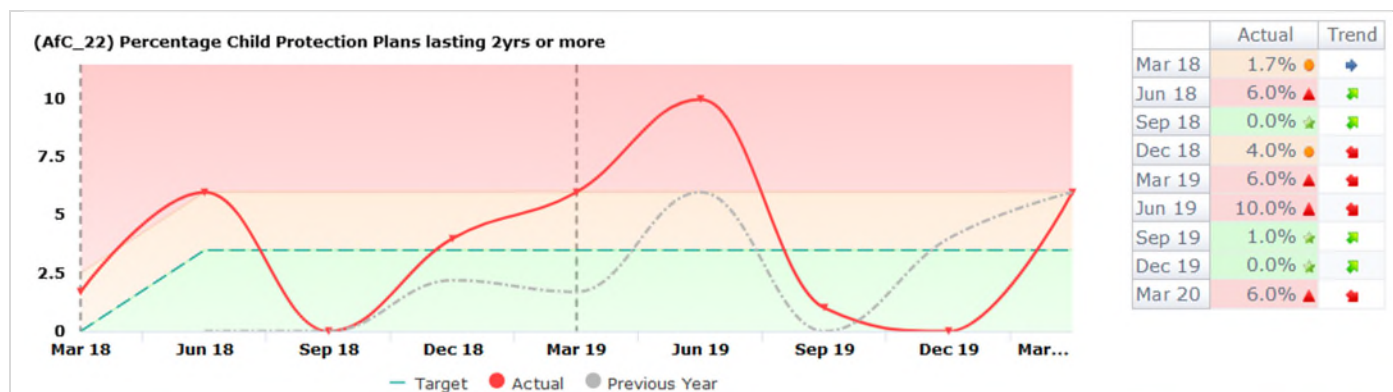
5.2 Children’s social care



Q4 and End of Year Commentary

This indicator is volatile around the high end of the expected range of 10%-20% and performance represents a good balance in risk judgement. The Ofsted inspection in January found the Single Point of Access (SPA) to have an effective threshold and made appropriate decisions.

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Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**



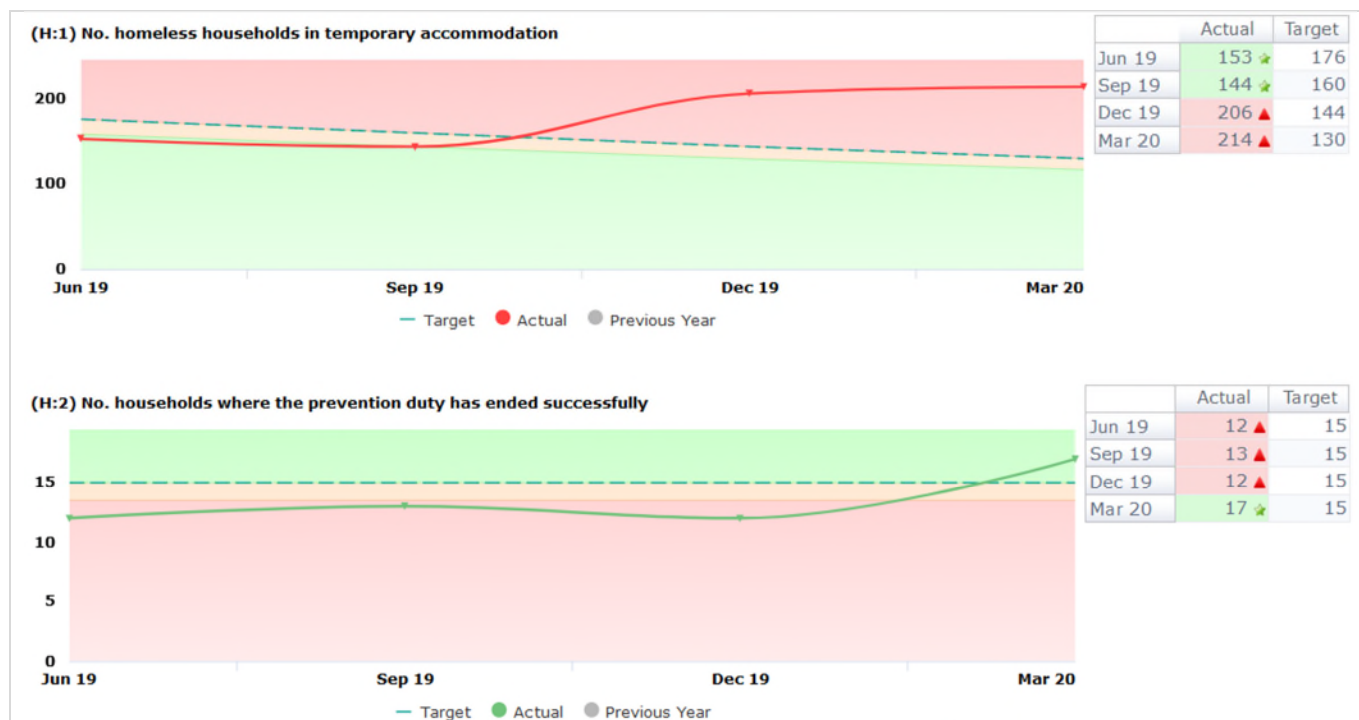
Q4 and End of Year Commentary

This measure is the number of children whose plan lasts more than 2 years at the point of closure in the period as a percentage of all the plans that have closed. It represents two children from one family where the decision to extend the plan beyond two years allowed the plan to subsequently close without taking the children into care. It is likely that there will be the occasional case where this is the best risk balanced approach for the child.

**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

6. Growing economy, affordable housing: Detailed Trends and Commentary

6.1 Homelessness and temporary accommodation



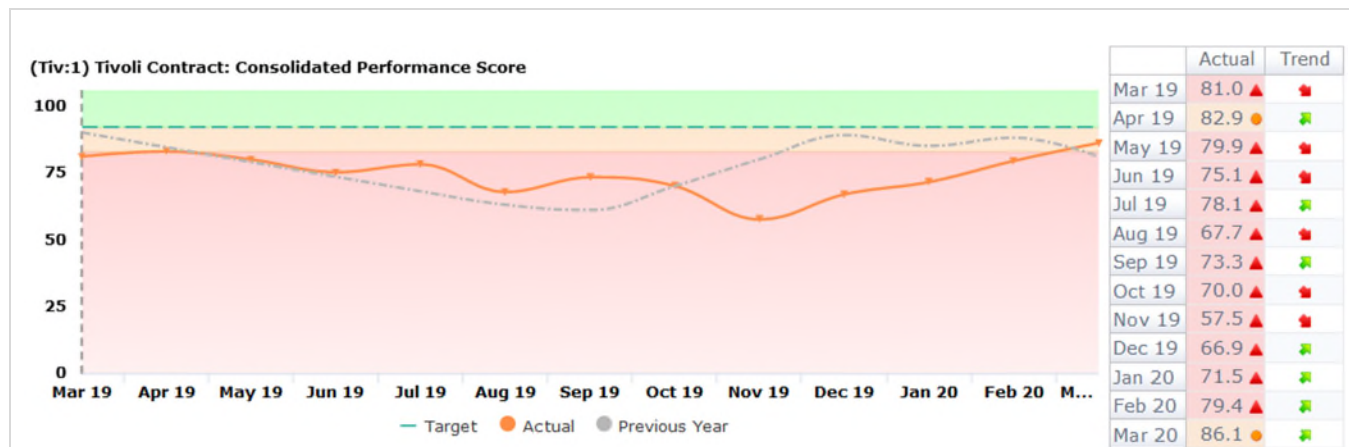
Q4 and End of Year Commentary

Due to the increased pressure on the Housing Service during the Covid-19 pandemic, households in temporary accommodation have increased to 214 by end of year. This includes households that the authority would not normally be required to accommodate. As part of Covid-19 the Housing Service has also brought all rough sleepers and sofa surfers into temporary accommodation. This has increased those on the rough sleeper pathway from an average of 25/30 at any given time to 54 at the end of March 2020. The team have however been successful in continuing to prevent homelessness where possible, with an increase to 17 for the final quarter of 2019/20, and are actively sourcing alternative accommodation in the private rented sector for homeless households and working hard to ensure appropriate suitable accommodation is available as temporary accommodation.

**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

7. Attractive and well-connected borough: Detailed Trends and Commentary

7.1 Parks and open spaces



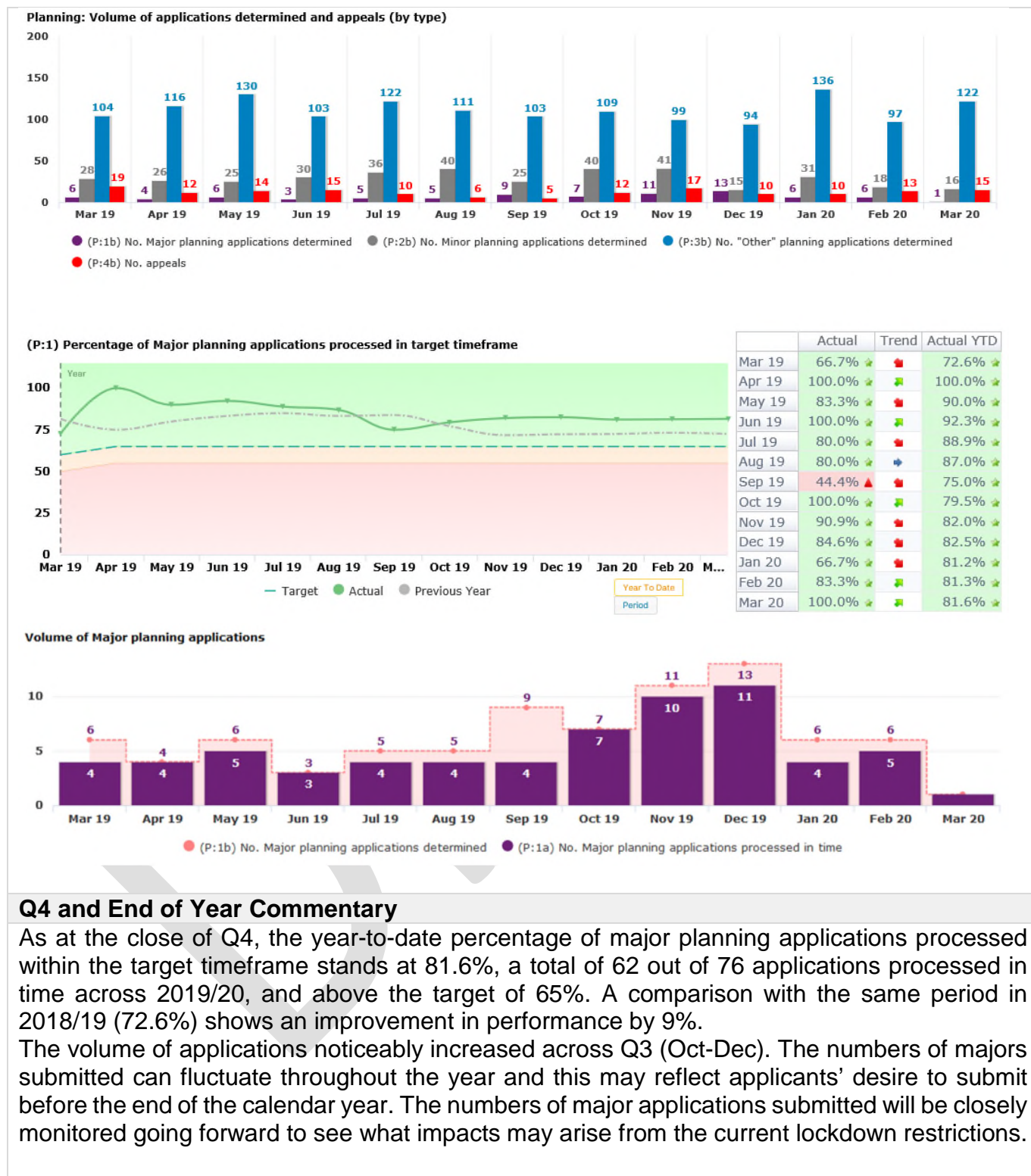
Q4 and End of Year Commentary

The consolidated performance score is created on the basis of a number of operational and resident-facing measures. As at the end of Q4 the latest consolidated performance score is 86.1, short of target (92) by 5.9 but within tolerance for this measure. This score is presently indicative and subject to verification.

After working closely with Tivoli on the agreed improvement plan, performance has seen a consistent upward trend month on month since the low in November 2019 of 57.5. It is acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown restrictions from 23 March 2020 have had a minimal impact on service-delivery towards the close of Q4, however it is anticipated that Q1 performance will reflect a greater impact on performance due to disruption of operational resources in April.

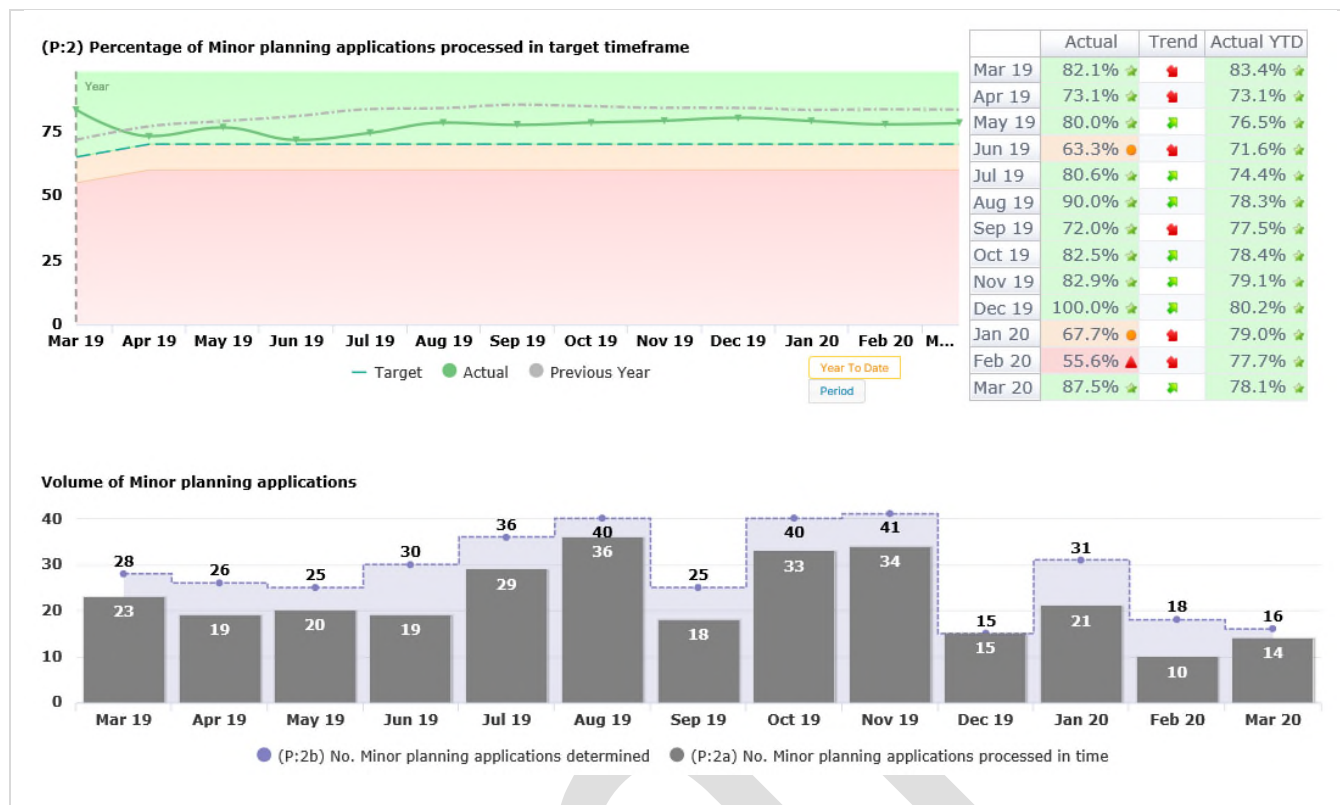
**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

7.2 Planning applications: Major



**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

7.3 Planning applications: Minor



Q4 and End of Year Commentary

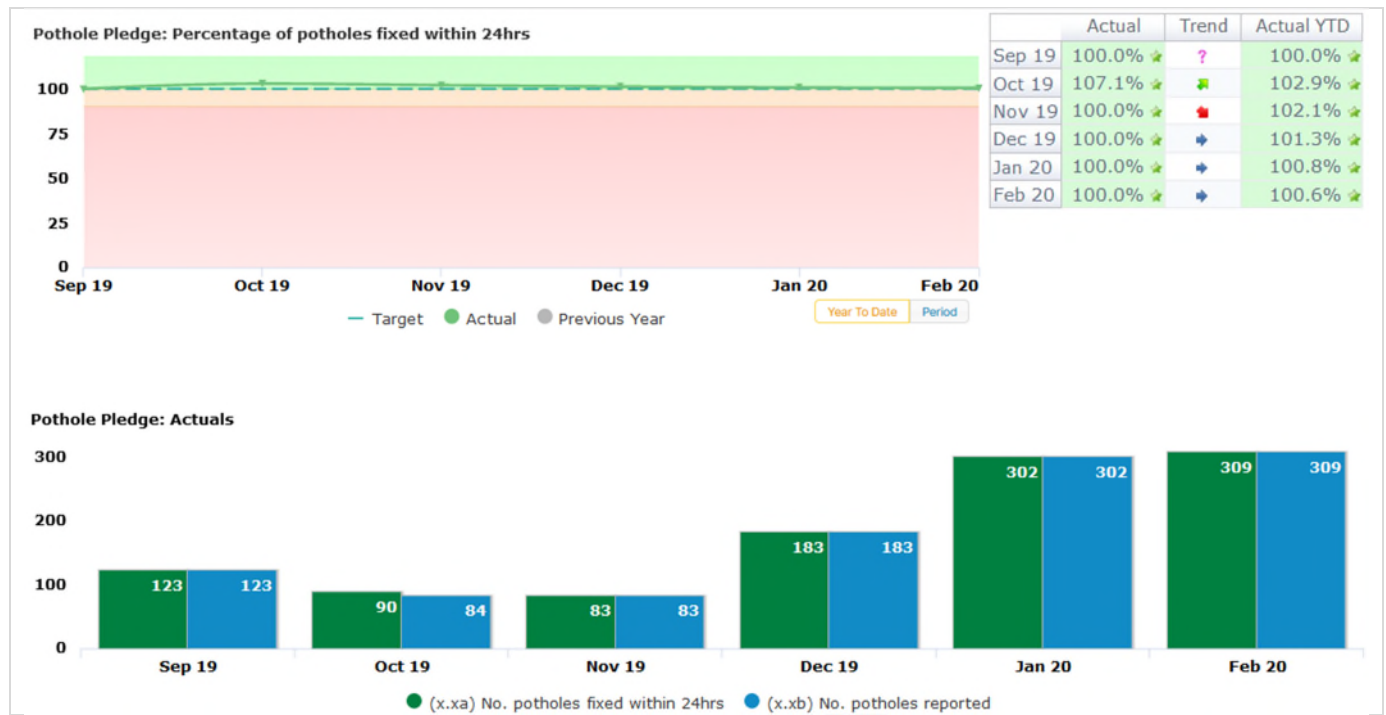
As at the close of Q4, the year-to-date percentage of Minor planning applications processed in target timeframe stands at 78.1%, a total of 268/ 343 applications processed in time across 2019/20, and above target of 70%. However, a comparison with the same period in 2018/19 (83.4%) shows a decrease in performance of 5.3%.

Performance fell in Q1 and Q4, to 63.3% (19/30) in June and reaching its lowest in February at 55.6% (10/18) of Minor planning applications processed in target timeframe, both impacting on each quarter and YTD performance. However, a strong performance in March has ensured that performance remains above target overall.

The volume of applications noticeably decreased at the end of Q3 in December with a drop of 26 applications from the previous month. Applications remained low for Q4 (Jan-Mar). The numbers of minor applications submitted will be closely monitored going forward to see what impacts may arise from the current lockdown restrictions.

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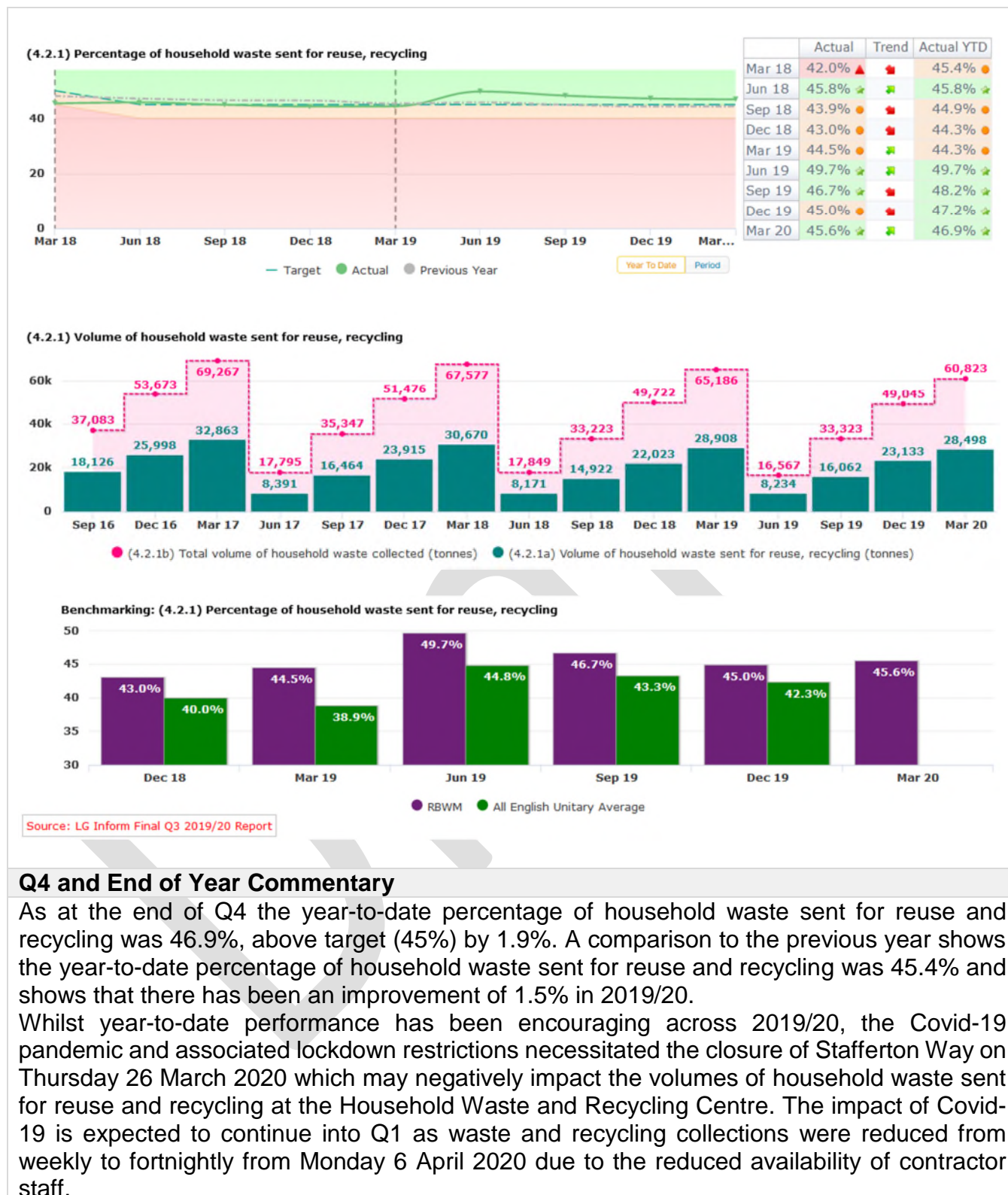
7.4 Potholes



Q4 and End of Year Commentary

In Q4 the initiative was stopped at the end of February as the scheme was no longer seen as necessary, and the funding to fix potholes in Q3 has dealt with the backlog problem. The attention is now been on targeting potholes that are deemed a hazard in accordance with the Borough Highways Asset Management Plan time frames.

