

NOTICE OF MEETING

CABINET

will meet on

Thursday 26 January 2023

at 7.00 pm

in the

Grey Room - York House, Windsor and on [RBWM YouTube](#)

To: Members of Cabinet: Councillors:

Andrew Johnson, Leader of the Council; Growth & Opportunity (Chairman)

Stuart Carroll, Deputy Chairman of Cabinet; Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation (Vice-Chairman)

David Cannon, Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection

David Coppinger, Adult Social Care & Maidenhead

Samantha Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council; Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor

Phil Haseler, Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport

David Hilton, Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot

Donna Stimson, Climate Action & Sustainability

Ross McWilliams, Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure

Gurpreet Bhangra, Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside

Issued: Wednesday 18 January 2023

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 **Kirsty Hunt** kirsty.hunt@rbwm.gov.uk

Recording of Meetings – In line with the council's commitment to transparency the Part I (public) section of the 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. If you have any questions regarding the council's policy, please speak to Democratic Services or Legal representative at the meeting.

AGENDA

Part I

<u>Item</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Page no</u>
1.	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> To receive any apologies for absence	
2.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> To receive any declarations of interest	5 - 6
3.	<u>Minutes</u> To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2022.	7 - 18
4.	<u>Appointments</u> To consider any appointments as appropriate.	
5.	<u>Forward Plan</u> To consider the Forward Plan for the period February – May 2023.	19 - 32

Cabinet Members' Reports

6.	<u>Finance Update</u> Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot This report details the forecast outturn against budget for the 2022/23 financial year as at the end of November (Month 8). It includes the revenue and capital budgets along with the forecast financial reserve position at year end.	33 - 68
7.	<u>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</u> Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot To consider the outcome of the consultation into the proposed amendments to the Council Tax Reduction scheme for 2023/24.	69 - 160
8.	<u>Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue and north of Woodlands Business Park, Maidenhead Stakeholder Masterplan Document</u> Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport To explain the new Borough Local Plan requirement for the preparation of Stakeholder Masterplan Documents (SMD) and summarise the process and outcomes specifically in relation to the Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue.	161 - 282

9.	<u>Windsor Castle Hill Public Realm Improvement</u>	283 - 292
	Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport	
	To confirm the procurement of Volker Highway, current highway maintenance contractor, to be the delivery agent for the Thames Valley LEP majority funded project.	
10.	<u>Corporate Plan Review and Refresh</u>	293 - 406
	Growth & Opportunity	
	To consider:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a Progress Report providing an overview of key achievements and activities in Year one of the Corporate Plan (November 2021 – November 2022) • a set of proposed amendments to the Corporate Plan to ensure that it remains appropriate and responsive to our changing operating context. • a revised set of equality objectives for the council, designed to mutually reinforce the Corporate Plan 	
11.	<u>Corporate Peer Challenge - Progress Review</u>	407 - 428
	Growth & Opportunity	
	To consider the peer's reflections on any new opportunities or challenges since the peer team were 'on-site' including any further support needs and to discuss any early impact or learning from the progress made to date.	

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MEMBERS' GUIDE TO DECLARING INTERESTS AT 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 Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) or Other Registerable 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.

Any Member with concerns about the nature of their interest should consult the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

Non-participation in case of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your DPIs (summary below, further details set out in Table 1 of the Members' Code of Conduct) you must disclose the interest, **not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room** unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted by the Monitoring Officer in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a DPI.

Where you have a DPI on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet Member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

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 (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her 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 council.*
- *Any licence to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer.*
- *Any tenancy where the landlord is the council, and the tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest in the securities of.*
- *Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where:*
 - a) *that body has a place of business or land in the area of the council, 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.

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (summary below and as set out in Table 2 of the Members Code of Conduct), you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.** If it is a 'sensitive interest' (as agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer), you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Other Registerable Interests:

- a) any unpaid directorships
 - b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
 - c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)
- of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

Disclosure of Non- Registerable Interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a DPI) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, or a body included under Other Registerable Interests in Table 2 you must disclose the interest. **You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting** but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer) you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –

- a. your own financial interest or well-being;
- b. a financial interest or well-being of a friend, relative, close associate; or
- c. a financial interest or well-being of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in Table 2 (as set out above and in the Members' code of Conduct)

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied.

Where a matter (referred to in the paragraph above) **affects** the financial interest or well-being:

- a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise **must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation**. If it is a 'sensitive interest' (agreed in advance by the Monitoring Officer, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Other declarations

Members may wish to declare at the beginning of the meeting any other information they feel should be in the public domain in relation to an item on the agenda; such Member statements will be included in the minutes for transparency.

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

CABINET

THURSDAY 15 DECEMBER 2022

Present:

Councillors Andrew Johnson (Leader of the Council; Growth & Opportunity) (Chairman), Stuart Carroll (Deputy Chairman of Cabinet; Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation) (Vice-Chairman), Samantha Rayner (Deputy Leader of the Council; Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor), Phil Haseler (Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport), David Hilton (Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot), Donna Stimson (Climate Action & Sustainability), Ross McWilliams (Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure) and Gurpreet Bhangra (Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside)

Also in attendance virtually:

Councillors Brar, Price, Sharpe and Tisi

Officers present: Tony Reeves, Andrew Durrant, Adele Taylor, Kevin McDaniel and Karen Shepherd

Officers in attendance virtually: Emma Duncan, Rebecca Hatch, Adrien Waite, Lin Ferguson, Becky Anderson, Ian Manktelow, Jason Mills, Ian Motuel and James Thorpe

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cannon and Coppinger.

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Rayner stated that Councillor Johnson would be presenting the report on the Platinum Jubilee Drinking Fountain as she felt uncomfortable doing so, given she had previously been a member of the Platinum Jubilee Committee. She left the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

Minutes

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2022 be approved.

Appointments

In accordance with Paragraph 16, Part 8E of the council constitution, the Chairman of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel had agreed that the decision to appoint a council representative to the outside body 'Frimley Council of Governors' could be taken at Cabinet on 15 December 2022, on the basis that it was not reasonable to defer the decision, to ensure the vacant position for Berkshire authorities was filled as soon as possible.

Cabinet considered two nominees: Councillor Stimson (nominated by Councillor Johnson) and Councillor Carole Da Costa (nominated by Councillor Wisdom Da Costa).

Members noted that Frimley Health Hospitals Foundation Trust had advised that they required an RBWM representative to be appointed to their Council of Governors. The Berkshire council seat on this body rotated between each Berkshire authority. And it was now RBWM's turn; the three-year term would end in November 2025. Councillor Johnson stated that it was important that the council took its opportunity to shape the health agenda. He proposed that Councillor Donna Stimson be appointed; the proposal was seconded by Councillor Rayner.

Councillor Johnson thanked Councillor Carole Da Costa for putting forward her expression of interest for the position.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that Councillor Donna Stimson be appointed as the council representative on the Frimley Council of Governors.

Forward Plan

Cabinet noted the Forward Plan for the next four months including the following additional changes:

- A new item 'Corporate Peer Challenge - Progress Review' would be considered by Cabinet in January 2023
- Disabled Facilities Grant Policy was delayed due to further work needing to be undertaken so this would be considered by Cabinet in February 2023
- Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Implementation Plan was delayed due to postponed launch of consultation in order to respond to requests made at Overview & Scrutiny Committee so this would be considered by Cabinet in February 2023
- The Housing Allocations Policy report was delayed due to further work needing to be undertaken so this would be considered by Cabinet in March 2023
- 2023/24 School Condition Works Programme was delayed in order to provide time to complete more detailed investigations and surveys at schools to allow for prioritisation of schemes so this would be considered by Cabinet in March 2023
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Capital Strategy was delayed as the start of the consultation had been delayed until January 2023, meaning that officers would not be able to report the outcome until the Cabinet meeting in March 2023
- Broadband Digital Lines was delayed due to a slight delay in commencing the procurement process so this would be considered by Cabinet in April 2023

Councillor Sharpe asked when the SPD for Ascot Redevelopment would come to Cabinet. The Executive Director of Place explained that the SPD was being worked on for 2023 but it was not yet on the Forward Plan as exact and defined timescales had not been agreed.

Biodiversity Action Plan

Cabinet considered adoption of the Biodiversity Action Plan as part of the Council's Environment and Climate Strategy.

Councillor Stimson, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Sustainability presented the Plan which had been produced following a thorough consultation. The Plan was the key pillar of the natural environment theme of the Environment and Climate Strategy. It sought to protect and enhance the natural environment, green towns and urban areas and raise awareness. Groups involved in the consultation included The Wilds groups and the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) and latterly the Rural Forum.

The headline aim of the plan was to provide 30% of land in the borough as a space for nature by 2030. Currently the figure was 23%. There were three key items for action:

- Better data
- Stronger partnerships
- Direct action to improve biodiversity.

It was proposed by Councillor Stimson and seconded by Councillor Rayner.

Councillor Rayner commented that residents appreciated living in such a green and beautiful borough. The Plan would help the council engage better and make the most of opportunities in the borough. As Chairman of the Rural Forum she was grateful that the farming community was listened to.

Cabinet was addressed by Fiona Hewer, trustee of Wild Maidenhead. The Wilds groups welcomed the involvement of farmers and landowners as they were essential to taking the Plan forward. Biodiversity was in severe decline and action was needed to reverse this. The overall target was 30%; half of this would come from the SSSI and the local wildlife sites. As the Plan correctly recorded a lot of these sites were not in favourable conditions for wildlife although they had been designated with favourable status. Therefore more conservation was needed. The land was not owned by the council, but the plan explained that engagement with landowners was important. Fiona Hewer asked what resources had been put in place to ensure improvements to designated sites would be delivered and who in the council was responsible for tracking progress. She also asked which officers and councillors were responsible for the actions where the council was listed as directly responsible for, and for overall reporting and monitoring of all objectives and targets.

The Plan also stated that the land was 7% short of the target; this equated to 1400 hectares. Fiona Hewer asked what the council's strategy was for identifying those sites and managing wildlife. The Plan stated that lead partners would meet and update actions on an annual basis and meet to review progress every 6 months. She asked when the first meeting would take place and who would organise it.

Councillor Stimson responded that the officer environment team had expanded significantly, including four based at the Braywick Nature Reserve. There were five times the resources now. More time could be spent educating young people on the issues and allowed the council to find new sites and to bid more for opportunities. The Climate Partnership was helping to develop new relationships.

It was anticipated that the first meeting would be before summer 2023. Battlemead now have sheep as well as cattle, dramatically increasing biodiversity. She hoped that behaviour would be emulated elsewhere. With the King in residence the organic content of the Great Park had improved.

James Thorpe, Service Lead Sustainability and Climate Infrastructure, explained that responsibility for the actions in the plan sat with his team and in particular the Natural Environment Manager. Councillor Stimson would be the relevant Lead Member. The Plan included habitat action plans to meet the 30% target. Once data was obtained, a strategy for intervention could be implemented.

Councillor Bhangra thanked both the lead member and the community groups involved.

Councillor Hilton commented that many groups had come together including one in Ascot that was trying to change streams to improve diversity. Individuals gave up their time to support the projects. He thanked all the Wild groups for their work.

Councillor Johnson acknowledged that it had taken time for the Plan to come before Cabinet, but commented that it was important to get it right. He thanked all those closely involved in the process.

Councillor Price commented that there were two verge wildings in her urban ward. She asked how areas would be prioritised as most residents lived in urban areas in the borough. Councillor Stimson commented that early on there would be a first meeting which would start

to look at the priorities. Urban areas were important. One factor would be volunteer availability.

Councillor Brar was invited to speak but was unable to do so due to technical issues.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that

- i) the report be noted; and**
- ii) the Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 be approved.**

Platinum Jubilee Drinking Fountain 2022

Cabinet considered a support request from The Windsor Platinum Jubilee Committee to commission the monument, align future responsibility & maintenance with other RBWM fountain assets once installed and a capital contribution towards the final costs on completion.

Councillor Rayner left the room for the duration of the debate and voting on the item.

Proposed by Councillor Johnson he explained that the committee has raised over £224k to fund design, manufacture and installation of the fountain. The Windsor Platinum Jubilee Committee required support from RBWM to take on the future responsibility of the monument once installed and a contribution towards the final costs on completion. The fountain would be fully accessible to all and aligned with the council's commitment to climate change and improving the natural environment, as it would provide clean drinking water and the reduction of single use plastics.

Councillor Bhangra seconded the proposal stating that it was a wonderful way to mark the Platinum Jubilee with a design reflecting existing monuments which would be for residents of Windsor and visitors to enjoy.

Councillor Hilton asked the rest of Cabinet to join him in formally thanking The Windsor Platinum Jubilee Committee for their work raising funds for this feature.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- i) the report be noted;**
- ii) authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Place Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council to approve support to assist in commissioning the Platinum Jubilee Drinking Fountain;**
- iii) RBWM be approved to take on responsibility for the fountain once completed; and**
- iv) a contribution to the fountain of up to £40,000 be approved to cover VAT contributions to be funded through virements from underspends within the council's capital programme.**

Demand for School Places

Cabinet considered the projections of demand for school places within the borough, the requirements for a new primary school in South East Maidenhead and the measures required to manage capacity in Windsor first schools.

Councillor Carroll, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation moved the proposals. He explained that the recommendations would help the borough achieve its corporate objective of 'Thriving Communities' by making it easier for

children and young people to achieve their ambitions and fulfil their potential. The report sets out the latest projections of demand for school places in the Royal Borough and analysis of demand for school places by each tier of schooling. The projections continued to suggest that a new primary school may be needed in South East Maidenhead by September 2025, but further mainstream school places were not likely to be needed anywhere else in that period. In Windsor, the level of surplus places at Reception looked set to increase and action may be required to temporarily reduce capacity. Appendix A of the report summarised the progress on the expansion programme with the project to expand Windsor Girls School underway. Medium term projections were reported annually to the Department for Education taking into account new demographics and change of preferable choice. There was a level of uncertainty in those projections and it was important to consider confidence in schools.

The proposals were seconded by Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council.

Kevin McDaniel, Executive Director of People Services explained that funding for schools directly related to the numbers on roll in order to fund management of the estate, employ staff and improve provision, however a fall in numbers made this even more challenging. It was noted some immediate actions were required as propose din the report but this was a longer term issue for the borough to consider.

Gavin Henderson, CEO of the Windsor Learning Partnership Academy Trust attended in person to address the meeting. He thanked the Council for their support expanding Windsor Girls School and advised that the Department for Education had recently approved the Published Admission Number for the school. He wanted to speak to the meeting regarding the growing pupil number problem as this was already affecting operational viability for some First schools. He explained that a 5% reduction on numbers would see a financial difficulty but the projects were three of four times that. He considered that there was a serious risk management issue if no school wished to adjust their Publish Admission Number. He asked the Council to consider some mid and long term solutions to help strengthen the financial viability of schools. He advised that the Windsor Learning Partnership believed the three tier system was increasing the issues as it increased the work required for transitions and Special Education Needs. He asked the Council to consider the changing pupil numbers as an opportunity to look at restructuring and improving the system in the borough by working with all school leaders and consulting the Windsor community.

The Executive Director of People Services agreed that the idea of getting education establishments together to co-design a plan for the future was a positive way forward and Councillor Carroll announced he would be happy to sponsor that proposal.

Councillor Rayner thanked Mr Henderson for attending and appreciate challenged being faced by education providers. She reflected that 97% of borough's school were good to outstanding and report showed progress. She also thanked all schools in the borough for the series of outstanding events during the Platinum Jubilee.

In response to Councillor Haseler's query the Executive Director of People Services confirmed that the report took into account the development being undertaken as well as that projected through the Local Plan.

In response to Councillor Price's concerns that significant disruption could potentially affect the borough's children in a move from a three to two tier system, the Executive Director of People Services agreed that any planned transition would put the children at the centre. He acknowledged that it would be a challenge as children were in the education system for 14 years.

Councillor Tisi echoed the comments that any consultation would need to be handled carefully and ensure that the right questions were asked so that it was clear that the initial consultation was about potential ideas.

Councillor Carroll concluded by thanking officers, teachers and support staff for the work they have done during the year, recognising it had been a challenging year in education due to a number of factors.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- i) the report be noted;**
- ii) the delegation of authority be confirmed to the Executive Director of People Services, in consultation with the Deputy Chairman of Cabinet, Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health and Transformation, to start the free school competition process for a new primary school at Chiltern Road, having regard for the target of 5% surplus places, both locally and across Maidenhead as a whole; and**
- iii) requests that measures be taken to reduce the likelihood of excessive surplus places in Windsor first schools.**

Microsoft Licensing Contract Renewal

Cabinet considered the report delegating authority to award the Microsoft Licencing Agreement Contract on conclusion of the aggregated tender process.

Councillor Rayner, Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor proposed the recommendations. She explained that the consideration to award the Microsoft Licencing Agreement Contract would be made on conclusion of the tender process being run by Crown Commercial Services via their Technology Products and Associated Services Framework, based upon a three-year contract. The current contract with the Council's Microsoft Partner, Bytes Software Services and was due to terminate on 31 March 2023. Microsoft licenses could only be procured through accredited Microsoft Partners, there was no direct route to Microsoft. The requirements scoped for the aggregated tender took into account the changes leveraged by the Modern Workplace and the Teams Telephony project supporting the IT Services Strategy. It was recognised that the business continuity of the Council relied upon its ICT infrastructure.

Councillor Carroll seconded the proposals stating that it was important that the Council stayed ahead of technology and digital security requirements.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that

- i) the report be noted; and**
- ii) authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Resources and Section 151 officer in consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor to award the new Microsoft Licensing Contract to the successful tenderer following the conclusion of Crown Commercial Services Aggregated Tender.**

South West Maidenhead Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document

Cabinet considered adoption of the South West Maidenhead Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transport explained that the Borough Local Plan adopted in February 2022 after a rigorous and lengthy examination by an Independent Inspector, identified the South West Maidenhead area for major housing and employment development. The adoption of the SPD would help coordinate

development across the area, providing more detail to supplement the policies and proposals in the adopted Local Plan. It would be an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Policy QP1b of the Borough Local Plan indicated that a Development Framework SPD would be produced. The SPD provided the opportunity to ensure that development in the area came forward in a strategic and comprehensive manner. It set design principles to ensure coordinated and high quality development, outlined other key requirements and principles for development, and set out the infrastructure requirements and how they could be delivered in a timely manner.

The South West Maidenhead Placemaking Area comprised three BLP allocated sites:

- Site AL13 – Desborough, Harvest Hill Road, South West Maidenhead – housing allocation for approximately 2,600 homes, two schools and a new local centre.
- Site AL14 – “The Triangle site” – allocated for industrial and warehousing development.
- Site AL15 – Braywick Park – allocated for mixed use strategic green infrastructure accommodating indoor and outdoor sports facilities, public park, special needs school and wildlife zone Policy.

QP1b stated that to ensure the development of the placemaking area as a whole came forward in a strategic and comprehensive manner, planning applications on individual land parcels should accord with the principles and requirements set out in the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The policy indicated that the SPD would be produced by the Council in partnership with the developers, landowners, key stakeholders and in consultation with the local community.

Councillor Haseler explained that Supplementary Planning Documents added further detail to policies in the development plan. They could be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues. They did not create new policy, they did not replace existing policy and they could not amend existing policy in the Borough Local Plan. An SPD was a material consideration in planning decisions but they did not form part of the development plan. In preparation of the SPD, early public engagement took place in the form of three online events together with the opportunity for everyone to submit written comments afterwards. There was extensive publicity about the events in advance including writing to nearly 1,000 homes in the vicinity of the main development sites, consulting an extensive list of people on the planning policy consultee database, holding a press briefing (with subsequent articles and publicity about the events in the local media), and regular use of social media to publicise the events. The draft SPD was published for a 6 week public consultation in July 2022, the Council again wrote to nearly 1,000 local residents and a wide range of consultees on the consultee database. Three staffed drop-in sessions were held, two at the Maidenhead Library and one at the Braywick Leisure Centre and an online event held via Microsoft Teams. About 90 written representations were received from residents and other stakeholders.

As expected, a wide range of comments were received. A Consultation Statement had been produced, summarising all engagement and consultation undertaken in the preparation of the SPD. It also summarised the responses received and provided a response to the issues raised. The changes made following consultation on the draft SPD were summarised at section 2.8 of the report.

Councillor Haseler explained the consequences of not adopting the SPD such as an uncoordinated approach to development across the area, a lack of coordination of key infrastructure provision with the risk that not all infrastructure was provided, or not provided for in a timely manner. It also risked the lack of joined up thinking in relation to key design principles across the area.

Councillor Haseler proposed the recommendations and Councillor Johnson seconded the proposals stating this was a critical piece of planning policy.

Councillor Hilton stated that the Supplementary Planning Document set out clearly how it would integrate and enhance the quality Maidenhead. He noted that the policy was promoting net zero carbon and taking a whole life carbon emissions approach would help the Council become carbon neutral.

Councillor McWilliams reiterated the importance of the site to resolve previous issues around the delivery of affordable housing and recognised the various targets set out within the document and the numbers of homes this equated to.

Councillor Johnson was pleased that the Supplementary Planning Document would ensure that local people would benefit from the affordable housing supply as well as from the significant infrastructure provision referred to.

In response to Councillor Stimson's query relating to the carbon calculation Councillor Haseler explained this was set out in section 6.7 of SPD itself as net zero carbon operational and that took into account whole life carbon and Council would therefore give weight to applications that considered this.

In response to Councillor Price's concerns that developers were not planning to build the affordable houses first Councillor Haseler stated that no applications had been received for the main site yet and therefore this would be dealt with as part of the planning process.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- i) the report be noted;**
- ii) the adoption of the South West Maidenhead Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document, as set out in Appendix B of the Cabinet report, be approved; and**
- iii) authority be delegated for minor changes to the Supplementary Planning Document to be made prior to publication to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transport.**

Review of Local Development Scheme

Cabinet considered approval of a new Local Development Scheme for the Royal Borough for the next three years to the end of 2025. This programme included work on the Traveller Local Plan.

Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport, proposed the recommendations and explained that every Local Planning Authority was required to prepare and maintain a document known as a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The document set out the timetable for the preparation of planning documents such as Local Plans, it did not include supplementary planning documents. The LDS was a three-year project plan for preparing planning documents, it was not a policy document itself. It provided information to the local community and stakeholders regarding planning documents that were being prepared by the Council and the timetable for when these documents would be produced. In particular, it set out the timetable for the review and update of the Council's Local Plans and outlined the dates when there would be formal opportunities to get involved with the plan making process. Approving the document which would ensure the Council had an up-to-date programme for future local plan work, in accordance with its legal requirement to do so. Local residents and others would then be aware of the expected future work programme.

He advised that if the LDS was not approved it would mean that communities and other stakeholders would not know what planning documents were proposed to be produced and the Council would not be in line with the regulations. The Borough Local Plan was adopted in

February 2022, the Minerals and Waste Plan in November 2022. Progress on the Traveller Local Plan had been slower than anticipated due to a number of factors, particularly the need to prioritise officer resources into taking the BLP through to adoption. However, a consultation on issues and options was undertaken in 2019 with a consultation statement published in 2020. The 2018 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment was updated in 2022 and this set out the need for pitches and plots up to 2036/37. National planning policy in the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites required that Councils identify a supply of deliverable and developable sites to meet the needs against locally set targets along with criteria-based policies to guide land supply allocations. Although the BLP included a criteria-based policy for the assessment of proposals for Gypsy & Traveller accommodation, it did not allocate any Gypsy & Traveller pitches or Travelling Showpeople plots. As such, it was necessary to produce a separate Local Plan to meet these needs and allocate new sites for these groups. Councillor Hasler concluded that the proposed timetable set out that the Traveller Local Plan would be submitted for examination by late Summer/early Autumn 2024 and, subject to a timely examination process, adopted by Summer 2025.

Councillor Johnson seconded the recommendations.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- i) the report be noted;**
- ii) the Local Development Scheme for 2023-2025 be approved for planning policy purposes and to publish it on the Council's website to take effect from 1 January 2023; and**
- iii) authority be delegated to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transport to make any minor non-material corrections to the Local Development Scheme as considered necessary ahead of publication.**

Housing Support Fund

Cabinet considered the Council's policy for allocating the Winter 2022-23 tranche of the Department for Work and Pensions Household Support Fund and the use of delegated authority to approve the allocation of the Fund, on the grounds of urgency, in order to support those most in need.

Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council advised the meeting that this fund was managed by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and RBWM's allocation of funding was £587,905 for the period covering 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Rebecca Hatch, Head of Strategy explained that the Council was working with nine different delivery partners and 60 applications had been received. The first tranche of payments had been authorised and they were expecting numbers of applications to increase.

Councillor Johnson explained that the Chief Executive had approved the allocation and initial distribution of funding on the grounds of in consultation with him and the Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny.

In response to Councillor Price's query as to whether all partners were working to the same definition of hardship the Head of Strategy explained that although they were, each partner was identifying residents in slightly different ways depending on the data they held and how they worked with residents to target different affected groups.

Councillor Tisi thanked officers improving the way the monies were distributed which was helping partners to focus on their core support activity. She also thanked everyone involved in distributing the support

The Executive Director for People advised that if the search terms 'RBWM household support fund' were used then a list of all the Council's partners and their contact details were available online.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- i) the report be noted; and**
- ii) use of Delegated Authority by the Chief Executive be noted, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance and Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny, to approve the allocation and initial distribution of funding on the grounds of urgency.**

Award of Contract for Case Management System

Cabinet considered the joint paper relating to the procurement and tendering outcome for the Council's Case Management System.

Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport, proposed the recommendations and explained that the report summarised the procurement and tendering outcome of a tender for a cloud based Case Management System to support services carried out by approximately 130 users within Planning, Environmental Health, Housing & Trading Standards; Licensing; Highways and the Local Land & Property Gazetteer custodian. This exercise had been undertaken because the current contract was due to end in March 2024. It recommended that a new contract be awarded to the winning bidder (Bidder A) whose bid had been considered as the most economically advantageous on the basis of the technical and financial evaluation undertaken. The new contract incorporated a specification that ensured continued service provision that would support the Council's transformation agenda, as well as lead to improved customer experience and more efficient ways of working. If the new contract was not awarded, the Council would be in breach of the Public Procurement Regulations (PCR 2015) as the Council would be out of contract and would not benefit from the proposed enhancements and transformation. Additionally, the Council would be unable to efficiently deliver statutory functions in a timely manner.

The response to the market engagement indicated, that based on the current market, the Authority should be moving from an on premise to a more up to date 'cloud' based, hosted option. This also aligned with the Council's IT preference of 'Cloud First' hosted solutions and, although the transition to this model would represent a significant change for the authority, it was anticipated that the benefits and associated efficiencies in ways of working would outweigh any investment required. Additionally, the Council had follow-up conversations with other authorities who had moved to a hosted model, and they confirmed it brings significant benefits. Procurement and legal officers had been involved in the process and their advice had been followed. Both procurement and legal colleagues had contributed to the procurement process and can confirm that advice has been provided to ensure that the exercise was fully compliant.

Councillor Rayner seconded the proposals explaining that the cross council report had seen ICT, highways and transport teams come together to agree the iCloud system to replace the iDox system. She explained that it was proposed to reduce the annual maintenance cost and allow the Council to transform services going forward.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that:

- i) the report be noted;**
- ii) the award of the case management system contract to the Bidder A on the basis of a 4 year contract, with the option to extend for a further 4 years in 1**

year periods be approved. The contract was due to commence in January 2023 with go-live in March 2024 and its value is detailed in Appendix A of the cabinet report which was Part II by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; and

- iii) delegated authority be approved to the relevant Director to extend the contract beyond the initial 4 years, on a yearly basis, up to the maximum contract period of 8 years.

Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)

Councillor McWilliams, Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure advised the meeting that due to the extreme cold temperatures the Council's Severe weather emergency protocol (SWEP) had been enacted. He advised that any person who was sleeping rough in the borough could receive support and the website had further details and emergency out of hours contact numbers for colleagues and residents to report anyone requiring assistance.

Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2012 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 16 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).**

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 8.34 pm

CHAIR.....

DATE.....

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FORWARD PLAN OF CABINET DECISIONS

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. Email: democratic.services@rbwm.gov.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)
<p>Budget 2023/24</p> <p>6</p>	Open -	To approve the budget to recommend to full Council	Yes	Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot (Councillor David Hilton)	Adele Taylor, Andrew Vallance	External consultation	Cabinet 9 Feb 2023	Council 21 Feb 2023
Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Implementation Plan	Open -	Presents a plan for scaling up electric vehicle chargepoint provision in the borough, to keep ahead of growing consumer demand for electric vehicles and to help bring down carbon emissions. This final plan reflects the feedback from a public consultation. The report seeks approval for the	Yes	Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport (Councillor Phil Haseler)	Chris Joyce	Public consultation	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	

Agenda Item 5

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)
		policies in the plan to be adopted, and the actions implemented.						
20 Disabled Facilities Grant Policy	Open -	Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) provide funding to improve accessibility and enable people to remain living independently in their own homes. This policy will set out the mandatory legal framework for DFGs, and how the Council intends to use its powers under the RRO to provide interventions to promote independent living and wellbeing.	No	Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection (Councillor David Cannon), Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure (Councillor Ross McWilliams)	Emma Congerton, Tracy Hendren	Formal consultation with all partner agencies	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	
Determination of admission arrangements	Open -	To approve amended admission arrangements	No	Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot (Councillor David Hilton)	Kevin McDaniel	External consultation	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	
A Vision for Windsor	Open -	A review of current	Yes	Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet	Andrew Durrant	Public engagement	Cabinet 23 Feb	

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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)
21		progress featuring end stage summary of vision statement engagement process. Potential options and recommendations for next steps will be presented and approval sought to proceed to next stage.		Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor (Councillor Samantha Rayner)		through several workshops, drop-in sessions and public survey	2023	
Achieving for Children Annual Reserved Ownership Decisions	Open -	As a joint owner of Achieving for Children CIC the Royal Borough is responsible for agreeing the 2023/24 budget for Achieving for Children, the refresh of the Business Plan, the 2023/24 Treasury Plan and a number of procurement decisions.	Yes	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation (Councillor Stuart Carroll)	Kevin McDaniel	Discussions with key councillors, officers and budget consultation	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	
Building Height and Tall Buildings Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Open -	There is a requirement within the adopted Borough Local	Yes	Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport (Councillor Phil Haseler)	Andrew Durrant, Adrien Waite	Internal process	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	

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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)
22		Plan for the preparation of a new Building Height and Tall Building Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to support Policy QP3a. This report seeks approval for the adoption of the draft Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD.						
Datchet Neighbourhood Plan Referendum	Open -	This report seeks approval from Cabinet to delegate authority to the Head of Planning in consultation with the Portfolio holder to allow the Datchet Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum at the earliest practicable opportunity.	No	Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport (Councillor Phil Haseler)	Andrew Durrant, Ian Motuel, Adrien Waite	Internal process	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	
Award of Contract for Adult Social Care Case	Fully exempt - 3	Report to Cabinet requesting	Yes	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for	Kevin McDaniel	Internal	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	

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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)
Management system		approval to award contract for the supply of a case management system		Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation (Councillor Stuart Carroll)				
Award of RBWM Leisure Management Contract 23	Fully exempt - 3	To consider the appointment of the approved bidder in the re-tendering of the Borough's Leisure Management Contract for the next contract period, which is a 12 + 5 year term commencing with effect from 1 August 2023.	Yes	Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure (Councillor Ross McWilliams)	Andrew Durrant, Alysse Strachan	Internal process	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	
Broadway Car Park - Nicholson Quarter Development update report	Fully exempt - 3	To provide an update to Cabinet on the Council's land Interest in the Nicholson Quarter and the associated development obligations.	No	Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot (Councillor David Hilton)	Adele Taylor	Internal process	Cabinet 23 Feb 2023	
2023/24 School Condition Works Programme	Open -	This report proposes the schemes to be funded in 2023/24 using the School	No	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, &	Kevin McDaniel	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Mar 2023	

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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)
		Condition Allocation. This funding is used to maintain the sites and buildings of community and voluntary controlled schools.		Transformation (Councillor Stuart Carroll)				
24 Allocations Policy	Open -	The allocation policy sets out our priorities for how social rented housing in The Royal Borough will be allocated, and the guidelines which determine entitlement and eligibility to that housing for people living in the borough. It also explains what help people can expect from us in meeting their housing needs and sets out the system and processes by which we make nominations for housing owned and managed by our partner	No	Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure (Councillor Ross McWilliams)	Tracy Hendren	Formal consultation with all partner agencies	Cabinet 30 Mar 2023	

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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)
		registered providers.						
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Capital Strategy	Open -	This report provides a draft SEND and AP Capital Strategy, following public consultation on a number of proposals to be included.	No	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation (Councillor Stuart Carroll)	Kevin McDaniel	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Mar 2023	
Standards and Quality of Education in Royal Borough schools	Open -	Annual report on progress against the outcomes set by cabinet that highlights overall performance of all pupils in the academic year including the attainment of disadvantaged pupils	No	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation (Councillor Stuart Carroll)	Kevin McDaniel	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Mar 2023	
RBWM Sport and Leisure Strategy - Update and Refresh 2022-23	Open -	To present the draft updated Sport and Leisure Strategy for RBWM, following the work undertaken with a range of stakeholders to inform the refresh strategy.	Yes	Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure (Councillor Ross McWilliams)	Andrew Durrant	TBC	Cabinet 30 Mar 2023	
Finance Update	Open -	Latest finance update	Yes	Cabinet Member for Asset Management &	Andrew Vallance	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Mar	

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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)
				Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot (Councillor David Hilton)			2023	
26 Lower Mount Farm (Cannondown Road) Stakeholder Masterplan Document	Open -	The report explains the adopted Borough Local Plan requirement for the preparation of Stakeholder Masterplan Documents and summarises the process and outcomes specifically in relation to the Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Lower Mount Farm (Cannondown Road), Cookham. The report recommends that Cabinet approves the Lower Mount Farm (Cannondown Road) Stakeholder Masterplan Document.	No	Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport (Councillor Phil Haseler)	Andrew Durrant, Adrien Waite	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Mar 2023	
Swayer's Close	Open -	The report explains	No	Cabinet Member for		Internal process	Cabinet	

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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)
27 Stakeholder Masterplan Document		the adopted Borough Local Plan requirement for the preparation of Stakeholder Masterplan Documents (SMD) and summarises the process and outcomes specifically in relation to the Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Sawyer's Close, Windsor. The report recommends that Cabinet approves the Sawyer's Close Stakeholder Masterplan Document.		Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport (Councillor Phil Haseler)	Andrew Durrant, Adrien Waite		30 Mar 2023	
New Shared Service Agreement for the commissioning of Joint Legal Services (JLT)	Open -	A new Shared Service Agreement (a recommendation from the 2019 review) will form the basis on which Joint Legal Team (JLT)	Yes	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation (Councillor Stuart Carroll)	Lin Ferguson, Kevin McDaniel	Internal process	Cabinet 30 Mar 2023	

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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)
		is provided by Reading and purchased by the Partners, including the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead						
28 Broadband Digital Lines	Open -	The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) is seeking to replace its site to site broadband circuits and wide area network connections.	Yes	Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor (Councillor Samantha Rayner)	Nikki Craig	Internal process	Cabinet 27 Apr 2023	
Home to School Transport Policy	Open -	To seek approval for consultation on the policy	No	Deputy Chairman of Cabinet & Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation (Councillor Stuart Carroll)	Kevin McDaniel	External consultation	Cabinet 27 Apr 2023	
Contract for Parking Enforcement, Moving Traffic Enforcement, Environmental Enforcement and Highways Enforcement	Fully exempt - 3	A report to set out future options for the contracts across the Borough.	Yes	Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Public Protection (Councillor David Cannon), Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport (Councillor Phil Haseler)	Alyse Strachan	Internal	Cabinet 27 Apr 2023	

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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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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

Cabinet Forward Plan - changes made since publication on 07.12.22:

Item	Scheduled date	New date	Reason for change
Corporate Peer Challenge - Progress Review	26.01.23	-	New item
Disabled Facilities Grant	26.01.23	23.02.23	Delay due to further work needing to be undertaken.
Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Implementation Plan	26.01.23	23.02.23	Delayed due to postponed launch of consultation in order to respond to requests made at Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Housing Policy report	26.01.23	30.03.23	Delay due to further work needing to be undertaken.
School Condition Programme 2023/24	26.01.23	30.03.23	Delayed in order to provide time to complete more detailed investigations and surveys at schools to allow for prioritisation of schemes
Outcome of consultation on new SEN Provision	23.02.23	30.03.23	Delayed as start of the consultation has been delayed until January 2023, meaning that officers will not be able to report the outcome until March.
Broadband	30.03.23	27.04.23	Moving due to slight delay in commencing procurement process
Windsor Castle Hill Public realm improvement	26.01.23		New item
New Shared Service Agreement for the commissioning of Joint Legal Services (JLT)	30.03.23		New item
Award of RBWM Leisure Management Contract	23.02.23		New item

Swayer's Close Stakeholder Masterplan Document	30.03.23		New item
Lower Mount Farm (Cannondown Road) Stakeholder Masterplan Document	30.03.23		New item
Building Height and Tall Buildings Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	23.02.23		New item
Achieving for Children Annual Reserved Ownership Decisions	23.02.23		New item
Broadway Car Park	26.01.23	23.02.23	Delay due to further work needing to be undertaken
Contract for Parking Enforcement, Moving Traffic Enforcement, Environmental Enforcement and Highways Enforcement			Delay due to delay in commencement of tender process.
Datchet Neighbourhood Plan Referendum	23.02.23		New item

Report Title:	2022/23 Month 8 Budget Monitoring Report
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Hilton, Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 26 January 2022
Responsible Officer(s):	Andrew Vallance, Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer Adele Taylor, Executive Director of Resources and S151 Officer
Wards affected:	All



REPORT SUMMARY

This report details the forecast outturn against budget for the 2022/23 financial year as at the end of November 2022 (Month 8). It includes the revenue and capital budgets along with the forecast financial reserve position at year end.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet:

- i) notes the forecast revenue outturn for the year is an overspend on services of £0.934m which reduces to an underspend of £1.329m when considering unallocated contingency budgets and changes to funding budgets (para 4.1);
- ii) approves two budget virements (para 12); and
- iii) notes the forecast capital outturn is expenditure of £60.945m against a budget of £76.121m (para 14).

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

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
To note the Council's outturn.	This is the recommended option.
To not note the Council's outturn.	This is not the recommended option.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

3.0 The Council faces considerable financial risks that could have a significant and immediate impact on its finances. However, whilst reserves are currently above the minimum level that the S151 Officer has deemed are required to protect against financial and service risks, they remain low compared to the optimum level that should be held. The Medium-Term Financial Plan assumes that the Council will identify sustainable savings over the medium term and therefore remain above the minimum level of reserves identified by the S151 Officer (£6.700m).

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
General Fund Reserves	<£6.7m	£6.7m to £6.9m	£6,9m to £16.9m	> £16.9m	31 March 2023

4. 2022/23 MONTH 8 REVENUE FORECAST OUTTURN

- 4.1 The current forecast is an overspend on service budgets of £0.934m, a favourable movement of £0.363m from month 6. Including corporate & contingency budget, and changes to funding, this reduces to an underspend of £1.329m.
- 4.2 This month, whilst Place has shown a significant improvement, this is partially offset by continuing pressures in Adult Social Care. Commentary on service budgets, along with the actions being taken to address any overspends, are set out in the following sections.
- 4.3 There remains significant volatility in the forecast, particularly in the demand led services. As such the measures outlined in the previous report to manage costs remain in place.

Table 3: 2022/23 Revenue Budget Forecast Outturn

	Current Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast over / (under) spend	Change since month 6
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adults and Housing	40,273	41,221	948	452
Children's Services	26,841	27,096	255	0
Place	13,645	14,267	622	(774)
Resources	5,546	5,078	(468)	73
Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	3,544	3,107	(437)	(118)
Chief Executive Department	279	293	14	0
TOTAL SERVICE EXPENDITURE	90,128	91,062	934	(367)
Contingency	2,556	636	(1,920)	0
Other funding and non-service expenditure	(92,684)	(93,027)	(343)	4
INCREASE IN GENERAL FUND	0	(1,329)	(1,329)	(363)

GENERAL FUND		
Opening balance	(8,753)	(8,753)
Transfer in	0	(1,329)
CLOSING BALANCE	(8,753)	(10,082)

5. ADULTS & HOUSING

5.1 The Adults & Housing directorate is forecasting an overspend of £0.948m, an adverse variance from month 6 of £0.452m largely due to Adult Social Care. It should be noted that the forecast outturn is assuming significant use of one-off funds. This forecast overspend is mainly due to pressures from support for an increased number of older people placed into residential care in the winter and spring of 2021/22 because of the pandemic. Measures have been put in place to try and manage this as outlined below, but this is a demand led budget and preventative measures take time to have an impact.

5.2 The directorate is implementing a series of actions to address this overspend including:

- deployment of £0.397m of additional Winter Care funding to provide additional discharge capacity which should feed through to a lower demand for residential beds in the final months of the year;
- acceleration of plans to automate internal management systems within Optalis provider services;
- additional checks and controls on the use of agency staff; and

- reviewing the use of accommodation by some residents with learning difficulties and seeking to relaunch a Shared Lives scheme locally.

Table 4: Adults and Housing Forecast Outturn

	Budget £000	Forecast outturn £000	Forecast over / (under) spend £000	Change since month 6 £000
Director & Support	1,841	1,822	(19)	57
Housing	2,729	2,609	(120)	(139)
Adult Social Care	35,704	36,791	1,087	534
Total	40,273	41,221	948	452

5.3 Of the £0.956m budgeted savings, £0.656m (69%) are currently forecast to be achieved. Savings in relation to staff costs remain challenging due to difficulties recruiting and the Shared Lives scheme is unlikely to significantly impact this financial year. Appendix B summarises the position on savings.

Director & Support

5.4 There has been an adverse £0.057m movement within Director & Support, mainly due to increased charges for the Emergency Duty Service (provides out of hours support for Adults and Children’s Social Care as well as Housing services). This is due to increased usage with statistics provided by the service suggesting there has been a 22% increase in hours of support provided compared to the previous year.

5.5 Expenditure on the Homes for Ukraine scheme is managed as part of the Director and Support budget. The Council is currently providing support to 217 individuals. The Council currently receives “tariff” funding of £10,500 per refugee to cover costs, such as administration and housing. There is an additional grant to cover the £350 monthly payments to the host. From January 2023 the scheme is to be amended as follows:

- Tariff funding to be reduced to £5,900 per person.
- Payments to hosts, where the family have been resident for 12 months, to be increased to £500 per month.

5.6 Excluding the funding of host payments, Homes for Ukraine tariff funding for the first two quarters of this financial year was £2,961m, with a smaller amount expected for the final two quarters. Part of this funding will be utilised to implement the increase of monthly host payments to £500 from November irrespective of how long the family have been resident. As the tariff payment is for the whole period the refugee is resident, there remains significant uncertainty over the extent that this grant will be sufficient to cover costs. In particular, temporary accommodation costs may increase as the initial six-month period to which hosts committed comes to an end. However, at this point a significant amount of the grant remains unallocated.

Adult Social Care

- 5.7 Adult Social Care services are forecasting an outturn overspend of £1.087m, an adverse variance of £0.534m from month 6. This is primarily due to the costs and numbers of care packages for older people. The forecast outturn includes the use of £2.150m of one-off funds as well as £0.750m of contingency.

Table 5: Adults Social Care Forecast Outturn

	Budget	Forecast outturn	Forecast over / (under) spend	Change since month 6
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Older people & physical dis.	21,830	23,322	1,492	144
Learning disability	15,708	15,209	(499)	290
Mental health	2,949	3,452	503	115
Other Adult Social Care	3,358	3,641	283	(35)
Better Care Fund income	(8,141)	(8,083)	58	20
Less: use of contingency	0	(750)	(750)	0
Total	35,704	36,791	1,087	534

- 5.8 The main reason for the adverse variance this month is an increase in Learning Disability costs of £0.290m. This is due to increased costs of Optalis provider services driven by difficulties in recruiting and the need to rely on more expensive agency staff.
- 5.9 As outlined at paragraph 5.2 above, the Council has deployed additional Winter Pressure funding of £0.397m on additional capacity. Beds have been procured to assist with hospital discharge, and homecare to facilitate reablement interventions to be timed for the period that they will have the greatest impact. Any financial benefit of this investment should become apparent in the final months of the year.
- 5.10 Appendix G provides details of the numbers currently being supported which shows a marginal decrease since the start of the financial year. However, it should be noted that these are still significantly more than budgeted for.

Housing

- 5.11 Housing services are forecasting an outturn underspend of £0.120m, a favourable movement of £0.139m from month 6. This is made up of various favourable and unfavourable variances across the service and utilising of earmarked reserves. There are currently 233 households being supported in temporary accommodation.
- 5.12 Hackney carriage license renewals are reporting a pressure of £0.122m. Street performing licenses renewals are also forecast to overspend by £0.010m, this has improved by £0.068m since month 6 due to other mitigations.

- 5.13 There is further work to be done in Housing concerning the financial impact of various grants being received. Rough Sleeping Initiative grant of £1.492m for the next three years was agreed in September and a plan has been developed to allocate £0.516m of this grant to be spent before the end of the financial year.
- 5.14 Other Housing grants from last year have been rolled forward in earmarked reserves. The forecast assumes allow these will now be released in the current financial year, which contributes a further £0.071m to the underspend.

6. CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Non-Dedicated Schools Grant

- 6.1 Non-school Children's Services show an overspend of £0.255m; no change from month 6. The overspend mainly relates to the increased demand on Home to School Transport, Legal Services, and the impact of the National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and high legal costs, due to complex cases.
- 6.2 An AfC Leadership Management Recovery Plan has been implemented to reduce the overspend. The indicative in-year mitigations total £0.481m and are reflected in the reported overspend position. The key mitigations include:
- expanding the existing vacancy management process;
 - matching grants to existing resources; and
 - release of non-essential expenditure budgets.

Table 6: Children's (non-Dedicated Schools Grant) Forecast Outturn

	Budget	Forecast outturn	Forecast over / (under) spend	Change since month 6
	£000	£000	£000	£000
AfC: Social Care and Early Help	19,326	19,887	561	(17)
AfC: Mgt & Business Services	3,489	3,423	(66)	76
AfC: Education	3,067	3,440	373	77
AfC: Public Health	(37)	(58)	(21)	(40)
AfC: Special Educational Needs	1,528	1,366	(162)	(76)
Retained Children's Services	(532)	(962)	(430)	(20)
Total	26,841	27,096	255	0

- 6.3 The primary reason for the net overspend relates to Home to School Transport which since the start of the academic year has evidenced an increased volume and complexity of the current and planned cohort of pupils including refugees, totalling £0.420m. Continued pressure on the Legal Services contract due to high volumes, increased complexity, and duration of the legal process results in a pressure of £0.241m. There is also a forecast overspend of £0.213m due to the net impact of the National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- 6.4 These pressures have been partly offset by underspends relating to the review of direct payment support packages of £0.193m.
- 6.5 The underspend on Retained Children's Services of £0.430m is primarily due to additional grants of £0.383m being utilised to match against increased costs within the AfC Contract and reduced central education support costs £0.047m.
- 6.6 The academisation of All Saints Church of England Junior School is planned to happen within the financial year 2022/23. As this is a Secretary of State directed School Academy Order conversion routinely any related school deficit at the point of transfer becomes the financial responsibility of the local authority. However, in relation to this school's unique circumstances and the improvements that have been led by the Council the expectation is for the financial responsibility to be met by the Secretary of State. The financial risk has not been reflected in the current reported position.

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 6.7 The Dedicated Schools budget forecast underspend is £0.197m a favourable variance of £0.600m from month 6. This underspend is transferred to a dedicated reserve, so does not impact on the general fund. However, it should be noted that the accumulated projected deficit as at 31 March 2023 now stands at £1.850m which is a small reduction on last year.

Table 7: Dedicated Schools Grant Forecast Outturn

	Budget	Forecast outturn	Forecast over / (under) spend	Change
	£000	£000	£000	£000
AfC – DSG	12,987	13,441	454	(290)
Retained – DSG	59,456	58,414	(651)	(310)
Transfer to / (from) DSG reserve	(72,443)	(71,855)	197	600
Total	0	0	0	0

Dedicated Schools Reserve	£000
Opening Deficit	2,047
Forecast 2022/23 surplus	(0.197)
Closing Deficit	1.850

- 6.8 The projected net in-year underspend of £0.197m is a favourable movement on the dedicated schools grant general reserve which as at 31 March 2022 was a deficit of £2.047m. Therefore, the cumulative projected deficit as at 31 March 2023 is £1.850m, representing 1.3% of the total budget allocation for 2022/23.
- 6.9 The Schools Block underspend of £0.496m relates to the release of an uncommitted pupil growth fund as no additional school places have been required this year.
- 6.10 The Central School Services Block underspend of £0.125m relates to reduced management overheads and non-independent special school places.
- 6.11 The Early Years Block underspend of £0.135m reflects historic funding levels compared to planned levels of provision.
- 6.12 The High Needs Block overspend of £0.559m is primarily due to provision of Independent Special or Non-Maintained Schools and other associated direct support. However, there has been a favourable movement of £0.474m since month 6, primarily due to the implementation of several of the Deficit Management Plan themes, including the robust challenge process for agreeing inflationary rate increases and stronger commissioning arrangements.
- 6.13 Further examples of Deficit Management Plan themes being implemented which have contributed towards the improved forecast include.
- The impact of the Social, Emotional & Mental Health programme reducing the volume of pupils at risk of exclusion. Additionally, interventions by coach monitors supporting pupils have in many cases resulted in no further Education and Health Care Plan support being required.
 - A reduction in the Special School placement costs through adding new resource bases / units within RBWM schools resulting in increased cost avoidance of more costly placements.
 - Education and Health Care Plan funding panels now have headteachers on the board which has resulted in a greater understanding of Special Educational Needs & Disabilities financial matrix.
 - More schools have been awarded the Quality Inclusion Mark resulting in more pupils with an Education and Health Care Plan being educated within Borough Schools that are attached to these units reducing out of borough costs.
- 6.14 Within the High Needs Block forecast variance of £0.559m is an estimated provision of £0.400m for future demand of new placements for the period from November 2022 to March 2023. Future Demand will be monitored monthly Any underspend or additional pressures would be released into the forecast position.

- 6.15 Whilst the overall DSG in-year position has significantly improved the Dedicated Schools Grant conditions require that any authority with an overall deficit on its Dedicated Schools Grant account at the end of the financial year prepare a Deficit Management Plan, including a recovery period of three to five years. It will be challenging to clear the cumulative deficit with increased costs and rising demand for complex service provision, and the SEND reforms (2014) that increased support to include individuals up to 25 years of age. The Deficit Management Plan was reported to the Schools Forum in May 2022.
- 6.16 In conjunction with the Deficit Management Plan, AfC is participating with the DfE Delivering Better Value in SEND support programme. The programme will provide dedicated support and funding to help local authorities with substantial deficit issues to reform their high needs systems. In addition, the aim of the programme is to establish a more sustainable structure, so authorities are better placed to respond to the forthcoming SEND Review reforms. The Delivering Better Value programme commenced in the summer of 2022 and will operate for 30/36 months with a significant involvement of key officers from both Finance & SEND.

7. PLACE

- 7.1 The Place directorate forecast outturn is an overspend of £0.622m a favourable variance of £0.774m from month 6. The directorate has started and continues to implement a series of actions which have contributed to this favourable movement. These actions include:
- financial performance is reviewed on a weekly basis as part of Directorate Leadership Team meetings, which focuses on key pressures and mitigations required to close the adverse variance;
 - development of targeted actions to improve parking revenue and in particular season ticket sales, which continues to be a challenge;
 - engagement with significant contractors (including Serco and Tivoli) so that opportunities for efficiencies can be identified;
 - vacant staff positions reviewed and given careful consideration before being recruited to;
 - review of consultancy spend to ensure it is achieving value for money; and
 - review of s106 funds to ensure they have been properly applied and reflected in the forecast outturn.
- 7.2 It should be noted that there is a significant risk in leisure services from the increasing cost of utility bills, though further work is to be done on potential mitigations before that is included in the forecast and the leisure contract re-procurement is in progress. Our best estimate at this stage is that the Council's exposure could be an additional £0.350m.

Table 8: Place Forecast Outturn

	Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast over / (under) spend	Change since month 6
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director of Place	236	236	0	0
Neighbourhood Services	8,635	9,309	674	(197)
Planning	1,341	1,575	234	(78)
Communities	(956)	(1,052)	(96)	(257)
Health Partnerships	325	221	(104)	(104)
Infrastructure, Sust. & Transport	4,064	3,978	(86)	(138)
Total	13,645	14,267	622	(774)

- 7.3 Neighbourhood Services is forecasting an overspend of £0.674m, a favourable variance of £0.197m compared to month 6. This movement is primarily due to the updated parking forecast. Income from pay and display car parks is averaging at 96% (compared to 92% as reported in month 6) of the profiled budget. A similar level has been assumed for the remainder of the year, but this will be kept under review as it is a volatile budget. Appendix G gives further information on parking income performance.
- 7.4 Planning is reporting an overspend of £0.234m, a favourable variance of £0.078m mainly due to delays in recruitment of vacant positions, allocation of s106 funding as well as allocating staff time to Capital projects. The main pressure is still in the Arboricultural team. This has had to respond to above average numbers of emergency tree works this year during major storm events and because of the dry summer months. The forecast assumes that works commissioned are delivered; if they are not this overspend may reduce. Further mitigations are also being considered to reduce the pressure.
- 7.5 Health Partnerships & Community Development, responsible for leading and managing the Council's community resilience and voluntary sector partnerships is showing a favourable movement of £0.104m, mainly due to staff vacancies.
- 7.6 Communities is reporting an underspend of £0.257m, mainly due to a one-off Contain Outbreak Management Fund allocation of £0.225m.
- 7.7 Of the £0.772m budgeted savings, £0.652m (84%) are currently forecast to be achieved. However, there are several savings highlighted as amber risk including sponsorship to cover costs of Christmas lights, review of the operating model for allotments and generating additional parking fines income through recruitment of two additional parking enforcement officers through the NSL contract. Appendix B summarises the position on budgeted savings.

8. RESOURCES

- 8.1 The Resources directorate forecast outturn is an underspend of £0.468m, an adverse movement of £0.073m from the prior month. This is due to several smaller variances, the most significant of which are detailed below.

Table 9: Resources Forecast Outturn

	Budget	Forecast Outturn	Forecast over / (under) spend	Change
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Executive Director of Resources	218	234	16	0
Libraries & Residents Services	2,418	2,270	(148)	16
Revenues and Benefits	1,544	1,125	(419)	(105)
Housing Benefit	(320)	(60)	260	100
HR, Corporate Projects, and IT	3,061	2,881	(180)	0
Corporate Management	(42)	(22)	20	10
Finance	1,529	1,483	(46)	37
Property	(2,862)	(2,833)	29	15
Total Resources	5,546	5,078	(468)	73

- 8.2 Housing Benefits is showing an adverse variance of £0.100m due to the rate of Housing Benefit overpayments being lower than budgeted. However, this is offset by a favourable movement of £0.105m in the Revenues and Benefits team largely due to the income from recovery of court costs on Council Tax and Business Rates arrears.
- 8.3 Of the £0.435m budgeted savings, £0.415m (95%) are currently forecast to be achieved. The saving unlikely to be achieved relates to utility costs at the Town Hall. Appendix B summarises the position on budgeted savings.

9. GOVERNANCE, LAW, STRATEGY & PUBLIC HEALTH

- 9.1 The Governance, Law, Strategy and Public Health directorate forecast outturn is an underspend of £0.437m, a favourable movement of £0.118m from month 6. This is primarily due to £0.077m of accruals from the prior year being released as the costs will be met from the remaining Contain Outbreak Management Fund.
- 9.2 Of the £0.288m budgeted savings, £0.213m (74%) are currently forecast to be achieved. The savings unlikely to be achieved relate to delays recruiting to the commercialisation post and sale of sponsorship on the website. Appendix B summarises the position on budgeted savings.

Table 10: Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health Forecast Outturn

	Budget	Forecast outturn	Forecast over / (under) spend	Change since month 6
	£000	£000	£000	£000
Deputy Director	111	160	49	0
Communications & Marketing	341	284	(57)	(29)
Governance	2,091	2,002	(89)	(16)
Law	635	555	(80)	(24)
Performance Team	378	352	(26)	28
Policy Comms & Engagement	144	202	58	0
Public Health Grant Income	(4,166)	(4,166)	0	0
Public Health Spend	4,010	3,933	(77)	(77)
Grant funding (inc. PH)	0	(215)	(215)	(0)
Total	3,544	3,107	(437)	(118)

10. SUNDRY DEBT

10.1 The current level of overdue sundry debt is £11.628m. There are significant increases in the bad debt provision for Adult Social Care and Housing. To an extent large amounts of debt in these areas is in line with national trends as well as reflective of the levels of income we are raising. However, further actions are in progress to raise the profile of debt within directorates and tackle the level of arrears including:

- charging the cost of the bad debt provision to directorates rather than funding centrally;
- developing more focused reports to directorates to highlight areas of concern; and
- establishing a debt panel to ensure overdue debt is discussed.

Table 11: Aged Debt and bad debt provision

	> 1 month	> 2 month	> 6 month	> 1 year	Debt Sep 2022	Inc (dec) in debt prov.
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
People Services						
Adult Social Care	709	884	868	2,244	4,705	487
Children's	17	18	0	7	41	10
Housing	29	15	446	1,142	1,632	458
Deferred Payments	6	25	34	388	453	0
GLS&PH	31	21	3	2	56	3
Place	213	97	64	163	537	45
Resources						
Commercial property	203	85	127	358	774	78
Other	10	115	2	74	202	28
Total Agresso Debt	1,219	1,260	1,545	4,376	8,401	1,126

Debt on other systems:

HB Overpayments	3,220	(36)
Housing Rents	7	2
Total debt	11,628	1,092

- 10.2 The adult social care debt represents the contribution to care costs which the Council considers to be the responsibility of individuals in receipt of care above the current financial thresholds, and which has not yet been received despite the providers having been paid. There is a monthly review process underway to resolve the largest outstanding situations with families. There is further work to do with residents to improve early care planning so that we reduce the number of times there is a funding dispute.
- 10.3 The increase in Housing debt is largely the result of how rent debt was raised on the system. For 2021/22 a single invoice was raised for a year's worth of rent at the start of the financial year. Arrears in respect of this rent went over 12 months old on 1 April 2022 resulting in a large increase in the bad debt provision. From June 2022, housing rents have moved to a specialised rent accounting system (ARA) which should resolve this issue going forward. Despite this there remains a significant amount of Housing debt to be addressed.
- 10.4 The increase in the bad debt provision for Commercial Property is mainly due to the regulations that were in place during the pandemic meaning that rent arrears could not be chased. Unsurprisingly, arrears have therefore increased.

This debt is being actively managed by the Propco to maximise returns from this debt.

11. EARMARKED RESERVES

11.1 Appendix H details the movements in earmarked reserves based on current forecasts.

12. BUDGET VIREMENTS

12.1 Budget virements more than £0.100m should be approved by Cabinet. They should also be approved by Cabinet when over £0.025m and move budgets between portfolios. The following virements are proposed and have been reflected in this report. Neither impact on total service expenditure and are housekeeping virements as opposed to changing service budgets.

Table 12: Budget virements for Cabinet approval

Reference	Budget Line	Debit £000	Credit £000
1	Achieving for Children Contract		(2,168)
1	Children's services - retained	2,168	
2	Public Health - spend		(162)
2	Adults and Housing: Director		(97)
2	Human Resources, Corporate Projects & IT	121	
2	Place: Health Partnerships	138	
	Total	2,427	(2,427)

12.2 Virement 1 represents a change in practice which will require Achieving for Children to invoice public health for contributions. This is to enable the Director of Public Health to have greater oversight of how Public Health grant allocated to Children's services is being deployed.

12.3 Virement 2 is the remaining budget virement in respect of the restructure of the transformation team, which has been split across departments. Staff budgets were covered in month 6, this virement relates to the non-staff budgets which took longer to disaggregate.

13. BORROWING

13.1 Borrowing is only undertaken to finance capital projects that have been approved by the Council and lead to clear future benefits. It is not used to support day to day operational expenditure. Throughout the year the Council's borrowing levels are updated based on cash-flow and spending on the capital programme. Currently, the Council is borrowing temporarily pending anticipated capital receipts in future years.

- 13.2 A further £10m of long-term PWLB borrowing was taken out in November to reduce the Council's exposure to interest rate increases in future years.
- 13.3 Table 13 details current borrowing offset against investment balances.

Table 13: Net borrowing

	Opening balance £000	Current balance £000	Year-end forecast £000
Long term	71,265	101,265	100,265
Short term – Local Authority	119,000	84,000	104,000
Short term – LEP / Trusts	15,598	16,525	13,000
Investments	(41,609)	(57,473)	(37,856)
Total	164,254	144,317	179,409

14. CAPITAL

- 14.1 Capital expenditure is currently projected at £60.945m. Appendix E details the capital budget movements and Appendix F provides more detail on variances.
- 14.2 Completed schemes include the new Vicus Way Car Park which is fully operational and within budget.

Table 14: Capital programme outturn

	Gross budget £000	Slippage £000	Current year variances £000	Gross outturn £000
Chief Executive department	0	0	0	0
GLS&PH	289	0	0	289
Children's Services	10,627	(2,355)	0	8,272
Adults and Housing	2,691	(1,941)	0	750
Resources	38,247	(3,148)	(3,551)	31,548
Place	24,267	(3,816)	(365)	20,086
Total	76,121	(11,260)	(3,916)	60,945

- 14.3 The £60.945m of 2022/23 projected capital expenditure will be funded by the income streams as set out below. At present the cost of borrowing at a short-term borrowing rate of 2.56% is estimated to cost £1.086m for current year projected expenditure; a significant increase compared to previously low interest rates. Further slippage is expected to be reported at year end which will reduce the projected cost of borrowing.

Table 15: Capital programme financing

Source of funding	£000
Government grants	(10,463)
Developers' contributions (s106 & CIL)	(7,755)
Other contributions	(275)
Corporate funding	(42,452)
Total	(60,945)

Table 16: Capital programme status

Number of schemes in programme	
Yet to start	2%
In progress	77%
Completed	12%
Ongoing programmes e.g., Disabled Facilities Grant	9%

15. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

15.1 In producing and reviewing this report the Council is meeting its legal obligations to monitor its financial position.

16. RISK MANAGEMENT

16.1 Projected variances require mitigation to reduce them during the financial year.

17. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

17.1 Equalities. There are no direct impacts.

17.2 Climate change/sustainability. There are no direct impacts.

17.3 Data Protection/GDPR. There are no direct impacts.

18. CONSULTATION

18.1 None.

19. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation date if not called in: 'Immediately'.

20. APPENDICES

20.1 This report is supported by nine appendices:

- Appendix A Revenue monitoring statement
- Appendix B Savings tracker
- Appendix C Growth tracker
- Appendix D Capital budget summary
- Appendix E Capital programme budget movements
- Appendix F Capital monitoring report
- Appendix G Key financial information
- Appendix H Usable reserves

21. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

21.1 This report is supported by one background document, the budget report to [Council February 2022](#).

22. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>			
<i>Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	22/12/22	23/12/22
Emma Duncan	Director of Law, Strategy & Public Health/ Monitoring Officer	22/12/22	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	22/12/22	22/12/22
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	22/12/22	23/12/22
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	22/12/22	
<i>Mandatory:</i>			
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer	22/12/22	23/12/22
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Tony Reeves	Interim Chief Executive	22/12/22	22/12/22
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	22/12/22	22/12/22
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of People Services	22/12/22	22/12/22

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Non-key decision	No	No

Report Author: Julian McGowan, Senior Finance Business Partner
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Original budget	Service	Current budget	Forecast	Forecast	Previously	Change from
£000		£000	£000	£000	reported	previously
					variance	reported
					£000	variance
						£000
	Chief Executive Department					
279	Chief Executive	279	293	14	14	0
279	TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT	279	293	14	14	0
	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health					
112	Deputy Director of Governance, Law & Strategy	111	160	49	49	0
383	Communications & Marketing	341	284	(57)	(28)	(29)
2,032	Governance	2,091	2,002	(89)	(73)	(16)
636	Law	635	555	(80)	(56)	(24)
380	Performance Team	378	352	(26)	(54)	28
5,058	Public Health Spend	4,010	3,933	(77)	0	(77)
(5,069)	Public Health Grant Income	(4,166)	(4,381)	(215)	(215)	0
93	Policy Communication & Engagement	144	202	58	58	0
3,625	TOTAL GOVERNANCE, LAW & STRATEGY	3,544	3,107	(437)	(319)	(118)
	Children's Services					
(79)	Director of Children's Services	(65)	(100)	(35)	(35)	0
42,863	Achieving for Children Contract	40,360	41,499	1,139	1,409	(270)
57,365	Children's Services - Retained	58,598	57,552	(1,046)	(716)	(330)
(73,004)	Dedicated Schools Grant - Income	(72,052)	(71,855)	197	(403)	600
27,145	TOTAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES	26,841	27,096	255	255	0
	Adults and Housing					
2,315	Director, Support Teams & Provider support	1,840	1,821	(19)	(76)	57
2,742	Housing	2,729	2,609	(120)	19	(139)
35,489	Adult Social Care	35,704	37,541	1,837	1,303	534
12,090	Better Care Fund - Spend	15,646	15,646	0	0	0
(12,090)	Grant & BCF Income	(15,646)	(15,646)	0	0	0
0	Use of contingency	0	(750)	(750)	(750)	0
40,546	TOTAL ADULTS, HEALTH AND HOUSING	40,273	41,221	948	496	452
	Resources					
218	Executive Director of Resources	218	234	16	16	0
2,355	Library & Resident Services	2,418	2,270	(148)	(164)	16
1,150	Revenues & Benefits	1,544	1,125	(419)	(314)	(105)
90	Housing Benefit	(320)	(60)	260	160	100
2,857	Human Resources, Corporate Projects & IT	3,061	2,881	(180)	(180)	0
(42)	Corporate Management	(42)	(22)	20	10	10
1,162	Finance	1,529	1,483	(46)	(83)	37
(2,914)	Property	(2,862)	(2,833)	29	14	15
4,876	TOTAL RESOURCES	5,546	5,078	(468)	(541)	73
	Place					
237	Executive Director of Place	236	236	0	0	0
8,651	Neighbourhood Services	8,635	9,309	674	871	(197)
1,308	Planning Service	1,341	1,575	234	312	(78)
(950)	Communities including Leisure	(956)	(1,052)	(96)	161	(257)
0	Health Partnerships, Community Resilience & Development	325	221	(104)	0	(104)
3,901	Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	4,064	3,978	(86)	52	(138)
13,147	TOTAL PLACE	13,645	14,267	622	1,396	(774)
89,618	TOTAL SERVICE EXPENDITURE	90,128	91,062	934	1,301	(367)
	Sources of funding and non-service expenditure					
2,562	Contingency and Corporate Budgets	2,556	636	(1,920)	(1,920)	0
1,931	Precepts and Levies	1,931	1,931	0	0	0
2,078	Financing and investment (income) and expenditure	2,078	2,512	434	434	0
(102,755)	Taxation and non-specific grant income	(103,033)	(103,033)	0	0	0
3,797	Minimum Revenue Provision	3,797	3,020	(777)	(777)	0
(1,542)	Use of earmarked reserves	(1,768)	(1,768)	0	(4)	4
4,311	Contribution to Pension Fund deficit	4,311	4,311	0	0	0
(89,618)	TOTAL FUNDING AND NON-SERVICE EXPENDITURE	(90,128)	(92,391)	(2,263)	(2,267)	4
0	(INCREASE) DECREASE IN GENERAL FUND	0	(1,329)	(1,329)	(966)	(363)

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Ref	Title	Category	Directorate	Service Area	Description	Budgeted Saving £000	Forecast saving	%	RAG	Comments
1	Review of packages and right sizing	Transformation	Adults & Housing	Director of Adults, Health & Housing	Review of packages and right sizing -strengthening our reviewing function including for long term packages, to ensure consistent reviewing practice at the 6 week review where actual rather than anticipated needs are clear.	275	275	100%	GREEN	£150k achieved to date, further work on this will continue throughout the year.
2	Review of resourcing	Service Redesign/change	Adults & Housing	Director of Adults, Health & Housing	Review of resourcing	250	0	0%	RED	The current pressure on staffing from difficulties in recruiting and the resultant reliance on agency spend mean this saving is unlikely to be realised.
3	Transitions	Transformation	Adults & Housing	Director of Adults, Health & Housing	Transitions - Earlier and smarter commissioning of services provided under the Care act rather than the Children's act should enable more resource effective services to be provided, in particularly support at home and towards independence.	200	200	100%	GREEN	Review the care packages that young people have prior to transition from children's services. The saving may come from children's services or adult social care. Transitions work in progress with a view to more targeted earlier involvement with families to achieve better outcomes and more appropriate placements.
4	Implement shared lives scheme	Transformation	Adults & Housing	Director of Adults, Health & Housing	Expand current Shared Lives scheme - the scheme enables our customers with support needs to live in someone's home who supports them and is paid for the use of the house and the support provided. These arrangements are tailored, flexible and can be more resource effective than more formal placements in care settings.	50	0	0%	RED	Work has begun on this project, however we are not forecasting any savings to be achieved in the current year as there will be lead-in time before savings are realised.
5	Savings resulting from the cessation of contracts in People Commissioning - Alzheimer's Dementia Support	Contract Change	Adults & Housing	Director of Adults, Health & Housing	The service currently provides funding to Alzheimer's Dementia Support on a three year contract. This contract expires on 31 March 2022.	45	45	100%	GREEN	Completed 1 April 2022
6	Savings resulting from the cessation of contracts in People Commissioning - Berkshire Vision	Contract Change	Adults & Housing	Director of Adults, Health & Housing	The service currently provides funding to Berkshire Vision on a three year contract. This contract expires on 31 March 2022.	16	16	100%	GREEN	Completed 1 April 2022
7	Temporary Accommodation Management	Service Redesign/change	Adults & Housing	Housing	The outsourced temporary accommodation management function is to be brought in-house to reduce costs by 10%	65	65	100%	GREEN	Annual Savings already realised as we have reduced payment to Open4u for management of 22 units, activity moved in-house
8	Supported Accommodation Savings	Contract Change	Adults & Housing	Housing	A 10% cost saving is being sought on supported accommodation schemes in the Borough	41	41	100%	GREEN	£3.5k Monthly savings achieved as now inhouse support is provide to Wellesley House tenants rather than provided by Look Ahead ltd.
9	Subjective Savings	Service Redesign/change	All	All	Subjective Savings e.g. employee mileage, stationery,	350	350	100%	GREEN	
10	Corporate Subscriptions	Service Redesign/change	Chief Executive	Chief Executive	Reduction of corporate subscriptions budget in line with actual costs .	8	8	100%	GREEN	
11	Full year effect of home to school transport procurement	Contract Change	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Following policy updates in 2021 and full contract retender process further efficiencies have been achieved.	165	0	0%	RED	Home To School Transport net pressure £420,000 reflecting current term and indicative future terms indicative provision for 2022/23.
12	Refocus of parenting work to edge of care	Transformation	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Develop edge of care approach to work with families	114	114	100%	GREEN	On track to be delivered within AFC Contract.
13	Health Contribution	Transformation	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Review health contributions for continuing health care	101	101	100%	GREEN	On track to be delivered within AFC Contract.
14	Traded services scope and cost	Income Generation	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Increase in fees for services traded with schools, and other local authorities	67	67	100%	GREEN	On track to be delivered within AFC Contract.
15	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH)	Transformation	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Review MASH working and partnership arrangement including partner contributions	37	37	100%	GREEN	On track to be delivered within AFC Contract.
16	Staff Transport Costs	Service Redesign/change	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Reduction in mileage budget to reflect new hybrid way of working	30	30	100%	GREEN	On track to be delivered within AFC Contract.
17	External Legal Costs	Service Redesign/change	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Increased internal Legal triage to support consistent thresholds for seeking legal advice	25	0	0%	RED	Legal Services indicative overspend circa £300,000 reflects expected reduction in volumes and complexity of cases for 2022/23. Delivery of Savings Plan difficult to evidence in light of current projected overspend.
18	Printing	Service Redesign/change	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Reflects increased use of digital information in Children's Services	20	20	100%	GREEN	On track to be delivered within AFC Contract.
19	Cross-skill role development	Transformation	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Increase resilience and flexibility of internal support teams including finance	18	18	100%	GREEN	On track to be delivered within AFC Contract.
20	Therapy Provision	Transformation	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Further transform the therapy provision for Children in care	10	10	100%	GREEN	On track to be delivered within AFC Contract.
21	Printing	Service Redesign/change	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Civic and Facilities	Reduction in printing requirements by officers	30	30	100%	GREEN	
22	Review of resources within Facilities	Service Redesign/change	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Civic and Facilities	Review of resources within Facilities Services	27	27	100%	GREEN	
23	Review of resources within Civic Services	Service Redesign/change	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Civic and Facilities	Review of resources within Civic Services	15	15	100%	GREEN	
24	Centralised Stationery	Service Redesign/change	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Civic and Facilities	Reduced demand for stationery by officers	5	5	100%	GREEN	
25	Sale of advertising and sponsorship on website	Income Generation	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Communications & Marketing	Income from sale of advertising and sponsorship on website and other areas - income generation to be identified	50	25	50%	AMBER	Work is ongoing but at present income is yet to be secured.
26	Set up and facilitate local good causes lottery	Transformation	Place	Democratic Services	Set up local good causes lottery and replace revenue funded small grants to local organisations, set up costs in year one - estimated £25k have reduced the saving in 22/23	25	0	0%	RED	Officers are progressing the administrative detail and license application to implement a new Community Lottery. It is anticipated that this will be delivered in 2023/24.
27	Commercialisation	Income generation	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Deputy Director of Law & Strategy	Identification and maximisation of income generating opportunities. A fixed term post initially would be required to review all of RBWM current fees and charges with a view to maximising sponsorship, advertising and identifying new opportunities. £100k growth, rising to £150k in 2026/27.	50	0	0%	RED	Post not appointed to yet and will take time to realise savings.
28	Land Charges Income	Income Generation	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Electoral and Information Governance	Increase income target for 22/23 only, in recognition of current economic activity.	50	50	100%	GREEN	
29	Land Charges Income	Income Generation	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Electoral and Information Governance	Amend fees to bring RBWM more into line with neighbouring authorities.	13	13	100%	GREEN	
30	Remove parish elections budget	Service Redesign/change	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Electoral and Information Governance	Costs to be fully recharged to parishes.	10	10	100%	GREEN	
31	Legal services saving	Service Redesign/change	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Law	Services delivered by shared service now provided by head of Law & Governance	30	30	100%	GREEN	
32	Magistrates Court	Service Redesign/change	Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health	Law	Reducing loan repayment liability	8	8	100%	GREEN	
33	Review of resources within Communities	Service Redesign/change	Place	Communities	Review of resources within Communities	73	73	100%	GREEN	
34	Review of resources	Service Redesign/change	Place	Executive Director of Place	Surplus staff budget identified no longer required	15	15	100%	GREEN	

Ref	Title	Category	Directorate	Service Area	Description	Budgeted Saving £000	Forecast saving	%	RAG	Comments
35	Public transport funding	Income Generation	Place	Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	There is £84k of S106 funding that could be used to cover some of the growth bid for public transport subsidy during 2022/23	84	84	100%	GREEN	
36	Christmas Lights - Sponsorship	Income Generation	Place	Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	Obtain sponsorship income to cover contract costs for Christmas Lights across the borough.	69	44	64%	AMBER	A combined sponsorship plan for businesses is being developed which will incorporate Christmas lights. At this stage we identified £44k of funding which includes sponsorship and £106. Although further sponsorship of Christmas lights is unlikely at this stage, further mitigation savings are being sought.
37	Concessionary Fares	Service Redesign/change	Place	Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	Align expenditure budgets with actual expected costs	30	30	100%	GREEN	
38	Energy	Service Redesign/change	Place	Neighbourhood Services	We currently spend £330k on energy for street lighting and close to £20k on powering water fountains in the borough. Turning lights and fountains off overnight could help to reduce energy bills as well as other carbon and biodiversity benefits.	20	20	100%	GREEN	
39	Cemetery Income	Income Generation	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Income budget increase for one year only	20	0	0%	RED	Exceptionally high burials income received in last couple of years due to COVID. Demand for burials has dropped, as such this saving may not materialise. Will be reviewed over coming months as further data emerges.
40	Berkshire records office	Income Generation	Adults & Housing	Commissioning & Support	There is £13.8k of S106 one-off funding available that could be put towards our revenue funding of the Berkshire Records office	14	14	100%	GREEN	
41	Waste Management	Income Generation	Place	Neighbourhood Services	There is S106 funding under waste management (£11.2k) that could be used as one-off support for the waste budget	11	11	100%	GREEN	
42	Allotments - operating model	Income Generation	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Review of operating model for allotments to increase charges and/or reduce cost of operating with the aim to be self-financing over time.	10	10	100%	AMBER	Charges for allotments have been introduced in October '22. Further review to be undertaken for options to reduce operational costs by March '23.
43	Increased parking enforcement	Service Redesign/change	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Increase parking enforcement - two new officers within the NSL contract, expected to significantly improve enforcement around the borough. Income raised in penalties should fund this service and allow a contribution towards overheads.	50	0	0%	RED	Enforcement contract is outsourced. Further work is required to assess viability of these savings. Currently (Month 8) £130k forecast PCN income shortfall against budget.
44	Waste Mobilisation	Service Redesign/change	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Budget no longer required	50	50	100%	GREEN	
45	Street Lighting	Service Redesign/change	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Align expenditure budgets with actual expected costs	30	30	100%	GREEN	
46	Cash Collection costs	Contract Change	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Reduce cash collection costs - Libraries service - maintain cashless strategy	30	30	100%	GREEN	
47	Cash Collection costs	Contract Change	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Reduced cash collection requirements as customers increase use of pay by phone and card methods of payment	25	25	100%	GREEN	
48	Public Toilets	Service Redesign/change	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Council tax expenditure budget no longer required	20	20	100%	GREEN	
49	Planning Fees	Income Generation	Place	Planning Services	Income target increased to align with anticipated activity levels, subject to annual review.	125	125	100%	GREEN	
50	Building control	Income Generation	Place	Planning Services	Building Control fees to be set to contribute to reasonable RBWM overheads	45	45	100%	GREEN	
51	Planning Policy	Service Redesign/change	Place	Planning Services	Align expenditure budgets with actual expected costs	40	40	100%	GREEN	
52	Review of resourcing of Insurance and Risk service	Service Redesign/change	Resources	Finance	Review of funding and resourcing of Insurance and Risk service	47	47	100%	GREEN	
53	Corporate - Business Development	Income Generation	Resources	Finance	Income target increased to align with activity levels	10	10	100%	GREEN	
54	Telephony Savings	Contract Change	Resources	Human Resources, Corporate Projects & IT	Savings generated by moving to new telephony technologies and a reduction in mobile phones.	70	70	100%	GREEN	
55	Weddings Income	Income Generation	Resources	Library & Resident Services	Income from delayed weddings - one off impact as a result of the Covid-19 emergency restrictions.	100	100	100%	GREEN	
56	Rental Income-Clyde House	Income Generation	Resources	Property Services	Clyde House in occupation by external tenant. Agreed rental income £101K p.a. Termination of agreement scheduled for March 2023. Assumes building demolished 24/25 and related property costs saved of £68k	101	101	100%	GREEN	
57	Development & Regeneration-Removal of revenue professional fees	Service Redesign/change	Resources	Property Services	Removal of provision for RBWM Property Company project management fees - these are now mainly capitalised against relevant projects	40	40	100%	GREEN	
58	Rental Income	Income Generation	Resources	Property Services	Rental income budget from estate shops brought into line with actual expected income.	24	24	100%	GREEN	
59	Town Hall Electricity costs	Service Redesign/change	Resources	Property Services	Review Town Hall electricity / utilities budgets given reduced levels of occupation.	20	0	0%	RED	Given current inflation on energy bills unlikely to be achieved.
60	Review of NNDR provision-G10-G12 Alma Rd, Windsor & St Edmunds House, Mhead	Service Redesign/change	Resources	Property Services	Reduce budget provision by £10k to match actual costs	10	10	100%	GREEN	
61	Review Maintenance provision for Estate Shops	Service Redesign/change	Resources	Property Services	Reduce budget by £7K to reflect actual level of likely costs. Saving linked to capital bids for Commercial Investment Property Portfolio-Repairs.	7	7	100%	GREEN	
62	St Mary's House - Utilities costs	Service Redesign/change	Resources	Property Services	Review St Mary's House - electricity / utilities budgets given reduced levels of occupation.	6	6	100%	GREEN	

Summary		
GREEN: Saving expected to be achieved	2,612	2,612
AMBER: Saving at risk or unlikely to be achieved in full	129	79
RED: Saving will not or is unlikely to be achieved	655	0
Total	3,396	2,691

Ref	Title	Directorate	Service Area	Brief Description	Budgeted Growth £000	Forecast Growth £000	%	RAG	Comments
1	Private Rented Sector Officer - invest to save	Adults, Health & Housing	Housing	A Private Rented Sector Officer will reduce temporary accommodation spend by assisting homeless households into settled accommodation.	60	0	0%	RED	Post has not been recruited to yet. Grant underspend from 21/22 was rolled forward to 22/23 which should be able to fund this, so this growth should not be required in 22/23.
2	Increase in Employers National Insurance from 2022/23	All	Corporate	The increase in employers national insurance of 1.25% from April 2022 will have an impact on direct and indirect employees costs, this budget is to cover those costs.	500	500	100%	GREEN	
3	Commercial income budget reduction	Resources	Property Services	Request to reduce current Budget to align with actual rental Income after the loss of rental at Siena Court.	225	225	100%	GREEN	
4	Building Services - unachievable income target	Resources	Property Services	Request to reduce current income budget of £179k to align with actual income achievable of £114k split between, Maintained Schools £73k and Academies £41k. A reduction of £83k.	83	83	100%	GREEN	
5	Property repair & maintenance contingency	Resources	Property Services	Budget required for ongoing issues relating to parcels of land/boundary fences and Tree maintenance across the Borough for which there is no current budget.	40	40	100%	GREEN	
6	Cost of provision for open cases	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	The expected increase in costs to manage the care and support for the cohort of children currently open to the Councils services, inclusive of inflation and savings related to the process of regular placement reviews.	1,041	1,041	100%	GREEN	Growth fully committed within current forecast.
7	Estimated future demand	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	The estimated costs to manage the likely future demand, including the continued impact of the pandemic and maintaining the domestic abuse support service to mitigate the level of demand.	985	985	100%	GREEN	Growth fully committed within current forecast.
8	Workforce transformation	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Three year plan to reduce reliance on agency workers by offering strong professional development in a highly supportive environment with lower than average case holding levels. Transformation supported by short-term stability incentives.	465	465	100%	GREEN	Growth fully committed within current forecast.
9	Practice Transformation	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Investment in an edge of care team and continued support for domestic abuse services to support families from reaching point of crisis.	325	325	100%	GREEN	Growth fully committed within current forecast.
10	Increased costs of compliance	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Additional capacity to respond to information requests (Subject Access Requests), health and safety, insurance and apprenticeship levy.	156	156	100%	GREEN	Growth fully committed within current forecast.
11	Increases in volume of children with additional needs	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Additional posts required within the education and disability services to support the ability to respond within the statutory timescales for processing reviews and changes in education, health and care plans.	92	92	100%	GREEN	Growth fully committed within current forecast.
12	Lost income (Covid)	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Lost income relating to education welfare regulations and use of group facilities	55	55	100%	GREEN	Growth fully committed within current forecast.
13	Grant changes	Childrens Services	Childrens Services	Implications of regulatory changes on the amounts of money that can be used from the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant for school improvement.	19	19	100%	GREEN	Growth fully committed within current forecast.
14	VRU Coordinator	Place	Communities	This bid is to provide one-off funding for a Violence Reduction Coordinator. A Bill, currently going through parliament, will place a new duty on all LA's to work on an ongoing basis to reduce violence and work with partners to share information and coordinate work to achieve a reduction in serious violence the local area.	40	0	0%	RED	No recruitment required, work has been absorbed into the Antisocial Behavior Coordinator role on a phased basis.
15	Bus Service Support Investment	Place	Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	Additional investment to support the alignment of our approach with the national bus strategy and our environment and climate strategy	300	300	100%	GREEN	
16	RBWM Climate Partnership	Place	Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	The proposals, set out in further detail in a paper to cabinet on 30 September 2021, will set up a new independent RBWM Climate Partnership to lead on the delivery of the Borough Wide Environment and Climate Strategy. This will better engage the private sector and community organisations to support delivery for the goals of the strategy and enable the council to focus on its own commitments to deliver carbon reductions on its own estate, deliver biodiversity recovery in its green spaces	250	250	100%	GREEN	
17	Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	Place	Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport	Funding to continue the LEP from 2022/23	75	75	100%	GREEN	
18	Waste Contract	Place	Neighbourhood Services	Waste Contract	500	500	100%	GREEN	
19	Section 81 works extra resource - self funding from year 2	Place	Neighbourhood Services	This spend to save initiative aims to enhance resources relating to enforcement/management of Sections 81 works, this should be self funding in future years.	75	75	100%	GREEN	
20	Paving Maintenance Cleaning	Place	Neighbourhood Services	This growth bid is for additional street cleaning in both Maidenhead and Windsor Town Centre. Currently under the street cleansing contract there are a few cleans leaving the towns looks neglected and unkempt which leads to a negative perception of the town and a lack of funding from new businesses.	21	21	100%	GREEN	
21	IT post - Technology Solutions Architect	Resources	Human Resources, Corporate Projects & IT	Post requirement in the IT team to work across the whole council in the delivery of the IT strategy, providing strategic technological insight to all services and working collaboratively with all teams when identifying suitable technology solutions for the delivery of improved services. Salary plus 28% on costs.	96	24	25%	AMBER	Post not yet recruited to but in progress. Full amount will be required, but probably less this financial year.
22	Laptop warranty extension - modern workplace devices	Resources	Human Resources, Corporate Projects & IT	Extension of the current 3 year warranty with Dell for modern workplace devices to 5 years.	46	46	100%	GREEN	

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Capital Programme Movements 2022/23	Expenditure £'000	Income £'000	Net £'000
Original Budget 2022/23	67,980	(17,109)	50,871
Budget Changes to 31 December 2022			
Final slippage-in from previous year	11,535	(5,647)	5,888
Schools DFC budget adjustment to reflect final grant allocation	53	(53)	-
Schools budget approvals - Council April 2022	2,065	(2,065)	-
Reprofiling of Property budgets to reflect projections per July Finance update	(24,614)	-	(24,614)
Academies s106 funding	69	(69)	0
Windsor Girls School Expansion - Council July 2021	2,708	(1,349)	1,359
Waste vehicles budget drawdown	395	-	395
Budgets no longer required	(210)	210	0
Budget Drawdown Maidenhead Golf Course	15,950	-	15,950
Schools Wave 2 Resource Base feasibilities	100	(100)	0
Hilltop School roof and washroom refurbishment projects	92	(92)	0
Roundings	(2)	2	0
Revised Budget 2022/23	76,121	(26,272)	49,849

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Capital Monitoring Report 2022/23

	Exp £'000	Inc £'000	Net £'000
Revised Budget	76,121	(26,272)	49,849
Variances identified	(3,915)	184	(3,731)
Slippage to 2023/24	(11,260)	7,595	(3,665)
Projected outturn 2022/23	60,946	(18,493)	42,453

Variances from revised budget	£'000	£'000	£'000	Commentary
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Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport

CC51	Datchet Barrel Arch Drainage Repairs	(70)	-	(70)	Revised Business Case - budget reduced
CC60	Hostile Vehicle Mitigation Measures for Windsor	(65)	-	(65)	Revised Business Case - budget reduced
CD92	Telemetry System Replacement	(45)	-	(45)	Revised Business Case - budget reduced
CD99	Traffic Monitoring-Replacement Counters	(150)	150	0	Revised Business Case - budget reduced
CF02	Emergency Active Travel Measures	(29)	29	0	Revised Business Case - budget reduced
CLF4	RBWM Audio Upgrade	(1)	-	(1)	Scheme complete

Green Spaces & Parks

CC87	Public Rights of way - General	(5)	5	-	Scheme complete
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Library & Resident Services

CC65	Refurbishment MHead, Windsor, Ascot, Eton Libs	(10)	-	(10)	Revised Business Case - budget reduced
CLE1	Cox Green Lib - Building Repairs Etc	(5)	-	(5)	Revised Business Case - budget reduced
CLE6	Upgrade Public PCs	(39)	-	(39)	Scheme complete
CLG7	Libraries-Upgrade of Self Serve Kiosks	5	-	5	Revised Business Case - budget reduced

Property

CI75	York House-Leasing & Building Adaption Costs	(27)	-	(27)	Residual budget no longer required - budget reduced
CX40	Operational Estate Improvements	(225)	-	(225)	Residual budget no longer required - budget reduced
CX41	Commercial Investment Property Portfolio-Repairs	(187)	-	(187)	Residual budget no longer required - budget reduced
CX45	Affordable Housing - 16 Ray Mill Ave East, MHead	(2,734)	-	(2,734)	Residual budget no longer required - budget reduced
CX61	Fire Compartmentalisation Works-Maintained Schools	(28)	-	(28)	Residual budget no longer required - budget reduced
CX74	Commercial Estates-Compliance	(300)	-	(300)	Residual budget no longer required - budget reduced
Total Variances		(3,915)	184	(3,731)	

Slippage to 2023/24

	£'000	£'000	£'000	Commentary
Slippage previously reported	(6,319)	3,509	(2,810)	
Further slippage is reported as follows.				

Infrastructure, Sustainability & Transport

CD97	Cycling Action Plan-Delivery	(1,000)	1,000	-	Scheme to progress in 2023/24
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Schools - Non Devolved

CSKU	Windsor Girls School Expansion 2022	(2,000)	2,000	-	Slippage to complete in 2023/24
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Housing

CE08	Air Quality Monitoring	(100)	45	(55)	Slippage to 2023/24
CT29	Low Cost Housing (S106 Funding)	(161)	161	-	Slippage to 2023/24
CT51	Key Worker DIYSO	(195)	195	-	Slippage to 2023/24
CT66	John West House	(1,100)	300	(800)	Slippage to 2023/24

Head of Commissioning - People

CT62	Adult Services Case Management System	(200)	200	-	Slippage to 2023/24
CT67	Homestead- Winston and Hub	(185)	185	-	Slippage to 2023/24
Total Slippage		(11,260)	7,595	(3,665)	

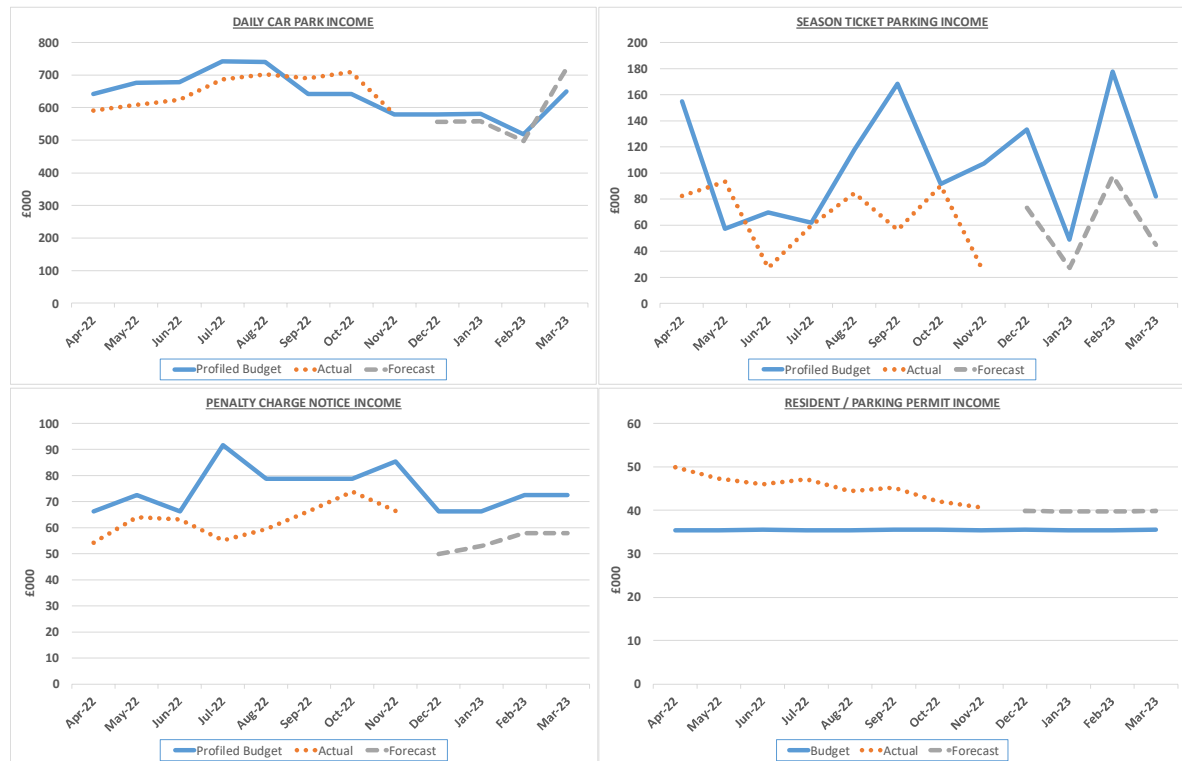
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Adult Social Care Client Numbers

	Budget*	Budget	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Current Variance
	£'000	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
Older people												
Residential and Nursing	13,843	290	343	345	338	337	337	342	342	345	343	53
Non-residential	6,164	328	437	430	427	426	417	399	406	406	398	70
Total older people	20,007	618	780	775	765	763	754	741	748	751	741	123
Physical disability												
Residential and Nursing	828	16	16	16	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	2
Non-residential	911	43	42	42	41	40	41	41	40	41	42	-1
Total physical disability	1,739	59	58	58	59	58	59	59	58	59	60	1
Learning disabilities												
Residential and Nursing	5,186	64	56	56	56	56	57	57	57	57	57	-7
Non-residential	3,819	104	111	112	112	112	114	116	116	116	117	13
Total learning disabilities	9,006	168	167	168	168	168	171	173	173	173	174	6
Mental health												
Residential and Nursing	689	17	23	23	23	22	22	22	22	22	22	5
Non-residential	1,494	82	78	73	73	72	72	72	72	71	71	-11
Total mental health	2,183	99	101	96	96	94	94	94	94	93	93	-6
Total	32,934	942	1,106	1,097	1,088	1,083	1,078	1,067	1,073	1,076	1,068	126

* Gross budget for commissioned care packages – excludes other costs such as staff costs and excludes client income.

Parking income



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Revenue Reserves	Opening balance £	Forecast transfers in £	Forecast transfers out £	Forecast closing balance £	Description of reserve
Better Care Fund	(3,399,541)	0	1,402,000	(1,997,541)	Funds directed by the BCF Board.
Business Rates Section 31 Grant Reserve	(23,052,535)	0	21,687,000	(1,365,535)	This relates to additional s31 grant to cover for the Covid-19 reliefs granted to businesses.
Business Rates Volatility Reserve	(3,193,668)	0	1,600,000	(1,593,668)	To cover any deficits on business rate collection. £1.6m earmarked for 2023/24 budget per MTFP.
Community Infrastructure Levy Revenue	(329,090)	0	0	(329,090)	CIL contributions to revenue costs.
Covid-19 General Reserve	(2,143,972)	0	2,143,972	0	To meet funding gap in 2022/23 due to the impact of the pandemic, identified in the MTFP.
Insurance Reserve	(901,064)	0	100,000	(801,064)	To fund insurance claims.
Grant funded future commitments reserve	(2,927,866)	(18,019)	2,063,564	(882,321)	New burdens and other unringfenced government grants.
Optalis Development Reserve	(380,747)	0	380,747	0	Optalis Board agreed that this would be provided to offset the Central Management costs
Property Reserve	(500,000)	0	78,000	(422,000)	Funding property specific one-off costs.
Public Health Fund	(587,984)	0	194,500	(393,484)	Ring-fenced Public Health Grant.
Arts funding reserve	(140,000)	0	0	(140,000)	Specific funding for the arts.
Safeguarding Reserve	(194,018)	0	170,000	(24,018)	Use to fund in year spend.
Building Control Reserve	69,241	(69,241)	0	0	Deficit from the joint service to be met from future fees & charges.
Grave Maintenance Reserve	(7,535)	0	0	(7,535)	To meet expenditure on closed graveyards.
Nature Reserve Maintenance Fund	(122,682)	0	0	(122,682)	Arthur Jacobs Nature Reserve.
Old Court Maintenance Reserve	(16,434)	0	0	(16,434)	Art Centre in Windsor
Total earmarked reserves	(37,827,894)	(87,260)	29,819,783	(8,095,371)	
School Reserves					
Schools Forum De delegated school services	(547,029)	0	0	(547,029)	Funding passed back (de-delegated) for school services with Schools Fourum approval.
Sensory Consortium Service	(245,457)	0	70,000	(175,457)	Berkshire joint arrangement for specialist ducation support.
Schools Revenue Balances	(3,003,155)	0	0	(3,003,155)	School specific reserves.
DSG Adjustment Account	2,046,845	0	(197,000)	1,849,845	Ringfenced deficit on education services held separately from general fund.
Total schools reserves	(1,748,796)	0	(127,000)	(1,875,796)	

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Report Title:	Council Tax Reduction Scheme
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Hilton Cabinet Member for Asset Management, Commercialisation, Finance and Ascot.
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 26 January 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Adele Taylor – Director of Resources. Louise Freeth, Head of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Resident Services.
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

1. Council Tax Reduction (CTR) provides financial assistance to council tax payers on a low income. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 places a legal requirement on local authorities to consider whether to change their working age Council Tax Reduction (CTR) scheme on an annual basis.
2. While there were no significant changes to the current scheme proposed in 2023/24, there are a number of administrative changes proposed in order to simplify the system for both residents and officers. This report seeks to provide the results of a recent public consultation in respect of those changes.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and, in particular notes the feedback from the consultation and:

- i) Approves the proposed amendments to the Council Tax Reduction scheme for the financial year 2023/24.

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

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Approve the proposed 2023/24 changes This is the recommended option	This will ensure the scheme is easier to understand for residents, introduces fairness for those not/on UC and simplifies the administration for staff.
Do not approve the proposed 2023/24 changes. Not the recommended option.	This will continue to differentiate between how UC income is treated and retain the complexity of administration for staff.

- 2.1 Since April 2013, billing authorities have been responsible for devising their own Council Tax Reduction (CTR) schemes to assist working age council tax payers who are on a low income.
- 2.2 It is a legal requirement that consideration is made, on an annual basis, to changing the scheme even where a decision is made that the scheme should be unchanged or where proposed changes may be considered minor e.g. uprating means tested allowances in line with the Department of Work and Pension figures.
- 2.3 No changes may be made to the pensionable age CTR scheme as these regulations are amended, annually, by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLHUC). Responsibility for their maintenance rests with DLHUC.
- 2.4 Councils are required to consult on any changes which they wish to make to the operation of their scheme. They must first consult with their major precepting authorities as it has a direct financial impact upon them. They must also consult anyone else who may be affected i.e. recipients of CTR and the wider council tax payers.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are currently 2,059 pensionable age CTR recipients, this is down from 2,100 in April 2022. None of these proposals would affect them.
- 3.2 There are currently 2,204 working age CTR recipients, this is down from 2,347 in April 2022. Of these 2,204 a total of 1,221 are in receipt of Universal Credit.
- 3.3 Total expenditure on the CTR scheme is currently £3,923,755 split into £2,094,196 in respect of pensionable age recipients and £1,829,558 for those of working age.
- 3.4 Any proposed change must be consulted on in a specific order i.e. with the major precepting authorities first and then anyone else considered to have an interest in the scheme i.e. residents whether in receipt of CTR or not.
- 3.5 Prior to the public consultation both Thames Valley Police and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service were consulted and confirmed they would not have any objection to the proposed changes

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Amend the working age CTR scheme as proposed	Working age CTR scheme remains as is	Scheme updated by 31 March 2023	N/A	N/A	01 April 2023

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 The financial impact for the Royal Borough is difficult to predict as it is not possible to identify relevant customers from existing records and there should be a focus, not only on the cost of CTR awards, but also on the costs associated with officer time, printing and posting additional CTAX bills and chasing outstanding CTAX debts associated with CTR claims.
- 4.2 It is also not possible to predict whether or not the number of CTR recipients will increase in 2023/24 as a result of the cost of living crisis although it should be noted that this has not been the case during the current financial year.
- 4.3 The potential costs of these changes are however perceived to be small compared to the benefit of the simpler administration of the scheme, for both customers and officers as well as the increasing fairness and support for many customers.
- 4.4 The table below summarises the effect of each change for both the customer and the council.

Table 3: Summary of proposed changes.

Change	Financial impact for customer	Financial impact for authority	Primary purpose
UC customers – limited reassessments.	No impact	No impact	More efficient administration of the scheme
UC customers – automatic re-awards	No impact, provided they previously submitted a new claim on time. Not possible to quantify costs.	Potentially more CTR support awarded as removing the burden of submitting a new claim. Not possible to quantify costs.	More efficient administration of the scheme
UC customers – Net vs Gross income	Negative impact – would receive less CTR. Would only affect new UC claims or where the UC reduces after 01.04.23. However anyone suffering financial hardship would be eligible to submit an application for a Discretionary S13A(1)(c) reduction in the CTAX charge. Not possible to quantify costs.	Would be awarding less CTR. Not possible to quantify costs.	To align the way in which UC income is treated with other Benefit income types.

All working age customers – 3 months backdating	Potentially positive if they qualified for the whole 3 month period rather than the current 1 month. Not possible to quantify costs.	Negative impact as would be potentially awarding more CTR but need to consider the possibility of chasing small debts for outstanding Council Tax if not awarded. Not possible to quantify costs.	More efficient administration of the scheme – aligning working age customers to existing rules for pensionable age customers.
All working age customers annual uprating	Positive impact – increased allowances would mean more CTR awarded. Not possible to quantify costs.	Negative impact as would be awarding more CTR. Not possible to quantify costs.	More efficient administration of the scheme, aligning CTR claims with those for Housing Benefit.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) (“the 1992 Act”) requires each billing authority in England to make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax payable by persons, or classes of person, whom the billing authority considers are in financial need. The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended in 2020) prescribe matters which must be included in such a scheme in addition to those matters which must be included in such a scheme by virtue of paragraph 2 of Schedule 1A to the 1992 Act.
- 5.2 The 1992 Act also requires an authority reducing CTR to consider the issue of whether to award such transitional protection as it sees fit to affected customers. It is proposed that, since the primary purpose of these changes is to simplify the scheme and mitigation already exists for those individuals suffering any potential financial hardship as a result, to create a complex transitional protection scheme would not be appropriate.
- 5.3 The council has existing powers under S13A(1)(c) of the 1992 Act where an affected customer believes they have suffered financial hardship as a result of these changes. This power enables the council to reduce the amount which a council tax payer is liable to pay, as respects the dwelling and the day, to such extent as it thinks fit on an individual basis.
- 5.4 The 1992 Act also places a requirement on councils to consult with anyone who may be affected i.e. recipients of CTR assistance and Council Tax Payers, should they wish to make any amendments to their scheme. The Council has sought to do so following consultation with the major preceptors i.e. Thames Valley Police and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 As this is a complex means tested form of public assistance it is not possible to outline the impact on each individual, but it is anticipated that only 1 proposed change may have a negative financial impact on new UC customers, or those existing UC customers whose income subsequently reduces, as a result of a debt repayment. It is not possible to accurately forecast numbers.
- 6.2 It should however be noted that the council is retaining existing protection for vulnerable customers within its current scheme. These include:
 - Disregarding income received from Child Benefit and Child Maintenance for both couples and lone parents with children.
 - Disregarding eligible child care costs up to £175 per week for one child and £300 per week for two or more children.
 - Disregarding income received from Disability Benefits such as Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments.
- 6.3 The council also has existing powers under S13(A)(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act which allows for the reduction of the charge, as the Borough sees fit. The Borough’s policy specifies that where an affected customer believes they have suffered severe financial hardship this discretionary power may be utilised. This power enables the council to reduce the amount which a council tax payer is liable to pay, as respects the dwelling and the day, to such extent as it thinks fit on an individual basis. It is proposed that this existing power is used in the event of customers facing financial hardship as a result of this change.
- 6.4 In addition, since this consultation concluded, Government have also announced a further £100m to be allocated to English local authorities to assist in protecting the most financially vulnerable from the effect of increased Council Tax changes. Guidance provided to local authorities on 23 December 2022 advises that the Royal Borough has been allocated £113,000 and is required to award all existing CTR recipients up to £25 additional CTR for the 2023/24 financial year, depending upon their net liability. Details of this award and the use of any potential underspend are subject to further discussion at this time. Any potential negative impact of the changes proposed within this report will be further mitigated by this new award.

Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risk	Level of uncontrolled risk	Controls	Level of controlled risk
Existing customers affected by the change could suffer hardship	Medium	S13(A)(1)(c) permits cases to be considered on an individual basis	Low
Collection rates in respect of Council	Medium	The Revenues Team will ensure the focus remains	Low

Tax will not be achieved		on collection and that this is monitored monthly.	
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7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 The council has to give due regard to its Equalities Duties, in particular with respect to general duties arising pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, section 149. Having due regard to the need to advance equality involves, in particular, to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant characteristic that are connected to that characteristic. Further details about the Equalities Duties are set out in the Equality Impact Assessment, which all councillors should read before taking the decisions identified in this report.
- 7.2 The council tax system is programmed to identify all CTR accounts. There is no evidence to indicate that groups with protected characteristics have been disproportionately affected by the operation of the scheme previously and while the changes proposed may reduce support available to individuals this would be based on the individual's circumstances rather than merely because they share a protected characteristic.
- 7.3 The powers provided within S13A(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act also provide further mitigation.
- 7.4 Standard questions relating to Equality and Diversity were included on the survey but it was made clear that answering these was not compulsory. While 191 responses were received, not all respondents chose to complete the questions regarding their circumstances or ethnic background
- 7.5 **Equalities.** An Equality Impact Assessment is available as Appendix A.
- 7.6 **Climate change/sustainability:** no impact identified.
- 7.7 **Data Protection/GDPR:** no impact identified.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 A public consultation exercise was undertaken during the period from 02 September 2022 to 02 December 2022. The consultation was available on the RBWM Together platform with paper copies available upon request. Only 1 request was received for a paper copy, which was issued but not returned. The consultation was promoted through a variety of channels during this time:
- A link was immediately available on the Royal Borough's website and posters put up in the Libraries.
 - Automated messages highlighting the consultation were placed on the generic Council Tax and Benefit acknowledgement e-mails.
 - An e-mail was issued to recipients of CTR, where these details were held, (4,100 residents) on 02 September 2022
 - An e-mail was issued to residents liable for Council Tax, where these details were held (39,375), on 07 October 2022

- Information was included in both the Resident's Newsletter and Members Update on 07 October 2022.
 - A newspaper advert, of all live consultations, including reference to the CTRS consultation, was placed in the local press on the 13th and 14th October 2022.
 - A paper flyer was produced, of all live consultations, including reference to the CTRS consultation, and a distribution house engaged to issue it to every household within the Borough from 27th to 29th October 2022
 - E-mails were issued to community groups and charities, identified from various sources, during this period culminating in a final reminder to 623 organisations who were sent an e-mail on 27 November 2022.
- 8.2 In total there were 499 responses received, compared with 191 last time this matter was consulted upon in October 2020.
- 8.3 Supplementary questions were asked, for monitoring purposes, to determine whether respondents were currently in receipt of CTR or were completing the consultation on behalf of a representative body. While only 8 respondents advised that they were completing the survey on behalf of a representative body, only 4 respondents then went on to state which group in the community they represented. Analysis of the 4 shows that responses were received from West Windsor Hub, Age Concern and the Disability and Inclusion Forum with the fourth response being from "pensioners" which may or may not be in connection with a community group.
- 8.4 Of those who chose to respond to these questions, 56 of the 494 respondents answering this specific question (11.33%) stated that they were currently in receipt of CTR and 47 of the 52 answering this specific question (90.38%) advised that they were of working age.
- 8.5 The consultation exercise was based on five questions to residents of the Royal Borough regarding the specific changes proposed, with options for free form text comments to be made if residents disagreed. The remaining question was entirely free text regarding any alternative savings proposals, or additional changes, that respondents would wish to see. Standard Equality and Diversity questions were also asked but it was made clear that providing this information was voluntary.
- 8.6 In summary:
- 400 respondents (82%) agree that customers in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) and CTTR should have their reassessments limited.
 - 384 respondents (79%) agree that UC customers whose income increases for a 4 week period should not have to complete a new claim if their income subsequently drops.
 - 372 respondents (77%) agreed that UC customers whose income is reduced as a result of debt repayment, should have their gross UC income taken into account in CTR.
 - 419 respondents (86%) agreed that the current backdating period of 1 month should be extended to 3 months.

- 409 respondents (85%) agreed that working age amounts should be updated and aligned to pensionable age sums, where they overlap.

8.7 In making its decision, in relation to the CTR Scheme, the Council must conscientiously take into account the feedback from the consultation process. The Council should look carefully at the comments made, including the alternative proposals suggested as to savings/revenue generation.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

If approved, the proposals would become effective from 01 April 2023.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by two appendices:

- Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment
- Appendix B - Consultation pre-amble showing full narrative and questions posed
- Appendix C – Summary of consultation responses

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is not supported by any background documents:

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	19.12.22	22.12.22
Emma Duncan	Director of Law, Strategy & Public Health/ Monitoring Officer	19.12.22	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	19.12.22	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	19.12.22	29.12.22
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	19.12.22	
<i>Mandatory: Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>			
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager	NA	
<i>Mandatory: Data Protection Officer (or deputy) - if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>			

Emma Young	Data Protection Officer	NA	
<i>Mandatory: Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>			
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer	19.12.22	
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Tony Reeves	Interim Chief Executive	19.12.22	
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	19.12.22	
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of People Services	19.12.22	19.12.22

Cllr Hilton	Cabinet Member for Asset Management, Commercialisation, Finance and Ascot.	19.12.22	
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Cabinet report: Key decision. First entered into the Cabinet Forward Plan: 01 December 2022.	No	No

Report Author: Louise Freeth, Head of Revenues, Benefit, Library and Resident Services. Tel: 01628 685664
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APPENDIX A - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Essential information

Items to be assessed: (please mark 'x')

Strategy		Policy	X	Plan		Project		Service/Procedure	
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Responsible officer	Louise Freeth	Service area	Revenues, Benefits, Library & Resident Services	Directorate	Resources
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Stage 1: EqIA Screening (mandatory)	Date created: 19/12/2022	Stage 2 : Full assessment (if applicable)	Date created : NA
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Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:

"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."

Signed by (print): Louise Freeth

Dated: 19/12/2022

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. 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.

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 proposed policy is to make a number of minor administrative changes to the existing working age Council Tax Reduction scheme for the financial year 2023/24 in order to make the scheme simpler to understand for residents and for officers to administer.

Each local authority has a duty to review its Council Tax Reduction scheme on an annual basis with any changes being approved by Council prior to 11th March preceding the financial year in which any changes would be implemented.

The authority must also consider any transitional protection, as it sees fit, where any changes would adversely affect individuals currently receiving such assistance.

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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 characteristics	Relevance	Level	Positive/negative	Evidence
Age	Relevant	High	Negative	<p>Key data: The estimated median age of the local population is 42.6yrs [Source: ONS mid-year estimates 2020].</p> <p>An estimated 20.2% of the local population are aged 0-15, and estimated 61% of the local population are aged 16-64yrs and an estimated 18.9% of the local population are aged 65+yrs. [Source: ONS mid-year estimates 2020, taken from Berkshire Observatory]</p> <p>DLHUC prescribe the regulations which govern the assessment of Council Tax Reductions customers of pensionable age. Authorities are unable to amend these.</p> <p>The proposals will affect some, but not all, customers of working age, in receipt of Council Tax Reduction in the future.</p>
Disability	Relevant	Low	Negative	<p>The authority will continue to disregard income received from disability related benefits e.g. Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independence Payments. However, in order to ensure the scheme remains simple to administer there is no proposal to exempt customers, en masse, as a result of disability. They, like anyone else, will be able to apply to consider remitting the costs on the basis of financial hardship in accordance with the authority's existing S13A(1)(c) Policy and, for the financial years 2020/21 – 2021/22, benefit from the Council Tax Hardship Fund award.</p>

Gender re-assignment	Not relevant			
Marriage/civil partnership	Not relevant			
Pregnancy and maternity	Not relevant			
Race	Not relevant			<i>Key data: The 2011 Census indicates that 86.1% of the local population is White and 13.9% of the local population is BAME. The borough has a higher Asian/Asian British population (9.6%) than the South East (5.2%) and England (7.8%). The forthcoming 2021 Census data is expected to show a rise in the BAME population. [Source: 2011 Census, taken from Berkshire Observatory]</i>
Religion and belief	Not relevant			<i>Key data: The 2011 Census indicates that 62.3% of the local population is Christian, 21.7% no religion, 3.9% Muslim, 2% Sikh, 1.8% Hindu, 0.5% Buddhist, 0.4% other religion, and 0.3% Jewish. [Source: 2011 Census, taken from Berkshire Observatory]</i>
Sex	Not relevant			<i>Key data: In 2020 an estimated 49.6% of the local population is male and 50.4% female. [Source: ONS mid-year estimates 2020, taken from Berkshire Observatory]</i>
Sexual orientation	Not relevant			

Outcome, action and 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?	No	NA	NA	NA
Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact?	Yes	The outcome of the policy may have a negative effect on future UC customers who have deductions made from their UC income but this will ensure consistency of treatment with other benefit recipients.	Louise Freeth	Public consultation closed on 02.12.22 and details of the feedback are included within the report.

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).

Stage 2 : Full assessment

2.1 : Scope and 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.

The main beneficiaries would be working age CTR recipients and, in the case of all but one of the proposed changes, those in receipt of Universal Credit.

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.

Director of Resources/S151
Cabinet Member for Asset Management, Commercialisation, Finance and Ascot.
The former Chief Executive
Corporate Leadership Team
Head of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Resident Services.
Revenues & Benefit Team

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.*

Current caseload data from the Council Tax and Council Tax Reduction system.

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.*

Public consultation which ended on 02.12.22 promoted in various ways including:

- A leaflet drop to each household
- Newspaper adverts
- Social media
- Poster in libraries
- Direct e-mail to community groups and charities involved with customers who may be affected
- Direct e-mail to all council tax liable parties where details held
- Direct e-mail to all CTR recipients where details held

Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation

Protected Characteristic	Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Negative impact : 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.
Age	No		Yes	Low	Some working age CTR recipients could be affected but could apply for a discretionary reduction.
Disability	No		Yes	Low	Some working ag disabled, CTR recipients could be affected but could apply for a discretionary reduction.
Gender reassignment	No		No		
Marriage and civil partnership	No		No		
Pregnancy and maternity	No		No		
Race	No		No		
Religion and belief	No		No		
Sex	No		No		
Sexual orientation	No		No		

Advance equality of opportunity

Protected Characteristic	Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Negative impact : 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.
Age	No		Yes	Low	Some working age CTR recipients could be affected but could apply for a discretionary reduction.
Disability	No		Yes	Low	Some working ag disabled, CTR recipients could be affected but could apply for a discretionary reduction. Existing income disregards would however remain.
Gender reassignment	No		No		
Marriage and civil partnership	No		No		
Pregnancy and maternity	No		No		
Race	No		No		
Religion and belief	No		No		
Sex	No		No		

Sexual orientation	No		No		
--------------------	----	--	----	--	--

Foster good relations

Protected Characteristic	Advancing the Equality Duty : Does the proposal advance the Equality Duty Statement in relation to the protected characteristic (Yes/No)	If yes, to what level? (High / Medium / Low)	Negative impact : 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.
Age	No		Yes	Low	Some working age CTR recipients could be affected but could apply for a discretionary reduction.
Disability	No		Yes	Low	Some working ag disabled, CTR recipients could be affected but could apply for a discretionary reduction. Existing income disregards would however remain.
Gender reassignment	No				
Marriage and civil partnership	No				
Pregnancy and maternity	No				
Race	No				
Religion and belief	No				
Sex	No				

Sexual orientation	No				
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2.4 Has your delivery plan been updated to incorporate the activities identified in this assessment to mitigate any identified negative impacts? If so please summarise any updates.

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.

If the decision is made to approve and continue with these changes, all Revenues, Benefits, Library and Resident services staff will be reminded of the Council Tax Hardship Fund and the S13A(1)(C) discretionary powers ensuring that, on a case by case basis, those suffering financial hardship will be protected.



Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support

Louise Freeth
Head of Revenues, Benefits, Library and Resident Services
Resources Directorate
Royal Borough Windsor & Maidenhead
PO Box 3464, Town Hall
Maidenhead
SL6 1XP

Have Your Say - Consultation on Council Tax Reduction Scheme: Consultation Closes 2nd December 2022.

Section A – What is this consultation about?

Each year the Council must decide whether to change the Council Tax Reduction Scheme (also known as Council Tax Support) for working-age applicants in its area.

What is Council Tax Reduction?

In April 2013, the national scheme of Council Tax Benefit was replaced by the new Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Council Tax Benefit had been funded by the Department of Work and Pensions and supported people on low incomes, by reducing the amount of Council Tax they had to pay.

Council Tax Reduction schemes are determined by local councils rather than by the Department of Work and Pensions. Central Government initially provided funding for the scheme but this has been reducing year on year and is no longer separately identified, but forms part of the Council's overall funding from Central Government.

Council Tax Reduction is a discount on the amount of Council Tax charged, it reduces how much residents have to pay.

How much someone is entitled to is calculated by comparing the income and capital of the household with the amount of money they "need" to live on. This is known as "means testing" and is how other types of benefits are calculated such as Housing Benefit, Income Support and Universal Credit.

Some parts of the Council Tax Reduction scheme are set by Central Government e.g. how to appeal, some basic rules of entitlement such as whether people from abroad can claim etc.

Central Government also set all the rules regarding Council Tax Reduction for Pensioners, who may still receive a discount of up to 100%, dependent upon their household income and capital.

The Royal Borough, is required to review their scheme for working age applicants each year to decide whether they wish to make any changes to it. Before any changes can be implemented, however, they must be subject to wide public consultation.

Further details on the Royal Borough's Council Tax Reduction scheme can be found here: <https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/council-tax-and-benefits/benefits/housing-benefit-and-council-tax-support>

You can also check to see if you could qualify for this discount by undertaking a trial calculation here: <https://rbwmclaims.teamnetsol.com/>.

What changes are being proposed for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24?

There are five changes being proposed for the 2023/24 Council Tax Reduction scheme for working age applicants. Three of these changes only affect working age applicants who are in receipt of both Council Tax Reduction (CTR) and Universal Credit (UC). There are currently 2,274 working age residents in receipt of CTR and, of these, 1,202 are in receipt of both UC and CTR.

The remaining two proposed changes affect all working age applicants. The changes are summarised below:

Universal Credit Customers – limited reassessments.

Currently, any applicant on UC and CTR who is working has their CTR adjusted each time their UC changes as a result of fluctuations in their earnings. This could mean up to 13 changes per year which may be confusing for customers who may have difficulty understanding how much Council Tax they have to pay as a result.

The proposal is to only re-assess these claims 3 times per year, unless a customer had a significant change such as starting or stopping work. When re-assessed, all changes would be processed so the overall net financial effect would be the same, but the number of adjusted Council Tax bills issued to customers would be fewer.

This would neither decrease nor increase the level of CTR for customers, as all claims would be corrected eventually, but should make it simpler for residents to understand.

Universal Credit Customers – automatic re-awards.

This proposal would mean that any UC customer who has a slightly higher level of income for one UC assessment period of 4 weeks, would not need to submit a new claim for CTR if they subsequently re-qualify. The fluctuation in their income would simply be treated as a change in circumstances making it easier for the customer to re-gain CTR entitlement.

This would neither increase nor decrease the level of CTR for customers but would make the process of re-gaining support easier.

Universal Credit – net vs gross income.

Currently, if a UC customer has a deduction from their UC income as a consequence of repaying a loan to the Department of Work and Pensions, the net UC income is taken into account when assessing entitlement to CTR. This is at odds with most other Benefit Income where regulations require the gross income to be used. The proposal is to amend the scheme to equalise the treatment of UC customers by taking their gross award i.e. the amount of UC they *should* be receiving if deductions were not made, rather than the net amount which they are *actually* receiving.

This would not be beneficial to these UC customers as they would get less CTR but would be fair and only affect claims in future where this change occurs.

All working age customers – backdating.

The current scheme limits the time that a working age customer may be able to have their new claim backdated to 1 calendar month, from the date that they request it, provided they have proven good cause for failing to apply at an earlier date.

It is proposed that the current 1 month time limit for backdating is amended to be 3 months where the customer has proven good cause for failing to apply at an earlier date.

This would be beneficial to customers.

All working age customers – annual uprating.

The final change proposed is primarily to ensure the scheme aligns to changes introduced to the national Housing Benefit scheme, where the rules are set by the Department of Work and Pensions or the pensionable age CTR regulations which are amended by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities.

This would be largely beneficial to customers and is in line with action taken each year since the scheme was introduced.

The Council is not proposing to change the maximum level of Council Tax Reduction that working age applicants can receive. This is set at 80%.

Who will this affect?

Working age households in the area who currently receive, or can apply for, Council Tax Reduction. Some applicants may be on Council Tax Reduction for the whole financial year while others will come on and off, depending upon their financial circumstances. There are currently 2,274 working age residents in receipt of CTR and, of these, 1,202 are in receipt of both UC and CTR. This includes households where one partner is of working age and the other is of pensionable age as they would both be treated as being of working age. This aligns with Housing Benefit.

Pensionable age households, either single pensioners or couples who are both pensioners, will not be affected as Central Government prescribes the scheme relating to those households.

Examples.

As CTR is a means tested benefit, based on an individual's income and needs allowance, it is not possible to provide examples of how this may affect all applicants.

The majority of the proposals will not alter the level of CTR awarded but the example below shows how the potentially detrimental change would affect the level of award with regard to a specific customer.

If anyone has specific concerns, not answered here, about their specific circumstances, please contact benefits@rbwm.gov.uk.

UC income – using gross not net income.

A single disabled person in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payment living in a Band B property in Windsor. Gross weekly income of £364.87 of which £156.90 is fully disregarded. They have a £20 deduction taken from their Employment Support Allowance as they are repaying the DWP a previous loan, the income from which is not taken into account when it is received. So their actual income is now only £344.87 but the CTR regulations still treat them as having the full £364.87.

- **Weekly CTR award £12.91 per week against a maximum of £13.55 (80% of their charge)**

A single disabled person on Universal Credit with the same level of income would currently have their actual weekly income of £344.87 taken into account.

- **Weekly CTR award £13.55 per week as their income is below their weekly needs allowance (80% of their charge)**

Under the proposal, the UC customer would be treated the same as the person on Employment Support Allowance and have the gross amount taken into account of £364.87.

- **Weekly CTR award £12.91 per week against a maximum of £13.55 (80% of their charge)**

Will there be any exemptions to these proposals for working age Council Tax Reduction applicants?

We recognise, even before the effects of Covid 19 were felt, that residents may struggle to meet the cost of their Council Tax charge and have considered introducing protection for certain groups who receive Council Tax Reduction.

However, the Council already has Discretionary Powers to reduce *anyone's* Council Tax charge, whether in receipt of Council Tax Reduction or not, where they are suffering financial hardship. Further details on this may be found here: https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-08/ctax_discretionary_reduction_liability_policy.pdf

This would continue to offer protection for those most financially vulnerable. We believe this is fairer than only protecting certain groups of applicants, as it available for anyone who fits the criteria.

This also ensures that further complexity is not introduced into the administration of the Council Tax Reduction scheme which could increase costs.

Are there any alternatives to these proposals?

The majority of these changes are proposed in order to simplify the administration of the current scheme, for customers and staff as well as aligning the treatment of customers where there is a clear disparity. Simplifying the administration of the current scheme may also bring savings, or at least ensure that costs associated with processing current claims do not escalate as more customers move across to Universal Credit. The Council has to look carefully at all costs it incurs and, without these proposals, there could be an impact on its overall budget, which could mean:

- Raising Council Tax *; or
- reducing Council services and using compensatory savings to fund Council Tax Reduction; or
- using the Council's one-off reserves, which does not resolve the underlying funding requirement; or
- a combination of the three.

* In recent years the Government has restricted the level by which Local Authorities can increase Council Tax without holding a referendum.

In addition, if the scheme is not aligned with existing Housing Benefit changes, or if further complex arrangements such as protecting certain groups of people are introduced, this could mean increased administration costs generally.

Each year the Council also receives details of Council Tax Reduction changes for Pensionable Age applicants from Central Government. These changes are usually provided in late December or early January. However, where appropriate, the Council wishes to mirror such changes in its working age scheme.

An example of this would be where a deduction from the maximum Council Tax Reduction is made because someone, other than the claimant or partner, lives in the house who is working and aged over 18. This is known as a “non-dependent deduction”. Deduction levels are set by Central Government for pensioners and the proposal is to mirror those for working age applicants.

Also, for working age Housing Benefit applicants, the Department of Work and Pension provides details of the new allowances for working age customers which change each April, such as the sums involved in calculating how much money someone “needs” to live on. It is proposed that these amounts are mirrored in the Council’s working age Council Tax Reduction scheme, as they have been since 2013.

Unfortunately, we cannot confirm the exact details of these changes as they are not yet available, but the links below are for the 2020/21 documents and may therefore provide some insight into the types of changes typically introduced:

Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2020: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/25/made>

Housing Benefit Up-rating Circular: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-benefit-adjudication-circulars-2021/a112021-housing-benefit-uprating-for-the-financial-year-ending-march-2023#:~:text=Up-rating%20of%20non%2Dincome%20related%20social%20security%20benefits,-6.&text=The%20higher%20and%20middle%20rate,be%20increased%20from%20April%202022>

Q1 Universal Credit customers – limiting the reassessments

	Yes	No
Do you agree that customers in receipt of both UC and CTR who are working, should normally have the reassessment of their CTR limited to 3 times per year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you disagree, please write your reasons here:

.....

Q2 Universal Credit customers – automatic re-awards.

	Yes	No
Do you agree that UC customers whose income rises for 4 weeks, to take them out of entitlement for CTR, should not have to complete a new claim for CTR if their income then drops and they become entitled again?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you disagree, please write your reasons here:

.....

Q3 Universal Credit customers – net vs gross income.

	Yes	No
Do you agree that UC customers whose income reduces, due to a debt repayment, should have their gross income used when calculating CTR rather than their net, bringing them into line with other benefit recipients?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you disagree, please write your reasons here:

.....

Q4 All working age – backdating.

	Yes	No
Do you agree that the current 1 month period of backdating for all working age customers should be extended to 3 months, from the date the request is received, where good cause for failing to apply earlier is proven?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you disagree, please write your reasons here:

.....

Q5 Do you agree that changes, for working age Council Tax Reduction customers, should be aligned with those of Pensioners and working age Housing Benefit customers?

	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------

It should also be noted that the scheme is subject to revision in order to comply with any legislative changes introduced by Central Government in relation to Council Tax Reduction

Are there any other changes you would have liked to see to the Council Tax Support scheme 2022/23 or general comments regarding CTS?

Please write your answer here:

.....

Q6 Please choose any of these that apply:	Yes	No

a. Are you currently in receipt of Council Tax Support?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you answered yes to (5a) please tick one of the following:		
bi. Are you a pensioner?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
bii. Are you of working age?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q7 Are you completing this on behalf of a representative body such as the Citizen Advice Bureau or Age Concern?

Yes No

Which group in the community do you represent?

.....

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Council Tax Reduction Scheme Consultation

SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

02 September 2022 - 02 December 2022

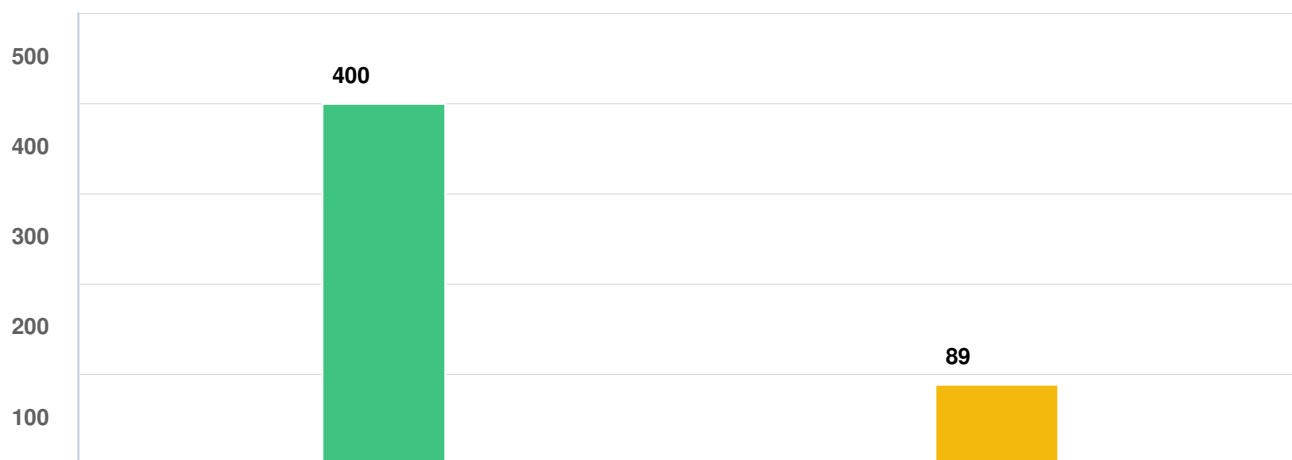
PROJECT NAME:

Council Tax Reduction Scheme Consultation



SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1 Do you agree that customers in receipt of both UC and CTR who are working, should normally have the reassessment of their C...



Question options

- Yes
- No

Optional question (489 response(s), 10 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q2 | If you disagree, please write your answers here

Anonymous

9/12/2022 11:13 AM

It should be based on their current status

Anonymous

9/13/2022 02:42 PM

I think the CTR should be assessed as many times as needed within a year as sometimes the UC can change or wages can change

Anonymous

9/20/2022 02:45 PM

they might still be working but their payments might fluctuate.

Anonymous

10/07/2022 05:31 PM

Life is stressful enough, without worrying that the council tax bill will change in the year

Anonymous

10/07/2022 05:40 PM

Peoples circumstances can change rapidly leading to urgent problems

Anonymous

10/07/2022 07:29 PM

Income can change assessment should be regular

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:26 PM

This is an uncertain climate we live in and so the unpredictability could result in increased number of times some one is employed or unemployed so by allowing more opportunities to review is a fair and measured way for all to benefit / contribute.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

Should be assessed as and when recipient circumstances change.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

There is no way of knowing how a persons financial situation will change from month to month. Those in a more volatile job stability will be subject to change. Those on permanent UC and CTR will be less affected so perhaps those who work and qualify for UC /CTR should be allowed more reassessments.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:28 PM

I am of the opinion that there are many scroungers and there should be more stringent assessments.

Anonymous

Why is this needed i M disabled and all this just cause me mental

10/10/2022 02:30 PM

illness stressful

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

It will give a big impact on families who are already struggling with Bill's and high cost living

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:28 PM

Applicant's circumstances can change more frequently than that, this limitation inhibits them from seeking reassessment when there might be a genuine change of circumstances. It may also inhibit applicants from seeking reassessment at all, "saving" for when "something even worse" happens

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

review more often as benefits should be temporary, not permanent

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:34 PM

Some people work shifts and also UC monitor our monthly wage and deduct from it. There fore if someone worked overtime UC already deduct any extra moneys from the payment.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:42 PM

If the customer is in possession of UC that likely means they have some sort of disability which is not allowing them to work to their full potential. I'm aware of people who not only work but also get UC but do not have much money due to their job being very low wage due to their illness or inability to work and the UC only covers essentials like food and bills.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:51 PM

This should be an ongoing process.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:49 PM

Should be 6 times

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:52 PM

Why ask this, people need the money

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:59 PM

Do it more

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:11 PM

Peoples circumstances can change dramatically at short notice and in multiple times in multiple ways, especially in current economically uncertain climate

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:08 PM

Do UC claimants circumstances change that substantially that frequently that merits the logistical time / effort / cost of doing this 3 times a year Vs 2 a year?

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:18 PM

It should be reassessed quarterly

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:58 PM

I think it should be limited to once a year unless there are any changes in circumstance.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:17 PM

"who are working, should normally have the reassessment of their CTR limited to 3 times per year" As opposed to what. 4 times? Surely any more strikes a balance between staff time and benefit.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:28 PM

It should be checked more regular than that, a monthly check in would be good

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:06 PM

I think we should give people as much help as possible

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:45 PM

I disagree because some of those people do not have a stable income, and do not work full time. Having to continually reassess those people from low income households can be stressful and disruptive.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:52 PM

I think it should be once a year rather than 3 times, it just makes it easier

Anonymous

10/12/2022 06:21 PM

Reassessment should be done annually to avoid costs

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:10 PM

Regardless of income all people should be assessed. Some people have struggled and are not entitled to anything.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 11:37 PM

This needs to be consistently reviewed

Anonymous

If they are working they should pay like others

10/10/2022 11:53 PM

Anonymous

Circumstances can change faster than that

10/11/2022 01:43 AM

Anonymous

In my opinion , reassessment should be more frequent than 3 month per year. To encourage customers to work and not relying on their benefits. The more gap in reassessment, the more opportunity you provide customers to avoid any incentive to be part of the society

10/11/2022 07:20 AM

Anonymous

I think review should be even less frequent and changes shouldn't be back dated where disadvantageous to the claimant.

10/11/2022 09:13 AM

Anonymous

The system is hideous, based on a person's address/borough and use earnings, simply tax a person at source from their income by inland revenue, who then in turn pass on the reflected council tax to relevant borough, in your case RBWM. You will never need to assess anyone ever again; If someone has massive income they can contribute more to society, if less fortunate they pay less - but every one pays and is therefore equal in society.

10/11/2022 11:05 AM

Anonymous

why 3 times per year? that is gonna take up and consume a lot of time and resources for the administrators. and stress levels for the applicant will be thru the roof. 3 times in one year is too much ...

10/11/2022 02:06 PM

Anonymous

Reassessment should be done whenever there's a significant change in circumstances - however often that occurs

10/11/2022 05:29 PM

Anonymous

Would three times a year and also when circumstances change not be better?

10/11/2022 06:08 PM

Anonymous

Reassessments should take place more often and as soon as there is a change in circumstance.

10/11/2022 06:27 PM

Anonymous

The reviews should be rolling. A year can see huge swings in fortune.

10/11/2022 08:15 PM

Anonymous

Payments need to be at the appropriate level, so make adjustments as and when necessary

10/12/2022 07:44 AM

Anonymous

10/12/2022 10:47 AM

Monthly income varies if doing shift work. So 5 times more fair.

Anonymous

10/12/2022 01:50 PM

I believe they should be reassessed as circumstances change

Anonymous

10/12/2022 04:50 PM

Quarterly feels like an appropriate reassessment period.

Anonymous

10/12/2022 06:24 PM

Because they have low incomes

Anonymous

10/12/2022 08:00 PM

The people on UC will work the system for their benefit

Anonymous

10/13/2022 01:07 PM

This should be limited to 6 times a year

Anonymous

10/14/2022 05:44 PM

Quarterly seems like an appropriate cadence.

Anonymous

10/16/2022 09:44 AM

once assessed that's it

Anonymous

10/16/2022 03:27 PM

Better to do it any time circumstances change to avoid stress of not knowing

Anonymous

10/17/2022 04:34 PM

People who works full time and don't take any benefit should be able to get support as well

Anonymous

10/19/2022 11:18 AM

People should be able to have their council tax reassessed as many times as they need, in line with changes to their income. Capping it to three could put someone in a position where their income falls but they are still receiving a lower level of reduction.

Anonymous

10/19/2022 05:00 PM

Should be more often

Anonymous

10/20/2022 08:26 AM

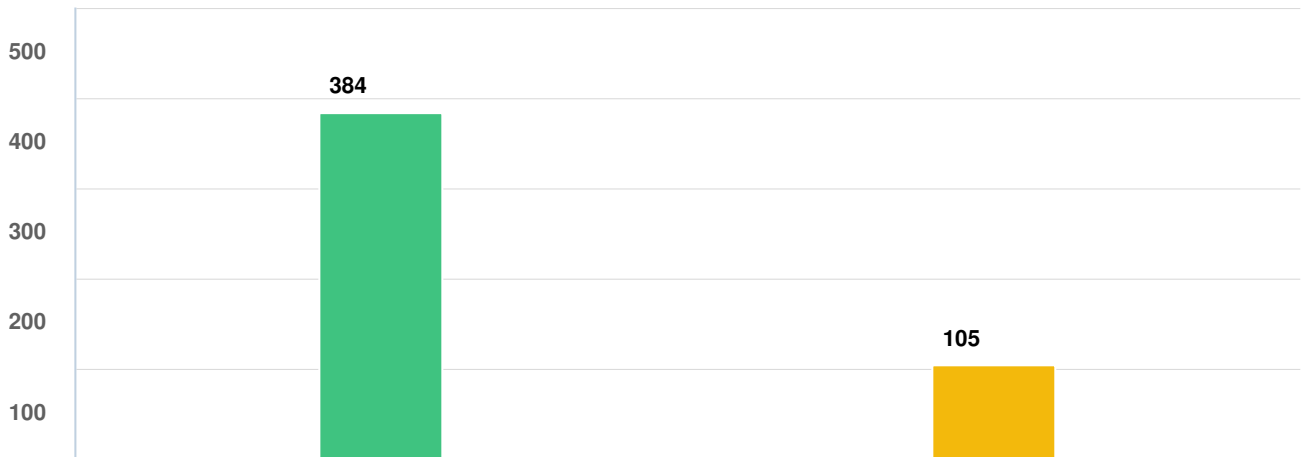
Assessed constantly. Circumstances can change overnight.

Anonymous 10/24/2022 09:33 PM	Because situations change and income can go up as well as down
Laanee 10/25/2022 09:47 PM	Needs to be more
Anonymous 10/28/2022 07:26 PM	It should be re assessed if their circumstances change before an assessment is due
Anonymous 10/29/2022 09:26 AM	I reckon the previous setting of having reassessments is reasonable - the concern was that it may be confusing to customers, then I would suggest providing more support (e.g. help materials or customer officers) to deal with the real issue. Limiting the reassessment to 3 times per year would greatly enhance the possibility of abusing of the UC / CTR
Anonymous 10/29/2022 02:56 PM	It should be reassessed on an annual basis.
Anonymous 11/02/2022 12:39 PM	circumstances change month to month
Anonymous 11/14/2022 01:51 PM	People who get UC are already low-income, so they don't need to be reassessment. If there is a change in their financial situation, they are already evaluated by UC.
Anonymous 11/21/2022 12:36 PM	Circumstances can change quite quickly why not 4 times a year, quaterly only if there is a change which would impact the outcome.
Anonymous 11/26/2022 12:33 AM	The stress of redoing the form, can and does stop people reapplying for the reduction.
Anonymous 11/26/2022 11:13 AM	they should be reassessed when a significant change of more than GBP10 per week net income happens
Anonymous 12/02/2022 05:05 PM	must have regular update of circumstances

Optional question (67 response(s), 432 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q3 Do you agree that UC customers whose income rises for 4 weeks, to take them out of entitlement for CTR, should not have to ...



Question options

● Yes ● No

Optional question (489 response(s), 10 skipped)
 Question type: Checkbox Question

Q4 If you disagree, please write your reasons here

Anonymous

9/13/2022 02:42 PM

It may not only be their income that has changed and I think a new CTR application should be completed to update any information on a claim

Anonymous

9/20/2022 02:45 PM

If they don't complete a new claim how will you know they are entitled to CTR again. If you're meaning to ask will a notification of reduction in income be sufficient rather than reclaiming then I agree

Anonymous

10/03/2022 11:03 PM

Situation changes. New assemble should be done. To Stop people taking advantage

Anonymous

10/04/2022 06:54 AM

It is their responsibility to manage their finances including applying for benefit schemes that apply to them, it would put additional work onto someone else to monitor their incomes and reapply them

Anonymous

Just extra work

10/07/2022 05:42 PM

Anonymous

10/07/2022 06:19 PM

Too short a period Propose 6 weeks This would mean better indication that increase was sustained

Anonymous

10/07/2022 06:25 PM

a shorted questionnaire as little as a signed statement of facts and the relevant proofs should be enough to restart a claim

Anonymous

10/07/2022 07:29 PM

Clear assessment is needed to see if the dip is temporary and/or self inflicted

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:18 PM

If their income fluctuates then the council taxi should be assessed

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:18 PM

Too much costly admin to verify which is likely to be more expensive than the money you get back

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:21 PM

Because the flatulent raise or decrease can change at any given time and is not stable alongside the couple busy schedules would not allow time to recalculate before the next bill. Unless they are able cap the increase, for example it's it means tested already then it can bounce back to the regular amount and never change.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:20 PM

If it is to be means tested then the fall should be assessed as to why it has taken place and the circumstance causing the fall

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:26 PM

Onus is on individual to apply and this should remain and be made clear.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:23 PM

the income can vary and at least 10-12 week period of rising income should be taken into account before removing the benefit

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:22 PM

Circumstances change

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:28 PM

New claim should be made to keep track on their earnings

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:27 PM

How will they prove this.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:28 PM

See my answer to 1

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

Sometimes it can be temporary for them it will create chaos.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

test why the income had risen and adjust benefits as necessary

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:42 PM

Income rises are common and can drip almost instantly if you are working commission based or by an hourly/day rate however I think the specifics should be looked into before deciding to not make the customer re-apply ie. How substantial was the income rise? How stable was the income rise? and Would the customer require a CTR as support?

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:56 PM

This question is badly formulated. I do not agree that anyone receives benefits automatically just because they were entitled before. I pay my taxes and duties according to my current income, and if the situation changes I have to make prof of that.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:51 PM

they have to be able to claim based on their situation so they can pay their bills

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:54 PM

I think that automatic re-awards would be liable to an abuse of the system

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:59 PM

Make it tougher to get support

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:18 PM

If their income raises it's a new claim and they should complete a new form

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:23 PM

4 weeks is to shorts

Anonymous

We are assuming that they will report this change of circumstances

10/10/2022 03:48 PM

within the AP. It's difficult to get some claimants to report accurately as it stands

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:58 PM

If circumstances change then this should be recorded, however, it should be made a much more simple process than currently.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:28 PM

If you are on UC, you should complete form monthly

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:58 PM

How will you know that they are entitled to re-award if they don't reapply?

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:13 PM

CTR should not be given too easily. Other working people pay for that in the end.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:17 PM

Have to prove their income has dropped.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:52 PM

It adds upto more time and paper work

Anonymous

10/10/2022 06:52 PM

This should be done so that they do not get more than the stipulated amount each month since they are not always in a position to returnh

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:10 PM

Should reasssed

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:18 PM

It is important to understand whether their incomes reduced due to voluntary reasons (they decided not to continue employment or work for increased hours etc.) or involuntary reasons (health, family, redundancy, etc.)

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:38 PM

To make sure thatthey are eligible and the council has the most up-to-date information

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:16 PM

If there earning for most months then they should be re assessed and tax amended accordingly. Or it should be assessed yearly and then again managed by the tax office.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:50 PM

You have to assess this on an individual case and if the amount of increase is over X percentage then they would need to re apply. Of course, if the increase is minimal and these individuals income should drop then they shouldn't complete another form for CTR. Surely, if the cost to administer that additional check is greater than the claim itself it would not be in the interest of the tax payer.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 10:42 PM

Evidence should always be provided via the form

Anonymous

10/10/2022 11:37 PM

This needs to be reassessed with changes in circumstances

Anonymous

10/10/2022 11:53 PM

They should have to reclaim if their circumstances change

Anonymous

10/11/2022 07:20 AM

Reassessment should be mandatory for any changes in one's circumstances

Anonymous

10/11/2022 10:08 AM

This would mean CTR is being applied incorrectly and unfair to those not receiving any discount. Consider previous discounts amounts being paid back once they are out of entitlement. The adjustments should be completed on a quarterly basis and be pro rata within a quarter. Focus should be on minimising CTR and encouraging people to earn a fair living wage regularly.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 11:05 AM

see no2 answer

Anonymous

10/11/2022 02:24 PM

It would be too complicated to work out monthly, but overall assessment 4 monthly. Some people may cease to have to claim.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 02:41 PM

as long as they can prove income has reduced then they shouldn't have to fill in a new claim as this just delays payment.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 06:27 PM

Due to increased income, taking them over the CTR threshold, of course there needs to be a reassessment. How can they be allowed to have the increased income over the threshold and retain the same CTR?

Anonymous

10/11/2022 09:45 PM

This would increase CTR to ineligible people

Anonymous

10/12/2022 07:44 AM

Claimants should make a claim as and when they become eligible (or re eligible) for CTR

Anonymous

10/12/2022 04:50 PM

It is important & fair to ensure only those entitled to CTR receive it.

Anonymous

10/13/2022 01:07 PM

Should be tested each time on a means basis

Anonymous

10/13/2022 03:10 PM

If re-application is NOT required it will be easier to just stay on UC (even when not entitled) rather than discontinue receipt and start again if needed/ .

Anonymous

10/13/2022 04:42 PM

I think it's a customer duty to claim for CTR again if they need it.

Anonymous

10/17/2022 10:36 AM

just to make sure it is valid that it should apply again

Anonymous

10/17/2022 10:47 AM

This appears to be a significant admin burden to both the claimant and the borough

Anonymous

10/17/2022 06:28 PM

Would answer YES if this happens within 3 months, but NO and should reapplying if more than 3 months.

Anonymous

10/19/2022 04:17 PM

That's because the rise may be seasonal and it might drop once their temporary employment ends

Anonymous

10/20/2022 08:26 AM

Every circumstance assessed.

Anonymous

10/24/2022 09:33 PM

They should provide proof again of entitlement and current situation/ circumstances each time they may be entitled.

Laanee

10/25/2022 09:47 PM

Reapply

Anonymous

10/27/2022 11:06 AM

If there are other means to assess the authenticity that's fine.

Anonymous

11/02/2022 12:39 PM

increased work may continue and become full time and they would still be receiving credit

Anonymous

11/02/2022 10:16 PM

In my opinion, anyone who is claiming for CTR should always complete a claim for it, and be checked on the information provided by them.

Anonymous

11/04/2022 08:35 PM

To short of time, with the way the economy is at the moment it is unlikely that everyone will have a stability, and seems unfair to make them reapply if they only have stability for 4 weeks.

LDT99

11/20/2022 12:55 PM

Need to check status when income changes

Anonymous

11/27/2022 04:27 PM

It's better to have transparency, rather than someone on a low income being hit with a bill or fine later on for not paying accurately, which will likely put them under increasing financial pressure. If the purpose of this question is about resourcing the additional checks, it should be the recipient's responsibility to disclose any changes, like required with UC awards, and any deliberate misleading be dealt with at a later stage after reasonable consideration and grace period.

Anonymous

11/29/2022 08:38 AM

Can always go down again. I'd give it 6 months not 3

Anonymous

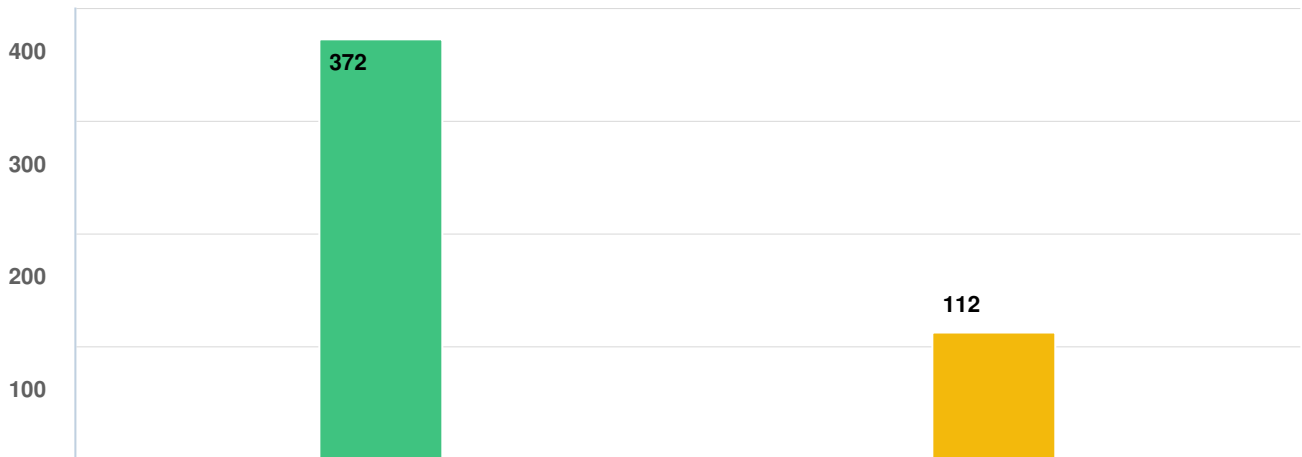
12/02/2022 05:05 PM

must have an update of the actual circumstances to avoid working less in order to get benefit again.

Optional question (70 response(s), 429 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q5 Do you agree that UC customers whose income reduces, due to a debt repayment, should have their gross income used when calc...



Question options

● Yes ● No

Optional question (484 response(s), 15 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q6 If you disagree, please write your reasons here

Anonymous

9/07/2022 02:20 PM

I think all legacy benefits should be brought into line with UC and calculated on their net income.

Anonymous

9/12/2022 11:13 AM

We all have debts - not just those on CTR - which we have to manage

Anonymous

10/03/2022 12:02 PM

A reduction still means a person has less money and will be taken into further debt as they will not have the means to pay the council tax

Anonymous

10/03/2022 11:03 PM

What stops people getting into debt then, why should they then pay the council less and others in the council for their bill for going into arrears.

Anonymous

10/04/2022 06:54 AM

Dependant on the debt, high levels for costs of living yes, low levels for first World benefits like toys games, cigarettes etc no

Anonymous
10/04/2022 07:22 AM

Cost of living crisis related debt should have the net related reduction.

Anonymous
10/07/2022 05:31 PM

You cannot calculate CTR on gross income, as that is not a true reflection on what income people have.

Anonymous
10/07/2022 05:40 PM

We need to encourage debt reduction

Anonymous
10/07/2022 06:19 PM

Net income reflects spending power & is fair

Anonymous
10/07/2022 06:25 PM

repaying the debt out of a Benefit is already reducing their resources, they should not be punished further

Anonymous
10/09/2022 04:49 PM

These claimants have little enough to live on as it is!

Anonymous
10/10/2022 06:20 AM

It is disposable income that matters.

Anonymous
10/10/2022 02:18 PM

People live of net not gross

Anonymous
10/10/2022 02:27 PM

Paying off debt is a great contributor to better mental health which helps them focus on keeping their job and not sliding further into needing more state benefits.

Anonymous
10/10/2022 02:28 PM

Should go on the take home pay

Anonymous
10/10/2022 02:30 PM

No because they don't use that money, it is to pay the debt and therefore should not be considered as income.

Anonymous
10/10/2022 02:32 PM

Poorly worded, give examples. Reads to me like they would be worse off, even if it means the other type of benefit recipients are worse off, doesn't mean that UC recipients should be

Anonymous

Nett income should be used for all calculations

10/10/2022 02:36 PM

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:51 PM

because the net income is more realistic than the gross

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:54 PM

As a fair society we shall consider the cost of living crisis and think of the more fragile people.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:59 PM

Their usable income has reduced because of debt repayment. There is no need introduce further hardship.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:00 PM

Well if they have debt repayments to make that are not taken into consideration they may fall below the poverty line and will still need enough to live on.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:11 PM

Net income is all they have left available from which to pay further liabilities including council tax

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:09 PM

I have to manage debt and so should they manage debt

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:20 PM

Expenses and expenditure should be taken in consideration when deciding an award

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:49 PM

Their net income is what is important as that is the pool in which council tax will be taken. I think it is important that, when deciding who qualifies for CTR, this aspect is understood and taken into consideration.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:43 PM

Money how lbs up and down and should be adjusted to what they take home as one month may be more than another

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:58 PM

Debt repayment can be many things. If at one point an individual could afford something and they are tied into a contract to continue repaying monthly then something changes in their income unexpected, it would be unfair to calculate CTR based on gross income instead of net. Gross income implies someone has more disposable income than they actually do.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:58 PM

People who are on UC are the most financially vulnerable people in our society, and it seems to me that anything that decreases their available income, even by a couple of pounds, could actually make a bad situation worse.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:28 PM

Why is person taking the debt?

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:02 PM

Need more details about the nature of the debt

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:17 PM

Then they will just keep piling up debts.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:31 PM

People are vert hard pressed in these difficult times.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:52 PM

How can you use gross rather than net to calculate ones earnings. Because gross always works out more over time.

Anonymous

10/12/2022 06:21 PM

all these cost a.nd calculations should be done annually to avoid cost to the council

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:38 PM

Everyone has debts/ mortgages amd other loans, and thensystem should treat everyone equally. My mortgage is not excluded when I am billed !

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:47 PM

Because it is meant to assess those in need , debt doesn't reduce need .

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:24 PM

In my experience staff at Town Hall are not proficient enough to make correct changes

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:32 PM

using net income is a much better method of determining a persons disposable income which should be the measure by which a tax reduction is calculated if a person has debt that has to be paid back that has to be taken into consideration

Anonymous

If the debt has been declared at the time of the CTR application, then

10/10/2022 08:50 PM

yes but if not and the debt could have been prevented I.e the claimant has decided to purchase luxury items and as a result they get in debt, then it shouldn't be the tax payer that foots the bill. This is partly the reason why the welfare system is in a mess.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:39 PM

Unforeseen circumstances should be taken into consideration

Anonymous

10/10/2022 11:53 PM

I tried to select yes and system froze.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 08:58 AM

I think that there are some cases when debt should be considered. For example, an individual who has fled an abusive relationship might have debt because of this situation they had to escape from. They might have been forced to take on the debt of a partner, who had no option but to take on debt to escape the situation, such as to purchase essential items to enable them to free themselves.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 09:13 AM

People's ability to feed themselves is based on the actual money they have in their pocket, not a notional gross figure. Most deductions made by DWP are the result of DWP error or inefficiency not customer error or fraud. It is wrong that vulnerable people are put under even more pressure by DWP by making deductions to correct their errors. RBWM should not add to this hardship.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 11:05 AM

see answer 2

Anonymous

10/11/2022 11:30 AM

People who are doing the right thing by repaying debt shouldn't be penalised - assuming that the debt can be verified

Anonymous

10/11/2022 11:49 AM

I neither agree nor disagree

Anonymous

10/11/2022 02:55 PM

People should take on debt responsibly, with a few exceptional cases.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 08:15 PM

Net income is the measure for feeding and heating themselves and/or their household.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 09:41 PM

Self employed lone parents are already penalised with benefits being cut as they assume you earn what they want (MIF), not what you actually earn. so if you then took that fictitious figure, you'd be taking even more assuming that lone parent was left with the min they need to live on - when in fact they are well below that. This won't affect just those owing loans but will mainly affect those self employed subject to the minimum income floor. So no, definitely should not use the gross figure. It's all fictitious figures designed to pull families further into poverty - and you'd be helping them.

Anonymous

10/12/2022 06:54 PM

Would be excessive burden on those families who are already struggling and as benefits low in any case it would be inappropriate

Anonymous

10/13/2022 08:56 AM

The whole purpose of the UC system was to avoid cliff edges like you're suggesting. Pushing people into arrears/poverty over variable net income is more likely to lead to greater money issues for UC recipients. You also haven't been explicit as to whether you mean a public debt (due to benefit overpayment) and private debts, such as credit cards. UC/benefit advances and emergency loans are common in the system - if you are discounting these deductions when calculating a recipient's income for CTR, you are more likely to push this group further into poverty. This will likely lead to greater demands on RBWM's purse strings as these individuals will fall further into poverty demanding greater council support, and/or increase their debts even more as they borrow to support basic living costs.

Anonymous

10/13/2022 06:44 PM

People on low incomes are struggling at the moment. The cost saving for RBWM from this is tiny. Better to adjust the other benefits in the same way.

Anonymous

10/13/2022 07:58 PM

Net is after tax and other repayment are made. If they're making the effort to pay off debt, they should have the more beneficial option

Anonymous

10/13/2022 08:57 PM

If someone is paying tax and national insurance, that is not money they are in receipt of therefore they shouldn't have this income included in their calculations

Anonymous

10/17/2022 12:24 AM

If they are repaying debts it makes no sense to penalise further

Anonymous

10/17/2022 10:36 AM

it encourages bad debt.

Anonymous

10/17/2022 02:58 PM

This measure could lead them into getting into more debt because they represent the poorest in society

Anonymous

10/18/2022 09:29 AM

I think is fair to calculated income on how much money they are receiving in hand and not gross.

Anonymous

10/18/2022 12:08 PM

You shouldn't use income with Ct

Anonymous

10/19/2022 09:48 PM

Debt for low income families is a necessity and not a choice. More support is needed

Anonymous

10/20/2022 08:26 AM

Others should not pick up debt

Anonymous

10/20/2022 08:42 PM

Debt from overpayment is often . When the overpayment first occurred it would have been counted towards the income calculation for the assessment of CTR so by now disregarding the netting off of the repayment, this income is effectively being double counted.

Anonymous

10/28/2022 12:12 PM

People on Universal Credit should receive Reduction on their council tax on their net income. The idea is to support people when they need it, if gross income is used, it is not a true recognition of need. Council Tax reductions should reflect the needs of The Royal Borough Residents.

Anonymous

10/28/2022 07:26 PM

Because whatever the reason, poverty could result, especially if any children

Anonymous

10/29/2022 02:56 PM

It should be based on net income

Anonymous

11/02/2022 11:34 AM

Should be calculated on net rather than gross income

Anonymous

11/03/2022 10:35 PM

Paying off debt is in the long term interest of UC customers and will help them manage their money more effectively. Penalising them for paying off debt is not fair.

Anonymous

11/25/2022 04:46 PM

They need more support for a time

Anonymous

11/26/2022 12:15 PM

It's important to help people manage and reduce debt given the mental health issues it can cause

Anonymous

11/27/2022 04:27 PM

Nobody should be pushed further into poverty in this current climate, especially when individuals and families are showing genuine intention to clear debts. However it's not the borough's responsibility to manage individual's finances or financial decisions. Maybe the answer is a blanket approach to net inline with other benefits and have an emergency pot based on case by case needs.

Anonymous

11/28/2022 09:36 AM

They need to be allowed to get out of the debt cycle.

Anonymous

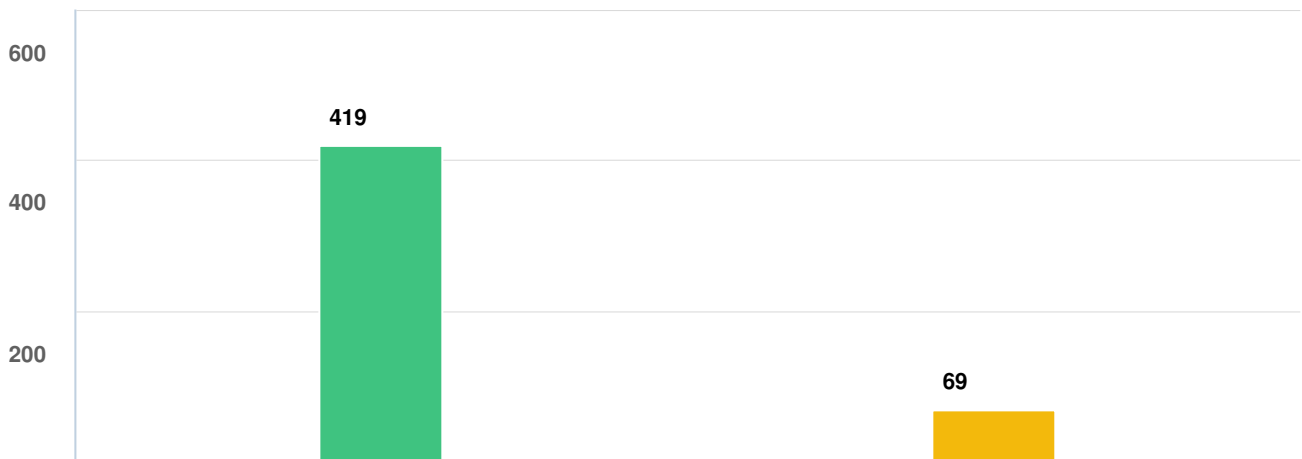
12/02/2022 05:00 PM

I think it is unfair that when trying to reduce debts they are penalised and have income reduced

Optional question (73 response(s), 426 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q7 Do you agree that the current 1 month period of backdating for all working age customers should be extended to 3 months, fr...