7.5 Waste and recycling



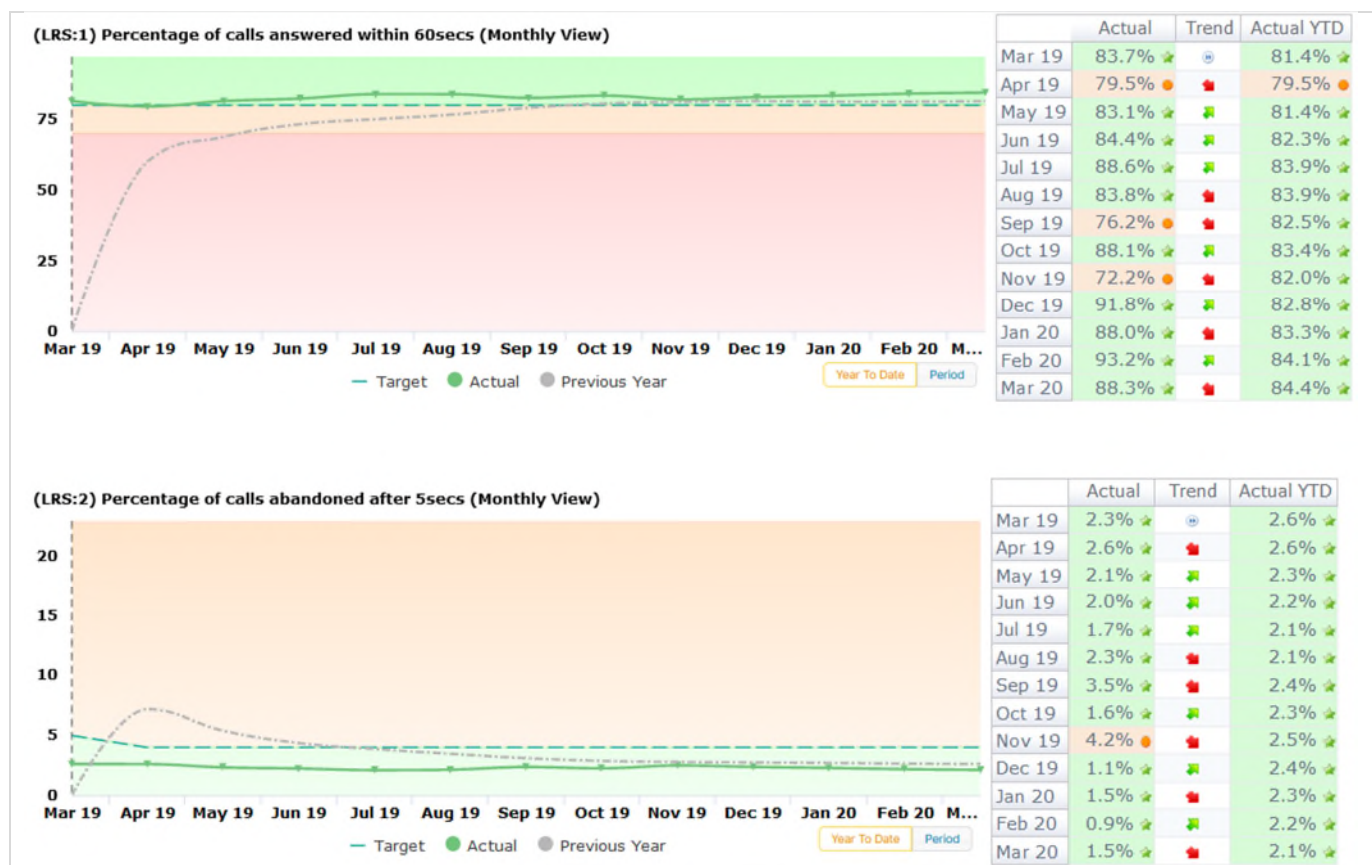
**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

8. An excellent customer experience: Detailed Trends and Commentary

8.1 Customer contact centre calls



**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**



Q4 and End of Year Commentary

Year-end performance for the call centre is above target with 84.4% of calls answered within 60 seconds (136,960 / 162,246) against a target of 80%, and 2.1% of calls abandoned after 5 seconds (3,451 / 162,246) against a target of 4%. This improves on 2018/19 performance which stood at 81.4% of calls answered within 60 seconds, and 2.6% of calls abandoned after 5 seconds. Overall the number of calls received to the call centre fell in 2019/20 (162,246) from 165,897 in 2018/19 which is largely attributed to the availability of online services and information via the council’s website and also overall reductions in avoidable contact by addressing customer enquiries “right first time”.

Analysis of underlying data-sets relating to customer contact patterns resulted in the approval of proposals in February to change call centre opening times to become a Monday-Friday 9-5pm service with effect from 1 April 2020. These changes are expected to generate future financial savings for the council and, at the time the proposals were made and then approved, call performance up to and into 2020/21 was expected to remain consistently high.

The council’s operations changed considerably as a result of lockdown restrictions in mid-March. Libraries closed on Wednesday 18 March 2020 and business continuity plans necessitated the adoption of new technology to support call centre staff in the continuation of their duties from home where it was possible and appropriate to do so. In March the volume of calls received (13,615) remained relatively consistent with previous months. Whilst the percentage of calls answered within 60 seconds remained above the target of 80% in March, there was an increase in the percentage of calls abandoned after 5 seconds.

The council’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic has utilised resources from across all council teams, and call centre staff in particular have been engaged in setting up and training council staff in the use of new technologies to support engagement with local community groups and also local residents who may be shielded as a result of particular vulnerabilities to the virus. It is therefore anticipated that call performance in Q1 will be heavily impacted by the draw on the services’ staff to support these community response efforts.

**Cabinet PMF:
Q4 and End of Year 2019-20 Performance Report**

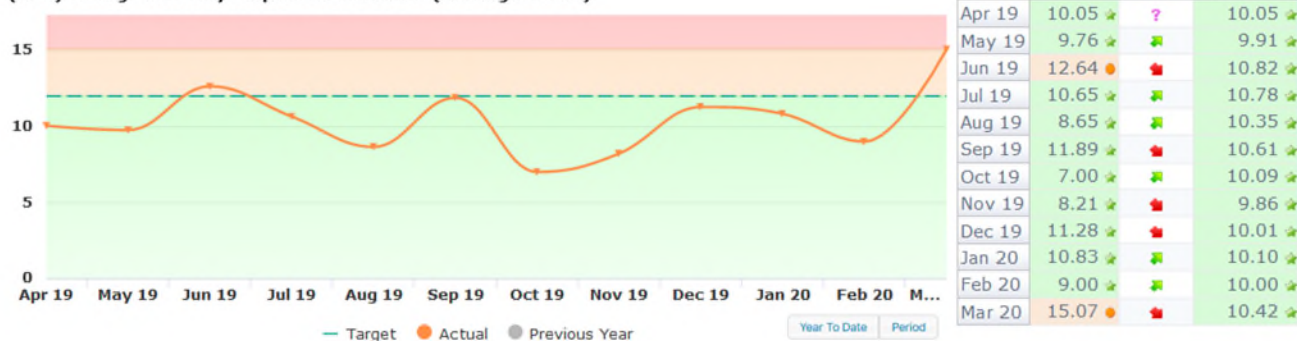
It is acknowledged that the greater part of Q1 has been spent in lockdown and analysis of call volumes over this period will generate valuable insights when correlated with the volumes of digital transactions made in the period and virtual library attendances.

Draft

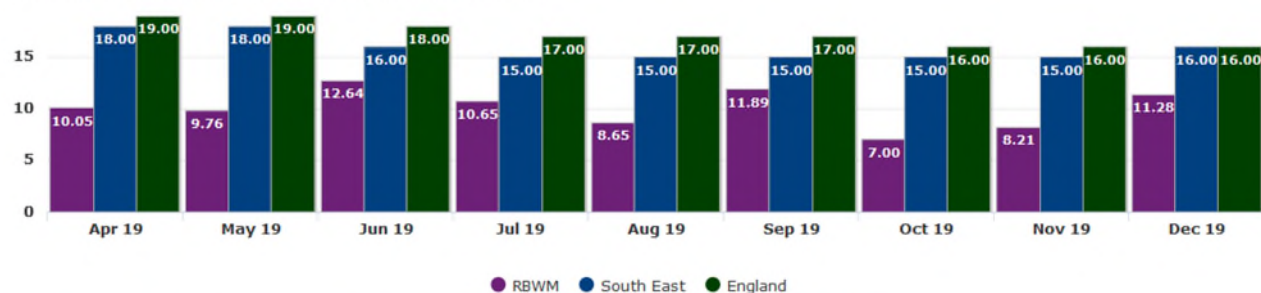
Cabinet PMF:
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8.2 Processing times for Housing Benefits

(RB:5) Average no. of days to process new claims (Housing Benefits)

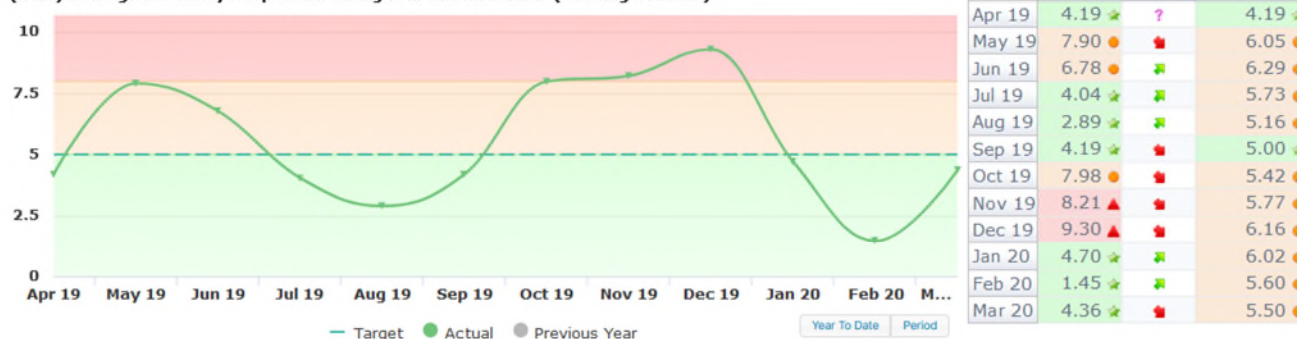


Benchmarking: Trends: (RB:5) Average no. of days to process new claims (Housing Benefits)
England and SE Benchmarking figures available a quarter in arrears

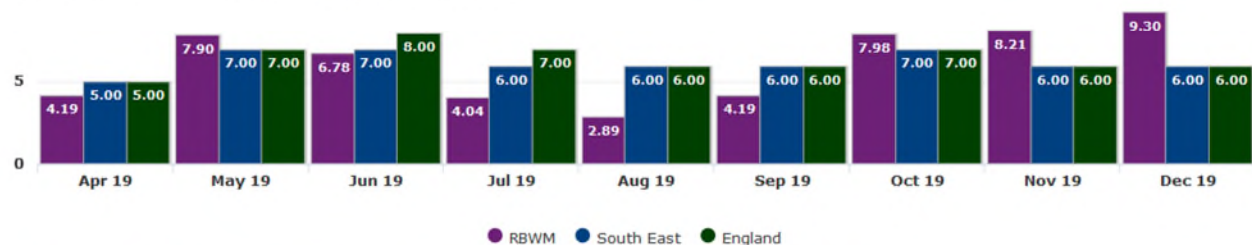


Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-benefit-statistics-on-speed-of-processing-2019-to-2020>

(RB:6) Average no. of days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits)



Benchmarking: Trends: (RB:6) Average no. of days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits)
England and SE Benchmarking figures available a quarter in arrears



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-benefit-statistics-on-speed-of-processing-2019-to-2020>

Q4 and End of Year Commentary

(RB:5) Average no. days to process new claims (Housing Benefits): Across 2019/20 the average number of days to process new claims for Housing Benefits has remained largely within target albeit with a slight fall in June 2019 (12.64). Available benchmarking data shows RBWM to have consistently performed better than the South East and England up to the end

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of December 2019 (please note that South East and England benchmarking figures are available a quarter in arrears). Monthly performance dipped in March to its lowest point in the year (15.07) however overall the strong performance across 2019/20 has ensured that the year-to-date position as at the close of Q4 (10.42) remains on target.

(RB:6) Average no. days to process changes in circumstances (Housing Benefits):

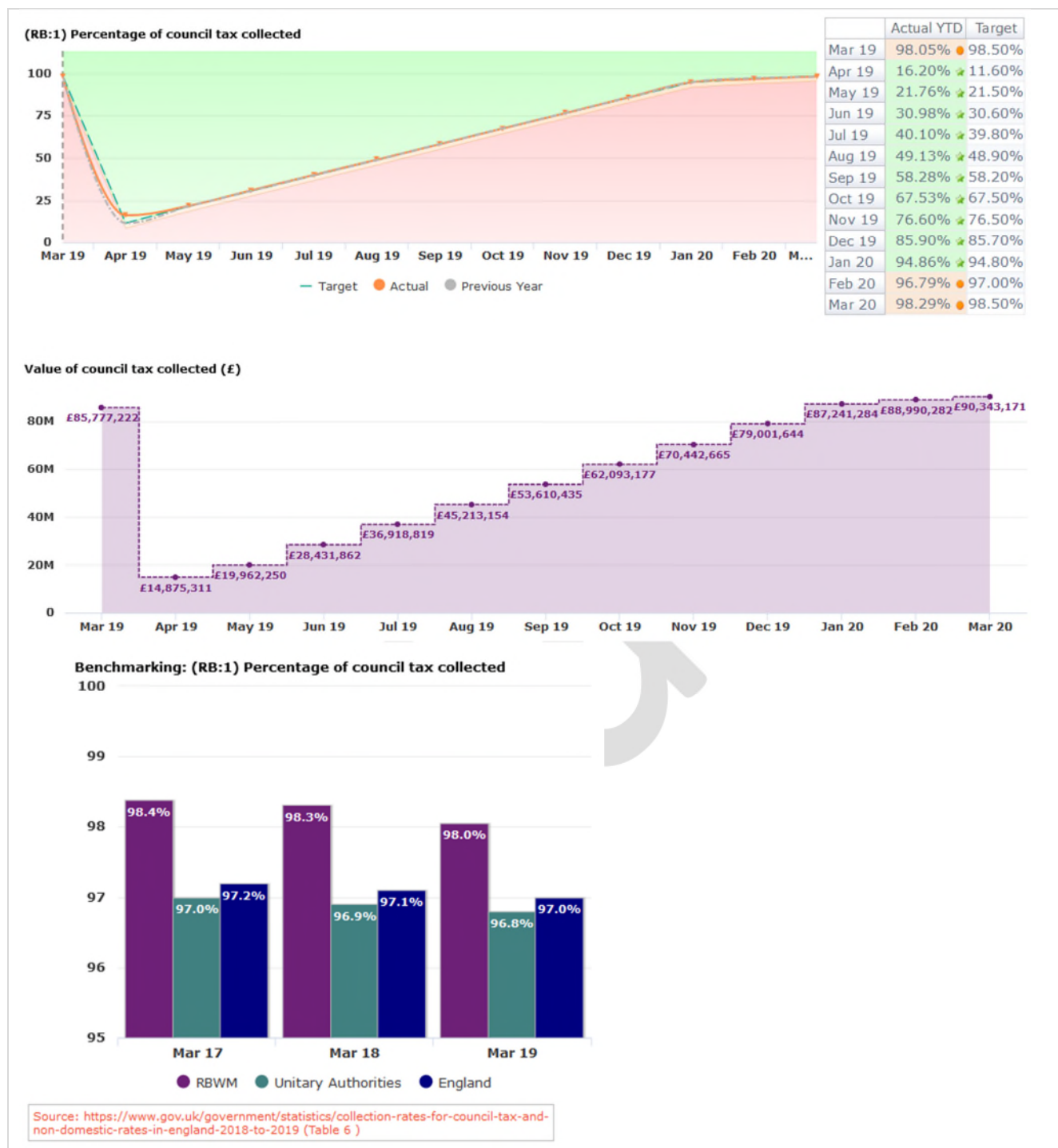
Across 2019/20 performance against this measure has fluctuated and has shown a steady downward trend since August 2019, with performance moving off target though within tolerance for October 2019 and reaching its lowest point in December 2019 (9.30). This downturn in performance is reflective of staffing pressures within the service at the time, and whilst performance across Q4 (Jan-Mar) has seen considerable performance improvements – including a performance peak for the entire year in February 2020 (1.45) – it is Q3 that has primarily put recovery of year-to-date performance beyond reach although 5.50 is still within tolerance.

The Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown restrictions will have an impact on performance going into Q1, the start of which we may detect in the March 2020 figures for both measures as the council's operations changed considerably as part of coordinated measures to keep both customers and staff safe. The unprecedented demand for services has been reflected on by the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions in a statement to Parliament, and a downturn in performance for both measures in 2020/21 is therefore expected and unavoidable as service staff meet the challenges of this increased demand.

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9. Well-managed resources delivering value for money

9.1 Council Tax and Business Rates

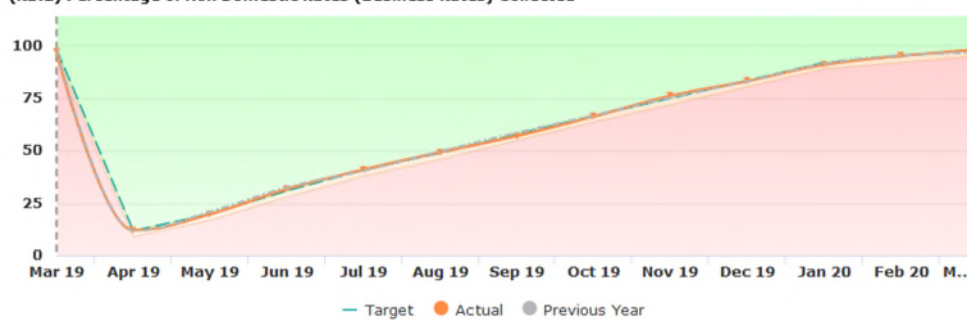


Q4 and End of Year Commentary

Performance of this measure has remained on target throughout 2019/20 up to February 2020 where it dipped by 0.21% from target (97%) to 96.79% and remained at 0.21% short of target as at the end of March though within tolerance for the measure. As at the close of 2019/20 this equates to a value of £1,570,761 not collected. It is acknowledged that the value and volume of payments in February and March is much less than in previous months of the year as most taxpayers/ratepayers retain the standard statutory 10-month instalment plan. Available benchmarking data shows RBWM performance to be consistently higher than Unitary Authorities and England across the last 3 financial years 2017/18 and 2018/19.

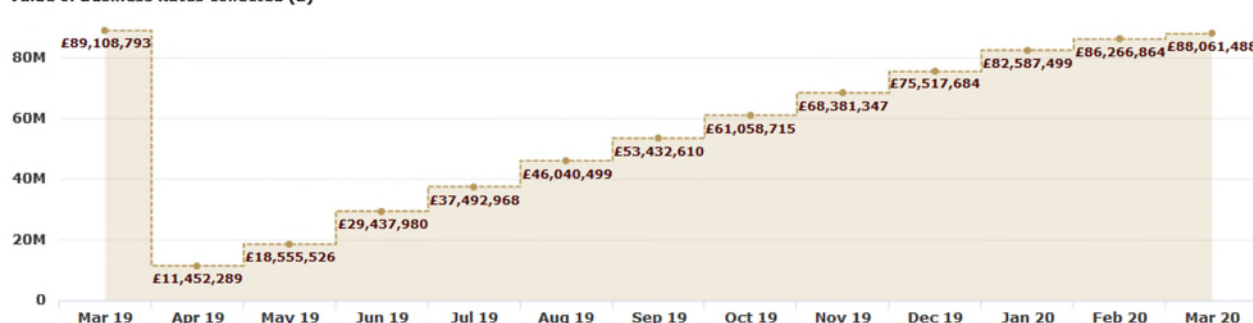
**Cabinet PMF:
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(RB:2) Percentage of Non Domestic Rates (Business Rates) Collected

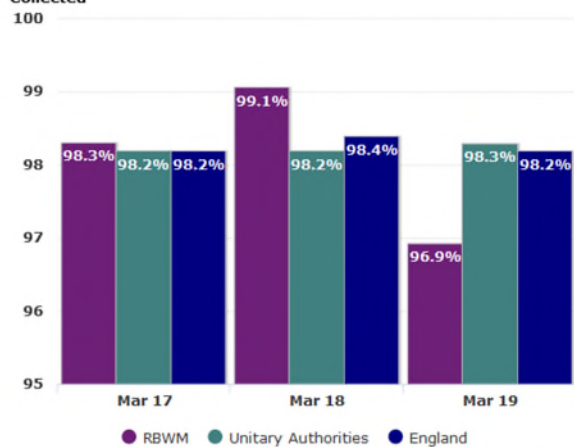


	Actual YTD	Target
Mar 19	96.92% ●	98.30%
Apr 19	12.25% ▲	12.00%
May 19	19.90% ●	20.00%
Jun 19	31.84% ▲	31.00%
Jul 19	41.12% ▲	41.00%
Aug 19	49.39% ▲	49.00%
Sep 19	57.09% ●	58.00%
Oct 19	66.36% ●	66.70%
Nov 19	76.20% ▲	75.00%
Dec 19	83.20% ●	83.50%
Jan 20	90.91% ●	92.00%
Feb 20	95.19% ▲	95.00%
Mar 20	98.23% ●	98.30%

Value of Business Rates collected (£)



Benchmarking: (RB:2) Percentage of Non Domestic Rates Collected



Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/collection-rates-for-council-tax-and-non-domestic-rates-in-england-2018-to-2019> (Table 6)

Q4 and End of Year Commentary

As at the close of Q4 performance for this measure stands at 98.23%, short of target (98.3%) by 0.07% though within tolerance for the measure. As at the close of 2019/20 this equates to a value of £1,589,910 not collected. It is acknowledged that the value and volume of payments in February and March is much less than in previous months of the year as most ratepayers retain the standard statutory 10-month instalment plan.