Question options

- Yes
- No

Optional question (488 response(s), 11 skipped)
 Question type: Checkbox Question

Q8 If you disagree, please write your reasons here

Anonymous

9/08/2022 04:15 PM

Application processes are clear. One month is sufficient

Anonymous

9/13/2022 02:42 PM

I think the application should only be backdated by 1 month. If it was extended to 3 months backdating it would mean people put off applying in a timely manner as they know the application will be backdated. UC only backdate for a month upon application so we should keep in line with other Benefit systems

Anonymous

10/03/2022 11:03 PM

People should not be given preferential treatment for not completing documents and submissions on time.

Anonymous

10/07/2022 06:25 PM

Everyone now knows that there is help out there, 1 month is a good period of time

Anonymous

It's the claimants personal responsibility to claim on time.

10/07/2022 07:29 PM

Anonymous

10/08/2022 12:36 PM

I am not sure of the volume in this category but 1 month back dated is very generous otherwise open to abuse to claim more.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:18 PM

Costly admin to police this

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:20 PM

Good cause is open to interpretation and would strain the system further

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:26 PM

All have an equal opportunity apply so should be used.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

if it's that important to someone, they should have the ability to claim on time

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:56 PM

This will increase the tax effort on all the other tax payers and it will ease scams as requesting support for scenarios that may not be accurate.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:49 PM

It's a joke people who do nothing and sit at home claiming UC should get a council tax rebate. They do nothing and get everything. Get the to work for the council. Cleaning streets, parks, town centre. Do something for the money they get for scratch cards.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:49 PM

Should be back dated from when 1st payment

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:52 PM

That's putting us in debt

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:54 PM

More liable to abuse of the system

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:18 PM

They should apply immediately

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:26 PM

no

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:28 PM

They should be checked monthly

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:43 PM

a person cannot change past expenses only future expenses

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:13 PM

The cost for all these benefits is paid by other people, who also work very hard for their income.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:17 PM

If they didn't apply before, they didn't need before.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:47 PM

I think 1 month is enough

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:08 PM

If working age customers are to have a significant decrease in their council tax of 80% then one-month backdating is sufficient. An 80% reduction is very generous and is being subsidised by customers who are not able to claim the reduction such as pensioners.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:24 PM

Same as before _ staff at Town hall need training - I asked for breakdown of changes , changes NOT made by me , but made by Town Hall staff & I am still waiting , no face to face communication .

Anonymous

10/11/2022 10:08 AM

Open to abuse if used as a default and subjective reasoning on what is good cause or not. Instead there should be an appeal process for proven exceptional circumstances.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 11:05 AM

see answer 2

Anonymous

10/12/2022 04:50 PM

If this is already backdated from the date of receipt (rather than date of processing) then that seems fine. What good cause could there be for failing to make a request for 3 months?

Anonymous

10/13/2022 07:58 PM

I think it could be extended to 2 months but would expect good cause to be rare

Anonymous

10/17/2022 10:47 AM

Too much leeway is given where people make excuses for not submitting timely claims

Anonymous

10/20/2022 08:26 AM

1 month is sufficient

Laannee

10/25/2022 09:47 PM

1 month is plenty

Anonymous

10/30/2022 01:52 PM

Because 1 month is sufficient time to claim

Anonymous

11/02/2022 12:39 PM

Need to keep up and not rely on the 'system' to pick and pay back their mistake.

Anonymous

11/02/2022 10:16 PM

In my opinion, the longer time people have to provide information the less genuine the information could be.

LDT99

11/20/2022 12:55 PM

Only if your slow in processing the claim

Anonymous

11/26/2022 11:13 AM

The power is in the hands of the customers to report the change the day it happens, for them to delay is thier own fault whatever the circumstances with the ability to communication via phone, text, email or Digital forms or even coming in in person when out shopping

Anonymous

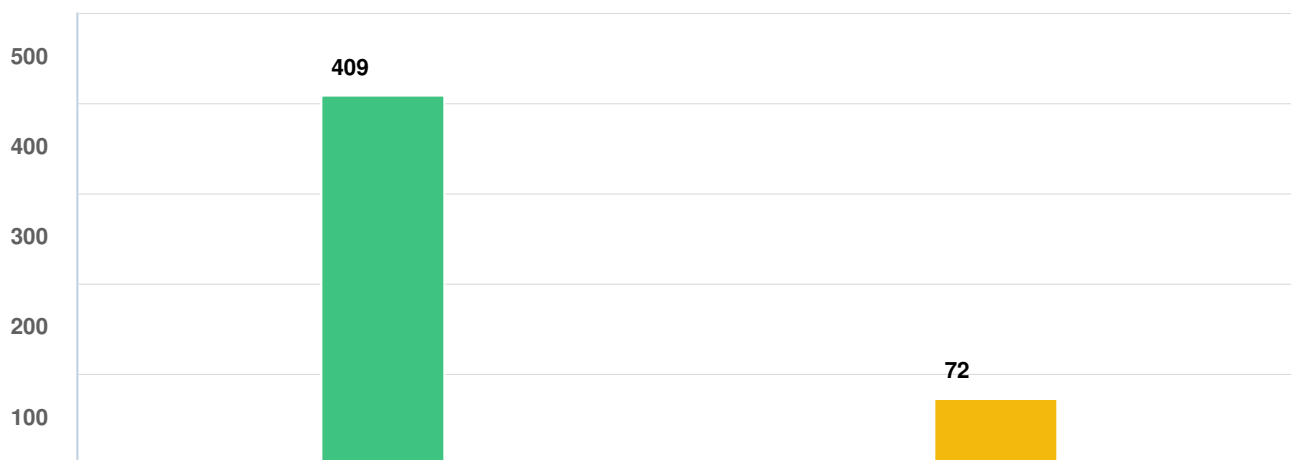
11/26/2022 03:23 PM

need to save money

Optional question (37 response(s), 462 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q9 Do you agree that changes, for working age Council Tax Reduction customers, should be aligned with those of Pensioners and ...



Question options

- Yes
- No

*Optional question (481 response(s), 18 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question*

Q10 Are there any other changes you would have liked to see to the Council Tax Support scheme 2022/23 or general comments regarding CTS?

Anonymous
9/07/2022 02:20 PM
I would have liked the percentage of council tax support paid to have been increased. If you get the minimum UC personal allowance (especially if you are under 25) the even 20% of council tax is unaffordable.

Anonymous
9/08/2022 04:15 PM
50 % reduction for single households. Why should we pay more per head than people with two plus residents.

Anonymous
9/12/2022 11:13 AM
Customers whos income reduces to make them eligible again for CTS should not have to refill the form but make a declaration that their circumstances have reverted without change to previous status

Anonymous
9/20/2022 02:45 PM
The discount restored to 2019 levels.

Anonymous

9/26/2022 03:18 PM

There needs to be better information and communication from the council to recipients of the council tax support scheme. I have spoken to several employees working in the council tax department at RBWM who have no clue how the scheme even works. They promise to call back with the correct information but fail to do so. It's not acceptable is it?

Anonymous

10/03/2022 12:02 PM

The reduction should be back date to the start of the bill if the customer can show good reason for why it was not claimed earlier

Anonymous

10/03/2022 06:53 PM

Council Tax Support for working age pensioners who are in receipt of contribution based Employment Support Allowance and higher rate Personal Independence Payments due to severe ill health . Working aged ill health pensioners on extremely low incomes are already struggling due to cost of living increases and fuel rises and at risk of severe illness having no money to pay for food or fuel due to not being awarded any council tax support.

Anonymous

10/03/2022 11:03 PM

Should be scrapped. People can't live in large houses and get credits. Use the varied facilities which council tax pays for and just get to pay less because they earn less

Anonymous

10/04/2022 07:22 AM

No

Anonymous

10/04/2022 02:00 PM

Do not do enough for disabled residents - yet the amount they pay has increased a lot. Disabled benefits haven't increased yet you don't seem to care. Disabled people who cannot work then literally have to take this money from their food funds!!

Anonymous

10/05/2022 01:47 PM

None

Anonymous

10/07/2022 05:15 PM

Personal independence payment entitlement - those on enhanced in both categories should be entitled to a discount

Anonymous

10/07/2022 05:32 PM

No

Anonymous

10/07/2022 06:19 PM

No

Anonymous

10/07/2022 06:25 PM

Administering the Benefit has to be reduced through simplification of the system and robotics

Anonymous

10/07/2022 09:51 PM

How about council tax reduction for pensioners

Anonymous

10/08/2022 12:36 PM

General comment.....As a single occupier I find the help of a reduction to council tax payment very helpful and fair. Please maintain this.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 11:47 AM

Ensure that anyone receiving CTS is made aware of this consultation and asked to complete the questionnaire. Otherwise, you are probably asking people via your Resident's Newsletter, who are probably less likely to receive CTS, to comment when they really have no experience of how it's currently administered.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:17 PM

I have applied three times and been declined, I am extremely struggling to pay all bills and my council tax is now £200 a month which I can't afford but can't get help towards

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:21 PM

If you're on a lower income it should include pick up of old waste furniture. Also provision on bag for food waste.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:17 PM

N/a

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:26 PM

Council tax should be equal for all those who live in the area that are not disabled or a pensioner and the amount billed not reduced but rather contributed to from central government to ensure that services across the area can be maintained. In addition, where village residents pay council tax that money should be used to reinvest and provide the network services that they require such as weekly waste management or bus routes. Village residents who contribute are often penalised at the expense of the towns and that parity needs to be remedied.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:22 PM

Actually taking into account take home pay and UC rather than before deduction pay and listen to family circumstances when applications for reduction are submitted. Too many times I've been refused and my council tax is in line with my gas and electric on the increased

amount as of 01/10. It's a joke and don't see much good being done with the money

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:23 PM

Why doesn't it apply to all hard working income earning people?

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:24 PM

The scheme should be extended to cover applicants whose salaries are higher but whose expenses due to rising costs of living mean that we are no better off than those on lower incomes who are able to receive benefits!

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:24 PM

n/a

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:26 PM

No

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

No.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:28 PM

You should take into account other working adults who are not on UC. UC isn't an accurate way of determining who needs help with finances

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:27 PM

Rbwm not doing anything useful with council tax which is a lot more than other councils. The road are not safe

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:25 PM

None

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:30 PM

Yes Disable people shouldn't pay council tax

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

Council tax reduction scheme should remain the way it is.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:31 PM

You absolutely MUST change the rules you have around Enhanced PIP. Wandsworth Council AUTOMATICALLY give a council tax reduction for enhanced PIP, whereas RBWM insists on paying staff to come out and assess the home. What a waste of tax payers money

to pay council workers for a pointless assessment - just apply a discount for those receiving enhanced PIP it's immoral.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:30 PM

That everyone should receive a leaflet every year when together with their council tax recalculation advising them that this help exists because eg i was eligible but nobody told me!

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:29 PM

remove it altogether. no one should get reduced council tax; if you can't afford the costs of a house then don't live in Windsor

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:33 PM

More discount for family

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:34 PM

I have tried to register for RCT and been declined. I am on a low income and UC so not sure why I am not eligible

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:43 PM

I think there should be an option to over pay or accrue the money from overpayments so on months where the council bill will be more there isn't such a dramatic impact. Some months you suddenly need to pay a large amount all at once. Due to fluctuations with wages. Instead of crediting the money one month keep it on individuals account so they can use this to cushion the blow from other months.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:38 PM

To make it more available for people

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:40 PM

None

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:41 PM

NA

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:56 PM

I would like to see the Council to implement a fair scheme for all tax payers. Everyday we see the Council reducing services like the bin collection and increasing taxations, either by the Council Tax or parking permits and on the other hand is planning to reduce the responsibilities for those that mostly benefit from the Council.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:51 PM

yes, People not receiving UC should be entitled to Council Tax reduction as well based on change of income

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:49 PM

Yeah down do any council tax refund room for UC people, they don't deserve it. Get the bums working, sick of our tax money paying for them.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:51 PM

Better spending on the community (eg level of cleaning during the Queen's Funeral and better maintenance of services - dentists and go) or reduction in the annual council tax for everyone.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:52 PM

No

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:54 PM

Think of the more vulnerable in this days.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:00 PM

Don't know enough to suggest any no

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:59 PM

Stop making it so widely available. Means test more. Help more people into employment. I pay my tax to provide services. Not discount others

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:00 PM

I would like the Council to assist people like me who have been off work the last month due to illness but have still received council tax demand letters , How can people afford to pay council tax if they were off work for 1 month due to underlying illness ? The council definitely needs to take circumstances like mine and others into consideration.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:00 PM

no

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:00 PM

There should be support for working class who don't meet the criteria for UC. It's not fair to not get any help even though all of us are going through the increases.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:11 PM

Families on low incomes, which is supported by their childs eligibility for free school meals or pupil premium should also qualify for a discount. Their entitlement to these provisions confirms that a child is being brought up in an already financially restricted environment, where further assistance should be provided to limit the long term detrimental impact of child poverty.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:13 PM

We can't afford to reduce income streams and still provide services.
I'm pro services.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:20 PM

All people on universal credit should have council tax reduction applied automatically.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:21 PM

We can't afford the 20% to pay, it should be less. It's a struggle to eat or keep a roof over our heads so anyone who is a pensioner or on benefits of non working capabilities should not have to pay no matter their age.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:21 PM

No

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:24 PM

This has been one of the worst surveys I have ever seen. Presumably you have already decided what results you want, and just want to make sure you get them

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:29 PM

Where a recalculation by RBWM results in an increase in Council Tax from 3 or more years ago, where there was no fraud, that increase should be automatically reduced by 50%. It is quite ridiculous to have a recalculation in 2022 from 2014 and be charged with back pay? No fraud or error on the taxpayer's part but purely an error on RBWM's part, can be devastating to the taxpayer.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:43 PM

To get things in order and give more information for uc people and assessments should be based on what they earn

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:48 PM

Integrate systems to RTI with other benefit departments

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:58 PM

I think the whole process should be made simpler. I get many adjustment notices, sometimes more than one a week even though my circumstances are pretty stable. I also would appreciate a clearer explanation of how the percentage of support is worked out as it seems to vary on each notice.

Anonymous

The bill should be reduced due to inflation

10/10/2022 04:04 PM

Anonymous

Support should be given to needy ones

10/10/2022 04:17 PM

Anonymous

Reduced council tax amount in a whole to support this economic crisis

10/10/2022 04:26 PM

Anonymous

I think there needs to be a rethink in 2022/2023 to cost of living so make exceptions to council tax payments

10/10/2022 04:28 PM

Anonymous

Yes reduce it to families too just normal families that are not on UC but struggle anyway

10/10/2022 04:28 PM

Anonymous

No

10/10/2022 04:28 PM

Anonymous

Council should support pensioners who are not being supported at the moment

10/10/2022 04:43 PM

Anonymous

Its hard to make meaningful comment when there are no detailed case examples

10/10/2022 05:02 PM

Anonymous

It's very difficult to vote on these matters when there is no information here about the amounts of money involved

10/10/2022 04:58 PM

Anonymous

These are hard times for everyone. And those working people who don't receive any benefits at all should also be considered sometimes. So please don't be too generous to one group while having the others pay for it.

10/10/2022 05:13 PM

Anonymous

Like to be notified

10/10/2022 05:10 PM

Anonymous

No Council Tax for those over 70.

10/10/2022 05:17 PM

Anonymous

Single parent with children under age of 18

10/10/2022 05:24 PM

Anonymous
10/10/2022 05:47 PM
I don't think working people should get the single person discount, as I work my wife does not and I pay full council tax

Anonymous
10/10/2022 05:49 PM
Should

Anonymous
10/10/2022 05:44 PM
Yes -- please reconsider the 25% discount for those living alone. This should more fairly become a 50% discount, as those of us who find ourselves living alone for a range of reasons, and therefore already paying twice what a partnered person would, should not have to pay yet another penalty.

Anonymous
10/10/2022 05:45 PM
Display an actual income that specifies how much you need to be earning so you can apply for council tax support. You have not made clear what one must be earning in order to receive council tax support. This is incredibly infuriating.

Anonymous
10/10/2022 06:29 PM
More support for uc for those who ate in couples not just single parents

Anonymous
10/10/2022 06:52 PM
No

Anonymous
10/10/2022 07:10 PM
I would have liked to see the council tax stay the same and not increase. It increases every year without fail. Yet the council has made cuts to abolish the children centres concept, reduced opening times in the local library, reduced bin collections, no food waste bags available for free. It takes the street lighting forever to respond to queries!

Anonymous
10/10/2022 07:08 PM
No

Anonymous
10/10/2022 07:06 PM
Increase single persons allowance if disabled

Anonymous
10/10/2022 07:35 PM
More warning should be given if CTS is being withdrawn. It is very difficult to very suddenly find £100+ / month when money is already tight.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:38 PM

What about think of families where there are both working parents and small children attending full time education. Can these families have reduced taxes due to less waste/ energy and other resources comparing with people who stayed at home the whole day!

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:47 PM

Giving claimants , the amount at which they would qualify for assistance.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:49 PM

Families with disabled children should be taken into consideration and prioritise with any CTSS . At the moment only properties who have been adapted qualify for tax redemption but often parents with disabled children struggle to pay for higher electricity bills

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:55 PM

I hope this doesn't affect the single person discount. As a single person I like the discount!

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:24 PM

I would like to see face to face communication so that customer & staff can be looking at " same page" . I had to stop my direct debit to get get any service from town hall & im still waiting . Last person I phoned refused to give me an answer & cut me off , by phone, saying " he needed a break . " . I'm still waiting for answers as to why the council changed my direct debit , just before Christmas , without advising me & this change looks completely wrong . A change was made for less than £4 , instead of being carried forward to new year . Caused me lots of problems . Still cannot get face to face appointment . All in all a shambles for me personally and for me to keep track . I wait more months , calmly , for a polite communication from Windsor & Maidenhead council . No doubt the next communication will be a debt collection , for me to sort out , from a council that made the mistake in the first instance . Katherine Edwards 105 Evenlode aged 75 years

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:50 PM

Simplified application forms and an efficient council administration to process the application swiftly.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 08:41 PM

Careful consideration should be given to adults only paying 10% council tax when they are in receipt of huge sums of benefits. Some have more disposable income than working age adults

Anonymous

A more efficient system for those in immediate need.

10/10/2022 08:43 PM

Anonymous

10/10/2022 09:19 PM

I'd like to have a drop of Council Tax because every year was an increase, and now with rising costs of living we need a hand and we need help.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 10:03 PM

not sure if that possible but people who get their UC unnecessarily must be black listed / banned for any discount provided by the council. maybe this is the very less majority of the people with UC but we have seen quite a lot of people rejecting contract jobs or not disclosing their income to protect their UC status.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 11:04 PM

Free parking for residents App to pay

Anonymous

10/10/2022 11:37 PM

More support to pensioners, working age should be responsible for more, and universal credit beneficiaries are not the only ones in need for help at the moment, most of the working class are not necessarily receiving any benefit and are still struggling however still ignored.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 11:53 PM

you take money off residents for their social care costs and it makes their income less than what someone on benefits has but they can't claim benefits - you are stealing their money and leaving pensioners vulnerable as they can't claim anything

Anonymous

10/11/2022 01:43 AM

Rates should based on no of occupants in the property.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 07:41 AM

No other changes required.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 09:13 AM

The scheme should never have been devolved from DWP/HM Treasury to councils. It should be wrapped up in Universal Credit. Maximum assistance should be more generous % of council tax.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 09:18 AM

I think council tax needs to be reduced over all areas to coincide with the rising cost of living.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 10:08 AM

Changes made should not encourage additional or increased claims. Claim credits should be paid back when claimants are in a position to do so.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 10:09 AM

no

Anonymous

10/11/2022 11:05 AM

see answer 2. You are making something really simple difficult.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 11:30 AM

As long as the scheme reductions can be simply verified (in order to minimize fraud or abuse) then I am fully supportive of helping those in real need

Anonymous

10/11/2022 02:06 PM

i think the scheme seems overly complicated and is in desperate need of simplification. For in its present format it deincenifies work. please understand those at the bottom of the financial pile are stressed enough just simply trying to survive. they apply for these benefits to top up the fact that even though they are working they still not earning enough. you need to change the system. for why is government having to top up what people earn. should it not be the company for which they work, doing the topping up. why are all of these companies with multi million pound annual turnovers allowed to pocket and share the substantial profits they make with those at the top and shareholders. Yet those that work for them their employees at the bottom of the chain are left having to suffer the indignity of claiming govt handouts just to put food on the table and heat their homes etc. But instead of making life easier for those determined to work you make it harder. Why will big business ever do things differently when they know that the govt will cover the financial short fall. this is the 21st century. yet it feels and sounds 'dickensian' with poor housing food banks and rubbish pay ... Those in work, be it partime or fulltime, should not have to be claiming any benefits at all ... Make the companies that employ them pay all their employees a decent living wage. For if legislation directed that companies had to pay those at the bottom a minimum of 30 - 40k per annum. And yes, those at the top would receive a little less. Profits might be a little lower. But the quality of life then afforded those at the bottom would be immeasurable ... So dont demonise the family with the 50" tv on the never never. For its all they have. As they literally cant afford to eat out or go to the theatre or cinema. People at the bottom of the pile dont go to work to bolster their self esteem. They go to work to provide a better life for them and their families. yet you make them jump thru hoops for an extra few quid. In their situ would i do the same? No, I honestly dont think I would! You cant force single mothers out to work and then be surprised when their kids turn into delinquents getting into trouble etc. The kids are coming back to an empty house with mum at work. They can skip school and go home

knowing mums at work. Kids join gangs to be with others not coz they bad. we need to find another way. coz this aint working As a society we need to incentivise work. not demonise and make life harder still for those on benefits.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 01:51 PM

I think even people who are not receiving universal credit may be on incomes below the average amount needed to live on in this time of increasing living costs. I would like to see a council tax rebate offered to adults in work who are on low incomes & not in receipt of UC based on their annual profit/loss statements.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 02:55 PM

A general reduction in the year on year rises. Salaries don't rise as fast as bills.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 02:59 PM

Council tax Bands need a review periodically.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 05:29 PM

The scheme should apply to all, regardless of age - why should pensioners (who are by definition on fixed incomes, often not index linked) subsidise those who have options to increase their income and thus be able to afford local taxation?

Anonymous

10/11/2022 08:15 PM

We need to publicise this benefit. It should not be a secret.

Anonymous

10/11/2022 09:07 PM

Yes. Consider people like me who are not eligible to any benefits . Except to say I am ADisabled student at The Open University

Anonymous

10/11/2022 09:41 PM

It needs to be less confusing. It needs a comprehensive complaints system that can deal with complaints swiftly. You should be supporting lone parents more and build more social housing!

Anonymous

10/12/2022 11:04 AM

word this survey so that it can be red by a layman

Anonymous

10/12/2022 01:50 PM

home owners who are on benefits and when they sell their homes do not have to repay anything back

Anonymous

10/12/2022 02:25 PM

Better written information sent to claimants who currently receive or are applying for council tax reduction.

Anonymous 10/12/2022 06:24 PM	Help for people on the lowest income. It could mean a choice between eating or paying council tax.
Anonymous 10/12/2022 06:54 PM	Increase 80% max to being means tested up to 100%
Anonymous 10/13/2022 04:42 PM	I think should be support for the family, for new born babies to help the family in this though moment, the future is for them, we need babies.
Anonymous 10/13/2022 06:44 PM	With the challenging economic circumstances I would rather other benefits were brought in line with CTS where this is more generous.
Anonymous 10/13/2022 08:57 PM	More visible, so residents understand what they could get help with.
Anonymous 10/15/2022 04:42 PM	None
Anonymous 10/16/2022 03:27 PM	If it was set at an affordable rate in the first place, perhaps all these adjustments wouldn't be needed
Anonymous 10/17/2022 02:04 PM	No
Anonymous 10/18/2022 09:29 AM	I would like to be more visible on your website. it took me long time to see where is the online form for CTS is , more clarity what you need to have on hand before starting the application.
Anonymous 10/18/2022 12:08 PM	Some kind of reduction or help for people on all Benefits.
Anonymous 10/19/2022 11:27 AM	No
Anonymous 10/19/2022 12:25 PM	Need more super with council tax in 2023

Anonymous
10/19/2022 01:50 PM
I would like to see support extended / increased for working age disabled people (eg. receiving PIP) to provide more support for both in work and out of work recipients.

Anonymous
10/19/2022 05:00 PM
Some who could pay try not to

Anonymous
10/19/2022 09:48 PM
I'd like to see an easy online system for reporting change of circumstances

Anonymous
10/20/2022 08:26 AM
Police those who take advantage. Continue to help those most in need.

Anonymous
10/20/2022 12:27 PM
No

Anonymous
10/20/2022 01:40 PM
council tax should not be deducted after net benefits,ie the amount the gov say you need to live on,then council tax has to be paid from that income.

Laannee
10/25/2022 09:47 PM
It should be fair

Anonymous
10/27/2022 11:06 AM
N/A

Anonymous
10/28/2022 12:12 AM
If a member of a household becomes an adult but is on a low wage and cannot contribute, ie on UC that should be taken into account if household has previously had single persons discount and now low income worker or UC person lives with them. Single person discount should still apply if the only other adult living in the household is entitled to CTR or in receipt of UC

Anonymous
10/28/2022 12:25 PM
Working aged medically retired individuals who are on exceptionally low occupation ill health pensions and in receipt of contribution based Employment Support Allowance and in receipt of the higher rate PIP for both care and mobility should be included in the Council Tax reduction scheme. I feel that younger disabled pensioners are being unfairly discriminated against. As someone with an income of £12,004 per year (pension £5985.00 contribution based ESA £6019.00) I am experiencing extreme financial hardship whilst my

home is also falling into total disrepair. Recent Government changes to legislation have meant that I no longer receive the Warm home discount nor the higher Disabled Living Payment which is only offered now to pensioners of pension age.

Anonymous

10/29/2022 02:56 PM

Yes, the money we pay should be directed to pavements, roads and general rubbish tidying. This seems to be ignored and nothing is kept nice anymore.

Anonymous

10/30/2022 12:00 PM

no

Anonymous

10/31/2022 08:30 PM

Please, increase the council tax for single occupant reduction from 25% to 50%: we barely are at home, we have no big garbage..our house barely have 20m2.

Anonymous

11/01/2022 09:53 AM

No

Anonymous

11/02/2022 12:16 PM

they all seem fine

Anonymous

11/02/2022 12:39 PM

stricter control and assessment, many in receipt of support who circumstances have changed.

Anonymous

11/03/2022 10:35 PM

Increasing council tax for higher band customers (of which I am one) to help support the less well off.

Anonymous

11/06/2022 12:30 PM

Since the average family size in the UK is 2.36 (2021 data), the single-person discount %age should increase from 25%.

Anonymous

11/09/2022 09:00 PM

To leave the CTS for disabled young people and adults

LDT99

11/20/2022 12:55 PM

Needs to be fair regardless of age, gender, race

Anonymous

11/21/2022 12:05 PM

No

Anonymous

11/26/2022 11:13 AM

Most changes due to income changes are minor, larger income bands would hopefully mean less significant changes and less administration costs, it seems silly to spend GBP20 to administer a change of 40p per week

Anonymous

11/26/2022 12:15 PM

Yes council tax reduction could be a way of supporting key workers and encouraging more people to join these professions for example nurses, carers, and paramedics.

Anonymous

11/27/2022 12:50 PM

Open u the scheme to disabled people, regardless of any partner earnings or pension.

Anonymous

11/28/2022 04:13 PM

Where severely disabled (eg in receipt of PIP) recipients of CTRS have the minimal income of benefits then they should not be subjected to the rate of 80% maximum. This should be a greater reduction.

Anonymous

11/29/2022 01:33 PM

for documents submission for CTS council should provide a secure and encrypted way for such submissions. Currently, the council request sending all documents via email, which opens up possibility for fraudsters to steal the identity of the person who sends documents.

Anonymous

11/29/2022 03:51 PM

I'm currently economically inactive due to health issues which limit the work I can do. I have started working as a volunteer for the Royal Voluntary Service at Wexham hospital. Although the role is not directly caring for people, it is providing indirect support to people in the hospital. I feel that volunteering for this type of charity should also qualify for CTR.

Anonymous

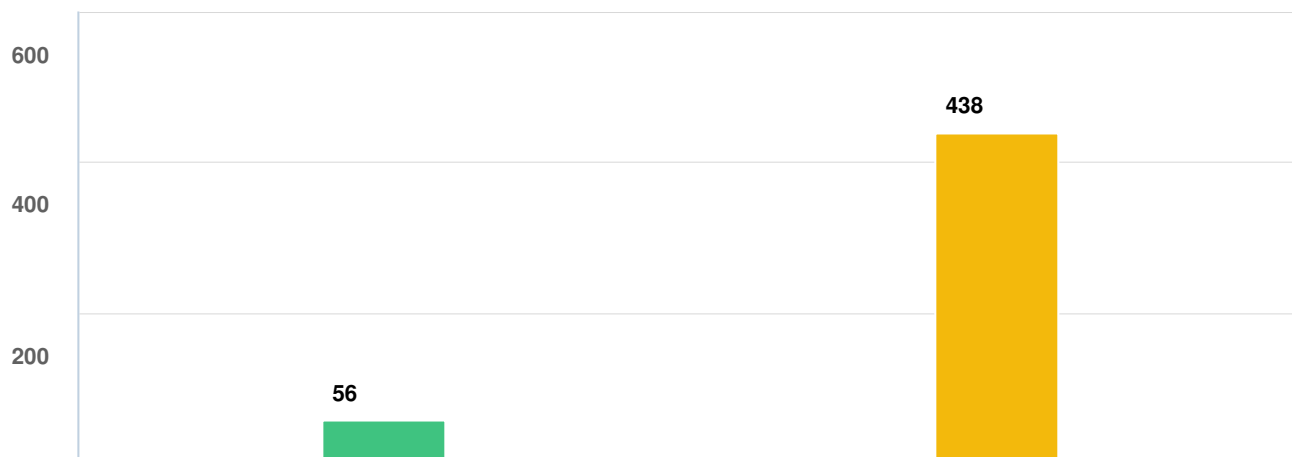
12/01/2022 09:47 PM

Help more with employed single parents

Optional question (158 response(s), 341 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q11 Are you currently in receipt of Council Tax Support?

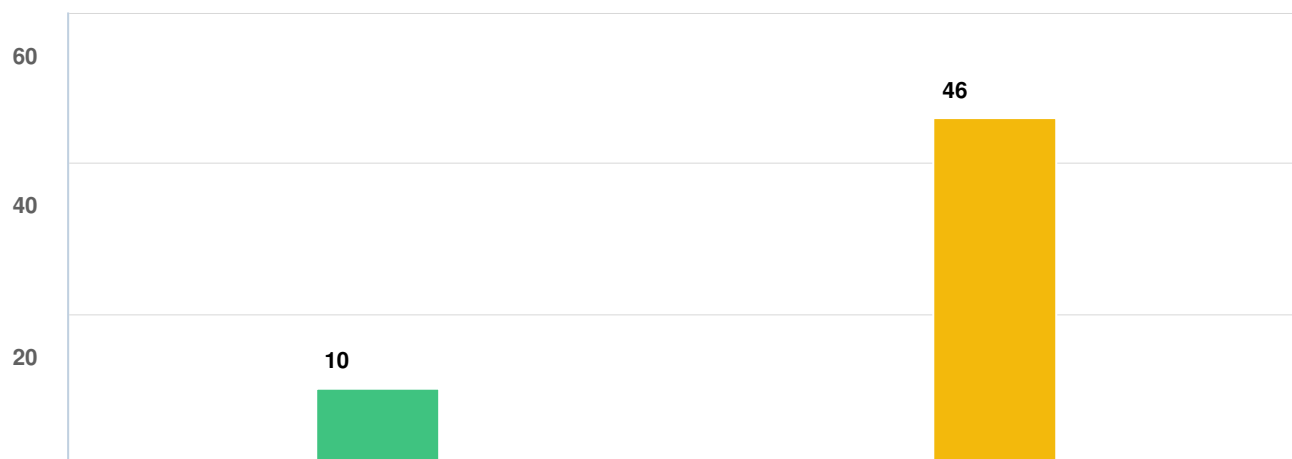


Question options

- Yes
- No

Optional question (494 response(s), 5 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q12 Are you a pensioner?

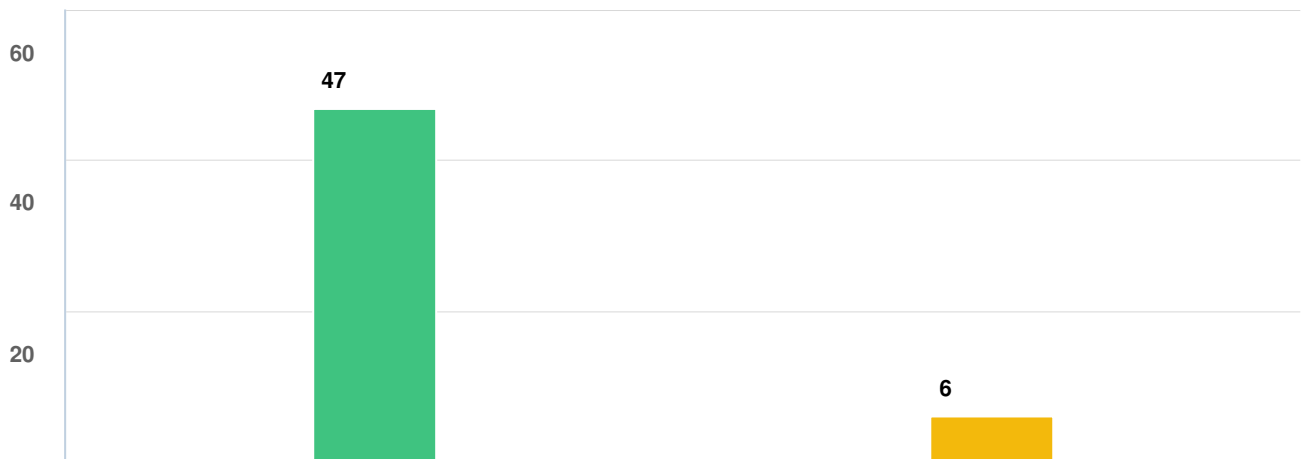


Question options

- Yes
- No

Optional question (55 response(s), 444 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q13 Are you of working age?

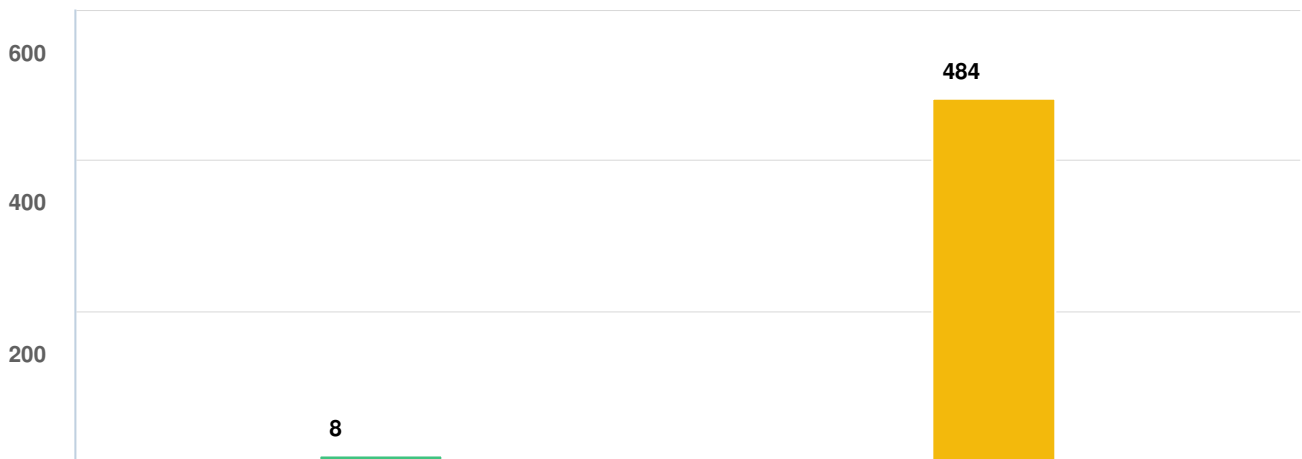


Question options

● Yes ● No

*Optional question (52 response(s), 447 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question*

Q14 Are you completing this on behalf of a representative body such as the Citizen Advice Bureau or Age Concern?



Question options

● Yes ● No

*Optional question (492 response(s), 7 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question*

Q15 Which group in the community do you represent?

Anonymous

10/03/2022 12:02 PM

West Windsor hub

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:43 PM

pensioners

Anonymous

10/11/2022 07:41 AM

Age concern

Anonymous

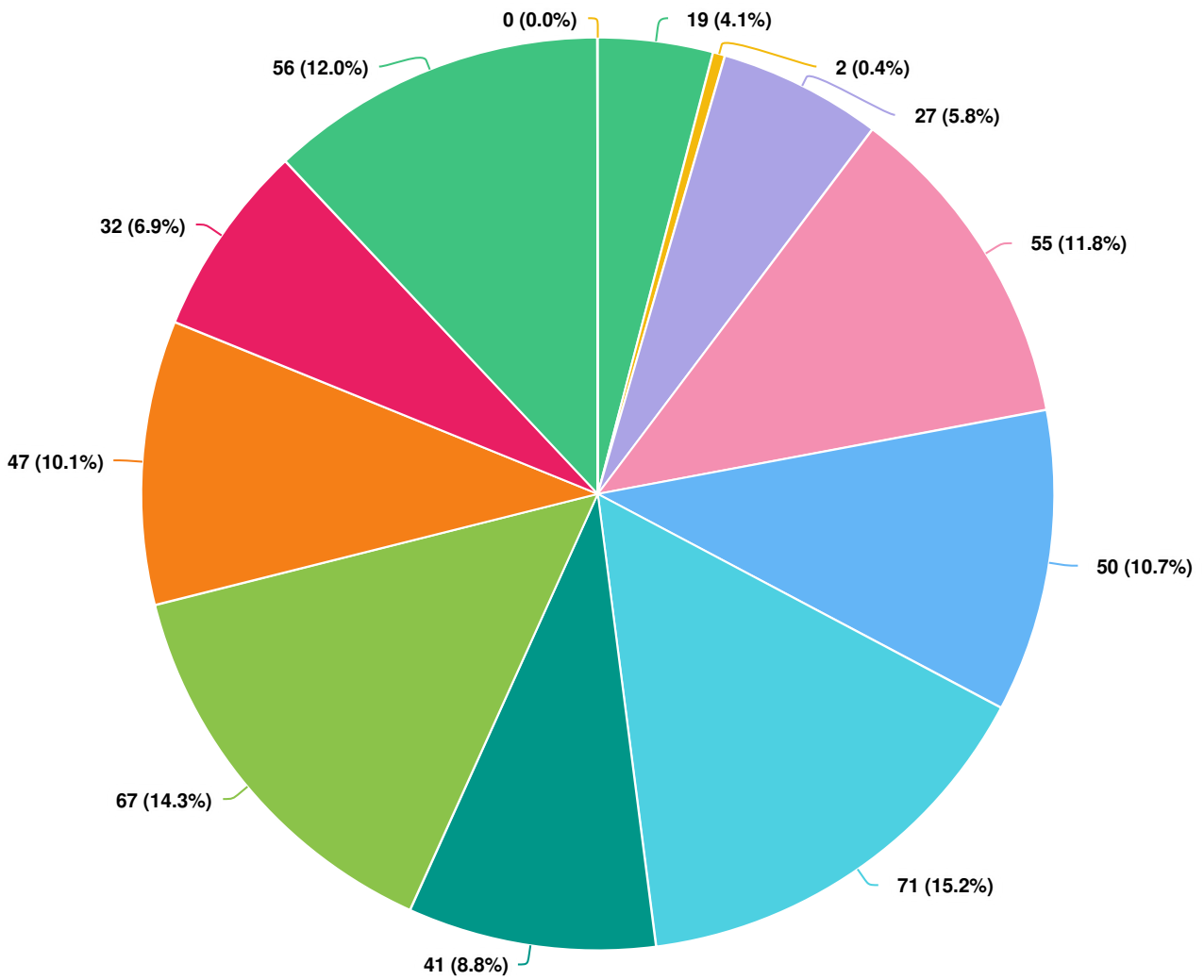
11/28/2022 04:13 PM

The Disability and Inclusion Forum

Optional question (4 response(s), 495 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q16 AgePlease select your age

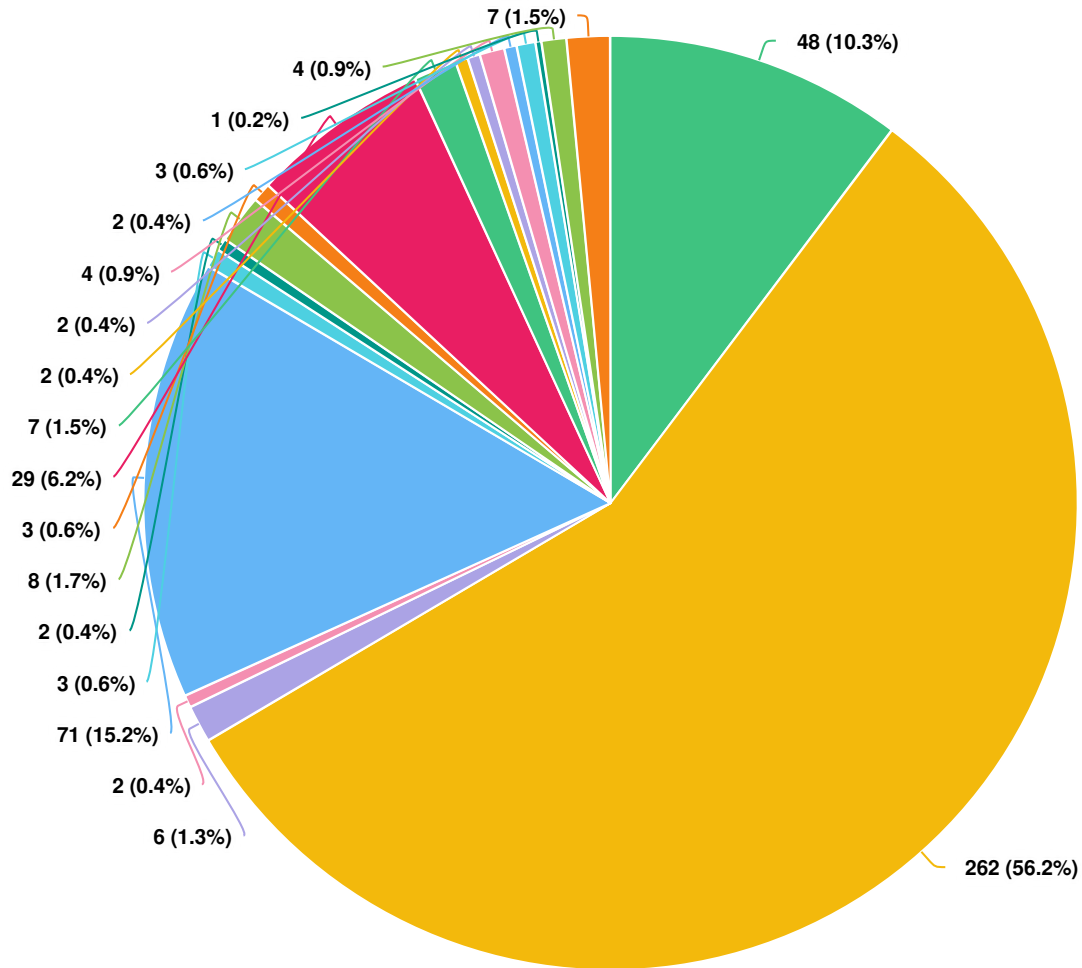


Question options

- Prefer not to say
- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-34
- 35-39
- 40-44
- 45-49
- 50-54
- 55-59
- 60-64
- 65+
- Under 18

Optional question (467 response(s), 32 skipped)
Question type: Dropdown Question

Q17 Race/Ethnicity What is your ethnic group?



Question options

- Prefer not to say
 ● English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
 ● Irish
 ● Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Any other White background
 ● White and Black Caribbean
 ● White and Black African
 ● White and Asian
- Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background
 ● Indian
 ● Pakistani
 ● Bangladeshi
 ● Chinese
- Any other Asian background
 ● African
 ● Caribbean
 ● Any other Black / African / Caribbean background
 ● Arab
- Any other ethnic group

Optional question (466 response(s), 33 skipped)
 Question type: Dropdown Question

Q18 Please specify below

Anonymous 10/05/2022 01:47 PM	White
Anonymous 10/06/2022 12:34 PM	Polish
Anonymous 10/08/2022 09:44 PM	South african
Anonymous 10/10/2022 11:47 AM	White eastern European
Anonymous 10/10/2022 02:22 PM	Spanish
Anonymous 10/10/2022 02:33 PM	belgian
Anonymous 10/10/2022 02:29 PM	European
Anonymous 10/10/2022 02:56 PM	Portuguese (or Brown, according to the new PC/awoke dictionaire)
Anonymous 10/10/2022 02:52 PM	None
Anonymous 10/10/2022 02:54 PM	European : Franco portugese
Anonymous 10/10/2022 03:01 PM	Portuguese
Anonymous 10/10/2022 03:32 PM	Polish nation
Anonymous 10/10/2022 03:20 PM	White European

Anonymous 10/10/2022 05:13 PM	European
Anonymous 10/10/2022 05:24 PM	Polish
Anonymous 10/10/2022 09:04 PM	Polish
Anonymous 10/10/2022 09:19 PM	European
Anonymous 10/10/2022 09:35 PM	Portuguese
Anonymous 10/10/2022 09:37 PM	White
Anonymous 10/10/2022 10:03 PM	Turkish
Anonymous 10/11/2022 12:54 AM	Italian
Anonymous 10/11/2022 09:13 AM	Cornish
Anonymous 10/11/2022 10:09 AM	white-italian
Anonymous 10/11/2022 11:11 AM	Chechen
Anonymous 10/11/2022 12:38 PM	I am A white Hungarian
Anonymous 10/12/2022 04:21 PM	Eastern European
Anonymous 10/13/2022 04:42 PM	Italian

Anonymous Jewish
10/20/2022 08:42 PM

Anonymous African white
10/25/2022 04:08 PM

Anonymous Australian
11/02/2022 12:16 PM

Anonymous Turkish
11/14/2022 01:51 PM

Anonymous Italian
11/26/2022 01:00 PM

Optional question (32 response(s), 467 skipped)
Question type: Single Line Question

Q19 Please specify below

Anonymous White British / Lebanese
9/07/2022 02:20 PM

Optional question (1 response(s), 498 skipped)
Question type: Single Line Question

Q20 Please specify below

Anonymous Hong Konger
10/29/2022 09:26 AM

Optional question (1 response(s), 498 skipped)
Question type: Single Line Question

Q21 Please specify below

Anonymous Black African
11/07/2022 02:18 PM

Optional question (1 response(s), 498 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q22 Please specify below

Anonymous Indo Guyanese
10/10/2022 02:51 PM

Anonymous No
10/10/2022 04:21 PM

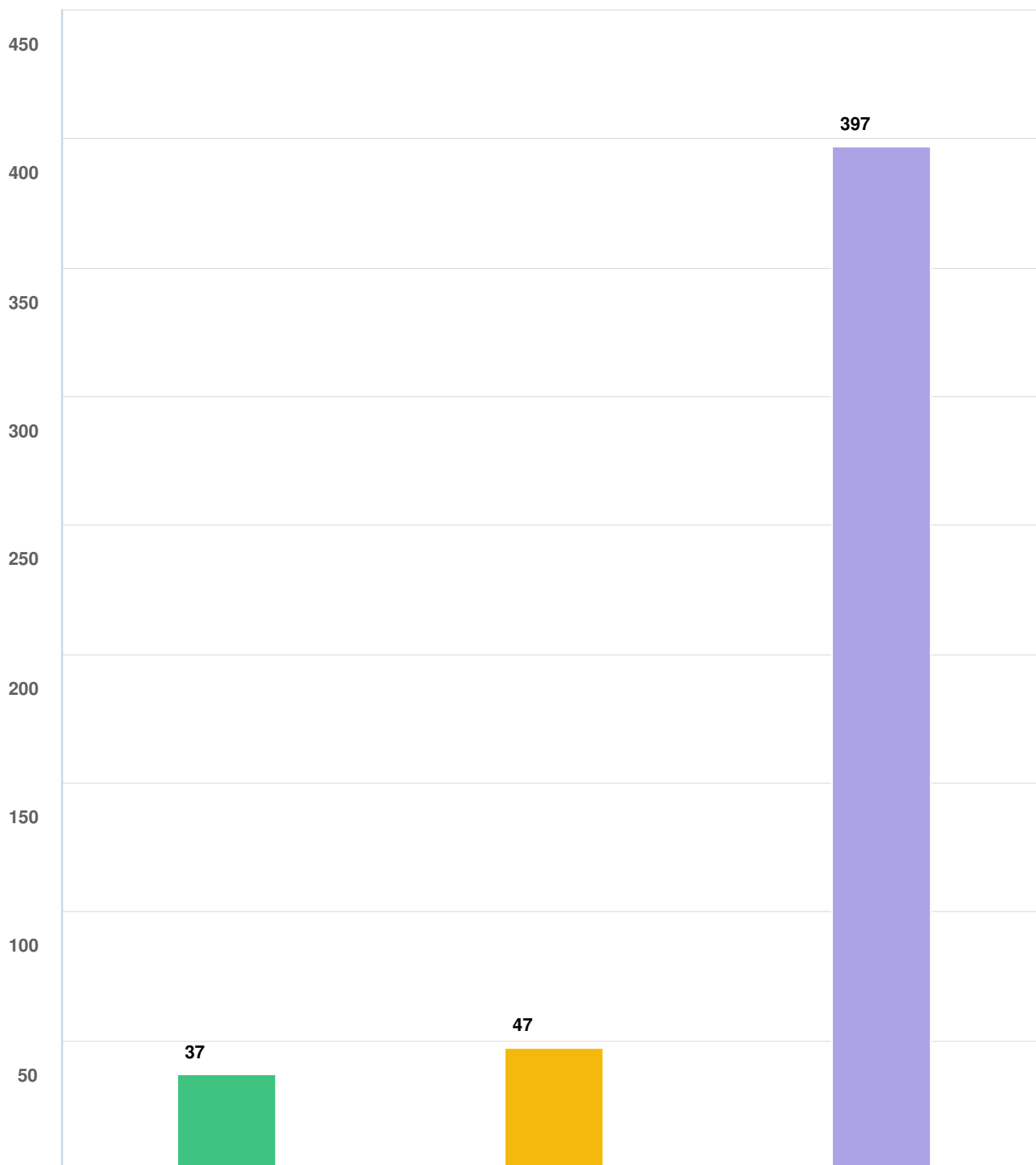
Anonymous nonsense - ethnicity is irrelevant in these questions
10/12/2022 11:04 AM

Anonymous Latin
10/25/2022 07:54 AM

Optional question (4 response(s), 495 skipped)

Question type: Single Line Question

Q23 Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

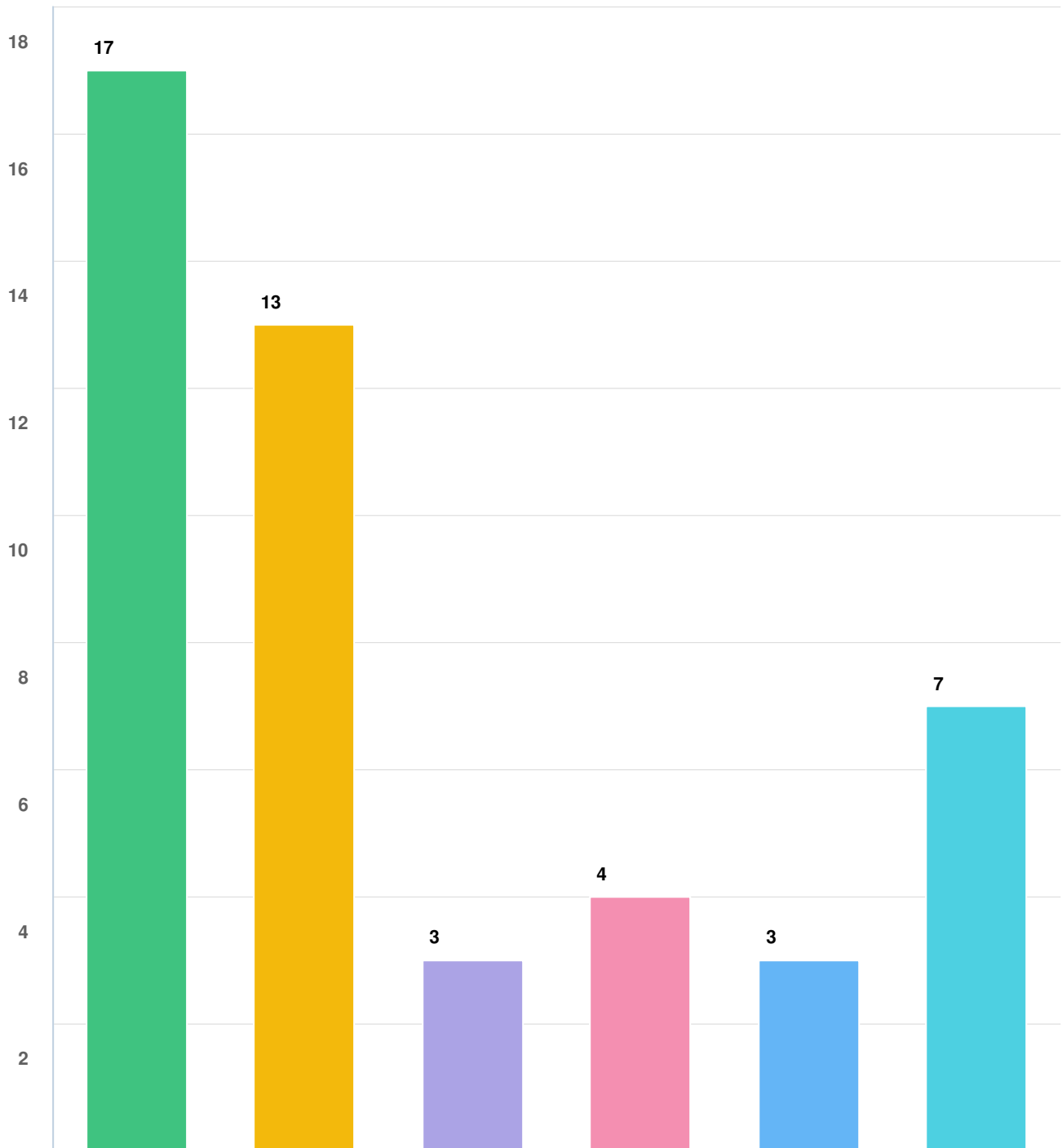


Question options

- Prefer not to say
- Yes
- No

*Optional question (480 response(s), 19 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question*

Q24 Please state the type of impairment that applies to you. Please indicate as many that may apply. If none of the categories apply, please mark 'Other'



Question options

- Physical impairment, such as difficulty using your arms or mobility issues which means using a wheelchair or crutches
- Option 2
- Option 3
- Option 4
- Option 5
- Option 6

Optional question (34 response(s), 465 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q25 Please specify below

Anonymous

10/04/2022 02:00 PM

I don't know what I have ticked as you've not completed the form!!! I have physical health problems and so does my partner, he also has severe mental health problems.

Anonymous

10/10/2022 02:59 PM

I have all the worst options

Anonymous

10/10/2022 03:00 PM

Mental health disability

Anonymous

10/10/2022 04:18 PM

MS

Anonymous

10/10/2022 05:17 PM

Dementia

Anonymous

10/10/2022 07:55 PM

Crohn's disease sufferer.

Anonymous

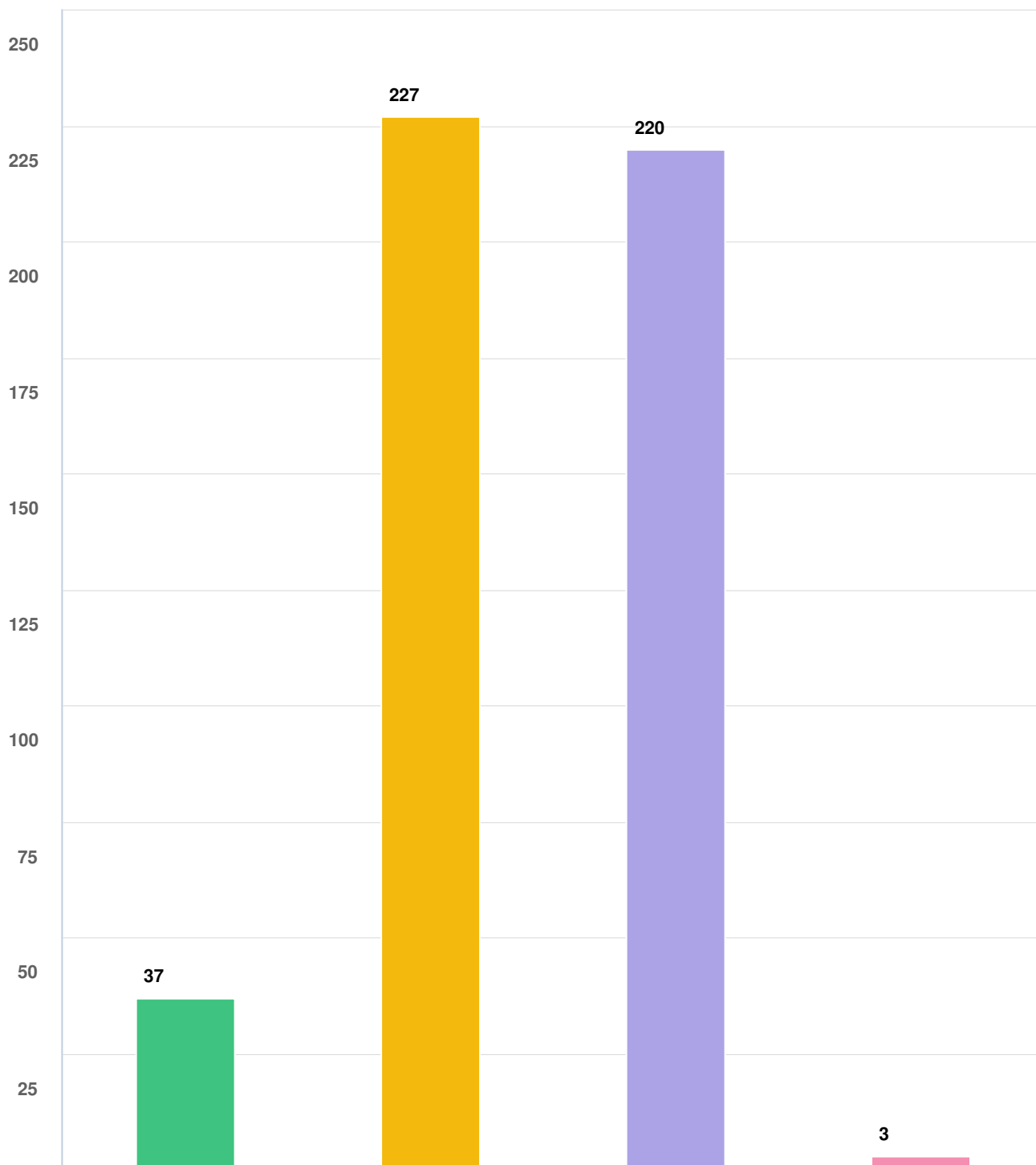
10/17/2022 10:36 AM

My husband is totally bed bound. He has an amputated right leg. He has had a major stroke which has left him with asphasia and unable to talk. He is double incontinent and his diabetic which requires me to give him insulin injections. He cant be left on his own and I am his main carer with some carer help first think in the mornings from external company, which we have to pay for.

Optional question (7 response(s), 492 skipped)

Question type: Essay Question

Q26 GenderAre you:



Question options

- Prefer not to say
- Female
- Male
- Transgender

Optional question (487 response(s), 12 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

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Report Title:	Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue Stakeholder Masterplan
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Phil Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transport
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 26 th January 2022
Responsible Officer(s):	Andrew Durrant, Executive Director of Place Services Adrien Waite, Head of Planning
Wards affected:	Cox Green and Hurley and Walthams

REPORT SUMMARY

This report explains the new Borough Local Plan requirement for the preparation of Stakeholder Masterplan Documents (SMD) and summarises the process and outcomes specifically in relation to the Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue.

The report recommends that Cabinet approves the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue Stakeholder Masterplan Document as an important material consideration for Development Management purposes.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue Stakeholder Masterplan Document as an important material consideration for Development Management purposes.**

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

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Approve the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Development Management purposes.	The site promoter, stakeholders, local residents and local planning authority have worked collaboratively on the Stakeholder

Option	Comments
<p>This is the recommended option.</p>	<p>Masterplan Document. If approved for Development Management purposes, the document will help to ensure a high-quality development that takes into account the views of the local community and other stakeholders.</p>
<p>Not approve the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Development Management purposes.</p> <p>This is not the recommended Option.</p>	<p>Deciding simply not to approve the Stakeholder Masterplan Document would undermine the Stakeholder Masterplanning process set out in the Borough Local Plan. If there is a significant concern about an aspect (or aspects) of the Stakeholder Masterplan Document, Officers could review the Stakeholder Masterplan Document, and a revised version brought back to Cabinet for approval.</p>

- 2.1 The adopted Borough Local Plan (BLP) places great importance on ensuring that development is sustainable, and that it positively contributes towards the qualities and character of the Borough. The Plan's Spatial Vision states that: *"...development will be expected to promote sustainability and add to the special qualities of the Borough through high quality design, effective and efficient use of land and protection of valued heritage, natural and other assets."*
- 2.2 To assist in implementing the Spatial Vision, BLP Policy QP1 (Sustainability and Placemaking) introduces a requirement for the preparation of 'stakeholder masterplans' for developments that will deliver 100 or more net new dwellings, or more than 5,000 sq. m of employment or mixed use floorspace. The supporting text to Policy QP1 explains that the stakeholder masterplanning process formalises good practice in relation to pre-application discussions, by requiring developers of larger sites to engage with the Council, local community, and other stakeholders at an early stage in the development process.
- 2.3 The developer is responsible for preparing the Stakeholder Masterplan Document (SMD). In summary, the process involves:
- Engagement with the Council, local community and other stakeholders on key issues, priorities, and development options;
 - Preparation of the draft SMD;
 - Consultation on the draft document;
 - Consideration of the consultation responses, with amendments to be made to the draft SMD as appropriate/ necessary; and
 - Preparation of the final SMD.

- 2.4 The last stage in the process is for the final SMD to be presented to Cabinet, with a recommendation that the document be approved as an important material consideration for Development Management purposes.
- 2.5 The remainder of this Cabinet report addresses the process of preparing the SMD for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue, the content of the SMD, and the next steps.
- 2.6 The site allocation proforma for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue (AL24 in the BLP) outlines the uses to be accommodated on the site, alongside a number of site-specific design requirements and considerations. The proposed uses are:
- Approximately 300 residential units
 - Strategic public open space
 - Sports pitches
- 2.7 The site-specific design requirements and considerations address matters including access to the site (including by sustainable modes of transport), boundary treatments, the form of housing (including the need for family housing and affordable housing), and the importance of providing a strong green and blue infrastructure network across the site.
- 2.8 The requirements for site AL24, as set out in the BLP, were the starting point for determining the matters to discuss with the local community and other stakeholders through the stakeholder masterplanning process.
- 2.9 Berkeley Strategic Land set up a Community Liaison Group (CLG) after undertaking a community mapping exercise and liaising with local groups and key stakeholders. The CLG comprised members of the local community, interest groups, elected Councillors and officers, as well as an urban design advisor working for the Council.
- 2.10 CLG meetings took place on 9 June, 5 July and 21 September 2022. Berkeley Strategic Land organised a five-week community consultation on the draft SMD from 30 September to the 4 November 2022. A dedicated project website (<https://lillibrooke.co.uk>) along with an email address and phonenumber was set up to enable community members to engage with the project. A flyer publicising the event was sent to 2,957 addresses highlighting the consultation event and the project website.
- 2.11 Alongside this a public exhibition was held at Cox Green Youth and Community Centre in Maidenhead on 30th September 2022. The public exhibition gave an opportunity for local residents to see the initial design proposals and discuss any queries with the project team. Feedback forms were provided both for the public exhibition and the virtual consultation.
- 2.12 The fourth CLG meeting took place via Zoom on 28 November 2022. The Berkeley team presented an overview of engagement to date and feedback from the consultation, including emerging key themes.

- 2.13 The Berkeley Strategic Land Team have also met with officers, local residents and Councillors over the course of the last 6 months, to discuss particular aspects of the project in more detail than could be accommodated at the Working Group sessions.
- 2.14 The feedback at and following the Working Group meetings, the Borough Wide Design Guide and pre-application advice from officers and the Council's urban design advisor, all fed into the preparation of the draft SMD. Berkeley Strategic Land were responsible for preparing the draft SMD, in consultation with officers and the Council's urban design advisor.
- 2.15 In summary terms, the SMD prepared provides a description of the site and a summary of the planning policy context; summarises the feedback received during the engagement phase; sets out a series of development objectives for the site; identifies the principal opportunities and constraints associated with the site; and outlines the design principles that will guide the future development of the site.
- 2.16 Through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Berkeley Homes will make financial contributions towards upgrading and improving the local infrastructure. The current Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) states that CIL contributions will be spent on the following three junctions in the vicinity of the AL24 site, namely
- Shoppenhangers Road/Norreys Drive,
 - A4/A404(M) Thicket Roundabout and Cannon Lane/Henley Road/Bath Road (A4) roundabout,
 - M4 J8/9 (a contribution).

In addition, CIL contributions may be used for enhancements to existing schools to enable the provision of additional school places; improvements to existing healthcare facilities; enhancements to existing libraries, social and community facilities and public realm improvements.

- 2.17 Some of the main SMD principles and approaches to highlight, include:
- A commitment to deliver a greater proportion of family housing.
 - A commitment to providing new sports pitches and allotments
 - Improvement of the junction of Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue to enhance safety.
 - An extensive network of pedestrian and cycle routes providing attractive routes to key facilities and links to the countryside.
 - Beautiful open spaces and new wildlife habitats creating at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity.
 - Active and informal open spaces to encourage active lifestyles and people's enjoyment of nature.
 - Enhanced surface water attenuation to reduce off-site flood risk.

- A sensitive approach to the boundaries with existing development, in particular with the Lillibrooke Manor, and Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.
- 2.18 Berkeley Strategic Land received 83 completed feedback forms. A table summarising the comments received is attached as Appendix B.
- 2.19 It should be highlighted that many of the comments received related to matters that had also been raised at the Working Group meetings. Berkeley Strategic Land and Council officers had therefore already had the opportunity to consider many of the issues in preparing the draft SMD. Some of the concerns being raised were in relation to matters of principle, which have been dealt with through the BLP examination (for example, the principle of releasing the western part of the site from the Green Belt for development). Other matters are points of detail (too detailed for the SMD) that can be further considered at the planning application stage.
- 2.20 A copy of the final SMD, as recommended for approval for Development Management purposes, is attached as **Appendix C**. An accessible version of the SMD is also attached as **Appendix D**. Please note all text is identical however, some imagery has been removed. Additional text has been added to explain images and plans.
- 2.21 The main changes made to the SMD, as a result of the consultation feedback, include:
- Further detail given on the proposed junction improvements at Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue.
 - To address concerns regarding safe pedestrian crossings on Woodlands Park Road, further consideration will now be given to the design of the proposed crossing points in consultation with RBWM and through the preparation of the planning application.
 - An extended area of allotments is now proposed following feedback from the local community. The SMD has been amended to reflect this.
 - The masterplan has been updated showing a natural and organic shaped pond design on pages 44/45. This will be part of the surface water drainage strategy and be biodiverse and wildlife friendly.
 - The Stakeholder Masterplan Document now seeks to incorporate a positive frontage onto Woodlands Park Avenue, providing pedestrian and cycle access onto the road and enhancing the existing hedgerow that runs parallel to the road.
 - To address concerns of a loss of privacy on existing homes along Woodlands Park Avenue, development parcels will now be set back from the boundary with Woodlands Park Avenue and separated by additional planting.
 - Greater clarity given on biodiversity net gain, emphasising the importance of securing best biodiversity outcomes
 - The addition of text to state that new dwellings will be designed to be adaptable providing flexible, accessible and age friendly homes and where viable a proportion of the new homes will meet Building Regulation requirements for greater accessibility, in line with the BLP.

- 2.22 Overall, the Stakeholder Masterplanning process has been generally well received by local residents and other stakeholders. Although Cox Green Parish Council raised some concerns over the consultation undertaken, the promoters met with the parish council on 29 September 2022 and have continued to engage with them. Whilst some remain opposed to the principle of development, many recognise that the process has enabled the local community and interested parties to be involved in the development process far earlier than would normally be the case.
- 2.23 Moving forward, and subject to Cabinet approving the SMD for Development Management purposes, Berkeley Strategic Land will prepare a pre-application public consultation to take place early in 2023 in addition to on-going Engagement through further CLG meetings and liaison with the Royal Borough.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

Table 2: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
The SMD helps to deliver a high-quality scheme on Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue, which meets the requirements of the BLP, is appropriate to context and respects its surroundings.	The high-level design principles, developed with input from the local community, and set out in the SMD, are not taken forward/ are watered down.	The high-level design principles, as set out in the SMD, are generally taken forward, and positively influence the planning application proposals/ development on the ground.	The high-level design principles, as set out in the SMD, are mostly taken forward, and positively influence the planning application proposals/ development on the ground.	The high-level design principles, as set out in the SMD, are taken forward and strengthened (with further community input at the design coding stage) and positively influence the planning application proposals/ development on the ground.	Upon determination of the Reserved Matters applications/ completion of the development.

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 The hosting of the engagement sessions, publicity, drafting of the SMD, and organisation of the consultation, were all the responsibility of Berkeley Strategic Land (albeit with guidance and input from Council officers and their advisors).
- 4.2 A Planning Performance Agreement was agreed with Berkeley Strategic Land at the start of the Stakeholder Masterplanning process. This Agreement provided funding to the Council to resource the input of specialist officers/ consultants, in particular, Stefan Kruczkowski (urban design advice) and Project Centre (highways and drainage advice).
- 4.3 This therefore means that the funding for this work has all been contained within resources and has not required additional funding from the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The SMD for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue will not form part of the Development Plan in the Royal Borough. It would not have the same weight as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) produced in accordance with [Regulations 11 to 16 of the Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#).
- 5.2 SMDs are effectively the first stage in the development process on the larger housing sites within the Borough (in effect an expanded pre-application submission, but with added public engagement intended to allow residents to have an input into the development of the sites). We are therefore expecting the developer at Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue to come forward with a pre-application submission or an outline planning application which would be based upon the SMD following the adoption of the SMD by Cabinet.
- 5.3 In light of the community engagement and consultation undertaken in relation to the SMD, some weight must already be attributed to the SMD, but in accordance with the process prescribed in the BLP, and to give Berkeley Strategic Land confidence that the Council is supportive of the design objectives and design principles in the SMD, Officers are recommending that Cabinet formally approves the SMD as an important material consideration for Development Management purposes.
- 5.4 This is a process that will be repeated for other housing sites within the borough in order to comply with policy QP1. The Land West of Windsor site had its SMD adopted by Cabinet in October 2021, and Spencer’s Farm in July 2022. In addition to the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue site, an SMD for Lower Mount Farm in Cookham (AL37) is expected to be taken to Cabinet early next year.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risk	Level of uncontrolled risk	Controls	Level of controlled risk
Local community concerns and issues are not taken into account at the planning application stage.	Medium	Approve the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue SMD for development management purposes, ensuring that the comments from the local community are considered at the planning application stage.	Low
Other developers and promoters (for other sites)	Medium/ Low	Approve the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue SMD for development	Low

allocated in the BLP) resist preparing Stakeholder Masterplans.		management purposes (demonstrating the benefits/ effectiveness of the process).	
Design principles in the SMD are watered down in delivering the development	Medium/ High	Approve the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue SMD for development management purposes – prior to any granting of outline planning permission.	Low

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 Equalities. Officers consider that the SMD for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue meets the Basic Conditions in relation to human rights requirements.
- 7.2 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, including those within the workforce and customer/public groups, have been considered.
- 7.3 An [EQIA screening form](#) has been completed and signed by the relevant Head of Service. The recommendations in this report have no identified equality impacts.
- 7.4 Climate change/sustainability. Another of the Basic Conditions is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The SMD aligns with the policies and requirements of the BLP, which was subject to Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 7.5 Data Protection/GDPR. The consultation on the draft SMD was undertaken by Berkeley Strategic Land. Any sensitive information shared with Officers was handled in accordance with the GDPR regulations and the statement on the way the Planning Policy team handles personal data.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The process of engagement and consultation on the draft SMD for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue is described above. Officers believe that the form and amount of engagement is as envisaged by the BLP (in relation to the preparation of SMDs) and accords with the principles set out in the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Table 4: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
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26 th January 2023	Subject to Cabinet’s approval, the SMD, will become an important material consideration in the assessment and determination of planning applications on the Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue site.
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10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by 3 appendices:

- Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment Screening
- Appendix B – Summary of consultation responses, with Berkeley Strategic Land comments
- Appendix C – Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue Stakeholder Masterplan Document (Version for Approval for Development Management Purposes)
- Appendix D - Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue Stakeholder Masterplan Document (Accessible Version)

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

11.1 This report is supported by 2 background documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>
- [Adopted Borough Local Plan](https://consult.rbwm.gov.uk/file/5883688)
<https://consult.rbwm.gov.uk/file/5883688>

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>	
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	16/12/22	19/12/22
Emma Duncan	Director of Law, Strategy & Public Health/ Monitoring Officer		
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	16/12/22	20/12/22
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	16/12/22	22/12/22

Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)		
<i>Mandatory:</i>	<i>Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>		
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer		
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Tony Reeves	Interim Chief Executive	16/12/22	29/12/22
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	16/12/22	20/12/22
<i>Heads of Service (where relevant)</i>			
Chris Joyce	Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth		
Adrien Waite	Head of Planning		
<i>External (where relevant)</i>			
N/A			

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cllr Phil Haseler Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transport	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Non-key decision.	No	No

Report Author: Ian Motuel – Planning Policy Manager Tel. 01628 796429

APPENDIX A - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Essential information

Items to be assessed: (please mark 'x')

Strategy		Policy		Plan	X	Project		Service/Procedure	
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Responsible officer	Adrien Waite, Head of Planning	Service area	Planning	Directorate	Place
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Stage 1: EqIA Screening (mandatory)	Date created: 15/12/2022	Stage 2 : Full assessment (if applicable)	Date created : N/A
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Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:
"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."

Signed by (print): Adrien Waite

Dated: 22/12/2022

Guidance notes

What is an EqlA 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.

EqlAs 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. All completed EqlA 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.

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 EqlA?

The process for conducting an EqlA 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 Stakeholder Masterplan Document (SMD) has been prepared to guide future development on Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue, identified as Allocation AL24 within the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead's (RBWM) adopted Borough Local Plan (BLP).

The Stakeholder Masterplan document aims to:

- Inform the Development Management process;
- Enable the local community and other stakeholders to engage with the planning and design process for the site, far early than would normally be the case. (See paragraphs 2.10 and 2.11 of main report ensuring that the engagement reflected the diversity of the local community).
- Improve the efficiency of the planning and development process, by providing greater certainty in advance of the planning application stage; and
- Ensure that the new development framework delivers the sustainability and place-making aspirations of the BLP, thereby creating a high-quality environment

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 characteristics	Relevance	Level	Positive/negative	Evidence
Age	Relevant	Medium	Positive	<p><i>Key data: The estimated median age of the local population is 42.6yrs [Source: ONS mid-year estimates 2020].</i></p> <p><i>An estimated 20.2% of the local population are aged 0-15, and estimated 61% of the local population are aged 16-64yrs and an estimated 18.9% of the local population are aged 65+yrs. [Source: ONS mid-year estimates 2020, taken from Berkshire Observatory]</i></p> <p>The Borough Local Plan allocates site AL24, Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue, for residential uses and supporting community infrastructure. The adopted Borough Local Plan was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment in 2017, which did not identify any negative impacts for any particular group with protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue develops the policies and requirements set out in the Borough Local Plan. It does not create new policy.</p> <p>Borough Local Plan Policy 'HO2 Housing Mix and Type' recognises that new homes should support the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life, and the expectation is that a proportion of new housing should meet the higher accessibility standards of Requirement M4(2) (Building Regulations). The Stakeholder Masterplan Document recognises the need for different housing types and tenures to meet a range of local needs, particularly in relation to the design of new dwellings to be adaptable providing flexible, accessible and age friendly homes.</p>

				<p>Future planning applications will need to comply with Borough Local Plan policy.</p> <p>There is nothing in the Stakeholder Masterplan Document which is considered to disproportionately impact on any particular individual or group.</p>
Disability				<p>The Borough Local Plan proposes allocation of site AL24, Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue, for residential uses and supporting community infrastructure. The adopted Borough Local Plan was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment in 2017, which did not identify any negative impacts for any particular group with protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue develops the policies and requirements set out in the Borough Local Plan. It does not create new policy. Borough Local Plan Policy 'HO2 Housing Mix and Type' recognises that new homes should support the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life, and the expectation is that a proportion of new housing should meet the higher accessibility standards of Requirement M4(2) (Building Regulations). The Stakeholder Masterplan Document recognises the need for different housing types and tenures to meet a range of local needs, particularly in relation to the design of new dwellings to be adaptable providing flexible, accessible and age friendly homes.</p> <p>In addition, provision of high quality walking, cycling provision, and safe crossing points will provide links to existing neighbourhoods and facilities at Cox Green and Woodlands Park that could benefit those with physical disabilities in particular.</p> <p>Future planning applications will need to comply with Borough Local Plan policy.</p>

				There is nothing in the Stakeholder Masterplan Document which is considered to disproportionately impact on any particular individual or group.
Gender re-assignment	Not relevant			The SMD will have no impact on this protected characteristic.
Marriage/civil partnership	Not relevant			The SMD will have no impact on this protected characteristic.
Pregnancy and maternity	Relevant	Low	Positive	<p>The Borough Local Plan proposes allocation of site AL24, Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue, for residential uses and supporting community infrastructure. The Borough Local Plan (Submission Version) was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment in 2017, which did not identify any negative impacts for any particular group with protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue develops the policies and requirements set out in the Borough Local Plan. It does not create new policy.</p> <p>There is nothing in the Stakeholder Masterplan Document which is considered to disproportionately impact on any particular individual or group.</p>
Race	Relevant	Medium	Positive	<p><i>Key data: The 2011 Census indicates that 86.1% of the local population is White and 13.9% of the local population is BAME. The borough has a higher Asian/Asian British population (9.6%) than the South East (5.2%) and England (7.8%). The forthcoming 2021 Census data is expected to show a rise in the BAME population. [Source: 2011 Census, taken from Berkshire Observatory]</i></p> <p>The Borough Local Plan proposes allocation</p>

				<p>of site AL24, Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue, for residential uses and supporting community infrastructure. The adopted Borough Local Plan was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment in 2017, which did not identify any negative impacts for any particular group with protected characteristics. The Stakeholder Masterplan Document for Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue develops the policies and requirements set out in the Borough Local Plan. It does not create new policy.</p> <p>Borough Local Plan Policy 'HO2 Housing Mix and Type' recognises that new homes should support the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life, and the expectation is that a proportion of new housing should meet the higher accessibility standards of Requirement M4(2) (Building Regulations). The Stakeholder Masterplan Document recognises the need for different housing types and tenures to meet a range of local needs, and future planning applications will need to comply with Borough Local Plan policy.</p> <p>There is nothing in the Stakeholder Masterplan Document which is considered to disproportionately impact on any particular individual or group.</p>
Religion and belief	Not relevant			<p><i>Key data: The 2011 Census indicates that 62.3% of the local population is Christian, 21.7% no religion, 3.9% Muslim, 2% Sikh, 1.8% Hindu, 0.5% Buddhist, 0.4% other religion, and 0.3% Jewish. [Source: 2011 Census, taken from Berkshire Observatory]</i></p> <p>The SMD will have no impact on this protected characteristic.</p>

Sex	Not relevant			<p><i>Key data: In 2020 an estimated 49.6% of the local population is male and 50.4% female. [Source: ONS mid-year estimates 2020, taken from Berkshire Observatory]</i></p> <p>The SMD will have no impact on this protected characteristic.</p>
Sexual orientation	Not relevant			<p>The SMD will have no impact on this protected characteristic.</p>

Outcome, action and 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?	No	At this time, it is considered that the proposed Stakeholder Masterplan Document is unlikely to have a disproportionate impact on any particular group.		
Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact?	No			

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).