It is anticipated that the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown restrictions will have an impact on performance going into Q1 2020/21. Central government announced in March that, with effect from 1 April 2020, a one-year rates holiday will apply for all businesses in the leisure, retail and hospitality sectors, with central government reimbursing the council's shortfall.

Report Title:	Designation of the Cookham Neighbourhood Area
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	No - Part I
Member reporting:	Councillor Coppinger, Lead Member for Planning and Maidenhead
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet - 25 June 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Executive Director Place, Russell O'Keefe & Head of Planning, Adrien Waite
Wards affected:	Bisham and Cookham

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REPORT SUMMARY

This report recommends the designation of the Cookham Neighbourhood Area to cover the whole parish of Cookham. Residents in the parish will be able to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for their area which will have statutory weight and form part of the Development Plan, upon which development management decisions will be based.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) **Approves the neighbourhood area designation for the parish of Cookham, with the boundaries shown in Appendix B, co-terminus with the Parish boundary.**

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Cookham Parish Council applied for designation of the whole of the parish area as a neighbourhood plan area in January this year.
- 2.2 Neighbourhood Plans are community-led frameworks which enable local people to draft policies for future development, specific to the area that they live and work in. Together with the strategic policies of the emerging Borough Local Plan, these policies will be used to determine future planning applications in the Royal Borough. Preparation of a neighbourhood plan is subject to a series of formal steps including examination and referendum.
- 2.3 The neighbourhood planning process is guided by the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, amended Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. This gives local authorities the power to formally designate neighbourhood areas within their administrative area, in which neighbourhood plans can be prepared.
- 2.4 Following receipt of an application for a neighbourhood area, and a consultation period, the Council is required to designate the neighbourhood area. National Planning Practice guidance indicates that where a parish applies for the whole

of their parish to be designated, the local planning authority should agree designation of the whole area.

2.5 As also required, the Borough has published notification of the application for area designation and invited representations. The comments and representations received are summarised in Appendix A. Most representations received supported the designation as applied for. However, one representation on behalf of the owners of the Odney Club and managers of Winter Hill Golf Course, John Lewis Partnership (JLP), sought the omission of these two properties from the designation. The grounds given are that additional planning controls in a neighbourhood plan would adversely impact on the flexibility with which JLP can adapt and invest to respond to the business' changing requirements. Both sites lie within the green belt and are therefore subject to planning national policy restrictions.

2.6 It is considered that the boundaries of the proposed neighbourhood planning area are reasonable. Both sites mentioned in the representation are within the boundaries of the Parish area and separate from each other. To exclude these would effectively create two islands within the area of the neighbourhood plan. This would be contrary to the effective planning of the whole area. The reasons advanced by the representor are not considered to be of sufficient weight to outweigh the disadvantages of preventing the community from considering the comprehensive planning of their area.

2.7 Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
To designate the neighbourhood area This is the recommended option	The recommended option will enable local people to continue with preparation of a neighbourhood plan
To refuse designation of the neighbourhood area.	This option would prevent local people from preparing a neighbourhood plan for their area.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Designation of the Cookham Neighbourhood Area	Not designated	Designated June 2020			Designation June 2020
New Neighbourhood Plan produced	The plan makes no progress.	Draft Plan submitted to the council by spring 2023	Draft plan submitted to the council in 2022	Draft plan submitted to the council in 2021	Examination of the Neighbourhood Plan summer 2023

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 Earlier neighbourhood planning groups have been able to draw on a £20,000 grant from the Council towards the costs of plan preparation. These funds were initially provided through Government support for neighbourhood plans. However, this funding is no longer available to local authorities. Government does however provide support for neighbourhood planning groups through Locality. This support is available on application to Locality by the neighbourhood planning group and is both in the form of grant funding and technical support.
- 4.2 Officers from the policy team will be required to liaise with and advise the steering group, whilst they develop the plan. Under the current government grant funding regime the council will also be expected to forward fund the examination of the Neighbourhood Plan but upon setting a date for the referendum, RBWM will be able to apply for a grant of £20,000. This forward funding system has been in place for previous neighbourhood plans. This grant is expected to cover the cost of the examination and the referendum.
- 4.3 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) legislation states that a meaningful proportion of the Council's CIL income has to be devolved and spent at the local level. In accordance with CIL Regulations, once the neighbourhood plan is made part of the development plan, the parish will be entitled to 25% of CIL receipts within the parish, currently they can receive 15%. This apportionment is taken into account in the Borough's infrastructure planning.

Table 3: Financial Impact of report's recommendations

REVENUE COSTS	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Additional total	£0	£0	£20,000
Reduction	£0	£0	£20,000
Net Impact	£0	£0	£0

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Neighbourhood area applications are required to be made in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and applications are required to be publicised in compliance with Regulation 6 of those regulations. Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out the requirements for determining applications for an area to be designated a neighbourhood area.
- 5.2 Neighbourhood Development Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders are prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 5.3 Amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced by the Localism Act, allow for a third party to make a claim for a judicial review in certain circumstances. Such a claim can be made in the context of decisions made on a neighbourhood development

plan or neighbourhood development order, or in regards to the consideration of recommendations made by an examiner.

- 5.4 To determine whether an environmental assessment of the effects of a neighbourhood plan is necessary, a screening will be carried out of the draft plan during its preparation. This will be in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risks	Uncontrolled risk	Controls	Controlled risk
Neighbourhood plans cannot be delivered without designating neighbourhood areas	High	Designate the neighbourhood area.	Low
Residents and businesses may later object that the Neighbourhood Area does not reflect the most appropriate area for drafting of planning policies.	Low	Undergo consultation on Neighbourhood area.	Low

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS.

- 7.1 Climate Change/ Sustainability: The content of the neighbourhood plan will be determined in the first instance by the neighbourhood plan group. The final Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to independent examination which, amongst other issues, will make a recommendation based upon the contribution of the neighbourhood plan to delivering sustainable development. Another of the basic conditions which the plan will need to satisfy is that it is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan - including policies regarding climate change. The examiner will make recommendations in regard to the content of the plan. The Council officers will discuss these with the Parish acting as the neighbourhood planning group with the goal of agreeing any necessary modifications to the plan. The Council will then have the decision whether to proceed to a referendum where the community will be given the chance to vote on acceptance of the neighbourhood plan.

- 7.2 Equalities: The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the council to ensure that when considering any new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or procedure the impacts on particular groups. In this instance, it is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is required at this time. The preparation of the neighbourhood plan is led by the neighbourhood planning group – in this case Cookham Parish Council. The impact of the resulting plan will be subject to assessment under the Equalities Act.
- 7.3 Data Protection/GDPR: No personal data is being processed in regard to the decision under consideration.

8. CONSULTATION

The application for designation of the whole parish of Cookham as Neighbourhood Area has involved placing the information on the council's web site. On the home page is a [link](#) to the current consultations, this has included the Cookham Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation.

- 8.1 The planning department has a database of people and businesses interested in the planning process as well as statutory bodies and other parish councils, this has been used to consult people mainly by email, but for those who do not have this by paper letter. The consultation took place between Thursday 27 February until midnight on Sunday 12 April 2020. There have been several responses which are summarised in Appendix A.
- 8.2 The consultation responses have raised no compelling issues which suggest that the designation should not take place, with the overwhelming proportion supporting the designation.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation date if not called in: Immediately

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 This report is supported by 2 appendices:
- Appendix A Summary of Consultation Responses
 - Appendix B Proposed Neighbourhood Area Designation Plan

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 This report is supported by 3 background documents:
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policyframework--2>
 - Localism Act (2011) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents/enacted>

- Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012)
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/637/schedule/1/made>
- National Planning Practice Guidance
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Cllr Coppinger	Lead Member for Planning and Maidenhead	2/6/20	
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	2/6/20	2/6/20
Russell O'Keefe	Director of Place	2/6/20	
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources/S151 Officer	2/6/20	5/6/20
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services	2/6/20	3/6/20
Hilary Hall	Director Adults, Commissioning and Health	2/6/20	3/6/20
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	2/6/20	5/6/20
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer	2/6/20	4/6/20
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	2/6/20	2/6/20
Louisa Dean	Communications	2/6/20	
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance	2/6/20	3/6/20

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Non-key decision	Urgency item? No	To Follow item?
Report Author: Phillipa Silcock, Consultant Policy Planner Neighbourhood Plans, Ext 6508		

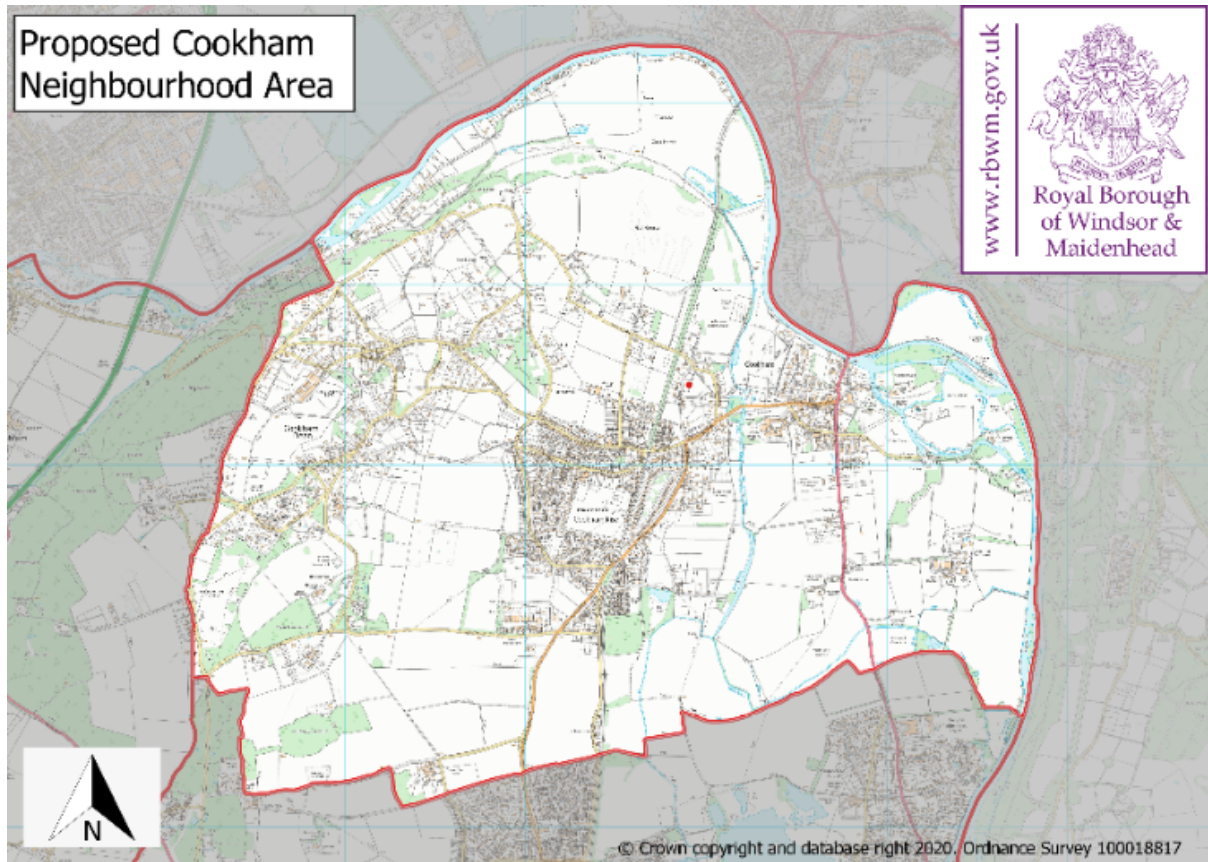
Appendix A

Summary of responses to the consultation

Berkshire Gardens Trust	Support the principle of local input into planning matters. Particularly concerned with the Odney club and local woodlands and ancient common.	supporting
Sir William Perry (Cookham West ward councillor)	Important for future of Cookham that it has a NP. Parish boundaries are obvious and long established geographical are for the NP.	supporting
Highways England		No Comment
Mark Howard	Fully support	supporting
National Grid	Add NG to consultation base for the NP	No comment
Natural England	Provide sources of information for NP preparation	No comment
Sport England	Provide sources of information for NP preparation	No Comment
Mark McGovern	Wishes to be on consultation list	No Comment
Rt Hon Theresa May	Supports the preparation of NP as a means of engaging with the local community to identify and meet future needs	Supporting
Transport for London		No Comments
John Lewis and Partners	Odney Club and Winter Hill Golf Course should be excluded from the designated area in order to provide flexibility for future use of these sites by JLP.	Object to inclusion of Odney Club and Winter Hill Golf Club within the designated area.
Ian Wernham		supporting
Peter Roe (27/02/20)	Vital activity and support inclusion of the whole parish	supporting
Miriam Blaisey	Parish must have primary input to planning in the area	supporting
Kai Gait		supporting
Peter Roe (04/03/20)	Makes sense for the parish to be designated	supporting
Christine-Ann Jannetta	Fully support – believes that village design statement should be the main part	supporting

Appendix B

Proposed Neighbourhood Area Designation Plan



Report Title:	Treasury Outturn Report 2019/20
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	No - Part I
Lead Member:	Councillor Hilton, Lead Member for Finance and Ascot
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 25th June 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Adele Taylor, Director of Resources (s151 Officer)
Wards affected:	All

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REPORT SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - a) Update Members on the delivery of the Treasury Management Strategy approved by Council on 26th February 2019 and confirm the treasury outturn position as at 31st March 2020.
 - b) This report forms part of the monitoring of the treasury management function as recommended in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Treasury Management Code of Practice which requires that the Council receives a report on its treasury management activity at least twice a year;

Specifically this report includes:

 - a) a review of the Council's financial investment portfolio for 2019/20 as at 31st March 2020;
 - b) a review of the Council's borrowing strategy in 2019/20;
 - c) a review of compliance with the Council's Treasury and Prudential limits for 2019/20; and
 - d) an economic update for the financial year.
2. The Council has complied with all elements of its Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) as agreed by Council.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes and approves the annual Treasury Outturn Report 2019/20.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 The Authority has adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve treasury management mid-year and annual reports.
- 2.2 The Authority’s treasury management strategy for 2019/20 was approved at the Council meeting on 26th February 2019, and amended on 3rd December 2019. When borrowing and investing money the Authority is exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue impact of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk remains central to the Authority’s treasury management strategy.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 A successful treasury management approach will ensure the security of the Council’s assets whilst meeting the liquidity requirements of the Council and ensuring an investment return that meets the target set in the table below. The Council exceeded its return on investment target in 19/20 by 0.03%.

Table 1: Investment return target

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
A return that exceeds benchmark (Bank of England base rate plus 0.25%)	<0%	>0%	>0.1%	>0.2%	31 March 2020

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

Outturn Review of Treasury Management Activity

- 4.1.1 This report reviews the period from the 1st April 2019 to the 31st March 2020.
- 4.1.2 The Council receives payments in the form of government grants, council tax and business rates. These funds are invested in either fixed rate loans, cash deposits or money market funds with Council approved counterparties. The list of approved counterparties is known as the “Lending List”. A copy of the Lending List following this approval is attached to this report as Appendix A.
- 4.1.3 Whilst total funds under management varied throughout the period, total funds under management at the 31st March 2020 were £51,726,000 (£22,048,000 at 31st March 2020).
- 4.1.4 Funds under management at the 31st March 2020 were higher than usual due to payments on behalf of the LEP being lower than anticipated and the receipt of emergency Covid-19 funding from central government.

4.1.5 The allocation of funds under management by counterparty type at 31st March 2020.

Lloyds Call Account	5,700,000
Money Market Funds	13,900,000
Debt Management Office	22,400,000
Loans to partners/subsidiaries	9,726,000
Total	51,726,000

4.1.6 The investment return benchmark is 0.25% above Bank of England base rate. The Bank of England base rate is currently 0.10%.

4.1.7 The return on the prepayment of Pension Fund contributions for 2019/20 will be £256,987. This amount is not included in the investment return reported above but it contributes towards budget targets.

4.1.8 The Council has not increased its level of long term external debt during the period. As at 31st March 2020 the Authority's total long term external borrowing was £57,049,400, with an average interest rate of 4.97% for the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans and 4.19% for the Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) loans borrowed from Barclays and Dexia. Appendix B shows the Authority's external long term borrowing as at 31st March 2020. During the course 2019/20 a total of £2,733,000 will be paid on existing long term loans in the form of interest payments.

4.1.9 The balance of short term loans as at the 31st March 2020 was £134,000,000.

4.1.10 An economic assessment for 2019/20 by the Council's Treasury Management advisors, Arlingclose is attached as Appendix C.

4.2 Borrowing Requirement & Borrowing Strategy

4.2.1 The table below shows how the level of long and short term borrowing has changed during 2019/20.

Borrowing Type	Actual 31/03/2019	Actual 17/10/2019	Actual 31/03/2020
	£000	£000	£000
Long Term	57,049	57,049	57,049
Short Term – Local Authority	43,835	37,500	134,000
Short Term – LEP	48,501	58,467	33,521
Investments	(20,384)	(30,057)	(51,726)
Net Borrowing	129,001	122,959	172,844

4.2.2. The Council has increased its short-term borrowing from Local Authorities by £90m during the financial year to finance its capital investment and to replace internally borrowed LEP funding that has been paid out.

4.2.3. The Council's borrowing requirement has revenue implications for the Council. Accordingly, the Council engaged Treasury Management Advisors, Arlingclose to advise on its Borrowing and Treasury Management Strategy.

4.2.4. Current market conditions are as follows:-

- (a) The Covid crisis has caused considerable uncertainty within the market, which has had an impact on the availability of long-term funding with institutions and organisations holding on to their cash.
- (b) The PWLB borrowing rate remains at its increased rate of 1.8% above gilts again reducing the option of relatively affordable long term loans.
- (c) Short term loans are at a significantly lower rate than long term loans currently, although the availability of LA loans is reduced due to LA's retaining cash due to the current market uncertainty.

4.2.5. In accordance with advice from Arlingclose the Council took out additional short-term borrowing and has kept under review the option to increase the proportion of long-term borrowing.

4.2.6. The reason more long-term borrowing was not taken was due to the uncertainty caused by Brexit and the associated movement in long-term interest rates which was not considered to be favourable.

4.2.7. The strategy to increase short-term borrowing has exposed the council to the risk that rates could rise. A 1% increase in interest rates for the current level of short-term loans could be in the region of £1m.

4.2.8. Officers will therefore keep under review options to increase the proportion of its borrowing that fixed long-term during 2020/21 including the options there are within the market.

4.3 Treasury Management Strategy

4.3.1 The Treasury Management Strategy sets out parameters that are designed to govern the level of council borrowing. These were updated by the Council on 3rd December 2019.

- (i) **The operational boundary** – sets the maximum level of long term borrowing that the council will incur based on its estimated need to finance its capital investment. It is recognised that the council may borrow in excess of this amount for cash flow purposes i.e. while it waits to receive government grants or other significant income. The limit for 2019/20 is £190m
- (ii) **The authorised limit** – is an absolute limit and sets the absolute maximum level of borrowing that the council can undertake and cannot be exceeded in the short term. The limit for 2019/20 is £212m

4.3.2 The Council has remained within these approved borrowing limits during 19/20.

4.3.3 The Council's upper limit for the proportion of its borrowing that is exposed to variable interest rates is 80%. The Council has remained within this limit during 19/20 with the actual proportion being 70% as at the 31st March 2020.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.4 In producing and reviewing this report the Council is meeting legal obligations to manage its funds properly.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risks	Uncontrolled Risk	Controls	Controlled Risk
That a counterparty defaults on repayment of a loan resulting in a loss of capital for the Council	MEDIUM	Loans are only made to counterparties on the approved lending list. The credit ratings of counterparties on the lending list are monitored regularly	LOW
That funds are invested in fixed term deposits and are not available to meet the Council's commitment to pay suppliers and payroll.	MEDIUM	A cashflow forecast is maintained and referred to when investment decisions are made to ensure that funds are available to meet the Council's commitment to pay suppliers and payroll.	LOW

6. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

6.1 Equalities. None identified, it's a change in accounting policy.

6.2 Climate change/sustainability. None identified, it's a change in accounting policy.

6.3 Data Protection/GDPR. None identified, it's a change in accounting policy.

7. CONSULTATION

7.1 Not applicable

8. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 This section is not applicable.

9. APPENDICES

This report is supported by three appendices:

- Appendix A – Approved Lending List
- Appendix B – External Long Term Borrowing at 31st March 2020
- Appendix C – 19/20 Economic Assessment

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Not applicable

11. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
Cllr Hilton	Lead Member for Finance and Ascot	01/06/20	01/06/20
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	18/05/20	18/05/20
Russell O'Keefe	Director of Place	18/05/20	
Adele Taylor	Director of Resources	01/05/20	15/05/20
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	18/05/20	
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects & ICT	18/05/20	18/05/20
Louisa Dean	Communications	18/05/20	
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services	18/05/20	
Hilary Hall	Director of Adults, Commissioning & Health	18/05/20	18/05/20
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance	18/5/20	18/5/20
Aron Kleiman	External Auditors, Deloitte	17/06/20	

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type: Key decision	Urgency item? Yes – agreed with O&S Chairman	To Follow item? No
Report Author: Ryan Stone, Accountant		

APPENDIX C

**Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Approved Counterparty List
(Approved by Cabinet on 03/12/2019)**

<u>Fitch Ratings</u>	FITCH ShortTerm Rating	FITCH Long Term Rating	FITCH Outlook	Max. Sum To Be Lent £m
UK				
Government				
Debt Management Office	F1+	AA	Negative (watch)	no limit
Banks				
Abbey National Treasury	F1	A	Stable	5
Australia and New Zealand Bank	F1+	AA-	Stable	5
Barclays Bank	F1	A+	Stable	5
Clydesdale Bank	F2	A-	Negative (watch)	5
HSBC	F1+	A+	Negative (watch)	5
Lloyds Banking Group	F1	A+	Negative (watch)	7.5
National Australia Bank Ltd	F1+	AA-	Negative	5
Royal Bank of Canada	F1+	AA	Stable	5
Royal Bank of Scotland	F1	A	Negative (watch)	5
Santander UK	F1	A+	Negative (watch)	5
Standard Chartered	F1	A	Stable	5
Ulster Bank	F1	A-	Negative (watch)	5
Building Societies (max £3m per loan)				
All Building Societies with total group assets greater than £6 billion and FITCH Long term rating of BBB or better				
Coventry	F1	A-	Stable	5
Nationwide	F1	A	Negative (watch)	5
Yorkshire	F1	A-	Stable	5
Leeds	F1	A-	Stable	5
Skipton	F1	A-	Stable	5
Local Authorities				
All UK Local Authorities, with the exception of those with reported financial irregularities.				5
Money Market Funds				
All money market funds with a Fitch AAA long term credit rating, including:				
Federated Short Term Sterling Prime Fund		AAA		5
Invesco Sterling Liquidity Fund		AAA		5
Aberdeen Sterling Liquidity Fund		AAA		5
Insight GBP Liquidity Fund		AAA		5
LGIM Sterling Liquidity Fund		AAA		5
Revolving Credit Facility				
AFC				11.7
Financial Services Companies				
Kames Capital				1
Legal & General				1.5
RBWM associated companies				
Flexible Home Improvement Loans Ltd				0.5
RBWM Property Company Ltd				1.5

SHORT TERM RATING

Expectation of timely repayment of financial commitments.