Appendix B – Berkeley Strategic summary of consultation responses

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
Traffic & Highways	Traffic congestion at peak times currently often has roads blocked, has there been consideration given to the impact further housing will have on this?	Junction capacity assessments will be undertaken for the local junctions using traffic flows provided by RBWM from their Strategic Highway Model. This will incorporate increases in traffic resulting from the Adopted Local Plan. Where required junction improvements will be proposed to mitigate the impact of the development.	No changes proposed to the SMD. Comments are to be addressed in the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.
	Suggested changes to highways infrastructure will not make any effective difference to the level of traffic in the local area.	Highway mitigation will be supported by junction capacity modelling to determine it's effectiveness. A Travel Plan will be provided to encourage residents to move from private car use to sustainable transport from the outset.	No changes proposed to the SMD. Comments are to be addressed in the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.
	How will the developer implement a robust residential travel plan? Private individuals cannot be compelled to adhere to a travel plan for their own property.	The Travel Plan will be submitted to and approved by the Travel Plan team at RBWM. It will set out various initiatives and measures to encourage sustainable transport use and will include an Action Plan the implementation of which will be monitored by RBWM. The main initiative for Residential Travel Plans is making residents aware of their travel options and the ease of travelling to the major trip destinations (the town centre and railway station). It is easier to change travel behaviour from the outset rather than changing ingrained travel habits and so residents will be informed of their travel options prior to them moving into their new dwelling.	No changes proposed to the SMD. Comments are to be addressed in the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	The pavement along Woodlands Park Road is already far too narrow and this is a safety concern for cyclists and pedestrians.	It is proposed to widen the footway in the immediate vicinity of the site access where it is at its narrowest. Widening the full length of the road would require the removal of the existing hedge with adverse environmental impacts and there is a significant level difference in places.	Text added: Page 54: 'In the vicinity of the site, the footpath on Woodlands Park Road is between 1 m and 1.5 m wide but the potential for widening the footway to 2m is limited due to the existing mature hedgerow. The location where the footway is at its narrowest, however, is adjacent to the proposed site access junction and so it is proposed to widen the footway in this location from 1m to 1.5m to assist pedestrians.'
	What is the plan for the junction of Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue? Visibility is currently poor coming onto Woodlands Park Road.	The visibility splays will be improved to meet national standards and will be based on speed surveys undertaken on Woodlands Park Road. This visibility splay will be kept clear of any development and will be offered for adoption to the Highway Authority to ensure that it remains unobstructed.	Trees removed at primary access junction and at Woodlands Park Avenue/Woodlands Park Road junction on the Masterplan Framework drawing on page 44/45.
	The nearby Highfield Road is currently overused by traffic and additional traffic generated from the proposed development will make this worse.	Development traffic heading to and from the north west of Maidenhead and the Thicket Roundabout will use Cannon Lane instead of Highfield Lane. The only development traffic which will use Highfield Lane would be travelling to and from the schools and Cox Green leisure centre, which are close enough to walk or cycle to and from. Therefore the volume of residential traffic using Highfield Lane will be low and the impact on the one-way operation across the railway bridge will be minimal.	No changes required.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	<p>Development will cause a significant increase in traffic along Shoppenhangers Road. Shoppenhangers Road is already in a very poor state of repair and will only become worse with proposed plans increasing traffic.</p>	<p>The 2011 Census identifies that 50% of traffic will head east along Woodlands Park Road and 50% to the west. A lot of traffic will also use the A404(M) and would therefore only use the southern part of Shoppenhangers Road. Consequently the majority of Shoppenhangers Road will only see a relatively small increase in traffic resulting from the development.</p> <p>The condition of the carriageway surface along Shoppenhangers Road is the responsibility of RBWM. It will be subject to a rolling programme of maintenance. The Local Plan and the South West Maidenhead SPD includes improvements on Shoppenhangers Road and so maintenance is liable to be undertaken at the same time.</p>	<p>No changes required.</p>
	<p>Public transport will need improving as the bus service into Maidenhead is too slow and people will use their cars.</p>	<p>The bus timetable indicates that it takes around 25 minutes to travel from Sawyers Crescent to Maidenhead Railway Station. This is based on the brand new timetable which will have been developed based on observed journey times. This might take longer than a car journey but it removes the need to find a free parking place and is a cheaper travel option when compared to paying for parking.</p>	<p>No changes required.</p>

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	Recent changes to the bus route should be considered - The potential bus stop enhancements may not be entirely suitable on the outbound route which may no longer be operational. Inbound stops should have proper bus laybys.	<p>Bus route 7 no longer heads eastbound on Woodlands Park Road between Cannon Lane and Lowbrook Drive, with buses now heading north along Cannon Lane to Bissley Drive and re-joining Woodlands Park Road via Lowbrook Drive. Consequently, the existing eastbound stops in the vicinity of the site will no longer be served. Therefore improvements to the westbound stops will be required. It is proposed to improve the westbound stop opposite Lowbrook Drive and consideration will be given to improving the stop at the northern end of Woodlands Park Avenue.</p> <p>The provision of a bus layby will have a significant impact on the existing hedgerow and mature trees, whilst laybys are no longer favoured by bus companies as drivers can find it difficult to leave the layby at busy times. The preference is now for on-road bus stops.</p>	<p>Text added: Page 30 - 'Existing bus stops are located within a 5 minute walk of the site providing direct links to the town centre and train station. There is an opportunity to improve the existing bus stops, following the re-routing of bus route 7, to encourage sustainable travel amongst residents.'</p> <p>page 52 - Healthy Placemaking: At the bus stop, a pedestrian crossing will also be provided to improve access to the bus stops. Consideration will be given to relocating the former eastbound stop near Lowbrook Drive to a position which serves the re-routed bus route but this is subject to discussions with RBWM.</p>
	There is currently a high number of bus cancellations on the existing service.	<p>The reliability of the bus service is Thames Valley Buses responsibility. Liaison can be undertaken with the bus company to identify the reasons for the unreliable service. If highway congestion is the cause, the Local Plan incorporates highway improvements which will improve traffic flow through Maidenhead.</p>	No changes required.
Access	The proposed access point onto Woodlands Park Road is an accident hotspot and is unsafe.	The accident records indicate that there has been one serious accident in the vicinity of the proposed site access over the previous five years and one further slight accident in the last ten	No changes required.

Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	<p>years (2 accidents in total). The site access location is therefore not identified as an accident hotspot. The proposals will widen the carriageway and will improve visibility, whilst the provision of central island will act as a traffic calming feature.</p> <p>These changes will create a safer environment for road users.</p>	
<p>The proposal to add emergency access points along Woodlands Park Avenue is flawed. The road is already extremely busy with heavy goods vehicles and pedestrians.</p>	<p>The emergency access will be designed to ensure that emergency vehicles are able to wait off the carriageway whilst the removable bollards are removed. Therefore, there will be limited impact to the traffic flow on Woodlands Park Avenue. The access will be used infrequently by vehicles, if at all, as it will only be used if the main site access is blocked. It's main function will be as a pedestrian / cycle access to the development.</p>	<p>No changes required.</p>
<p>How will the emergency access from Woodlands Park Avenue be restricted so that it does not become a main thoroughfare for all vehicles?</p>	<p>Vehicular access to the emergency access will be restricted through removable bollards.</p> <p>These will be locked through a fire brigade padlock which will enable the emergency services to have access as they will have a master key.</p>	<p>Text added: page 30 - Site Opportunities: 'An emergency only access will be provided off Woodlands Park Avenue with restrictions in place to ensure access for only authorised emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.'</p> <p>page 46 - Masterplan Framework: 'Emergency vehicle and pedestrian/cycle access only provided off Woodlands Park Avenue.'</p>
<p>Will one main access to the new site be enough to support the level of new vehicles coming in and out of the proposed development?</p>	<p>The access has been designed in accordance with the RBWM Highway Design Guide. This confirms that a development of up to 300 dwellings can be accessed via a single access point if an emergency access is</p>	<p>No changes required.</p>

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
		provided. The Transport Assessment will undertake a junction capacity assessment to show that the junction would operate within capacity.	
	The emergency access planned for Woodlands Park Avenue should be placed elsewhere as emergency services would block Woodlands Park Avenue.	The emergency access will enable emergency vehicles to access the development if the main site access is blocked and therefore vehicles will not park on Woodlands Park Avenue. The access will be designed to ensure that emergency vehicles are able to wait off the carriageway whilst the removable bollards are removed. Therefore, there will be limited impact to the traffic flow on Woodlands Park Avenue.	No changes required.
	A number of local residents are both in favour of a potential roundabout access on Woodlands Park Road, though some are opposed to the idea. Those in favour claim it would lower dangerous car speeds along the road and those in opposition claim it would add to congestion.	The provision of a roundabout has been investigated but it is considered to have too significant an impact on the existing mature trees along Woodlands Park Road. It also has a significant impact on the amount of developable land available and would therefore not be compliant with the Local Plan site allocation. A roundabout would increase queueing and delay on Woodlands Park Road and would be excessive provision for the number of dwellings being proposed. Instead the proposed ghost island priority T junction will provide traffic calming whilst the provision of dwellings on the southern side of the road will increase the drivers perception of Woodlands Park Road being a residential road which will also help reduce vehicular speeds.	Text added: page 33 - 'The provision of a roundabout has been investigated but it is considered to have too significant an impact on the existing mature trees along Woodlands Park Road. It also has a significant impact on the amount of developable land available and would therefore not be compliant with the Local Plan site allocation. A roundabout would increase queueing and delay on Woodlands Park Road and would be excessive provision for the number of dwellings being proposed. Instead the proposed ghost island priority T junction will provide traffic calming whilst the provision of dwellings on the southern side of the road will increase the drivers perception of Woodlands Park Road being a residential road which will also help reduce vehicular speeds. A roundabout access arrangement was therefore

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
			discounted in favour of a priority T junction access.'
Parking	Will there be adequate parking for all the new occupants within the site, so the local roads do not get clogged up with excess vehicles?	The parking will be provided in accordance with the RBWM maximum parking standards in accordance with RBWM policy. Visitor parking will also be provided on site. It is therefore not anticipated that there will be overspill parking on local residential roads.	Text added: page 54 - Healthy Placemaking: 'The development will provide adequate parking provision and meet RBWM's relevant parking standards at the time of a planning application submission.' Photograph added showing parking provision.
	If the site is to support family housing, will houses have sufficient parking (at least two spaces per house) to support the new population and avoid traffic parking on Woodlands Park Avenue?	The parking will be provided in accordance with the RBWM maximum parking standards to ensure it accords with RBWM policy. The number of spaces provided is dependent on the number of bedrooms and so the larger dwellings will have more parking than the smaller dwellings.	Text added: page 54 - Healthy Placemaking: 'The development will provide adequate parking provision and meet RBWM's relevant parking standards at the time of a planning application submission.' Photograph added showing parking provision.
	Parking for the sports pitches in the eastern section should have a direct road to it, rather than motorists and cyclists going into the estate.	There is insufficient site frontage to provide a second access onto Woodlands Park Road and which provides suitable separation with Lowbrook Drive. The provision of a second access will have significant impact on the existing mature hedgerows and trees.	No changes required.
	There is not enough parking at Maidenhead Station to support the idea that people will drive to the station and use the train.	Parking at the railway station is the responsibility of Great Western Railway and RBWM. The Travel Plan provided to residents will promote and encourage sustainable transport use to residents	No changes required.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
		(i.e. bus, walking and cycling). The site is located within a 3.5km cycling distance of the station either via Shoppenhangers Road or via the National Cycle Route 4 along the residential roads to the north of the development.	
Permeability	Uncontrolled pedestrian crossings are not sufficient for safe pedestrian movements on these roads. Additional crossings are needed on Woodlands Park Road.	At the site access, central refuge islands will be provided so that pedestrians do not have to cross in one movement. These islands will also slow vehicles down.	Text added: page 54 - Healthy Placemaking: 'Further work will be undertaken with the relevant authorities to achieve the best solution for pedestrian crossings on Woodlands Park Road to deliver safe, attractive and convenient crossing points, the crossing type and location is subject to further discussion with RBWM.'
	There is an opportunity for improved cycling and walking links into the countryside and surrounding public rights of way.	There will be routes linking the development to the existing off-site Public Rights of Way. This will provide improved connections to the wider countryside and existing Public Rights of Way.	No changes required.
	The masterplan appears to merge pedestrian and cycling routes which is not consistent with the wider countryside network and introduces conflict between cyclists and pedestrians.	There are currently no dedicated cycle routes within the development itself, except for the emergency access which doubles as a footway / cycleway. The residential roads will be lightly trafficked and will have a design speed of 20mph to improve cyclist safety and encourage less confident cyclists to use the roads.	No changes required.
	It is Important to allow a bridlepath through the development to the south western corner so equestrians and cyclists do not have to use the busy Woodlands Park Road.	There will be pedestrian and cycle links within the site to connect the existing Public Rights of Way to the off-site pedestrian infrastructure. There are no existing bridleways abutting the site and so cyclists and equestrians would have nowhere to go if a bridleway is provided within the site. A connection to the existing	No changes required.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
		bridleway linking Ockwells Road to Thrift Lane is not feasible as it would cross third party land.	
Drainage	The western field regularly floods. Is channelling this water into a stream running through the middle of the site enough to avoid flooding issues for new and existing houses?	The central feature has been modelled to have capacity to take any overland flooding through the site and away from the proposed and existing properties.	No changes required.
	The land to be built on is composed of clay, which contains a higher flood risk and is more expensive to mitigate against.	Through site investigations groundwater was found at between 1.98 and 4m below ground level. The site investigation has found a mix of both clay and chalk, therefore flood risk is considered low.	No changes required.
	The development of the site poses the risk of flooding existing nearby properties as the Environment Agency have identified the land to the north end of the site as being prone to flooding.	The proposed flood mitigation measures have been sized to accommodate the potential flood risk volumes. Therefore the risk has been reduced.	No changes required.
	Sustainable urban drainage systems are a result of development on the western side of the site, and this should be provided on the western side as a result. As a large percentage of the eastern side appears to be dedicated to the SuDS, how is this conducive with providing "health and wellbeing benefits, recreation, food production and leisure opportunities"	Some SuDS features will be contained within the western side of the site. However due to space required to control flows off the site a larger area is required. The SuDS feature in the east will be a soft feature, to aid in biodiversity, aesthetic and create an amenity feel.	page 44/45 - Change to Masterplan Framework - The extent of the wetland features on the eastern part of the site has been reduced and redesigned.
Principle of Development	There are brownfield sites that should be developed before greenfield land is compromised.	The site is allocated for development within the Borough Local Plan and the principle of development is therefore established.	No changes required.
	Enough new homes are being built already on the nearby Maidenhead Golf Course. Additional homes are not needed here as well.	The site is allocated for development within the Borough Local Plan for up to 300 homes. This is in addition to the allocation at the Maidenhead Golf Club.	No changes required.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	All the empty office sites in the Borough should be repurposed before building on greenfield land. Sites such as The Magnet Leisure Centre and Grove Business Park should be built and utilised first.	Such considerations could form part of the Council's ongoing spatial strategy for development in the Borough. The site is allocated for development within the Borough Local Plan.	No changes required.
	The land is currently in agricultural use and should be kept in this use to sustain the population and help with food security in the UK.	The site is allocated for development within the Borough Local Plan for up to 300 homes. The loss of current land was taken into consideration during the Examination of the Borough Local Plan.	No changes required.
Consultation	The local residents should be given further consideration. The consultation event should have been hosted in an area affected by the development.	Berkeley Homes are very keen to engage with local residents. Further consultation will be held at a public exhibition to discuss the proposals in early 2023 and residents will be invited. There has been one public consultation event to date which revolved around the Stakeholder Masterplan Document. Section 8.3 of the SMD sets out the Timeframe for Next Steps / Delivery of Development.	No changes required.
Construction	Construction is said to take place between approximately three to five years. How can residents of Woodlands Park Avenue overlook a building site and have their daily commutes disrupted this long.	A Construction Management Plan will be submitted with the application which will contain guidance on construction to ensure any impact of local residents is minimised.	No changes required.
Housing	There is no figure for the number of houses proposed to be built. What figure of housing can we expect to see on the site?	The site is allocated for up to 300 homes and the proposals will not exceed this figure. The number of homes is to be decided through the preparation of a planning application.	No changes required.
	Housing that is labelled as affordable housing is often not genuinely affordable and will not help key workers or local residents.	The affordable housing proposed on the site will be in accordance with planning policy and in accordance with government guidance on affordable housing.	No changes required.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	A higher proportion of housing on the site should be social housing as opposed to private housing.	40% of the proposed homes will be affordable, in accordance with Borough Local Plan Policy.	No changes required.
	The ratio of flats and houses should be revealed for the site. The site is not suitable for the flats as there is already a large supply within the town centre.	The project team are still finalising the masterplan, based on technical input on matters such as drainage and highways. The application will be submitted in outline form, with details such as the number of homes and flats to be agreed at a later stage through a Reserved Matters application. The future Reserved Matters applications will be subject to public consultation at the relevant time.	No changes required.
	How tall will the buildings be? There is a limited number of town houses in Waltham Chase, but nothing else in immediate proximity over two storeys. Will they be taller than this?	The homes will be designed to reflect the local vernacular with further detail to be provided in a future Design and Access Statement.	No changes required.
Design & Land Use	The existing houses along Woodlands Park Avenue will experience a loss of privacy and overlooking from the development. Flats would also cause privacy issues for residents along Woodlands Park Avenue.	Current development parcels will be set back from the boundary with Woodlands Park Avenue through additional planting. This will minimise any perceived loss of privacy for existing residents.	Text added: page 30 - Site Opportunities - 'There is potential to deliver a landscaped edge incorporating additional planting along the western site boundary ensuring privacy for the existing residents on Woodlands Park Avenue.' Page 44/45 - Annotation added to Masterplan Framework - 'Reinforced planting and landscaped edge on western boundary to screen views from existing properties on Woodlands Park Avenue.' Page 51 - Cross Section added to show relationship between existing properties on Woodlands Park Avenue and proposed new homes, screened by a landscaped

Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
		edge. Descriptive text also added.
The sports facilities will need changing rooms and maintenance, who will be responsible for the long term management of this?	Berkeley Homes are currently in discussion with Officers at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to discuss the requirement for sports pitches. It is the current intention that the sports pitches will be informal (to respond appropriately to the setting) and are therefore unlikely to have changing rooms and facilities.	No changes required.
The residents at the hospice will be adversely affected by the proposed development due to issues relating to noise and privacy.	Ongoing liaison has been held with the Thames Hospice and all comments and concerns raised have been taken into account. The SMD currently proposes a landscape buffer.	No changes required.
How is the sports and play hub to be addressed? Flood lights will be inappropriate for the semi-rural feel on the site and may affect nearby wildlife.	Berkeley Homes are currently in discussion with Officers at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to discuss the requirement for sports pitches. It is the current intention that the sports pitches will be informal (to respond appropriately to the setting) and not have flood lighting.	No changes required.
The new 'public' facilities adjacent to the new housing should not provide the illusion of exclusivity to the development if the intention is to provide wider community benefits.	Currently, informal sports pitches are proposed which will be for the benefit of the wider community.	No changes required.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	There is significant demand for allotments in the area. A site that can accommodate 100 medium sized plots would not be difficult to fill. The area allocated for allotments appears to be around 6,000m ² to 6,500m ² which would provide up to approximately 40 plots.	There is no policy requirement to provide allotments. However, following feedback from the local community, allotments are now proposed.	Text added: page 44/45 - Change to Masterplan Framework - Area allocated to allotments expanded. page 57 - Healthy Placemaking - 'Further engagement with RBWM will be undertaken to agree an open space package that works towards meeting the local need for allotments. There is an aspiration to provide both standard and mini allotment plots providing a range of sizes.'
	The field proposed for development is an emergency landing field for White Waltham Airport and is unsafe for development.	The site is allocated for development within the Borough Local Plan and the appropriateness of the site has been considered at length during the Examination of the Borough Local Plan.	No changes required.
	The development is strongly focused on Cox Green and pays little attention to the neighbourhood of Woodlands Parks or its needs.	White Waltham Parish Council representatives have taken part in Community Liaison Group meetings and have influenced the framework masterplan and Stakeholder Masterplan Document.	No changes required.
Supporting Infrastructure	There is no plan for how the development will address the additional demand on health, education and waste facilities. How will existing infrastructure manage to meet the needs of existing and new residents?	Through a mechanism called the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), Berkeley Homes will make financial contributions towards upgrading and improving the local infrastructure. CIL contributions from a development such as Lillibrooke will be spent on strategic highways improvement; enhancements to existing schools to enable the provision of additional school places; improvements to existing healthcare facilities; enhancements to existing libraries, social and community facilities and public realm improvements.	No changes required.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	Will the generated tax from the development be able to support the additional need for local infrastructure in the long- term?	The contribution to be made through the Community Instructure Levy will contribute towards Borough Wide infrastructure. At least 15% of the CIL contribution will be directly passed onto the Parish who can decide what to spend the money on.	No changes required.
RBWM Section Specific Comments	Page 39 6.1 Design Principles 'Respect Heritage Assets'. Remove the yellow barrier around Lillibrooke Manor as the extent of the heritage setting isn't fixed and goes beyond this.	Built Heritage advice shows that the land east of the tree belt forms part of the setting of the listed building.	Page 41 - Key updated to state 'Indicative setting of listed buildings'.
	Page 46 7.1 Homes for the Future 'Sustainable Identity' Include in this section, that development will contribute the to target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 (reference policy SP2 of the BLP).	Agreed	Page 48 - Text added: 'The development will contribute to the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 as set out in Policy SP2 of the BLP.'
	Page 47. 7.1 Homes for the Future – Homes for Everyone Include reference to accessible and adaptable dwellings. The site will also provide flexible, accessible, adaptable and age friendly homes.	Agreed	Page 49 - Text added: 'New dwellings will be designed to be adaptable providing flexible, accessible and age friendly homes.'
	Page 48. 7.2 Nature Recovery Include reference to 10% net gain in biodiversity in paragraph 'Opportunities for movement...' Beautiful open spaces and new wildlife habitats creating at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity (as mentioned in 8.2). Alexander Devine Children's Hospice is described in sections 3.1 The Engagement Process, 4.2 Site Constraints, 4.3 Site Opportunities and 6.2 Masterplan Framework plan. But not included in section 7.2 of the design	There is a monitoring indicator with a target that "All developments to result in biodiversity net gain (at least 10%)". However, it appears there is no set policy figure for BNG. Policy NR2 specifically states "Development proposals will demonstrate a net gain in biodiversity by quantifiable methods such as the use of a biodiversity metric."	Text added: page 50: 'The creation of beautiful open spaces and new wildlife habitats will deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain.' page 50: 'Proposed new planting will reinforce the existing treeline along the southern boundary of the site acting as screening for the Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.'

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	objectives. Perhaps describe how the proposed nature network acts as the Landscape screening for the Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.		
	Page 56 8.1 Site Requirements. Under 'Homes for the Future', add the following in the bullet points: • Development will contribute to the target of net zero carbon emissions. See section 7.1	Agreed	Text added: Page 60: 'Development will contribute to the target of net zero carbon emissions. See section 7.1' Page 60/61: Formatting and text in tables updated.
Urban Design Doctor - Key Principles	Reduce vehicle speeds along Woodlands Park Road and invite people to walk and cycle to local facilities by making this road easier and safer to cross. A crossing point needs to be stronger than a refuge to invite and encourage people to walk and cycle more, particularly for short trips such as the school run.	Agreed	Text added: page 54 - Healthy Placemaking: 'Further work will be undertaken with the relevant authorities to achieve the best solution for pedestrian crossings on Woodlands Park Road to deliver safe, attractive and convenient crossing points, the crossing type and location is subject to further discussion with RBWM.'
	Explore providing homes with direct frontage access (with on plot turning; as opposed to private drives) along Woodlands Park Avenue; reflecting the form and character of existing homes along the Avenue. Even with attenuation needs, there are design solutions that allow driveways to be accessed over features such as open drainage channels/swales.	The Stakeholder Masterplan Document seeks to incorporate a positive frontage onto Woodlands Park Avenue, providing pedestrian and cycle access onto the road and enhancing the existing hedgerow that runs parallel to the road.	Text added as annotation to Masterplan Framework. Page 44 - 'Reinforced planting and landscaped edge on western boundary to screen views from existing properties on Woodlands Park Avenue. New homes set back behind a bio- diverse and richly planted landscape edge incorporating drainage swales. New homes served by private drives within the development to maintain the integrity of the landscaped edge. Connectivity to Woodlands Park Avenue provided via multiple pedestrian/cycle connections.'

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	Tree lined streets + Edenbrook – this will give the place a distinct and memorable identity, complementing this with locally distinctive facing and roofing materials. The SMD needs to fix some key street parameters to allow streets with meaningful variation to be brought forward at any future RM stage. Trees need to be in adopted or MANCO verges; not privately conveyed.	Agreed	Text added: page 54 - 'Streets will be designed to create a distinctive place with a clear identity and hierarchy. Street design will be informed by RBWM's Design Guide including guidance on street widths. Street design will contribute to delivering character and placemaking as well as contributing to the wider nature recovery network through the provision of incidental green spaces and tree planting within the public realm.' Photographs of 'good streets' added.
	In relation to the attenuation pond to the east of the tree belt, this pond should not be an engineered feature but should rather be organic and provide opportunities for recreation and biodiversity.	Agreed	Page 45/45 - Masterplan updated showing natural/organic shaped pond design. Texted updated: Page 50 - 'New wetland habitats including ponds, ditches, swales, reedbeds and wet grasslands will be sympathetically designed and natural in character, as part of the surface water drainage strategy, complementing the existing aquatic habitats in the wider area. Biodiverse and wildlife friendly in design including gently shelving margins, areas of open water and native aquatic/marginal planting whilst providing opportunities for recreation.' Page 51 - Photograph of natural and organic attenuation added.
Ecology	The development of the site will be detrimental to local wildlife that use the fields. Wildlife such as deer have been frequently spotted within the site.	The proposals have been informed by the findings of an ecological desk study, a phase 1 habitat survey and ongoing specialist surveys for protected and notable species including bats, dormice, badgers and reptiles. Studies are also being carried out into	No changes proposed.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
		<p>the arable plant assemblage and whether hedgerows qualify as 'important' under the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations. The emerging proposals have had regard to the findings of this work to ensure that where possible features of ecological interest, such as bat roosts and hedgerows, are retained and that opportunities for wildlife are maintained at the site. This includes deer, which are expected to continue to use areas of greenspace within the site following development.</p>	
	<p>The existing hedge line is poor along Woodlands Park Avenue which is a concern in terms of both privacy and ecology. Some residents suggest maintaining and enhancing the existing hedgerow, whilst others suggest planting a new and enhanced hedgerow and treeline along the boundary.</p>	<p>It is agreed that the hedgerow along the western site boundary is in poor condition. Retain the existing mature planting where this is in a healthy state (albeit this may require some coppicing back) and supplementing this with new native species-rich hedgerow planting within gaps. Consideration could also be given to establishment of standard trees along the boundary either through planting of individual trees or allowing existing or new hedgerow plants to 'grow out' - this would be beneficial from an ecological perspective but also to protect privacy of properties to the west.</p>	<p>Text added: page 30 - Site Opportunities - 'There is potential to deliver a landscaped edge incorporating additional planting along the western site boundary ensuring privacy for the existing residents on Woodlands Park Avenue.'</p> <p>Page 44/45 - Annotation added to Masterplan Framework - 'Reinforced planting and landscaped edge on western boundary to screen views from existing properties on Woodlands Park Avenue.'</p> <p>Page 51 - Cross Section added to show relationship between existing properties on Woodlands Park Avenue and proposed new homes, screened by a landscaped edge. Descriptive text also added.</p>
	<p>Who can guarantee that the long term maintenance of green areas will be ensured and litter / waste will not be allowed to accumulate.</p>	<p>Areas of greenspace within the site will be subject of a management plan, which will include removal of litter and waste alongside management of the habitats present.</p>	<p>No changes proposed.</p>

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	There are too many animals protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which would be affected by this proposed development.	Where protected species are present, such as breeding birds and bats, measures have been incorporated into the proposals to avoid loss of specific features and ensure that opportunities remain following development. In addition, during construction measures will be implemented (such as sensitive timing of works) to ensure that nature conservation legislation is not contravened.	No changes proposed.
	Green corridors should be incorporated into the development and maintained beyond the initial construction of the site.	Green corridors have been incorporated into the development proposals including around and across the development area, which will be retained and maintained during the operational phase of the proposed development. Areas of open space also provide opportunity to enhance the habitat resource of the site such as through provision of high value habitats such as species- rich grassland, wetland and native shrub planting.	No changes proposed.
Noise	The development of the site will cause short term noise pollution for the adjacent houses on Woodlands Park Avenue during construction.	A Construction Management Plan will be submitted with the application which will contain guidance on construction to ensure any impact of local residents is minimised.	No changes proposed.
	The development of the site will cause long term noise pollution for the adjacent houses on Woodlands Park Avenue.	Any new properties built through the development of the site will be set back from Woodlands Park Avenue through the use of a landscaping buffer. Residential use is appropriate given the surrounding residential land use.	No changes proposed.
	Aircraft circuits 07 and 25 from White Waltham Airfield fly directly over the site and would cause an	The site is allocated for development within the Borough Local Plan and the appropriateness of the site, in terms of noise	No changes proposed.

	Summary of Draft SMD Comments	Design Team Response	Proposed Changes to SMD
	unacceptable amount of noise for new residents.	constraints, has been considered at length during the Examination of the Borough Local Plan. A noise assessment will be submitted with a future planning application.	
Air Quality	The local area won't be able to support an influx of hundreds of people and vehicles into an existing area of high air pollution. The area already exceeds three W.H.O limits on air pollution.	The site is not located within an AQMA.	No changes proposed.
	What will be done regarding the dust from Topsoil and Aggregate works. Will development of the site stop the Topsoil and Aggregate works?	Development will not stop the adjacent business, but will reduce the area in which it currently operates. Careful landscape design will be required to mitigate the impact of potential noise and dust.	No changes proposed.

Appendix C – Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue Stakeholder Masterplan Document (Version for Approval for Development Management Purposes)

See SMD in separate attachment

STAKEHOLDER MASTERPLAN DOCUMENT
DECEMBER 2022



lillibrooke

LAND EAST OF WOODLANDS PARK AVENUE, MAIDENHEAD
LOCAL PLAN SITE AL24

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200 The Team



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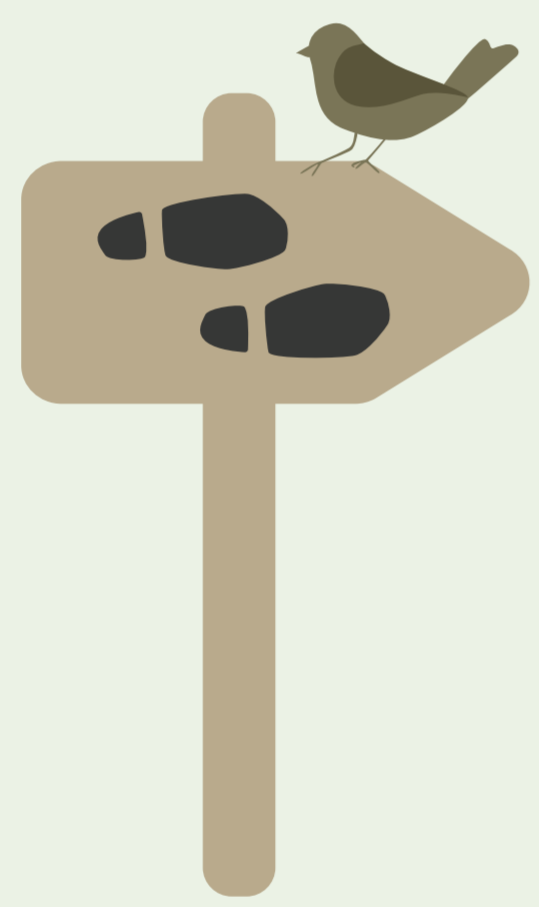
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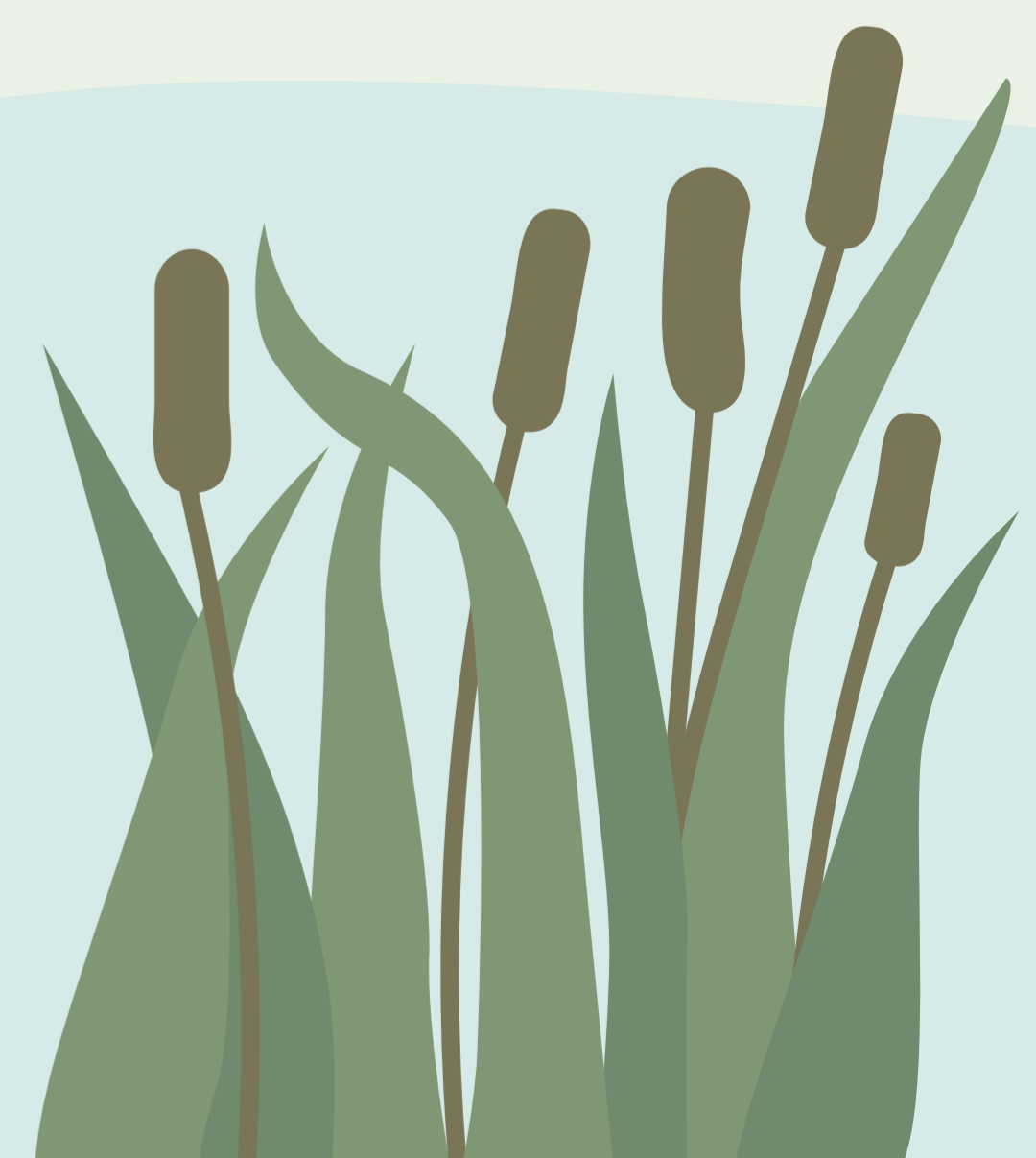


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INTRODUCTION



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1.1 Purpose of the Document

Purpose of the Document

This Stakeholder Masterplan Document (SMD) has been prepared to guide future development on Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue and north of Woodlands Business Park, Maidenhead, referred to hereafter as 'Lillibrooke'.

Lillibrooke has been identified as allocation AL24 within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) Borough Local Plan (BLP). The BLP requires the preparation of a stakeholder masterplan for the site.

This SMD provides information on the site constraints and opportunities, the design objectives and the engagement process undertaken which in turn has informed the preparation of a series of design principles and a masterplan which subsequent planning application(s) will be expected to be in general accordance with.

The aim of the SMD is as follows:

- Inform the preparation of the masterplan for Lillibrooke;
- Help inform design objectives; and
- Provide an opportunity for local stakeholders to engage in the design process and help shape the design principles and masterplan.

It will form a material consideration in the determination of the subsequent planning application(s).

The SMD has been prepared on behalf of Berkeley.

Document Structure

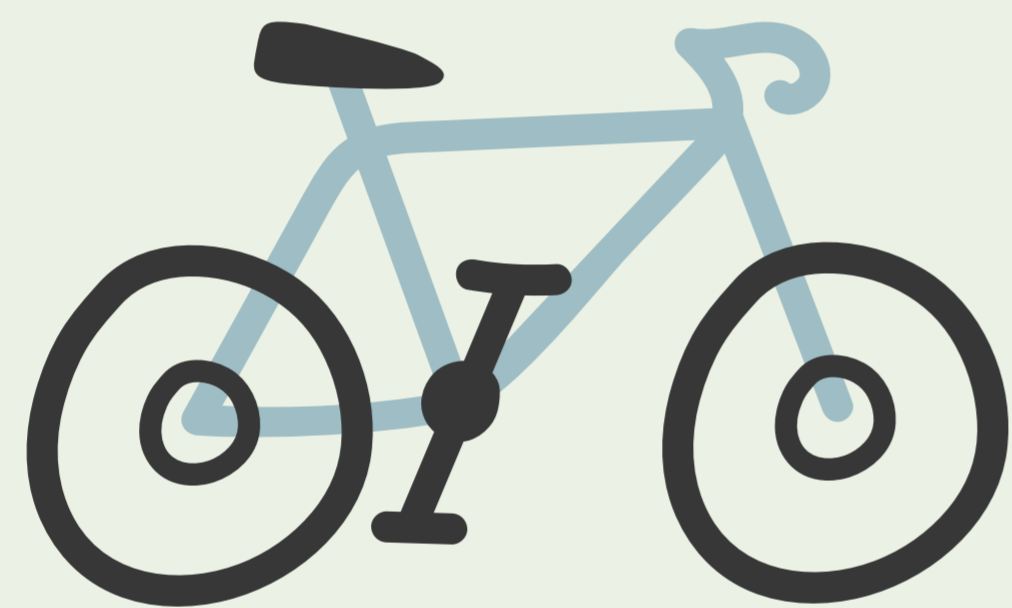
The SMD sets out the process that has been undertaken to inform the Masterplan and the Masterplan Document, and will be used in the consideration of future planning applications on the site.

The structure is as follows:

- Section 2 provides a description of the site and the planning policy context surrounding the allocation;
- Section 3 sets out the stakeholder and community engagement and the outcome of the engagement;
- Section 4 sets out the constraints and opportunities identified for the site and the 'key issues' which future planning applications will have to address;
- Section 5 sets out the design objectives, which have derived through the stakeholder engagement. The design objectives for Lillibrooke include:
 - High quality Green and Blue Infrastructure
 - Access and Movement
 - Maintaining and Enhancing Heritage
 - Landuse and Amenities (including open space and sports facilities)
- Section 6 outlines the design principles that have evolved through the engagement process and introduces the masterplan;
- Section 7 sets out how the masterplan achieves the design objectives; and
- Section 8 deals with delivery and next steps.

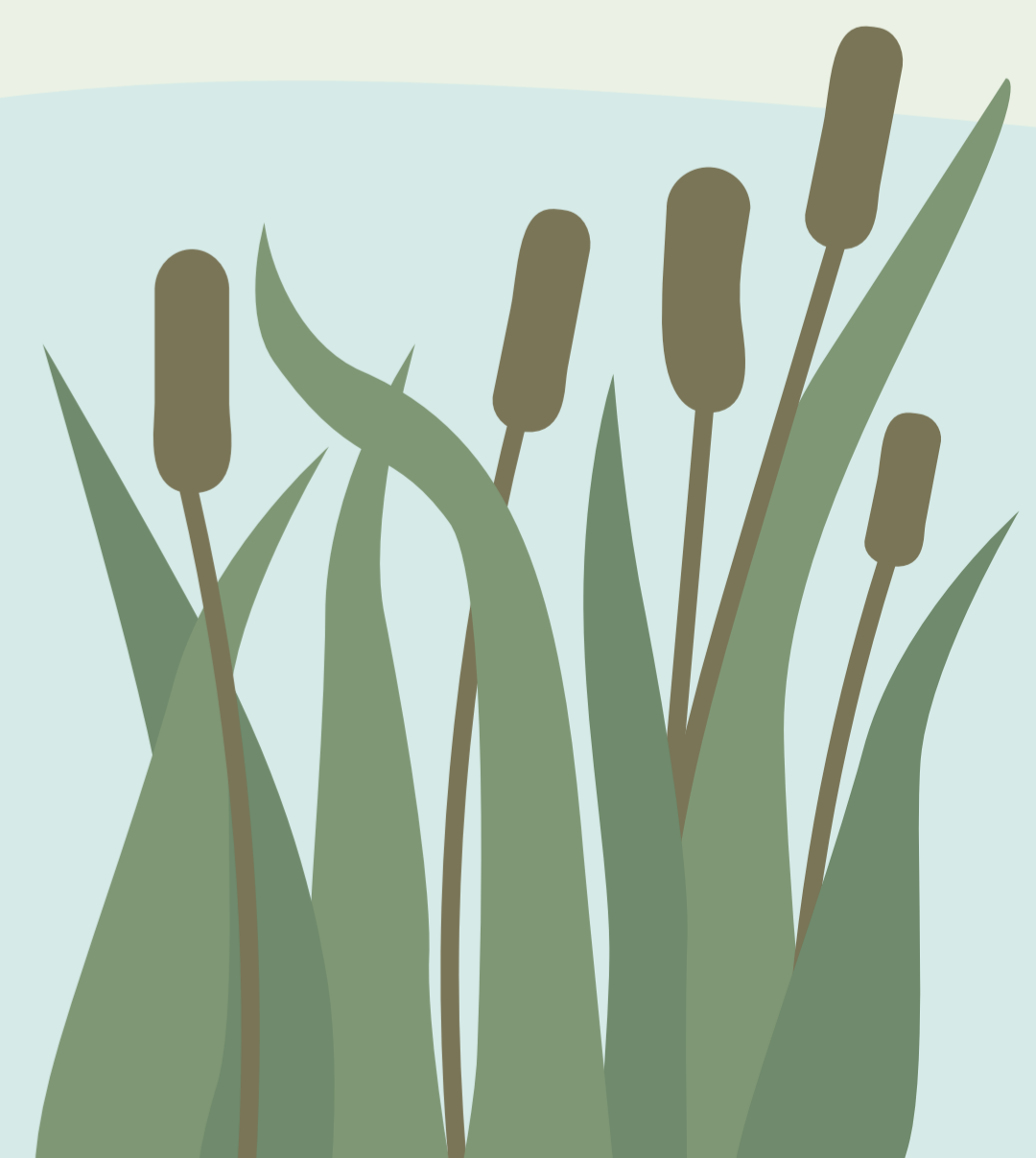


Site Location Plan



two

CONTEXT



2.1 Planning Policy Context

Site Description

The site extends to approximately 16.6ha of agricultural land and woodland. Part of the site is also used for the storage of soil and other material associated with an adjoining turf business.

The site is located approximately 3km to the south-west of Maidenhead town centre and is adjacent to the neighbourhood of Cox Green. The site falls within Cox Green Parish and White Waltham Parish lies to the west of the site.

Woodlands Park Road runs along the northern site boundary and Woodland Park Avenue to the west. Residential properties are located to the north and west. A complex of buildings at Lillibrooke Manor are located to the east of the site comprising Grade II listed buildings. Woodlands Park Business Park and Alexander Devine Children's Hospice are located to the south of the site.

A public footpath runs along the southern and eastern site boundary. The site is enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows on all sides. The local area provides a wide range of amenities and facilities as well as good walking and cycling links to the town centre and surrounding countryside.

Planning Policy Context

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Borough Local Plan (BLP) sets out RBWM's spatial development strategy for the Borough up to 2033. RBWM's overarching strategy is to focus most development in Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot, in order to optimise infrastructure and provide a sustainable approach to growth. The plan sets out several spatial objectives, including providing sufficient new housing to meet the Borough's needs. To ensure the borough has a sufficient supply of varied housing in sustainable locations, the plan has allocated sites around the borough where it is considered new homes are acceptable.

The BLP was adopted by the Council on the 8th of February 2022 and is now the key statutory planning document that shapes and manages new development in the Borough.

Lillibrooke, or site AL24, as it is referred to in the BLP, is allocated for approximately 300 new homes, strategic open space and sports pitches. Whilst the western half of the site has been removed from the Green Belt, the eastern half and central tree belt are retained in the Green Belt.

The pro-forma in Appendix C of the BLP identifies the following key requirements for the site:

- Approximately 300 new homes;
- Strategic Open Space;
- Sporting Hub;

Further detailed site-specific requirements are contained in the pro-forma relating to a variety of design and other matters.

The SMD has been prepared alongside the policies within the BLP, NPPF, PPG, National Design Guide and Borough Wide Design Guide, Building for a Healthy Life and Manual for Streets.



Central tree belt and western field

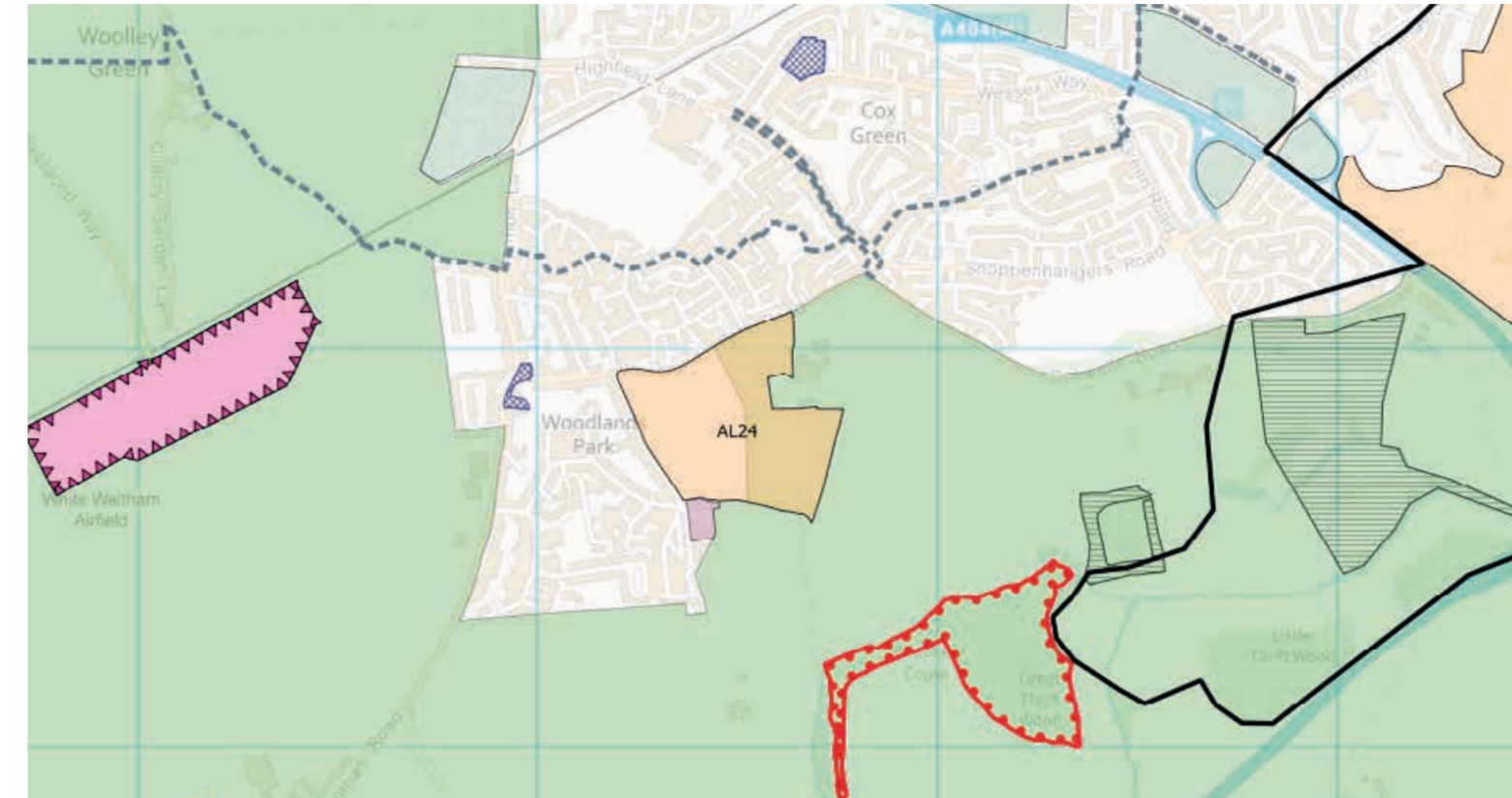


Turf and soil processing business in eastern field



View from Lillibrooke Manor across the north-eastern field

2.1 Planning Policy Context



Key

- Site Allocation
- Green Belt
- Established Employment Sites in the Green Belt
- Site of Special Scientific Interest

Key

- Allocation boundary
- Retained green belt
- Area removed from the green belt
- Parish boundary

Local Plan Proposals Map



Site Location Plan

2.2 Site Location

Local Facilities & Connections

The site is located approximately 3km to the south-west of Maidenhead town centre and is adjacent to the neighbourhood of Cox Green.

The local area provides a wide range of amenities and facilities as well good walking and cycling links to the town centre and surrounding countryside.

Cox Green local centre is located 1km north-east of the site and has a range of services including a food shop, newsagent, takeaways and pharmacy amongst other provisions. A cluster of community facilities are located west of Highfield Lane including a youth and community centre, leisure centre and library.

There are a number of schools within close proximity to the site, Woodlands Park Primary to the south and Manor Green School, Lowbrook Academy, Cox Green School and Wessex Primary School to the north.

Woodlands Park Doctors Surgery is located to the west of the site on Woodlands Park Road.

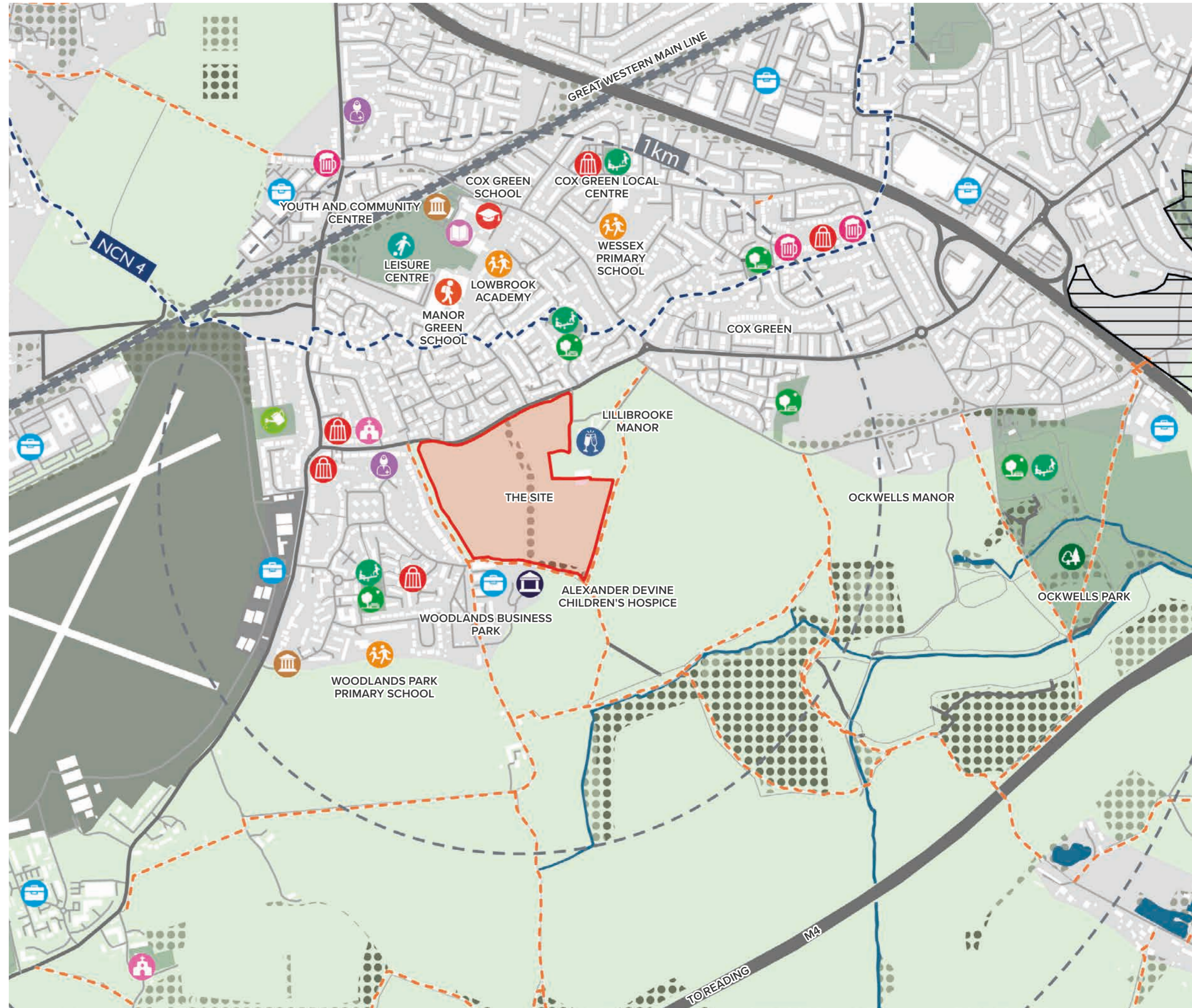
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Local Facilities

Key

- Site Boundary
- Railway Line
- Roads and Paths
- Waterways
- PROW
- NCN 4
- Built Up Area
- Town Centre Area
- Green Spaces
- Other Open Space
- Airfield
- Woodland
- Ancient Woodland
- South West Maidenhead Allocation Sites

- Primary School
- Secondary School
- Special School
- Play Area
- Library
- Village Hall/Community Centre
- GP Surgery
- Hospice
- Park/Recreation Ground
- Nature Reserve
- Local Shop/Local Centre
- Pub
- Events Venue
- Place of Worship
- Leisure Centre
- Employment
- Allotments



2.2 Site Location

2.3 Sense of Place

Architectural Character

Cox Green was historically a small village on the south-western edge of Maidenhead. Cox Green Lane has a mixed architectural character, including some historic buildings. Homes range from large detached houses set within generous mature gardens to simple symmetrical terraced houses providing frontage onto the lane. The vernacular architecture is characterised by timber framing, brick and rendered elevations with tile hanging at first floor level. Elevations are articulated by bay windows, porches and dormer windows. Roofs are typically covered with red clay tiles or traditional grey slates.

Ockwells Road is rural and leafy in character, homes are typically detached double fronted properties set within a landscaped setting.

Over time the neighbourhoods of Cox Green, Heynes Green and Woodlands Park have developed and extended south-west towards the site. The character predominantly dates from the late 20th century, from 1960 onwards.

The adjacent residential neighbourhoods of Cox Green and Woodlands Park were developed in the 1970s and 1980s.



Aerial Photograph: Site Context

2.3 Sense of Place



1. Semi-detached homes, Woodlands Park



2. Detached homes, Heynes Green



3. Detached house, Cox Green Lane



4. Terraced houses, Cox Green Lane



5. The Barley Mow Pub, Cox Green



6. Timber framed house, Cox Green Lane



7. Ockwells Manor, Grade I Listed Manor House



8. Ockwells Road



9. Ockwells Road



10. Ockwells Road

2.3 Sense of Place

Landscape Character

The site sits within a relatively flat landscape on the edge of Woodlands Park and Cox Green.

A series of interconnected ancient woodlands and copses to the south-east, include Shrubbery Copse, Great Thrift Wood and Little Thrift Wood. Great Thrift Wood is a Site of Special Scientific Interest including broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland.

The Cut is a historic stream which flows eastwards through the woodlands.

A network of footpaths and bridleways cross the landscape connecting Cox Green to the rural countryside to the south.

Ockwells Park, once part of Ockwells Manor Estate is now a local nature reserve where areas of woodland, meadow and copses can be explored via paths and nature trails. This is a key destination for recreation and play for all ages.



Landscape Context: Wider Nature Recovery Network

2.3 Sense of Place



1. Public Right of Way



2. Poplar trees along driveway to Lillibrooke Manor



3. Lillibrooke Manor



4. Mature tree belt



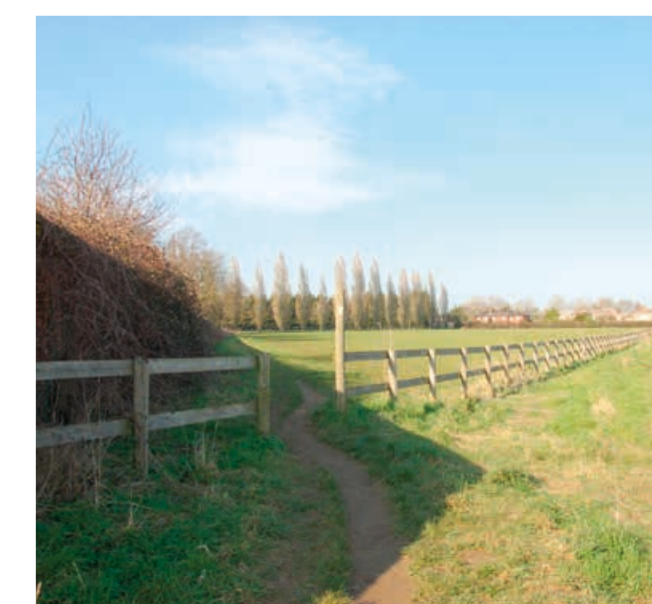
5. Track leading into the site



6. The Cut watercourse



7. Woodland track



8. Track adjacent to Lillibrooke Manor



three

STAKEHOLDER & COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT

3.1 The Engagement Process

SMD Engagement

The engagement process carried out has directly informed the Masterplanning Framework for the site. Regular Community Liaison Group (CLG) meetings began in June 2022, which have established a continued dialogue with local key stakeholders in the development of the emerging proposals.

The CLG meetings included a site visit and workshop in July 2022.

In addition to the CLG meetings, the design team has met with local stakeholders throughout the preparation of the SMD.

A draft SMD was consulted on for a period of 5 weeks and included a public consultation event in September 2022.

The consultation with local stakeholders and the community has shaped the final masterplan.

Community Liaison Group Engagement

To assist with the preparation of the stakeholder masterplan and to understand the needs and aspirations of the local community at an early stage, Berkeley set up a Community Liaison Group (CLG) comprising of a range of local stakeholders.

After undertaking a community mapping exercise, and liaising with local groups and key stakeholders, the Community Liaison Group was established. The Liaison Group consists of officers and members from the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, representatives from Cox Green and White Waltham Parish Councils and representatives from local organisations and businesses including the Maidenhead Civic Society.

The role of the CLG has been to:

- Provide early-stage input into the key issues involved;
- Identify the constraints and opportunities that the masterplan should consider;
- Provide input into the draft masterplan; and
- Understand how the views of the community have been incorporated into the final masterplan.

The first CLG meeting was held on 9th June 2022 via Zoom and attended by a range of stakeholders including representatives from Cox Green and White Waltham Parish Council, Lillibrooke Manor, Alexander Devine Children's Hospice, Maidenhead Civic Society, Woodlands Park Surgery, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council, Berkeley and members of the wider project team.

The purpose of this introductory meeting was to provide an overview of the planning policy context of the site and how it is included in the RBWM Local Plan, the policy context for the stakeholder masterplan and Berkeley's involvement on the site to date. A draft Terms of Reference for the CLG was also discussed.

Participants had a chance to ask questions of the Project Team who also provided an overview of key site issues, opportunities and constraints. Some of the key issues discussed included landscaping, drainage, traffic, noise and impacts on the local area including Lillibrooke Manor and Alexander Devine Children's Hospice. A commitment was given to further explore key issues discussed and to hold a second CLG meeting as soon as possible.

The second meeting of the CLG was held on 5th July 2022 at Lillibrooke Manor. To start with the group undertook a walkabout around the site; this was suggested at the previous CLG by attendees as a way to bring a better context to the discussion.

The group then returned to a workshop session designed to delve deeper into the points raised. JTP (project architects) gave an overview of the site and its context. The latest opportunities and constraints plans were also presented alongside the emerging concept plan for the scheme. An interactive post-it notes session was conducted where everyone was given the opportunity to voice various issues and aspirations for the site. Each post-it note was read out to the group and points raised led to further discussion of challenges and possible solutions.

The attendees then split into three groups to further discuss the challenges and aspirations of the site marking up site plans with their thoughts. Each group presented and reported back to everyone attending with key discussion points. Key themes that emerged from the workshop session are summarised on the following pages.

3.1 The Engagement Process

Public Consultation Timeline



CLG Site Visit: July 2022



CLG Site Visit: July 2022



CLG Site Visit: July 2022

3.1 The Engagement Process

CLG Workshop Key Themes

After the CLG Workshop the design team analysed and summarised the ideas people had, in order to start shaping the proposals. The following key themes are a summary of the various discussions and workshops that have taken place to date.

TRAFFIC, PARKING & GETTING AROUND

Participants raised concerns regarding current traffic speeds along Woodlands Park Road and highlighted the need to improve the visibility at the junction between Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue.

Options for site access were discussed including suggestions for a roundabout access from Woodlands Park Road and emergency access from Woodlands Park Avenue.

The need to provide safe pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the existing facilities and schools in Cox Green and Woodlands Park was highlighted as a priority. There is potential to connect to the wider PROW and national cycle network, both linking to the surrounding settlement and wider countryside. It was suggested that a heritage trail could connect Lillibrooke and Ockwells Park as a walking route. Active travel should be encouraged through the site and beyond.

Options for parking provision were discussed to serve potential open space uses proposed for the site, such as sports provision and allotments. A participant suggested creation of an environmentally friendly parking area in keeping with the natural setting, rather than a large tarmac car park.

RESPECTING THE LOCAL HERITAGE

Participants noted the heritage value of Lillibrooke Manor and its setting. The sensitivity of the listed buildings should be taken into consideration when developing design proposals.

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

The local stakeholders welcomed the opportunity for the site to deliver publicly accessible open space for both existing and new residents. Participants expressed a preference for the provision of informal open space for bio-diversity and nature as opposed to formal space. Suggestions included adventure play, woodland trim trail, outdoor gym, natural play, skate/BMX track, forest schools and allotments. A participant recommended having allotments adjacent to children's play so parents can watch their kids as they play.

The Parish Council expressed an interest in taking over the management of the public open space east of the tree belt.

DRAINAGE

Many participants discussed mitigating surface water drainage with the aspiration of planning water infrastructure and management that creates attractive and bio-diverse habitats. Group discussions suggested locating ponds and wetlands responding to the natural gradients of the site. Water attenuation areas could potentially provide water to serve the allotments.

HOUSING

Housing should be well designed, in keeping with the context referencing local character and architectural style. A mix of size and tenure is important to build a balanced community. The provision of affordable housing is key, and the suggestion was made that the development could deliver key worker homes and homes for the younger generation living and working around Maidenhead. Many participants discussed the appropriate location for flats, voicing concern that new homes should not overtly overlook existing properties. The scheme provides the opportunity to deliver a mix of homes, focusing on 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes.

OTHER USES

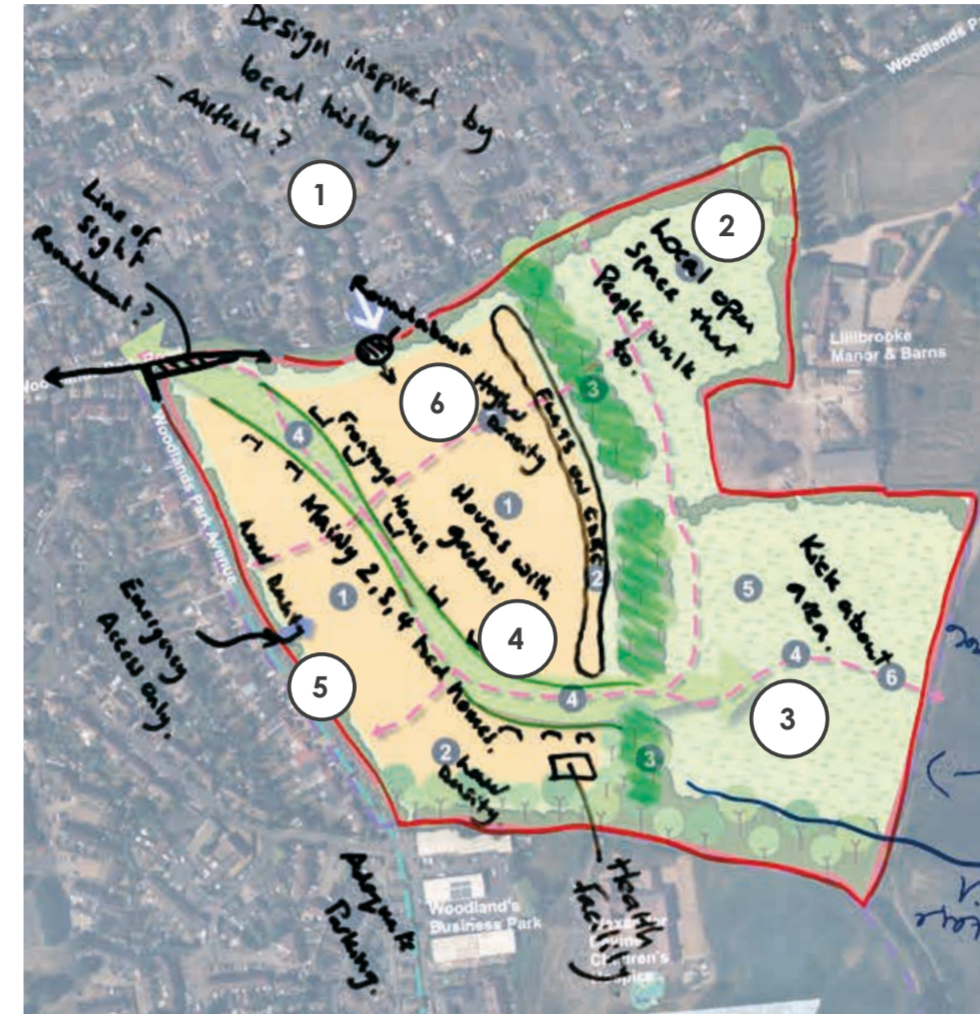
The delivery of new homes and increase in local residents will impact on the existing GP surgery and other services. It was suggested that the opportunity to deliver a health facility could be explored.

CONTINUED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Many participants appreciated the opportunity to be involved at the early stage in helping shape the proposals and are keen to stay involved and informed. The future design stages will include further liaison with the CLG and wider community.

3.1 The Engagement Process

“We need to make space for the younger generation...”



Example of Hands on Planning Drawing from CLG Workshop

1. Design inspired by local history
2. Local open space that people walk to
3. Kick about area, wetlands and heritage trail
4. Mainly 2, 3, 4 bed homes with gardens
5. Lower density homes
6. Higher density homes - potential for some apartments in appropriate locations



CLG Presentation: July 2022



CLG Hands on Planning Workshop: July 2022



CLG Hands on Planning Report Back: July 2022

3.1 The Engagement Process

Public Consultation on Stakeholder Masterplan Document

PUBLIC EXHIBITION

A public exhibition on the draft Stakeholder Masterplan Document was held in Cox Green Youth and Community Centre in Maidenhead on the 30th September 2022 from 3pm to 7pm.

The public exhibition gave an opportunity for local residents to see the initial design proposals and discuss any queries with the project team.

CONSULTATION WEBSITE

Simultaneously, a five week virtual consultation was held from the 30th September to the 4th November 2022 on www.lillibrooke.co.uk where the public exhibition material was made available to read online.

The public exhibition and consultation presented an opportunity for the local community to view the initial proposals, give feedback and have a say in the preparation of the Lillibrooke SMD.

Feedback forms were provided both for the public exhibition and the virtual consultation. Feedback was reviewed by the project team and informed further development of the masterplan and supporting SMD.

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Public Exhibition: September 2022

“It would be good to create more affordable homes for keyworkers and young families ...”



Public Exhibition: September 2022



Public Exhibition: September 2022

3.1 The Engagement Process

Public Consultation Feedback

The design team analysed and summarised the feedback received from the local community and stakeholders. Key comments and concerns raised are categorised under the following themes.

ACCESS & MOVEMENT

The local community voiced their concerns about the increase in traffic and the visibility at the junction between Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue. Concerns regarding the visibility at the junction will be addressed by improving the visibility splays to meet national standards based on speed surveys undertaken on Woodlands Park Road. The visibility splay will be kept clear of any development and will be offered for adoption to the Highways Authority to ensure it remains unobstructed.

A number of local residents were in favour of a potential roundabout access off Woodlands Park Road, though some were opposed to the idea. Those in favour felt it would lower dangerous car speeds, whilst those in opposition thought it would add to congestion. The provision of a roundabout has been investigated but it is considered to have too significant an impact on the existing mature trees along Woodlands Park Road. It also has a significant impact on the amount of developable land available and would therefore not be compliant with the Local Plan site allocation. A roundabout would increase queueing and delay on Woodlands Park Road and would be excessive provision for the number of dwellings being proposed. Instead the proposed ghost island priority T junction will provide traffic calming whilst the provision of dwellings on the southern side of the road will increase the drivers perception of Woodlands Park Road being a residential road which will also help reduce vehicular speeds.

Residents wanted to understand how the emergency access from Woodlands Park Avenue would be restricted to prevent it becoming a thoroughfare for all vehicles. The detailed design of the access junction will ensure restrictions are in place to only allow authorised emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists to enter the development at this entrance.

PARKING

Residents asked if adequate parking would be provided for new occupants within the site. The parking will be provided in accordance with RBWM's relevant parking standards in accordance with RBWM policy. Visitor parking will also be provided on site. It is therefore not anticipated that there will be overspill parking onto local residential roads.

BUS ROUTE

Recent changes to the number 7 bus route were highlighted, where the eastbound route no longer operates along the section of Woodlands Park Road past the site. Given this change, it is proposed to improve the westbound stop opposite Lowbrook Drive and consideration will be given to improving the stop at the northern end of Woodlands Park Avenue.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Concern was expressed that the pavement on Woodlands Park Road is too narrow and is a safety issue for cyclists and pedestrians. It is proposed to widen the footway in the immediate vicinity of the site access where it is at its narrowest.

Residents would like to see additional crossing points on Woodlands Park Road and felt uncontrolled pedestrian crossings are not sufficient for safe pedestrian movement. Further work will be undertaken with the relevant authorities to achieve the best solution for pedestrian crossings on Woodlands Park Road to deliver safe, attractive and convenient crossing points.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Retention of the central tree belt, mature trees and headgerows along the periphery of the site, strengthening the existing green infrastructure and creating opportunities for movement of local wildlife within and around the site was well received.

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION

The local stakeholders welcomed the opportunity for the site to deliver publicly accessible informal open space for both existing and new residents. The maintenance and management strategy of informal open space was raised.

There is a significant demand for allotments in the local area. Therefore the area identified for allotments in the eastern part of the site was well received and further suggestions have been received to increase its size.

DRAINAGE

Frequent flooding of the southern edge of the site in recent times has resulted in local residents questioning the drainage strategy for the proposal. Concerns were raised about the capacity of the newly proposed sustainable urban drainage systems and if the development proposes a risk of flooding into the existing neighbouring properties.

The proposed flood mitigation measures have been sized to accommodate the potential flood risk volumes. Therefore the risk has been reduced.

HOUSING

Houses were preferred over flats. Multiple concerns regarding building heights, loss of privacy and overlooking for residents along Woodlands Park Avenue were received.

Current development parcels will be set back from the boundary with Woodlands Park Avenue through additional planting. This will minimise any perceived loss of privacy for existing residents.

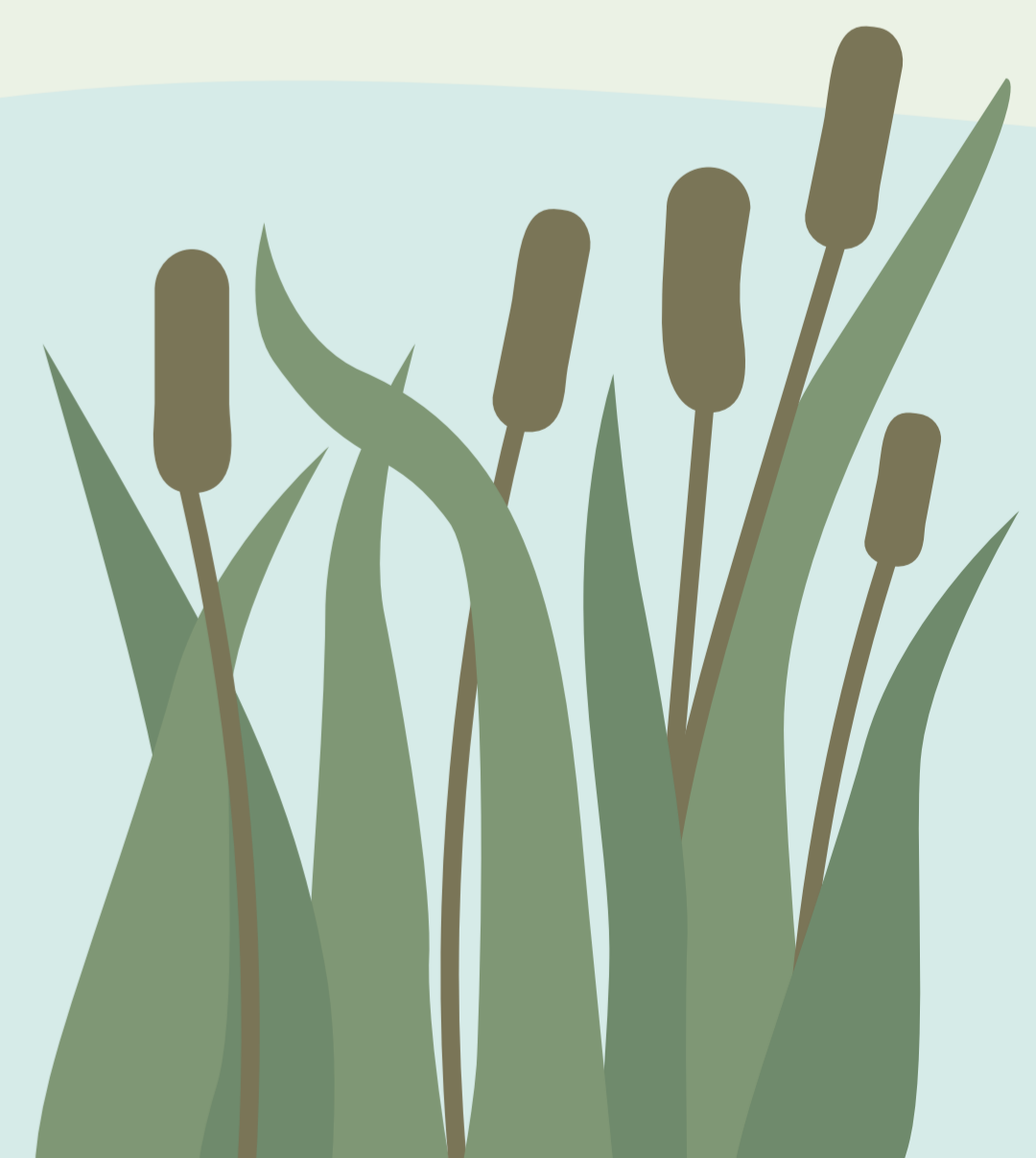
SUPPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Local residents raised concerns about how the addition of up to 300 homes would increase demand on local amenities such as education, health care and waste. The development will pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and make financial contributions towards upgrading and improving local infrastructure. CIL payments from the development will be spent on infrastructure improvements such as strategic highways improvement; enhancements to existing schools to enable the provision of additional school places; improvements to existing healthcare facilities; enhancements to existing libraries, social and community facilities and public realm.



four

UNDERSTANDING
THE SITE



4.1 Site Constraints

LANDSCAPE SETTING

The site has a strong landscape character, its boundaries are well defined by hedgerows with mature trees, including significant large oak trees, and there is a strong tree belt dissecting the site from north to south. Ancient woodland is present on the south eastern boundary of the site. The tree survey has identified a number of category A and B trees that should be retained where possible within the Masterplan Framework.

The framework of woodland and tree belts connects to the wider landscape network to the south-east; comprising the interconnected Shrubbery Copse, Great Thrift Wood and Little Thrift Wood where The Cut watercourse meanders through.

GREEN BELT

The central tree belt through the middle of the site defines the Green Belt edge, the tree belt and the land to the east of the trees falls within the Green Belt.

HERITAGE

An initial heritage constraints and built environment assessment has been undertaken. The main heritage assets potentially affected are Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed), Barn, Horse engine, threshing house (Grade II listed); and the Garden Wall at Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed) located to the east of the site. Lillibrooke Manor is a medieval manor, the hall house dating from the 14th century.

The eastern part of the site forms part of Lillibrooke Manor's setting and the whole site is an original part of the manor's estate. The land south and west of Lillibrooke Manor is within the Green Belt and will provide open space in the Masterplan Framework.

SURROUNDING USES

Lillibrooke Manor is a popular wedding venue, there is potential for noise from events to extend into the site. A soil processing and turf business is located to the east of the site and occupies part of the site. Alexander Devine Children's Hospice is located to the south of the site. Consideration needs to be given to the privacy of the hospice and its gardens.

UTILITIES

A twin 525mm dia surface water sewer runs through the middle of the site from northwest to southeast. The sewer line requires an easement; however, there is potential for its route to be realigned to facilitate the layout of the Masterplan or for it to be retained and incorporated as part of the open space framework. The sewer is owned by Thames Water and as such, any works to the sewer, or within the permitted easement, will require approval from them accordingly.

FLOODING & DRAINAGE

The majority of the site is within flood zone 1 with a very small proportion of the site in the south lying within flood zone 2. The western part of the site includes areas of low to medium overland (pluvial) flood risk. This risk is due to the natural topography of the site which currently causes water to flow along this boundary and as such, the development will need incorporate a flow path which allows water to pass through the site in a similar manner.



Central tree belt and western field



Break in central tree belt looking east



Eastern field used by soil processing and turf business



Lillibrooke Manor: Listed Building

4.1 Site Constraints



Constraints Plan

Key

- - - Site boundary
- Topography levels (AOD)
- Primary road
- ↔ Restricted junction visibility
- - - Public right of way
- - - Restricted byway
- - - Existing sewer line
- ↔ Views from hospice & gardens into the site
- ↔ Potential noise from events
- * Listed building
- Green Belt
- Ancient woodland
- Category A tree
- Category B tree
- Root protection area
- Surface water flood depth 300-900mm
- Surface water flood depth below 300mm
- Floodzone 2
- Floodzone 3
- Land leased to South East Water Limited

4.2 Site Opportunities

ENHANCED LANDSCAPE & OPEN SPACE

There is an opportunity to create a connected network of woodland, trees and wildlife habitats, both within and beyond the site forming a nature recovery network.

The central tree belt will define the Green Belt edge and open space to the east has the opportunity to form a natural interface to the countryside, respecting the setting of Lillibrooke Manor.

Open space within the Green Belt can deliver natural greenspace and space for recreation which will respond to the needs of the local community and new residents.

There is an opportunity to provide landscape screening on the southern boundary of the site providing privacy for Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.

There is potential to deliver a landscaped edge incorporating additional planting along the western site boundary ensuring privacy for the existing residents on Woodlands Park Avenue.

NATURAL DRAINAGE SOLUTIONS

The land gently slopes towards the south and the site provides the opportunity to work with the natural topography to alleviate surface water drainage issues. Drainage ponds and swales should be natural in character, integrated within the landscape proposals creating habitats for wildlife and contributing to bio-diversity net gain.

ACCESS & MOVEMENT

The primary access into the site will be from Woodlands Park Road. An emergency only access will be provided off Woodlands Park Avenue with restrictions in place to ensure access for only authorised emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

Existing bus stops are located within a 5 minute walk of the site providing direct links to the town centre and train station. There is an opportunity to improve the existing bus stops, following the re-routing of bus route 7, to encourage sustainable travel amongst residents.

ENCOURAGE ACTIVE MOVEMENT

There is an opportunity to provide new footpaths and cyclepaths which connect to the existing network, creating links to the surrounding community facilities, to the wider countryside and to Ockwells Park.

NEW HOMES

Residential development will be located to the west of the central tree belt and new homes will be set within a rich landscape setting with a close connection to nature.



Housing set within a rich landscape setting



Open space for recreation and leisure



Natural open space for people and wildlife



New planting creating wildlife habitats

4.2 Site Opportunities



Opportunities Plan

Key

- - - Site boundary
- Primary road
- ↔ Opportunity to improve junction visibility
- Ⓚ Potential to enhance bus stops
- - - Public right of way
- - - Restricted byway
- ➔ Potential main vehicular access
- ➔ Emergency vehicle & pedestrian/cycle access only
- ➔ Potential new pedestrian crossing points
- - - Opportunity for landscape screening
- Area for residential development
- ▨ Multifunctional open space
- - - Woodland corridor
- - - Green/blue corridor including swales & attenuation

4.3 Technical Analysis

ECOLOGY

The proposals have been informed by the emerging findings of an ecological desk study, a phase 1 habitat survey and ongoing specialist surveys for protected and notable species including bats, dormice, badgers and reptiles.

This work to date has shown that no statutory or non-statutory designations pertain to the site or adjacent land, and that the site largely comprises habitats of limited nature conservation interest in their own right being dominated in the west by arable farmland and in the east by species-poor agriculturally improved grassland and bare ground/ephemeral vegetation associated with a soil processing works. Where habitats of higher interest occur, these are generally located around the site/ field margins and include:

- A network of hedgerows around field boundaries;
- A belt of broadleaved plantation woodland running north to south through the centre of the site and along the north eastern site boundary; and
- An area of woodland, included on Natural England's ancient woodland inventory, is located on the south eastern site boundary.

Protected species recorded at the site to date include:

- Bats: The ongoing bat survey work has identified low-status bat roosts in three trees on the northern and southern site boundaries. The site is also used by relatively low numbers of bats for foraging and commuting.
- Badgers: One main badger sett is present within the site, located to the east of the central woodland belt.
- Reptiles: The site supports a population of Slow-worm, generally associated with rough grassland and tall ruderal habitats along woodland and field edges.
- No Dormice have been recorded at the site to date.

The emerging proposals show that it will be possible to retain key habitats within the scheme such as the woodland habitats crossing and bordering the site, including retention of the small area of ancient woodland affording it appropriate buffers in accordance with Natural England Standing Advice. Although the emerging proposals indicate that it will be possible to retain the confirmed bat roosts, the main Badger sett will be closed due to the unstable condition of the mound of debris in which it is located which presents a health and safety risk to existing and future site users. An artificial Badger sett is subsequently proposed in the south east of the site in association with the informal open greenspace with good connections to the wider countryside.

The landscape scheme for the proposed development includes opportunity to enhance existing and provide new green corridors comprising a variety of semi-natural habitats across the site. Additionally, the provision of substantial informal greenspace across the site, particularly in the east, will provide opportunity to create substantial areas of semi-natural habitat in areas currently dominated by habitats of limited ecological interest. Habitats of benefit to wildlife to be provided in this area could include a selection of species-rich meadow grassland, and native shrub and tree planting, complementing the areas of woodland within and adjacent to the site.

In addition the proposals provide opportunity to create ponds and other wetland habitats as part of the surface water drainage scheme.

ARBORICULTURE

The proposals have been informed by a BS5837 Tree Survey to

identify constraints in relation to trees. The emerging proposals seek to retain all high-quality trees and minimise loss of hedgerows. Where it is unavoidable that trees or hedgerows are lost, predominantly in association with access points, these will be mitigated by new tree and hedgerow planting appropriate to the local area.

TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

A topographical survey was carried out in May 2022 to gather spatial information relating to the site and its natural and man-made land features.

The results show that the eastern field has a high level of 32m AOD and a low level of 26m AOD. The direction of the fall is from north to south. The survey shows that the western field has a high level of 31m AOD and a low level of 27m AOD. The direction of fall is from north-east to south-west.

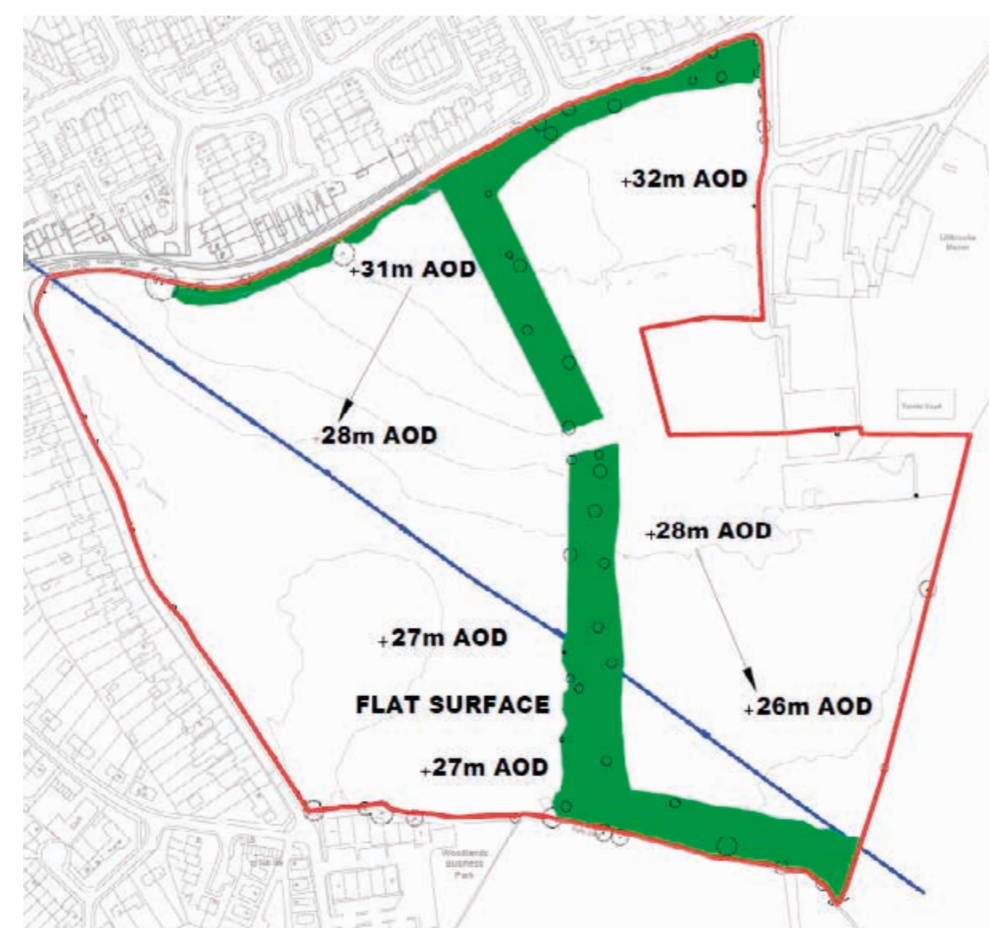
The lowest lying land is located in the south-east corner of the site at c. 26m AOD. This will be the natural place for surface water to ultimately drain and offers opportunities for SUDS and wetland creation.

UTILITIES

Local utility record searches have been carried out to determine any constraints to development. The main utility constraints have been identified through this process.

A medium pressure gas main has been identified running along the northern boundary of the site with a Gas Governor located in the verge at the junction of Woodlands Park Avenue/Woodlands Park Road. In assessing highway access options for the site, this constraint has been considered.

A Surface Water sewer was identified as crossing the site diagonally from the north-west to the south-east of the site. A CCTV survey has identified this sewer as twin 525mm pipes. Options to retain, divert or alter this sewer are being discussed with Thames Water and there may be opportunities for these improvements to contribute towards



Topography Plan

net-biodiversity gain.

Vodafone communication cables are located in Woodlands Park Road and will be considered in the site access design.

In addition to asset searches, enquiries with utility operators have been lodged in order to identify any reinforcement of key infrastructure that would be required to support the development.

HERITAGE

An initial heritage constraints and built environment assessment has been undertaken. The main heritage assets potentially affected would be Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed), Barn, Horse engine, threshing house at Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed); and the Garden Wall at Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed). The original estate boundaries are intelligible to an informed eye, contributing towards significance. Alterations to the rural setting would have potential to affect significance. If the proposals are sympathetic to the setting of the listed buildings they should not be adversely affected.

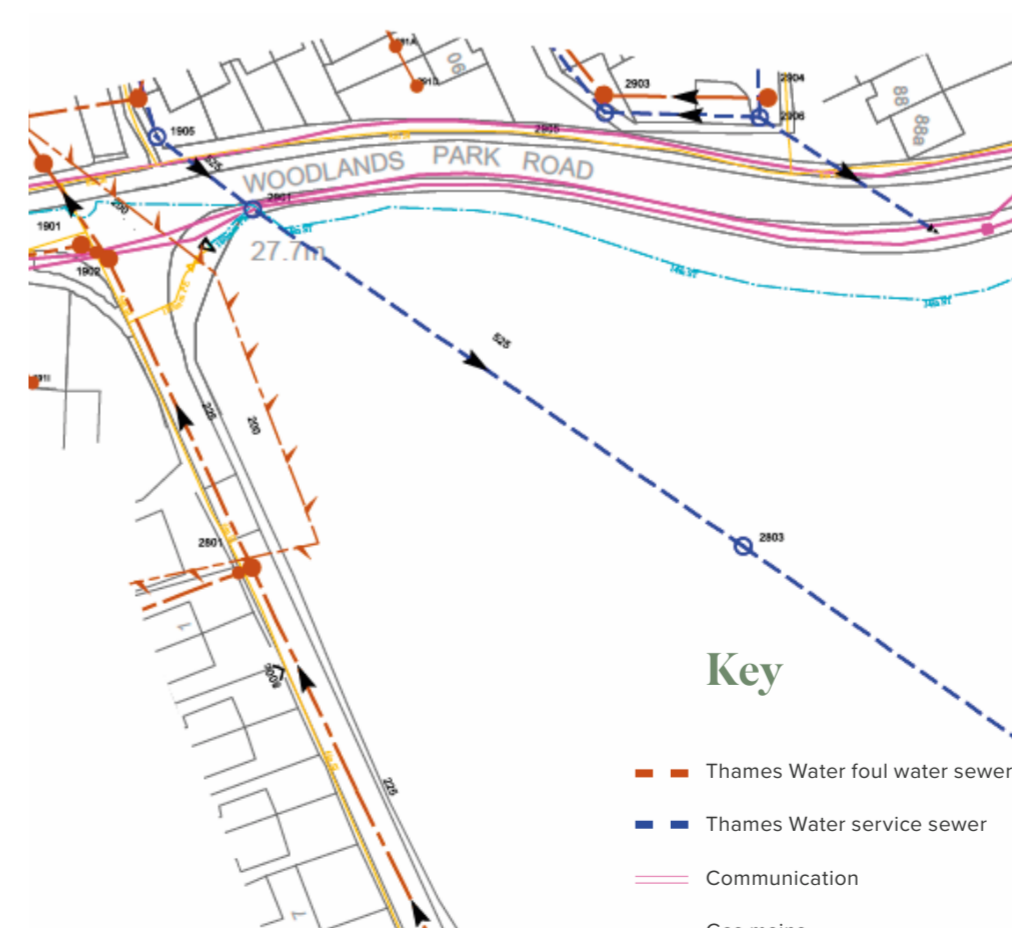
ARCHAEOLOGY

A desk based archaeological assessment has been undertaken. Within the general area a range of finds and features have been recorded from the prehistoric to the post-medieval periods.

Further information from field observation will be required to establish the archaeological potential of the site.

FLOOD RISK & DRAINAGE STRATEGY

Site specific flood data has been used to calculate overland flows coming into the site from Woodlands Park Road to the north, and Woodlands Park Avenue to the west. This data has then been modelled with consideration to the development proposals to create new overland flow paths through the site. This enables flows to continue to pass through the site without causing an increase in flood risk to the neighbouring properties as well as to the proposed development. The onsite drainage will utilise sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to convey, clean and attenuate the flows. The site will



Utilities Plan

4.3 Technical Analysis

discharge these flows at the current greenfield runoff rate, therefore not causing any increase in discharge downstream of the site. The SuDS features will be a mix of open topped swales, filter drains and attenuation ponds. These features will be soft features enabling them to become part of the wider landscaping design.

HIGHWAYS MODELLING

The impact of the development on the local highway network will be assessed during both the AM and PM peak hours. This assessment will be undertaken for the site access junction and nearby off-site junctions using the industry standard computer modelling software.

To undertake this modelling, traffic flows will be obtained from RBWM's Strategic Traffic Model in order to assess the impact of the junction when combined with the other Local Plan sites and in particular the nearby South West Maidenhead SPD site. Where required, junction mitigation will be proposed to ensure that the cumulative impact of the development is minimised.

As per Policy IF1 within RBWM's Borough Local Plan, the proposals at Lillibrooke will help to deliver infrastructure to support the overall spatial strategy of the Borough, including making contributions to assist the delivery of the relevant infrastructure projects included in the IDP in the form of financial contributions.

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

Access options have been explored including appropriate locations and potential junction arrangements.

The provision of a roundabout has been investigated but it is considered to have too significant an impact on the existing mature trees along Woodlands Park Road. It also has a significant impact on the amount of developable land available and would therefore not be compliant with the Local Plan site allocation. A roundabout would increase queueing and delay on Woodlands Park Road and would be excessive provision for the number of dwellings being proposed. Instead the proposed ghost island priority T junction will provide traffic calming whilst the provision of dwellings on the southern side of the road will increase the drivers perception of Woodlands Park Road being a residential road which will also help reduce vehicular speeds.

A roundabout access arrangement was therefore discounted in favour of a priority T junction access.

NOISE

Noise surveys were carried out across the development site during August 2022. This month was selected to represent a reasonable worst case assessment of all noise sources with particular focus on peak recreational aviation activity from the nearby White Waltham Airfield. The airfield were consulted during the surveys and flight logs obtained in order to validate the noise model.

The results of the initial assessment conclude that the relevant internal and external noise criteria can be achieved for the new dwellings. The initial assessment also looks at the noise impacts from the development on nearby sensitive receptors. This assessment identified the sports pitches as a potential noise source for which mitigation measures will be explored.



five

VISION & DESIGN
OBJECTIVES

5.1 Vision

The Vision for Lillibrooke is of a thriving new neighbourhood that accommodates exemplary new homes set within a naturally enriched landscape.

Its identity will be influenced by its strong connection to the surrounding established beautiful landscape and rich cultural heritage.

It will be a new place rooted in nature.

Living embedded within nature is beneficial to people's health and wellbeing. Lillibrooke will be a place at one with nature, where people can coexist with wildlife in a beautiful landscape setting.

Initial Concepts

- A new community sensitively shaped by the rich landscape fabric of the site, integrating woodland, trees and hedgerows into a green network connecting Lillibrooke and the countryside.
- A connected place, providing links to surrounding amenities and the countryside via safe walking and cycling routes. Homes within walking distance to a bus route.
- A sensitive response to the existing development edge and heritage buildings at Lillibrooke Manor.
- Key existing landscape assets retained and reinforced by new planting to create green corridors linking town and countryside.
- A green edge which delivers accessible open space for both people and wildlife. Space for recreation, food growing, play and biodiversity.

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Concept Plan

5.2 Design Objectives

The Vision is Founded on Three Key Design Objectives:

Homes for the Future

Homes for the Future

SUSTAINABLE IDENTITY
Deliver sustainable homes for the future, low carbon and energy efficient. A place with a strong climate conscience where residents respect the environment they inhabit responding with changes in lifestyle.

HOMES FOR EVERYONE
A variety of homes with a mix of sizes for all generations and life stages creating a balanced community, delivering much needed affordable homes for the younger generation, key workers and families.

ROOTED IN PLACE
Homes with character, referencing the local architectural style. Homes set within a landscape with a close connection to nature.

Nature Recovery

Healthy Placemaking



Low carbon technologies



EV charge points



Biodiversity enhancement



Retain and enhance habitats



Wetland, woodlands & meadows where wildlife thrives

Nature Recovery

NATURE NETWORK
Connect and enhance the existing natural qualities of the site - the established trees, woodland and hedgerows linking to the surrounding copses, woods and waterways, creating new nature networks.

ECOLOGICALLY RICH & BIODIVERSE
A nature recovery network linking protected habitats for wildlife, supporting increased biodiversity and creation of a rich landscape character incorporating woodland, wetlands and wildflower meadows. A thriving living landscape achieving bio-diversity net gain.

DEFINING THE GREEN BELT EDGE
Defining a robust natural interface to the countryside, respecting the setting of Lillibrooke Manor.

Healthy Placemaking

CONNECTED TO CONTEXT
Active travel will be encouraged, linking to public footpaths and the cycle network; connecting to Cox Green and the wider countryside.

RECREATION & ACTIVITY
Active greenspace for all the community; space for sports, a trim trail through woodland and adventure play. Wild open spaces for people to rest and relax.

GROWING & GARDENS
Food growing in allotments or community gardens to encourage cultivating, sharing and cooking locally grown food. A community coexisting with nature and wildlife, with a culture and ethos of healthy living.



Walking and cycling routes



Accessible public open space



Sports pitches and play areas

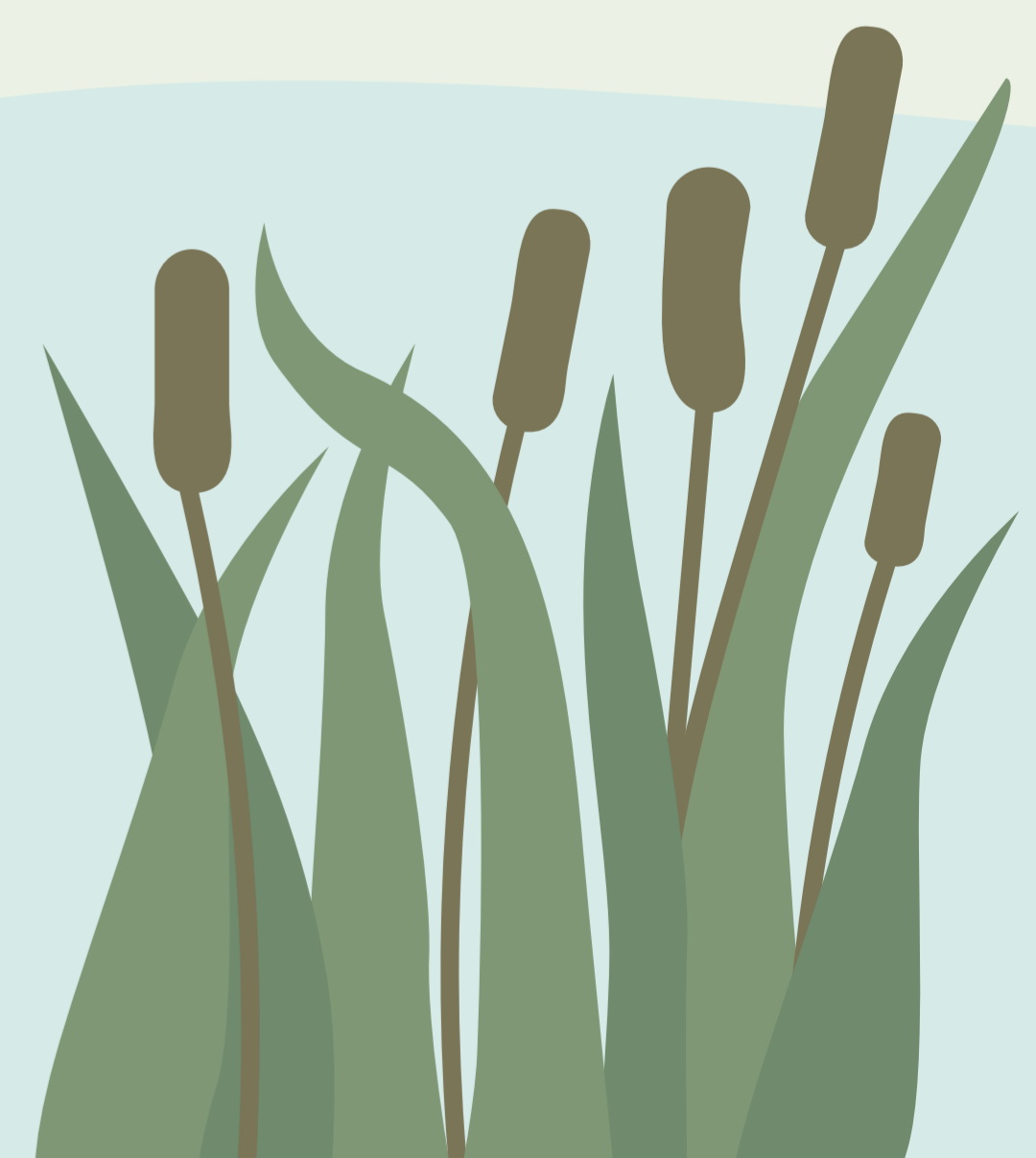
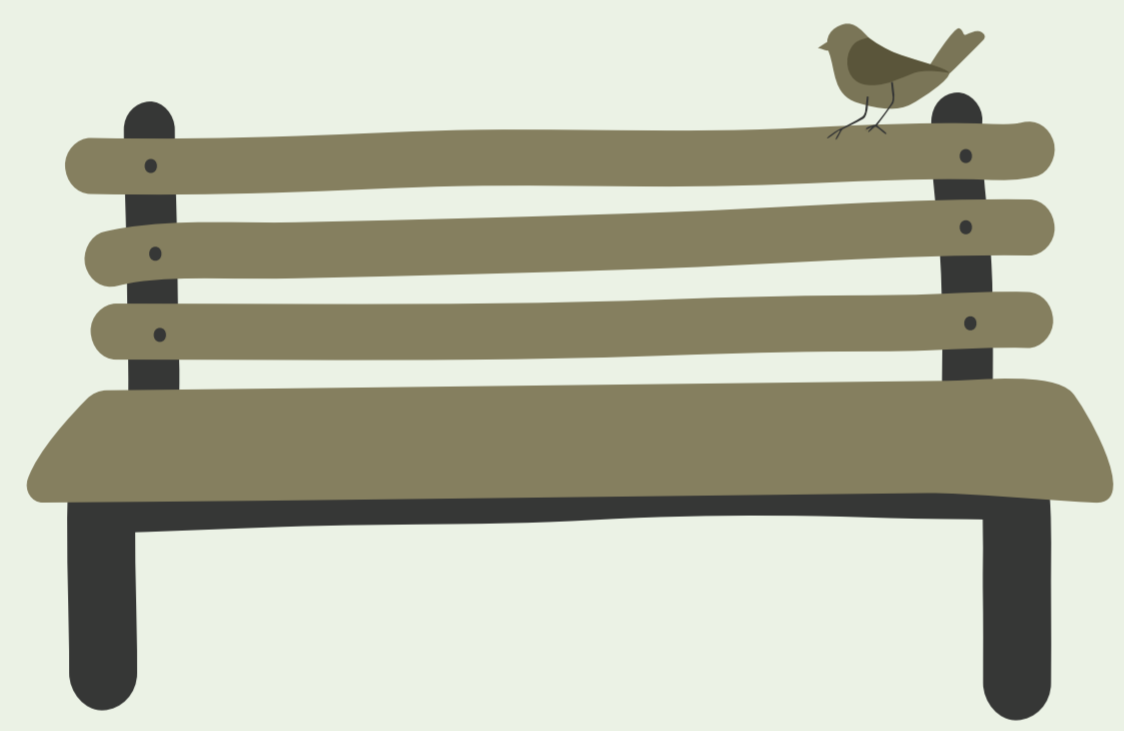


Allotments and food growing



six

MASTERPLAN
FRAMEWORK



6.1 Design Principles

The Masterplanning Framework

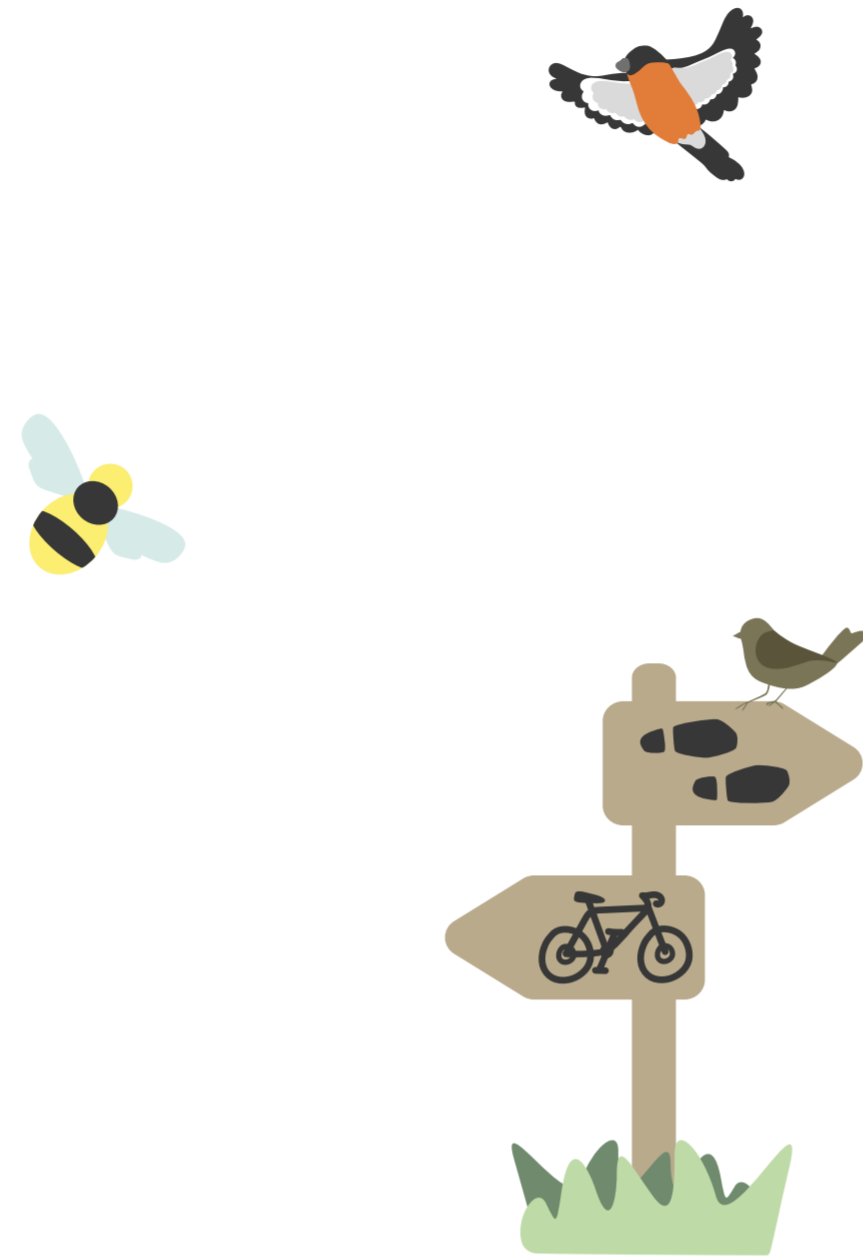
This section of the SMD illustrates how an understanding of the site and its opportunities has developed a series of design principles which will form the layers of the Masterplan Framework. The design principles ensure the Masterplan Framework responds to and connects with the surrounding context, linking to Maidenhead and the wider countryside. These principles establish structuring elements for a new neighbourhood informed by its landscape setting whilst creating rich multi-functional accessible open space.

The section concludes with the Masterplan Framework.

Design Principles

The following seven design principles illustrate the defining structuring elements underpinning the Masterplan Framework. The Masterplan Framework provides an illustrative masterplan which establishes a set of design principles to guide future design and engagement.

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EXISTING LANDSCAPE FEATURES

The site is characterised by its strong landscape character. Mature trees and hedgerow line Woodlands Park Road, a dense central tree belt dissects the site from north to south and ancient woodland is located on the south-eastern site boundary.

Existing trees and hedgerow will be retained where possible contributing to the landscape setting of the new neighbourhood.

Key

- Site boundary
- Green belt
- Existing tree clusters



Existing Landscape Features

6.1 Design Principles

RESPECT HERITAGE ASSETS

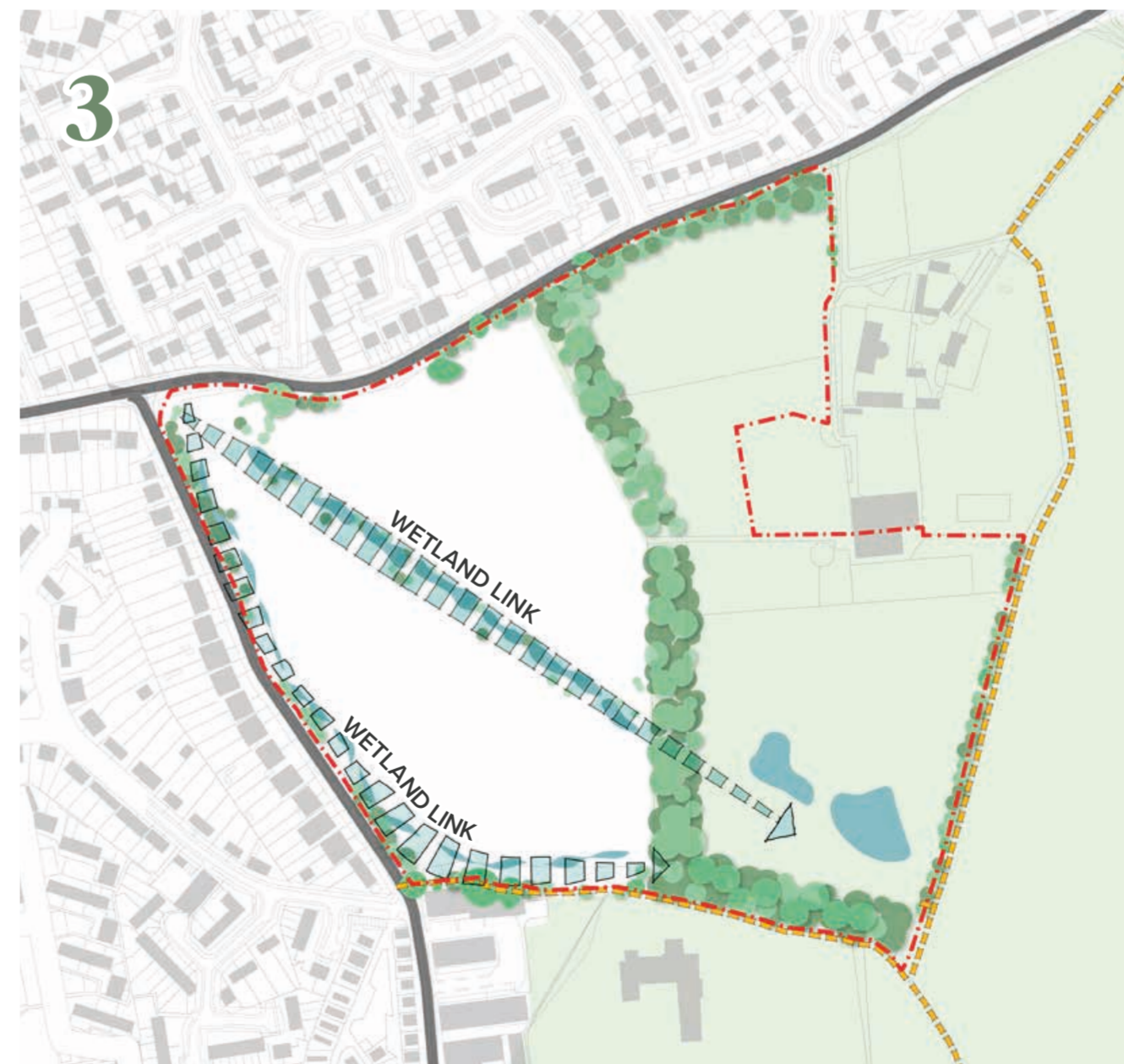
The setting of the listed buildings at Lillibrooke Manor will be conserved and enhanced through the sensitive design of open space and landscaping on the eastern part of the site.

Key

- Site boundary
- Existing tree clusters
- Existing buildings
- Listed building
- Indicative setting of listed buildings



Respect Heritage Assets



Blue Network

BLUE NETWORK

A blue network comprising blue/green wildlife corridors incorporating marshy wetland ponds, habitats for wildlife and boardwalks bringing people closer to nature. Addressing sustainable drainage and biodiversity in a natural environment.

Key

- Site boundary
- Wetland corridors forming the drainage strategy
- SuDS and attenuation features






6.1 Design Principles

CONNECTING LANDSCAPE & NATURE

Mature woodland blocks and hedgerows within the site will be retained within an integrated green/ blue infrastructure network. Existing trees and woodland will be reinforced and enhanced to strengthen landscape and habitat connectivity, forming a nature recovery network.

Green spaces will be multi-functional in character, delivering informal areas of meadow, allotments, play areas and sports facilities to promote active lifestyles and enable people to connect and interact with nature.

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Woodland link
-  Green/blue corridor



Connecting Landscape & Nature



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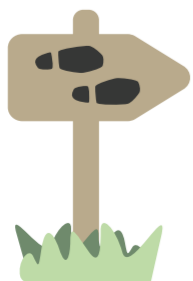
LIVING WITH NATURE

Homes will be located on the western part of the site, on land removed from the Green Belt, and set within a network of existing mature trees and hedgerows forming beautiful new green spaces.

The eastern part of the site will provide a series of natural green spaces for sport and active play, food production, water attenuation and biodiversity gain, easily accessible for new and existing residents to enjoy.

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Residential parcels



Living with Nature

6.1 Design Principles

MOVEMENT & CONNECTIONS: FOOT & CYCLE

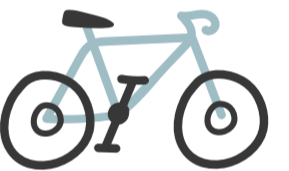
The development will provide a walkable neighbourhood based around a clear movement framework with designated pedestrian and cycle routes to encourage active travel.

Safe crossing points will provide links to existing neighbourhoods and facilities at Cox Green and Woodlands Park.

Connections will be created to the surrounding public rights of way network providing convenient countryside links and access to Ockwells Park to the east.

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Restricted byway
-  Public right of way/footpaths/cyclepaths












Movement & Connections: Foot & Cycle

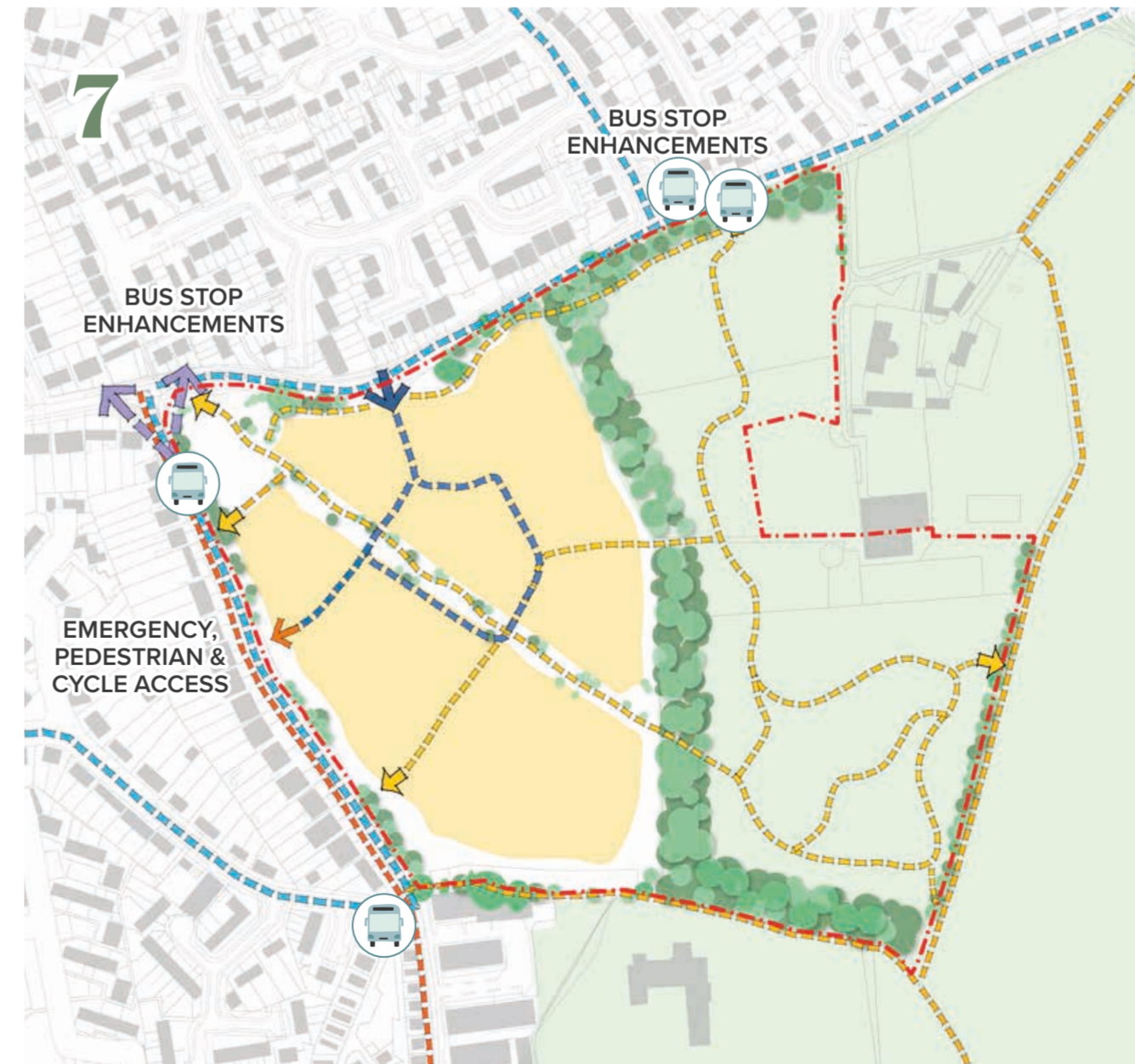
MOVEMENT & CONNECTIONS: CAR & BUS

The gateway to the neighbourhood will be provided from Woodlands Park Road with emergency vehicle and pedestrian access on to Woodlands Park Avenue. The exact design and location of the access points will need to be agreed following further assessment and discussion with RBWM.

Bus stop enhancements will encourage sustainable transport use.

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Restricted byway
-  Public right of way/footpaths
-  Vehicular access
-  Emergency vehicle & pedestrian/cycle access only
-  Primary vehicular routes
-  Bus route no.7
-  Bus stop enhancements
-  Opportunity to improve junction visibility

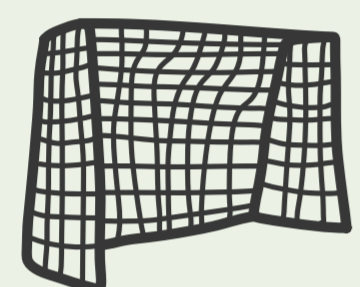


Movement & Connections: Car & Bus

6.2 Masterplan Framework

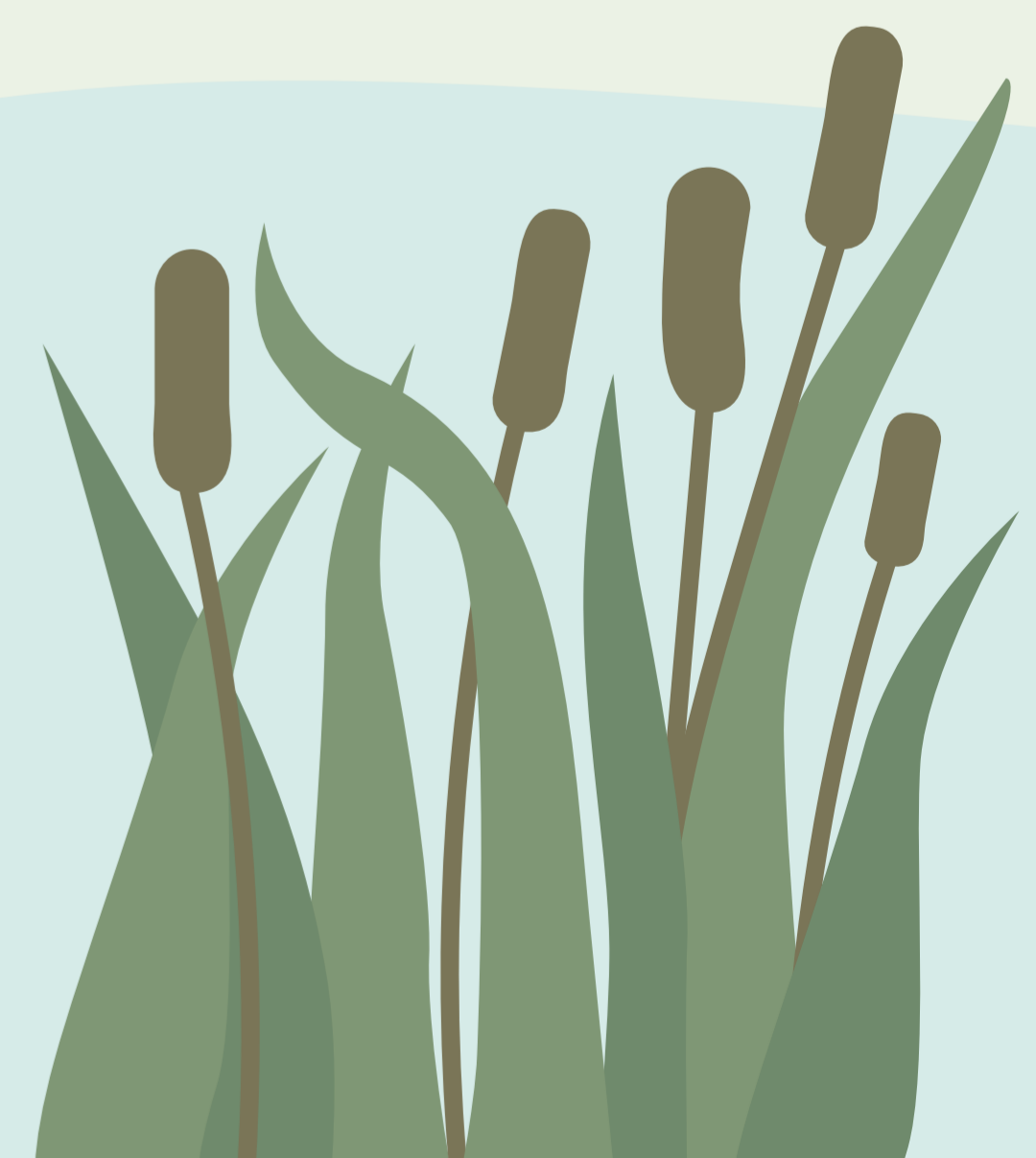
- 1 HOMES FOR ALL
Homes of all types and tenures, that people can afford. A strong sense of place, rooted and respectful of the natural and historic setting.
- 2 GATEWAY TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD
Primary vehicular access forming key gateway to the new neighbourhood.
- 3 LINKS & CONNECTIONS
Emergency vehicle and pedestrian/cycle access only provided off Woodlands Park Avenue.
- 4 SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT
A walkable neighbourhood served by buses on Woodlands Park Road with a 15 minute journey time to Maidenhead Train Station. New pedestrian crossings and enhanced bus stops on Woodlands Park Road.
- 5 MOVING IN NATURE
Network of pathways through diverse natural spaces, encouraging walking and cycling to the wider countryside, linking to rights of way.
- 6 NATURE RECOVERY NETWORK
Existing woodlands and tree belts retained and enhanced; a rich habitat for nature and wildlife.
- 7 WETLANDS & WILDLIFE
A generous blue/green wildlife corridor incorporating marshy wetland ponds, habitats for wildlife and boardwalks bringing people closer to nature. Addressing sustainable drainage and biodiversity in a natural environment.
- 8 SPORTS & PLAY HUB
An area for sport and play within a woodland setting. Easily accessible promoting health and wellbeing through facilitating an active lifestyle outdoors in nature.
- 9 PLAY IN THE WOODS & WILD GARDENS
Focal natural play area for a range of ages and abilities that provides a fun, challenging and exciting space for children. Trim trail providing dispersed natural play and recreational opportunities.
- 10 PLAY ALONG THE WAY
A trail of natural features such as tree trunks and stepping stones integrated within the green network encouraging children to play along the way in natural greenspaces.
- 11 ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL
Car parking serving sports provision, community orchards and growing gardens.
- 12 GROWING LOCALLY
Promoting a sense of community through collective food growing and sustainable food production at local allotments and orchards.
- 13 SAFE MOVEMENT
Visibility to the right when turning out of Woodlands Park Avenue will be improved for safer vehicle and pedestrian movement.
- 14 ENHANCED LANDSCAPING
Reinforced planting on southern boundary to screen views from Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.
- 15 WOODLANDS PARK AVENUE EDGE
Reinforced planting and landscaped edge on western boundary to screen views from existing properties on Woodlands Park Avenue. New homes set back behind a bio-diverse and richly planted landscape edge incorporating drainage swales. New homes served by private drives within the development to maintain the integrity of the landscaped edge. Connectivity to Woodlands Park Avenue provided via multiple pedestrian/cycle connections.





seven

RESPONSE TO
MASTERPLAN FRAMEWORK
DESIGN OBJECTIVES



7.1 Homes for the Future

This section sets out how the Framework Masterplan has responded to the three Design Objectives; Homes for the Future, Nature Recovery and Healthy Placemaking.

SUSTAINABLE IDENTITY

The land at Lillibrooke presents an opportunity to deliver truly sustainable and affordable homes for the future, low carbon and energy efficient. A place with a strong climate conscience where residents respect the environment they inhabit responding with changes in lifestyle, living with a close connection to nature.

The development will contribute to the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 as set out in Policy SP2 of the BLP.

The proposed homes will be fully compliant with current Building Regulations, and be capable of being easily adapted to satisfy the needs of its residents through all stages of life. Construction materials will be responsibly and locally sourced where possible. The development will be designed in accordance with the Building for a Healthy Life design tool.

A Sustainability Statement will be submitted with the future planning application which will include further details of the proposals for sustainability.



ILLUSTRATIVE ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE STRATEGY



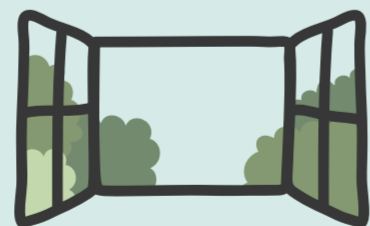
Landscape led approach
Bio-diversity enhancements
Active healthy lifestyle for residents
Tree lined streets



Fabric First Approach
Street & Plot orientation
Renewable energy
(photovoltaic panels on available roof space)
Waste Water Heat Recovery
Mechanical Extract Ventilation



Electric car charging points
Attractive walking & cycling routes
Investment in public transport



Energy saving
Water efficiency
Homes with gardens
Sustainable drainage systems
Construction & domestic waste management

7.1 Homes for the Future



HOMES FOR EVERYONE

The land at Lillibrooke will deliver a distinct and inspiring place that provides new homes for local people. A wide spectrum of types, tenures and sizes will be provided from one bed to five bedroom homes. The majority of the homes will be two, three and four bedroom family homes with gardens.

The site will provide 40% affordable housing and 5% of market housing units for custom and self-build plots, subject to viability. The number of homes and housing density will be a product of achieving the appropriate mix of housing typologies and layout design which responds positively to both the site features and the surrounding context.

Lillibrooke will cater for all ages and different housing needs which in turn will create a mixed, balanced and socially sustainable community. New dwellings will be designed to be adaptable providing flexible, accessible and age friendly homes. Where viable, a proportion of the new homes will meet Building Regulation requirements for greater accessibility, in line with the BLP.

ROOTED IN PLACE

Lillibrooke will integrate into the surrounding neighbourhoods, new homes will front onto both Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue set behind mature landscape planting.

An understanding of the local architectural style and vernacular will influence the building design ensuring Lillibrooke references the unique features of its context whilst creating a strong identity for a new place set within nature.



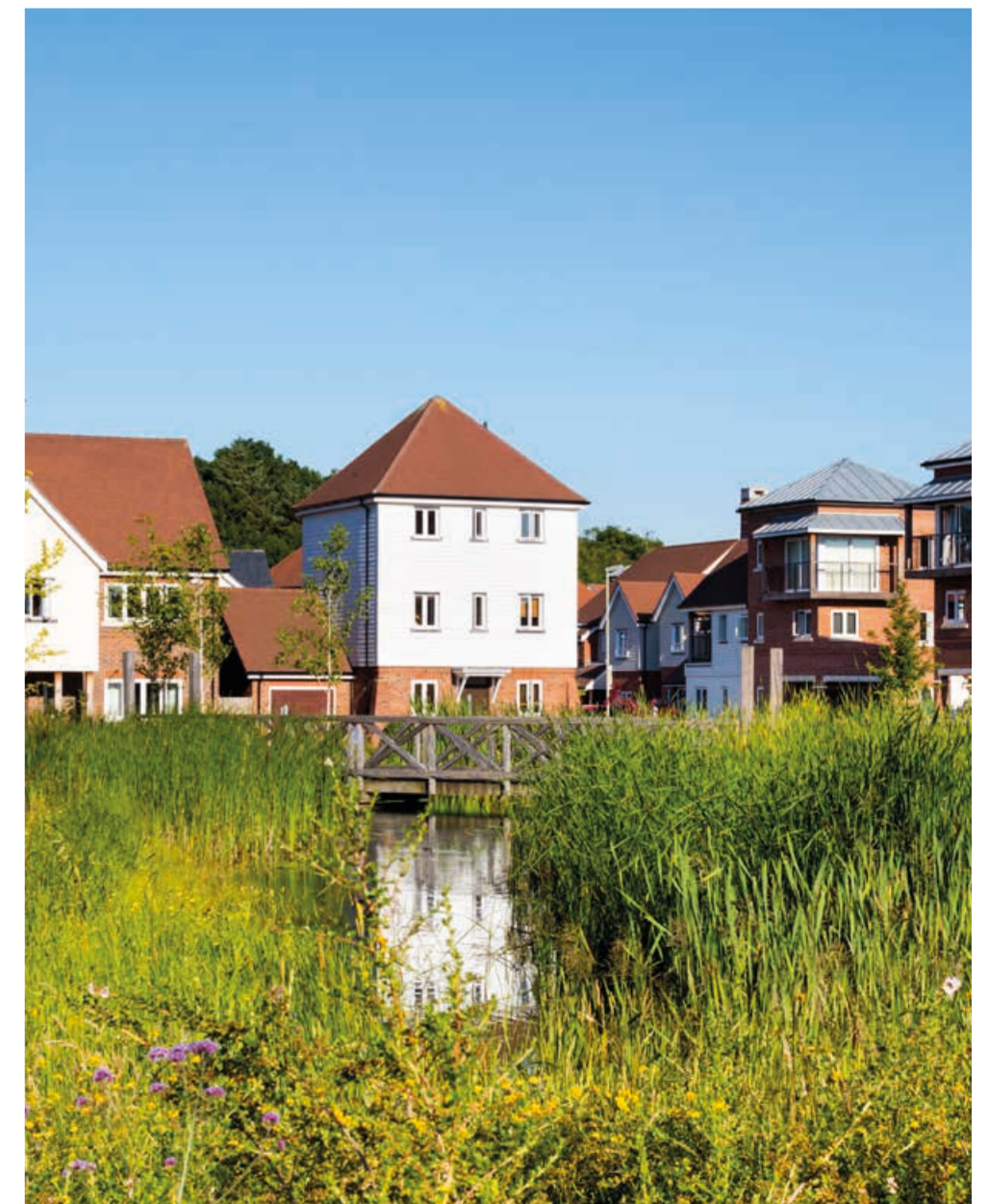
Sustainable homes



High quality homes



High quality architecture and range



7.2 Nature Recovery



NATURE NETWORK

The existing established trees, woodland and hedgerows will be retained forming a strong landscape setting. Protected ancient woodland on the southern edge of the site connects to the wider woodland network including Shrubbery Copse and Great Thrift Wood.

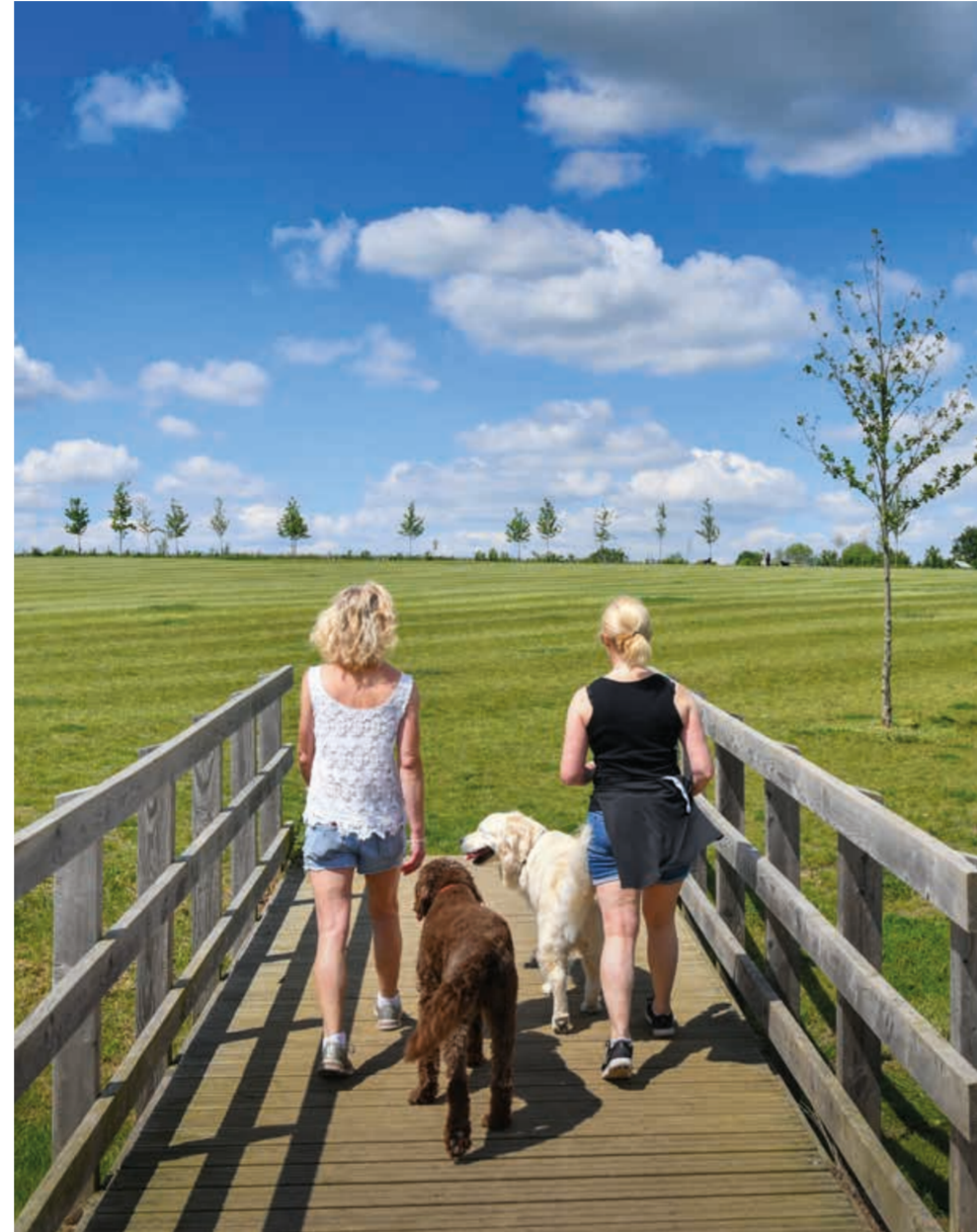
ECOLOGICALLY RICH & BIODIVERSE

The landscape structure of the site will be enhanced and landscaped edges established incorporating structural vegetation and ecotone creating habitat diversity.

Opportunities for movement of wildlife will be provided within and around the site through strengthening of existing treelines and hedgerow corridors and associated seminatural habitats alongside provision of new linear habitats including hedgerow, tree and scrub planting. The creation of beautiful open spaces and new wildlife habitats will deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain.

Proposed new planting will reinforce the existing treeline along the southern boundary of the site acting as screening for the Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.

A replacement badger sett will be provided in the south-eastern part of the site close to woodland and scrub screening providing a secluded and undisturbed habitat with links to the wider countryside.



Walking routes through parkland



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The south-eastern part of the site will be a naturalistic open space incorporating swathes of meadow, native tree and shrub planting and damp marginal habitats associated with the sustainable urban drainage basins and wetland habitats.

New wetland habitats including ponds, ditches, swales, reedbeds and wet grasslands will be sympathetically designed and natural in character, as part of the surface water drainage strategy, complementing the existing aquatic habitats in the wider area. Biodiverse and wildlife friendly in design including gently shelving margins, areas of open water and native aquatic/marginal planting whilst providing opportunities for recreation.

DEFINING THE GREEN BELT EDGE

New tree planting along the eastern site boundary will reinforce layers of structural planting defining the green belt edge, respecting the setting of Lillibrooke Manor and connecting to the wider countryside.



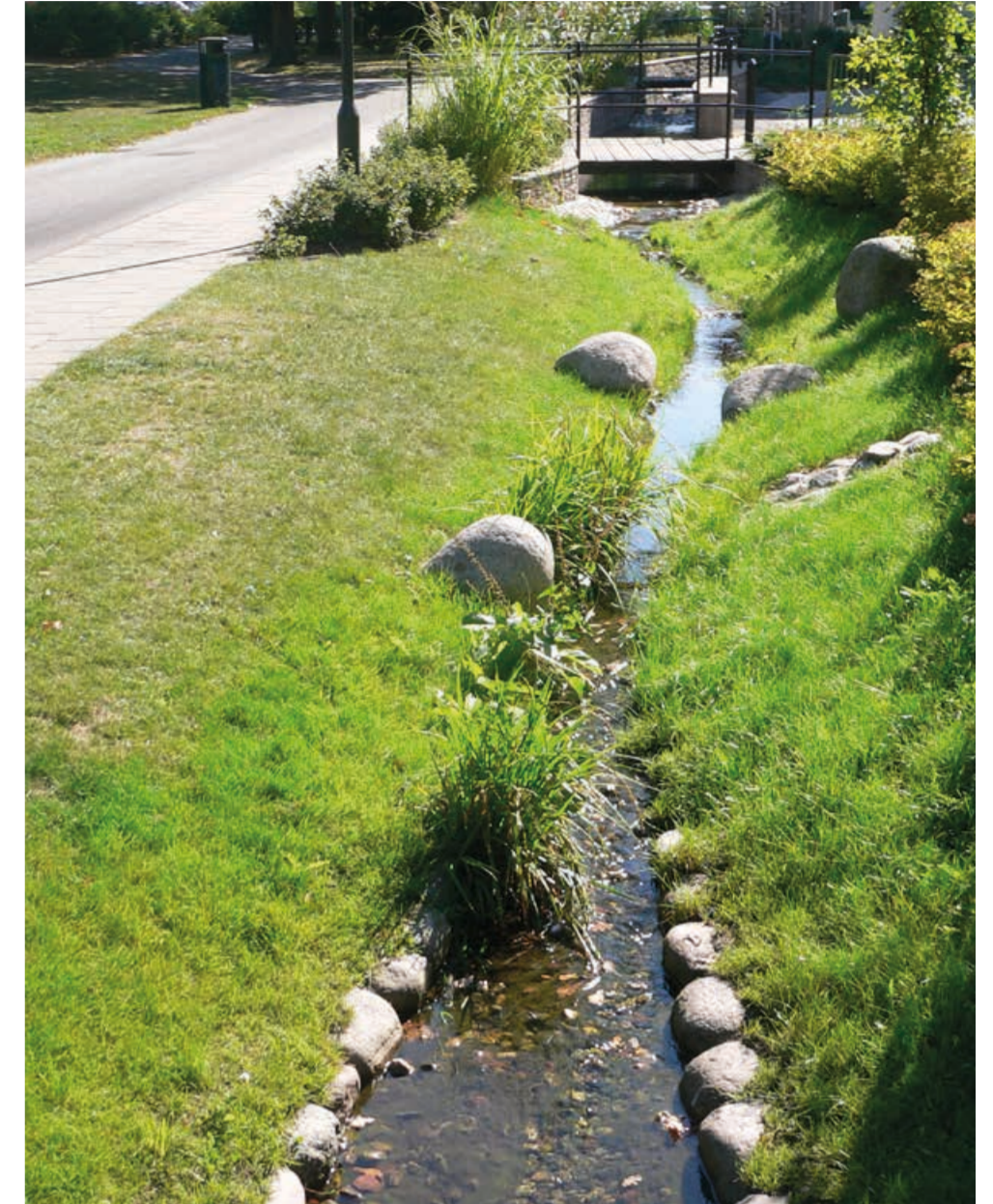
7.2 Nature Recovery



Natural and organic attenuation feature



Structural vegetation and ecotone

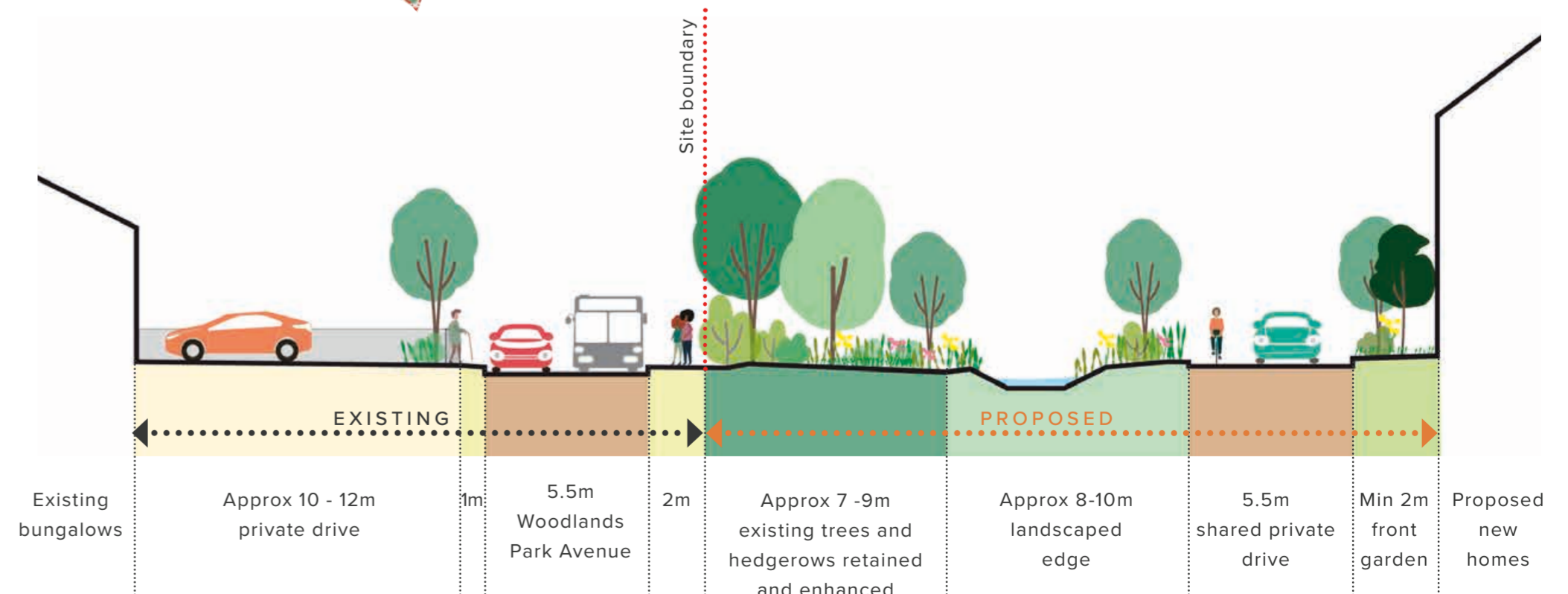


Swales



LANDSCAPE NETWORK

A landscaped buffer along the western site boundary incorporates landscape enhancements, tree planting and sustainable urban drainage. It forms part of the wider landscape network delivering rich and bio-diverse habitats and green spaces. Proposed homes are set back behind the landscaped buffer, which provides screening for the existing residents on Woodlands Park Avenue.



Rich and bio-diverse Landscaped Edge: Illustrative section through Woodlands Park Avenue

7.3 Healthy Placemaking

CONNECTED TO CONTEXT

Active and sustainable travel will be encouraged. All homes will be within 400 metres walking distance of a bus stop.

A network of public footpaths and cycle paths will connect to the surrounding neighbourhoods and wider countryside. New pedestrian crossing points across Woodlands Park Road will provide connectivity to nearby facilities and amenities.

BUS STOP IMPROVEMENTS

The site is well located to existing bus services with bus route 7 providing a half hourly service to Maidenhead town centre. This bus service is accessible from stops on Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue in the immediate vicinity of the site.

It is therefore proposed to improve the bus stop on Woodlands Park Road by providing a bus shelter and additional space for waiting passengers at the westbound stop at the junction with Lowbrook Drive.

At the bus stop, a pedestrian crossing will also be provided to improve access to the bus stops.

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Consideration will be given to relocating the former eastbound stop near Lowbrook Drive to a position which serves the re-routed bus route but this is subject to discussions with RBWM and the bus operator and confirmation that the amended trial route will be made permanent.



Bus serving Woodlands Park Avenue

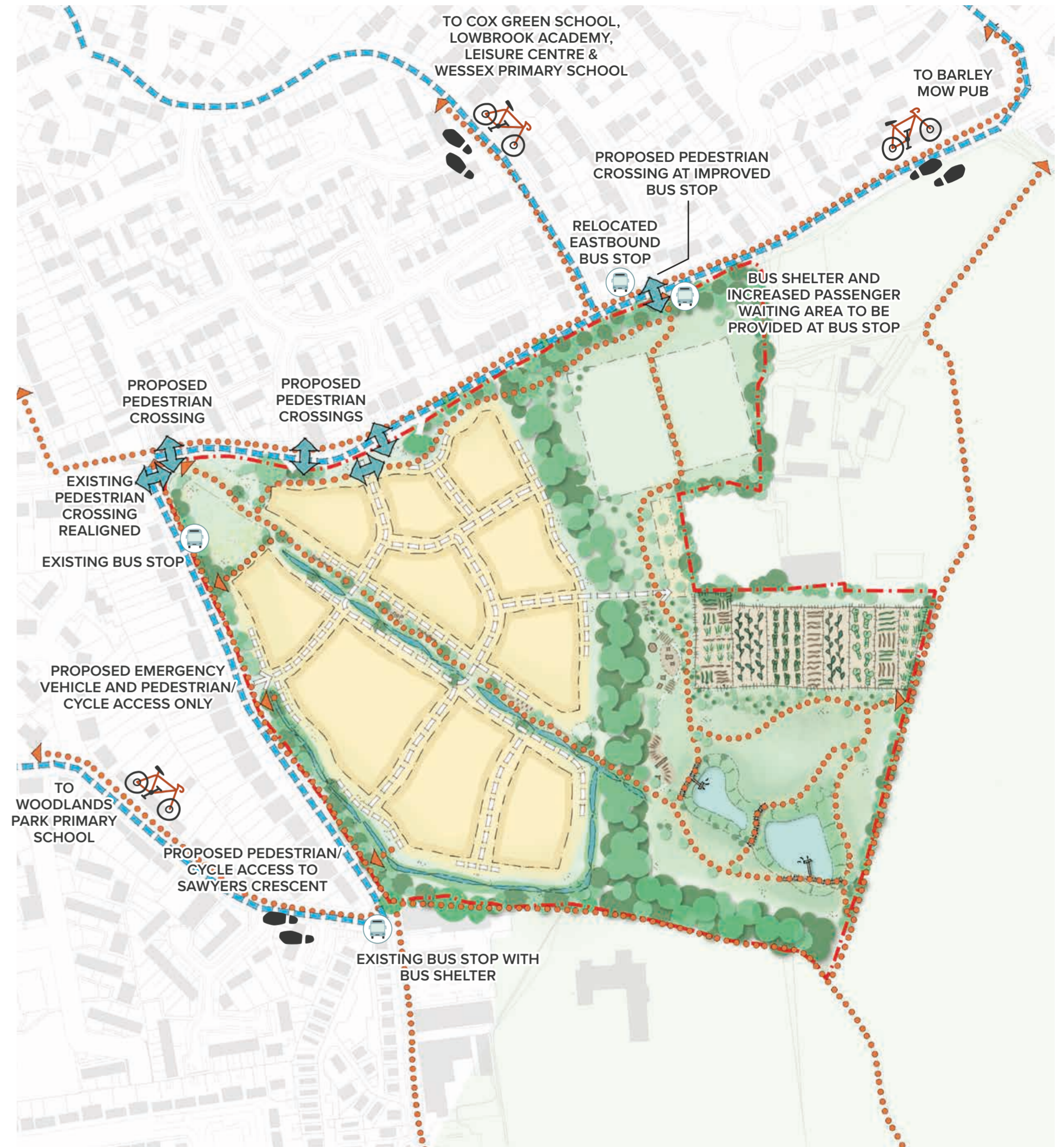


Accessible public transport to encourage sustainable travel



Potential toucan crossing

7.3 Healthy Placemaking



Movement Plan

Key

- Bus stop
- Bus route no.7
- Pedestrian crossing
- Footpath/cyclepath link



7.3 Healthy Placemaking

PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE IMPROVEMENTS

The development is well located to local shops, schools and employment opportunities with the majority of these amenities being accessed via Woodlands Park Road. Consequently, pedestrian and cycle permeability through the site will be considered in detail with pedestrian and cycle access being proposed at three locations on Woodlands Park Road namely at the site access, the north eastern corner of the site at the existing bus stop and at the north western corner at the junction with Woodlands Park Avenue. In addition to these access points, a further two pedestrian accesses are proposed along Woodlands Park Avenue to provide a link to the south west of Cox Green and White Waltham.

To assist pedestrians crossing Woodlands Park Road, crossings will be provided at each of the three access points outlined on the Movement Plan, with a realigned crossing on Woodlands Park Avenue at its junction with Woodlands Park Road to serve residents from the development. Further work will be undertaken with the relevant authorities to achieve the best solution for pedestrian crossings on Woodlands Park Road to deliver safe, attractive and convenient crossing points. The crossing type and location is subject to further discussion with RBWM during the planning application process.

Within the site, these accesses will be connected to provide pedestrian and cycle permeability throughout the site and connect the development to the existing Public Rights of Way along the eastern edge of the site and to the south of the development towards The Cut watercourse and the wider countryside.

In the vicinity of the site, the footpath on Woodlands Park Road is between 1 m and 1.5 m wide but the potential for widening the footway to 2m is limited due to the existing mature hedgerow. The location where the footway is at its narrowest, however, is adjacent to the proposed site access junction and so it is proposed to widen the footway in this location from 1m to 1.5m to assist pedestrians.

NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET NETWORK

Streets will be designed to create a distinctive place with a clear identity and hierarchy. Street design will be informed by RBWM's Design Guide including guidance on street widths.

Street design will contribute to delivering character and placemaking as well as contributing to the wider nature recovery network through the provision of incidental green spaces and tree planting within the public realm.

PARKING PROVISION

The development will provide adequate parking provision and meet RBWM's relevant parking standards at the time of a planning application submission.



Example of shared pedestrian/cycle route



Example of street incorporating landscaping, trees and parking provision.



Example of street incorporating parking screened by landscaping.

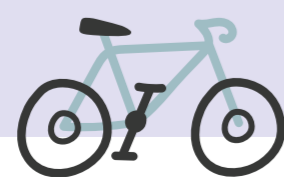
7.3 Healthy Placemaking



Walking and Cycling Connections

Key

- Pedestrian and Cycle Desire Lines to Local Facilities
- National Cycle Network 4



7.3 Healthy Placemaking

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RECREATION & ACTIVITY

A rich green infrastructure network will be designed to be natural and wild, encouraging people to explore the landscape on their doorstep, promoting healthy lifestyles through activity and play in nature.

The eastern part of the site provides open space for people to be active and relax in a natural and wild setting. Playing fields for a range of sports, such as junior football are proposed in the north-eastern part of the site, located to be easily accessible to the surrounding neighbourhoods and existing residents.

A destination playspace and trim trails encouraging running and outdoor exercise will be integrated within the natural parkland setting to the south.

Natural play and traditional door step play areas will be integrated within the green network forming the landscape setting of the new homes. Play along the way within the blue/green corridors will allow children to explore and play within a natural setting.

The overall play strategy for the site will be developed to meet Fields In Trust standards ensuring all new residents are within close proximity to play areas. The location and design of natural play areas will be explored in further detail through the preparation of subsequent planning application(s).



Trim trail



Play area



Sports provision



Natural play



Play along the way



Informal play



Natural play

7.3 Healthy Placemaking

GROWING & GARDENS

Community growing gardens are proposed in the south-eastern part of the site adjacent to Lillibrooke Manor. The provision of allotment plots will give existing local residents and the new community the opportunity for food growing. Further engagement with RBWM will be undertaken to agree an open space package that works towards meeting the local need for allotments. There is an aspiration to provide both standard and mini allotment plots providing a range of sizes.

Orchard planting will form part of the community growing gardens including fruit trees as part of a productive landscape. Orchard trees will link to the wider nature recovery network, linking from the central tree belt to the wider woodland networks creating new wildlife habitats. The orchards and gardens will include nectar and pollen-rich and fruit and nut-producing species to benefit a range of species including birds, invertebrates, bats and foraging badgers.

The allotments and community orchard will be accessible to all by walking and cycling and served by an adjacent car park to enable transport of bulky gardening equipment.

The allotments and orchards will form part of the natural wild gardens creating opportunities for cultivating and sharing locally grown food as part of a healthy lifestyle connected to nature.



Fruit picking



Community orchards



Planting and nurturing



Community growing

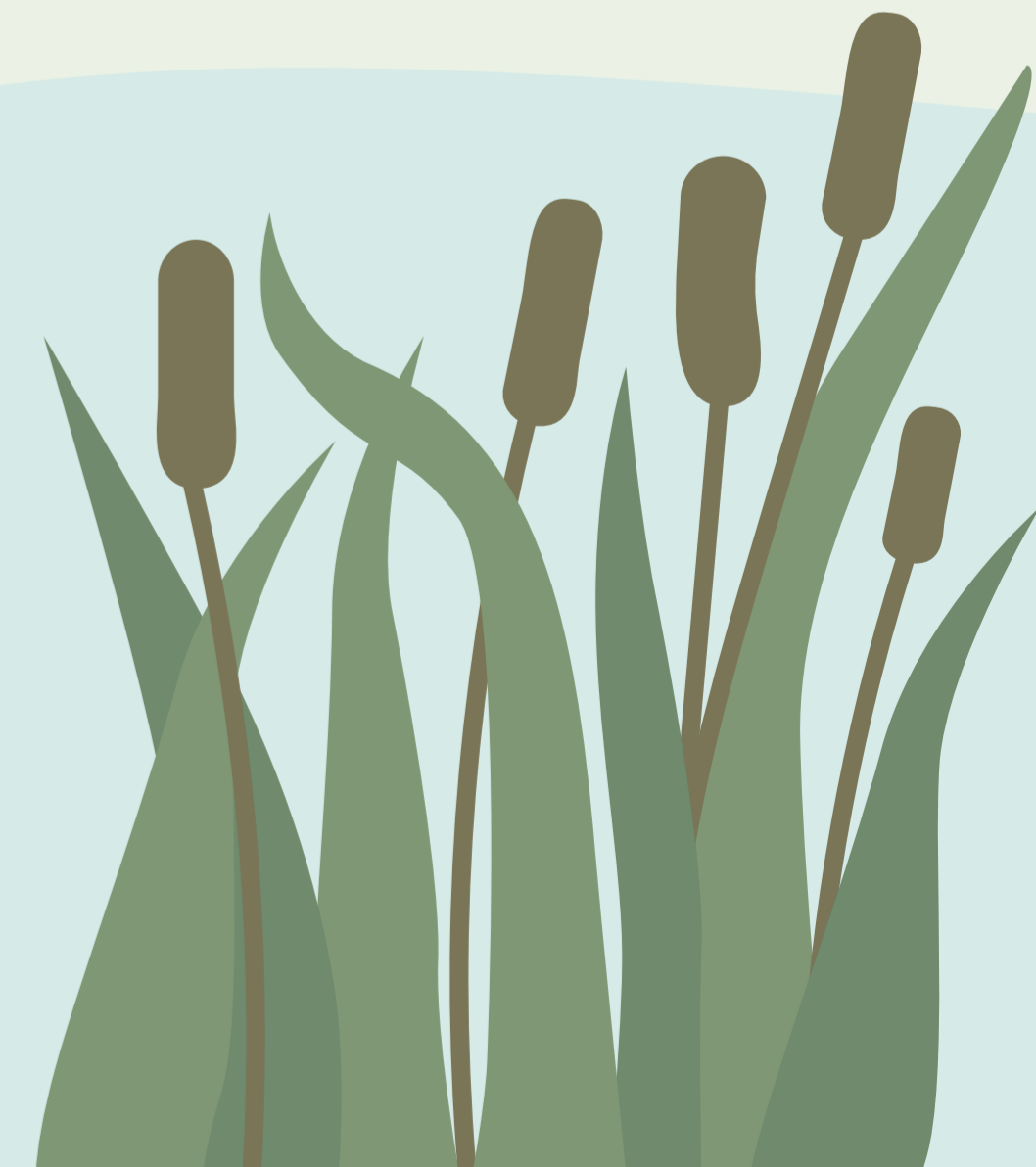
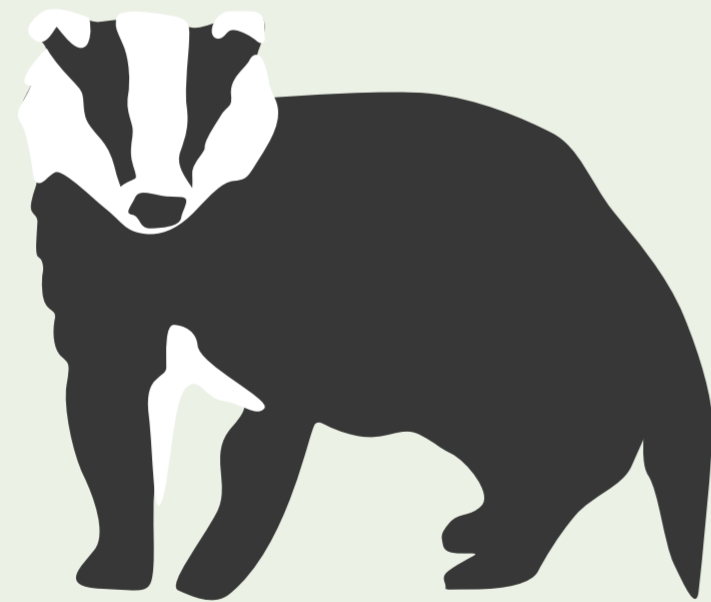


Local food growing



eight

SUMMARY



8.1 Site Requirements

SITE ALLOCATION REQUIREMENTS

The development of the site should meet 21 requirements as set out in the BLP Site Allocation Profoma. Each requirement has been categorised under the Masterplan Framework Objectives opposite and the reader is signposted to the relevant section of this SMD which addresses each requirement.

Further detail and information on how these requirements will be met will be provided as part of a future planning application.