F1+ is most likely to repay on time, F1 Highest Credit, F2 Good, F3 Fair, B Speculative, C High Default Risk

LONG TERM RATING

Expectation of credit risk. AAA is the least risky, ie little credit risk. AA Very High Credit, A High, BBB Good.

Below BBB indicates non-investment grade

Appendix C

External Long Term Borrowing at 31st March 2020

Fixed Term Borrowing			
	Duration/ Type	Repayment Date	Loan Value £000s
PWLB			
	25yrs/Maturity	25/09/21	785
	25yrs/Maturity	08/06/29	7,500
	26yrs/Maturity	25/09/29	2,500
	26yrs/Maturity	23/09/30	10,000
	25yrs/Maturity	08/12/30	5,000
	30yrs/Maturity	25/09/33	5,000
	45yrs/Maturity	08/12/50	5,000
	45yrs/Maturity	08/12/50	5,000
	60yrs/Maturity	25/03/55	1,600
	60yrs/Maturity	25/09/55	1,000
	60yrs/Maturity	25/03/56	400
	60yrs/Maturity	25/09/56	265
Total Fixed Term Borrowing			44,049

ANALYSIS OF PWLB RESIDUAL MATURITY @ 31.3.20		
Maturing Within	Amount £000s	Average Rate
1 Year	0	0.000%
1 to 2 Years	785	8.000%
2 to 5 Years	0	0.000%
5 to 10 Years	0	0.000%
10 to 15 Years	30,000	4.790%
15 to 20 Years	0	4.800%
20 to 25 Years	0	0.000%
25 to 30 Years	0	0.000%
30 to 35 Years	10,000	4.200%
35 to 40 Years	3,265	8.184%
40 to 45 Years	0	0.000%
TOTAL	44,049	4.966%

LOBO Loans at 31st March 2020

Fixed Term Borrowing			
	Duration/ Type	Repayment Date	Loan Value £000s
LOBO			
Barclays	60yrs/15yrs fixed, 6mth LOBO	19-Jul-66	5,000
Dexia	35yrs/5yrs fixed, 5yr LOBO	26-Jan-43	8,000
Total Fixed Term Borrowing			13,000

ANALYSIS OF LOBO RESIDUAL MATURITY @ 31.3.20		
Maturing Within	Amount £000s	Average Rate
5 to 30 Years	8,000	4.190%
30 to 55 Years	5,000	4.190%
TOTAL	13,000	4.190%

Appendix C – 2019/20 Economic Assessment from Arlingclose

The UK's exit from the European Union and future trading arrangements, had remained one of major influences on the UK economy and sentiment during 2019/20. The 29th March 2019 Brexit deadline was extended to 12th April, then to 31st October and finally to 31st January 2020. Politics played a major role in financial markets over the period as the UK's tenuous progress negotiating its exit from the European Union together with its future trading arrangements drove volatility, particularly in foreign exchange markets. The outcome of December's General Election removed a lot of the uncertainty and looked set to provide a 'bounce' to confidence and activity.

The headline rate of UK Consumer Price Inflation UK Consumer Price Inflation fell to 1.7% y/y in February, below the Bank of England's target of 2%. Labour market data remained positive. The ILO unemployment rate was 3.9% in the three months to January 2020 while the employment rate hit a record high of 76.5%. The average annual growth rate for pay excluding bonuses was 3.1% in January 2020 and the same when bonuses were included, providing some evidence that a shortage of labour had been supporting wages.

GDP growth in Q4 2019 was reported as flat by the Office for National Statistics and service sector growth slowed and production and construction activity contracted on the back of what at the time were concerns over the impact of global trade tensions on economic activity. The annual rate of GDP growth remained below-trend at 1.1%.

Then coronavirus swiftly changed everything. COVID-19, which had first appeared in China in December 2019, started spreading across the globe causing plummeting sentiment and falls in financial markets not seen since the Global Financial Crisis as part of a flight to quality into sovereign debt and other perceived 'safe' assets.

In response to the spread of the virus and sharp increase in those infected, the government enforced lockdowns, central banks and governments around the world cut interest rates and introduced massive stimulus packages in an attempt to reduce some of the negative economic impact to domestic and global growth.

The Bank of England, which had held policy rates steady at 0.75% through most of 2019/20, moved in March to cut rates to 0.25% from 0.75% and then swiftly thereafter brought them down further to the record low of 0.1%. In conjunction with these cuts, the UK government introduced a number of measures to help businesses and households impacted by a series of ever-tightening social restrictions, culminating in pretty much the entire lockdown of the UK.

The US economy grew at an annualised rate of 2.1% in Q4 2019. After escalating trade wars and a protracted standoff, the signing of Phase 1 of the trade agreement between the US and China in January was initially positive for both economies, but COVID-19 severely impacted sentiment and production in both countries. Against a slowing economic outlook, the US Federal Reserve began cutting rates in August. Following a series of five cuts, the largest of which were in March 2020, the Fed Funds rate fell from of 2.5% to range of 0% - 0.25%. The US government also unleashed a raft of COVID-19 related measures and support for its economy including a \$2 trillion fiscal stimulus package. With interest rates already on (or below) the floor, the European Central Bank held its base rate at 0% and deposit rate at -0.5%.

Financial markets: Financial markets sold off sharply as the impact from the coronavirus worsened. After starting positively in 2020, the FTSE 100 fell over 30% at its worst point with stock markets in other countries seeing similar huge falls. In March sterling touch its lowest level against the dollar since 1985. The measures implemented by central banks and governments helped restore some confidence and financial markets have rebounded in recent weeks but remain extremely volatile. The flight to quality caused gilts yields to fall substantially. The 5-year benchmark falling from 0.75% in April 2019 to 0.26%

on 31st March. The 10-year benchmark yield fell from 1% to 0.4%, the 20-year benchmark yield from 1.47% to 0.76% over the same period. 1-month, 3-month and 12-month bid rates averaged 0.61%, 0.72% and 0.88% respectively over the period.

Since the start of the calendar 2020, the yield on 2-year US treasuries had fallen from 1.573% to 0.20% and from 1.877% to 0.61% for 10-year treasuries. German bund yields remain negative.

Credit review: In Q4 2019 Fitch affirmed the UK's AA sovereign rating, removed it from Rating Watch Negative (RWN) and assigned a negative outlook. Fitch then affirmed UK banks' long-term ratings, removed the RWN and assigned a stable outlook. Standard & Poor's also affirmed the UK sovereign AA rating and revised the outlook to stable from negative. The Bank of England announced its latest stress tests results for the main seven UK banking groups. All seven passed on both a common equity Tier 1 (CET1) ratio and a leverage ratio basis. Under the test scenario the banks' aggregate level of CET1 capital would remain twice their level before the 2008 financial crisis.

After remaining flat in January and February and between a range of 30-55bps, Credit Default Swap spreads rose sharply in March as the potential impact of the coronavirus on bank balance sheets gave cause for concern. Spreads declined in late March and through to mid-April but remain above their initial 2020 levels. NatWest Markets Plc (non-ringfenced) remains the highest at 128bps and National Westminster Bank Plc (ringfenced) still the lowest at 56bps. The other main UK banks are between 65bps and 123bps, with the latter being the thinly traded and volatile Santander UK CDS.

While the UK and Non-UK banks on the Arlingclose counterparty list remain in a strong and well-capitalised position, the duration advice on all these banks was cut to 35 days in mid-March.

Fitch downgraded the UK sovereign rating to AA- in March which was followed by a number of actions on UK and Non-UK banks. This included revising the outlook on all banks on the counterparty list to negative, with the exception of Barclays Bank, Rabobank, Handelsbanken and Nordea Bank which were placed on Rating Watch Negative, as well as cutting Close Brothers long-term rating to A-. Having revised their outlooks to negative, Fitch upgraded the long-term ratings on Canadian and German banks but downgraded the long-term ratings for Australian banks. HSBC Bank and HSBC UK Bank, however, had their long-term ratings increased by Fitch to AA-.

Report Title:	0-19 Integrated Family Hub Model – Commissioning Intent.
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information?	No.
Member reporting:	Cllr S Carroll, Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Children’s Services, Health and Mental Health. Cllr R McWilliams, Lead Member for Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement.
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet- Thursday 25 June 2020
Responsible Officer(s):	Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children’s Services
Wards affected:	All.

www.rbwm.gov.uk



REPORT SUMMARY

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval in principle for the preferred early help model of integrated Family Hubs. The report is not seeking a decision on the closure of children’s centres and youth centres.
2. The Family Hubs would bring together a range of services that would focus provision on targeted support to our most vulnerable children, young people and families in line with the national policy direction. The aim of the remodelling is to strengthen support for those families that most need it and in doing so reduce the demand for statutory intervention. This would ensure the limited resources available for early help services are being used as effectively as possible and would enable savings targets to be achieved.
3. Following the initial 12 week public consultation on the preferred model of Family Hubs, which has informed the more detailed proposals, the report also seeks approval to proceed to a second stage of public consultation on the implementation of the preferred model i.e. what it would look like in practice.
4. Whilst delivering a more targeted service for vulnerable families, the preferred model would deliver a full year cost reduction of £600,000. The overall annual budget for these services before savings was £4,101,480 which will reduce to £3,501,480. Savings will begin to be achieved from the start of implementation, resulting in a partial saving in 2020/2021 will be less than the £450,000 included in the current year’s budget.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i)** Agrees in principle to the preferred model of integrated Family Hubs.
- ii)** Agrees in principle for the Family Hub model to prioritise services for children, young people and families most in need.
- iii)** Agrees to a second stage of public consultation which will seek views on the proposed implementation of the Family Hub model at a local level. The final model will then be developed, based on this consultation, and brought back to Cabinet in October for the final decision.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

2.1 The table below sets out the two options arising from this report.

Option	Comments
<p>1. Transform Family Resilience Services, Children’s Centres and Youth Services into an integrated Family Hub model, which focuses on supporting and improving outcomes for those children, young people and families most in need of help.</p> <p>This is the recommended option.</p>	<p>Doing this would involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing services together to create a service that better meets the needs of the whole family. • Prioritising services for those children, young people and families most in need of help. • Strengthening links with the voluntary and charitable sector to identify opportunities for other organisations to deliver some of the universal offer. • Developing a Family Hub programme of activities and sessions that is based on feedback from both stages of the consultation. • Reducing the current volume of universal and preventative services offered by these teams which includes open access/ drop in ‘Stay and Play’ sessions for families with small children and open access/ drop-in sessions for young people, currently delivered by our youth service. • Reviewing the delivery model for children’s centres and youth centres with the potential to make changes to current venues that are used. The focus would be on maintaining sites in geographical areas of need and discontinuing leases at locations that are no longer appropriate. This would be informed by the proposed second stage of consultation. • Reviewing the staffing model once a formal decision has been made about the detailed local implementation to ensure it is fit for purpose. This would likely result in redundancies.
<p>2. Do nothing.</p>	<p>This means we would:</p>

Option	Comments
<p>This is not recommended.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to offer all universal open access/ drop in ‘Stay and Play’ sessions (currently 13 sessions a week) and open access/ drop-in youth service sessions (currently seven sessions a week). • Continue to have wait times for vulnerable children, young people and families who have been assessed as needing support. This could lead to families having more entrenched difficulties, thus requiring statutory intervention at a later date. • Be running counter to evidence-based national policy for early years services. • Be unable to contribute to the in year and future years savings planned in the MTFS.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Background to the report

3.1 A report setting out proposals relating to early help services in Windsor and Maidenhead was considered at Cabinet on 30 April 2020 and agreed by Councillors. This decision was subject to call-in and then the report was taken to Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 14 May 2020. It was resolved at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel that:

1. It be noted that the Head of Law had reviewed the Cabinet’s decision made on April 30th, what had been said at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on May 14th, and the reasons for the call in, and had concluded that the decision complied with the law and did not conflict with the Council’s Access For All policy;
2. The Cabinet paper of April 30th will be brought back to Cabinet in June setting out a consultative pathway;
3. The results of a further consultation process and recommendations for a decision will be brought to the Cabinet in July or August.

3.2 It was agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 28 May 2020 that the report would be ‘put aside’ and re-presented to Cabinet on 25 June 2020 to allow time for the further details required for clarity of the next steps to be added.

Background to the preferred model

3.3 Achieving for Children, who are commissioned to deliver children's services in Windsor and Maidenhead, undertook a review of existing early help services in response to the government's Life Chances agenda and the All Party Parliamentary Group report on the future of children's centres:

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s150825/app%25208%2520appg%2520>

2

3.4 The intention was to better understand the developing approach to children's centre and youth centre service delivery. Based on this, a preferred model has been developed which would see services reorganised into Family Hubs. This approach aligns with national and regional evidence, including the report noted above, and would enable the service to effectively meet the needs of the most vulnerable children, young people and families and while providing value for money.

3.5 This model is preferred as it would deliver a number of benefits in Windsor and Maidenhead including the opportunity to:

- Strengthen the focus on children, young people and families that most need support through early intervention to increase resilience and reduce the need for statutory social care involvement. This would contribute to reducing the time that vulnerable families who need support have to wait for a service, but are unable to access it through the current model.
- Build on the success of the Healthy Child Programme by continuing to deliver a universal health visiting service that can be accessed by all families (for the purpose of this report, please note that universal health visiting is funded directly by Public Health England and not from the same funding stream as children's centres and youth centres and as such, this funding will be unaffected).
- Move away from traditional models of service delivery focused on particular static sites with lots of fixed assets that require maintaining. These are no longer considered effective and so the preferred option is to move to a more flexible and responsive approach that brings services to those that need them i.e. outreach in the community and in the home. The needs of families are not static and often fluctuate over time. It is therefore essential that the proposed model is able to respond to these needs in a new way, so that families are not expected to travel across the borough to access services.
- In line with the above point, set up flexible and time limited outreach services on a small, more local scale, when intelligence suggests this is required in particular areas, e.g. work on knife crime.
- Support local communities so that they can develop universal provision in particular areas by providing advice and guidance on the effective delivery of services to children, young people and families and by working with them to identify potential sites that could be used for service delivery, should leases for particular buildings be discontinued.
- Deliver better impact for families from the £3.5m that will still be spent on early help services as the hub model would allow the discontinuing of leases on buildings in the early help portfolio that are no longer fit for purpose and would enable a staff remodelling which would better align with the proposed approach.

Service delivery

3.6 As set out previously, the preferred model is to bring together services being run by children's centres, youth centres, the parenting service, health visitors, school nurses and the family resilience service so that residents can get all the help they need from one Family Hub. It is important to emphasise however that this does not mean that residents will get this support from one building. Alternatively the Family Hub model will act as a single point to coordinate services for vulnerable families.

3.7 The preferred model would be to establish two main Family Hubs - one in Windsor and one in Maidenhead. In addition, there would be a number of sub-venues across both Windsor and Maidenhead. Children's centre services and youth services would be delivered from these venues, other community venues, in people's homes and via other outreach in the community.

3.8 The key principles underpinning the preferred model include:

- Delivering a service that has a whole family focus, through the provision of multi-disciplinary Family Hubs situated across the borough. There would be a strong emphasis on mental health and relationship support including integration of all early help services such as education, health and the voluntary sector.
- Predominantly supporting targeted vulnerable families across the age range of 0-19 years (or age 25 years where young people have learning difficulties and/or disabilities), so that the needs of families can be coordinated in one place, regardless of the ages of their children.
- Adopting a flexible approach to service delivery whereby the focus is more on delivering services where they are needed rather than at a single location. This means some services would be delivered at hubs but other services would be delivered via outreach in collaboration with partners and the community.
- At an early stage, working in partnership with children, young people and families by supporting them to be more resilient, and by offering the right support at the right time and in the right way, so that improvements in their lives can be sustained.
- Enabling children, young people and families needing our support to tell their story only once.
- In response to community concerns about knife crime and County Lines activities, delivering the youth service on an outreach basis in partnership with the Police and Community Safety, with activity in specifically targeted areas where issues have been identified.
- Accepting referrals into the Family Hubs via the Single Point of Access (SPA) and undertaking a triaging exercise to ensure those most in need are prioritised, which would reduce current waiting times for accessing services.
- Working with the community and voluntary sector, including parent groups, to support them to deliver universal services where children's centre and youth centre provision is reduced.

3.9 The Family Hubs would deliver a full programme of services in various venues across their community area including universal health provision; school nursing; specific sessions and groups for vulnerable families; parenting support; and

opportunities for early years learning and development by continuing to host a range of activities and groups from the independent and private sector.

- 3.10 Through the first stage of consultation with residents and stakeholders we have learned that respondents see the key priority as one to one work with families, particularly those with younger children or children with additional needs. Building community resilience was also a common theme and so we would ensure that this would be an integral aspect of the model. By building community resilience and maintaining the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme, it is anticipated that families who need additional support would be identified and offered support at an early stage.
- 3.11 As part of the implementation, we would review our programme of activities to ensure that where possible, we are able to continue those sessions that support groups most in need, for example, groups for parents with children with additional needs and targeted sessions for hard to reach Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) families in the community.
- 3.12 Our youth service would continue to prioritise supporting more vulnerable young people on a 1-1 basis such as those that are: involved with statutory children’s social care services; engaging in risky behaviours; or with low self-esteem. The service would also continue to support participation and engagement of children and young people, including those in care and those leaving care, and deliver parent/ carer/ professional workshops on child sexual exploitation, gangs, substance misuse and online safety, and would also provide outreach to identified hotspots in the borough, as the need is identified. In terms of universal services, the proposal is to carry on delivering sessions and workshops to pupils in partnership with our local schools.
- 3.13 Whilst the expertise/specialism of each service will remain, the delivery would be fully integrated to best match the needs of the local community. Subject to consultation, to achieve an integrated Family Hub model we would propose to:

Activity	Details	Benefits and impact
Continue to deliver universal health provision	<p>There would be no changes to the universal health provision that is currently delivered. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Healthy Child Programme, offering every family 5 health reviews in the first 3 years (crucial first 1000 days) of their child’s life and a range of support services in the community, i.e. drop in clinics, new baby groups. • School nursing service which provides support with long term conditions 	<p>Health services were rated as one of the most popular services delivered by children’s centres in the stage one public consultation exercise.</p> <p>All families would still be able to access universal health support to give their children the best start in life.</p>

	<p>and universal support for pupils in school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home visiting support for families whose child is developmentally delayed, socially isolated or living with other vulnerabilities. 	
<p>Deliver outreach work more flexibly and in a greater number of locations to reach people who are not currently accessing provision.</p>	<p>We would extend our outreach work and focus on delivering services in the community, rather than at a specifically designated children's centre or youth centre.</p> <p>This would enable us to engage more with hard to reach groups by delivering programmes from a range of local venues such as schools, leisure and community centres, partner properties and other community locations.</p>	<p>The intention is to increase the amount of outreach work we do by freeing up staff from the management and maintenance fixed assets, such as buildings.</p> <p>This approach would strengthen the focus on the most deprived areas with the highest level of need. It would also mean we are better able to reach those families who are not currently accessing our services.</p> <p>It would also enable us to move away from the traditional delivery of youth services i.e. drop in sessions at a centre which have proven less and less popular over recent years, towards a more flexible approach whereby we take services to the young people, where this is needed most. This should lead to increased engagement with those more vulnerable children and young people.</p>
<p>Reduce the number of designated children's centres delivery sites from 13 to six and youth centres from nine to three.</p>	<p>By delivering more services through outreach and other community venues, we would be less reliant on children's centre and youth centre buildings.</p> <p>Detailed analysis of current usage of children's centres has enabled us to identify which centres could</p>	<p>This would mean a reduction in the quantity of children's centre and youth centre services that we are able to offer.</p> <p>It would also mean that families or young people whose nearest children's</p>

	<p>be closed with the least impact. We propose to maintain those centres that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well used by residents. • Best equipped to meet the future needs of the service. • Located close to areas of relative deprivation. • Well-placed for public transport or with good parking facilities. • Wheelchair and pushchair accessible. • Able to offer good value for money in terms of rental costs. • Aligned with the RBWM new climate/ environmental strategy. <p>This could save c £60,000 in the running costs of managing 10 sites rather than 22.</p>	<p>centre or youth centre is earmarked for closure would have further to travel to visit a centre.</p> <p>We would mitigate against some of the impact of these changes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopting a new, more responsive and flexible service. • Providing more services through outreach at alternative venues in the community. • Working more closely with community and voluntary sector groups. • Signposting young people or families who may no longer be able to access universal services to alternative providers. <p>As part of the initial consultation we have already asked users views on which services they most value and we would prioritise these when putting together the service offer for 2020-21 and beyond.</p>
<p>Deliver a wider range of services for families coordinated from the remaining centres which prioritises those most in need</p>	<p>For the remaining buildings we would coordinate a more family-focused offer, by bringing together a range of services, for example, health services, family support, support for childminders, and responsive outreach.</p> <p>As part of this we would continue to deliver the specific services and groups for children with additional needs and their families; for women at risk of or</p>	<p>Although the proposals in this consultation would result in a reduced universal early help offer, we propose to mitigate against some of the impact by bringing more services together in a more coordinated way, thereby enabling families to access more of the support they would most benefit from.</p>

	<p>living with domestic abuse; for first time or young or vulnerable parents; for families involved in statutory social care; for care leavers including those who are parents; for childminders and the children in their care; for parents in need of mediation or support with parental conflict; and for parents with poor mental health.</p>	<p>This would mean that those needing targeted support such as information about domestic abuse and health guidance, would be more likely to access it.</p> <p>Where specific issues arise in particular areas, for example, a rise in knife crime, we would deliver targeted support in that area which would be accessible for all.</p>
<p>Strengthen partnerships with local community and voluntary groups</p>	<p>We would work with the local community and voluntary sector to identify those groups and/or individuals who are willing and able to run universal sessions for children, young people and families. We would provide advice and guidance to enable them to establish sessions accessible by all. This could include supporting parents to deliver sessions and / or support themselves where possible.</p> <p>We would also develop a directory of resources which will include local organisations offering universal and targeted support. We would use this to signpost children, young people and families to the support they need in the wider community. The intention would be to make the directory easy to navigate and we would seek to provide additional online resources including self-help tools which have become more prevalent during the current pandemic.</p>	<p>Local community and voluntary sector organisations could deliver some of the universal services that are not proposed as part of the new model, thereby ensuring all families are able to access some level of provision.</p> <p>By providing advice and guidance to these groups, we would be equipping the local community with greater knowledge and skills.</p>

3.14 Included in appendix 1 is a document outlining what the proposed Family Hub model would look like in practice. Should the second stage of consultation be approved, we would seek to ask participants for alternative models of delivery that they believe would enable us to achieve the same aims as the preferred model that we would be outlining.

Staffing

- 3.15 Should the second stage of consultation be approved, we would then develop a final model shaped by the feedback. If this final model was then approved, we would undertake a review of staffing to ensure that the staff model aligns with the Family Hub approach.
- 3.16 The Family Hub model would see a move from three separate teams (children's centres, family resilience and youth services), each with their own management structure, priorities and specific roles, to a Hub team which would have a range of skills and expertise but seek to work to meet the needs of the whole family.
- 3.17 This would require change to the service which would involve all members of staff and we would expect a reduction in staffing numbers. This is because we would require a smaller number of workers as the focus would be on need rather than maintaining poorly- attended drop in sessions or maintaining buildings. However we would aim to retain the talent, skills and experience of our specialist workers.
- 3.18 The final details of these staffing changes would not be finalised until the whole model had been approved however and as such, are not included in this report. Any reduction in staffing would contribute to achieving the efficiency target of £600,000 that is allocated to the project.

Sites

- 3.19 As part of the review of early help services and the development of the preferred model, we have considered all existing service delivery sites and made proposals for how those sites could be used going forward.
- 3.20 We have a number of criteria against which we have reviewed the sites. Although proposals have been suggested, these are in no way been finalised and would be subject to the second stage of consultation as set out in the recommendations. The final proposals would then follow from for a final decision.
- 3.21 We are proposing to retain sites that meet a number of the following criteria:
- Well used.
 - Best equipped to meet the future needs of the service.
 - Located close to areas of relative deprivation.
 - Well-placed for public transport or with good parking facilities.
 - Wheelchair and pushchair accessible.
 - Able to offer good value for money in terms of rental costs.
 - Aligns with the emerging Council Asset Strategy.
- 3.22 We are proposing to discontinue leases on centres that meet a number of the following criteria:

- Are situated in areas where they are no longer the most needed.
- Are too small or too expensive to run and are not equipped to meet the future needs of the service or the Council's climate priorities.
- Are under-used compared to other centres.
- Are unable to offer additional service i.e. health clinics, due to lack of space or lack of accessibility.
- Are potentially able to be used by parents, community or voluntary groups to deliver sessions independently.

3.23 The table below provides a summary of which centres could be retained and which could be discontinued (subject to the second stage of consultation), based on the criteria outlined above, along with some key information about each site. However whilst some service delivery could take place in the sites that are recommended for retention, the key principle of this model is that services would be delivered in a range of venues across the borough, coordinated by staff operating out of these sites.

3.24 For clarity it should be noted that this table is for illustrative purposes to assist Cabinet in clearly understanding the decision that is being asked to consider. Councillors are not being asked to approve the retention or discontinuing the lease on any buildings. No final recommendation about the retention or discontinuing the lease on any building has been made.

3.25 Please also note that the references to distances between different centres and between centres and public transport have been made based on directions from postcode to postcode on foot using Google Directions. Councillors Carroll and McWilliams have also checked some of these distances as part of their visits to each centre.

Building	Proposed action	Preliminary Rationale
Children's centres		
Datchet Children's Centre SL3 9EJ	Retain as sub-venue in Windsor.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; close to areas of relative deprivation; good transport links- 200 feet to nearest train station; accessible facilities; low rental cost; high footfall.
Larchfield Children's Centre SL6 2SG	Retain as sub-venue in Maidenhead.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; close to area of relative deprivation; good transport links- 0.9 miles to nearest train station; accessible facilities; low rental cost; high footfall.
Manor Children's Centre/ Youth Centre	Retain as sub-venue in Windsor.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; close to area of relative deprivation; accessible facilities; high footfall.

SL4 5NW		
Poppies Children's Centre SL4 4XP	Retain as sub-venue in Windsor.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; well positioned for targeted interventions on the army estate; accessible facilities; high footfall.
Riverside Children's Centre SL6 7JB	Retain as main Family Hub in Maidenhead.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; central location; good transport links- within 0.6 miles of nearest train station; accessible facilities; high footfall.
Eton Wick Children's Centre SL4 6JB	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; no designated disabled parking; low footfall.
Pinkneys Green Children's Centre/ Youth Centre SL6 5HE	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; close to other provision- Marlow Youth Centre and Riverside Children's Centre both within 1.6 miles; potential interest from local voluntary and community groups to deliver services at the site; low footfall at youth service sessions.
The Lawns Children's Centre SL4 3RU	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; only open during term-time; close to other provision- Manor Children's Centre/ Youth Centre within 0.5 miles; access via a footbridge- wheelchair users and those with mobility issues may need help to access.
Woodlands Park Village Centre Children's Centre SL6 3GW	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; limited transport links- 2.7 miles away from nearest train station; potential interest from local voluntary and community groups to deliver services at the site.
Children's centre satellite sites		
Low Ropes Activity Course at Beech Lodge SL6 6QL	Retain as sub-venue.	No other similar provision available locally; could be used for targeted groups; no rental cost- low maintenance cost.

Maidenhead Nursery School SL6 7PG	Retain as sub-venue.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; good transport links- nearest train station within 0.2 miles; accessible facilities; no rental cost.
South Ascot SL5 9EB	Retain as sub-venue.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; good transport links- nearest train station within 0.3 miles; accessible facilities; low rental cost.
Old Windsor SL4 2PX	Discontinue lease	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; limited transport links- nearest train station is 2 miles away; low footfall.
Wraysbury Village Hall TW19 5NA	Discontinue lease	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; low footfall.
Youth centres		
Marlow Road Youth Centre SL6 7YR	Retain as sub-venue in Maidenhead.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; good transport links- nearest train station is within 0.6 miles; high footfall.
Windsor Youth Centre SL4 3HD	Retain as main Family Hub in Windsor.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; good transport links- nearest train station is within 0.7 miles; external hires ensure that the centre runs as cost neutral; high footfall.
Charters Youth Centre SL5 9QY	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; school has requested site reverts back to school use; low footfall.
Datchet Youth Centre SL3 9HR	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; close to other provision- within 0.4 miles of Datchet Children's Centre; low footfall.
Eton Wick Youth Centre SL4 6LT	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; high rental cost; low footfall.
Larchfield Youth Centre SL6 4BB	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; close to other provision- within 0.4 miles of Larchfield Children's Centre; steadily reducing footfall.
Other buildings		

Maidenhead Project Centre, Reform Road SL6 8BY	Discontinue lease and staff move sites	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; potentially part of RBWM regeneration plans; high rental cost.
Outdoor provision in Hurley SL6 5ND	Transfer to community provider to maintain.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; potential interest from a community provider to maintain the provision- would seek access for targeted groups as part of new arrangement.

3.26 The key implications are set out in the table below:

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Transformation of Children's Centre, Youth Services and Family Resilience to integrated Family Hub model, saving £600,000.	Not approved	Approved	Approved and model in place by 1 February 2021- TBC	Approved and model fully operational by 1 January 2020- TBC	1 February 2020

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

4.1 Whilst delivering a more targeted service for families, the proposed transformation once implemented would reduce annual revenue costs by £600,000. This represents a 15% saving on the total costs of community and youth services.

4.2 The transformation is still expected to have a one off cost, estimated to be in the region of £200,000 which was considered when setting the transformation budget for 20/21.

4.3 It is recognised that the decision to undertake a full second consultation means that no transformation can start until that is completed. This will delay the implementation which reduces the expected in year saving from this work stream to approximately £170,000.

4.4 With the delay described above; Covid19 pressures on summer term income; lack of alternative job opportunities for staff; and wider pressures on the council budget, the service will continue to look for alternative savings options to reduce the impact of this change.

4.5 The table below sets out the financial implications of the preferred model compared to the published budgets.

REVENUE COSTS	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Additional total	£0	£0	£0
Reduction	£280,000	£0	£0
Net Impact	£280,000	£0	£0

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 ("the 2004 Act")

5.1 Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 ("the 2004 Act") imposes an obligation on each local authority in England to make arrangements to promote co-operation between the local authority, its relevant partners, and any other persons or bodies who exercise functions or are engaged in activities relating to children in the local authority's area, as the authority considers appropriate. These arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the well-being of children in the authority's area.

Section 11 of the 2004 Act

5.2 Section 11 of the 2004 Act applies to various bodies and persons, including local authorities. S.11(2) provides that each such person and body must make arrangements for ensuring that their functions are discharged "having regard to the need to safeguard and protect the welfare of children". In discharging that duty, they must have regard to any guidance given to them for the purpose by the Secretary of State (s.11(4)). The relevant guidance is the "Working Together to Safeguard Children".

Childcare Act 2006

5.3 The Council also has certain statutory obligations under the Childcare Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act") The obligations under the 2004 Act concern children of all ages. The statutory obligations in the 2006 Act concern "young children", which is defined by s.19 as (essentially) meaning those aged between 0-5. Section 1 of the 2006 Act imposes on local authorities a general duty in relation to the well-being of young children, in these terms:

- (1) An English local authority must -
- (a) improve the well-being of young children in their area, and
 - (b) reduce inequalities between young children in their area in relation to the matters mentioned in subsection (2).
- (2) In this Act "well-being", in relation to children, means their well-being so far as relating to -
- (a) physical and mental health and emotional well-being;
 - (b) protection from harm and neglect;
 - (c) education, training and recreation;
 - (d) the contribution made by them to society;
 - (e) social and economic well-being.

5.4 This list mirrors the types of well-being described in s.10(2) of the 2004 Act.

5.5 Section 3 of the 2006 Act sets out specific duties of local authorities in relation to early childhood services, which are defined in s.2 as including early years provision. S.3(2) provides that:

The authority must make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in their area are provided in an integrated manner which is calculated to -

- (a) facilitate access to those services, and
- (b) maximise the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children.

5.6 Section 3(6) provides that:

"In discharging their duties under this section, an English local authority must have regard to any guidance given from time to time by the Secretary of State."

5.7 The language is similar to that of s.11(4) of the 2004 Act.

5.8 Section 5A of the 2006 Act is entitled "Arrangements for provision of children's centres." It provides that:

(1) Arrangements made by an English Local Authority under section 3(2) must, so far as is reasonably practicable, include arrangements for sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need.

(2) "Local need" is the need of parents, prospective parents and young children in the authority's area."

5.9 The discharge of the sufficiency duty therefore involves the Local Authority considering and assessing three things: the need for children's centres in their area; what provision would be enough to meet that need; and what number of children's centres it would be reasonably practicable for the Local Authority to provide, taking into account such matters as affordability, and practical considerations such as the availability of appropriate buildings, geographic location, and accessibility. Provided all three of these matters are taken into account, there is no obligation to consider them in any particular order.

5.10 A "children's centre" is defined in s.5A(4) as:

"a place, or a group of places -

- a) Which is managed by or on behalf of or under arrangements made with, an English local authority, with a view to securing that early childhood services in their area are made available in an integrated manner,
- b) Through which each of the early childhood services is made available, and
- c) At which activities for young children are provided, whether by way of early years provision or otherwise."

5.11 Section 5D of the 2006 Act provides that:

An English local authority must secure that such consultation as they think appropriate is carried out -

...

- (b) before any significant change is made in the services provided through a relevant children's centre;
- (c) before anything is done that would result in a relevant children's centre ceasing to be a children's centre..."

Sure Start children's centre statutory guidance

5.12 In April 2013 the Government issued the " Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance " ("the Guidance") to which local authorities are obliged to have regard when carrying out their duties relating to children's centres under the 2006 Act. The Guidance states that it seeks to assist local authorities and partners by making clear:

- what they must do because it is required by legislation;
- what they should do when fulfilling their statutory responsibilities; and
- what outcomes the Government is seeking to achieve.

5.13 Chapter 2 of the Guidance, which begins at page 9, identifies as an outcome that "Local Authorities have sufficient children's centres to meet the needs of young children and parents living in the area, particularly those in greatest need of support." It then sets out the sufficiency duty, and the various things that a local authority should do when fulfilling it. These include:

- ensure that a network of children's centres is accessible to all families with young children in their area;
- ensure that children's centres and their services are within reasonable reach of all families with young children in urban and rural areas, taking into account distance and availability of transport;
- consider how best to ensure that the families who need services can be supported to access them;
- target children's centres services at young children and families in the area who are at risk of poor outcomes through, for example, effective outreach services, based on the analysis of local need;
- not close an existing children's centre site in any reorganisation of provision unless they can demonstrate that, where they decide to close a children's centre site, the outcomes for children, particularly the most disadvantaged, would not be adversely affected and will not compromise the duty to have sufficient children's centres to meet local need. The starting point should therefore be a presumption against the closure of children's centres.
- take into account the views of local families and communities in deciding what is sufficient children's centre provision.

5.14 So far as the obligations to consult under s.5D of the 2006 Act are concerned, the Guidance provides that:

”Local authorities must ensure there is consultation before:

- making a significant change to the range and nature of services provided through a children’s centre and/or how they are delivered ...
- closing a children’s centre...

Local authorities... should consult everyone who could be affected by the proposed changes, for example, local families, those who use the centres, children’s centre staff, advisory board members and service providers. Particular attention should be given to ensuring disadvantaged families and minority groups participate in consultations.

The consultation should explain how the local authority will continue to meet the needs of families with children under 5 as part of any reorganisation of services. It should also be clear how respondents’ views can be made known and adequate time should be allowed for those wishing to respond. Decisions following consultation should be announced publicly. This should explain why decisions were taken.

5.15 On page 13 of the Guidance there is a section entitled “ Supporting families in greatest need of support “ which states that to reduce inequalities in outcomes among young children in their areas, local authorities should commission and support children’s centres as part of their wider early intervention strategy and strategy for turning round the lives of troubled families. Local authorities should ensure that children’s centres offer differentiated support to young children and their families according to their needs. To help fulfil their duty to reduce inequalities between young children in the area, local authorities should consider the role that children’s centres can play by:

- providing inclusive universal services which welcome hard to reach families;
- hosting targeted and specialist services on-site where appropriate;
- considering the use of multi agency assessment and referral processes; and
- having children’s centre outreach and family support staff work with other services to:
 - support families before, during and after specialist programmes and/or interventions;
 - provide opportunities to help families develop resilience to risk factors; and
 - promote child development.

5.16 Page 14 of the Guidance explains that children’s centres use universal activities to bring in many of the families in need of extra support. As families build up confidence in relationships with staff and other service users, they often become more receptive to appropriate targeted activities.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The table below sets out the key risks and the proposed mitigation relating to the preferred model:

Risks	Uncontrolled risk	Controls	Controlled risk
Risk of families in need not being identified through universal provision.	Medium	The universal health visiting service will continue in order to identify families in need of support.	Lows
Risk of not meeting the savings targets through being tied into long lease notices.	High	Link with RBWM property company transformation.	Medium
Ensuring we gather the views of the whole community including hard to reach groups if we gain approval for the second stage of consultation.	High	The consultation methodology (set out in section 8) highlights the range of approaches that would be used to ensure we engage as much as possible and gather the views of those that will be impacted. This would include direct emails to all registered children's centre users and working with community and voluntary groups to publicise the consultation and the opportunity to participate.	Medium
Taking into account the COVID-19 circumstances when carrying out a second stage of consultation (if approved).	Medium	As noted above, the consultation methodology (set out in section 8) highlights the range of approaches that will be used to ensure we engage as much as possible and gather the views of those that will be impacted. Advice and guidance from consultation experts- both internally and externally- have shaped this, taking into account the current COVID-19 situation. For example, we would utilise consultation	Low

Risks	Uncontrolled risk	Controls	Controlled risk
		<p>methods that would allow the community to engage with us virtually i.e. video drops in throughout the course of the consultation period. Given that many households have been relying on video calls during the COVID-19 period to work or to socialise, this should prove effective.</p> <p>We have also proposed an eight week consultation period to ensure that those who would like to give their views would have ample opportunity.</p>	

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Equalities

7.1 A full equality impact assessment (EIA) has been drafted to assess the potential impact of the preferred model. This is currently in draft and will be finalised after the second stage of consultation, should it be approved. This will ensure any comments and feedback can be included. This draft EIA is included as appendix 2 of this report for transparency.

7.2 The draft EIA has identified that overall the preferred model would have a positive impact across the protected characteristic groups as it would aim to:

- improve accessibility for those most in need including those who are traditionally considered hard to reach;
- provide opportunities for disadvantaged children, young people and families to access provision that will contribute to increasing their equality of opportunity; and
- increase the engagement of children, young people and families who do not usually participate in the provision services.

7.3 However, the EIA does acknowledge that there would be a negative impact on those users of universal provision delivered through children's centres services and the youth service. The intention would be to mitigate this through actions such as:

- Providing more flexible services through outreach at alternative venues in the community.

- Working more closely with community and voluntary sector groups to identify any groups that could deliver sessions to replace the reduced universal activities, with support from AfC staff.
- Signposting young people or families who may no longer be able to access universal services to alternative providers such as those identified in the first stage of the consultation e.g. signposting users of Old Windsor Children's Centre to Old Windsor's 'Tiddlers and Toddlers' playgroup.

Climate change/ sustainability

7.4 The recommendations are expected to have minimal impact on climate change/ sustainability.

Data protection/ GDPR

7.5 This is not considered applicable to this report.

8. CONSULTATION

Background to the first stage of the consultation

8.1 Following approval at November 2019 Cabinet to undertake a public consultation on the transformation of our early help services into an integrated Family Hub model, a consultation process was undertaken. The consultation process sought to:

- Ascertain the views of the public on transforming early help services into integrated Family Hubs for 0-19 year olds.
- Ascertain the priorities of those likely to be most affected by the proposed changes.

Consultation methodology

8.2 RBWM residents were consulted on the proposed changes to the delivery of early help services through a variety of methods:

- A 12-week online survey, which launched on Monday 6 January 2020 and closed on Monday 30 March 2020. Paper copies of the survey were made available at libraries and current early help service sites. Paper copies submitted made up approximately 10% of the overall survey.
- 6 public focus group sessions held at Children's and Youth Centres across the Royal Borough. It is worth noting that a seventh session was planned to take place in South Ascot on 18 March 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic this had to be cancelled. The list of sessions that were held is below:
 - Woodlands Park Children's Centre (13 January 2020);
 - Windsor Youth Talk (21 January 2020);
 - Pinkneys Green Youth & Community Centre (3 February 2020);
 - Datchet Children's Centre (8 February 2020);
 - Riverside Children's Centre (22 February 2020); and
 - The Manor, Dedworth (4 March 2020).

Consultation results

8.3 During the 12-week consultation, 501 responses were received. This number takes into account paper copy responses. This is a relatively strong response rate. By comparison, Buckinghamshire County Council received 752 responses to their own equivalent 12-week public consultation from a population approximately four times the size.

8.4 In addition to the online questionnaire, we held six public consultation focus groups and two staff workshops. While most respondents recognised the need to prioritise one to one support for our most vulnerable families, there were concerns about how other families would find other support.

8.5 The vast majority (88%) of responders to the survey identified themselves as female within the age range of 25-49 years (80%). 84% described themselves as 'parent/carers' with most (60%) having children under the age of 5. Over three-quarters (79%) were based in Windsor or Maidenhead towns with 42% of respondents declaring a household income of £30,000 or less which is lower than the median annual UK salary of £30,350. 27% declared a household income of over £60,000 a year.

8.6 83% of responders confirmed that they had accessed one of the available family services within the last 12 months. Children's centres and parenting support services were the most regularly accessed with 48% saying they accessed these at least once a week. The sites where responders had accessed these services from was mixed, but Riverside Children's Centre in Maidenhead appeared to be the most well-used with almost a third (32%) having attended a session there within the last year.

8.7 When responders were asked to state the maximum amount they would be willing to pay to attend a children's centre or youth centre session, the majority (37%) said they would be willing to spend up to £3. Over a quarter (28%) said they would be willing to spend up to £1.50 and 15% said up to a maximum of £5.00. 20% stated that they would not want to pay any sum to attend a session.

8.8 As part of the consultation, responders were shown the proposed aims for its early help services and were asked whether they agreed. 36% confirmed that they did agree with the new family hub proposals set out, while 32% said they disagreed. 32% also stated that they were neutral or did not know.

8.9 Other suggestions for a remodelled delivery of services were invited. The key themes to emerge were:

- How highly- regarded the early help services are and how many families consider them invaluable and rate the existing services delivered.
- The need to work more closely with existing charities and volunteer groups and key partners such as local schools.
- The importance of maintaining the focus on vulnerable groups including children and young people with disabilities; Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) support groups; those with mental health issues.
- The need to ensure all families are able to access provision and that services are delivered in an accessible way and publicised accordingly.
- The need to clearly define who services will be targeted at.

- Some willingness to accept charges for sessions if that means services can continue.
- Providing more of an offer for teenagers, particularly during school holidays.

8.10 When asked to prioritise areas where support should be targeted, the most common answer amongst respondents was 'one-to-one support for families in crisis'. 'Positive parenting groups for parents to help manage their children's behaviour' and 'emotional wellbeing support for new parents' made up the top three. 'Drop-in youth groups in the community' was considered the least priority.

8.11 There was a noticeably low response from users of the youth centres. Only 12% of responders said they had accessed a youth service session in the past year and only 8% said they used them on a weekly basis. The most well-attended youth centre by participating responders was Windsor Youth Club.

8.12 Respondents were asked to list what other groups or sessions in the community they and their families attended. The below lists a summary of their answers and whether we would expect them to continue if we were to implement the preferred model.

Alternative groups/ sessions attended	Would this be retained with the preferred model?
National Childbirth Trust (NCT) sessions.	Yes.
Baby sensory, baby yoga, baby massage.	Yes.
Church sessions, e.g. baby, toddler and youth groups.	Yes.
Library sessions, e.g. rhyme time, story time and sing-a-longs.	Yes.
Scouts, guides, cubs, beavers, brownies and rainbows.	Yes.
Army, sea and air cadets.	Yes.
Music groups, e.g. Bilinguasing, Diddy Disco, Moo Music, Teddies Music.	Yes.
Sports clubs, e.g. Maidenhead United, Puddleducks swimming, Phoenix Gym.	Yes.
Hartbeeps.	Yes.
Birth matters.	Yes.
Norden Farm.	Yes.
Tumbletots.	Yes.

Focus group sessions

8.13 Six public consultation meetings were held at various venues and at different times of the week and day to maximise accessibility. Social media, print media and poster campaigns were undertaken to advise service users, stakeholders and residents to partake in the survey or attend a public meeting.

8.14 The key themes to emerge can be summarised in terms of concerns and priorities. The tables below set out the concerns and priorities and our response to them.