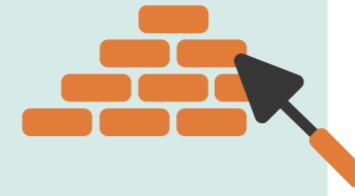
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Homes for the Future

SUSTAINABLE IDENTITY

HOMES FOR EVERYONE

ROOTED IN PLACE



The site specific requirements which are met within the Homes for the Future Framework Objectives are:

- Provide all housing to the west of the existing central tree belt in order to create a defensible boundary to the urban edge. **See Section 6.1 & 6.2**
- Provide family housing with gardens. **See Section 7.1**
- Provide 40% affordable housing. **See Section 7.1**
- Provide 5% of market housing units for custom and self build plots (fully serviced). **See Section 7.1**
- Provide appropriate mitigation measures to address the impact of noise and air quality so as to protect residential amenity. **See Section 4.3. Detail to be provided as part of a future planning application.**
- Front onto both Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue. **See Section 7.1**
- Development will contribute to the target of net zero carbon emissions. **See section 7.1**



Nature Recovery

NATURE NETWORK

ECOLOGICALLY RICH & BIODIVERSE

DEFINING THE GREEN BELT EDGE



The site specific requirements which are met within the Nature Recovery Framework Objectives are:

- Retain the existing central tree belt in the centre of the site running north to south. **See Section 4.2 & 4.3**
- Create a strong high quality green and blue infrastructure framework across the whole site to deliver biodiversity, health and wellbeing benefits, recreation, food production and leisure opportunities. The central tree belt and the public open spaces to the east will form the focus for the Green Infrastructure network on the site. **See Section 6.1, 6.2, 7.2 & 7.3**
- Retain valuable trees at site boundaries and enhance biodiversity across the site. **See Section 4.2, 4.3 & 7.2**
- Provide appropriate edge treatment and transition from the strategic public open spaces to the countryside. **See Section 6.1, 6.2 & 7.2**
- Be designed sensitively to conserve and enhance the setting of nearby Listed Building. **See section 6.1 and 6.2**
- Address potential risks to ground water and surface water flooding issues. **See Section 4.2, 4.3**
- Consider flood risk as part of a Flood Risk Assessment as the site is partially located within Flood Zone 2 and larger than one hectare. **See Section 4.2, 4.3**
- Demonstrate the sustainable management of surface water runoff through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in line with policy and best practice; any proposed surface water discharge must be limited to greenfield runoff rates. **See Section 4.2, 4.3, 6.1, 6.2 & 7.2**
- Undertake a minerals assessment to assess the viability and practicality of prior extraction of the minerals resource, as the site falls within a Minerals Safeguarding Area. **Detail to be provided as part of a future planning application.**



8.1 Site Requirements

Healthy Placemaking

CONNECTED TO CONTEXT

RECREATION & ACTIVITY

GROWING & GARDENS

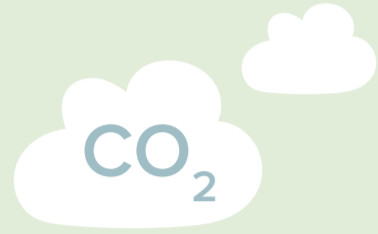


The site specific requirements which are met within the Healthy Placemaking Framework Objectives are:

- Provide a mix of residential, strategic public open space and sporting hub for western Maidenhead. **See Section 6.2 & 7.3**
- Limit development on the eastern side of the central tree belt to the provision of facilities associated with delivery of the strategic open space and sports pitches. **See Section 6.2 & 7.3**
- Provide strong pedestrian and cycle connectivity throughout the housing area and into and through the strategic public open spaces on the eastern side of the central tree belt. Provide strong linkages into surrounding urban and countryside areas including connections to the Public Rights of Way network. **See Section 7.3**
- Ensure that the development is well served by public bus routes/demand responsive transport/other innovative public transport solutions, with appropriate provision for new bus stop infrastructure, such that the bus is an attractive alternative to the private car for local journeys, including local railway stations. **See Section 7.3**
- Develop and implement a robust residential travel plan to manage travel to and from the site and reduce instances of single-occupancy car trips, including a car club for residents - Detail to be prepared as part of a future planning application.
- Place sports pitches in a woodland setting. **See Section 6.2 & 7.3**
- Minimise the visual impacts of any recreational, sporting or leisure built form on the eastern side of the central tree belt, including sports pitch lighting.
- Open space and play strategy to be approved by RBWM as part of a future planning application.



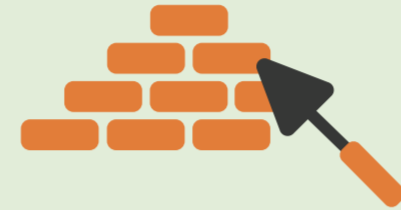
8.2 Scheme Benefits



Approximately 300 high quality low carbon homes.



40% of the new homes will be on-site affordable homes for local people on low incomes, first-time buyers and key workers.



Provision of plots available for custom and self-build.



Beautiful open spaces and new wildlife habitats creating at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity.



New sports pitches and allotments.



Active and informal open spaces to encourage active lifestyles and peoples enjoyment of nature.



Investment in public transport and other facilities in Cox Green.



Network of pedestrian and cycle routes providing attractive routes to key facilities and links to the countryside.



Improvement of the junction of Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue to enhance safety.



Enhanced surface water attenuation to reduce off-site flood risk.

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8.3 Next Steps & Delivery

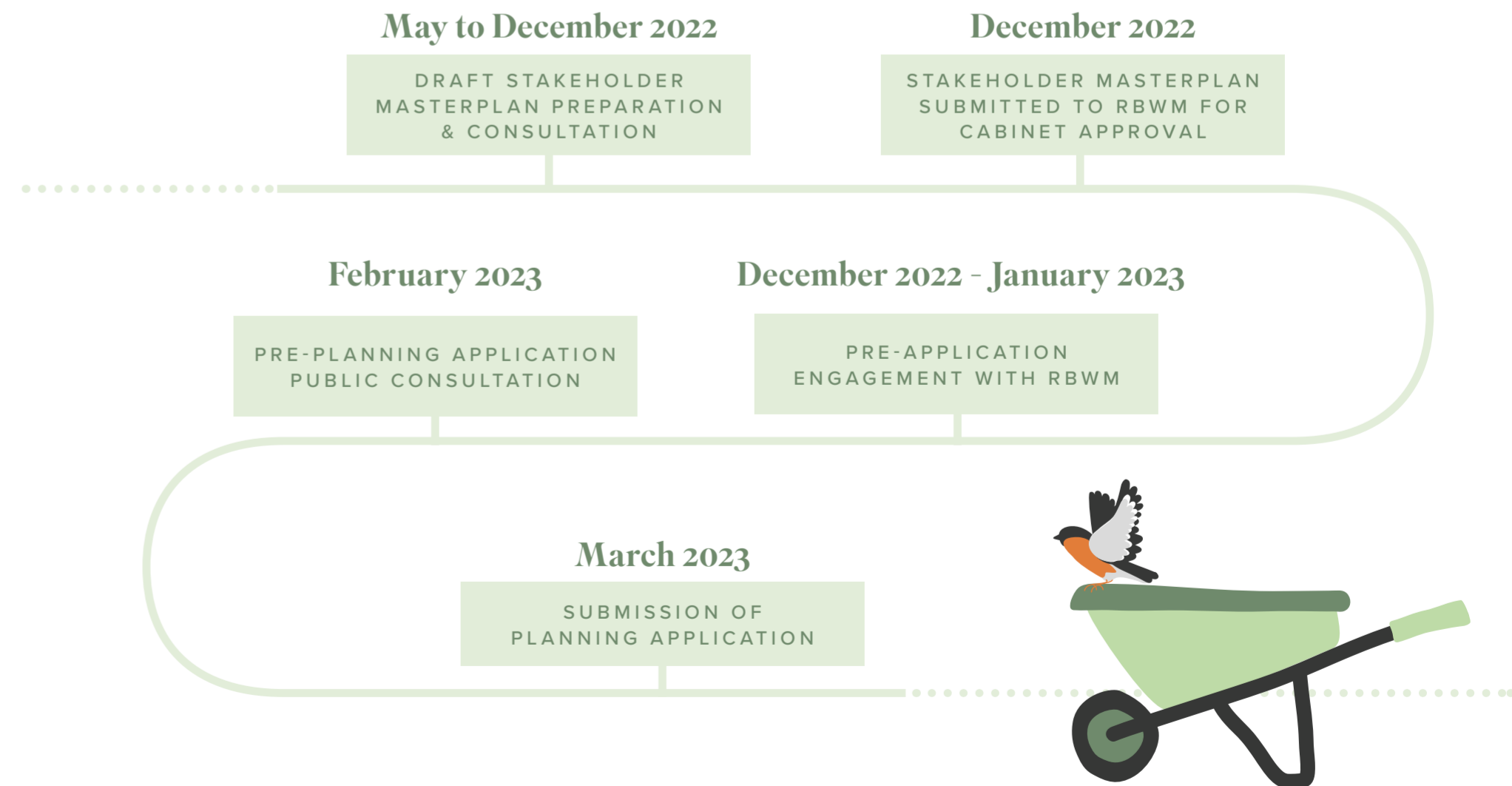


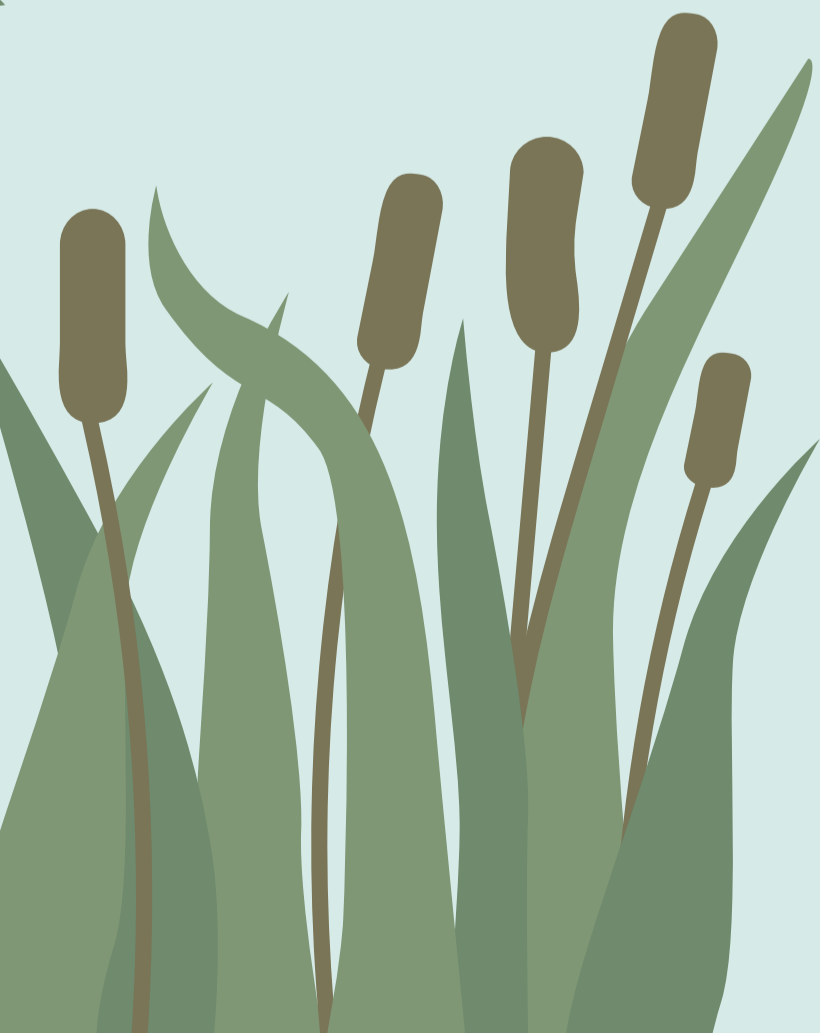
Timeframe for Next Steps/ Delivery of Development

Through the preparation of a planning application(s) for the development, the design team will proactively engage with the Council and the Councils technical Officers to agree and finalise more detailed paras for the site. Following this process, there will be further public consultation engagement to seek community feedback on the final proposals, before the planning application is submitted in March 2023.

The planing application will be supported by a suite of technical assessments and information to demonstrate compliance with site specific policy requirements and the BLP.

Planning Timeline





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Lillibrooke

Stakeholder Masterplan Document

December 2022

Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue

Maidenhead

Local plan site AL24

Accessible Version

Contents.

Click on the coloured box below to go to each chapter.

The Team.

Click on the coloured box below to visit the contacts website.

Chapter One. Introduction.

This section sets out the purpose of the Stakeholder Masterplan Document (SMD), and describes the structure and detail each section contains.

1.1 Purpose of the Document.

Purpose of the Document.

This Stakeholder Masterplan Document (SMD) has been prepared to guide future development on Land east of Woodlands Park Avenue and north of Woodlands Business Park, Maidenhead, referred to hereafter as ‘Lillibrooke’.

Lillibrooke has been identified as allocation AL24 within the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) Borough Local Plan (BLP). The BLP requires the preparation of a stakeholder masterplan for the site.

This SMD provides information on the site constraints and opportunities, the design objectives and the engagement process undertaken which in turn has informed the preparation of a series of design principles and a masterplan which subsequent planning application(s) will be expected to be in general accordance with.

The aim of the SMD is as follows:

- Inform the preparation of the masterplan for Lillibrooke;
- Help inform design objectives; and
- Provide an opportunity for local stakeholders to engage in the design process and help shape the design principles and masterplan.

It will form a material consideration in the determination of the subsequent planning application(s).

The SMD has been prepared on behalf of Berkeley.

Document Structure.

The SMD sets out the process that has been undertaken to inform the Masterplan and the Masterplan Document, and will be used in the consideration of future planning applications on the site.

The structure is as follows:

- Section 2 provides a description of the site and the planning policy context surrounding the allocation;
- Section 3 sets out the stakeholder and community engagement and the outcome of the engagement;
- Section 4 sets out the constraints and opportunities identified for the site and the ‘key issues’ which future planning applications will have to address;
- Section 5 sets out the design objectives, which have derived through the stakeholder engagement. The design objectives for Lillibrooke include:
 - High quality Green and Blue Infrastructure
 - Access and Movement
 - Maintaining and Enhancing Heritage
 - Landuse and Amenities (including open space and sports facilities)
- Section 6 outlines the design principles that have evolved through the engagement process and introduces the masterplan;
- Section 7 sets out how the masterplan achieves the design objectives; and
- Section 8 deals with delivery and next steps.



Site Location Plan.

Chapter Two. Context.

This section provides planning policy context followed by a description of the site location, with reference to local facilities and connections; and illustrating the sense of place defined by architectural and landscape character.

2.1 Planning Policy Context.

Site Description.

The site extends to approximately 16.6ha of agricultural land and woodland. Part of the site is also used for the storage of soil and other material associated with an adjoining turf business.

The site is located approximately 3km to the south-west of Maidenhead town centre and is adjacent to the neighbourhood of Cox Green. The site falls within Cox Green Parish and White Waltham Parish lies to the west of the site.

Woodlands Park Road runs along the northern site boundary and Woodland Park Avenue to the west. Residential properties are located to the north and west. A complex of buildings at Lillibrooke Manor are located to the east of the site comprising Grade II listed buildings. Woodlands Park Business Park and Alexander Devine Children's Hospice are located to the south of the site.

A public footpath runs along the southern and eastern site boundary. The site is enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows on all sides. The local area provides a wide range of amenities and facilities as well as good walking and cycling links to the town centre and surrounding countryside.

Planning Policy Context.

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Borough Local Plan (BLP) sets out RBWM's spatial development strategy for the Borough up to 2033. RBWM's overarching strategy is to focus most development in Maidenhead, Windsor and Ascot, in order to optimise infrastructure and provide a sustainable approach to growth. The plan sets out several spatial objectives, including providing sufficient new housing to meet the Borough's needs.

To ensure the borough has a sufficient supply of varied housing in sustainable locations, the plan has allocated sites around the borough where it is considered new homes are acceptable.

The BLP was adopted by the Council on the 8th of February 2022 and is now the key statutory planning document that shapes and manages new development in the Borough.

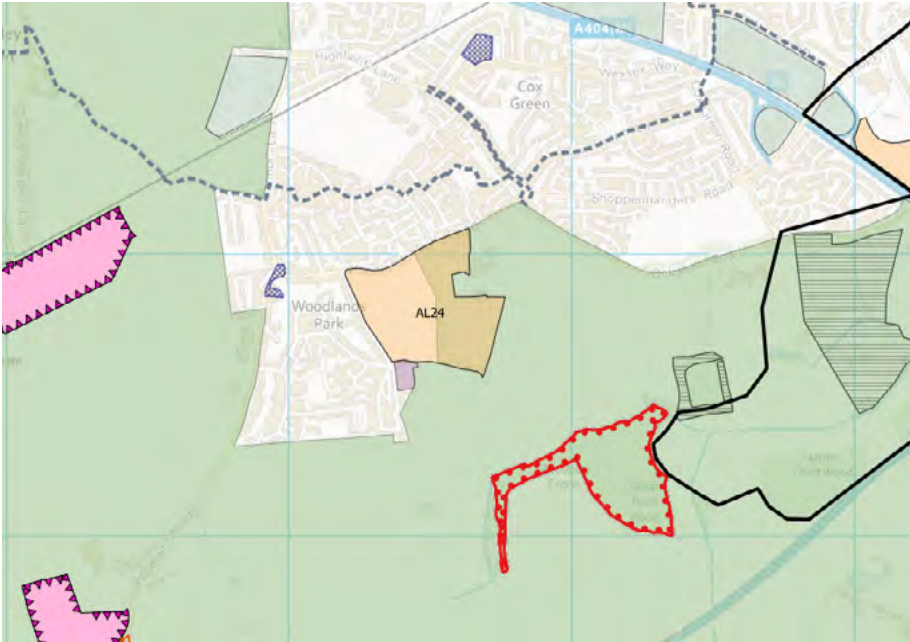
Lillibrooke, or site AL24, as it is referred to in the BLP, is allocated for approximately 300 new homes, strategic open space and sports pitches. Whilst the western half of the site has been removed from the Green Belt, the eastern half and central tree belt are retained in the Green Belt.

The pro-forma in Appendix C of the BLP identifies the following key requirements for the site:

- Approximately 300 new homes;
- Strategic Open Space;
- Sporting Hub;

Further detailed site-specific requirements are contained in the pro-forma relating to a variety of design and other matters.

The SMD has been prepared alongside the policies within the BLP, NPPF, PPG, National Design Guide and Borough Wide Design Guide, Building for a Healthy Life and Manual for Streets.



Key

- Site Allocation
- Green Belt
- Established Employment Sites in the Green Belt
- Site of Special Scientific Interest

Local Plan Proposals Map.



Key

- Allocation boundary
- Retained green belt
- Area removed from the green belt
- Parish boundary

Site Location Plan.

2.2 Site Location.

Local Facilities and Connections.

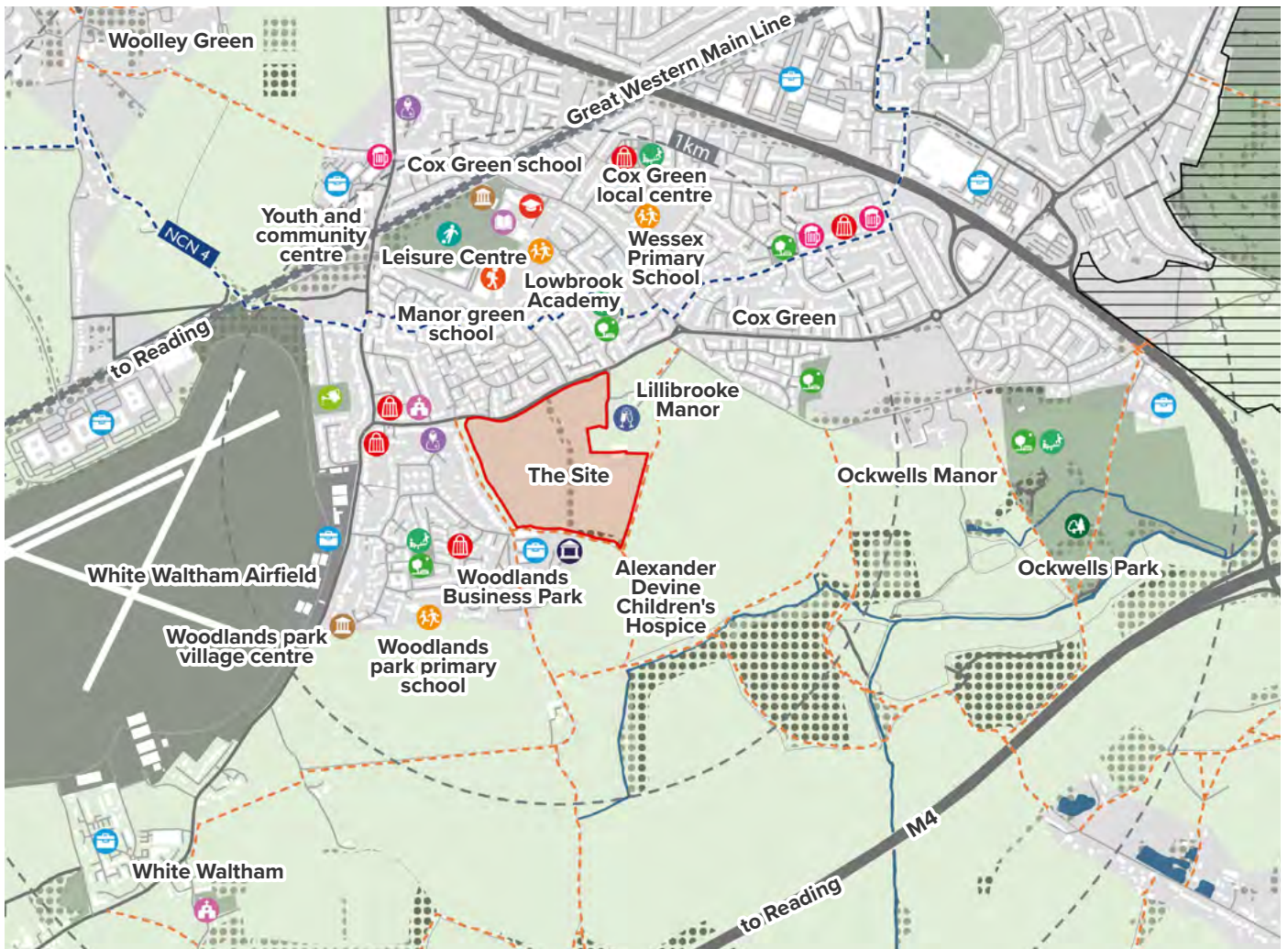
The site is located approximately 3km to the south-west of Maidenhead town centre and is adjacent to the neighbourhood of Cox Green.

The local area provides a wide range of amenities and facilities as well good walking and cycling links to the town centre and surrounding countryside.

Cox Green local centre is located 1km north-east of the site and has a range of services including a food shop, newsagent, takeaways and pharmacy amongst other provisions. A cluster of community facilities are located west of Highfield Lane including a youth and community centre, leisure centre and library.















There are a number of schools within close proximity to the site, Woodlands Park Primary to the south and Manor Green School, Lowbrook Academy, Cox Green School and Wessex Primary School to the north.

Woodlands Park Doctors Surgery is located to the west of the site on Woodlands Park Road.



Local Facilities and connections plan.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Railway Line
-  Roads and Paths
-  Waterways
-  PROW
-  NCN 4
-  Built Up Area
-  Town Centre Area
-  Green Spaces
-  Other Open Space
-  Airfield
-  Woodland
-  Ancient Woodland
-  South West Maidenhead Allocation Sites

Local Facilities

-  Primary School
-  Secondary School
-  Special School
-  Play Area
-  Library
-  Village Hall/Community Centre
-  GP Surgery
-  Hospice
-  Park/Recreation Ground
-  Nature Reserve
-  Local Shop/Local Centre
-  Pub
-  Events Venue
-  Place of Worship
-  Leisure Centre
-  Employment
-  Allotments

2.3 Sense of Place.

Architectural Character.

Cox Green was historically a small village on the south-western edge of Maidenhead. Cox Green Lane has a mixed architectural character, including some historic buildings. Homes range from large detached houses set within generous mature gardens to simple symmetrical terraced houses providing frontage onto the lane. The vernacular architecture is characterised by timber framing, brick and rendered elevations with tile hanging at first floor level. Elevations are articulated by bay windows, porches and dormer windows. Roofs are typically covered with red clay tiles or traditional grey slates.

Ockwells Road is rural and leafy in character, homes are typically detached double fronted properties set within a landscaped setting.

Over time the neighbourhoods of Cox Green, Heynes Green and Woodlands Park have developed and extended south-west towards the site. The character predominantly dates from the late 20th century, from 1960 onwards.

The adjacent residential neighbourhoods of Cox Green and Woodlands Park were developed in the 1970s and 1980s.

Landscape Character.

The site sits within a relatively flat landscape on the edge of Woodlands Park and Cox Green.

A series of interconnected ancient woodlands and copses to the south-east, include Shrubbery Copse, Great Thrift Wood and Little Thrift Wood. Great Thrift Wood is a Site of Special Scientific Interest including broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland.

The Cut is a historic stream which flows eastwards through the woodlands.

A network of footpaths and bridleways cross the landscape connecting Cox Green to the rural countryside to the south.

Ockwells Park, once part of Ockwells Manor Estate is now a local nature reserve where areas of woodland, meadow and copses can be explored via paths and nature trails. This is a key destination for recreation and play for all ages.



Landscape Context: Wider Nature Recovery Network

Chapter Three. Stakeholder and Community Engagement.

This section provides a description and documentation of the engagement process carried out to directly inform the Masterplan Framework, including Community Liaison Group workshops and meetings followed by Public Consultation on the SMD.

3.1 The Engagement Process.

SMD Engagement.

The engagement process carried out has directly informed the Masterplanning Framework for the site. Regular Community Liaison Group (CLG) meetings began in June 2022, which have established a continued dialogue with local key stakeholders in the development of the emerging proposals.

The CLG meetings included a site visit and workshop in July 2022.

In addition to the CLG meetings, the design team has met with local stakeholders throughout the preparation of the SMD.

A draft SMD was consulted on for a period of 5 weeks and included a public consultation event in September 2022.

The consultation with local stakeholders and the community has shaped the final masterplan.

Community Liaison Group Engagement.

To assist with the preparation of the stakeholder masterplan and to understand the needs and aspirations of the local community at an early stage, Berkeley set up a Community Liaison Group (CLG) comprising of a range of local stakeholders.

After undertaking a community mapping exercise, and liaising with local groups and key stakeholders, the Community Liaison Group was established. The Liaison Group consists of officers and members from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, representatives from Cox Green and White Waltham Parish Councils and representatives from local organisations and businesses including the Maidenhead Civic Society.

The role of the CLG has been to:

- Provide early-stage input into the key issues involved;
- Identify the constraints and opportunities that the masterplan should consider;
- Provide input into the draft masterplan; and
- Understand how the views of the community have been incorporated into the final masterplan.

The first CLG meeting was held on 9th June 2022 via Zoom and attended by a range of stakeholders including representatives from Cox Green and White Waltham Parish Council, Lillibrooke Manor, Alexander Devine Children's Hospice, Maidenhead Civic Society, Woodlands Park Surgery, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Council, Berkeley and members of the wider project team.

The purpose of this introductory meeting was to provide an overview of the planning policy context of the site and how it is included in the RBWM Local Plan, the policy context for the stakeholder masterplan and Berkeley's involvement on the site to date. A draft Terms of Reference for the CLG was also discussed.

Participants had a chance to ask questions of the Project Team who also provided an overview of key site issues, opportunities and constraints. Some of the key issues discussed included landscaping, drainage, traffic, noise and impacts on the local area including Lillibrooke Manor and Alexander Devine Children's Hospice. A commitment was given to further explore key issues discussed and to hold a second CLG meeting as soon as possible.

The second meeting of the CLG was held on 5th July 2022 at Lillibrooke Manor. To start with the group undertook a walkabout around the site; this was suggested at the previous CLG by attendees as a way to bring a better context to the discussion.

The group then returned to a workshop session designed to delve deeper into the points raised. JTP (project architects) gave an overview of the site and its context. The latest opportunities and constraints plans were also presented alongside the emerging concept plan for the scheme. An interactive post-it notes session was conducted where everyone was given the opportunity to voice various issues and aspirations for the site. Each post-it note was read out to the group and points raised led to further discussion of challenges and possible solutions.

The attendees then split into three groups to further discuss the challenges and aspirations of the site marking up site plans with their thoughts. Each group presented and reported back to everyone attending with key discussion points. Key themes that emerged from the workshop session are summarised on the following pages.

Public Consultation Timeline.

Community Liaison Group Meetings. June to September 2022.

Public Exhibition of draft Stakeholder Masterplan. September 2022.

Five week public consultation on the draft stakeholder masterplan. September to November 2022.

Submission of Stakeholder Masterplan Document to RBWM for approval. December 2022.

Pre-planning application public consultation. February 2023.

Submission of planning application. March 2023.

CLG Workshop Key Themes.

After the CLG Workshop the design team analysed and summarised the ideas people had, in order to start shaping the proposals. The following key themes are a summary of the various discussions and workshops that have taken place to date.

Traffic, parking and getting around.

Participants raised concerns regarding current traffic speeds along Woodlands Park Road and highlighted the need to improve the visibility at the junction between Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue.

Options for site access were discussed including suggestions for a roundabout access from Woodlands Park Road and emergency access from Woodlands Park Avenue.

The need to provide safe pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the existing facilities and schools in Cox Green and Woodlands Park was highlighted as a priority. There is potential to connect to the wider PROW and national cycle network, both linking to the surrounding settlement and wider countryside. It was suggested that a heritage trail could connect Lillibrooke and Ockwells Park as a walking route. Active travel should be encouraged through the site and beyond.

Options for parking provision were discussed to serve potential open space uses proposed for the site, such as sports provision and allotments. A participant suggested creation of an environmentally friendly parking area in keeping with the natural setting, rather than a large tarmac car park.

Respecting the local heritage.

Participants noted the heritage value of Lillibrooke Manor and its setting. The sensitivity of the listed buildings should be taken into consideration when developing design proposals.

Open space and recreation.

The local stakeholders welcomed the opportunity for the site to deliver publicly accessible open space for both existing and new residents. Participants expressed a preference for the provision of informal open space for bio-diversity and nature as opposed to formal space. Suggestions included adventure play, woodland trim trail, outdoor gym, natural play, skate/BMX track, forest schools and allotments. A participant recommended having allotments adjacent to children's play so parents can watch their kids as they play.

The Parish Council expressed an interest in taking over the management of the public open space east of the tree belt. Drainage Many participants discussed mitigating surface water drainage with the aspiration of planning water infrastructure and management that creates attractive and bio-diverse habitats. Group discussions suggested locating ponds and wetlands responding to the natural gradients of the site. Water attenuation areas could potentially provide water to serve the allotments.

Housing.

Housing should be well designed, in keeping with the context referencing local character and architectural style. A mix of size and tenure is important to build a balanced community. The provision of affordable housing is key, and the suggestion was made that the development could deliver key worker homes and homes for the younger generation living and working around Maidenhead. Many participants discussed the appropriate location for flats, voicing concern that new homes should not overtly overlook existing properties. The scheme provides the opportunity to deliver a mix of homes, focusing on 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes.

Other uses.

The delivery of new homes and increase in local residents will impact on the existing GP surgery and other services. It was suggested that the opportunity to deliver a health facility could be explored.

Continued community engagement.

Many participants appreciated the opportunity to be involved at the early stage in helping shape the proposals and are keen to stay involved and informed. The future design stages will include further liaison with the CLG and wider community.

Public Consultation on Stakeholder Masterplan Document.

Public Exhibition.

A public exhibition on the draft Stakeholder Masterplan Document was held in Cox Green Youth and Community Centre in Maidenhead on the 30th September 2022 from 3pm to 7pm.

The public exhibition gave an opportunity for local residents to see the initial design proposals and discuss any queries with the project team.

Consultation Website.

Simultaneously, a five week virtual consultation was held from the 30th September to the 4th November 2022 on www.lillibrooke.co.uk where the public exhibition material was made available to read online.

The public exhibition and consultation presented an opportunity for the local community to view the initial proposals, give feedback and have a say in the preparation of the Lillibrooke SMD.

Feedback forms were provided both for the public exhibition and the virtual consultation. Feedback was reviewed by the project team and informed further development of the masterplan and supporting SMD.

Public Consultation Feedback.

The design team analysed and summarised the feedback received from the local community and stakeholders. Key comments and concerns raised are categorised under the following themes.

Access and Movement.

The local community voiced their concerns about the increase in traffic and the visibility at the junction between Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue. Concerns regarding the visibility at the junction will be addressed by improving the visibility splays to meet national standards based on speed surveys undertaken on Woodlands Park Road. The visibility splay will be kept clear of any development and will be offered for adoption to the Highways Authority to ensure it remains unobstructed.

A number of local residents were in favour of a potential roundabout access off Woodlands Park Road, though some were opposed to the idea. Those in favour felt it would lower dangerous car speeds, whilst those in opposition thought it would add to congestion. The provision of a roundabout has been investigated but it is considered to have too significant an impact on the existing mature trees along Woodlands Park Road. It also has a significant impact on the amount of developable land available and would therefore not be compliant with the Local Plan site allocation.

A roundabout would increase queueing and delay on Woodlands Park Road and would be excessive provision for the number of dwellings being proposed.

Instead the proposed ghost island priority T junction will provide traffic calming whilst the provision of dwellings on the southern side of the road will increase the drivers perception of Woodlands Park Road being a residential road which will also help reduce vehicular speeds.

Residents wanted to understand how the emergency access from Woodlands Park Avenue would be restricted to prevent it becoming a thoroughfare for all vehicles. The detailed design of the access junction will ensure restrictions are in place to only allow authorised emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists to enter the development at this entrance.

Parking.

Residents asked if adequate parking would be provided for new occupants within the site. The parking will be provided in accordance with RBWM's relevant parking standards in accordance with RBWM policy. Visitor parking will also be provided on site. It is therefore not anticipated that there will be overspill parking onto local residential roads.

Bus Route.

Recent changes to the number 7 bus route were highlighted, where the eastbound route no longer operates along the section of Woodlands Park Road past the site. Given this change, it is proposed to improve the westbound stop opposite Lowbrook Drive and consideration will be given to improving the stop at the northern end of Woodlands Park Avenue.

Active Travel.

Concern was expressed that the pavement on Woodlands Park Road is too narrow and is a safety issue for cyclists and pedestrians. It is proposed to widen the footway in the immediate vicinity of the site access where it is at its narrowest.

Residents would like to see additional crossing points on Woodlands Park Road and felt uncontrolled pedestrian crossings are not sufficient for safe pedestrian movement. Further work will be undertaken with the relevant authorities to achieve the best solution for pedestrian crossings on Woodlands Park Road to deliver safe, attractive and convenient crossing points.

Green Infrastructure.

Retention of the central tree belt, mature trees and hedgerows along the periphery of the site, strengthening the existing green infrastructure and creating opportunities for movement of local wildlife within and around the site was well received.

Open Space and Recreation.

The local stakeholders welcomed the opportunity for the site to deliver publicly accessible informal open space for both existing and new residents. The maintenance and management strategy of informal open space was raised.

There is a significant demand for allotments in the local area. Therefore the area identified for allotments in the eastern part of the site was well received and further suggestions have been received to increase its size.

Drainage.

Frequent flooding of the southern edge of the site in recent times has resulted in local residents questioning the drainage strategy for the proposal. Concerns were raised about the capacity of the newly proposed sustainable urban drainage systems and if the development proposes a risk of flooding into the existing neighbouring properties.

The proposed flood mitigation measures have been sized to accommodate the potential flood risk volumes. Therefore the risk has been reduced.

Housing.

Houses were preferred over flats. Multiple concerns regarding building heights, loss of privacy and overlooking for residents along Woodlands Park Avenue were received.

Current development parcels will be set back from the boundary with Woodlands Park Avenue through additional planting. This will minimise any perceived loss of privacy for existing residents.

Supporting Infrastructure.

Local residents raised concerns about how the addition of up to 300 homes would increase demand on local amenities such as education, health care and waste. The development will pay the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and make financial contributions towards upgrading and improving local infrastructure. CIL payments from the development will be spent on infrastructure improvements such as strategic highways improvement; enhancements to existing schools to enable the provision of additional school places; improvements to existing healthcare facilities; enhancements to existing libraries, social and community facilities and public realm.

Chapter Four. Understanding the Site.

This section illustrates an understanding of the site and immediate context representing the constraints and opportunities followed by the technical analysis underpinning the work undertaken to date.

4.1 Site Constraints.

Landscape Setting.

The site has a strong landscape character, its boundaries are well defined by hedgerows with mature trees, including significant large oak trees, and there is a strong tree belt dissecting the site from north to south. Ancient woodland is present on the south eastern boundary of the site. The tree survey has identified a number of category A and B trees that should be retained where possible within the Masterplan Framework.

The framework of woodland and tree belts connects to the wider landscape network to the south-east; comprising the interconnected Shrubbery Copse, Great Thrift Wood and Little Thrift Wood where The Cut watercourse meanders through.

Green Belt.

The central tree belt through the middle of the site defines the Green Belt edge, the tree belt and the land to the east of the trees falls within the Green Belt.

Heritage.

An initial heritage constraints and built environment assessment has been undertaken. The main heritage assets potentially affected are Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed), Barn, Horse engine, threshing house (Grade II listed); and the Garden Wall at Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed) located to the east of the site. Lillibrooke Manor is a medieval manor, the hall house dating from the 14th century.

The eastern part of the site forms part of Lillibrooke Manor's setting and the whole site is an original part of the manor's estate. The land south and west of Lillibrooke Manor is within the Green Belt and will provide open space in the Masterplan Framework.

Surrounding Uses.

Lillibrooke Manor is a popular wedding venue, there is potential for noise from events to extend into the site. A soil processing and turf business is located to the east of the site and occupies part of the site. Alexander Devine Children's Hospice is located to the south of the site. Consideration needs to be given to the privacy of the hospice and its gardens.

Utilities.

A twin 525mm diameter surface water sewer runs through the middle of the site from northwest to southeast. The sewer line requires an easement; however, there is potential for its route to be realigned to facilitate the layout of the Masterplan or for it to be retained and incorporated as part of the open space framework. The sewer is owned by Thames Water and as such, any works to the sewer, or within the permitted easement, will require approval from them accordingly.

Flooding and Drainage.

The majority of the site is within flood zone 1 with a very small proportion of the site in the south lying within flood zone 2. The western part of the site includes areas of low to medium overland (pluvial) flood risk. This risk is due to the natural topography of the site which currently causes water to flow along this boundary and as such, the development will need incorporate a flow path which allows water to pass through the site in a similar manner.



Constraints plan.

Key

- Site boundary
- Topography levels (AOD)
- Primary road
- Restricted junction visibility
- Public right of way
- Restricted byway
- Existing sewer line
- Views from hospice and gardens into the site
- Potential noise from events
- Listed building
- Green Belt
- Ancient woodland
- Category A tree
- Category B tree
- Root protection area
- Surface water flood depth 300-900mm
- Surface water flood depth below 300mm
- Floodzone 2
- Floodzone 3
- Land leased to South East Water Limited

4.2 Site Opportunities.

Enhanced Landscape and Open Space.

There is an opportunity to create a connected network of woodland, trees and wildlife habitats, both within and beyond the site forming a nature recovery network.

The central tree belt will define the Green Belt edge and open space to the east has the opportunity to form a natural interface to the countryside, respecting the setting of Lillibrooke Manor.

Open space within the Green Belt can deliver natural greenspace and space for recreation which will respond to the needs of the local community and new residents.

There is an opportunity to provide landscape screening on the southern boundary of the site providing privacy for Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.

There is potential to deliver a landscaped edge incorporating additional planting along the western site boundary ensuring privacy for the existing residents on Woodlands Park Avenue.

Natural Drainage Solutions.

The land gently slopes towards the south and the site provides the opportunity to work with the natural topography to alleviate surface water drainage issues. Drainage ponds and swales should be natural in character, integrated within the landscape proposals creating habitats for wildlife and contributing to bio-diversity net gain.

Access and Movement.

The primary access into the site will be from Woodlands Park Road. An emergency only access will be provided off Woodlands Park Avenue with restrictions in place to ensure access for only authorised emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Promote Sustainable Travel.

Existing bus stops are located within a 5 minute walk of the site providing direct links to the town centre and train station. There is an opportunity to improve the existing bus stops, following the re-routing of bus route 7, to encourage sustainable travel amongst residents.

Encourage Active Movement.

There is an opportunity to provide new footpaths and cyclepaths which connect to the existing network, creating links to the surrounding community facilities, to the wider countryside and to Ockwells Park.

New Homes.

Residential development will be located to the west of the central tree belt and new homes will be set within a rich landscape setting with a close connection to nature.



Opportunities plan.

Key

- Site boundary
- Primary road
- Opportunity to improve junction visibility
- Potential to enhance bus stops
- Public right of way
- Restricted byway
- Potential main vehicular access
- Emergency vehicle and pedestrian/cycle access only
- Potential new pedestrian crossing points
- Opportunity for landscape screening
- Area for residential development
- Multifunctional open space
- Woodland corridor
- Green/blue corridor including swales and attenuation

4.3 Technical Analysis.

Ecology.

The proposals have been informed by the emerging findings of an ecological desk study, a phase 1 habitat survey and ongoing specialist surveys for protected and notable species including bats, dormice, badgers and reptiles.

This work to date has shown that no statutory or non-statutory designations pertain to the site or adjacent land, and that the site largely comprises habitats of limited nature conservation interest in their own right being dominated in the west by arable farmland and in the east by species-poor agriculturally improved grassland and bare ground/ephemeral vegetation associated with a soil processing works. Where habitats of higher interest occur, these are generally located around the site/ field margins and include:

- A network of hedgerows around field boundaries;
- A belt of broadleaved plantation woodland running north to south through the centre of the site and along the north eastern site boundary; and
- An area of woodland, included on Natural England's ancient woodland inventory, is located on the south eastern site boundary.

Protected species recorded at the site to date include:

- Bats: The ongoing bat survey work has identified low-status bat roosts in three trees on the northern and southern site boundaries. The site is also used by relatively low numbers of bats for foraging and commuting.
- Badgers: One main badger sett is present within the site, located to the east of the central woodland belt.
- Reptiles: The site supports a population of Slow-worm, generally associated with rough grassland and tall ruderal habitats along woodland and field edges.
- No Dormice have been recorded at the site to date.

The emerging proposals show that it will be possible to retain key habitats within the scheme such as the woodland habitats crossing and bordering the site, including retention of the small area of ancient woodland affording it appropriate buffers in accordance with Natural England Standing Advice. Although the emerging proposals indicate that it will be possible to retain the confirmed bat roosts, the main Badger sett will be closed due to the unstable condition of the mound of debris in which it is located which presents a health and safety risk to existing and future site users. An artificial Badger sett is subsequently proposed in the south east of the site in association with the informal open greenspace with good connections to the wider countryside.

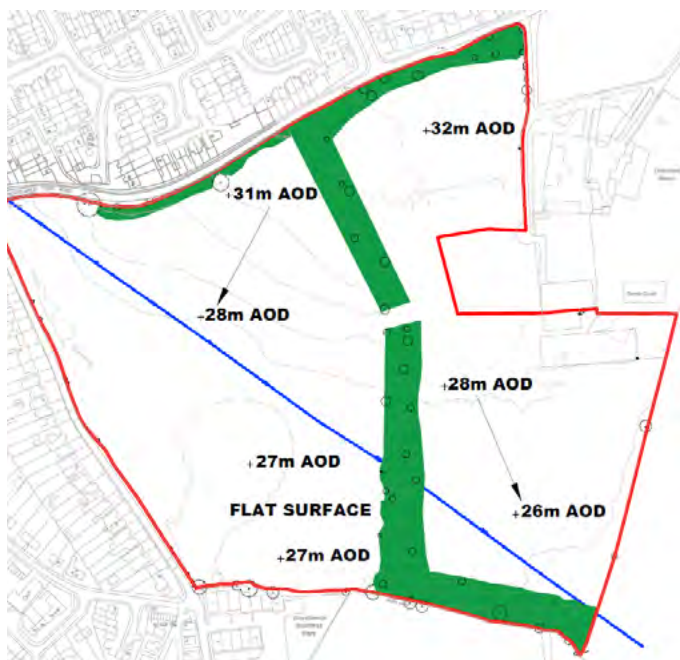
The landscape scheme for the proposed development includes opportunity to enhance existing and provide new green corridors comprising a variety of semi-natural habitats across the site. Additionally, the provision of substantial informal greenspace across the site, particularly in the east, will provide opportunity to create substantial areas of semi-natural habitat in areas currently dominated by habitats of limited ecological interest. Habitats of benefit to wildlife to be provided in this area could include a selection of species-rich meadow grassland, and native shrub and tree planting, complementing the areas of woodland within and adjacent to the site.

In addition the proposals provide opportunity to create ponds and other wetland habitats as part of the surface water drainage scheme.

Arboriculture.

The proposals have been informed by a BS5837 Tree Survey to identify constraints in relation to trees.

The emerging proposals seek to retain all high-quality trees and minimise loss of hedgerows. Where it is unavoidable that trees or hedgerows are lost, predominantly in association with access points, these will be mitigated by new tree and hedgerow planting appropriate to the local area.



Topography plan.

Topographical Survey.

A topographical survey was carried out in May 2022 to gather spatial information relating to the site and its natural and man-made land features.

The results show that the eastern field has a high level of 32m AOD and a low level of 26m AOD. The direction of the fall is from north to south. The survey shows that the western field has a high level of 31m AOD and a low level of 27m AOD. The direction of fall is from north-east to south-west.

The lowest lying land is located in the south-east corner of the site at c. 26m AOD. This will be the natural place for surface water to ultimately drain and offers opportunities for SUDS and wetland creation.



Utilities plan.

Key

- Thames Water foul water sewer
- Thames Water service sewer
- Communication
- Gas mains

Utilities.

Local utility record searches have been carried out to determine any constraints to development. The main utility constraints have been identified through this process.

A medium pressure gas main has been identified running along the northern boundary of the site with a Gas Governor located in the verge at the junction of Woodlands Park Avenue/Woodlands Park Road. In assessing highway access options for the site, this constraint has been considered.

A Surface Water sewer was identified as crossing the site diagonally from the north-west to the south-east of the site. A CCTV survey has identified this sewer as twin 525mm pipes.

Options to retain, divert or alter this sewer are being discussed with Thames Water and there may be opportunities for these improvements to contribute towards net-biodiversity gain.

Vodafone communication cables are located in Woodlands Park Road and will be considered in the site access design.

In addition to asset searches, enquiries with utility operators have been lodged in order to identify any reinforcement of key infrastructure that would be required to support the development.

Heritage.

An initial heritage constraints and built environment assessment has been undertaken. The main heritage assets potentially affected would be Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed), Barn, Horse engine, threshing house at Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed); and the Garden Wall at Lillibrooke Manor (Grade II listed). The original estate boundaries are intelligible to an informed eye, contributing towards significance. Alterations to the rural setting would have potential to affect significance. If the proposals are sympathetic to the setting of the listed buildings they should not be adversely affected.

Archaeology.

A desk based archaeological assessment has been undertaken. Within the general area a range of finds and features have been recorded from the prehistoric to the post-medieval periods.

Further information from field observation will be required to establish the archaeological potential of the site.

Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy.

Site specific flood data has been used to calculate overland flows coming into the site from Woodlands Park Road to the north, and Woodlands Park Avenue to the west. This data has then been modelled with consideration to the development proposals to create new overland flow paths through the site. This enables flows to continue to pass through the site without causing an increase in flood risk to the neighbouring properties as well as to the proposed development. The onsite drainage will utilise sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to convey, clean and attenuate the flows.

The site will discharge these flows at the current greenfield runoff rate, therefore not causing any increase in discharge downstream of the site. The SuDS features will be a mix of open topped swales, filter drains and attenuation ponds. These features will be soft features enabling them to become part of the wider landscaping design.

Highways Modelling.

The impact of the development on the local highway network will be assessed during both the AM and PM peak hours. This assessment will be undertaken for the site access junction and nearby off-site junctions using the industry standard computer modelling software.

To undertake this modelling, traffic flows will be obtained from RBWM's Strategic Traffic Model in order to assess the impact of the junction when combined with the other Local Plan sites and in particular the nearby South West Maidenhead SPD site. Where required, junction mitigation will be proposed to ensure that the cumulative impact of the development is minimised.

As per Policy IF1 within RBWM's Borough Local Plan, the proposals at Lillibrooke will help to deliver infrastructure to support the overall spatial strategy of the Borough, including making contributions to assist the delivery of the relevant infrastructure projects included in the IDP in the form of financial contributions.

Access and Movement.

Access options have been explored including appropriate locations and potential junction arrangements.

The provision of a roundabout has been investigated but it is considered to have too significant an impact on the existing mature trees along Woodlands Park Road. It also has a significant impact on the amount of developable land available and would therefore not be compliant with the Local Plan site allocation. A roundabout would increase queueing and delay on Woodlands Park Road and would be excessive provision for the number of dwellings being proposed. Instead the proposed ghost island priority T junction will provide traffic calming whilst the provision of dwellings on the southern side of the road will increase the drivers perception of Woodlands Park Road being a residential road which will also help reduce vehicular speeds.

A roundabout access arrangement was therefore discounted in favour of a priority T junction access.

Noise.

Noise surveys were carried out across the development site during August 2022. This month was selected to represent a reasonable worst case assessment of all noise sources with particular focus on peak recreational aviation activity from the nearby White Waltham Airfield. The airfield were consulted during the surveys and flight logs obtained in order to validate the noise model.

The results of the initial assessment conclude that the relevant internal and external noise criteria can be achieved for the new dwellings. The initial assessment also looks at the noise impacts from the development on nearby sensitive receptors. This assessment identified the sports pitches as a potential noise source for which mitigation measures will be explored.

Chapter Five.

Vision and design objectives.

This section conveys the vision for a new neighbourhood at Lilibrooke comprising exemplary new homes set within a naturally enriched landscape. The vision is founded on three key design objectives, Homes for the Future, Nature Recovery and Healthy Placemaking.

5.1 Vision.

The Vision for Lillibrooke is of a thriving new neighbourhood that accommodates exemplary new homes set within a naturally enriched landscape.

Its identity will be influenced by its strong connection to the surrounding established beautiful landscape and rich cultural heritage.

It will be a new place rooted in nature.

Living embedded within nature is beneficial to people's health and wellbeing. Lillibrooke will be a place at one with nature, where people can coexist with wildlife in a beautiful landscape setting.

Initial Concepts.

- A new community sensitively shaped by the rich landscape fabric of the site, integrating woodland, trees and hedgerows into a green network connecting Lillibrooke and the countryside.
- A connected place, providing links to surrounding amenities and the countryside via safe walking and cycling routes. Homes within walking distance to a bus route.
- A sensitive response to the existing development edge and heritage buildings at Lillibrooke Manor.
- Key existing landscape assets retained and reinforced by new planting to create green corridors linking town and countryside.
- A green edge which delivers accessible open space for both people and wildlife. Space for recreation, food growing, play and biodiversity.

The Vision is Founded on Three Key Design Objectives:

- Homes for the future
- Nature recovery
- Healthy placemaking

Homes for the Future.

Sustainable Identity.

Deliver sustainable homes for the future, low carbon and energy efficient. A place with a strong climate conscience where residents respect the environment they inhabit responding with changes in lifestyle.

Homes for everyone.

A variety of homes with a mix of sizes for all generations and life stages creating a balanced community, delivering much needed affordable homes for the younger generation, key workers and families.

Rooted in place.

Homes with character, referencing the local architectural style. Homes set within a landscape with a close connection to nature.

Nature Recovery.

Nature network.

Connect and enhance the existing natural qualities of the site - the established trees, woodland and hedgerows linking to the surrounding copses, woods and waterways, creating new nature networks.

Ecologically rich & biodiverse.

A nature recovery network linking protected habitats for wildlife, supporting increased biodiversity and creation of a rich landscape character incorporating woodland, wetlands and wildflower meadows. A thriving living landscape achieving bio-diversity net gain.

Defining the green belt edge.

Defining a robust natural interface to the countryside, respecting the setting of Lillibrooke Manor.

Healthy Placemaking.

Connected to context.

Active travel will be encouraged, linking to public footpaths and the cycle network; connecting to Cox Green and the wider countryside.

Recreation and activity.

Active greenspace for all the community; space for sports, a trim trail through woodland and adventure play. Wild open spaces for people to rest and relax.

Growing and gardens.

Food growing in allotments or community gardens to encourage cultivating, sharing and cooking locally grown food. A community coexisting with nature and wildlife, with a culture and ethos of healthy living.



Concept Plan

Chapter Six. Masterplan Framework.

This section illustrates how an understanding of the site and its opportunities has developed a series of design principles which will form the layers of the Masterplan Framework. The section concludes with the Masterplan Framework.

6.1 Design Principles.

The Masterplanning Framework.

This section of the SMD illustrates how an understanding of the site and its opportunities has developed a series of design principles which will form the layers of the Masterplan Framework. The design principles ensure the Masterplan Framework responds to and connects with the surrounding context, linking to Maidenhead and the wider countryside. These principles establish structuring elements for a new neighbourhood informed by its landscape setting whilst creating rich multi-functional accessible open space.

The section concludes with the Masterplan Framework.

Design Principles.

The following seven design principles illustrate the defining structuring elements underpinning the Masterplan Framework. The Masterplan Framework provides an illustrative masterplan which establishes a set of design principles to guide future design and engagement.

Existing Landscape Features.

The site is characterised by its strong landscape character. Mature trees and hedgerow line Woodlands Park Road, a dense central tree belt dissects the site from north to south and ancient woodland is located on the south-eastern site boundary.

Existing trees and hedgerow will be retained where possible contributing to the landscape setting of the new neighbourhood.



Existing landscape features.

Key

- Site boundary
- Green belt
- Existing tree clusters






Respect Heritage Assets.

The setting of the listed buildings at Lillibrooke Manor will be conserved and enhanced through the sensitive design of open space and landscaping on the eastern part of the site.



Respect heritage assets.

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Existing tree clusters
-  Existing buildings
-  Listed building
-  Indicative setting of listed buildings




Blue Network.

A blue network comprising blue/green wildlife corridors incorporating marshy wetland ponds, habitats for wildlife and boardwalks bringing people closer to nature. Addressing sustainable drainage and biodiversity in a natural environment.



Blue network.

Key

-  Site boundary
-  Wetland corridors forming the drainage strategy
-  SuDS and attenuation features

Connecting Landscape and Nature.

Mature woodland blocks and hedgerows within the site will be retained within an integrated green/ blue infrastructure network. Existing trees and woodland will be reinforced and enhanced to strengthen landscape and habitat connectivity, forming a nature recovery network.

Green spaces will be multi-functional in character, delivering informal areas of meadow, allotments, play areas and sports facilities to promote active lifestyles and enable people to connect and interact with nature.



Connecting landscape and nature.

Key

- - - Site boundary
- - -> Woodland link
- - -> Green/blue corridor

Living with Nature.

Homes will be located on the western part of the site, on land removed from the Green Belt, and set within a network of existing mature trees and hedgerows forming beautiful new green spaces.

The eastern part of the site will provide a series of natural green spaces for sport and active play, food production, water attenuation and biodiversity gain, easily accessible for new and existing residents to enjoy.



Living with nature.

Key

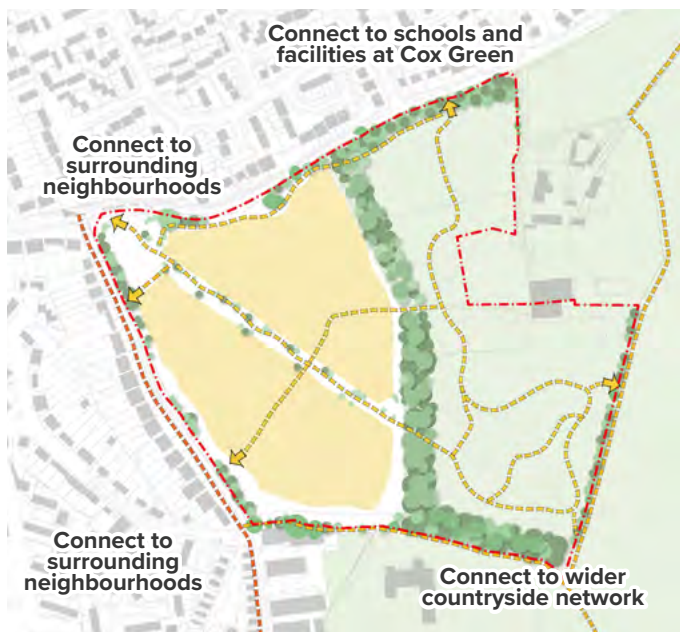
- - - Site boundary
- Residential parcels

Movement and connections. Foot and cycle.

The development will provide a walkable neighbourhood based around a clear movement framework with designated pedestrian and cycle routes to encourage active travel.

Safe crossing points will provide links to existing neighbourhoods and facilities at Cox Green and Woodlands Park.

Connections will be created to the surrounding public rights of way network providing convenient countryside links and access to Ockwells Park to the east.



Movement and connections, foot and cycle.

Key

- - - Site boundary
- - - Restricted byway
- - - Public right of way/footpaths/cyclepaths

Movement and connections. Car and bus.

The gateway to the neighbourhood will be provided from Woodlands Park Road with emergency vehicle and pedestrian access on to Woodlands Park Avenue. The exact design and location of the access points will need to be agreed following further assessment and discussion with RBWM.

Bus stop enhancements will encourage sustainable transport use.



Movement and connections, car and bus.

Key

- - - Site boundary
- - - Restricted byway
- - - Public right of way/footpaths
- ➔ Vehicular access
- ➔ Emergency vehicle and pedestrian/cycle access only
- ■ ■ Primary vehicular routes
- - - Bus route no.7
- Bus stop enhancements
- ➔ Opportunity to improve junction visibility

6.2 Masterplan Framework.



Masterplan Framework.

Key

- | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| ① | Homes for all | ⑧ | Sports and play hub |
| ② | Gateway to the neighbourhood | ⑨ | Play in the woods and wild gardens |
| ③ | Links and connections | ⑩ | Play along the way |
| ④ | Sustainable movement | ⑪ | Accessible for all |
| ⑤ | Moving in nature | ⑫ | Growing Locally |
| ⑥ | Nature recovery network | ⑬ | Safe movement |
| ⑦ | Wetlands and wildlife | ⑭ | Enhanced landscaping |
| | | ⑮ | Woodlands Park Avenue edge |

1. Homes for all.

Homes of all types and tenures, that people can afford. A strong sense of place, rooted and respectful of the natural and historic setting.

2. Gateway to the neighbourhood.

Primary vehicular access forming key gateway to the new neighbourhood.

3. Links and connections.

Emergency vehicle and pedestrian/cycle access only provided off Woodlands Park Avenue.

4. Sustainable Movement.

A walkable neighbourhood served by buses on Woodlands Park Road with a 15 minute journey time to Maidenhead Train Station. New pedestrian crossings and enhanced bus stops on Woodlands Park Road.

5. Moving in nature.

Network of pathways through diverse natural spaces, encouraging walking and cycling to the wider countryside, linking to rights of way.

6. Nature recovery network.

Existing woodlands and tree belts retained and enhanced; a rich habitat for nature and wildlife.

7. Wetlands and wildlife.

A generous blue/green wildlife corridor incorporating marshy wetland ponds, habitats for wildlife and boardwalks bringing people closer to nature. Addressing sustainable drainage and biodiversity in a natural environment.

8. Sports and play hub.

An area for sport and play within a woodland setting. Easily accessible promoting health and wellbeing through facilitating an active lifestyle outdoors in nature.

9. Play in the woods and wild gardens.

Focal natural play area for a range of ages and abilities that provides a fun, challenging and exciting space for children. Trim trail providing dispersed natural play and recreational opportunities.

10. Play along the way.

A trail of natural features such as tree trunks and stepping stones integrated within the green network encouraging children to play along the way in natural greenspaces.

11. Accessible for all.

Car parking serving sports provision, community orchards and growing gardens.

12. Growing locally.

Promoting a sense of community through collective food growing and sustainable food production at local allotments and orchards.

13. Safe movement.

Visibility to the right when turning out of Woodlands Park Avenue will be improved for safer vehicle and pedestrian movement.

14. Enhanced landscaping.

Reinforced planting on southern boundary to screen views from Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.

15. Woodlands Park Avenue edge.

Reinforced planting and landscaped edge on western boundary to screen views from existing properties on Woodlands Park Avenue. New homes set back behind a bio-diverse and richly planted landscape edge incorporating drainage swales. New homes served by private drives within the development to maintain the integrity of the landscaped edge. Connectivity to Woodlands Park Avenue provided via multiple pedestrian/cycle connections.

Chapter Seven. Masterplan Framework Design Objectives.

This section sets out how the Framework Masterplan has responded to the three Design Objectives; Homes for the Future, Nature Recovery and Healthy Placemaking.

7.1 Homes for the Future.

Sustainable Identity.

The land at Lillibrooke presents an opportunity to deliver truly sustainable and affordable homes for the future, low carbon and energy efficient. A place with a strong climate conscience where residents respect the environment they inhabit responding with changes in lifestyle, living with a close connection to nature.

The development will contribute to the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050 as set out in Policy SP2 of the BLP.

The proposed homes will be fully compliant with current Building Regulations, and be capable of being easily adapted to satisfy the needs of its residents through all stages of life. Construction materials will be responsibly and locally sourced where possible. The development will be designed in accordance with the Building for a Healthy Life design tool.

A Sustainability Statement will be submitted with the future planning application which will include further details of the proposals for sustainability.

Illustrative Environment and Climate Strategy.

- Landscape led approach
- Bio-diversity enhancements
- Active healthy lifestyle for residents
- Tree lined streets
- Fabric First Approach
- Street and Plot orientation
- Renewable energy (photovoltaic panels on available roof space)
- Waste Water Heat Recovery
- Mechanical Extract Ventilation
- Electric car charging points
- Attractive walking and cycling routes
- Investment in public transport
- Energy saving

- Water efficiency
- Homes with gardens
- Sustainable drainage systems
- Construction and domestic waste management

Homes for Everyone.

The land at Lillibrooke will deliver a distinct and inspiring place that provides new homes for local people. A wide spectrum of types, tenures and sizes will be provided from one bed to five bedroom homes. The majority of the homes will be two, three and four bedroom family homes with gardens.

The site will provide 40% affordable housing and 5% of market housing units for custom and self-build plots, subject to viability. The number of homes and housing density will be a product of achieving the appropriate mix of housing typologies and layout design which responds positively to both the site features and the surrounding context.

Lillibrooke will cater for all ages and different housing needs which in turn will create a mixed, balanced and socially sustainable community. New dwellings will be designed to be adaptable providing flexible, accessible and age friendly homes. Where viable, a proportion of the new homes will meet Building Regulation requirements for greater accessibility, in line with the BLP.

Rooted in place.

Lillibrooke will integrate into the surrounding neighbourhoods, new homes will front onto both Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue set behind mature landscape planting.

An understanding of the local architectural style and vernacular will influence the building design ensuring Lillibrooke references the unique features of its context whilst creating a strong identity for a new place set within nature.

7.2 Nature Recovery.

Nature Network.

The existing established trees, woodland and hedgerows will be retained forming a strong landscape setting. Protected ancient woodland on the southern edge of the site connects to the wider woodland network including Shrubbery Copse and Great Thrift Wood.

Ecologically Rich and Biodiverse.

The landscape structure of the site will be enhanced and landscaped edges established incorporating structural vegetation and ecotone creating habitat diversity.

Opportunities for movement of wildlife will be provided within and around the site through strengthening of existing treelines and hedgerow corridors and associated seminatural habitats alongside provision of new linear habitats including hedgerow, tree and scrub planting. The creation of beautiful open spaces and new wildlife habitats will deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain.

Proposed new planting will reinforce the existing treeline along the southern boundary of the site acting as screening for the Alexander Devine Children's Hospice.

A replacement badger sett will be provided in the south-eastern part of the site close to woodland and scrub screening providing a secluded and undisturbed habitat with links to the wider countryside.

The south-eastern part of the site will be a naturalistic open space incorporating swathes of meadow, native tree and shrub planting and damp marginal habitats associated with the sustainable urban drainage basins and wetland habitats.

New wetland habitats including ponds, ditches, swales, reedbeds and wet grasslands will be sympathetically designed and natural in character, as part of the surface water drainage strategy, complementing the existing aquatic habitats in the wider area. Biodiverse and wildlife friendly in design including gently shelving margins, areas of open water and native aquatic/marginal planting whilst providing opportunities for recreation.

Defining the Green Belt Edge.

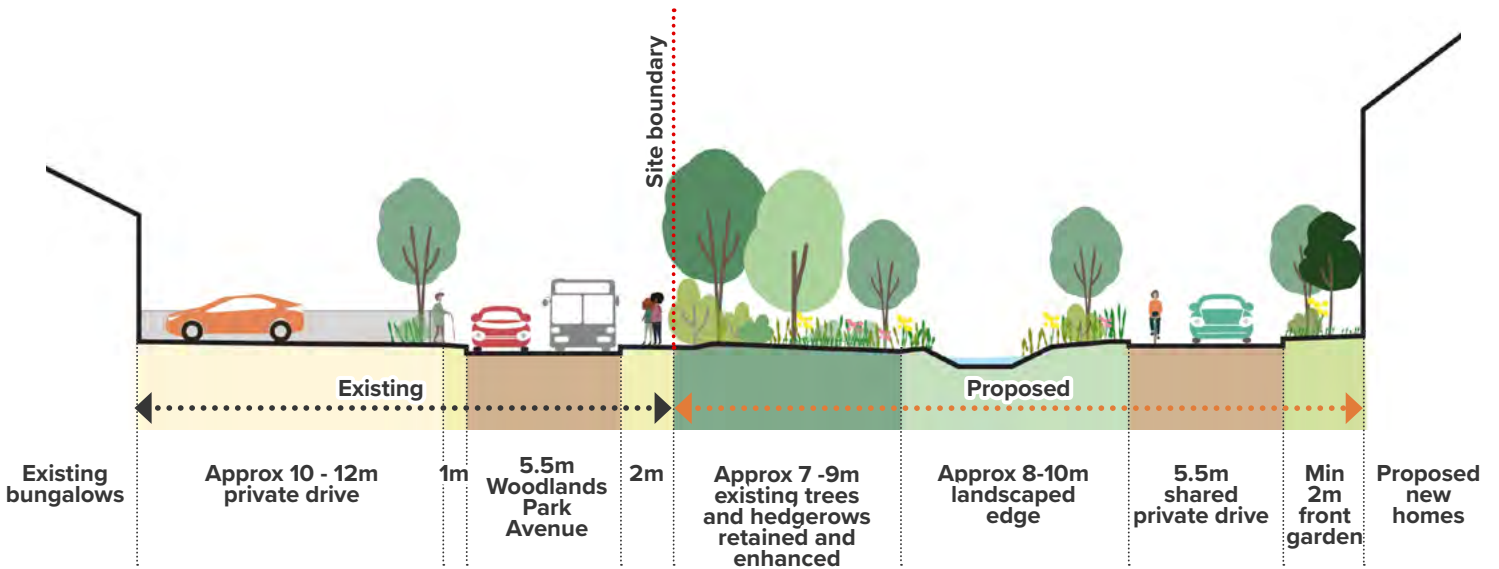
New tree planting along the eastern site boundary will reinforce layers of structural planting defining the green belt edge, respecting the setting of Lillibrooke Manor and connecting to the wider countryside.

Landscape Network.

A landscaped buffer along the western site boundary incorporates landscape enhancements, tree planting and sustainable urban drainage. It forms part of the wider landscape network delivering rich and biodiverse habitats and green spaces. Proposed homes are set back behind the landscaped buffer, which provides screening for the existing residents on Woodlands Park Avenue.



Key plan.



Rich and bio-diverse landscaped edge. Illustrative section through Woodlands Park Avenue.

7.3 Healthy Placemaking.

Connected to context.

Active and sustainable travel will be encouraged. All homes will be within 400 metres walking distance of a bus stop.

A network of public footpaths and cycle paths will connect to the surrounding neighbourhoods and wider countryside. New pedestrian crossing points across Woodlands Park Road will provide connectivity to nearby facilities and amenities.

Bus Stop Improvements.

The site is well located to existing bus services with bus route 7 providing a half hourly service to Maidenhead town centre. This bus service is accessible from stops on Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue in the immediate vicinity of the site.

It is therefore proposed to improve the bus stop on Woodlands Park Road by providing a bus shelter and additional space for waiting passengers at the westbound stop at the junction with Lowbrook Drive.





At the bus stop, a pedestrian crossing will also be provided to improve access to the bus stops.

Consideration will be given to relocating the former eastbound stop near Lowbrook Drive to a position which serves the re-routed bus route but this is subject to discussions with RBWM and the bus operator and confirmation that the amended trial route will be made permanent.



Movement plan.

Key

-  Bus stop
-  Bus route no.7
-  Pedestrian crossing
-  Footpath/cycle path link

Pedestrian and Cycle Improvements.

The development is well located to local shops, schools and employment opportunities with the majority of these amenities being accessed via Woodlands Park Road. Consequently, pedestrian and cycle permeability through the site will be considered in detail with pedestrian and cycle access being proposed at three locations on Woodlands Park Road namely at the site access, the north eastern corner of the site at the existing bus stop and at the north western corner at the junction with Woodlands Park Avenue. In addition to these access points, a further two pedestrian accesses are proposed along Woodlands Park Avenue to provide a link to the south west of Cox Green and White Waltham.

To assist pedestrians crossing Woodlands Park Road, crossings will be provided at each of the three access points outlined on the Movement Plan, with a realigned crossing on Woodlands Park Avenue at its junction with Woodlands Park Road to serve residents from the development. Further work will be undertaken with the relevant authorities to achieve the best solution for pedestrian crossings on Woodlands Park Road to deliver safe, attractive and convenient crossing points. The crossing type and location is subject to further discussion with RBWM during the planning application process.

Within the site, these accesses will be connected to provide pedestrian and cycle permeability throughout the site and connect the development to the existing Public Rights of Way along the eastern edge of the site and to the south of the development towards The Cut watercourse and the wider countryside.

In the vicinity of the site, the footpath on Woodlands Park Road is between 1 m and 1.5 m wide but the potential for widening the footway to 2m is limited due to the existing mature hedgerow.

The location where the footway is at its narrowest, however, is adjacent to the proposed site access junction and so it is proposed to widen the footway in this location from 1m to 1.5m to assist pedestrians.

Neighbourhood Street Network.

Streets will be designed to create a distinctive place with a clear identity and hierarchy. Street design will be informed by RBWM's Design Guide including guidance on street widths.

Street design will contribute to delivering character and placemaking as well as contributing to the wider nature recovery network through the provision of incidental green spaces and tree planting within the public realm.

Parking Provision.

The development will provide adequate parking provision and meet RBWM's relevant parking standards at the time of a planning application submission.



Walking and cycling connections.

Key

- - - - - Pedestrian and Cycle Desire Lines to Local Facilities
- - - - - National Cycle Network 4

Recreation and Activity.

A rich green infrastructure network will be designed to be natural and wild, encouraging people to explore the landscape on their doorstep, promoting healthy lifestyles through activity and play in nature.

The eastern part of the site provides open space for people to be active and relax in a natural and wild setting. Playing fields for a range of sports, such as junior football are proposed in the north-eastern part of the site, located to be easily accessible to the surrounding neighbourhoods and existing residents.

A destination playspace and trim trails encouraging running and outdoor exercise will be integrated within the natural parkland setting to the south.

Natural play and traditional door step play areas will be integrated within the green network forming the landscape setting of the new homes. Play along the way within the blue/green corridors will allow children to explore and play within a natural setting.

The overall play strategy for the site will be developed to meet Fields In Trust standards ensuring all new residents are within close proximity to play areas. The location and design of natural play areas will be explored in further detail through the preparation of subsequent planning application(s).

Growing and gardens.

Community growing gardens are proposed in the south-eastern part of the site adjacent to Lillibrooke Manor. The provision of allotment plots will give existing local residents and the new community the opportunity for food growing.

Further engagement with RBWM will be undertaken to agree an open space package that works towards meeting the local need for allotments. There is an aspiration to provide both standard and mini allotment plots providing a range of sizes.

Orchard planting will form part of the community growing gardens including fruit trees as part of a productive landscape. Orchard trees will link to the wider nature recovery network, linking from the central tree belt to the wider woodland networks creating new wildlife habitats. The orchards and gardens will include nectar and pollen-rich and fruit and nut-producing species to benefit a range of species including birds, invertebrates, bats and foraging badgers.

The allotments and community orchard will be accessible to all by walking and cycling and served by an adjacent car park to enable transport of bulky gardening equipment.

The allotments and orchards will form part of the natural wild gardens creating opportunities for cultivating and sharing locally grown food as part of a healthy lifestyle connected to nature.

Chapter Eight. Summary.

This section concludes the SMD providing reference to how the site should meet the requirements as set out in the BLP Site Allocation Proforma, the scheme benefits and the next steps for the delivery of the development including the planning timeline.

8.1 Site Requirements.

Site Allocation Requirements.

The development of the site should meet 21 requirements as set out in the BLP Site Allocation Profoma. Each requirement has been categorised under the Masterplan Framework Objectives opposite and the reader is signposted to the relevant section of this SMD which addresses each requirement.

Further detail and information on how these requirements will be met will be provided as part of a future planning application.

Homes for the Future.

- Sustainable Identity
- Homes for everyone
- Rooted in place

The site specific requirements which are met within the Homes for the Future Framework Objectives are:

- Provide all housing to the west of the existing central tree belt in order to create a defensible boundary to the urban edge. See Section [6.1](#) and [6.2](#)
- Provide family housing with gardens. See Section [7.1](#)
- Provide 40% affordable housing. See Section [7.1](#)
- Provide 5% of market housing units for custom and self build plots (fully serviced). See Section [7.1](#)
- Provide appropriate mitigation measures to address the impact of noise and air quality so as to protect residential amenity. See Section [4.3](#). Detail to be provided as part of a future planning application.
- Front onto both Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue. See Section [7.1](#)
- Development will contribute to the target of net zero carbon emissions. See section [7.1](#)

Nature Recovery.

- Nature network
- Ecologically rich and biodiverse
- Defining the green belt edge

The site specific requirements which are met within the Nature Recovery Framework Objectives are:

- Retain the existing central tree belt in the centre of the site running north to south. See Section [4.2](#) and [4.3](#)
- Create a strong high quality green and blue infrastructure framework across the whole site to deliver biodiversity, health and wellbeing benefits, recreation, food production and leisure opportunities. The central tree belt and the public open spaces to the east will form the focus for the Green Infrastructure network on the site. See Section [6.1](#), [6.2](#), [7.2](#) and [7.3](#)
- Retain valuable trees at site boundaries and enhance biodiversity across the site. See Section [4.2](#), [4.3](#) and [7.2](#)
- Provide appropriate edge treatment and transition from the strategic public open spaces to the countryside. See Section [6.1](#), [6.2](#) and [7.2](#)
- Be designed sensitively to conserve and enhance the setting of nearby Listed Building. See section [6.1](#) and [6.2](#)
- Address potential risks to ground water and surface water flooding issues. See Section [4.2](#), [4.3](#)
- Consider flood risk as part of a Flood Risk Assessment as the site is partially located within Flood Zone 2 and larger than one hectare. See Section [4.2](#), [4.3](#)
- Demonstrate the sustainable management of surface water runoff through the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in line with policy and best practice; any proposed surface water discharge must be limited to greenfield runoff rates. See Section [4.2](#), [4.3](#), [6.1](#), [6.2](#) and [7.2](#)

- Undertake a minerals assessment to assess the viability and practicality of prior extraction of the minerals resource, as the site falls within a Minerals Safeguarding Area. Detail to be provided as part of a future planning application.

Healthy Placemaking.

- Connected to context
- Recreation and activity
- Growing and gardens

The site specific requirements which are met within the Healthy Placemaking Framework Objectives are:

- Provide a mix of residential, strategic public open space and sporting hub for western Maidenhead. See Section [6.2](#) and [7.3](#)
- Limit development on the eastern side of the central tree belt to the provision of facilities associated with delivery of the strategic open space and sports pitches. See Section [6.2](#) and [7.3](#)
- Provide strong pedestrian and cycle connectivity throughout the housing area and into and through the strategic public open spaces on the eastern side of the central tree belt. Provide strong linkages into surrounding urban and countryside areas including connections to the Public Rights of Way network. See Section [7.3](#)
- Ensure that the development is well served by public bus routes/demand responsive transport/other innovative public transport solutions, with appropriate provision for new bus stop infrastructure, such that the bus is an attractive alternative to the private car for local journeys, including local railway stations. See Section [7.3](#)

- Develop and implement a robust residential travel plan to manage travel to and from the site and reduce instances of single-occupancy car trips, including a car club for residents - Detail to be prepared as part of a future planning application.
- Place sports pitches in a woodland setting. See Section [6.2](#) and [7.3](#)
- Minimise the visual impacts of any recreational, sporting or leisure built form on the eastern side of the central tree belt, including sports pitch lighting.
- Open space and play strategy to be approved by RBWM as part of a future planning application.

8.2 Benefits.

- 40% of the new homes will be on-site affordable homes for local people on low incomes, first-time buyers and key workers.
- Approximately 300 high quality low carbon homes.
- Provision of plots available for custom and self-build.
- Beautiful open spaces and new wildlife habitats creating at least a 10% net gain in biodiversity.
- New sports pitches and allotments.
- Active and informal open spaces to encourage active lifestyles and peoples enjoyment of nature.
- Investment in public transport and other facilities in Cox Green.
- Network of pedestrian and cycle routes providing attractive routes to key facilities and links to the countryside.
- Enhanced surface water attenuation to reduce off-site flood risk.
- Improvement of the junction of Woodlands Park Road and Woodlands Park Avenue to enhance safety.

8.3 Next Steps.

Timeframe for Next Steps/Delivery of Development.

Through the preparation of a planning application(s) for the development, the design team will proactively engage with the Council and the Councils technical Officers to agree and finalise more detailed parameters for the site. Following this process, there will be further public consultation engagement to seek community feedback on the final proposals, before the planning application is submitted in March 2023.

The planing application will be supported by a suite of technical assessments and information to demonstrate compliance with site specific policy requirements and the BLP.

Planning Timeline.

Draft Stakeholder Masterplan Preparation and Consultation. May to December 2022.

Stakeholder Masterplan submitted to RBWM for Cabinet Approval. December 2022.

Pre-application Engagement with RBWM. December 2022 to January 2023.

Pre-Planning Application Public Consultation. February 2023.

Submission of Planning Application. March 2023.

End of Document.

Report Title:	Windsor Castle Hill Public Realm Improvements
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 26 January 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Andrew Durrant, Executive Director – Place, Chris Joyce, Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth
Wards affected:	Eton and Castle

www.rbwm.gov.uk



REPORT SUMMARY

In July 2020 the Council secured financial approval from the Berkshire Local Transport Body, which secured over £1.5M of funding from the Local Growth Fund to deliver improvements to the public realm and wayfinding in Windsor Town Centre. The project is intended to deliver an improved pedestrian experience around Windsor Castle and encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more in the wider town centre.

The proposals directly support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, supporting the economic objectives of the ‘Inspiring Places’ objective and ‘Quality Infrastructure’ priority. The project is explicitly referenced as a goal within the plan: “Deliver the Windsor Public Realm project, transforming Castle Hill into a pedestrian first zone, and growing the local economy and increasing numbers of local jobs.”

The scheme is also an integral part of improving Windsor’s public realm over the foreseeable future and is referenced within the emerging ‘Vision for Windsor’ project improving access, the quality of place within the Town and ultimately driving our visitor economy.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves the delivery of the Castle Hill Public Realm Improvements in Windsor.**

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

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Approve delivery of the scheme	This would support the achievement of the approved Corporate Plan goal as well as the wider objectives and priorities.
This is the recommended option	

Option	Comments
Do Nothing	This would not achieve the corporate plan goal and would require the funding from the LEP to be returned.