Concerns:

Concerns	Response
Reduction of universal services will make early help difficult if families only get support when they are already having issues.	<p>The universal health visiting service will continue in its entirety i.e. five mandated contacts in the first three years via the Health Child Programme so issues can be identified within all families.</p> <p>There are robust links with schools and other voluntary agencies who already refer families in to early help services.</p>
Danger of labelling or stigmatising families if all have a targeted service.	<p>All families will continue to access the Health Child Programme via the Family Hubs not just those that are targeted.</p> <p>In addition, the new preferred model would be based on a progressive universal service- this means that everyone gets some level of service but the more service you need, the more you get.</p>
Most children's centres groups are well attended, meaning that families value service.	The proposals to retain existing children's centres as part of the Family Hub model have been made based on a range of criteria including those that are well-used.
Potential loss of outdoor education and natural environment experiences i.e. Nature Play.	Nature Play at the current Riverside Children's Centre would continue as a targeted service.
Risk of isolation for families/ Increased risk of postnatal depression due to isolation.	<p>The universal health visiting service will identify families new to the area or at risk of isolation and refer to targeted services.</p> <p>One of the mandated health visiting contacts is completed at six to eight weeks where every mother is screened for postnatal illness.</p>
Reduction of buildings- decrease accessibility for	One of the criteria for retaining buildings is that they are close to public transport i.e. train stations.

those unable to drive/ Poor public transport in area.	In addition, the preferred model would continue to allow families who need a service to receive it at home.
Stay and Play sessions offer informal support to parents.	We would maintain links with local community groups with the aim of ensuring that the informal support to parents would continue to be offered i.e. for community playgroups seeking support about parenting, we would offer information and advice.
Reduction in funding for voluntary sector i.e. Family Friends.	We would maintain close connections to the voluntary sector to ensure maximum use of limited resources.
Non Council play sessions or music groups can be expensive.	We would support targeted families to access play sessions or music groups if necessary.
Waiting times for CAMHS and Wellbeing services.	We would continue to work closely with CAMHS transformation work in order to reduce wait times.
Losing well trained and experienced staff.	Although there would be a reduction in staffing, the new model would aim to retain the experience, talent and skills of the existing workforce.
Provision for army families.	The provision for army families would be retained.

Priorities:

Priorities	Response
Maintain health visitor clinics in Children's Centres including breastfeeding support.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Keep supporting children, young people or families most in need with home visits on a one to one basis.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Link with voluntary sector and keep a central directory of all community groups, i.e. those run from churches, or by parents.	This would be retained in the preferred model and we would look to further develop the directory of local resources to share with families.
Keep targeted groups, i.e. Freedom, Esteem.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Continue supporting children with additional needs.	This would be retained in the preferred model.

More support for children excluded from school or at risk of exclusion.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Keep parenting courses going.	We would offer targeted families parenting courses as part of the new preferred model.
Use more volunteers.	We would continue to use volunteers and aim to strengthen links further with the community and voluntary sector.
Keep links with the rest of children's social care.	The existing strong links with children's social care would be maintained in the preferred model.
Keep mental health and wellbeing support, i.e. Emotional first aid for parents.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Consider families who live in rural areas with limited public transport.	Targeted outreach services would be available if needed. There would be potential to do pop up drop in groups if need was identified.
Keep access to early learning opportunities.	We would link to other locally delivered early learning opportunities and continue to target children entitled to two and three year old funding to ensure they are able to access these opportunities. Home learning outreach would continue to be offered through our parents as first teachers to families depending on need.
Consider BAME groups.	We would prioritise the support we currently provide to BAME groups through outreach i.e. parenting groups in the mosque.

8.15 The findings from the consultation were used to shape the final preferred model which is presented in this report. Furthermore, these findings and the findings from the second stage of consultation (if approved), would be used to finalise the whole of the model to ensure it reflects public opinion as far as is possible.

Second stage of public consultation

8.16 The first stage of the consultation aimed to get views on the strategic aims of the preferred Family Hub model. Further consultation is required about the detailed implementation of the model where there would be change to the current services of a specific children's centre.

8.17 We are seeking advice and guidance from a number of sources to ensure our approach to the second stage of consultation is robust and comprehensive. This has included:

- commissioning an early years and consultation expert from an external consultancy company to provide advice and guidance on the proposed consultation approach and methodology.
- seeking advice from other external consultation experts i.e. previous Non-Executive Independent Director on the Achieving for Children Board provided advice based on experience of delivering public consultation as part of an education consultancy.
- reviewing consultation approaches from other local authorities undertaking similar exercise to identify best practice. This includes the Buckinghamshire County Council consultation relating to the transformation of early help services which was subject to Judicial Review but found to be lawful.
- discussions with colleagues in Achieving for Children operational area 1 who have undertaken a similar exercise about lessons learned, best approaches to consultation i.e. engaging hard to reach families, including critical friend challenge of our proposed approach.
- review of the consultation approach by consultation experts in Achieving for Children operational area 1.
- review of consultation approach and methodology by RBWM Communications Team and support will be given for publicising the consultation when live.

8.18 The consultation itself is being planned (subject to agreement to consult from Cabinet) and the suggested consultation methodology is set out below:

Method	Detail
Online questionnaire for eight weeks	Questionnaire setting out the background detail to the consultation; the proposals for the centres; and questions about centre usage and their views on the proposed action for each centre.
AfCInfo internet page	Specific page set up for the consultation- this will include a link to the questionnaire; background information on the proposals; FAQs; details of how to request the questionnaire in paper format.
Social media	AfC and RBWM websites and social media accounts to publicise the consultation with a link to the questionnaire.
Dedicated inbox for questions, queries or comments	A dedicated inbox (familyhubs@achievingforchildren.org.uk) has been requested. Residents will be asked to send any questions or queries about the consultation here. This will be used to send out any invites to the virtual drop in sessions.
Virtual drop in sessions	Four virtual drop in sessions (1 hour) to be arranged. Dates to be advertised on the AfCInfo page- interested parties to email the inbox to request an invite.
Direct email to registered children's centre users who have	Registered children's centre users will be emailed directly with a link to the questionnaire to ask them to participate.

provided an email address	
Direct email to voluntary and community sector organisations and any other relevant groups	Direct emails will be sent to voluntary and community sector organisations and other relevant groups in the local area to ask for their help in distributing the link to the questionnaire and asking them to complete it themselves. This will include parent groups and established support groups for traditionally hard to reach groups including those from the BAME community and children, young people and families with special educational needs and disabilities.
Awareness raising sessions with key stakeholder groups	Informing key stakeholder groups i.e. Parents and Carers in Partnership for Windsor and Maidenhead (PaCiP); Asian Women's Group; other groups that support families that could be considered vulnerable.
Universal health clinics	Universal health clinics are due to recommence in the second week in June 2020. Health visitors will be asked to encourage attendees to complete the questionnaire.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 The full implementation stages are set out below:

Date	Details
25/6/2020	Approval obtained by RBWM Cabinet to go out to second stage public consultation (including 14 day call-in period).
9/7/20	Call in at Overview and Scrutiny.
Mid- July 2020	Second stage of consultation launched for eight weeks.
Mid- September 2020	Findings from second stage of consultation analysed and preferred model reviewed in light of findings.
October 2020 (TBC)	Cabinet considers final report setting out the details of the implementation of the preferred model.
October 2020 (TBC)	Staffing implications approved by AfC Board.
November 2020 (TBC)	Staff consultation commences (30 days).
December 2020	Formal response to staff consultation, interview and notice periods (up to 12 weeks).
January 2021 (TBC)	Launch of new model
February 2021 (TBC)	Family Hub model fully operational.

10. APPENDICES

Electronic only

- Appendix 1: Proposed Family Hub model
- Appendix 2: Draft Equalities Impact Assessment

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 All Party Parliamentary Group report on the future of children's centres:
<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s150825/app%25208%2520appg%2520>
2

12. CONSULTATION (MANDATORY)

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Comment ed & returned
Cllr Stuart Carroll	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Adult Social Care, Children's Services, Health and Mental Health	09/06/20	10/06/20
Cllr Ross McWilliams	Lead Member for Housing, Communications and Youth Engagement	09/06/20	10/06/20
Duncan Sharkey	Managing Director	15/06/20	16/06/20
Russell O'Keefe	Executive Director	15/06/20	
Adele Taylor	Executive Director/ S151 Officer	15/06/20	15/06/20
Elaine Browne	Head of Law	09/06/20	10/06/20
Mary Severin	Monitoring Officer	09/06/20	15/06/20
Nikki Craig	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	15/06/20	15/06/20
Louisa Dean	Communications	15/06/20	
Kevin McDaniel	Director of Children's Services	09/06/20	10/06/20
Hilary Hall	Director- Adults, Commissioning and Health	15/06/20	15/06/20
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance	15/06/20	

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To Follow item?
Key decision.	No .	No
Report Author: Rachael Park-Davies, Community Services Manager Phone: 07825 754435		

Appendix 1

The Proposed Family Hub Service Offer

The information below sets out what the service offer would look like if the preferred Family Hub model was implemented. Please note this has not been decided, this information is to help to understand what it would look like in practice.

Principles

The key principles of the Family Hub model would be:

- Delivering a service that has a whole family focus, through the provision of multi-disciplinary Family Hubs situated across the borough. There would be a strong emphasis on mental health and relationship support including integration of all early help services such as education, health and the voluntary sector.
- Predominantly supporting targeted vulnerable families across the age range of 0-19 years (or age 25 years where young people have learning difficulties and/or disabilities), so that the needs of families can be coordinated in one place, regardless of the ages of their children.
- Adopting a flexible approach to service delivery whereby the focus is more on delivering services where they are needed rather than at a single location. This means some services would be delivered at hubs but other services would be delivered via outreach in collaboration with partners and the community.
- At an early stage, working in partnership with children, young people and families by supporting them to be more resilient, and by offering the right support at the right time and in the right way, so that improvements in their lives can be sustained.
- Enabling children, young people and families needing our support to tell their story only once.
- In response to community concerns about rising knife crime and County Lines activities, delivering the youth service on an outreach basis in partnership with the Police and Community Safety, with activity in specifically targeted areas where issues have been identified.
- Accepting referrals into the Family Hubs via the Single Point of Access (SPA) and undertaking a triaging exercise to ensure those most in need are prioritised, which would reduce current waiting times for accessing services.

- Working with the community and voluntary sector, including parent groups, to support them to deliver universal services where children's centre and youth centre provision is reduced.

Services delivered

The Family Hubs would deliver a full programme of services in various venues across their community area including universal health provision; school nursing; specific sessions and groups for vulnerable families; parenting support; and opportunities for early years learning and development by continuing to host a range of activities and groups from the independent and private sector.

Families with a low level of need would be signposted to other groups in their area who could provide support (not including universal health visiting services which would remain accessible to all). This would free up resource to enable the Family Hub service offer to strengthen the focus on families with the greatest need.

The one-to-one offer would provide parents/ carers with specialised support tailored to their individual needs and the needs of their family. A skilled and knowledgeable worker would work with the family, drawing upon a variety of evidence based practice, including parenting, using a solution focused approach that would meet a range of identified complex needs. One-to-one interventions could include:

- Support for women recovering or in abusive relationships.
- Support for families who are isolated or depressed or have any other physical or mental health issues.
- Support for families in poverty, providing benefits advice and essential resources i.e. food, school uniform in partnership with local charities.
- Support for children who are developmentally delayed, or whose parents struggle to connect or play with them.

A range of approaches would be used i.e. listening; advocacy; advice/ information; motivation; signposting; positive communication; enabling; building self confidence/ self esteem; building resilience and encouraging families to access appropriate services.

This could also include direct work with young people who are at risk of homelessness. The worker would be the single point of contact for the family and would bring together a range of agencies to ensure the multiple and complex issues and barriers the family are facing are

addressed and that the parent/child is at the centre of the process. The worker would ensure the child has a voice and that their views and wishes are always taken into consideration.

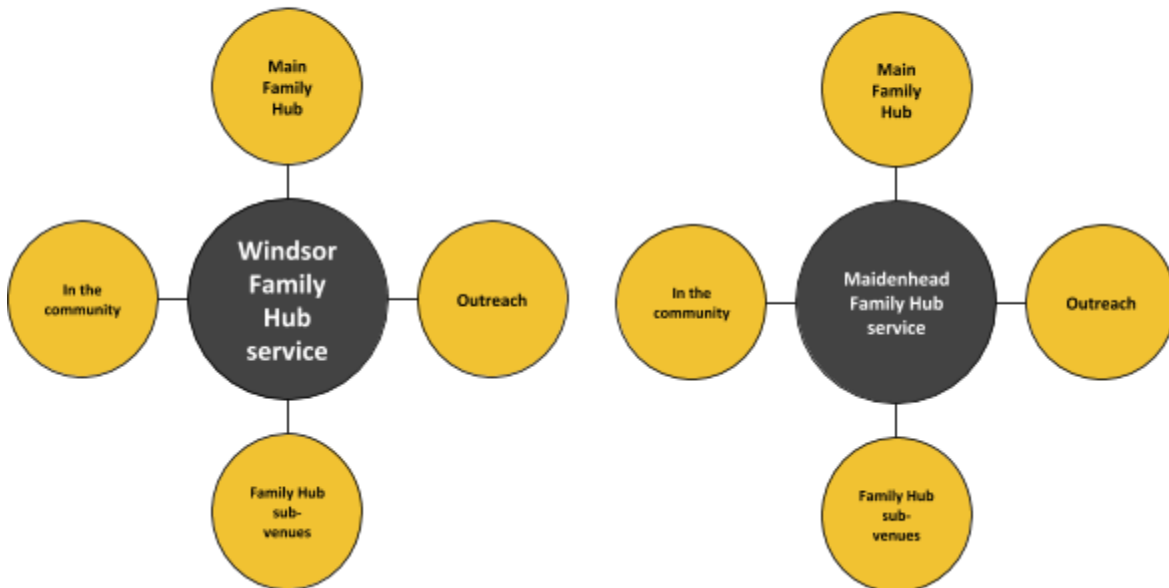
Our youth service would continue to prioritise supporting more vulnerable young people on a 1-1 basis such as those that are: involved with statutory children’s social care services; engaging in risky behaviours; or with low self-esteem. The service would also continue to support participation and engagement of children and young people, including those in care and those leaving care, and deliver parent/ carer/ professional workshops on child sexual exploitation, gangs, substance misuse and online safety, and would also provide outreach to identified hotspots in the borough, as the need is identified. In terms of universal services, the proposal is to carry on delivering sessions and workshops to pupils in partnership with our local schools.

Location

Services would be delivered from either:

- A main Family Hub (one in Windsor and one in Maidenhead);
- A Family Hub sub-venue (multiple across Windsor and Maidenhead).
- In the community (i.e. in a church hall, library or cafe).
- Outreach (i.e. in someone’s home; at an identified hotspot).

Family Hub model



Delivery would be less focused on one particular location but rather targeted at where the need is greatest. Family Hubs and Family Hub sub-venues would be used for some service delivery but much would take place in the community or via outreach. This would allow the service to be more flexible and responsive to what families really need.

Programmes

The Family Hubs would deliver a wide range of programmes and activities that focus on building resilience in children, young people and families. Examples are included in the table below:

Universal	Preventative	Targeted	Specialist
Full Health Visiting "Healthy Child" programme	One to one baby massage for parents at risk of postnatal depression	Triple P (positive parenting Programme)	Freedom programme for victims of domestic abuse
School Nursing "National Childhood Measurement Programme"	Access to "Baby Incredible Years" course for young or vulnerable mums of young babies	Esteem groups for young people who are unable to access mainstream youth/ Leisure services	Joey Nurture group for young children at risk of exclusion
Access to Health Visitor run new baby "Nurture Groups"	Family Links groups for Asian families	Parents as First Teachers home learning support	"Valu" programme for young people using drugs and alcohol

More detailed information about the parenting programmes that would form the central element of the Family Hub model is set out below:

Solihull approach
Solihull approach is a model integrating psychotherapeutic child development and behavioural approaches for working with children and parents with sleeping, eating or toileting issues (Douglas 1999). It is well suited to the progressive universalism model of health visiting – ‘everyone gets the service, the more you need, the more you get’.
In addition, there is an on-line resource which parents can access for free and covers pregnancy and childbirth, early years and the teenage brain.

Parents as first teachers

Parents as first teachers (PaFT) programme is designed to provide intense, targeted support for parents of children from the antenatal stage up to the age of 3 years. As an early intervention programme, the intention is to work alongside parents for up to three years, usually within the family home. Qualified staff, working within the children's centres, have been trained to deliver this evidence based programme.

PaFT is a strengths model, recognising that parents are the experts on their child and addresses the root causes of child abuse: unrealistic expectations of children, feelings of isolation and parental stress. Since its inception, this programme has been subject to numerous independent evaluations. It is listed in the recent Graham Allen report^t as one of 50 recognised Level 3 interventions, which have evidenced positive impact for families.

Webster Stratton Baby Incredible Years

In this evidence- based programme, parents learn how to help their babies feel loved, safe and secure. They learn how to encourage their babies' physical and language development. The parenting group format fosters peer support networks and shared learning. The strategies are learnt using video clips of real life situational vignettes to support the training and stimulate parenting group discussions and practice exercises with their babies.

This course is for first time parents of babies aged 8 to 12 weeks, who are likely to need additional support (it is a referral only from partner agencies group). The group is run over a 10 week period.

Triple P (Positive Parenting Programmes)

Triple P gives parents simple and practical strategies to help them confidently manage their children's behaviour, prevent problems developing and build strong, healthy relationships. Triple P is evidenced based and shown to work across cultures, socio-economic groups and in all kinds of family structures. We run a variety of parenting programmes every year. The programmes have been carefully designed and are evidence based to help and support parents.

Brief Triple P Intervention

A brief intervention delivered on a one-to-one basis to provide specific advice on how to solve common child developmental issues and behaviour problems. The session lasts for 20 to 60 minutes focusing on one topic and the parent will then be provided with a Triple P Tip Sheet.

Primary and Teen Triple P

An in-depth parenting programme which develop problem solving strategies and encourage positive relationships. These programmes run for two hours across five weeks. The programmes we currently deliver are:

- Primary: for parents of children aged 2 to 10 years old
- Teen: for parents of young people aged 11 to 17 years old

Triple P draws on social learning, cognitive behavioural and developmental theory as well as research into risk factors associated with the development of social and behavioural problems in children. It aims to equip parents with the skills and confidence they need to be self-sufficient and to be able to manage family issues without ongoing support. Also while it is almost universally successful in improving behavioural problems, more than half of Triple P's 17 parenting strategies focus on developing positive relationships, attitudes and conduct.

Emotional first aid for parents

Emotional first for parents focuses on a parents' own emotional wellbeing, helping them to identify their own early warning signs of emotional distress and develop their own sense of positive emotional health and wellbeing. The course offers an overview of mental health and well-being in relation to being a parent.

In a report from the Office of National Statistics a parent is quoted as saying "A parent is only as happy as their saddest child." It is our belief that likewise a child's emotional wellbeing and resilience is a reflection of that modelled by their parents, it may create a healthier emotional environment for the family.

The course aims to explore and rediscover a sense of self, identifies early signs of emotional distress and the solutions we use to manage it. Parents gain strategies to manage their own emotional wellbeing.

Freedom

The Freedom Programme is a domestic violence programme primarily designed for women as victims of domestic violence, since research shows that the vast majority of cases of serious abuse are male on female. However, the programme when provided as an intensive two day course, is also suitable for men, whether abusive and wishing to change their attitudes and behaviour or whether victims of domestic abuse themselves.

The Freedom Programme examines the roles played by attitudes and beliefs on the actions of abusive men and the responses of victims and survivors. The aim is to help them to make sense of and understand what has happened to them, instead of the whole experience just feeling like a horrible mess. The Freedom Programme also describes in detail how children are affected by being exposed to this kind of abuse and very importantly how their lives are improved when the abuse is removed.

As well as access to the evidenced based parenting groups set out in the table, the Family Hub would offer groups that respond to the needs of the local community. The priority groups would be agreed locally and based on need but could include young parents, service families, first time vulnerable parents, domestic abuse and support with language and development.

Locally, the model could look as follows (this is based on the preferred model of 11 buildings with some reduction in staffing. As the service will be demand-led, the figures included are only

an indication of activity and are based on current demand and population):

Area	Activity
Maidenhead and surrounding area: Woodlands Park, Cox Green, Larchfield, Cookham, Holyport, Hurley, Boyn Hill, Pinkneys Green.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Up to 58 families would be supported via 1 to 1 intensive work. ● Up to two evidenced based parenting groups would be established. ● Up to two priority groups would be determined locally.
Windsor and surrounding areas: Eton Wick, Old Windsor, Wraysbury, Oakley Green, Dedworth, Clewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Up to 58 families would be supported via 1 to 1 intensive work. ● Up to two evidenced based parenting groups would be established. ● Up to two priority groups would be determined locally.
Ascot and surrounding areas: Sunninghill, Sunningdale.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Up to 32 families would be supported via 1 to 1 intensive work. ● One evidenced based parenting groups would be established. ● One priority groups would be determined locally.

Staffing

We would have fully integrated teams working within our Family Hub service. This would likely include: Family Hub Leads; Family Hub Coordinators; Family Hub Support Workers; Family Coaches; and Youth Workers (please note the details of the staffing model would not be finalised until after the second stage of consultation, if approved).

The staff would work as a team to support the needs of the whole family with input from other key stakeholders, including health visitors.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form- **DRAFT**

Please use in conjunction with the [EIA toolkit](#), which has been designed to guide you through completing your EIA form.

Service Area:	Children and Health Services/ Early Help Services
Name of service/policy/project being assessed:	Transforming Community Services- Family Hubs
Officer leading on assessment:	Henry Kilpin, Head of Strategy and Programmes and Achieving for Children Equalities Lead
Other officers involved:	Rachael Park-Davies, Communities Service Manager; Lin Ferguson, Director of Children’s Social Care (DCSC); Kevin McDaniel, Director of Children’s Social Care; Elaine Browne, RBWM Head of Law and Deputy Monitoring Officer; Mary Severin, Monitoring Officer

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1. Briefly describe the service/policy/project:

Introduction

Achieving for Children, who are commissioned to deliver Children’s Services in Windsor and Maidenhead, undertook a review of existing early help services in response to the government’s Life Chances agenda and the All Party Parliamentary Group report on the future of children’s centres:

<https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/documents/s150825/app%25208%2520appg%252>

The intention was to better understand the developing approach to children’s centre and youth centre service delivery. Based on this, a preferred model has been developed which would see services reorganised into Family Hubs. This approach aligns with national and regional evidence,

including the report noted above, and would enable the service to effectively meet the needs of the most vulnerable children, young people and families whilst providing value for money.

This model is preferred as it would deliver a number of benefits in Windsor and Maidenhead including the opportunity to:

- Strengthen the focus on children, young people and families that most need support through early intervention to increase resilience and reduce the need for statutory social care involvement. This would contribute to reducing the time that some vulnerable families who need support have to wait for a service, as occurs in the current model.
- Build on the success of the Healthy Child Programme by continuing to deliver a universal health visiting service that can be accessed by all families (please note that universal health visiting is funded directly by Public Health England and not from the same funding stream as children's centres and youth centres and as such, this funding will be unaffected).
- Move away from traditional models of service delivery focused on particular static sites with lots of fixed assets that require maintaining. These are no longer considered effective and so the preferred option is to move to a more flexible and responsive approach that brings services to those who need them i.e. outreach in the community and in the home. The needs of families are not static and often fluctuate over time. It is therefore essential that the proposed model is able to respond to these needs in a new way, so that families are not expected to travel across the borough to access services from fixed buildings.
- In line with the above point, set up flexible and time limited outreach services on a smaller, more local scale, when intelligence suggests this is required in particular areas, e.g. work on knife crime.
- Support local communities so that they can develop universal provision in particular areas by providing advice and guidance on the effective delivery of services to children, young people and families and by working with them to identify potential community sites that could be used for service delivery, should leases for particular buildings be discontinued.
- Deliver better impact for families from the £3.5m that will still be spent on early help services as the hub model would allow the discontinuing of leases on buildings in the early help portfolio that are no longer fit for purpose and would enable a staff remodelling which would better align with the proposed approach.