- 2.1 The improvement works on Windsor Castle Hill forms part of the approved RBWM Windsor Visitor Economy business case approved by the LEP and the Borough in July 2020. This was structured in line with the five-case model with strategic, economic, financial, commercial and management cases showing the benefits to the town and its residents and businesses.
- 2.2 The overall case relates to investing in Windsor to improve the visitor experience thereby encouraging dwell time and increasing engagement with the local economy. The result is anticipated to be an increase in the amount of visitor spend within the town, benefiting businesses and the local economy.
- 2.3 The overall business case allows for a £2.4m investment across Castle Hill and wider wayfinding around the town centre to improve pedestrian flow. At the time of the submission the business case had a high value for money benefit/cost ratio (2.32). Whilst the after-effects of the Covid pandemic may impact on this, there continues to be a strong case to bring this project to fruition. It has been included as one of the 50 corporate goals that make up the Corporate Plan demonstrating its importance to the Borough in its efforts to create a sense of place in town centres.
- 2.4 This project also forms an integral part of improving Windsor's public realm and is referenced within the emerging 'Vision for Windsor' project improving access, the quality of place within the Town and ultimately driving our visitor economy. Future 'Vision for Windsor' ideas and projects can build on this scheme, hopefully resulting in increased benefits for the town and its residents and businesses.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The works are scheduled to take place between February 2023 and December 2023 with a detailed break down of the phases in section 9 below. The works will be delivered through the existing Highways Contract, through our delivery partner Volker Highways.
- 3.2 At this time there is also a project in place to deliver a Jubilee fountain at the foot of Castle Hill and this will be integrated into the work taking place for this Castle Hill project. The location of the fountain at the North-West end of Castle Hill allows for the footway to be prepared for the fountain installation and then made good with the remainder of the footway post-installation.
- 3.3 Given the importance of the summer tourist period to the Windsor economy, the programme includes a 2-month break across July and August. This allows for more space for pedestrians to dwell in this area, reduces the visual impact caused by the temporary works and saves the project time and money as there is less lost time when the daily guard change takes place. As the detail of other

major events become apparent, the project will liaise with the ceremonial events team and the town manager to ensure the works can be managed alongside these events

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 The business case approved by the Berkshire Local Transport Body demonstrates a high value for money. This has been assessed through the Local Enterprise Partnership. There is an approved budget within the Council's Capital Programme which has £1.8m available to deliver the proposals, approved by Full Council in February 2022.
- 4.2 The project is estimated to cost £1.53m through direct costs with Volker Highways, with anticipated project management and design support costs of £70k. The remaining £200k is set aside for contingency. Traditionally contingency funding would be 20-25% of the delivery costs. Having worked closely with VH through early contractor involvement, it has helped to reduce the cost risks and therefore the slightly lower contingency figure is considered appropriate.
- 4.3 If all or part of the contingency is not required at the end of the project, the monies will be shown as an underspend. The project spend will be carefully monitored through the usual capital forecasting and reporting processes.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The project team at the council has worked closely with the procurement team to determine the right approach to procuring the project to ensure good value for money for the council. Following an initial engagement with Volker Highways, council officers worked with Procurement to run a fixed-price tender process in early 2022. Unfortunately, due to high inflation expectations, none of the 6 interested parties chose to submit a bid.

- 5.1 In September 2022, Volker Highways were re-engaged to determine whether a feasible programme timeframe and cost could be agreed. Both were provided in November 2022 with improvements and costs savings agreed in December 2022. The current proposal will result in the timely delivery of the project by Christmas 2023 and within the budget available. Our existing framework agreement with Volker Highways will provide the contractual basis for this delivery with client-side project management provided by in-house resource.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A project risk register will be put in place to manage the operational and project delivery risks. The key strategic risk is a delay to the delivery programme which could put at risk the funding from the Local Enterprise Partnership:

Table 3: Impact of risk and mitigation

Threat or risk	Impact with no mitigations in place or if all mitigations fail	Likelihood of risk occurring with no mitigations in place.	Mitigations currently in place	Mitigations proposed	Impact of risk once all mitigations in place and working	Likelihood of risk occurring with all mitigations in place.
There is a risk that due to delays to the delivery programme because of unforeseen issues which could result in the funding from the LEP being withdrawn.	Major 3	Medium	Early contractor involvement in the project to produce robust programme and 3-month contingency post completion to funding deadline	Dedicated client project management resource to work with delivery partners. Programme assurance oversight from senior managers	Major 3	Low

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

7.1 Equalities. An Equality Impact Assessment is available as Appendix A. The EQIA screening has not identified any significant issues that need to be addressed.

7.2 Climate change/sustainability. The proposals are not expected to have a major impact on carbon emissions or the natural environment. The scope of works has considered where possible to re-use materials.

7.3 Data Protection/GDPR. The project is not expected to require the processing of personal data and therefore no issues are expected.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 A public consultation was completed in December and January 2020/2021 during which time an online survey was accessible to the public. Officers supported by colleagues from the Project Centre team hosted virtual consultation events for councillors and members of the public. The result of the consultation was that two-thirds of respondents supported the proposed design to make Castle Hill a pedestrian-first location with vehicular access restricted.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

9.1 Work is proposed to take place across 4 phases commencing February 2023:

- Phase 1a and b, the northern (castle) side of Castle Hill, will run from March to May 2023 with the plan to retain and make good the existing yorkstone pavement and replace the road surface with a granite block

finish. Access to Henry VIII gate will be retained as will one-way traffic on Castle Hill.

- Phase 2, the southern (shops) side of Castle Hill, will commence on completion of Phase 1a/b anticipated in May to July 2023. As per the design this will see the introduction of a far wider pavement with new yorkstone paving as well as new high velocity vehicle mitigation (HVM) measures and a gate.
- A summer pause is being aimed for within the programme with, ideally, no works taking place during July and August 2023.
- Phase 3, junction of Castle Hill and St Albans Street, will commence in September completing on November and consist of further granite laying, the introduction of semi-permanent HVM bollards and a raised crossing point to the Castle visitor entrance.
- Phase 4 will commence on completion of Phase 3 and consists of the completion of pedestrian walkways either side of the carriageway down St Albans Street. Completion is planned pre-Christmas 2023.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 This report is supported by one appendix:

- Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment

11. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Statutory Officer (or deputy)</i>	
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	05/01/23	09/01/23
Emma Duncan	Director of Law, Strategy & Public Health/ Monitoring Officer	06/01/23	06/01/23
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)		
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	05/01/23	06/01/23
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>	
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager		
<i>Mandatory:</i>		<i>Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>	
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer		
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Tony Reeves	Interim Chief Executive		
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	05/01/22	05/01/22
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of People Services		

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transportation.	Yes
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Key decision First entered into the Cabinet Forward Plan: 16/12/22	No	No

Report Author: Tim Golabek, Service Lead Transport
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Equality Impact Assessment

For support in completing this EQIA, please consult the EQIA Guidance Document or contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

1. Background Information

Title of policy/strategy/plan:	Windsor Castle Hill Public Realm Improvements
Service area:	Infrastructure, Sustainability and Economic Growth
Directorate:	Place

Provide a brief explanation of the proposal:

- What are its intended outcomes?
- Who will deliver it?
- Is it a new proposal or a change to an existing one?

The proposals are intended to improve the visitor experience in Windsor through improvements to the public realm around Windsor Castle. This should make it safer, more enjoyable and more accessible for residents as it includes elements such as new dropped kerbs and raised tables to improve accessibility for those with mobility difficulties. The proposals will be delivered by RBWM in Partnership with its partner Volker Highways.

2. Relevance Check

Is this proposal likely to directly impact people, communities or RBWM employees?

- If No, please explain why not, including how you've considered equality issues.
- Will this proposal need a EQIA at a later stage? (for example, for a forthcoming action plan)

The proposals will change the way in which pedestrians access Windsor Castle or the town centre and are expected to improve conditions for all pedestrians using the facilities. In developing the design, appropriate consideration was given to all users and application of appropriate design standards adopted. A full public consultation on the proposals did not highlight any concerns from an equalities perspective.

If 'No', proceed to 'Sign off'. If unsure, please contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

3. Evidence Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

Who will be affected by this proposal?

For example, users of a particular service, residents of a geographical area, staff

The changes will transform the way Castle Hill is set up with the area being given a pedestrian-first feel. This will impact on all users including visitors, residents and local businesses (both operators and customers). The removal of through traffic will have a positive impact on more vulnerable road users.

Among those affected by the proposal, are protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership) disproportionately represented?

For example, compared to the general population do a higher proportion have disabilities?

Castle Hill is a location open to all and whilst there is a greater than normal number of visitors due to the appeal of the Castle, there is no evidence to suggest any protected characteristics are disproportionately represented.

During the design phase, particular engagement took place with the local Disability and Inclusion forum to incorporate their views into the design work. This has resulted in the scheme including appropriate kerbing, dropped kerbs and tactile pavement to the benefit of users with disabilities.

What engagement/consultation has been undertaken or planned?

- How has/will equality considerations be taken into account?
- Where known, what were the outcomes of this engagement?

A consultation took place in December 2020/January 2021. During this time the consultation had to take place virtually and this was through an online platform survey and Teams based consultation event with residents and business made aware of the consultation through leaflets and social media. Over two-thirds of responses received were in favour of the scheme.

What sources of data and evidence have been used in this assessment?

Please consult the Equalities Evidence Grid for relevant data. Examples of other possible sources of information are in the Guidance document.

The initial design phase took into account existing and potential future users of Castle Hill. A traffic survey took place to understand the existing flow of traffic helping inform how the design may impact the future look and feel of the area.

The consultation was open to all residents and businesses who were made aware through social media and letter drop communications. Comments received were reviewed and where relevant, alterations to the scheme design made though these were minimal.

4. Equality Analysis

Please detail, **using supporting evidence**:

- How the protected characteristics below might influence the needs and experiences of individuals, in relation to this proposal.
- How these characteristics might affect the impact of this proposal.

Tick positive/negative impact as appropriate. If there is no impact, or a neutral impact, state 'Not Applicable'

More information on each protected characteristic is provided in the Guidance document.

	Details and supporting evidence	Potential positive impact	Potential negative impact
Age	Accessibility improvements as road will be pedestrian-first	Yes	
Disability	The scheme includes the installation of dropped kerbs, tactile paving and raised tables to enable safe crossing.	Yes	
Sex	Not applicable		
Race, ethnicity and religion	Not applicable		
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment	Not applicable		
Pregnancy and maternity	The scheme includes the installation of dropped kerbs, tactile paving and raised tables to enable safe crossing.	Yes	
Marriage and civil partnership	Not applicable		
Armed forces community	Not applicable		

Socio-economic considerations e.g. low income, poverty	Not applicable		
Children in care/Care leavers	Not applicable		

5. Impact Assessment and Monitoring

If you have not identified any disproportionate impacts and the questions below are not applicable, leave them blank and proceed to Sign Off.

<p>What measures have been taken to ensure that groups with protected characteristics are able to benefit from this change, or are not disadvantaged by it?</p> <p>For example, adjustments needed to accommodate the needs of a particular group</p>
<p>The scheme took the opportunity to build on design standards by engaging with the local Disability and Inclusion Forum to further inform the appropriate solutions for users with disabilities. This was then confirmed during the consultation phase.</p>
<p>Where a potential negative impact cannot be avoided, what measures have been put in place to mitigate or minimise this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For planned future actions, provide the name of the responsible individual and the target date for implementation.
<p>How will the equality impacts identified here be monitored and reviewed in the future?</p> <p>See guidance document for examples of appropriate stages to review an EQIA.</p>
<p>The council has standard channels of reporting faults through the RBWM website. Residents can make service requests if further steps are required and ultimately make use of our complaints process if needed</p>

6. Sign Off

Completed by: Tim Golabek and Chris Joyce	Date: 12/01/23
Approved by: Ellen McManus-Fry	Date: 17/01/23

If this version of the EQIA has been reviewed and/or updated:

Reviewed by: Ellen McManus-Fry	Date: 17/01/23
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Report Title:	Corporate Plan: Annual Report, changes in context and related proposals for revised Equality objectives, and amendments to the Corporate Plan
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Johnson, Leader of the Council
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 26 January 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Rebecca Hatch, Head of Strategy Rachel Kinniburgh, Service Lead for Strategy, Policy and Performance
Wards affected:	All

REPORT SUMMARY

This report sets out a Year 1 Progress Report (Appendix A), providing an overview of key achievements and activities in Year 1 of the Corporate Plan (November 2021 – November 2022). The report also details key changes in context and new evidence and insights generated since the Corporate Plan’s adoption. This has informed a review of the Corporate Plan priorities and goals. Cabinet is asked to consider a set of proposed amendments to the Corporate Plan to ensure that it remains appropriate and responsive to our changing operating context.

A review of these changes in context and new evidence and insights has also informed the development of a revised set of equality objectives for the council, designed to mutually reinforce the Corporate Plan. These objectives are proposed for agreement by Cabinet and subsequent publication in order to meet the council’s Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves the Year 1 Progress Report for publication, as set out at Appendix A.**
- ii) Notes the changes in context set out in this report (section 2.4 – 2.9) and new evidence and insights generated in 2022 (Appendix B Inequalities Project Phase 1 findings and Appendix C Census 2021 Insights).**
- iii) Agrees the proposed revisions to the Corporate Plan, summarised in table 1 below, and noting the further detail included at Appendix D.**
- iv) Agrees the proposed Equality Objectives and notes the update on work undertaken to strengthen equalities across the council (Appendix E).**
- v) To agree to include care experience as a protected characteristic within Equality Impact Assessments, in recognition of our particular responsibility to consider the needs of children in care and care leavers, as their corporate parents.**

Table 1: Summary of proposed revisions to the Corporate Plan

Proposed new goal	Recommendation
<p>1. Help to reduce the impact of cost of living rises on our residents, with a focus on those most at risk, through targeted financial and practical support.</p>	<p>Include this as a new goal within the Corporate Plan, reflecting the council's focus on activities to support residents and mitigate impacts of cost of living rises. (This goal is also one of the proposed Equality Objectives.)</p>
<p>2. Ensure that every child in the borough is able to experience positive outcomes in childhood, through healthy living, readiness to learn, and positive parenting, with support targeted at those most at risk.</p>	<p>Include this as a new goal within the Corporate Plan, reflecting the council's increased focus on prevention, and the importance of childhood to future outcomes. Incorporate the existing goal to reduce childhood obesity as a key performance metric under this goal. (This goal is also one of the proposed Equality Objectives.)</p>
<p>3. Strengthen community-based, preventative support for adults with additional needs through increased, and more effective, partnership working and embedding asset-based models of care.</p>	<p>Include this as a new goal within the Corporate Plan, reflecting the council's increased focus on prevention, the importance of working in partnership within the community, and of asset-based models of care. This goal replaces the two existing goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 70% of recipients are satisfied with the preventative and/or community-based interventions provided by the council • A minimum of three pilots of new Technology Enabled Care (TEC) delivered within 12 months
<p>4. Facilitate economic growth within key sectors and increase ambition on economic inclusion, through a renewed relationship with businesses, supporting residents into work, and maximising social value.</p>	<p>This new goal reflects the enhancement of our approach to economic development over the past year, the changing economic and labour market landscape, and the potential opportunities offered through the devolution agenda. This goal incorporates the following existing goals, which will be included as key measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the number of new and surviving businesses within the borough, including the expansion of creative industries. • A decrease in the claimant count back to pre-pandemic levels by 2023, with a focus on supporting increased employment rates among young people and people with disabilities. • An increase in the number of apprenticeships in the borough by 10%.
<p>5. Continue to play a leadership role in placemaking, focused on our key town centres: including the</p>	<p>This goal reflects our increased focus and ambition on placemaking, on supporting thriving town centres, and the importance of including our residents, businesses and partners in shaping the future of our places. This change reflects our refreshed approach</p>

<p>re-development of Maidenhead, a new vision for Windsor and delivery of the Ascot High Street Project and associated Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).</p>	<p>and responds to new developments including the opening of the Elizabeth Line.</p> <p>This goal incorporates the following existing goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in footfall in Windsor between 2021-2026, and in Maidenhead, following its regeneration. • Undertake a master planning exercise for central Windsor by 2023 and submit a business case for government funding for identified improvements along Ascot High Street.
<p>6. Embed accessibility into the planning and design of our streetscape, buildings and public spaces</p>	<p>Include this as a new goal, aligned with its inclusion within our revised Equality objectives. This goal responds to the increasing numbers of older people in the borough (as evidenced through the 2021 Census), and findings from the Residents Survey that highlight some of the challenges faced by residents with a disability, in addition to feedback from the Disability and Inclusion Forum, highlighting accessibility issues and their impacts.</p>

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

Options

Table 2: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
<p>Accept the recommendations in this report.</p> <p>This is the recommended option</p>	<p>The Corporate Plan is an integral part of a robust governance framework and sets out the council's priorities for the next 5 years, helping to guide the allocation of resources and energies on the delivery of change where it is required. It is good practice for any organisation to review their priorities on a regular basis, and particularly when there have been substantial changes in the operating context, as over the past 12 months.</p> <p>The council otherwise has a legal obligation to publish equality objectives at least every 4 years under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.</p>
<p>Not accept the recommendations in the report.</p>	<p>To not accept the recommendations in this report would mean that the Corporate Plan was not responding to changes in the internal, external and financial context, and reflecting the new evidence available. This would limit the council's ability to prioritise effectively. Not publishing a new set of Equality Objectives would mean that we were failing to meet our legal duty to do so.</p>

Year 1 Progress against the Corporate Plan

- 2.1 The Corporate Plan is a key component of good governance and recognises that the council has to make choices about where it focuses its resources. Adopted in November 2021, the Plan sets out three overarching objectives – “Thriving communities”, “Inspiring places” and “A council trusted to deliver its promises” – and 50 related goals for achievement in the period 2021-2026. These goals

intentionally do not cover the full range of activities and services provided by the council, rather they are focused on addressing the key challenges identified and where the council needs to drive change. The Plan emerged from an evidence-base and was shaped by consultation in Summer 2021 and a focused “challenge session” by the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel in October 2021.

- 2.2 Performance and progress against the Plan’s goals is routinely published to the public-facing [Citizens’ Portal](#) in the interests of transparency and accountability. Performance reports are shared with the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel on a regular basis, reporting by exception.
- 2.3 Appendix A sets out the Year 1 Progress Report, providing an overview of key achievements and activities in Year 1 of our Corporate Plan (November 2021 – November 2022), proposed for publication with Cabinet’s agreement. It is to be noted that the Corporate Plan focuses on delivery over a 5-year period, and therefore this Year 1 Progress Report reflects key achievements over the first year of the Plan. The council is also monitoring progress and impact across the longer five-year timeframe. Further prioritisation and sequencing of the delivery of activities to achieve our goals will be undertaken in early 2023.

Key changes in context since the Corporate Plan’s adoption

- 2.4 The council’s operating context has changed substantially over the course of the year. In particular, rises in the cost of living have caused challenges for our residents, staff, businesses and for the organisation as a whole. The wider economic climate has caused serious impacts for our 2023-24 budget and longer-term financial sustainability. Key changes in context are summarised below. These inform our review of the Corporate Plan and its priorities:
- 2.5 **Cost of living rises:** Rises in the cost of living are affecting householders across the UK, due to a combination of factors including: rises in energy bills, inflation causing increases in prices for necessities like food and fuel; and increased interest rates. The economic situation has been exacerbated by the Russian-Ukraine war, and following the pandemic. Rising costs affect all residents, but the impacts are greatest on those who are already struggling financially. Our voluntary and community sector partners are seeing increasing demand for food banks, debt advice and wider support services, and health partners are severely over-stretched. Cost of living rises are causing anxiety and stress for residents and can contribute to a range of negative impacts across health, housing, and relationships.
- 2.6 The more challenging economic climate also affects businesses, through increased costs of labour, materials and borrowing, and a different and more uncertain context for investment decisions. It presents challenges for central government when setting policy on economic growth. These external challenges make it more important for the council to present a strong case for investment in the borough, including through leading the development of a compelling devolution proposal for Berkshire. It drives us to strengthen our relationship with businesses – both to attract and support the expansion of key sectors, such as film and life sciences – and to work in stronger partnership with those businesses already located here.

- 2.7 **Financial challenges:** A number of key financial challenges are impacting on the organisation's short- and medium-term outlook, many of which are shared with the majority of Local Authorities. Rising interest rates, the impact of inflation on labour costs and materials, and increased energy costs affect the council and also our partners – including contracted delivery partners, developers and businesses. Increased costs and a more uncertain and challenging economic outlook have made the council's financial position more difficult. RBWM continues to experience additional financial risk due to its low council tax rates and historically low level of reserves, although in recent years these have been strengthened.
- 2.8 The challenging financial context makes it even more important that the council prioritises effectively, and allocates resources in an efficient, effective way. It highlights the importance of prevention and demand management in order to reduce demand on the highest cost services and manage the budget sustainably into the medium term. The Corporate Plan priorities and performance measures provide a framework for making difficult resourcing decisions and have informed the 2023/24 Budget proposals, as well as our Medium-Term Financial Strategy. In turn, the Corporate Plan and associated delivery plans must reflect the resources available. Following the Corporate Plan refresh and the agreement of the 2023/24 Budget, the council will undertake a prioritisation and delivery planning exercise, to ensure that the activities needed to deliver on our Corporate Plan are resourced and sequenced appropriately, and to strengthen our approach to risk management over the medium term. This will continue to form the basis on which resource prioritisation and budget setting are conducted in future years.
- 2.9 **Change in political leadership:** Changes in central government leadership over the summer and autumn have generated an uncertain time for local authorities across the country where new plans and policies are developed centrally. This has led to uncertainties about future national policy direction and funding for local authorities. September also saw the sad passing of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, for whom Windsor was the main residence.

New evidence and insights generated throughout 2022

- 2.10 During 2022, the council has benefited from a range of new evidence and insights. Firstly, from the RBWM 2022 Residents' Survey, and secondly through the ongoing phased release of Census 2021 data. The council has also undertaken research on inequalities and disadvantage in the borough through the cross-cutting Inequalities project. These new evidence sources support ongoing strengthening of an evidence-based approach to decision-making.
- 2.11 **Residents Survey:** The Residents' Survey 2022, conducted by an independent research provider, interviewed a representative sample of 1,740 residents through both telephone and face-to-face interviews. The Survey provides a wealth of evidence to inform decision-making as well as wider service and policy design. The results of the Residents Survey were published in October 2022 and are available in full [here](#).
- 2.12 Overall, the Survey found high levels of satisfaction with the borough as a place to live (89%), and trust in the council (70%). However, analysis reveals specific

cohorts experiencing difficulty, and whose different experiences need to be considered in future strategy. These include:

- residents aged 18-34.
- residents with Black, Asian or Mixed ethnicities.
- residents whose activities are limited due to a health condition (henceforth, those with a disability).
- residents who are not employed (excluding retired).

2.13 The findings provide assurance that the Corporate Plan priorities reflect the priorities of residents. When asked what makes the area a good place to live, the borough's parks and nature were the top two responses, and there were high levels of support for Climate Change as a priority for the council (84% agreeing). Roads maintenance and transport issues dominated top areas for improvement, supporting the Corporate Plan priorities around infrastructure; and housing affordability comes through as a key concern for those in younger age groups.

2.14 The Survey found that cost of living dominates as the primary concern for respondents (53%) over the next 1-3 years, with 18-34s, renters and ethnic minorities showing the highest levels of concern. 6% of respondents stated that they are finding things quite or very difficult financially. 25% said that they are just getting by. The cost-of-living rises have become a priority nationwide, since the Plan was agreed last November. This supports the proposed addition of a new goal on supporting residents to mitigate the impacts of cost of living rises, as set out at Appendix D.

2.15 The borough's strong communities come through as a theme: 72% of respondents agree that people pull together to improve their local area – and just over a third (36%) of respondents claim they take part in local community groups, activities or events at least once a month. However, engagement in community activities is lower amongst residents aged 75 & over, residents with a disability, and residents who rent from the council, housing association or trust. This supports the increased emphasis on community-based support, as proposed in revised goals for adult social care.

2.16 **Census 2021:** This report highlights key demographic findings from the 2021 census and its likely impact on current and future of service demand (see also Appendix C for further detail). Data is being released in phases by the Office for National Statistics over the course of 2022-23. From releases to date, RBWM has seen a population increase of 6.2% from 2011 (144,600) to 2021 (153,500). Overall, the population has aged since the 2011 census and the borough has seen decreases in key population groups 0-4yrs (-14.6%) and 20-44yrs (ranging from -2.1% to -9.5%). There have been increases in the population age-groups, 55-59yrs (+32.3%) and 70-74yrs (+33.2%). A growing and ageing population has implications for demand for services, particularly adult social care. It also has implications for infrastructure planning and the suitability of housing stock to meet changing needs over people's lifetimes.

2.17 As of 2021, the identified ethnic make-up of the borough is predominately 'White British' accounting for 69.05% of the total population. The intervening 10-year period (2011 to 2021) has seen a notable decrease of 8.48% in the group who

identified themselves as 'White British', alongside rises in other ethnic groups. This points to an increasingly ethnically diverse community.

2.18 At the time of census recording, (61.7%) of RBWM's working age population were in employment, this compares with 57.2% in England & Wales (E&W), (3.1%) were unemployed compared with (3.4%) in E&W and (35.2%) were economically inactive compared with (39.4%) in E&W.

2.19 **Inequalities Project** (see Appendix B for further detail): The council has undertaken a cross-cutting project to strengthen our collective understanding of inequalities and disadvantage in the borough. The project has two phases, with phase one laying the foundations for phase two by building an evidence base on inequalities and disadvantage in our communities. Phase two will focus on strengthening our approach to reducing inequalities, based on the evidence – aiming to reduce demand on high-cost services, through improved prevention and early intervention.

2.20 The project has been run collaboratively, involving services across the council and partners, and combining quantitative and qualitative data to build a rigorous picture of the challenges experienced by our residents through three evidence sources:

- Data and Desk-based research
- Frontline Insight and Engagement - Interviewing staff across, the council, voluntary and community sector and other partners, and collecting case studies.
- Community Engagement - including focus groups and interviews with residents, targeting specific areas and cohorts facing challenges. Findings from the World Café events have also been included.

2.21 The project employed three different routes to profile those experiencing inequality in the borough:

- **Geographical clusters of deprivation:** Utilising the index of multiple deprivation in conjunction with our frontline expertise, our research focused on small neighbourhoods in Dedworth (Windsor), Central Maidenhead and Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury.
- **Demographic cohorts at higher risk of challenges** (often but not always linked to poverty). These groups are identified both through interviews and through the Residents Survey data. i. Residents with low income/ in poverty, ii. Residents in social housing, iii. Those renting privately, iv. Those of Black and Asian Ethnicity, v. Those aged 75+ vi. Those living with a disability, vii. Those with caring responsibilities. Our approach to inequalities should consider the specific experiences and needs of these groups.
- **Key challenges:** Poverty and low income, emerged as a central and perhaps underpinning challenge, but the project demonstrated how closely intertwined this was with four other issues: Health, Housing, Skills and Relationships. These key challenges mirror the protective factors which support individual resilience, or the capacity to overcome and deal with challenges. The evidence demonstrated the interrelated nature of these

issues and that residents are unlikely to be able to resolve one problem in isolation.

2.22 The research highlighted the ways in which cost of living rises are having serious impacts on those who are already struggling financially and leading to wider impacts on mental health, physical health and relationships. Initial implications of this research are included at Appendix B and support stronger, preventative and community-based support.

Implications for the Corporate Plan

2.23 From reviewing the key changes in context and key implications from the new evidence set out in this report, Officers are satisfied that the overarching objectives and priorities of the Corporate Plan remain sound. However, the combination of cost of living impacts on residents, a growing and ageing population, and the wider economic challenges and uncertainties, suggest that there are opportunities to strengthen the Corporate Plan in the following areas:

- Reflecting the impacts of Cost of Living rises and the council's response.
- A greater focus on prevention in both Adults and Children's services, both to decrease demand and improve outcomes.
- Increased focus and ambition on economic growth and the council's role in supporting the growth of key sectors, and in supporting residents on to positive career pathways.
- Strengthening the council's Place Leadership role and setting a clear vision for the future of our key towns – Windsor, Maidenhead and Ascot.
- Increased emphasis on reducing inequalities, in particular for older and disabled residents, aligned with a new set of Equality Objectives (see Appendix E).

2.24 The proposed revisions to the Corporate Plan are set out in Appendix D and summarised in the recommendations above. These proposals are made in line with the acknowledgement to Full Council on adoption of the Corporate Plan (23 November 2021) that the Plan will be refreshed on an annual basis to respond to changes, challenges and opportunities.

Revised equality objectives 2022

2.25 The Corporate Plan states that we "recognise that we need to better understand the inequalities that affect different groups within the borough in order to ensure that those experiencing disadvantage and inequality are able to access appropriate, effective and early support within their communities". The Plan commits to further evidence-gathering and publication of new Equality objectives.

2.26 The new evidence and insights generated during 2022 has supported the council in the reformulation of its equality objectives. The council has a legal obligation to publish equality objectives at least every 4 years under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011.

- 2.27 Appendix E sets out the draft equality objectives proposed for adoption, alongside an update on work progressed in 2022 to strengthen the council's approach to the equality agenda. The objectives align to five themes, drawn largely from the structure of the Local Government Association's Equality Framework, and incorporate priorities identified through the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge and relevant equality-related goals from the Corporate Plan to ensure mutual reinforcement. Specific activities have been identified under each objective. A greater role for the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel is proposed, in monitoring progress against our equality objectives.
- 2.28 In preparing these objectives engagement has been undertaken with groups including the Disability and Inclusion Forum and KickBack. Feedback from colleagues in relevant service areas has also helped to shape the objectives and ensure that they are measurable and consistent with service objectives.
- 2.29 Alongside development of the equality objectives, we have also strengthened our approach to Equality Impact Assessments, as set out in more detail at Appendix E. The scope of the protected characteristics considered in the new EQIA template has been widened to acknowledge the council's responsibility to disadvantaged groups who are not covered by the nine established protected characteristics. The inclusion of 'children in care/care leavers' follows the recommendation of the 2022 Independent Review of Children's Social Care to make care experience a protected characteristic in law, in recognition of the challenges and disadvantages experienced by many people in care during their lives. Although the Government's response to the Review has not yet been published, the inclusion of this group acknowledges the council's role as Corporate Parent and ensures that they are considered in all council decisions and policies. Further additions alongside protected characteristics in the revised EQIA are the 'Armed Forces community', reflecting the council's commitment as a holder of the Armed Forces Covenant Gold Award and the special relationship between the borough and the military, and 'socio-economic considerations', which focuses on the effect of council decisions and policy on those experiencing poverty and financial hardship, which is particularly important in the current economic climate.

3. KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The key implications of this report are the advancement of the council's strategic planning process by way of response to changes, challenges and opportunities, and the requirement to meet statutory obligations regarding the publication of equality objectives.

Table 3: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Refresh of the Corporate Plan to responds to key changes, challenges and opportunities in the external context to deliver better outcomes for people and places.	Not having a strong, responsive Corporate Plan is a governance risk.	Corporate Plan provides governance and accountability.	N/A	N/A	26 Jan 2023
Meet statutory responsibilities under the Equality Duty.	Upheld legal challenge.	Compliance with the Equality Duty. Equality objectives met.	Equality objectives exceeded.	N/A	26 Jan 2023

4. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. However, as noted, the Corporate Plan priorities and performance measures provide a framework for making difficult resourcing decisions. In turn, the Corporate Plan and associated delivery plans must reflect the resource allocations agreed through the Budget process.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 require public authorities to publish equality objectives at least every 4 years. The recommendation to publish the revised equality objectives at Appendix E fulfils this legal duty.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The risks and mitigations are identified in Table 4.

Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risk	Level of uncontrolled risk	Controls	Level of controlled risk
The Corporate Plan does not respond to changes in the external or political context.	MEDIUM	The Plan will continue to be refreshed on an annual basis to respond to changes, challenges and opportunities. It can also be adapted at other times, where appropriate. The Plan will be reviewed by Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel after 2 years with recommendations made for change as appropriate.	LOW
The council is unable to deliver against its priorities as set out in the Plan.	MEDIUM	Progress against the Plan's goals are measured through the performance management framework. Strategies and action plans will be developed, where needed, to ensure that the council is clear on how it will achieve each goal. More detailed delivery planning will be undertaken in early 2023, to ensure that activities are adequately planned and resourced. Action will be taken to address barriers to progress.	LOW

7. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 7.1 **Equalities.** The proposed changes to the Corporate Plan and the adoption of new equality objectives are focused on strengthening the council's equalities agenda and on improving outcomes for groups with protected characteristics. The changes are based on an improved evidence base on inequalities and disadvantage in the borough, through the Inequalities Project, Residents Survey and emerging 2021 Census analysis.
- 7.2 **Climate change/sustainability.** Climate change and sustainability remain at the heart of the Corporate Plan. "Taking action to tackle climate change and its consequences and improving our natural environment" is one of the top three priorities within the Plan and is underpinned by a series of specific goals to achieve our ambitions. The Plan also includes a commitment to "Promote awareness of a sustainable and biodiverse environment across all our decision-making" as one of six underpinning principles of our approach.
- 7.3 **Data Protection/GDPR.** Not relevant.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The Corporate Plan refresh is supported by the new evidence sources outlined above. These include the 2022 RBWM Residents Survey which interviewed 1740 residents, and the frontline and community engagement strands of the Inequalities Project, which included focus groups and individual interviews with a wide range of residents experiencing inequalities and disadvantage, and those who work to support them. It is also informed by key messages from the World Café events.
- 8.2 Both the Residents Survey and Inequalities Project findings were also discussed by the Connected Leaders group and Place Committee, which include a range of health partners and wider stakeholders. In addition, the Equality objectives were discussed with the Disability & Inclusion Forum and Kickback council.
- 8.3 The Corporate Plan refresh and equality objectives were discussed by the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel at their meeting on 17 November 2022.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 Implementation date if not called in: Immediately. The full implementation stages are set out in table 5.

Table 5: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
26 Jan 2023	Agree changes to Corporate Plan and agree proposed equality objectives for publication.
February – April 2023	Setting of performance metrics and development of delivery plans for new goals, in parallel to wider prioritisation and delivery planning, reflecting resourcing allocations.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 This report is supported by four appendices:
- Appendix A: Progress Report (Year 1)
 - Appendix B: Inequalities Phase 1 Findings Report
 - Appendix C: Census analysis
 - Appendix D: Proposed Revisions to the Corporate Plan
 - Appendix E: Proposed revised equality objectives

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 11.1 This report is supported by two background documents:
- [Corporate Plan \[adoption by Full Council 23 November 2021\]](#)
 - [RBWM 2022 Residents Survey](#)

12. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	20/12/22	23/12/22
Emma Duncan	Director of Law, Strategy & Public Health/ Monitoring Officer	20/12/22	05/01/22
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	20/12/22	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	20/12/22	
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	20/12/22	
<i>Mandatory: Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>			
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager		
<i>Mandatory: Data Protection Officer (or deputy) - if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>			
Emma Young	Data Protection Officer		
<i>Mandatory: Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>			
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer	20/12/22	
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Tony Reeves	Interim Chief Executive	20/12/22	05/01/22
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	19/12/22	20/12/22
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of People Services	20/12/22	05/01/22

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cllr Johnson, Leader of the Council and Chairman of Cabinet. Cabinet Member for Growth & Opportunity	Yes
	Cllr Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council. Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Resident Services, Culture & Heritage, and Windsor Armed Forces Champion.	Yes
	Cllr Bhangra, Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside.	Yes
	Cllr Cannon, Cabinet Members for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Public Protection.	Yes
	Cllr Carroll, Deputy Chairman of Cabinet. Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health and Transformation.	Yes
	Cllr Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Maidenhead.	Yes
	Cllr Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transport.	Yes
	Cllr Hilton, Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance and Ascot.	Yes
	Cllr McWilliams, Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity and Sport & Leisure.	Yes
	Cllr Stimson, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Sustainability.	Yes

REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Key decision. First entered into the Cabinet Forward Plan: November 2022.	No	No

Report Author: Rebecca Hatch (Head of Strategy) and Rachel Kinniburgh (Service Lead – Strategic Policy, Performance and Insights)



Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Corporate Plan: Year 1 Progress Report November 2021 - November 2022

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE
BOROUGH OF OPPORTUNITY
AND INNOVATION



FOREWORD	3
COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS	4
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Welcome to the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead's Progress Report. This provides an overview of progress and activities in Year 1 of our Corporate Plan (November 2021 – November 2022).

The last 12 months has been a period of change and uncertainty, with changes in central government leadership, sharp increases in inflation, energy prices and the cost of living, and the outbreak of war between Russia and Ukraine. While our communities have lived 12 months free of lockdown restrictions, the global pandemic casts a long shadow and we are still seeing its impact in a number of areas which may change the shape of services, not just in the short-term, but potentially on an ongoing basis.

However, 2022 has also been a year of progress. The council has continued to deliver excellent services, to secure investment in our borough and to make progress across our Corporate Plan priorities.

We have agreed the Borough Local Plan, providing the framework for development for the next decade. New homes are being built, with high proportions of affordable housing, including 434 new homes, including 87 affordable, now under construction at St Cloud Way. Key projects including Maidenhead transport infrastructure upgrade works have made important steps forward, we have seen the opening of the Elizabeth Line in Maidenhead following public realm improvements and expanded cycle storage, and the agreement of the South West Maidenhead Supplementary Planning Document, setting the framework for development of the area. Our Vision for Windsor project launched in May, partnering with the Prince's Foundation and hosting a range of engagement opportunities with residents, community groups, businesses and others to create a shared view of Windsor's future. We are also preparing to start works to Castle Hill, the coach park footbridge and wider public realm improvements to enhance our welcome to Windsor for both residents and visitors alike.

We have facilitated the launch of an independent, boroughwide Climate Partnership. This is a ground-breaking approach in Berkshire, with the Partnership leading the way in uniting the community in tackling climate change, reaching far beyond the council alone. We have delivered improvements in energy efficiency, including securing £1.5m external funding for improvements in five local schools – enabling them to cut their energy bills as well as reducing emissions.

The increase in cost of living over the past year, has impacted our communities, our businesses, our partners, and the council as an organisation. The council has responded quickly, supporting our residents through our "Here to Help" campaign, which includes a network of warm spaces across the borough, and delivering financial support to residents in need through the Household Support Fund and wider centrally funded support schemes. We are working in close partnership with our community, health and housing partners to support residents across our communities to cope with the extra pressures.



Cllr Andrew Johnson, leader of the council

The country as a whole is facing an economic downturn, which presents challenges for businesses and changes the context in which investment decisions are made. However, our economy is resilient, due to the concentration of knowledge intensive industries in the borough and our high skills levels. This suggests that we can recover quickly. We are playing a lead role in developing a compelling devolution proposal for Berkshire, and strengthening relationships with businesses in key sectors including Life Sciences and Film, to increase investment into the borough. We will continue to work closely with our business partners, to ensure that we overcome this challenging period, and that we do so in a way which benefits all sections of the community and leaves no one behind.

Like many other councils, the Royal Borough continues to face significant financial pressures in the short to medium term, heightened by the more difficult economic climate. These pressures include continued growth in demand for a number of services, particularly Children's Services and Adult Social Care, which are being amplified by demographic changes in the borough. Difficult decisions have to be made about our future spend and we must continue to look for opportunities to transform the way we deliver services, with a focus on preventative support and working in closer partnership with our communities.

The sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was an emotional and historic moment in time, that will last forever in our memories, welcoming the Procession as it made its way to her final resting place at St George's Chapel. We are extremely proud of our close connection with the Royal Family and felt privileged to play a key role in the organisation of this globally important event. More than 900 stewards and 90 ambassadors worked to assist over 100,000 visitors to the Royal Borough.

The people who work in the council, for our delivery partners and within our communities, are our greatest asset, and we are hugely appreciative of the individuals who volunteer their time – either independently or as part of a community group – to support people and places in all areas of the borough.

The Corporate Plan is a five year plan, and there is much more yet to do to achieve our goals. This report sets out our progress in the first year of delivery. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the progress we have made in delivering on our priorities, over the last 12 months, and how we have responded to the challenges of the past year.

Cllr Andrew Johnson, leader of the council

COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS



Cllr Andrew Johnson
Leader of the council
Cabinet Member for Growth & Opportunity



Cllr Samantha Rayner
Deputy Leader of the council
Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Resident Services, Culture & Heritage, and Windsor Armed Forces Champion



Cllr Gurpreet Bhangra
Cabinet Member for Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside



Cllr David Cannon
Cabinet Member for Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Public Protection



Cllr Stuart Carroll
Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health & Transformation



Cllr David Coppinger
Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Maidenhead



Cllr Phil Haseler
Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways and Transport



Cllr David Hilton
Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance and Ascot



Cllr Ross McWilliams
Cabinet Member for Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity and Sport & Leisure



Cllr Donna Stimson
Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Sustainability

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Creating a sustainable borough of opportunity and innovation

Thriving communities

Where families and individuals are empowered to achieve their ambitions and fulfil their potential.

Inspiring places

Supporting the borough's future prosperity and sustainability.

Supported by:

A council trusted to deliver its promises

311

Over the next five years we will prioritise

A ladder of housing opportunity, to support better life chances for all.

Quality infrastructure that connects neighbourhoods and businesses and allows them to prosper.

Taking action to tackle climate change and its consequences, and improving our natural environment.

Championing innovation and partnership working, our approach is to:

Empower and enable individuals, communities and businesses to maximise their potential.

Invest in prevention, and intervene early to address problems before they escalate.

Shape our service-delivery around our communities' diverse needs and put customers at the heart of all we do.

Make the most effective use of resources - delivering the best value for money.

Promote awareness of a sustainable and biodiverse environment across all our decision-making.

Promote health and wellbeing, and focus on reducing inequalities, across all areas.



Empowering young people for the best start in life

● **97%** (Sep-22 figures) of borough schools have been rated by Ofsted as **Good or Outstanding** with 22 schools (33%) considered Outstanding, above the national average of 88% and our goal of 95%.

● 3,166.25 hours of **advocacy support** carried out **for children and young people** subject to child protection plans and 1,764 hours of advocacy support for children in care.

● **92%** (Sep-22 figures) of **referrals to our Family Hubs were closed with a positive outcome**, above our goal of 90%. Our Hubs have seen 322 children referred to them between April and September 2022.

● 5,297 children and young people benefitted from the **FUEL programme** during the Easter and Summer Holidays 2022. Coordinated by the Family Hubs the programme runs inspiring activities for children in the school holidays, including a hot meal. It is predominantly for children who have access to free school meals.

● **96.9%** (Sep-22 figures) of **19-21 year-old care-leavers were living in living in suitable accommodation**. 57.8% of 19–21 year-old care leavers were in education, training and employment, a good step in our ambition to achieve 75% by 2026. We have **renewed our Corporate Parenting Strategy** up to 2025, setting out 5 key priorities that have been shaped collaboratively with our children in care, foster carers, Kickback and other agencies.





Supporting healthy behaviours, independence and active lives

313 ● Our **leisure centres**, managed by Leisure Focus, have welcomed **1,492,218 visitors** between April and November, **above pre-Covid levels** (1,291,313 Apr to Nov-19). A range of events and campaigns have been hosted over the year, including a “**7 Days of Focus**” campaign aimed at increasing activity for people with disabilities and offering a range of taster sessions such as disability swimming and wheelchair basketball. In June our **Braywick Leisure Centre** was awarded “**Centre of the Year**” at the national UKActive Awards in the South regional category.

● Our 2022 Residents’ Survey found that access to nature/countryside, and the quality of parks and open spaces, are key things that make the local area a good place to live. **94% of respondents** said they find it **easy to access quality green spaces** in the

borough (62% find it very easy), and **66%** said they **visit the borough’s green spaces at least once a week** (with 25% visiting every day).

● A new Berkshire East **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment website** was **launched** in June following a service-user consultation. The website makes local health and wellbeing priorities publicly available in a clear and informative manner. In October, a new **stop-smoking service** was launched, offering residents behavioural support and various stop-smoking aids. In its first month, the service supported 34 individuals to set a quit date.

● We support a number of initiatives to reduce loneliness and social isolation and support the emotional wellbeing of residents. In December 2021 we participated in Good Morning

Britain’s “**1 Million Minutes**” campaign, introducing a “**listening bench**” in Windsor town centre.

● Our **Wellbeing Circles Project** was launched in April as an innovative way to encourage adults using NHS Services to engage with local organisations. Wellbeing Circles bring together a network of people to help in areas of day-to-day life where an individual may benefit from some support. They help **residents remain independent and connected** and therefore help combat loneliness and isolation. Between April and September, 112 residents have been signposted to Wellbeing Circles.



Supporting healthy behaviours, independence and active lives

● Between April and September, 260 residents have accessed our **Community Lives** offer. Delivered through our partner, Optalis, the Community Lives service offers stimulating activities aimed at helping people to develop skills, find companionship and improve well-being.

● Our **World Cafés** initiative was launched in June in partnership with NHS Frimley. 11 of these informal networking events have been held up to November, seeing over 500 participants. Two further events are planned for December. The Cafés are an opportunity for residents to discuss what matters most to them, access relevant support, **share ideas and find community-led solutions** to issues and challenges such as courses on money management and cost-effective cooking.

● Working with NHS Frimley, our **Innovation Fund Project** has distributed over £30,000 across 9 community-led initiatives which aim to address inequalities and improve health and wellbeing outcomes. Projects so far include digital training for ethnic minority groups in Maidenhead to tackle social isolation, and yoga for over-70s to boost their physical and mental health.

● Nearly £91,000 has been distributed to a wide range of not-for-profit voluntary organisations through our **Annual Grants Funding Scheme**. These grants support community projects and activities that make a positive difference within their neighbourhoods.





Tackling inequalities and responding to the cost-of-living crisis

315 ● Together with community partners, we launched our “**Here to Help**” campaign in May to raise awareness of the support available to help those struggling to cope with the cost of living. We are promoting a **network of safe, warm spaces** where people in need can go this winter, and a map of locations hosted by local community organisations, faith groups, housing associations and local businesses, has been published as a resource for the community and our partners. All local libraries are safe places for the community where people are welcome to use library facilities and speak with a librarian for advice on cost-of-living support.

● We are continuing to deliver the borough’s allocation of the **DWP Household Support Fund** to residents in need. This funding has supported the 3,000 families in receipt of Free School Meals, with food costs during the school holidays, supported pensioners receiving Council Tax relief through Council Tax rebates, and assisted residents experiencing struggles with housing and energy costs. For winter 2022/23, we are **working in close partnership with 9 distribution partners** across the voluntary sector, housing and health, to identify a wide range of residents facing severe financial hardship this winter. They will receive a £145 cash payment, linked to wider support and advice from our partners. We have also delivered a range of government support schemes including **Council Tax rebates** to eligible households.





Ukraine refugee support

- We stand together with the people of Ukraine. We continue to participate in the **“Homes for Ukraine”** national scheme and have responded as a priority to the Government’s request to ensure comprehensive support for local hosts and their guests. We introduced 2 new dedicated “Homes for Ukraine” Welfare Officers within our Housing Service, who visit and keep in touch with all participating households. We also made available a dedicated webpage and telephone support line and have welcomed the opportunity to support and partner with the charity Open Arms to produce a substantial welcome pack for hosts and prospective hosts. At the time of writing, we currently have 103 hosts with Ukrainian guests.

316





● The redevelopment of Maidenhead's old Magnet Leisure Centre site to provide much-needed new homes started in the summer. With the York Road regeneration scheme – known as **The Watermark** – well underway, this development is the second and largest of these projects, delivering 434 much-needed new homes in a mix of houses, apartments and maisonettes, including 87 affordable homes.

317

● Between April and November our Housing service has helped **157 households into existing affordable homes and 23 households into new affordable homes**. We have a stepped trajectory to help 2,000 households into new and existing affordable homes, prioritising social and affordable rent, by 2026.

● Reducing the number of **households in temporary accommodation** remains a key focus for us and we have seen this number rise gradually since July, albeit numbers have been fewer than monthly targets. We are aspiring to have a higher proportion of households in temporary accommodation within the borough. As at November, 42.7% of the households in temporary accommodation are within the borough.



THRIVING COMMUNITIES

OUR PRIORITY A ladder of housing opportunity to support better life chances for all



● We have successfully **secured accommodation in the private rented sector** for some households, both from the Ukrainian and general homeless cohorts, and are in the process of recruiting a dedicated Private Rented Sector Liaison Officer to enable us to develop an appealing offer to landlords and to maximise access to private rented sector properties.

318 ● Our **Rough Sleeper Pathway** supports households from the street into sustainable accommodation. Rough Sleepers spend an average time of 2 years 9 months on the pathway - 3 months (stage 1), 2 years (stage 2) and 6 months (stage 3) - and are supported by the service in their journey. Between November 2021 and November 2022, 30 households have been supported into permanent accommodation through the pathway. None of these households have re-approached us for housing assistance and 14 of these households are now living independently without floating support.

● We commissioned the **Housing Learning and Improvement Network** to deliver a supported housing needs analysis as part of our long-standing ambition to increase the numbers of people with a learning disability living in their own homes. We have undertaken an **accommodation census of people with a learning disability** supported by the borough and developed a **supported housing strategy** including people with a learning disability. We are working in partnership with a wider network of councils to develop a new strategy for building Shared Lives provision where adults with a learning disability live as part of family homes. We are currently working on reviewing and developing the current model of supported living to ensure that it focuses on promoting independence for adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and mental health support needs.





Supporting employment opportunities in the borough

319 ● As part of our work to support jobseekers in our borough, we have held a series of events including **jobs fairs** in partnership with JobCentre Plus to promote local job vacancies to our residents, **recruitment events** promoting jobs in the borough's vibrant and important hospitality and tourism sector, and **drop-in sessions** held in conjunction with the Heathrow Employment and Skills Academy. In February we worked with the Rebel Business School to provide a **free online course** to support budding entrepreneurs looking to start or grow their own business.

● Working with other Berkshire local authorities we co-funded and launched **Berkshire Opportunities**, a one-stop-shop digital service that provides information and guidance to support students through their next steps either into further education or into the world of work, and connects apprentices and students with prospective employers.

● We **secured first-year funding** from central government for the **adult numeracy programme 'Multiply'**, broadening the scope of our Employment, Skills and Training plan.



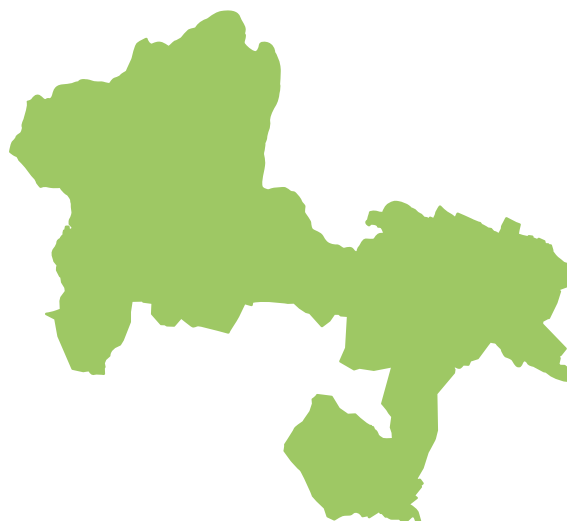


Great spaces

- A new public plaza, **Library Square**, was officially opened by MP Theresa May in May. The square is the latest step in the regeneration of Maidenhead town centre and the opening saw attendees enjoy a fun day of activities including a bootcamp workout and food and drink from local providers.

- In May we launched our **Vision for Windsor** project, partnering with the Prince's Foundation and hosting a range of engagement opportunities with residents, community groups, businesses and others to create a shared view of Windsor's future as a high-quality, distinctive, and sustainable place to live, work, spend leisure time and do business.

320 **Footfall in Maidenhead** up to November 2022 reached **4,209,276**, 1.3% **more than pre-covid levels** in November 2019, and **Windsor footfall** for the same period reached **5,043,205**, a marginal decrease of 0.6% from pre-covid levels in November 2019. Both town centres have **hosted a range of well-attended activities and markets** throughout the year, including the transformation of Maidenhead High Street to mark the start of the Lunar New Year in February, featuring the much-loved Lion Dance Parade.





Community safety and tackling anti-social behaviour

- Responses to our 2022 Residents' Survey indicate that **97% of women and girls report feeling safe in the borough during day** (64% of women and girls feel very safe) and **75% women and girls who report feeling safe in the borough during the night** (24% of women and girls feel very safe).

321

- In November 2022 **we teamed up with The Dash Charity and Maidenhead United FC for White Ribbon Day** and the World Cup, calling on all men to unite to tackle male abuse, harassment and violence towards women and girls.

- Our 2022 Resident's Survey found that **27% feel concerned about anti-social behaviour in their local area and 40% are not concerned**. Our Community Wardens remain a high visibility, reassuring presence, working with partners to support community safety locally. Between April and September, 17 **Anti-Social Behaviour interventions** have been delivered and 147 **group dispersal orders** issued. Working with key partners, we have **drafted a Community Safety Partnership 3yr delivery plan (2022-25)**. At the time of writing, this Plan is pending sign-off for implementation.





Community activities and events

Our borough has thriving communities across its towns, villages and smaller settlements and has seen a huge range of activities and events across the year that we have been proud to support, including:

- The **Braywick Nature Centre Festival** welcomed families and individuals for a free day of activities in July, including pond dipping, minibeast safari sessions, den-building, drumming workshops. Organised by our Natural Environment Team, the festival provided an opportunity to learn more about the nature reserve and the array of wildlife that call it home.

322

- The summer saw residents across the borough hosting their own **street parties** to celebrate **Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee**. We are proud to have **funded a range of celebratory events** and projects across the borough and supported communities to host their own events and projects to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to create lasting memories. Some key highlights include **the lighting of the Windsor Beacon, the Mayor's Platinum Jubilee**

Children's Party, a 13-week programme of free live musical entertainment on the Queen's Bandstand in Windsor, and a day-long Town Crier competition in Windsor. In July we were privileged to welcome a visit of the Queen's Baton Relay on its way to the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

- As part of the **Queen's Green Canopy**, children from more than 36 schools across the Royal Borough participated and planted trees as part of the initiative. A total of 1,080 trees were supplied to 36 schools, colleges and nurseries and these were planted before Christmas, the majority in their grounds. A **family tree planting day** also saw over 600 trees being planted at Thrift Wood, Ockwells Park, with the help of over 250 volunteers.



© Gill Heppell



Passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

The death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was a very sad day in the history of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead. We were deeply honoured and humbled to host the **Procession and Committal Service for Her Majesty**, welcoming over **100,000 visitors to Windsor** to remember her dedicated service, pay their respects, and lay flowers. On the day of the State Funeral there were more than **900 stewards and 90 ambassadors working to** assist visitors to the borough.

The successful delivery of this event – and all other events hosted in the borough this year – was made possible by the meticulous planning and dedication from council officers, as well as working in partnership with our public sector partners, community organisations and groups, and many dedicated volunteers. Nearly **800 paper hearts featuring tributes** from schoolchildren to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II are on display at the Windsor and Royal Borough Museum.



© Gill Heppell



● Our **Borough Local Plan** was adopted in February 2022, supporting sustainable development until 2033. The BLP provides the vision for the borough's future development, including setting out how many new homes are needed, how much space for jobs is required, the best locations for new development and where development cannot happen to protect valued natural and built historic heritage. The Plan has been shaped over a decade through a series of public consultations and includes changes required by an Independent Planning Inspector.

● We held a **consultation on ways to improve the A308** in summer this year. Feedback from the consultations is being analysed which will help prioritise projects, and progress these to the detailed design and costing stage.

324

● We ran a series of public engagement events throughout the year with extensive publicity to support the **development of our South West Maidenhead** Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document. Approved in December 2022, this document provides opportunity to ensure that development in the area comes forward in a strategic and comprehensive manner, and sets out design principles and infrastructure requirements.





325 ● We have focused on working with broadband providers to facilitate new infrastructure to increase Full Fibre coverage, which has included engaging with residents at local engagement meetings. We are also part of a project run by the **Berkshire Digital Infrastructure Group (DIG)**, made up of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership and six Local Authorities to improve digital infrastructure across the region. A **major contract has been awarded** to Virgin Media Business to supply Full Fibre infrastructure to schools, doctor's surgeries and public libraries across Berkshire by March 2022. We have also facilitated the **mapping of our street furniture**, to support the small cell deployment in hard-to-reach areas, creating further connectivity opportunities. Plans are also in place to **develop and adopt a Digital Infrastructure Strategy**, to further support the roll-out of improved broadband and mobile coverage across the borough.

● We adopted a new **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan** in June bringing together the outcomes of public feedback through our 2021 "Big Conversation" in support of our Corporate Plan ambitions to increase cycling by 50% by 2025 and to increase the numbers of people walking as a means of transport. The Plan plays an important role in achieving wider corporate goals too, including tackling the climate emergency, creating network capacity to ease congestion and support new housing development, and improving population health outcomes.



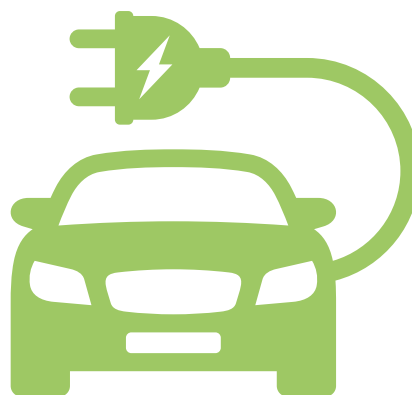
INSPIRING PLACES

OUR PRIORITY Quality infrastructure that connects neighbourhoods and businesses and allows them to prosper



● With 33% of carbon emissions coming from the vehicles on our roads, we have developed a **draft Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Implementation Plan** for public consultation from December 2022 as part of our commitment to tackling the climate emergency and supporting our borough to reach net zero emissions by 2050 and improve air quality along roads and at road junctions.

● Following a successful tender process, we **appointed a contractor to deliver the Windsor public realm project** to transform Castle Hill into a pedestrian-first zone.



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We have **worked closely with bus companies to support them post-Covid**, investing extra money in 2022/23 to **maintain subsidised services** for the time being, with a few adjustments, while we work with operators and communities to establish a longer-term solution for the bus network from April next year that reflects changing traveller habits, with the aim of keeping residents connected in a cost-effective manner.



INSPIRING PLACES

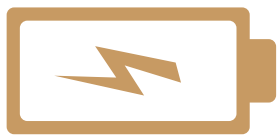
OUR PRIORITY Taking action to tackle climate change and its consequences, and improving our natural environment



Working in partnership

- We are one of the **founding members of an independent, borough-wide Climate Partnership**, a ground-breaking approach in Berkshire with the Partnership leading the way in uniting the community in tackling climate change. Welcoming a new Chief Executive, in June, the Partnership brings together businesses, charities, community groups and individuals as an independent Community Interest Company which will research, create and coordinate delivery of our Environment & Climate Strategy.

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Supporting sustainability

● We have **secured £1.3m from the Government's Sustainable Warmth scheme** to help support low-income families in the borough to improve the energy efficiency of their homes while reducing their carbon footprint. This will help families reduce fuel poverty while supporting the shift to cleaner, greener energy source.

● We have **secured £1.5m from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme** for energy efficiency **upgrades at five borough schools** to lower their carbon emissions and help meet the borough's carbon reduction target.

● In **partnership with Solar Together**, we launched a **solar panel purchasing scheme** in May 2022 to help households generate their own renewable energy, cut their carbon footprint and save money on energy bills. Over 1,100 registrations were received, with offers then sent to the residents. Once surveys are complete on residents' homes, installations will begin, with each install taking approximately three days to complete.





Supporting sustainability

● Between April and September 2022, 30,159 tonnes of household waste has been collected, **51.5%** of which has been **sent for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion**. Our aspiration is to reach 65% by 2035 with an overall reduction in waste generated.

● We continue to support a range of **initiatives** focused on **refuse and recycling**, including a volunteer-run **Repair Café** launched in December 2021 and hosted monthly at Maidenhead Library where repair coaches help visitors to fix broken items.

● As a council, we are assessing our own operations to gain an understanding of what changes can be made to improve our environmental impact. Key actions in the last 12 months include:

- ◇ Embedding a **commitment** within our **new Leisure Centre contract** to **eliminate all single use plastic within two years** unless they are essential for health and safety.
- ◇ **Examining our cleaning contract** to identify opportunities to improve environmental impact.
- ◇ **Optimising the transportation of meals** as part of our catering contract for schools to reduce transport emissions.





Our natural environment

- Our **draft Biodiversity Action Plan** was published in April 2022 following a delay from June 2021 as a result of the scope increasing in size. The Plan, which was approved in December 2022, has been drafted in collaboration with local wildlife groups and provides objectives and actions for each main habitat in the borough to **increase diversity through partnership working**.

- To help enable local wildlife community groups, we purchased new field monitoring equipment and set up an **Equipment Lending Library** in April 2022 for interested groups to complete their own surveys of local nature and share their results with a national monitoring scheme.

- Working with partners and a range of volunteers, we continue to support and enable a range of projects to protect and improve our natural environment and access to it, including:

- ◇ **Reintroducing livestock to an area of Battlemead Common**, north of Maidenhead, in an exciting new trial designed to **help enhance biodiversity** at the site. Almost 40 cows are now located on the site.
- ◇ In November 2022 **three new waymarked trails were opened at Braywick Nature Reserve**, featuring a range of new welcome signs designed by artist and illustrator, Stu McLellan, and offering visitors new experiences of this unique natural environment.





Residents' Survey

● Our latest **Residents' Survey** was held over the Summer with key questions to help us better understand residents' views, attitudes and priorities. Headline findings show that perceptions of the council are high, and above the LGA national benchmarks for satisfaction, trust and value for money.

Our survey structure gave us the ability to break down the results of each question and explore variations in responses across different groups of respondents. This approach gives us valuable insights to inform the design of policies and services.

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- ◇ **66% are satisfied with the way the council runs things**, meeting our Corporate Plan goal to be **above the June 2022 LGA benchmark (63%)**.
- ◇ **70% indicated they trust the council**, meeting our Corporate Plan goal to be **above the June 2022 LGA benchmark (58%)**.
- ◇ **52% agree the council provides value for money**, meeting our Corporate Plan goal to be **above the June 2022 LGA benchmark (45%)**.





Our workforce

- A **staff survey “temperature check”** was run in November 2021 and completed by 63% of employees. **84% of respondents said that their work provides a feeling of personal achievement** (an increase of +11% from 2020), and **69% of employees said they feel proud to work for the council** (an increase of +7% from 2020), close to our goal of 70%. At the time of writing this report, our next full staff survey is live in November 2022.

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- We introduced a new **Staff Awards** ceremony in December 2021, celebrating the performance and success of individuals and teams across the council in the following areas: Innovation, Individual Outstanding Achievement, Teamwork, Energy, Above & Beyond, Leadership, Diversity, Demonstration of our values (team and individual).

- We have created and launched a **modular leadership programme for all People Managers** within the council. The programme aims to develop and enhance the key skills of managers in a number of critical areas such as Resilience, Decision Making, and Leading Through Change and Inspirational Leadership.

- **Funding has been secured to transform the current HR system** and delivery of HR services to employees, schools and partner organisations. This will be achieved by **investing in information, digital and technological developments**, which will enable employees to focus on service delivery, rather than less efficient business processes.



A COUNCIL TRUSTED TO DELIVER ITS PROMISES



A commitment to good governance, transparency and accountability

333 ● We **invited the Local Government Association (LGA)** into the council for a **Corporate Peer Challenge** in January 2022. Members and Senior Officers from other local authorities led an independent review of how we work and made recommendations for how the council can continue to improve. These recommendations were agreed by the Cabinet in March 2022. The peer review returned in October for a follow-up visit to review our progress and noted the progress made across key areas including governance, financial management and performance management.

● We implemented **new performance reporting arrangements**, including launching an online, public-facing **Citizens' Portal** in April 2022. The Portal sets out our performance and progress against each of the 50 goals in our Corporate Plan as part of our commitment to transparency and accountability. We also routinely report on progress against our plan every quarter to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Panel and our reports are discussed in the panel's public meetings.

● The **council's scrutiny function was restructured**, with the aim of achieving greater public accountability. A trio of new Overview & Scrutiny Panels has been established – People, Place and Corporate – **aligned with our Corporate Plan objectives** of Thriving communities, Inspiring places, and A council trusted to deliver its promises.





Delivering services for you

We know that how we deliver our day-to-day services are integral to our being a council trusted to deliver its promises. We will continue to work to improve services for you. From April – November 2022, in conjunction with partners, we have:

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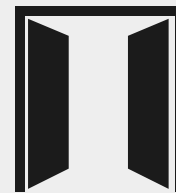
87,123

calls received from residents to our customer contact centre



71%

of customer contact centre calls answered within two minutes



445,177

physical and virtual visitors welcomed to our libraries



475,355

books, e-books, audiobooks, online newspapers, magazines, movies and songs loaned as part of our physical and digital offer



48,380

visitors welcomed to Windsor & Royal Borough Museum and the Royal Windsor Information Centre



19

births in the borough registered



720

deaths and stillbirths registered



685

notices of marriage and civil partnership



736

marriage and civil
partnership ceremonies



370

citizenship
ceremonies



30,159

tonnes of waste and
recycling collected



18.36

missed collections (average)
per 100,000 collections

335



482

food inspections of
businesses conducted



603km

of roads
maintained



800km

of footway
maintained



26,000

road drains
maintained


Listening and learning

Throughout the year we provided, and continue to provide, opportunities to our residents to have their say on a range of topics and help us shape services and opportunities for our communities. Whether it is through resident surveys, projects and services, talking and engaging with local business organisations or feedback via our website, our customer service centre or our customer complaints teams; we are keen to listen to what you like and what needs to be improved.



 www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/contact-us

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Let's talk

Have your say in consultations about changes to council services or policies at:

<https://rbwmtogether.rbwm.gov.uk/hub-page/consultations>

Sign up

For monthly news and updates from across the borough, sign up to our Residents' Newsletter [here](#) and get the latest direct to your inbox.

Online services

You can apply, book, find, report and pay for a range of services on our website:

www.rbwm.gov.uk

Inequalities Project

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Detailed Findings



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Note that the quotes included in the pack are the opinion of individual respondents, though care has been taken to include quotes which aligned to key themes raised, and reflecting quantitative data.

Introduction & Project Overview



Executive Summary (i)

Disadvantage and inequality in the borough can be hidden within the overall affluence.

Within some neighbourhoods, there are concentrations of disadvantage, where a substantial minority of residents experience a range of interrelated challenges, overwhelmingly rooted in poverty.

Some groups, including those with low levels of English, learning difficulties or mental health issues and some ethnic minorities and lone parents, face additional barriers to success. Family challenges can draw disadvantage down through generations. Older people can fall into disadvantage as they age.

Residents on low incomes in Central Maidenhead, Dedworth and Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury reported feeling segregated from and forgotten amidst the wider affluence of the borough. The gap between rich and poor can exacerbate their feelings of disadvantage and stigma. There is a strong sense that life chances are shaped by where you are from and a sense of lack of opportunities and control.

'I'm struggling and a lot of other people are struggling and in the same boat.... It can happen to anybody but where you live and what your circumstances are make a difference, oh god definitely it does. Who you socialise with and what you are surrounded by, of course it's going to have a big impact on what your life is like.' (Female, lone parent)²

Some residents reported feeling that they had limited levers to improve their situations. Those working with disadvantaged communities highlighted low skills, often compounded by low self-esteem and self-confidence acting as a barrier to improving outcomes, and to seeking help to do so.

"You have to look for the help and I think if you are feeling like that and feeling shameful [then you] don't want to look for the help and don't think it's out there..." (Female, Datchet)²

Executive Summary (ii)

The cost of living crisis is adding to existing challenges, and making it more likely for vulnerable households to spiral into crisis. Budgets that were previously tight, now don't appear manageable. Stress and depression linked to financial anxiety are eroding resilience and the ability to find positive ways forward. Residents in more disadvantaged neighbourhoods also reported rising anti-social behaviour.

“The cost of living is affecting everyone. The food banks are so overrun now, people are struggling so much...I feel really uncomfortable when I go up there and I really do need to be up there because I'm struggling. It is hard and it plays on your mental health a lot.” (Female, Dedworth)²

Those experiencing the highest levels of disadvantage and inequality often feel that they lack strong support and networks. However, in areas such as Dedworth, where there is a strong offer of support from within the community, residents recognise the positive difference that this makes.

Relationships have an impact on outcomes - a support network and somewhere to turn in times of challenge increases the ability to weather challenges, offering the opportunity to problem solve in collaboration.

Experiences of disadvantage differ according to where residents live and the types of problem they face. Disability, mental and physical illness are key factors which can upend lives – as are bereavement and trauma. Older people with long term health conditions and disabilities may fall into social isolation and poor quality of life, that is not necessarily linked to poverty. These households are sometimes spread across the borough, including in affluent areas adding to the challenge of targeting support.

“My husband is very limited in terms of his health and he's in a wheelchair, but we fumble along. There's no point being miserable, and feeling sorry for yourself, because nobody wants to know.”²

Executive Summary (iii)

Parent or child illness and disability can have far reaching impacts on the rest of the family, with caring responsibilities and coordination of support, affecting ability to work, wellbeing and household finances.

For two years my daughter couldn't go to school because no normal school is going to take her. The effect on me is that I couldn't work, someone had to be at home with her, either myself or my partner were interchanging and that really affected us." (Male, Riverside/Belmont)²

Physical isolation, made more acute by weak public transport links, can make it difficult for residents to access jobs and services (particularly health), and restrict opportunities for socialising.

The high cost of housing in the borough and limited genuinely affordable options, affects a wide spectrum of residents, particularly in younger age groups.

However, the natural, physical and cultural assets of the borough, coupled with the thriving voluntary sector, offer opportunities. Although some people talked of a declining sense of community, others highlighted its strengths.

I think in this area the community, we support each other - whenever someone knows something, we let each other know. I have my neighbours that come in and ask me do you need any shopping and they are very helpful people. I think everyone is kind of struggling financially at this moment, but I think the community as people, we are supportive to each other... [from case study]²

Introduction to the Project

Collaborative and cross-service

- The **Inequalities Project** has been **run collaboratively** between Public Health and the Strategy, Policy & Performance team, in partnership with a wide range of council services (including AfC, housing, Optalis, communities) and borough-wide partners, including from health and the VCS.
 - **Overarching aim: to support all residents and communities to achieve their ambitions and fulfil their potential**, with a focus on those who are at risk of poor outcomes – thereby reducing demand for high cost, high threshold services.
- 343
- The aim of this evidence pack** is to create a **stronger collective understanding** of how inequality and disadvantage are experienced in our borough, to help us, as a system, to develop a more effective, shared approach to preventing and reducing poor outcomes.
- The pack summarises the **key insights from the evidence** gathered. It focuses on the **voice of our communities and our frontline teams** within the council and partners (including health and voluntary organisations). Quotations represent the individual opinions and experiences of those interviewed.
 - The pack concludes with a set of initial implications for how **we can strengthen our approach to best support residents**, in order to reduce disadvantage and inequalities.
-
-

Project process

Mixed methods approach

This presentation summarises the key findings from frontline engagement; qualitative evidence from residents through interviews, focus groups and World Cafés; and by quantitative data, including from the RBWM 2022 Residents Survey and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. This research has been undertaken from May – November 2022.

Data

- 344
- RBWM 2022 Residents Survey
 - EQiA Evidence Grid
 - Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), via Berkshire Observatory
 - Wider data, including service level data.
 - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Frontline Insight

- Completed 18 x individual interviews and;
 - 30 focus groups.
- with circa 100 members of staff including council, health and VCS partners.

Community Engagement

Working with Lake Market Research, to conduct:

- 4 x Focus Groups
 - 12 x in-depth individual interviews
- Targeting specific areas & cohorts facing challenges
- World Cafés

Overview of RBWM

A prestigious and affluent borough

- Windsor and Maidenhead is a symbolic borough, closely linked to the Royal Family and one of the most affluent local authorities in the UK.
- Half of our 89 neighbourhoods* are in the top decile of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, and none are in the bottom 30%. However, the overall affluence results in some stark inequalities.
- A core of around 5-10% of households are struggling financially, and around another quarter are just about managing. There are many others who are experiencing other challenges – with their health, mental health, housing, social isolation, and employment - often, but not always, linked to poverty.
- This disadvantage can be hidden by the overall affluence of the area:
 - within positive outcomes at borough-level;
 - in the way we think and talk about the borough – and show ourselves to the world;
 - physically within the vista of affluent homes and beautiful countryside.
- Data highlights specific neighbourhoods with higher concentrations of disadvantage, but there are also clusters below neighbourhood level, and isolated households across the borough.
- The pandemic and cost of living increases, have made life more difficult for many of our residents. This is increasing inequalities and gives this work added urgency.

Overview of RBWM

Understanding our borough – Key demographics

- **153,497** people live in RBWM⁵
- **69%** of residents identify as **White British**, **9%** as **Other White Groups**, **13.1%** of residents as **Asian** or **Asian British**, **1.5%** as **Black** or **Black British**, **3.4%** as **Mixed** or **multiple ethnic groups** and **2.1%** residents as **Other** ethnicities (Census data 2021)⁵
- The **population is ageing**, between the 2011 and 2021 census **15-34 year olds make up 1.9% less of the overall population**, moving from 22.4% to 20.5%⁵
- **460** people aged 18 and over are registered to have a **learning disability**⁶
- Just over **20,421 residents** are living in neighbourhoods of **relative deprivation** (Deciles 3 -5 IMD)⁷
- The **median price** of a house in RBWM is **£510,000** ⁸

- **13.3%** of residents do **not have access to a car or van** (Census data 2011)⁹
- **Life expectancy** for men is **81.8 years**, however there is **4.8 year** difference in life expectancy at birth between the **most** and **least deprived** areas of the borough for **males** (2017-19)¹⁰. For **women** it is **84.7 years**, with a **4.3 year** difference.¹⁰



Overview of RBWM

A prestigious and affluent borough

Several **schools** in the borough have a proportion of **children on Free School Meals** that is over two or three times higher than the borough average¹¹.

- Woodlands Park Primary School - 36.4%
- Riverside Primary School & nursery – 33.1%
- Larchfield Primary and Nursery School - 27.3%
- Churchmead Church of England VA School - 27.1%

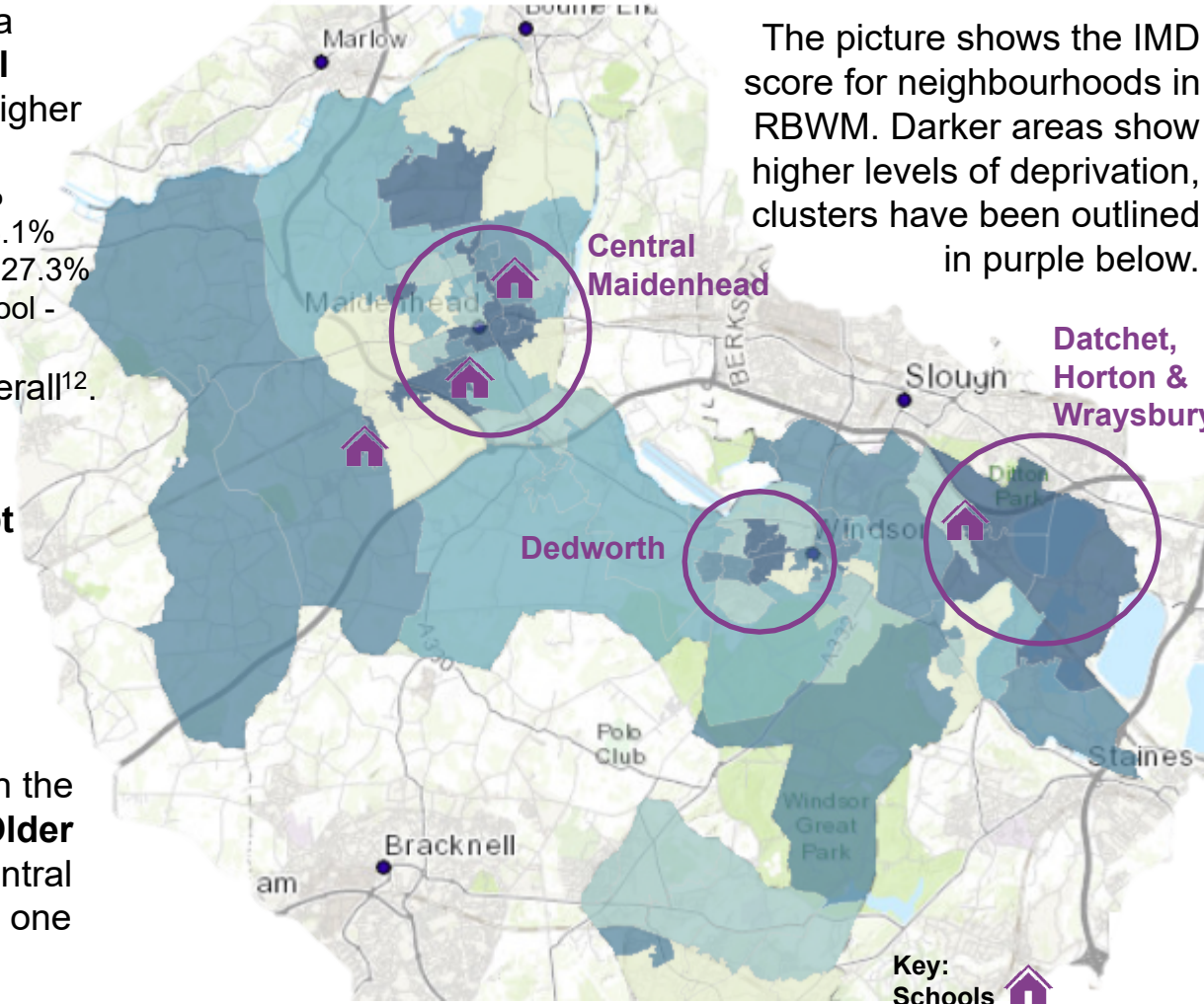
Compared to 11.7% in the borough overall¹².

In **three out of 19 wards**, **almost 9% of residents are in receipt of Universal Credit**.¹³

- Clewer & Dedworth East – 8.8%
- St Mary's – 8.7%
- Oldfield – 8.5%

Three neighbourhoods in RBWM are in the **20% most deprived in England for Older People** as per the IDAOPi*. Two in Central Maidenhead In St Marys, Belmont and one in Clewer and Dedworth East.¹⁴

The picture shows the IMD score for neighbourhoods in RBWM. Darker areas show higher levels of deprivation, clusters have been outlined in purple below.



* Income deprivation affecting older people index

Challenges & Assets

The overall wealth of the borough creates challenges.

Challenges

- Those facing disadvantage may get **hidden** by the overall affluence
“In Slough issues are out in the open, easier to see - on the street, here things are more hidden”¹
- **Designed for the wealthy**, e.g. expensive school uniform and lack/cost of public transport. Eight schools in the borough do not have public transport links
“funding for services and facilities typically isn’t tailored to a more disadvantaged community i.e.) high costs for services, travel, facilities, goods etc.”¹
- **Housing is extremely expensive**, both rented and bought
“Lack of affordable housing in the borough is affecting work, schooling, and lives”¹
- The **scale of the gap** to the very affluent can lead to feelings of shame and dissatisfaction.
“Previously people would just go without, now people want the same things as everyone else, sky TV, mobile phones... and will forgo some bills for these items”¹
- **Harder to get funding** for support, due to lower numbers requiring it.
“At a higher level we also get less funding because we are a wealthy borough”



Challenges & Assets

The overall wealth of the borough, also creates opportunity

Assets

- Resource available to support by **volunteering and making donations**
“There was a pensioner winter fuel payment of £300 which was not means tested. A group decided they don't need this payment so they pooled it together and gave it to the less affluent in the area”¹
- **Breadth of formal and informal support groups** available
“Online neighbourhood support groups emerged quickly in lockdown with children swapping science experiments online”, faith groups and churches also support residents¹
- Potential for willing residents to **role model or mentor** others
“potential for aspiration/ incentive...could use business owners as role models for young people”¹
- **Diversity** of residents and community groups
“Different communities and perspectives are a strength. Drawing on these different perspectives through feedback, exploring peoples feelings on topics.”¹
- High quality of **natural assets**, e.g. parks and green spaces and public space.
- Tourism opportunities, with global appeal & further economic opportunities through proximity and transport links to London



Cost of Living

Impacting residents unequally

Increases in the cost of living are having impacts on all residents, but causing the greatest challenges for those with the lowest incomes, and may exacerbate existing inequalities. *Residents' survey found that 58% are very concerned. 6% already experiencing financial challenges – another 25% just about managing.*³

For households on a tight budget, such as those living off Universal Credit, the increases in costs are causing difficult choices, between heating, eating and other essentials. A number of interviewees reported rising numbers of residents building up utility and fuel bill debts, or getting into rent arrears. *“A £15 pre-payment card used to last from Monday until Friday, and then a cold weekend. Now it runs out on Wednesday.”*¹ *“Previously, you’d work through the numbers and come up with a plan. Now the numbers just don’t work.”*¹

The long term impact of the current increases are multiple and serious including health impacts through people avoiding heating their homes to reduce fuel costs or increased social isolation impacting on mental health. *“Domestic heating [or lack of] can impact on pre-existing body circulatory problems and cause deterioration in a person’s condition”*¹, *“The cost-of-living crisis can increase levels of social isolation in RBWM due to poor mental health, financial worries, and inability to socialise due to expensive travel”*⁴

In RBWM:

The **cost of living is the biggest concern for residents** over the next 1-3 years. Over half of respondents (53%) named it as their top worry, and over two thirds (70%) of 18-34s.³

65% of those socially renting and 60% of those privately renting said that financially their households were **just about getting by or finding it difficult**, compared to 32% of residents overall.³

Local CAB data shows an **increase** over the last 3 years of those with **disabilities, long term health conditions** and those of **ethnic minority backgrounds accessing their services**.