Background to the decision

A report setting out proposals relating to early help services in Windsor and Maidenhead was considered at Cabinet on 30 April 2020 and agreed by Councillors. This decision was subject to call-in and then the report was taken to Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 14 May 2020. It was resolved at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel that:

1. It be noted that the Head of Law had reviewed the Cabinet's decision made on April 30th, what had been said at the Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting on May 14th, and the reasons for the call in, and had concluded that the decision complied with the law and did not conflict with the Council's Access For All policy;
2. The Cabinet paper of April 30th will be brought back to Cabinet in June setting out a consultative pathway;
3. The results of a further consultation process and recommendations for a decision will be brought to the Cabinet in July or August.

It was agreed at the Cabinet meeting on 28 May 2020 that the report would be 'put aside' and re-presented to Cabinet on 25 June 2020 to allow time for the further details required for clarity of the next steps to be added. As part of this, the EIA has been revisited and re-drafted to take into account the new report that will be considered at Cabinet.

Should the report at Cabinet on 25 June 2020 be approved, then the next step would be to undertake a further public consultation exercise. The proposed details of this are set out in the consultation section of this assessment. If this is approved, then the intention will be to develop a final preferred model for consideration by Cabinet in October 2020, based on the findings of the consultation. If this was then approved, implementation of the new model would be in early 2021.

Proposed service delivery

As set out previously, the preferred model is to bring together services being run by children's centres, youth centres, the parenting service, health visitors, school nurses and the family resilience service so that residents can get all the help they need from one Family Hub. It is important to emphasise however that this does not mean that residents will get this support from one building. Alternatively the Family Hub model will act as a single point to coordinate services for vulnerable families.

The preferred model would be to establish two main Family Hubs - one in Windsor and one in Maidenhead. In addition, there would be a number of sub-venues across both Windsor and Maidenhead. Children's centre services and youth services would be delivered from these venues, other community venues, in people's homes and via other outreach in the community.

The key principles underpinning the preferred model include:

- Delivering a service that has a whole family focus, through the provision of multi-disciplinary Family Hubs situated across the borough. There would be a strong emphasis on mental health and relationship support including integration of all early help services such as education, health and the voluntary sector.
- Predominantly supporting targeted vulnerable families across the age range of 0-19 years (or age 25 years where young people have learning difficulties and/or disabilities), so that the needs of families can be coordinated in one place, regardless of the ages of their children.
- Adopting a flexible approach to service delivery whereby the focus is more on delivering services where they are needed rather than at a single location. This means some services would be delivered at hubs but other services would be delivered via outreach in collaboration with partners and the community.
- At an early stage, working in partnership with children, young people and families by supporting them to be more resilient, and by offering the right support at the right time and in the right way, so that improvements in their lives can be sustained.
- Enabling children, young people and families needing our support to tell their story only once.
- In response to community concerns about knife crime and County Lines activities, delivering the youth service on an outreach basis in partnership with the Police and Community Safety, with activity in specifically targeted areas where issues have been identified.
- Accepting referrals into the Family Hubs via the Single Point of Access (SPA) and undertaking a triaging exercise to ensure those most in need are prioritised, which would reduce current waiting times for accessing services.
- Working with the community and voluntary sector, including parent groups, to support them to deliver universal services where children's centre and youth centre provision is reduced.

The Family Hubs would deliver a full programme of services in various venues across their community area including universal health provision; school nursing; specific sessions and groups for vulnerable families; parenting support; and opportunities for early years learning and development by continuing to host a range of activities and groups from the independent and private sector.

Through the first stage of consultation with residents and stakeholders we have learned that respondents see the key priority as one to one work with families, particularly those with younger children or children with additional needs. Building community resilience was also a common theme and so we would ensure that this would be an integral aspect of the model. By building community resilience and maintaining the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme, it is anticipated that families who need additional support would be identified and offered support at an early stage.

As part of the implementation, we would review our programme of activities to ensure that where possible, we are able to continue those sessions that support groups most in need, for example, groups for parents with children with additional needs and targeted sessions for hard to reach Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) families in the community.

Our youth service would continue to prioritise supporting more vulnerable young people on a 1-1 basis such as those that are: involved with statutory children's social care services; engaging in risky behaviours; or with low self-esteem. The service would also continue to support participation and engagement of children and young people, including those in care and those leaving care, and deliver parent/ carer/ professional workshops on child sexual exploitation, gangs, substance misuse and online safety, and would also provide outreach to identified hotspots in the borough, as the need is identified. In terms of universal services, the proposal is to carry on delivering sessions and workshops to pupils in partnership with our local schools.

Whilst the expertise/specialism of each service will remain, the delivery would be fully integrated to best match the needs of the local community. Subject to consultation, to achieve an integrated Family Hub model we would propose to:

Activity	Details	Benefits and impact
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<p>Continue to deliver universal health provision</p>	<p>There would be no changes to the universal health provision that is currently delivered. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Full Healthy Child Programme, offering every family 5 health reviews in the first 3 years (crucial first 1000 days) of their child’s life and a range of support services in the community, i.e. drop in clinics, new baby groups. ● School nursing service which provides support with long term conditions and universal support for pupils in school. ● Home visiting support for families whose child is developmentally delayed, socially isolated or living with other vulnerabilities. 	<p>Health services were rated as one of the most popular services delivered by children’s centres in the stage one public consultation exercise.</p> <p>All families would still be able to access universal health support to give their children the best start in life.</p>
<p>Deliver outreach work more flexibly and in a greater number of locations to reach people who are not currently accessing provision.</p>	<p>We would extend our outreach work and focus on delivering services in the community, rather than at a specifically designated children’s centre or youth centre buildings.</p> <p>This would enable us to engage more with hard to reach groups by delivering programmes from a range of local venues such as schools, leisure and community centres, partner properties and other community locations.</p>	<p>The intention is to increase the amount of outreach work we do by freeing up staff from the management and maintenance fixed assets, such as buildings.</p> <p>This approach would strengthen the focus on the most deprived areas with the highest level of need. It would also mean we are better able to reach those families who are not currently accessing our services.</p> <p>It would also enable us to move away from the traditional delivery of youth services i.e. drop in sessions at a centre which have proven less and less popular over recent years, towards a more flexible approach whereby we take services to the young people, where this is needed most. This should lead to increased engagement with those more vulnerable children and young</p>

		people. This would be a blended model of face-to-face and virtual intervention, as many young people prefer this model of engagement.
Reduce the number of designated children's centres delivery sites from 13 to six and youth centres from nine to three.	<p>By delivering more services through outreach, in people's homes and other community venues, we would be less reliant on children's centre and youth centre buildings.</p> <p>Detailed analysis of current usage of children's centres has enabled us to identify which centres could be closed with the least impact. We propose to maintain those centres that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Well used by residents. ● Best equipped to meet the future needs of the service. ● Located close to areas of relative deprivation. ● Well-placed for public transport or with good parking facilities. ● Wheelchair and pushchair accessible. ● Able to offer good value for money in terms of rental costs. ● Aligned with the RBWM new climate/ environmental strategy. <p>This could save c£60,000 in the running costs of managing 10 sites rather than 22.</p>	<p>This would mean a reduction in the quantity of children's centre and youth centre buildings that we work from.</p> <p>It would also mean that families or young people whose nearest children's centre or youth centre is earmarked for closure would have further to travel to visit a centre.</p> <p>We would mitigate against some of the impact of these changes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopting a new, more responsive and flexible service. ● Providing more services through outreach at alternative venues in the community, including people's homes. ● Working more closely with community and voluntary sector groups to support them to deliver universal provision, where appropriate. ● Signposting young people or families who may no longer be able to access universal services to alternative providers. An asset map is being put together. <p>As part of the initial consultation we have already asked users views on which services they most value and we would prioritise these when putting together the service offer for 2020-21 and beyond.</p>

<p>Deliver a wider range of services for families coordinated from the remaining centres which prioritises those most in need</p>	<p>For the remaining buildings we would coordinate a more family-focused offer, by bringing together a range of services, for example, health services, family support, support for childminders, and responsive outreach.</p> <p>As part of this we would continue to deliver the specific services and groups for children with additional needs and their families; for women at risk of or living with domestic abuse; for first time or young or vulnerable parents; for families involved in statutory social care; for care leavers including those who are parents; for childminders and the children in their care; for parents in need of mediation or support with parental conflict; and for parents with poor mental health.</p>	<p>Although the proposals in this consultation would result in a reduced universal early help offer, we propose to mitigate against some of the impact by bringing more services together in a more coordinated way, thereby enabling families to access more of the support they would most benefit from.</p> <p>This would mean that those needing targeted support such as information about domestic abuse and health guidance, would be more likely to access it.</p> <p>Where specific issues arise in particular areas, for example, a rise in knife crime, we would deliver targeted support in that area which would be accessible for all.</p>
<p>Strengthen partnerships with local community and voluntary groups</p>	<p>We would work with the local community and voluntary sector to identify those groups and/or individuals who are willing and able to run universal sessions for children, young people and families. We would provide advice and guidance to enable them to establish sessions accessible to all. This could include supporting parents to deliver sessions and / or support themselves where possible.</p> <p>We would also develop a directory of resources which will include local organisations offering universal and targeted support. We would use this to signpost children, young people and families to the support they need in the wider community. The intention would be to make the directory easy to navigate and we would seek to provide additional online resources including self-help</p>	<p>Local community and voluntary sector organisations could deliver some of the universal services that are not proposed as part of the new model, thereby ensuring all families are able to access some level of provision.</p> <p>By providing advice and guidance to these groups, we would be equipping the local community with greater knowledge and skills, in order to build resilience within communities..</p>

	tools which have become more prevalent during the current pandemic.	
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Staffing

Should the second stage of consultation be approved, a final model would be developed shaped by the feedback. If this final model was then approved, a review of staffing would be undertaken to ensure that the staff model aligns with the Family Hub approach.

The Family Hub model would see a move from three separate teams (children's centres, family resilience and youth services), each with their own management structure, priorities and specific roles, to a Hub team which would have a range of skills and expertise but seek to work to meet the needs of the whole family.

This would require change to the service which would involve all members of staff and we would expect a reduction in staffing numbers. This is because we would require a smaller number of workers as the focus would be on need rather than maintaining poorly- attended drop in sessions or maintaining buildings. However we would aim to retain the talent, skills and experience of our specialist workers.

The final details of these staffing changes would not be finalised until the whole model had been approved. Any reduction in staffing would contribute to achieving the efficiency target of £600,000 that is allocated to the project.

Sites

As part of the review of early help services and the development of the preferred model, we have considered all existing service delivery sites and made proposals for how these sites could be used going forward.

We have a number of criteria against which we have reviewed the sites. Although proposals have been suggested, these have in no way been finalised and would be subject to the second stage of consultation as set out in the recommendations and a Cabinet decision. The final proposals would then follow from any Cabinet decision.

We are proposing to retain sites that meet a number of the following criteria:

- Well used.
- Best equipped to meet the future needs of the service.
- Located close to areas of relative deprivation.
- Well-placed for public transport or with good parking facilities.
- Wheelchair and pushchair accessible.
- Able to offer good value for money in terms of rental costs.
- Aligns with the emerging Council Asset Strategy.

We are proposing to discontinue leases on centres that meet a number of the following criteria:

- Are situated in areas where they are no longer the most needed.
- Are too small or too expensive to run and are not equipped to meet the future needs of the service or the Council's climate priorities.
- Are under-used compared to other centres.
- Are unable to offer additional service i.e. health clinics, due to lack of space or lack of accessibility.
- Are potentially able to be used by parents, community or voluntary groups to deliver sessions independently.

The table below provides a summary of which centres could be retained and which could be discontinued (subject to the second stage of consultation), based on the criteria outlined above, along with some key information about each site. However whilst some service delivery could take place in the sites that are recommended for retention, the key principle of this model is that services would be delivered in a range of venues across the borough, coordinated by staff operating out of these sites.

For clarity it should be noted that this table is for illustrative purposes to assist Cabinet in clearly understanding the decision that is being asked to consider. Councillors are not being asked to approve the retention or discontinuing the lease on any buildings. No final recommendation about the retention or discontinuing the lease on any building has been made.

Please also note that the references to distances between different centres and between centres and public transport have been made based on directions from postcode to postcode on foot using Google Directions. Councillors Carroll and McWilliams have also checked some of these distances as part of their visits to each centre.

Building	Proposed action	Preliminary Rationale
Children's centres		
Datchet Children's Centre SL3 9EJ	Retain as sub-venue in Windsor.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; close to areas of relative deprivation; good transport links- 200 feet to nearest train station; accessible facilities; low rental cost; high footfall.
Larchfield Children's Centre SL6 2SG	Retain as sub-venue in Maidenhead.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; close to area of relative deprivation; good transport links- 0.9 miles to nearest train station; accessible facilities; low rental cost; high footfall.
Manor Children's Centre/ Youth Centre SL4 5NW	Retain as sub-venue in Windsor.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; close to area of relative deprivation; accessible facilities; high footfall.
Poppies Children's Centre SL4 4XP	Retain as sub-venue in Windsor.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; well positioned for targeted interventions on the army estate; accessible facilities; high footfall.
Riverside Children's Centre SL6 7JB	Retain as main Family Hub in Maidenhead.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; central location; good transport links- within 0.6 miles of nearest train station; accessible facilities; high footfall.
Eton Wick Children's Centre	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; no designated disabled parking; low footfall.

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SL4 6JB		
Pinkneys Green Children's Centre/ Youth Centre SL6 5HE	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; close to other provision- Marlow Youth Centre and Riverside Children's Centre both within 1.6 miles; potential interest from local voluntary and community groups to deliver services at the site; low footfall at youth service sessions.
The Lawns Children's Centre SL4 3RU	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; only open during term-time; close to other provision- Manor Children's Centre/ Youth Centre within 0.5 miles; access via a footbridge- wheelchair users and those with mobility issues may need help to access.
Woodlands Park Village Centre Children's Centre SL6 3GW	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; limited transport links- 2.7 miles away from nearest train station; potential interest from local voluntary and community groups to deliver services at the site.
Children's centre satellite sites		
Low Ropes Activity Course at Beech Lodge SL6 6QL	Retain as sub-venue.	No other similar provision available locally; could be used for targeted groups; no rental cost- low maintenance cost.
Maidenhead Nursery School SL6 7PG	Retain as sub-venue.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; good transport links- nearest train station within 0.2 miles; accessible facilities; no rental cost.
South Ascot	Retain as sub-venue.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; good

SL5 9EB		transport links- nearest train station within 0.3 miles; accessible facilities; low rental cost.
Old Windsor SL4 2PX	Discontinue lease	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; limited transport links- nearest train station is 2 miles away; low footfall.
Wraysbury Village Hall TW19 5NA	Discontinue lease	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; low footfall.
Youth centres		
Marlow Road Youth Centre SL6 7YR	Retain as sub-venue in Maidenhead.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; good transport links- nearest train station is within 0.6 miles; high footfall.
Windsor Youth Centre SL4 3HD	Retain as main Family Hub in Windsor.	Meets the accommodation requirements for the preferred Family Hub model; good transport links- nearest train station is within 0.7 miles; external hires ensure that the centre runs as cost neutral; high footfall.
Charters Youth Centre SL5 9QY	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; school has requested site reverts back to school use; low footfall.
Datchet Youth Centre SL3 9HR	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; close to other provision- within 0.4 miles of Datchet Children's Centre; low footfall.
Eton Wick Youth Centre	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; high rental cost; low footfall.

SL4 6LT		
Larchfield Youth Centre SL6 4BB	Discontinue lease.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; close to other provision- within 0.4 miles of Larchfield Children's Centre; steadily reducing footfall.
Other buildings		
Maidenhead Project Centre, Reform Road SL6 8BY	Discontinue lease and staff move sites	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; potentially part of RBWM regeneration plans; high rental cost.
Outdoor provision in Hurley SL6 5ND	Transfer to community provider to maintain.	Limited space available making it unsuitable for future use; potential interest from a community provider to maintain the provision- would seek access for targeted groups as part of new arrangement.

2. What sources of information have been used in the preparation of this equality assessment? (e.g national research, JSNA, user feedback)

Information Source	Description and outline of the information source
Business case for early help transformation- autumn 2019	Report to RBWM Council to seek approval to undertake a public consultation on the proposed changes to early help services.
Windsor and Maidenhead children's centre scorecards- Q3 2019-20	Data relating to the use of children's centres across RBWM.
Early help impact report- January 2020	Annual report setting out the impact of early help services provided by Achieving for Children across RBWM.

Windsor and Datchet Hub and Maidenhead Hub datapack- Q3 2019-20	Data relating to the needs of the community in RBWM- including the children's centre users.
Achieving for Children Annual Equalities Report 2018-19	Annual report setting out how Achieving for Children met the public sector equality duty in 2018-19.

3. Analysis of Impact

Protected Group	Impact (mark with an 'X')			Include Data and Analysis
	Positive	Negative	None	
<p>Data presented below mainly relates to users of children's centres and youth centres. Where additional information is known about the users of the others services included within the proposed changes, this has been noted.</p> <p>Children's centres</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During 2018-19, there were 20,266 attendees to the centres across the boroughs. <p>Youth Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are expected to be over 28,000 attendees to youth provision during 2019-20 (predicted based on data up to quarter 3 2019-20). Of these, over 7,000 are expected to be individuals regularly attending activities. There have been 4,234 participants at training delivered by the youth service with 90% rating it as beneficial to them. 				
Age	X	X		<p>Data</p> <p><u>Background</u></p> <p>There are 36,198 children and young people in Windsor and Maidenhead with the largest group within the 0-19 population being those aged five to nine years old.</p>

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Service users

Data relating to the age of children's centre attendees and youth centre users is not routinely collected. However, the data that is available shows that in relation to children's centres:

- in the Windsor and Datchet area (which includes the following children's centres: Lawns; Little Cygnets in Ascot, Datchet, Eton Wick and Old Windsor; Poppies; and the Manor) there is a 0-4 population of 4,209. On average, 86% of children and within the reach areas for these centres are registered (3,627 out of 4,209).
- in the Maidenhead area (which includes the following children's centres: Larchfield; Pinkneys; Riverside; and Woodlands Park) there is a 0-4 population of 4,586. On average, 72% of children within the reach areas for these centres are registered (3,295 out of 4,586).

Given that centres are aimed at children aged 0 to five, the assumption can be made that children in attendance are in that age bracket.

For the youth service, available data and anecdotal evidence indicates that there is an equal split between users who are aged between eight and 16. It is also worth noting that currently the service holds specific sessions depending on age- separate youth club sessions are held for seven to 12 year olds and for young people aged 13 to 19 years old.

Impact

Given that children's centre provision is aimed at children aged 0-5, the proposals will impact on this age group. Similarly, youth services are primarily aimed at children and young people aged eight to 16 so they too will be impacted.

Should the proposals be approved, there would likely be a negative impact on the children and young people and families who attend universal sessions at the children's centres or youth centres and those that attend centres that may not be retained. We would mitigate against some of the impact of these changes by:

- Adopting a new, more responsive and flexible service.
- Providing more services through outreach at alternative venues in the community.
- Working more closely with community and voluntary sector groups to help them build resilience.
- Signposting young people or families who may no longer be able to access universal services to alternative providers.

In addition, it is worth noting that there would be no changes to the universal health provision that is currently delivered. This includes:

- Full Healthy Child Programme, offering every family 5 health reviews in the first 3 years (crucial first 1000 days) of their child's life and a range of support services in the community, i.e. drop in clinics, new baby groups.
- School nursing service which provides support with long term conditions and universal support for pupils in school.
- Home visiting support for families whose child is developmentally delayed, socially isolated or living with other vulnerabilities.

This would ensure that all families receive some level of support from the Family Hub model, even if they do not receive targeted services.

			<p>There is not likely to be any impact on those children or young people and families who attend the centres that would remain or who access targeted services via outreach in the community or at home.</p> <p>Overall however, the preferred model would offer significant benefits to children, young people and families who are considered disadvantaged and who will receive a more holistic service that better meets their needs. For example, currently, there is a waiting list for families wanting to access targeted support. The strengthened focus on those who most need support as proposed in the Family Hub model would contribute to reducing these waiting lists, meaning help can be offered at an early stage. This could help to reduce the number of families experiencing more entrenched difficulties, thus requiring statutory intervention at a later date.</p>
Disability	X		<p>Data</p> <p><u>Background</u> There are 933 children and young people with a Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in Windsor and Maidenhead. In terms of primary need, in Windsor and Maidenhead, 35.7% have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD); 18.0% have Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN); and 12.4% have Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. ASD is the most common primary need nationally.</p> <p><u>Service users</u></p>

			<p>Data relating to families with disabled children and families with a disabled parent/ carer accessing children's centres is not routinely collected. However, currently the centres provide a range of support aimed at families with a child with SEND. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School nursing services including enuresis clinics and support with long term conditions i.e. asthma, epilepsy; ● Specific services and groups for children with additional needs and their families, i.e. Joey Nurture Group; ● links to the voluntary or charitable sector to provide specialist family support i.e. parenting special children organisation which provides parenting support for parents of children with autism or attention deficit disorder. <p>These sessions are well-attended so it can be assumed that a proportion of users do have children with a disability.</p> <p>In the youth service, available data and anecdotal evidence suggests that universal services are not accessed by many children and young people with a disability. However, specific sessions held for those with a disability are usually well-attended.</p> <p>Impact</p> <p>The Family Hubs would continue to provide support for families with children with special needs. This would see a continuation of the services currently delivered in children's centres, as set out above. In addition, by focusing on those most in need, more families who have children with SEND or families with parents with a disability, may be able to access services.</p>
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			<p>For example, this could include sessions specifically targeted at families who have a child with a disability, or parents receiving support for mental health issues.</p> <p>Staff will work with any families who may attend children’s centres that may not be retained to identify alternative accessible venues to attend sessions- either in other centres or in outreach sites including their home. This will take into account any mobility issues relating to the parent or child. It should also be noted that in developing proposals for retaining or discontinuing leases on buildings, criteria considered included accessibility, parking for those with a disability and proximity to public transport.</p> <p>The youth service will continue to provide specialised sessions for children and young people with disabilities. Any children and young people with disabilities who regularly attend universal services will be supported to identify other activities to participate in.</p> <p>Given the established link between disability and poverty (research in 2016 indicates that half of people in poverty are disabled or live with a disabled person), the strengthened focus on the most vulnerable families and hard to reach families is likely to have a positive impact on those families with a parent or carer who has a disability.</p>
Gender (Sex)	X	X	<p>Data</p> <p><u>Background</u> The gender breakdown of males and females aged 0-19 is almost 50/50 across the borough.</p> <p><u>Service users</u></p>

			<p>Data relating to the gender of parents/ carers and the children and young people that attend children's centres is not routinely collected. However, it can be assumed that the largest majority of parents and carers attending are female as they generally remain the primary carer.</p> <p>In terms of youth service participants, available data and anecdotal evidence suggests that around 75% are male and 25% are female.</p> <p>Impact</p> <p>Potential changes to the children's centre service are likely to have more of an impact on females as these services are predominantly taken up by women as the primary carers as set out above. It is worth noting however that fathers are actively encouraged to engage in services and additional groups for fathers are run. Staff would work with any families who may attend children's centres that may be closed, to identify alternative venues to access services- either in other centres or at outreach sites.</p> <p>The potential changes to youth centres are more likely to impact on males given the gender split in terms of users. Again, support would be provided to identify other participation opportunities available to children and young people should the universal provision be discontinued.</p> <p>Although it is recognised that there will be some negative impact on gender- both male and female- due to the reduction in universal services, overall the impact is expected to be positive given the proposed mitigation i.e. greater involvement of the community and voluntary sector in the delivery of services; and greater use of outreach and community venues. In addition, the strengthened focus on those who are most in need of support, such as single parent families and young people engaging in risk behaviour at locally</p>
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			<p>identified hotspots, will ensure the new model is contributing to increasing equality of opportunity for those who have struggled to access provision previously.</p>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>		<p>X</p>	<p>Data The children’s centres and youth centres do not collect information relating to gender reassignment.</p> <p>However, the youth service does provide support to young people who may be transgender. For example, transgender young people have been part of residential trips organised by youth workers to build confidence and self-esteem.</p> <p>In addition, the service delivers gender and identity training. Between April and December 2019, 187 participants attended this training and 82% felt the training was beneficial to them.</p> <p>Impact Gender reassignment is considered of low relevance to this equality assessment. However this will be kept under review.</p> <p>It is worth noting that the youth service would continue to work with young people who may be transgender or considering transitioning. This would not change as a result of the proposed new model.</p> <p>There would also be an expectation that all staff within early help have an understanding of transgender and gender identity when working with users accessing services.</p>

Marriage and civil partnership			<p>Data Information relating to marriage and civil partnership is not collected by any of the services proposed to undergo change.</p> <p>X</p> <p>Impact Marriage and civil partnership is considered of low relevance to this equality assessment. However this will be kept under review.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	X		<p>Data Children’s centres provide services to expectant and new parents although data is not available in relation to numbers.</p> <p>Impact Although the services that may be affected by the proposed changes are considered to be of high relevance to pregnancy and maternity, the impact of the changes is not likely to be significant. Children’s centres would continue to offer post-natal health services to parents. For example, as part of the Full Health Child Programme, families will be offered five health reviews in the first three years (crucial first 1,000 days) of their child’s life and a range of support services in the community, i.e. drop in clinics , new baby groups. It is worth noting the location of some sessions may alter and may be accessible via outreach or community venues rather than children’s centres.</p> <p>In addition, specific services and groups for first time or young or vulnerable parents i.e. Baby Incredible Years programme would continue to be offered regardless of whether the proposed changes are implemented. In addition, support for care leavers, including those who are parents, would continue to be provided.</p>

			Overall then, given that the majority of pregnancy and maternity services would continue, albeit potentially in different locations, and there would be increased focus on those most in need such as young or vulnerable parents, the overall impact is expected to be positive.
Race/ethnicity	X		<p>Data</p> <p><u>Background</u> 20.0% of children and young people from Windsor and Maidenhead (this total includes 'White Other') are from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. 80.0% of children and young people in Windsor and Maidenhead are White British. In Windsor and Maidenhead the 0-19 population is less diverse than the overall population with 22.0% of the overall population from a BAME background.</p> <p><u>Service users</u> Children's centres and the youth service do not routinely collect data relating to race/ethnicity.</p> <p>However, in recognition that some BAME groups in the community are hard to reach and may not be accessing services, the children's centres service have established specific and targeted sessions to engage with families from a BAME background. This has included, for example, working with 108 Asian women in Maidenhead to celebrate and build on their achievements in overcoming barriers to achieve better outcomes for their children; and successfully organising a beach trip in the summer of 2018 for 136 asian</p>

			<p>women and children from the borough. These services will continue should the new proposed model be implemented.</p> <p>In terms of the youth service, available data and anecdotal evidence suggests that the majority of users are White British with a small number from an Afro-Caribbean background or from other BAME ethnic groups.</p> <p>Impact</p> <p>The new proposed model, with a greater targeted approach for families most in need, would have a positive impact on those from a BAME background given the proven link between ethnicity and poverty. Research has shown that poverty is higher among all black and minority ethnic groups than among the majority white population (https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/migrated/files/poverty-ethnicity-evidence-summary.pdf). The proposals recognise this as the intention is to maintain centres located close to the areas with the highest levels of deprivation in the borough. As families from a BAME background are more likely to be vulnerable and are more likely to live in areas of deprivation, the increased focus on those most in need would help to ensure these families receive the support they require. The intention is also to continue to deliver the sessions targeted at specific hard to reach groups in the BAME community to ensure they are able to access services.</p> <p>If any BAME families are impacted by the proposed closures, the service would work in a culturally sensitive way to identify opportunities to access services at other centres or at outreach sites.</p> <p>In terms of the youth service, as with children’s centres, given the link between ethnicity and poverty, the continued focus on vulnerable young people should ensure those from</p>
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			<p>a BAME background receive the additional support that they need, as they are statistically more likely to need help. For example, nationally it is known that BAME young people are disproportionately represented amongst the children in care cohort. As part of the offer going forward, the youth service will continue to deliver 1-2-1 support to children in care.</p> <p>More generally, the new Family Hubs would be delivered in such a way that the needs of families from diverse ethnic backgrounds can be met, based on demographic information in the local area.</p>
<p>Religion and belief including non-belief</p>		<p>x</p>	<p>Data Data relating to religion and belief is not collected by the children's centres or youth centres.</p> <p>Impact Religion and belief is considered to be of low relevance to the proposals. However this will be kept under review.</p> <p>The children's centres and youth centres are open to all religious backgrounds and staff are expected to understand and respect a range of religions and beliefs and what they may mean for families i.e. diet. Achieving for Children would continue to take into account the use of certain local buildings for outreach services in relation to religion to ensure people do not feel unable to take part.</p>

			<p>It is also worth noting that we would continue to deliver events to celebrate the diversity of our communities. For example, the intention is to repeat successful events held previously:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In the summer of 2018, over 100 families attended Riverside Children's Centre Family Fun Day to celebrate Eid in Windsor and Maidenhead. The Mayor and Mayoress joined in the festivities and families celebrated with food, Bollywood dancing and a mini-farm. The health visiting team also delivered a quiz highlighting the importance of home safety and accident prevention. ● During the past 2018-29, 250 participants from the Muslim community attended personal development and parenting groups linked to Islamic values for both men and women. The aim has been to improve engagement with multi-faith communities. Work has also been undertaken with the community to set up Muslim youth groups and work alongside local and national Christian and Jewish leaders to organise multi-faith events for women.
Sexual orientation		X	<p>Data Data relating to sexual orientation is not collected by the children's centres or youth centres.</p> <p>However, anecdotal evidence from the youth service suggests around 10% of participants are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT).</p> <p>Impact Sexual orientation is considered to be of low relevance to the proposals. However this will be kept under review.</p>

				In addition, there will be an expectation that children's centre and youth work staff have an understanding and respect the sexual orientation of users of the children's centres and youth service provision. If there was a need to deliver a bespoke group, this will be considered.
Other i.e. carer, or those on a low income	X			Data shows that there are 9.3% of children in Windsor and Maidenhead who are living in poverty (compared to the national average of 19.9%). By targeting services at vulnerable families in or close to the areas of deprivation in the borough, the Family Hubs would be accessible by those who most need support. This may include lone parent families, families from a workless household and families who receive benefits.

What consultation have you undertaken in the development of this policy/ project or with stakeholders or critical friends?

Outline the consultation method and what feedback has been received

Background to the first stage consultation

Following approval at November 2019 Cabinet to undertake a public consultation on the transformation of our early help services into an integrated Family Hub model, a consultation process was undertaken. The consultation process sought to:

- Ascertain the views of the public on transforming early help services into integrated Family Hubs for 0-19 year olds.
- Ascertain the priorities of those likely to be most affected by the proposed changes.

Consultation methodology

RBWM residents were consulted on the proposed changes to the delivery of early help services through a variety of methods:

- A 12-week online survey, which launched on Monday 6 January 2020 and closed on Monday 30 March 2020. Paper copies of the survey were made available at libraries and current early help service sites. Paper copies submitted made up approximately 10% of the overall survey.
- Six public focus group sessions held at Children’s and Youth Centres across the Royal Borough. It is worth noting that a seventh session was planned to take place in South Ascot on 18 March 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic this had to be cancelled. The list of sessions that were held is below:
 - Woodlands Park Children’s Centre (13 January 2020);
 - Windsor Youth Talk (21 January 2020);
 - Pinkneys Green Youth & Community Centre (3 February 2020);
 - Datchet Children’s Centre (8 February 2020);
 - Riverside Children’s Centre (22 February 2020); and
 - The Manor, Dedworth (4 March 2020)

Consultation results

During the 12-week consultation, 501 responses were received. This number takes into account paper copy responses. This is a relatively strong response rate. By comparison, Buckinghamshire County Council received 752 responses to their own equivalent 12-week public consultation from a population approximately four times the size.

In addition to the online questionnaire, we held six public consultation focus groups and two staff workshops. While most respondents recognised the need to prioritise one to one support for our most vulnerable families, there were concerns about how other families would find other support.

The vast majority (88%) of responders to the survey identified themselves as female within the age range of 25-49 years (80%). 84% described themselves as ‘parent/carers’ with most (60%) having children under the age of 5. Over three-quarters (79%) were based in Windsor or Maidenhead towns with 42% of respondents declaring a household income of £30,000 or less which is lower than the median annual UK salary of £30,350. 27% declared a household income of over £60,000 a year.

83% of responders confirmed that they had accessed one of the available family services within the last 12 months. Children's centres and parenting support services were the most regularly accessed with 48% saying they accessed these at least once a week. The sites where responders had accessed these services from was mixed, but Riverside Children's Centre in Maidenhead appeared to be the most well-used with almost a third (32%) having attended a session there within the last year.

When respondents were asked to state the maximum amount they would be willing to pay to attend a children's centre or youth centre session, the majority (37%) said they would be willing to spend up to £3. Over a quarter (28%) said they would be willing to spend up to £1.50 and 15% said up to a maximum of £5.00. 20% stated that they would not want to pay any sum to attend a session.

As part of the consultation, respondents were shown the proposed aims for its early help services and were asked whether they agreed. 36% confirmed that they did agree with the new Family Hub proposals set out, while 32% said they disagreed. 32% also stated that they were neutral or did not know.

Other suggestions for a remodelled delivery of services were invited. The key themes to emerge were:

- How highly- regarded the early help services are and how many families consider them invaluable and rate the existing services delivered.
- The need to work more closely with existing charities and volunteer groups and key partners such as local schools.
- The importance of maintaining the focus on vulnerable groups including children and young people with disabilities; Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) support groups; those with mental health issues.
- The need to ensure all families are able to access provision and that services are delivered in an accessible way and publicised accordingly.
- The need to clearly define who services will be targeted at.
- Some willingness to accept charges for sessions if that means services can continue.
- Providing more of an offer for teenagers, particularly during school holidays.

When asked to prioritise areas where support should be targeted, the most common answer amongst respondents was 'one-to-one support for families in crisis'. 'Positive parenting groups for parents to help manage their children's behaviour' and 'emotional wellbeing support for new parents' made up the top three. 'Drop-in youth groups in the community' was considered the least priority.

There was a noticeably low response from users of the youth centres. Only 12% of responders said they had accessed a youth service session in the past year and only 8% said they used them on a weekly basis. The most well-attended youth centre by participating responders was Windsor Youth Club.

Respondents were asked to list what other groups or sessions in the community they and their families attended. The below lists a summary of their answers and whether we would expect them to continue if we were to implement the preferred model.

Alternative groups/ sessions attended	Would this be retained with the preferred model?
National Childbirth Trust (NCT) sessions.	Yes.
Baby sensory, baby yoga, baby massage.	Yes.
Church sessions, e.g. baby, toddler and youth groups.	Yes.
Library sessions, e.g. rhyme time, story time and sing-a-longs.	Yes.
Scouts, guides, cubs, beavers, brownies and rainbows.	Yes.
Army, sea and air cadets.	Yes.
Music groups, e.g. Bilinguasing, Diddy Disco, Moo Music, Teddies Music.	Yes.
Sports clubs, e.g. Maidenhead United, Puddleducks swimming, Phoenix Gym.	Yes.
Hartbeeps.	Yes.
Birth matters.	Yes.
Norden Farm.	Yes.

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Tumbletots.

Yes.

Focus Group Sessions

Six public consultation meetings were held at various venues and at different times of the week and day to maximise accessibility. Social media, print media and poster campaigns were undertaken to advise service users, stakeholders and residents to partake in the survey or attend a public meeting.

The key themes to emerge can be summarised in terms of concerns and priorities. The tables below set out the concerns and priorities and our response to them.

Concerns:

Concerns	Response
Reduction of universal services will make early help difficult if families only get support when they are already having issues.	<p>The universal health visiting service will continue in its entirety i.e. five mandated contacts in the first three years via the Health Child Programme so issues can be identified within all families. Universal awareness raising sessions will continue to be delivered in schools to all pupils.</p> <p>There are robust links with schools and other voluntary agencies who already refer families in to early help services.</p>
Danger of labelling or stigmatising families if all have a targeted service.	<p>All families will continue to access the Health Child Programme via the Family Hubs not just those that are targeted.</p> <p>In addition, the new preferred model would be based on a progressive universal service- this means that everyone gets some level of service but the more service you need, the more you get.</p>

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Most children's centres groups are well attended, meaning that families value service.	The proposals to retain existing children's centres as part of the Family Hub model have been made based on a range of criteria including those that are well-used.
Potential loss of outdoor education and natural environment experiences i.e. Nature Play.	Nature Play at the current Riverside Children's Centre would continue as a targeted service.
Risk of isolation for families/ Increased risk of postnatal depression due to isolation.	The universal health visiting service will identify families new to the area or at risk of isolation and refer to targeted services. One of the mandated health visiting contacts is completed at six to eight weeks where every mother is screened for postnatal illness.
Reduction of buildings-decrease accessibility for those unable to drive/ Poor public transport in the area.	One of the criteria for retaining buildings is that they are close to public transport i.e. train stations. However services will be delivered from a range of venues and not just these fixed buildings. In addition, the preferred model would continue to allow families who need a service to receive it at home.
Stay and Play sessions offer informal support to parents.	We would maintain links with local community groups with the aim of ensuring that the informal support to parents would continue to be offered i.e. for community playgroups seeking support about parenting, we would offer information and advice.
Reduction in funding for voluntary sector i.e. Family Friends.	We would maintain close connections to the voluntary sector to ensure maximum use of limited resources.
Non Council play sessions or music groups can be expensive.	We would support targeted families to access play sessions or music groups if necessary.
Waiting times for CAMHS and Wellbeing services.	We would continue to work closely with CAMHS transformation work in order to reduce wait times. We would promote the new 'Getting Help Team' focused on early intervention for

	emerging mental health needs and maintain the Esteem Groups currently run by the youth service.
Losing well trained and experienced staff.	Although there would be a reduction in staffing, the new model would aim to retain the experience, talent and skills of the existing workforce.
Provision for army families.	The provision for army families would be retained.

Priorities:

Priorities	Response
Maintain health visitor clinics in Children's Centres including breastfeeding support.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Keep supporting children, young people or families most in need with home visits on a one to one basis.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Link with the voluntary sector and keep a central directory of all community groups, i.e. those run from churches, or by parents.	This would be retained in the preferred model and we would look to further develop the directory of local resources to share with families.
Keep targeted groups, i.e. Freedom, Esteem.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Continue supporting children with additional needs.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
More support for children excluded from school or at risk of exclusion.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Keep parenting courses going.	We would offer targeted families parenting courses as part of the new preferred model.
Use more volunteers.	We would continue to use volunteers and aim to strengthen links further with the community

	and voluntary sector.
Keep links with the rest of children’s social care.	The existing strong links with children’s social care would be maintained in the preferred model.
Keep mental health and wellbeing support, i.e. Emotional first aid for parents.	This would be retained in the preferred model.
Consider families who live in rural areas with limited public transport.	Targeted outreach services would be available if needed. There would be potential to do pop up drop in groups if need was identified.
Keep access to early learning opportunities.	We would link to other locally delivered early learning opportunities and continue to target children entitled to two and three year old funding to ensure they are able to access these opportunities. Home learning outreach would continue to be offered through our parents as first teachers to families depending on need.
Consider BAME groups.	We would prioritise the support we currently provide to BAME groups through outreach i.e. parenting groups in the mosque.

The findings from the consultation were used to shape the preferred model which is being presented to Cabinet on 25 June 2020. Furthermore, these findings and the findings from the second stage of consultation (if approved), would be used to finalise the whole of the model to ensure it reflects public opinion as far as is possible.

Second stage of public consultation

The first stage of the consultation aimed to get views on the strategic aims of the preferred Family Hub model. Further consultation is required about the detailed implementation of the model where there would be change to the current services of a specific Children’s Centre. To ensure that the overall impact of the changes across the it is being proposed to carry out a second stage of public consultation.

We are seeking advice and guidance from a number of sources to ensure our approach to the second stage of consultation is robust and comprehensive. This has included:

- commissioning an early years and consultation expert from an external consultancy company to provide advice and guidance on the proposed consultation approach and methodology.
- seeking advice from other external consultation experts i.e. previous Non-Executive Independent Director on the Achieving for Children Board provided advice based on experience of delivering public consultation as part of an education consultancy.
- reviewing consultation approaches from other local authorities undertaking similar exercise to identify best practice. This includes the Buckinghamshire County Council consultation relating to the transformation of early help services which was subject to Judicial Review but found to be lawful.
- discussions with colleagues in Achieving for Children operational area 1 who have undertaken a similar exercise about lessons learned, best approaches to consultation i.e. engaging hard to reach families, including critical friend challenge of our proposed approach.
- review of the consultation approach by consultation experts in Achieving for Children operational area 1.
- review of consultation approach and methodology by RBWM Communications Team and support will be given for publicising the consultation when live.

The consultation itself is being planned (subject to agreement to consult from Cabinet) and the suggested consultation methodology is set out below. It takes into account the possible impact on the consultation of the current COVID-19 situation and the summer holiday period.

Method	Detail
Online questionnaire for eight weeks	Questionnaire setting out the background detail to the consultation; the proposals for the centres; and questions about centre usage and their views on the proposed action for each centre.
AfCInfo internet page	Specific page set up for the consultation- this will include a link to the questionnaire; background information on the proposals; FAQs; details of how to request the questionnaire in paper format.
Social media	AfC and RBWM websites and social media accounts to publicise the consultation with a link to the questionnaire.

Dedicated inbox for questions, queries or comments	A dedicated inbox (familyhubs@achievingforchildren.org.uk) has been requested. Residents will be asked to send any questions or queries about the consultation here. This will be used to send out any invites to the virtual drop in sessions.
Virtual drop in sessions	Four virtual drop in sessions (1 hour) to be arranged. Dates to be advertised on the AfCInfo page- interested parties to email the inbox to request an invite.
Direct email to registered children's centre users who have provided an email address	Registered children's centre users will be emailed directly with a link to the questionnaire to ask them to participate.
Direct email to voluntary and community sector organisations and any other relevant groups	Direct emails will be sent to voluntary and community sector organisations and other relevant groups in the local area to ask for their help in distributing the link to the questionnaire and asking them to complete it themselves. This will include parent groups and established support groups for traditionally hard to reach groups including those from the BAME community and children, young people and families with special educational needs and disabilities.
Awareness raising sessions with key stakeholder groups	Informing key stakeholder groups i.e. Parents and Carers in Partnership for Windsor and Maidenhead (PaCiP); Asian Women's Group; other groups that support families that could be considered vulnerable.
Universal health clinics	Universal health clinics are due to recommence in the second week in June 2020. Health visitors will be asked to encourage attendees to complete the questionnaire.

If the second stage of consultation is approved, the findings would be used to shape the final preferred model which would be subject to decision at Cabinet in October 2020.

Summary of findings

The draft assessment has identified that overall the preferred Family Hub model would have a positive impact across the protected characteristic groups as it would aim to:

- improve accessibility for those most in need including those who are traditionally considered hard to reach including families with a child or parent with a disability; and children, young people and families from a BAME background.
- provide opportunities for disadvantaged children, young people and families to access provision that will contribute to increasing their equality of opportunity by targeting services at those who most need support; and
- increase the engagement of children, young people and families who do not usually participate in the provision services by delivering targeted sessions via outreach, either in the community or in the home.

The findings from the first stage of consultation show that respondents support this approach, with the majority in favour of prioritising support for families in crisis and wanting to ensure there is continued focus on vulnerable groups including: children and young people with disabilities; Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) support groups; and those with mental health issues. The final model would be shaped by both the first and second stage of consultation (subject to approval for the second stage of consultation). This should help ensure it reflects the priorities of the local community.

It must be noted however that the assessment does acknowledge that there would be a negative impact on those users of universal provision delivered through children's centres services and the youth service. The intention would be to mitigate this through actions such as:

- Providing more flexible services through outreach at alternative venues in the community.
- Working more closely with community and voluntary sector groups to identify any groups that could deliver sessions to replace the reduced universal activities, with support from Achieving for Children staff.
- Signposting young people or families who may no longer be able to access universal services to alternative providers such as those identified in the first stage of the consultation e.g. signposting users of Old Windsor Children's Centre to Old Windsor's 'Tiddlers and Toddlers' playgroup.

In addition, all families would continue to receive some level of service as universal health provision would remain unchanged. This would mean that any families in need of targeted support should be identified at the earliest opportunity and given the help they need as soon as possible.

ACTION PLANNING

What consultation have you undertaken with stakeholders or critical friends about the key findings? Include any identified data gaps.

<i>Issue identified</i>	<i>Planned action</i>	<i>Lead officer</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
Lack of data relating to protected characteristics of users available to report on.	Improve data collection and reporting in relation to the protected characteristics for users of Family Hubs should the model be implemented.	Rachael Park- Davies, Community Services Manager	From the implementation of the Family Hub model, if approved.

PUBLISHING THE COMPLETED ANALYSIS

Completed Date:	June 2020
Lead Officer:	Henry Kilpin
Signed off by (Director level):	Lin Ferguson, Director of Children’s Social Care

Please send your completed EIA to henry.kilpin@achievingforchildren.org.uk or edwina.gregory@achievingforchildren.org.uk for publication.

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Agenda Item 9

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