CAB data indicated that the **most common types of debt issues** people wanted help with in 2022-23 were:
-energy debts
-council tax arrears¹⁵

Cost of Living

Impacting residents unequally

Concern about the rising cost of living is causing stress and anxiety, which has knock on effects on wellbeing, relationships and parenting. *“It makes you feel like a rubbish parent, I can’t really give my children what I want to because it costs too much.” (Female, Dedworth)²*

Those just about managing risk being pushed into difficulties. Higher numbers of residents are accessing foodbanks, seeking support for debt management, and reporting increases in evictions. **VCS organisations are reporting an increase in the numbers of single and childless residents, and those in low paid work, coming forward to seek help.** *“We are seeing a lot of new clients [at the Food Bank] who say they would never have dreamed they’d need to come here”¹*

³**VCS** interviewees suggest that services which are dependent on donations from other residents are likely to struggle, as residents who would previously have been able to donate are now struggling. *“Foodbanks are struggling as donations are depleting. This is costing them money to keep supplying food which may have adverse consequences in the future”¹*

*“I’ve got a friend who is so depressed they have started cutting themselves – they’ve got a mortgage and the mortgage has now gone up by another £400. He is just about scraping by now, so where is he supposed to find that money? Then he’s going to go into debt so how long will it be before they kick him out of his house and he’s homeless?... He has gone to see specialists about it because he’s worried that he could end up killing himself, that’s how bad it has got. He is actually skipping meals so that his kids can eat...”
(Male, Datchet)²*



Key Cohorts & Areas

Where and by whom are inequalities being experienced in RBWM

- Inequality is **clustered in particular neighbourhoods** - although there are households or smaller groups experiencing challenges across the borough.
- The IMD shows **highest levels of disadvantage** in the following areas, and this was supported through our engagement.
 - *Central Maidenhead (St Mary's, Oldfield, Belmont, Riverside)*
 - *Dedworth in Windsor*
 - *Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury*

The following **cohorts** are more likely to experience inequalities (confirmed by Residents Survey), as such **our work should take into account the specific needs of:**

- *Residents with low income / in poverty*
- *Residents in Social housing*
- *Residents in Private Rented housing*
- *Residents of Black and Asian ethnicity*
- *Those aged 75 +*
- *Those living with a disability*
- *Those with caring responsibilities*

Experiences of disadvantage and inequality differ between neighbourhoods and cohorts, some of these groups are likely to be clustered in areas of deprivation others dispersed across the borough.

- **Those aged 75+** are likely to be dispersed through RBWM, including in rural areas which may exacerbate the risk of social isolation and loneliness. This cohort are also more likely to be disabled
- **Social housing estates**, are often located in deprived neighbourhoods and can experience stigma and concentrations of anti-social behaviour
- Younger residents in low paid employment, are more likely to live in **private rental**, and to struggle with rising costs, mental health and accessing assets of the borough e.g. green spaces.

Key Cohorts & Areas

Areas of deprivation

Geography impacts on how inequalities are experienced locally, however key challenges are shared.

The key challenges identified in focus groups with residents demonstrate shared concerns across the different clusters of deprivation. Feeling that they are not listened to, even forgotten about, compared to their more affluent neighbours.

Residents were experiencing multiple challenges which were closely linked and they felt unable to solve these in isolation, often experienced as a lack of control over their lives. Some felt that the areas they lived in and perceived lack of support, were determining their outcomes.

However there are also important differences in experience: Datchet, Horton & Wraysbury is a rural area. Central Maidenhead and Dedworth are urban.

Datchet residents with low incomes were more likely to be concerned about public transport and isolation. Residents in central Maidenhead were concerned about infrastructure and overstretched services. Those in Dedworth seemed best served through current support, with increased resilience, but gave fewer examples of residents pulling together independently.



“Definitely a correlation between the environment people grow up in and where they are. Sometimes people fight for different but sometimes they just fall into things.”¹

Key Cohorts & Areas

Insight from our Residents in Dedworth

- **Lack of opportunities** especially for young people, linked to an increase in anti-social behaviour and drug use

“There are not enough things for teenagers to do so they get up to mischief – I think they need more youth clubs.” (Female)²

- **Cost of living, mental health and crime**

“If you can’t afford to pay for things then it has a detrimental effect on your mental health.” (Female)²

“The cost of everything going up and rising, we aren’t going to move out of our council properties and leave it for someone else who needs it, we are just going to be stuck there for the rest of our lives.” (Male)²

Assets

Dedworth residents highlighted the strong community spirit, amenities and community projects, councillors, and Windsor castle and river as strengths of their local area.

- Residents in Dedworth **cited the most examples of support**, mentioning the Abri job hub & others

“I go to our local Housing (Association), Abri, and speak to one of the women there. They are amazing, they help you out as much as they can, with the job search and the Hub down at the flats, they give you Food Bank vouchers weekly. They are good if you’ve got the balls to ask for help but it is embarrassing” (Female)²

- However, they were also **least likely to think of examples of the community pulling together**, independent of services.



Key Cohorts & Areas

Insight from our Residents in Datchet

Whilst the other areas looked at are located more centrally in towns, Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury include some of the few areas in the borough defined as rural. This impacts on the ways in which challenges are experienced, with isolation, transport and loneliness featuring more strongly.

- **Transport** – poor bus services or transport links are negatively impacting opportunities

“You look on the job websites like ‘Indeed’ etc. but most of the jobs are out of the area and most people can’t drive or there’s no public transport to get to these jobs so they are restricted.” (Male)²

- **Poor mental health, loneliness and isolation**

“I think a lot of people feel isolated and depressed” (Female)², “You have to look for the help and I think if you are feeling like that and feeling shameful and don’t want to look for the help and don’t think it’s out there.” (Datchet)²

- **Anti- social behaviour** and community cohesion

“The park is really nice but we have encountered some anti-social behaviour, my kids have been bullied there, there has been physical contact and bad language in that park.” (Female)²

- **Cost of living crisis** and **lack of opportunities**

“We live quite close to the airport and everyone got laid off from the airport during Covid so that was I don’t know how many thousand jobs.” (Male)²

Assets

Datchet residents highlighted the community feel, open green spaces and good primary schools in their local area.



Key Cohorts & Areas

Insight from our Residents in Central Maidenhead

- Increase in resident population **straining existing infrastructure** e.g. schools, GP's & specialist services (i.e. mental health)
"They want to attract new people to the town and want to build lots of lovely affordable housing and actually they could just take care of the infrastructure that is already here and the people that are already here, rather than trying to attract new people."
(Female, Riverside/Belmont)²
- **35** Lack of **affordable housing** and suitable opportunities within Maidenhead
"Maidenhead has got to the point where it might price itself out of itself, the people who live in Maidenhead can't live in Maidenhead because it's too expensive." (Male, St Marys). *"All of my children work out of Maidenhead, in Bracknell and Slough."*
(Female, Riverside/Belmont).²

Assets

Safe place to live, with good community assets for example schools and sports facilities. Well connected, especially to London.

- Cost of Living and **household finances**
"The challenge is budgeting with gas and electricity. I've just moved into a flat, I moved in two months ago, and obviously it is going to be a struggle."
(Male, Riverside/Belmont)²
- Groups or individuals **feeling left behind** by the prosperity and development in Maidenhead.
"I think there is a two-tier system happening in Maidenhead – you've got the commuters who work in London who are on a much higher salary...and then people who live in Maidenhead and you've got the salary difference. The town is catering more for the people who've got money and not for the people who haven't." (Male, St Marys)²



Key Themes

Overcoming or compounding challenges

The next section explores Inequalities through the key themes which have emerged from the project. We will look at these themes both as challenges and as “protective factors”, these are the factors in a persons life which help them to achieve positive outcomes and overcome challenges. We will explore the following **five themes**:

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1. **Poverty and low income** – lack of resource & households in debt
2. **Housing** – access to affordable, quality and appropriate homes
3. **Life Skills** – struggling to navigate daily life
4. **Health** – mental and physical illness
5. **Relationships** – negative relationships or relationship breakdown

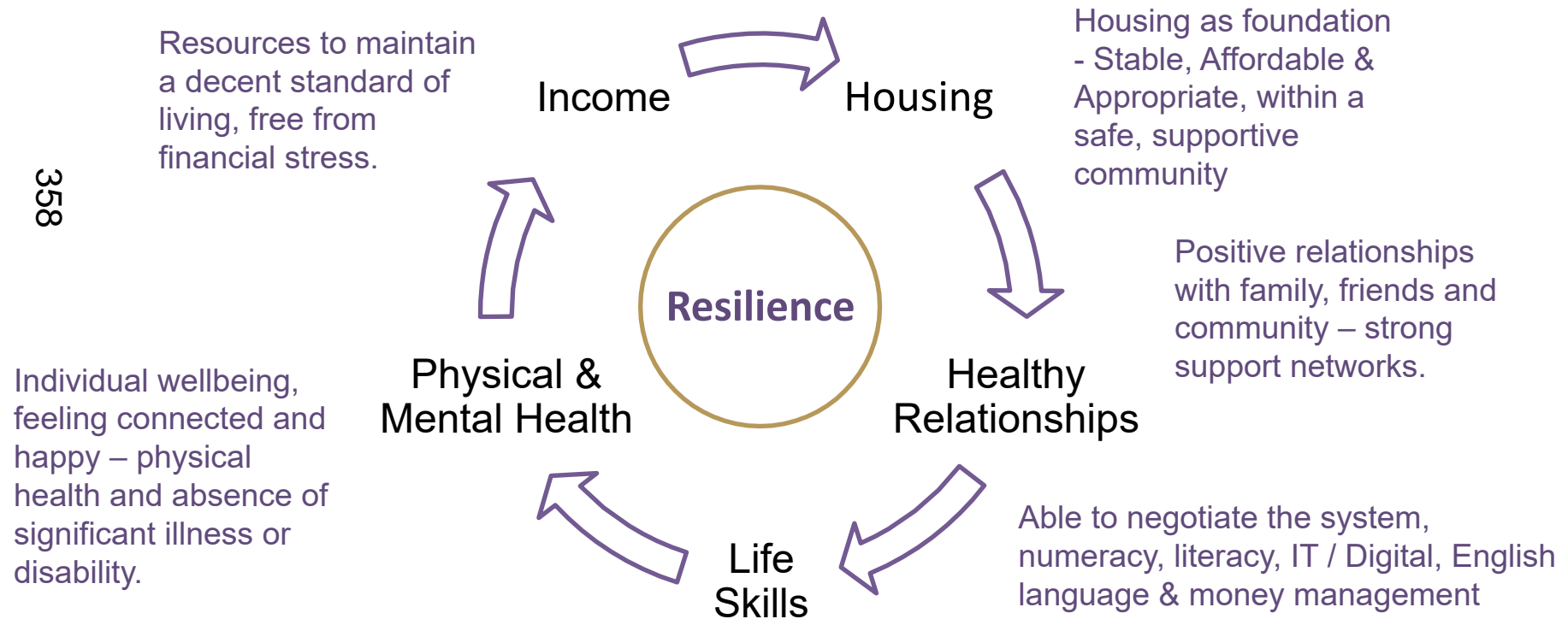
The same factors can either cause challenges, or act as protective factors. They are **interlinked and exacerbate one another**, meaning that it is often **difficult to pinpoint a single, root cause** or to **resolve an issue in isolation**. When a resident experiences interlinked and complex challenges, they can cause feelings of **chaos** in the lives of residents, **spiralling out of control** and removing any feeling of agency.

“Those suffering in one area of life are more likely to suffer in all areas of their lives. E.g those who have disadvantaged backgrounds appear to struggle more often with poor mental health. It is a cycle.”¹

Protective Factors

Underpinning resilience

Positive outcomes across the following five factors underpin individual lives and thriving communities. They also act as protective factors, which build the resilience, which enables individuals to overcome or bounce back more quickly from challenges and negative experiences.



Key Emerging Inequalities

Poverty and Low Income

Poverty is both a cause and consequence of wider Inequalities. Those struggling financially in the borough include those on benefits. Unemployment, disability, caring responsibilities or old age can contribute to these challenges. *“UC is survival money... you can’t live on it long term.”*¹

Those working in low paid sectors – may be working two or more different jobs – often insecure and unstable and possibly in and out of work. For example, through zero hours contracts: *ONS estimates indicate that zero hours contracts have grown fivefold since 2008, currently 3% of the workforce*¹⁶

Caring responsibilities increase the chances of living in poverty with 24% of informal carers in this situation compared to 21% of those without caring responsibilities⁹. *“With special needs schools, there is a long waiting list to access those facilities... For two years my daughter couldn’t go to school because no normal school is going to take her. The effect on me is that I couldn’t work”*²

Rises in the cost of living are increasing the numbers of residents who are experiencing financial difficulties – and making it more difficult to stay out of debt. *“it’s not easy to live on benefits without getting into a mess – especially now.”*¹

In RBWM:

6068 households on UC¹³

2671 pupils eligible for FSM (21/22)¹², **AFC report increase to 2937 for 22/23**

3.28% of households are experiencing hunger. 9.26% struggle with food insecurity & 9.39% are worried about their food security (Jan 2021)¹²

In 2020 - **6.4% were experiencing fuel poverty**¹²

2011 Census data indicates that **3.8% of households are overcrowded**⁹

In the UK:

In Dec 2021, **42% of UC claimants were in employment**¹⁷

Disabled people are almost twice as likely to be unemployed as non-disabled people¹⁸

Most minority ethnic groups earn less than White British employees¹⁹

Key Emerging Inequalities

Poverty and Low Income

Not having enough money makes it harder to deal with other challenges, to achieve ambitions and enjoy life.

“you can’t think about much else when you don’t have any food to put on the table”¹

It causes stress, anxiety and low self esteem, which in turn affects relationships and wellbeing.

“I’m so stressed about money that I am shouting at my kids all the time”¹

Living in affluent borough can make it harder to live on a low income, and can increase feelings of inadequacy and shame.

“parents feel bad that their child can’t have the expensive Xmas present or latest iphone like their classmates”¹

It can feel like a two tier system, where those without resources struggle to access support.

“richer families pay for private assessments and don’t have to wait to get support [for SEND children]”¹

Interviewees linked the consequences of poverty and specifically the impact of cost of living rises to an increase in crime, with people turning to stealing to meet their basic needs. *Crime goes hand in hand with poverty, kids see people with money and then see crime e.g. burglary and drug dealing as the route forward”¹. “There isn’t enough food at the food bank, shoplifting is going up”¹*

This crime and anti-social behaviour in turn affects business and wider incomes. *“We’ve had so much damage, especially taxis, they get raided on a daily basis, the taxi drivers don’t even bother reporting it anymore and have given up because they know the police do nothing. They were raiding working vehicles like cars, taxis, vans.” (Female, Boyn Grove)²*

The consequences of low income can be severe, across all protective factors on health, relationships, housing and skills /the ability to find paths out of challenging situations.

Key Emerging Inequalities

Voices of our residents on Poverty

Financial concerns, especially the short term impact of the cost of living crisis and knock on effect of the global pandemic are impacting on our residents' outlook for the future and their sense of control over their own destinies.

"I work full time and I'm actually looking to do an apprenticeship to become a paramedic, which is more money than what I'm on now. But even then, it will work out the same amount. I'll just be getting less basic universal credit and obviously more wages. So like my income in the household doesn't really change"²

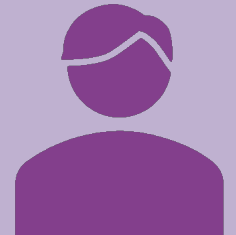


(18-35 yr old Resident)

"The public transport in the area is an issue. People are pretty much limited in where they look for employment, they are pretty much limited to Windsor or maybe over towards Ascot a little bit. There's only a handful of options to people and it's not necessarily the jobs you want to do"²



(Male, Dedworth)



"I think with Covid hitting it has caused a lot of pressure on a lot of people hasn't it, not just mentally but financially as well and it's just like trying to pick the country up again and make it work and it is hard, it really."²

(Female, Dedworth)



Key Emerging Inequalities

Housing

Barriers to finding secure, decent, affordable housing in the borough is a major underpinning cause of inequality and disadvantage. It is also driving younger, less affluent residents to live elsewhere.

Affordability – The high cost to rent or own housing in the borough is prohibitive for many residents. The affordability ratio is one of highest in the country. Private rents are expensive and rising, including through the Elizabeth line effect.

“I saw an example of a 30% rent increase- when residents challenged, they got evicted”¹

Social housing

- There is a lack of social housing stock: few larger family homes leading to overcrowding; and a lack of accessible homes restricts downsizing and limits options in borough.
- Rising demand, driven by private rent rises.

‘Of all the places we operate, we are most worried about supply in RBWM’¹ – housing provider.

- RBWM does not own temporary accommodation – increasing challenge of placing in borough.
- Challenges resolving poor maintenance and adaptations.

In RBWM:

5% in receipt of housing benefit (Aug 2022)¹²

3.07 households per 1,000 were in temporary accommodation (higher than England which is 2.15) (Q4 2021-22)¹²

Three most common reasons for homelessness (according to our housing dept):

- Private Rental Eviction
- Family and friends eviction
- Domestic Violence

Homelessness can be hidden, i.e. sofa surfing

The average monthly private sector rent for a 2 bedroom property in RBWM was £1,187, compared to £735 the English average (2020/2021)¹²

Almost a third (31%) of 18-34 year olds cited access to affordable housing as one of their biggest concerns over the next 1-3years, much higher than the 13% of all residents.³

44% of adults in contact with secondary mental health services in RBWM live in stable and appropriate accommodation. This is lower than both the Southeast and England averages, 52% and 58% respectively (2019/20)¹⁰

Key Emerging Inequalities

Housing

Private Rented Sector (PRS)

Short term contracts are increasingly popular in the private rented sector, this creates instability for some residents - *“Lots of 12 month tenancies which is a complete joke, no stability for people, need a 4 or 5 year lease.”¹*

- **Housing Residents with Complex Needs**

Residents with complex needs struggle to find **appropriate accommodation**, i.e. adapting a home for those with **limited mobility**. Permission is needed to make adaptations in PRS, often requiring financial support. In social housing there is a shortage of suitable properties.

- **Risky behaviours or complex needs**

Accommodating residents with **challenging behaviours** is complicated for housing services. Neighbours may not want a particular type of client living in their area and grouping those facing disadvantage into particular areas, can create issues in the wider community. *“Its not just about support services for the person affected but also for the people around them. Everyone's in a lifeboat and it is pulling people out the water to the lifeboat that might sink”¹*

- **Support to sustain accommodation**

Some tenants lack the skills to manage a tenancy sometimes linked to other key challenges for example mental health. Services may have difficulties offering support tailored to every households different needs.

- **Impact of poor housing**

Poor housing impacts on health – examples were given of residents living in housing with mould going to the GP with respiratory conditions.

Lack of suitable housing exacerbates family tensions, issues for households with disability.



Key Emerging Inequalities

Voices of our residents on Housing

Housing issues were raised frequently during our research, including lack of affordable options to buy or rent, housing quality and maintenance of rented homes.

“Rents and everything in general, private renting is so extortionate around these local areas - because you’re near the Royal Borough it is sky-high. If you go out of the Royal Borough area it is slightly cheaper...like as far out as Reading you start getting cheaper private rentals but if you’re working in this area it is too far to commute.”²



(Male, Datchet)

“Too many flats are a common complaint from residents, too many flats are being built and too many properties are being put up ...and there is a lot of development of ‘affordable housing’ but it’s not actually affordable for anyone... There is a lot of housing, which is good in one way, but it’s not ‘considered’ affordable housing”²



(Female, Riverside/Belmont)

I got stuck in my lift on Monday for an hour and a half, our front door to the building has been broken from vandalism so anybody can walk in if they push the door, and if it’s not that then it’s the car park gates. I’m paying rent not only on my flat but I also have to pay rent on the car park because otherwise I would have nowhere to park.... on the whole I feel quite unsafe.” (Female, Maidenhead)²

Key Emerging Inequalities

Life Skills

Skills are a toolkit which help to navigate daily life. Without these skills individuals and groups are disadvantaged. The project highlighted these key skills gaps affecting some of our residents:

Basic life skills - These include skills to manage a household, hold down a job, and live in a complex world. For example cooking, paying bills, buying furniture. *“often tenants don’t realise that when you get a council house, it’s an empty property. They don’t know how to get set up with utilities, where to buy furniture, they haven’t got any savings to get themselves even the basics,”*¹

Skills for employment – Residents who struggled in formal education can find it hard to find opportunities to develop the skills needed to gain employment and to progress out of lower paid jobs. *“Difficult to gain the skills to increase income.... If you are working in some jobs it doesn’t matter how hard you work your hourly rate will be the same - if you want more you have to find a way to change job, but how?”*¹

Pathways into work and further education can also be limited for those with SEND or learning disabilities.

In particular, digital skills are harder to develop for those who are not in work.. *“If people are under/unemployed they will have less opportunity to develop digital skills and will get ‘left behind’”*¹

In RBWM:

25.00% of residents highlight that they have a low level of financial knowledge and 20.00% report low levels of confidence managing their money (2020)¹²

Only 29% of the demand for face-to-face debt advice could be met by local supply (2019)¹²

In 2020 – **4.7%** of **16- to 17-year-olds** in RBWM were **not in education, employment or training**²⁰

1% cannot speak English or cannot speak English well⁵

14.1% of school-aged children have English as an additional language²¹

In the UK:

WEA data shows 1/3 who have no qualifications live in poverty¹⁶

Those with a higher level of education had higher levels of food security, of those with only entry level attainment 74% were food secure, this rises to 92% for Level 4 or above²²

Key Emerging Inequalities

Life Skills

Financial management & budgeting - Many residents lack skills for managing on a tight budget, not getting into unmanageable debt, making rational decisions about spending and saving. This is particularly important given cost of living rises.

English language skills and culture - Lack of fluency in English is a major barrier to employment and integration. Cultural differences, can also make it more difficult to access to services. *Those who speak English as a second language also felt that the confusing benefits and employment systems were big barriers to finding long term employment.*⁴

Confidence & self-esteem are closely linked to life skills – It can be very challenging to increase your skills, or even ask for help if you don't feel good about yourself. Not having or feeling confident and lacking skills can further increase **feelings of isolation**.

*“You almost need to have a certain amount of confidence I feel to go to a food bank and there are going to be people who don't want to tell anybody.” (Female, Datchet)*²

Digital exclusion is a particular issue for older populations - Residents highlighted that increased use of the internet in daily life and in accessing support can be a barrier for older people, increasing isolation and risk of being scammed⁴

*“Also don't assume that everyone could do things on email. Not all old people use e-mail. My husband wouldn't have a clue. A lot of people haven't got computers. The older people could do with the support, because they've never been brought up with them.”*² (65+ yr old Resident)

*“Everything is online and older people report not having access to computers/internet at home. They are really struggling because they cannot speak to a person about services.”*¹



Key Emerging Inequalities

Health – Mental and Physical Illness

Long term conditions – these conditions make it harder to work and can lower self esteem, for example younger people diagnosed with conditions found there was limited targeted support as it was unusual and surprising for those in their age group. In contrast older groups complained their poor health was seen as inevitable

“Life costs you £583 more on average a month if you're disabled. Families of disabled children on average, face extra costs of £581 a month. For almost a quarter (24%) of families with disabled children, extra costs amount to over £1,000 a month. 2 million (43%) of the 4.5 million children in poverty are living in a family where someone is disabled”¹⁸

Ageing borough – Two trends, an ageing population and the social changes which see more of us living alone - are likely to exacerbate poor health, isolation and loneliness in the future. Health decreases over age and can gradually or suddenly leave residents unable to meet their basic needs. This causes disadvantage and multiple challenges: including isolation and loneliness.

“The health is a problem at the moment. I was never ill, for the last 25 years in my last job I never had a day off sick. [Now] I've got COPD, diabetes, hypertension, so there's always something going on.... as soon as I retired, I suddenly collapsed and that was it...I can't do hardly anything. I can't do the cleaning anymore I get out of breath; I struggle”²

In RBWM

The groups most likely to report mental health as one of their key concerns over the next 1-3 years were 18-34s (19%) and social renters (18%). Three times the overall rate of 6%³

15% increase in PIP (disability benefit) cases involving psychiatric disorders (Nov 21 – Oct 22) with a 13% increase for overall PIP claims¹³

43% of unemployed in UK have poor mental health (Jan 2021)²³

Poverty is particularly high within families where there are adults cared for, with more than one-third living in poverty. The inability to work is the key driver for poverty among carers. In 2017/18, some 36% of working-age carers were not in work, compared with 23% of non-carers²⁴

26.3% of current smokers work in routine and manual jobs. This is statistically worse when compared with the overall borough smoking prevalence (2020/21)²⁵

Key Emerging Inequalities

Health – Mental and Physical Illness

Mental health was the key concern emerging through frontline interviews – residents in RBWM are reporting stress, loneliness, anxiety and across the board. Particular challenges and experiences, for example cost of living or experiencing debt or domestic violence were linked to increasing stress and mental health issues among residents *“Loneliness is an absolute theme, it is a national issue, and RBWM is no exception.”¹*

Poor mental health in turn, may create other challenges, by lowering self esteem, and undermining people’s resilience to manage other areas of their lives, for example *“I work with a depressed mother who often retreats to a darkened room. Then ends up ordering takeaways 3-4 times per week to feed her children, costing her several hundred pounds every month and taking her further into debt”¹*

“One common pattern I see with service users is for older adults with chronic mental illness – it is really hard to break the cycle. I have seen this pattern recurring many times, with individuals over 40 who have had a mental illness like psychosis, at that age they seem unlikely to fully recover. There tend to be on-going symptoms and I notice in contact with others, these individuals tend to be perceived as odd. This leads to challenges with social integration and sometimes to life on the streets. There we see alcoholics mixing with other vulnerable groups and these individuals are at high risk of problematic drinking”¹

Frontline staff account of Challenges faced by Residents with Chronic Mental Illness



The quote above from a frontline member of staff shows an example of mental health challenges at the most extreme. This cycle shows the inter-play between mental health, isolation, housing and addiction. Breaking these cycles is a key challenge for our approach to inequalities.



Key Emerging Inequalities

Voices of our residents (those with a disability / 65+) on Health

Long term health conditions often correlated with age or disability and contributed to feelings of isolation and loneliness; these residents often feel they are not being supported appropriately.

“There’s a lot of older people now up here. We’ve been up here a long time and a lot of the older people up here are quite sort of lonely and on their own and struggle. You can have a little walk around the local shops but as you know, they’re expensive and the buses are only one an hour. There’s nowhere to go and nobody to talk to and things like that, do you know what I mean?”²



(65+ yr old Resident)

“I think all of my age group, we’re just cast aside and you become not essential anymore we get to a point where we are not wanted any more. You know? Because of the fact that you are not actually producing anything. I worked as a plumber since I was 12 years old and because we are not contributing to the system, we’re just cast aside and that’s the feeling I get. I’m sure a lot of people feel the same”²



(65+ yr old Resident)

“The buses are only one an hour now and it’s difficult trying to get out if you want to go shopping. So, you try and get to Wickham or Reading or somewhere, you’ve got several buses or several trains to there. For disabled people because I use a mobility scooter, there’s just no sort of transport.”²



(65+ yr old Resident)

Key Emerging Inequalities

Voices of our residents (those with a disability / 65+) on Health

Long term health conditions often correlated with age or disability and contributed to feelings of isolation and loneliness; these residents often feel they are not being supported appropriately.

“Health-wise it definitely depends on your background. Anybody that says heavy manual work is good for you has never done any, because it catches up with you over time, and it does. It’s what I’ve done, I’ve worked outside all my life. I’ve never worked in an office, and I suffer from arthritis for example. I’ve had both my knees replaced and one shoulder has been replaced with arthritis.”²

(65+ yr old Resident)



Key Emerging Inequalities

Relationships

Partner relationships and conflict. Lacking supportive relationships in childhood can increase the risk of negative relationships in adulthood. Romantic relationship breakdown or bad relationships emerged as key challenges. With relationship breakdown and abusive relationships linked to stress, financial difficulties, debt, isolation and mental health difficulties. Stress may in turn contribute to damaging relationships, causing a negative cycle; *“Most of those accessing support for domestic violence have had ACEs (adverse childhood experiences), people have often seen domestic abuse at home, often they are repeat victims and some have substance issues as result”.*¹

Community and social relationships, can supplement for lacking or poor community or family relationships however frontline accounts noted that it is *“hard these days, as there seems to be a lack of a sense of community for some”*¹ Further highlighting that **the enablers of community,** for example digital access, transport and community might further exclude some residents’.

Support services: Services can provide sustained relationships and support, but are not a substitute for friends and family: *‘what people need is friendship. And that’s very hard to give if you’re providing services, because you need to think about efficiency, processes...’*¹

In RBWM:

137.5 per 10,000 of under-18 year olds are in need as a result of family stress or dysfunction or absent parenting. This is significantly higher than the national average of 93.8 children per 10,000³³

12% of residents indicated they feel lonely always, often or some of the time Over a quarter (26%) of those with a disability, one in five (20%) of those who are not working, and 15% of over 75s³

52% of over 75s never engage with any local community groups, activities or events, 56% of those with a disability and 60% of those living in social housing³

In the UK:

Nearly half of children in lone parent families live in poverty, compared with one in four of those in couple families (2022)²⁶

Key Emerging Inequalities

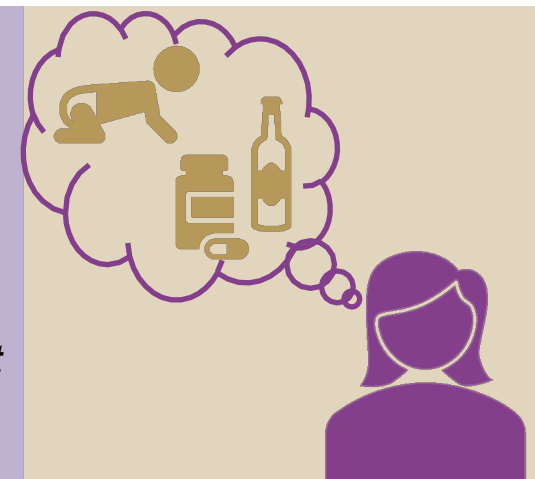
Relationships

Parental and family relationships, offer a key support system to children and teach life skills, care leavers for example often face significant challenges as a result. AFC noted a increase in risk to children, linked to what they call the toxic trio, parental drug abuse, mental health challenges and domestic abuse. **Neglect, abuse or the absence of parents** was one of the most common factors for negative outcomes in the individual stories and case studies shared with us, for example see below.

Until Sophie was 9 she lived with her mother who used drugs, Sophie and her siblings experienced some kinds of neglect as their mother prioritised buying drugs.

Sophie then moved to live with her nan as her mum's house was no longer a manageable living environment. Sophie's nan was dependent on alcohol and when Sophie reached her teenage years, her nan struggled to manage Sophie's behaviour.

*Sophie was placed into care as a result. Moving frequently with inconsistent adult support throughout her childhood left Sophie with **anxiety, low self esteem and at risk of unhealthy adult relationships**.¹*



At a less extreme but serious level parental illness, stress, conflict or an absence of skills or self esteem in parents can also impact on children's outcomes. Children may step in to take on the role of young carers. People learn parenting from their parents and own childhood experiences, without role models it can be even harder to learn how to parent. *"They don't have family around to tell them it is ok to have days as a parent where you don't get dressed until lunch time or do your hair. This can have a greater impact on mental health and the potential for post-natal depression"*¹

Inequalities Group Together

What are the root causes or underpinning challenges?

The challenging circumstances individuals are born into can compound across the life course forming barriers to achieving positive outcomes.

The risk of poor outcomes increases when a number of the 5 key challenges, outline above, are combined.

Individuals who have experienced the care system are at particular risk and are over-represented among those experiencing the worst outcomes.

The next slide shows the life story of **Tom, a man who was taken into foster care at 6 weeks.**

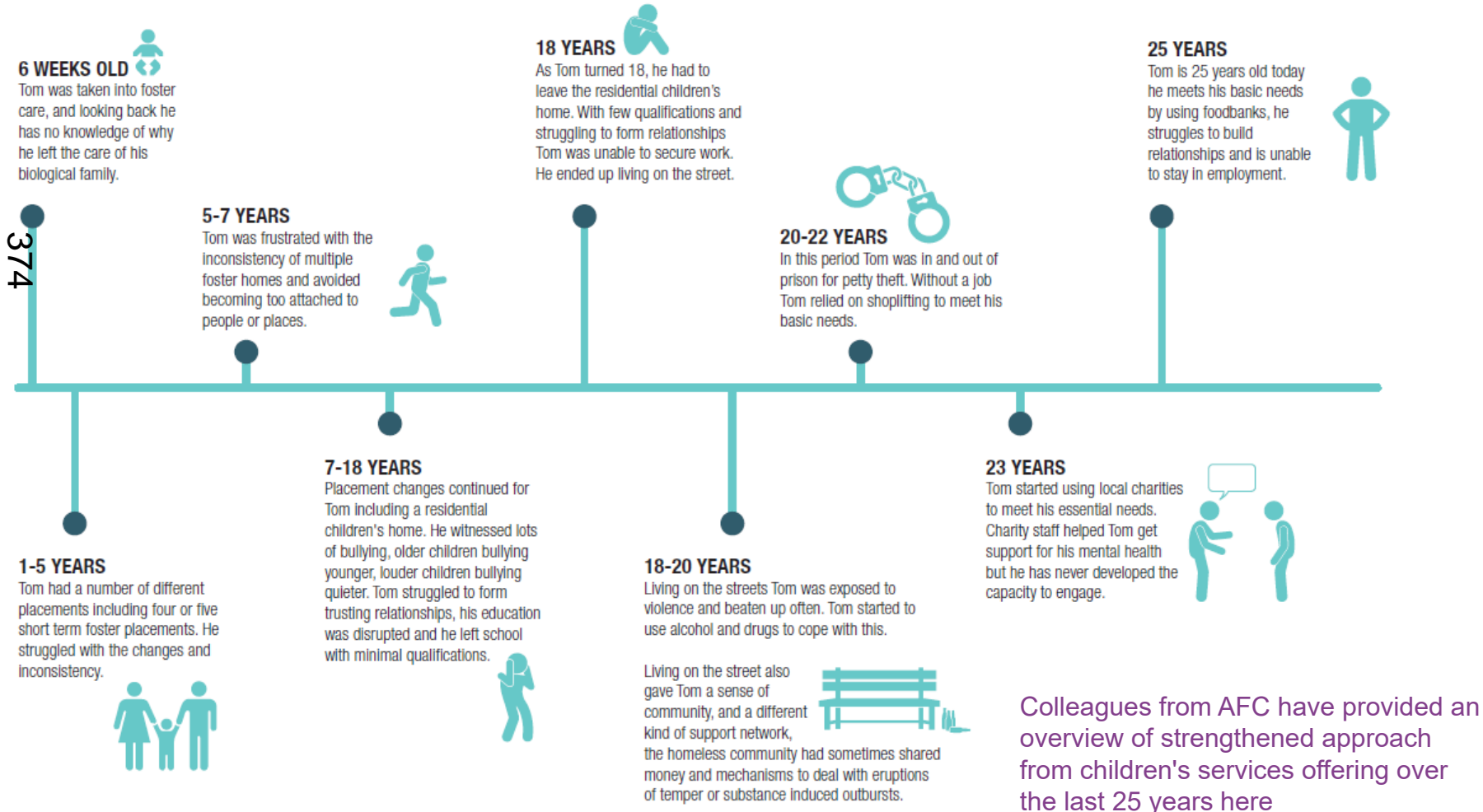
Thinking of our key challenges and protective factors, we can see these playing out in Tom's life:

- **Poverty and Low Income** – Tom is living in poverty and depending on food banks to meet his basic needs. Poverty is also often a cause of children being taken into care.
- **Housing** Tom is homeless, this has exposed him to further challenges – impacting on his relationship building and mental health.
- **Relationships** Tom struggles to form attachments as his early relationships have impacted his trust in people
- **Health** Tom's health isn't specifically referenced however, in the UK those who are homeless have worse health than the general population.²⁷
- **Skills** Educational disruption has left Tom lacking some key skills to sustain a job.

Inequalities Group Together

What are the root causes or underpinning challenges?

TOM IS A 25 YEAR OLD MAN, THIS IS HIS JOURNEY SO FAR, TOLD FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE. THIS LIFE STORY WAS SHARED WITH US BY A CHARITY VOLUNTEER WHO HAS BEEN HELPING TOM TO RE-INTEGRATE INTO SOCIETY.



The best start in life

Children and Young People

The strong relationship between childhood experiences and adult outcomes, and to intergenerational outcomes was a strong theme. This highlights the importance of getting the support for children and parents right.

Residents living on low incomes, highlighted that the cost of living was impacting on their ability to parent and especially to feel like good parents. *"It makes me feel rubbish because I can't afford everything that I want to... I work part time I can't work more than that because I have young children and it has to work around them too."* (Female, Deddington)

Further the impact of the lack of activities for young people in the local area, the high cost associated with clubs and the lack of specialist provision. *"Young people have it tough, there is nothing for them to do... We used to have youth centres but there is nothing like that around anymore."* (Female, Maidenhead), *"For the RBWM football club for my son, he wanted to join and it was £180 that it would have cost me for the whole year, that is insane."* (Female, Riverside/Belmont)

This was in turn linked to increases in antisocial behaviour i.e., vandalism and arson. *"When you get to the [school] holidays they run riot... it is a bit harder to take your kids to the park because you've got big groups of lads and girls... up to what teenagers get up to."*

In RBWM:

Higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) at 15.9% of pupils of school age. Partly due to the number of children in special schools in the borough, many of whom may not be resident in RBWM³³

Largest school readiness attainment gap in Berkshire East between.³³ Only 53% of those eligible for free school meals were developmentally ready for school, at the end of reception compared to 74.3% of those not eligible (2018/19)²⁸

6.3% of young people aged 16 to 17 are not in employment, education or training (NEET). This is significantly worse than the rest of Berkshire East and England³³

39.3% of year 6 children living in Datchet, Horton and Wraysbury are obese and overweight compared with 18.8% of children in Sunningdale and Cheapside (2017/18-2018/19)²⁹

In the UK:

Children who grow up in poverty are at greater risk of childhood traumas e.g., sexual abuse, parental separation or substance misuse³²

The best start in life

Voices of parents

Parents living in relative deprivation spoke about the challenges they face parenting. Highlighting the challenges in accessing timely support for their children, the inequalities they felt were present in the system and the importance of non-judgemental support.

“Otherwise, what a parent manages to get for their child is just a reflection of what they know and quite often that’s not very much because obviously you’re not well read and everything. I’ve been applying for various therapies for my daughter in a special needs school and I’ve just been told it’s in the pipeline and that’s it. So, unless you have money and unless you are able to fight, you’ve got a lawyer...you won’t get for your child what you need. You can see parents that are financially stable who are financially able to fight for their child are able to get those. There’s huge inequality in that sense.”²

“I’d like to go somewhere you are not going to get judged and I think talking to other parents and adults really does help instead of carrying it all around on your own. I know there’s loads of people who have struggled in the past and have got nowhere to go, ...sometimes you can’t always turn to your family. It’s better sometimes to talk to a stranger... I’m not just talking about myself but there are loads of people and I think that this is why they’re turning more to alcohol, drugs, you know. It’s a cycle”²

“There are long waiting lists for mental health services, for a child’s diagnosis of ADHD you’re talking five years minimum and we were on the top priority waiting list because my husband is in the Army, we got social services involved and we had to wait three years.”²



Representation and diversity

Building a more inclusive borough

The census 2021 results have shown that the borough is becoming increasingly diverse with ethnic minority representation* in the borough increasing by 11% since 2011, to make up 31% of the resident population. This raises the importance of reflecting on how we are serving all of our residents.

Some groups highlighted the lack of representation they saw of individuals like them, in positions of power in the council and in the way the borough is depicted, including in the media. This was linked to a feeling of exclusion, not feeling equally part of the community, and to worries about different treatment or potential discrimination. *“Just being left out puts that thought in your mind. Is it because of race/religion etc”*

377 “A local mosque in Maidenhead have been asking for planning permission for years, it is quite a small mosque, and nothing is happening, but you see all these big flats coming up, I don’t know what that’s all about”

Frontline staff also highlighted the role of unconscious bias, for example services might look differently at those whose cultural norms differ from their own, particularly when they are different to the majority.

Examples of residents showing a lack of empathy for particular groups was also highlighted. *“There is much stigma around rough sleepers...teenagers and lower income groups...Complaints [are] made...in an unempathetic tone.”*

Education focusing on learning about other cultures and religions, especially those in minority, was felt to create understanding and break down stereotypes. *“there is not enough education about the ...Gypsy, Roma, Traveller community for those outside of the community that identifies the historical racism, their lifestyles, disadvantages that they have faced, in a way that doesn’t just highlight the negative stereotypes. This would help to change perceptions.”*

Perceptions of existing support

- Residents were positive about local sources of support within the community, and this suggests opportunities to strengthen what is already working well.
- However, residents identified a lack of awareness of what is available and the need to feel confident and overcome feelings of shame, in order to ask for help.
- This points to a need for better communication and sign-posting and more outreach to those who lack confidence to engage, so that those who are informed, are not missing out on help.

“There are other resources like the Baby Bank which is a place where they have things that they can hand out to children, from newborns up to school age, like prams and cots and things like that and even school uniforms, but it’s not widely known about so it is about spreading the word to families that are really struggling.” (Female, Riverside/Belmont)²

- Where criticisms were raised, these focused on feeling that services were *‘faceless, nameless’*², with frequent staff changes and commitments to take action not being followed through.
- Face to face support within the local community was generally preferred. Some residents lamented not being *‘able to walk in to the Town Hall and speak to someone’*² any more.

1. Implications: Community hubs

- Both residents and those working with communities were in favour of bringing together advice and information into one place, through community hub models. These ways of working are already being taken forward, for example, within primary care hubs and libraries.

“Have a common place where people can find out information about social services and support networks and things like that.” (Male, Riverside/Belmont)²

“If there was a Hub somewhere, maybe like in a community library, where you could go and there was somebody designated there that could help you, [where you] can pop along and say, ‘Look, I’ve got an issue, where do I go, can you signpost me?’ and they say, ‘This is what you need to do’. I think that would help.” (Female, Dedworth)²

- There were also strong calls for more places where the community could get together, to build connections, and combat isolation and loneliness. Many residents felt that community facilities and activities had declined over time.

“It would be nice if there was somewhere for people to go in the local area who are lonely and want to meet friends and new people. Like a community centre, not just for children but for people like you and me who are now single...just meeting new people and doing different things – a community centre that is for all of us.” (Female, Maidenhead)²

2. Implications: Community building

- Residents set out a vision of the council, residents and the voluntary sector working together to create stronger communities. This supports work already in train through the 'Embedding Community Response', 'World Cafes' and Innovation Fund programmes and supports a strong role for the council in building community capacity.

"I don't think it's one particular thing when you're looking at trying to bring the community back together.... what you are trying to do is to rein everything in, but you need support with that and that's where the investment comes in or little ideas – enabling the community to come together to create these opportunities." (Female, Datchet)²

30 I think the Council has a role to inspire and create community locally and the two ways they can do that are communication – getting the message out, transparency, showing what's available - and saying what's missing and saying, 'We need some help here' so that people can say, 'Oh I can help you and I can activate it'. You can't really call on people to do stuff when they don't know where they are potentially needed." (Male, Maidenhead)²

"The Council would run it at the community centre with volunteers but it needs some energy behind it to get it started. This is the answer, this is what we need." (Female, Datchet)²

- Whilst there is a strong case for focusing community building activities in neighbourhoods with the highest levels of disadvantage, there individuals or small groups of households experiencing isolation or struggling across the borough. More targeted support to build networks, such as Wellbeing Circles, offer opportunities to work with individuals and small groups.

3. Implications: Addressing key issues

There are a number of opportunities to address key barriers to reducing disadvantage and inequalities in the borough.

- **Infrastructure and access to services:** There would be benefits in improving transport links for those without access to a car – focused in particular on supporting access to jobs and health services, through the new Transport Plan. There are opportunities to address residents’ particular concerns about the impacts of development in Maidenhead on infrastructure and access to services.
- **Housing:** the scale of housing challenges support the council’s plans to develop new social and affordable housing options – including for those requiring adapted or supported accommodation.
- **Skills:** Budgeting and financial management skills are particularly important due to the current cost of living rises. The Multiply Fund offers opportunities to strengthen provision. Building confidence, resilience and self-esteem are equally, if not more, important to enable all residents have the life skills to maximise their potential.
- **Support for parents, especially in the early years:** A stronger focus on ‘a best start in life’ for children at risk of disadvantage is important in embedding a preventative approach to reducing inequalities and breaking the cycle of disadvantage.
- **Intervening earlier and dealing with issues in the round:** An individual may not meet the threshold for any one service but have a low level of need across many areas. This research supports further strengthening of early intervention which addresses issues in the round.

4-5. Implications: Cost of living / Building an inclusive borough

4. Targeted support to help residents deal with rising costs of living

The cost of living is making life more difficult for residents and is having greater impacts on those who are already struggling.

Many residents in this research reported having to take difficult decisions, including choosing between heating and eating.

Stress caused by financial anxieties is having widespread impacts – perhaps even greater than those caused by reduced spending power.

The council's cost of living response, including the Here to Help campaign is important and offers opportunities to build an effective partnership to tackle wider disadvantage and inequality.

“I’m trying to avoid even thinking about it, because that’s going to lead to depression and like anxiety and things like that... [but] I’m aware there’s no easy way and these are things you can’t escape from.”
(Male interviewee)²

5. Building an inclusive borough

The council has a role to play in promoting an inclusive borough, which celebrates all communities and neighbourhoods through the ways in which it talks about the borough.

Messaging can encourage empathy, respect and connections within and between communities and reduce feelings of shame and isolation reported by residents facing disadvantage.

Within Maidenhead, the development of new housing and regeneration of the town centre, creates opportunities to build a stronger sense of place and community.

The increasing diversity of the borough prompts a greater focus on how the council is serving those with different cultures and needs.

“Because it’s a Royal Borough I think they tend to hide a lot of the underlying issues like homelessness.” (Male, Riverside/Belmont)²

References

The primary research conducted for this evidence base consisted of two key sets of interviews, which make up the quotes included (in purple) in this pack.

- 1. Frontline interviews** - conducted by an internal team with staff across the council, health and voluntary, community sector.
- 2. Community interviews** - conducted with residents by a Market Research Agency who were targeted as they were experiencing or at risk of key challenges and are therefore less likely to be satisfied with their experiences of living in the borough.

The quotes included in the pack are the opinion of individual respondents, though care has been taken to include quotes which aligned to key themes raised by a number of individuals and corresponding to quantitative data.

- 1 – Frontline Interviews, RBWM 2022 Inequalities Project
- 2 – Resident Interviews and Focus Groups, RBWM 2022 Inequalities Project
- 3 – RBWM 2022 Residents Survey, [Residents' survey 2022 | Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead \(rbwm.gov.uk\)](#)
- 4 – Wood Café Evaluation Report
- 5 - ONS (2022); [Census 2021](#)
- 6 - Frimley System Insights at 12-12-22
- 7 - Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2019); [English indices of deprivation 2019](#)
- 8 - ONS (2022); [Median house prices for administrative geographies](#)
- 9 - ONS (2012); [Census 2011](#)
- 10 - Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (2022); [Public Health Outcomes Framework](#)
- 11 - [The Best School Finder & School Catchment Area Checker | Locrating](#)
Accessed 11/11/22
- 12 - LG Inform [Home | LG Inform \(local.gov.uk\)](#)
- 13 – DWP Stat Explore [Stat-Xplore - Log in \(dwp.gov.uk\)](#)
- 14 – Berkshire Observatory <https://rbwm.berkshireobservatory.co.uk/>
- 15 – Citizens Advice (2022); [Cost of living dashboard](#)
- 16 – RBWM EST Working Group Insights Pack (2022)
- 17 - Universal Credit statistics, 29 April 2013 to 13 January 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- 18 - [Disability facts and figures | Disability charity Scope UK](#)
- 19 - [Household income - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- 20 - Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (2022); [Wider Determinants of Health profile](#)
- 21 - Department for Education (2022); [Schools, pupils and their characteristics](#)
- 22 - [Family Resources Survey: financial year 2019 to 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- 23 - [Unemployment and mental health - The Health Foundation](#)
- 24 - [UK Poverty 2019/20 | JRF](#)
- 25 - Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (2022); [Local Tobacco Control profiles](#)
- 26 - [Overall UK Poverty rates | JRF](#)
- 27 - [22.7 HEALTH AND HOMELESSNESS_v08_WEB_0.PDF \(local.gov.uk\)](#)
- 28 - Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (2022); [Public Health Outcomes Framework](#)
- 29 - Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (2022); [Obesity Profile](#)
- 30 – [Public health profiles - OHID \(phe.org.uk\)](#)
- 31 - [Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On - The Health Foundation](#)
- 32 - [Children in poverty at greater risk of childhood traumas | UCL News - UCL – University College London](#)
- 33 – Berkshire East HNA [Local Health Needs Assessments and Profiles - Berkshire East JSNA \(berkshirepublichealth.co.uk\)](#)

Appendix 1

Child Services enhanced support for care leavers

Key challenges in Tom's life resonated with our colleagues from AFC who wanted to outline some of the key processes & approaches in place in order to minimise the risk of challenges compounding across the life course for care leavers.

- **Early Years** – Children's services promote health connection with birth families through extended conversation to develop the young persons understanding of family network. This is often documented in a life story book.
- **Child-centred care focused on stability and healthy attachments** - Emotional attachment training is provided for professionals to ensure best practice. Enhanced focus and a formal structure to promote placement stability, including placement stability meetings, which involve intense support and intervention to minimise the risk of placement breakdown.
- **Enhanced 18-25 support package** – Care leavers are now supported from 18-25 years old, pathway planning begins at 16 or younger to ensure provision is made for the transition to adulthood . Including, virtual school to support young people into training/employment. Assigned a personal advisor. Focus on accommodation through a strengthened relationship between AFC and housing, incl council tax exemption.

APPENDIX C: INSIGHTS (2021 CENSUS)

1. POPULATION:

- **RBWM has seen a population increase of 6.2% since the last census in 2011.**
- **Overall the age breakdown is changing with growing numbers of older people.**
- **Noticeable outlier is a decrease in population within the age groupings (20-44).**

RBWM has seen a population increase of 6.2% from 144,500 (2011) to 153,500 (2021). The 2021 figure is slightly higher than the ONS projected population figure of 151,905 (calculated on a 2018 base). The RBWM increase is lower than the overall increase seen for England (6.6%) and the South East (7.5%) over the same period. The largest population increases in the South East over this period have been seen in Dartford (20.0%) and Milton Keynes (15.3%).

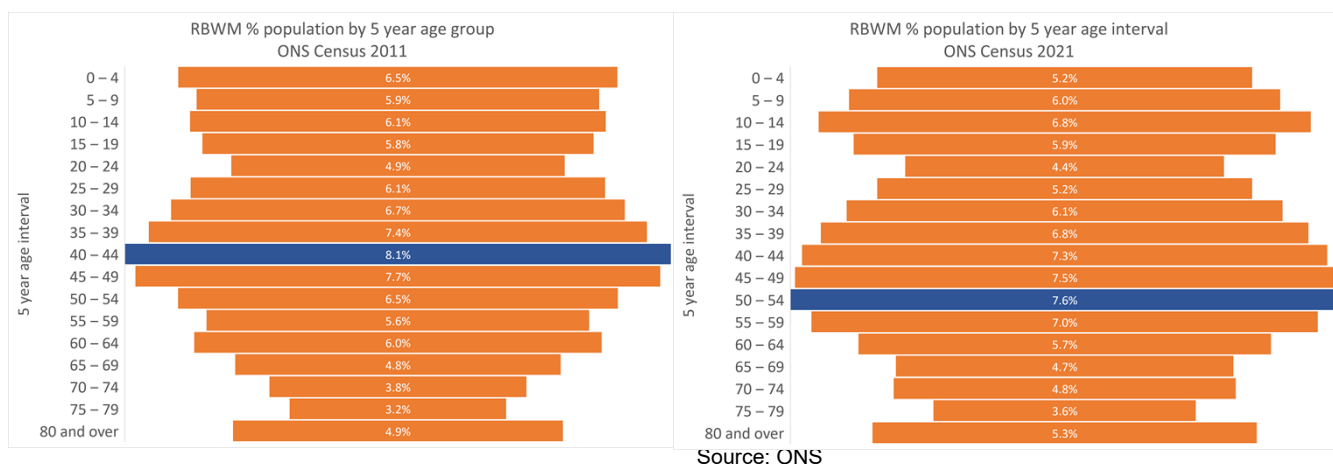
	2011	2021	% Change
Population	144500	153500	6.2%
Male	71328	75400	5.7%
Female	73232	78100	6.6%
Population density	736	781	6.1%
Largest 5-year age group	(40-44)	(50-54)	> aged
Households	58349	60900	4.4%

1.1 Change in population by 5-year age group interval:

Over the intervening 10-year period the largest population group interval has migrated from (40-44yrs) in 2011 to (50-54yrs) in 2021.

Based on current life expectancy¹ within the Royal Borough of 83 years, the largest demographic (50-54yrs) is predicted to proportionally create a greater demand on health and social care services in the foreseeable future.

1: OHID - ONS death registration data and mid-year population estimates (2016-2020)

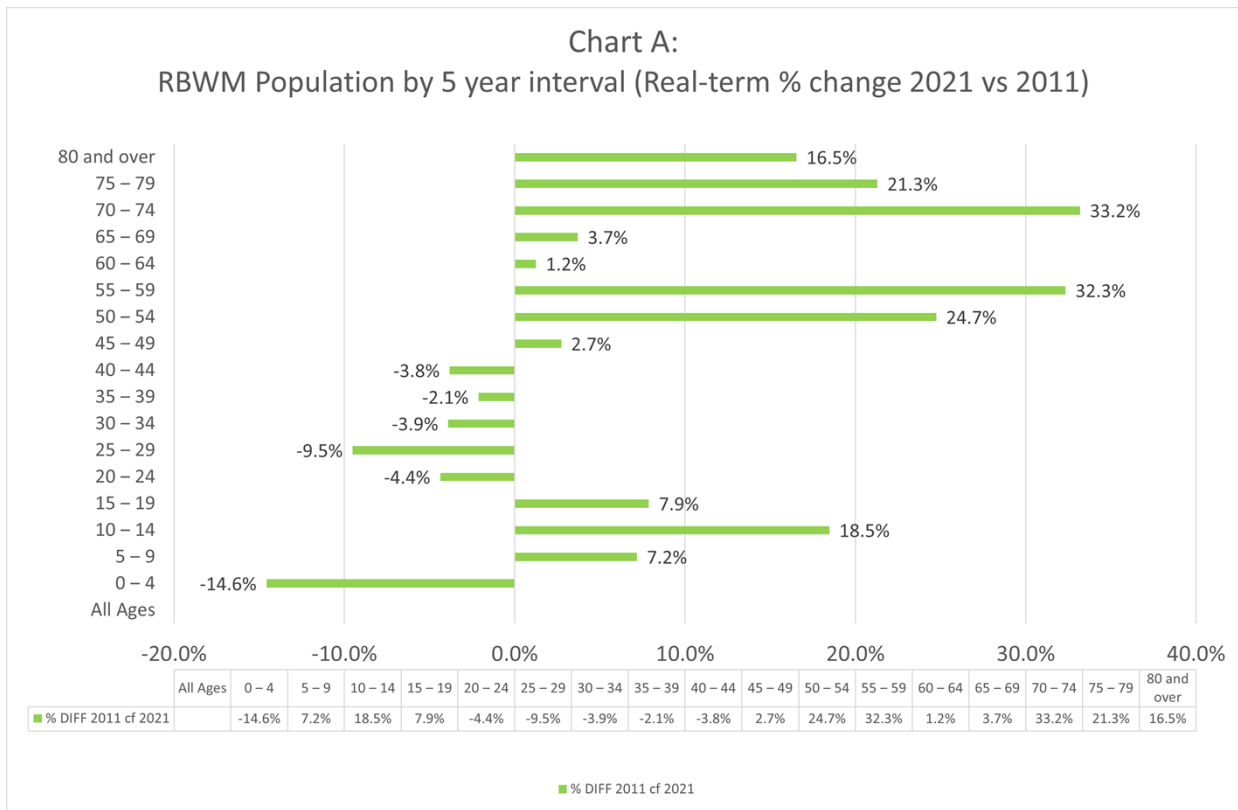


Overall the demographic shift within RBWM has aged since the last census in 2011 (Chart A). In real terms (actual population) the Royal Borough has seen marked decreases in key population groups:

- (0-4yrs) of -14.6%
- (20-44yrs) ranging from -2.1% to -9.5% [Note: possible correlation with high property prices locally]

With marked increases in the population age groups:

- (10-14yrs) of +18.5%
- (55-59yrs) of +32.3%
- (70-74yrs) of +33.2%.



1.2 Working and non-working population groups (2021 vs 2011)

Reflecting the ageing demographic shift within RBWM there has been a real term increase of 17.5% in people aged 65 years and over, compared with increases of 4.1% in people aged (15 to 64yrs), and a 3.3% increase in children aged under 15 years.

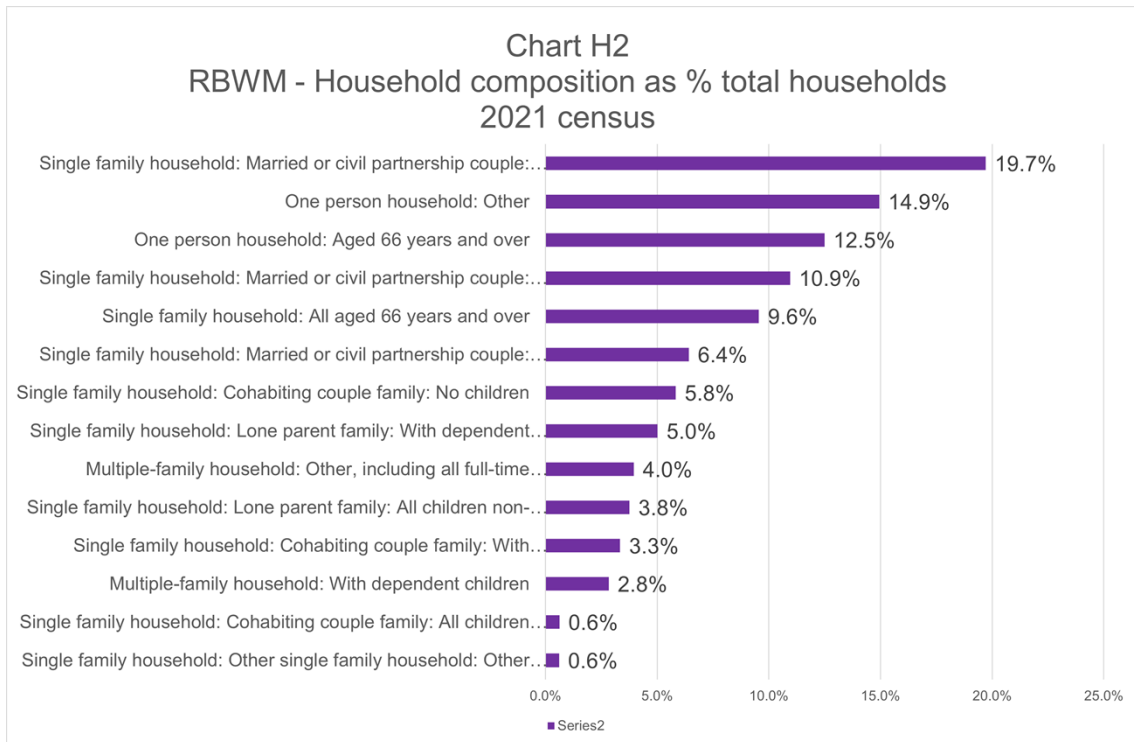
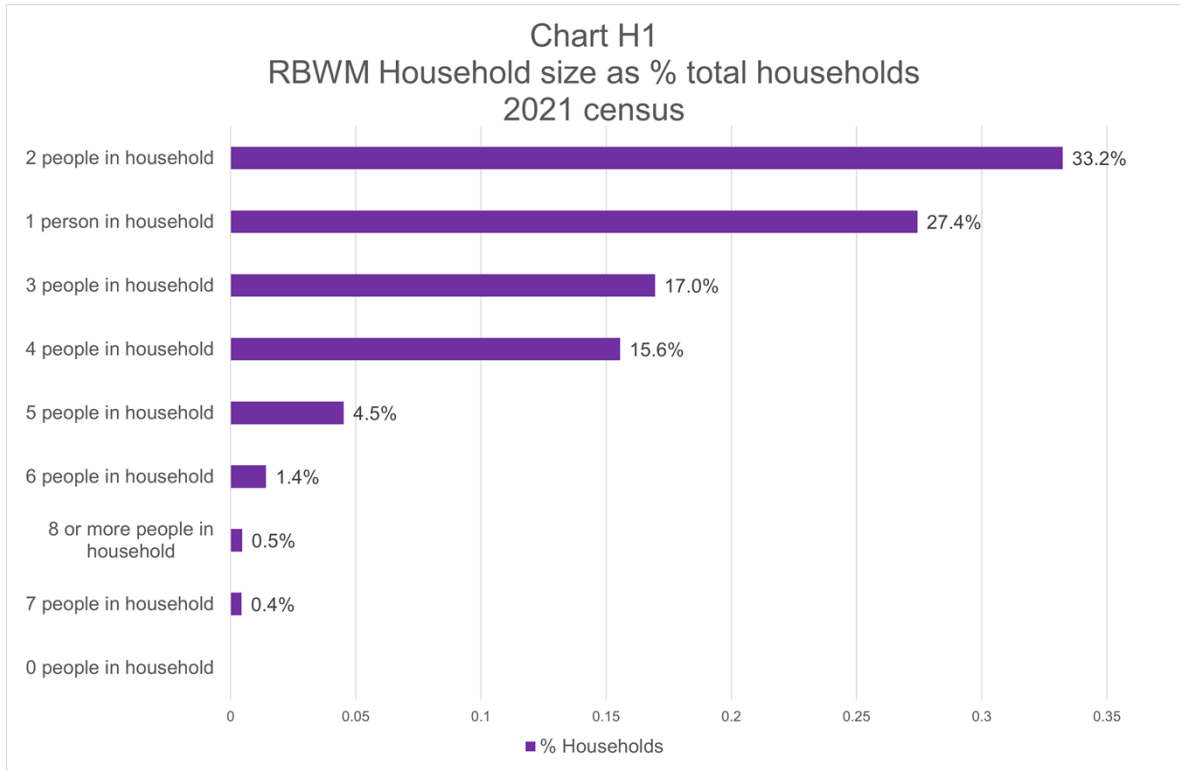
	2011	2021	% Change
Aged 65+	24077	28300	17.5%
Aged (15-64)	93671	97500	4.1%
Aged under 15	26812	27700	3.3%

2 HOUSING:

Since 2011 RBWM has seen a 4.4% increase in the number of households from 58,349 (2011) to 60,900 (2021); this 2021 figure being slightly lower than the ONS projected figure of 61,915 for 2021. The Borough Local Plan, adopted in February 2022, plans to ensure future housing demand is met.

2.2 Household composition:

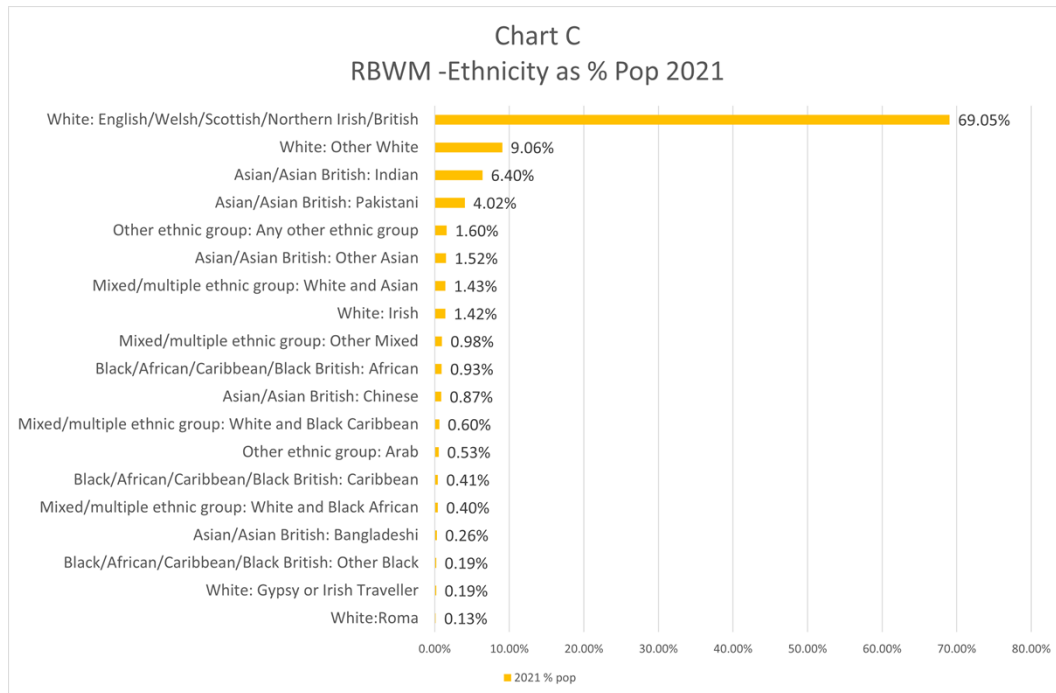
Within the Borough 33.3% of all households were recorded as having an occupancy of 2-people (highest %), followed by households of a 1-person occupancy accounting for 27.4% of all households (Chart H1). In relation to the latter 12.5% of all households had a single person occupancy over the age of 66 years and over (Chart H2). It is noted that loneliness accounted for only 2% of respondent household concerns (Resident Survey 2022).



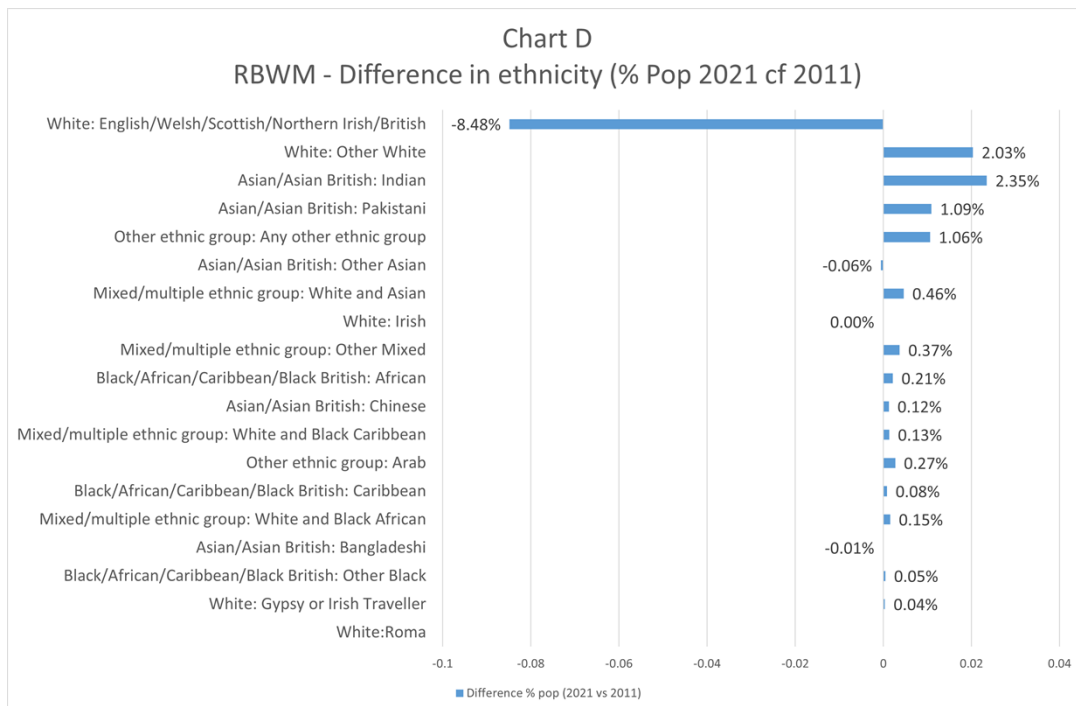
3 ETHNICITY

- *The borough has become more ethnically diverse since 2011.*

As of 2021 the identified ethnic make-up of the borough is predominately 'White British' accounting for 69.05% of the total population (Chart C).



The intervening 10-year period (2011 to 2021) has seen a notable decrease of 8.48% in the group identified as 'White British' (Chart D), pointing to an increasingly ethnically diverse local community.

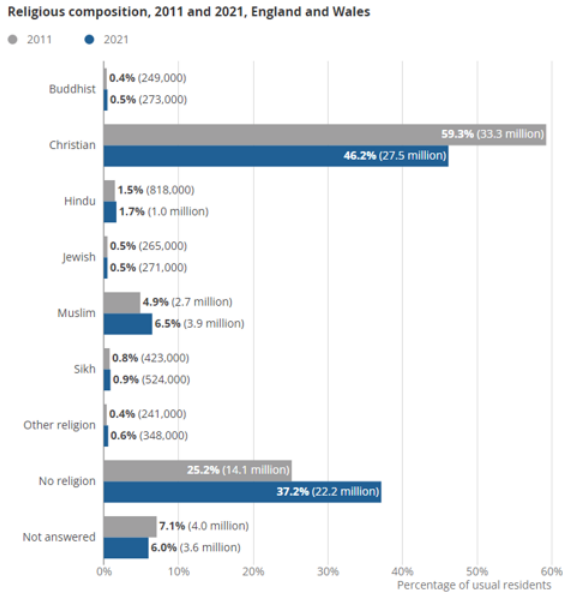


4 RELIGION

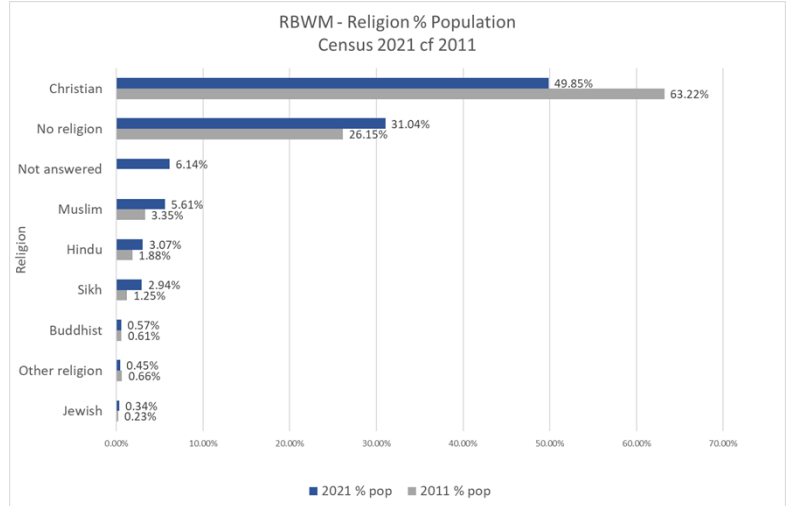
- **A notable decrease in the number of people identifying as Christian.**
- **A notable increase in the number of people identifying as having no religious affiliation.**

The 2021 census shows that over the intervening 10-year period, religion locally reflects the national trend with a notable decrease in the number of people identifying as Christian (-13.37% locally to 49.85%) and a notable increase in the number of people identifying as having no religious affiliation (+4.89% locally to 31.04%).

Nationally:



RBWM:



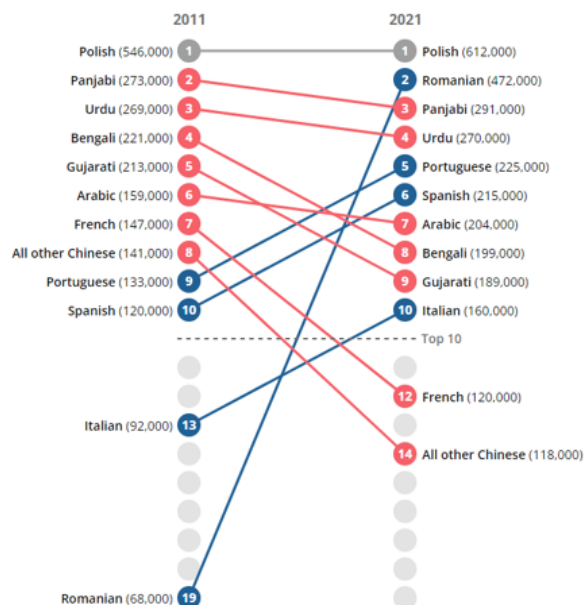
Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

5 LANGUAGES

The top 10 languages spoken within the Borough, reflects that nationally, with English being the predominant language (88.59% locally).

Nationally:

Total usual resident population, aged three years and over, who speak each language as their main language, 2011 and 2021, England and Wales



RBWM:

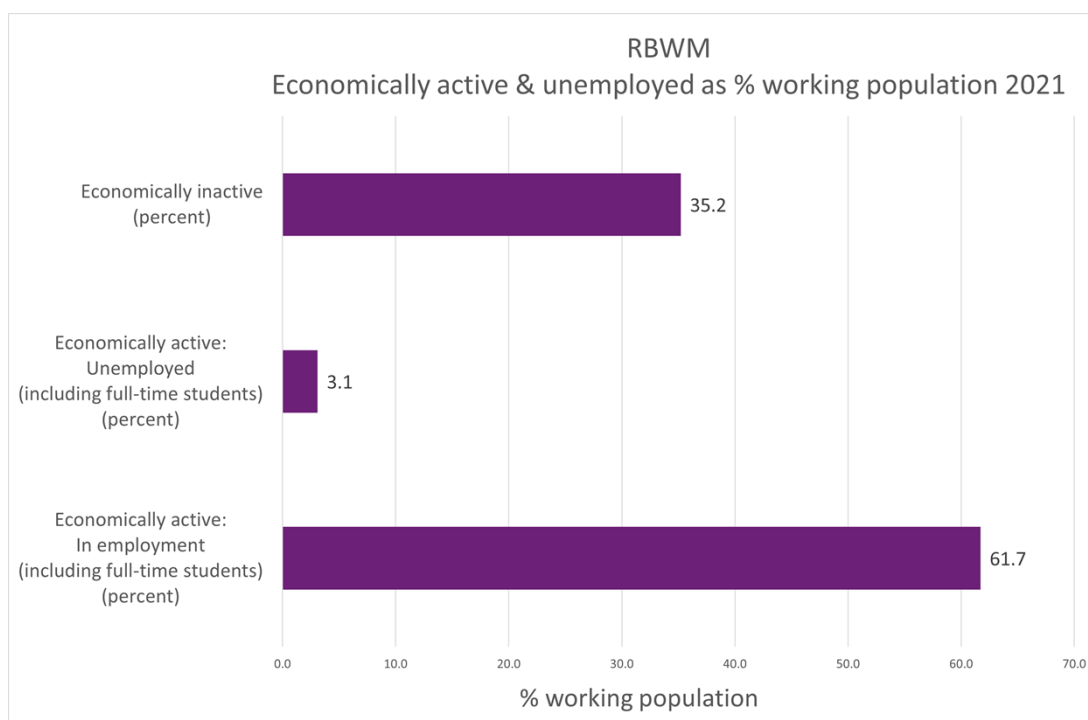
Language	2021	% Pop
English (English or Welsh in Wales)	135982	88.59%
Does not apply	4625	3.01%
Other European language (EU): Polish	1582	1.03%
South Asian language: Punjabi	1487	0.97%
Spanish	848	0.55%
Portuguese	704	0.46%
Other European language (EU): Romanian	682	0.44%
Other European language (EU): Italian	663	0.43%
South Asian language: Urdu	625	0.41%
French	460	0.30%

Source: Office for National Statistics - Census 2021

6 ECONOMIC ACTIVITY STATUS

- **Employment locally as a % of working age population is slightly higher than that found in England & Wales.**
- **Slight decrease in the percentage of economically active people in employment since 2011.**

At the time of census recording, (61.7%) of RBWM's working age population were in employment, this compares with 57.2% in England & Wales (E&W), (3.1%) were unemployed compared with (3.4%) in E&W and (35.2%) were economically inactive compared with (39.4%) in E&W. Over the intervening 10-year period RBWM has seen a slight decrease (2.6%) in the percentage of economically active people in employment.



The Office for National Statistics recognises the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the UK labour market, in some areas the estimated number of people who were economically inactive might be higher than anticipated. It is possible that some people on furlough may have identified as economically inactive, instead of temporarily away from work.

Reasons given for economic inactivity were recorded as being one of the following:

- retired (whether receiving a pension or not)
- studying
- looking after home or family
- long-term sick or disabled
- another reason.

Appendix D: Suggested revisions to the Corporate Plan

New goals:

Proposed new goal	Rationale
<p>1. Help to reduce the impact of cost of living rises on our residents, with a focus on those most at risk, through targeted financial and practical support.</p> <p>(Equality Objective)</p>	<p>The rises in costs of living are having serious impacts on communities nationwide, and are having the greatest impacts on households who are already at risk. The council has played a proactive role in supporting residents, working in partnership with a wide range of voluntary & community organisations, plus housing and health partners. This new goal reflects the priority that the council is placing on supporting residents with the cost of living, and brings together our programme of work.</p> <p>Key activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of a range of central government grants, including Energy and Council Tax rebates • Here to Help campaign • Household Support Fund delivery – partnership approach • Warm Spaces Network • Forthcoming work on budgeting skills through the Multiply Fund
<p>2. Ensure that every child in the borough is able to experience positive outcomes in childhood, through healthy living, readiness to learn, and positive parenting, and support targeted at those most at risk.</p> <p>(Equality Objective)</p>	<p>This reflects the increased focus on prevention and demand management within Children’s services and across the council as a whole. The importance of the early years on future outcomes is highlighted through the Inequalities evidence pack, through the new Children and Young People’s partnership, and supported by a wealth of data. This goal aligns with the priorities in the forthcoming Children and Young People’s Plan and will be supported by the programme of work currently in development to deliver this.</p> <p>To include existing childhood obesity goal, work to improve school readiness among children in receipt of Free School Meals, and health visiting/breastfeeding rates. Key activities and additional metrics will be set out through the Children and Young People’s Plan.</p>
<p>3. Strengthen community-based, preventative support for adults with additional needs through increased, and more effective, partnership working and embedding asset-based models of care.</p>	<p>This change reflects the increased focus on prevention and demand management within Adults services and across the council as a whole. Key activities include strengthening and expanding existing initiatives including Wellbeing Circles and Community Lives, and continuing to build on our partnership working with health services.</p> <p>This goal replaces the existing goals of “At least 70% of recipients are satisfied with the preventative and/or community-based interventions provided by the council” to reflect the stronger focus on working in partnership with our community sector, health and wider partners.</p>

	<p>It replaces the goal of “A minimum of three pilots of new Technology Enabled Care (TEC) delivered within 12 months”, as the 12 month period has now ended, and a greater focus on community-based interventions, alongside technology solutions.</p>
<p>4. Facilitate economic growth within key sectors and increase ambition on economic inclusion, through a renewed relationship with businesses, supporting residents into work, and maximising social value.</p>	<p>This new goal reflects the development of our approach to economic development over the past year, the changing economic and labour market landscape. The wider economic challenges make it more important than ever that the council plays a lead role in facilitating economic growth and makes a strong case for investment within the borough. This includes playing a lead role in pursuing the potential opportunities offered through the devolution agenda and being bold and ambitious in our engagement with businesses to build business and investor confidence.</p> <p>Key activities to take forward this goal include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewing the council’s relationship with key businesses, focusing on high growth sectors including health and Life Sciences, film, cultural, the visitor economy and low carbon, supported by further sector analysis. • Delivery of UKSPF Investment Plan • Developing a strong Berkshire Devolution proposal, playing a lead role in our partnership with Berkshire local authorities. • Supporting our residents on to a positive career pathway, with a focus on skills building, including through the Multiply fund, and through relationships with key employers in the borough (such as the Merlin group). • Developing a clearer set of priorities to maximise the social value generated through business relationships and investment. <p>This goal incorporates the following existing goals, which will be included as key measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the number of new and surviving businesses within the borough, including the expansion of creative industries. • A decrease in the claimant count back to pre-pandemic levels by 2023, with a focus on supporting increased employment rates among young people and people with disabilities. • An increase in the number of apprenticeships in the borough by 10%.
<p>5. Continue to play a leadership role in placemaking, focused on our key town centres: including the re-development of Maidenhead, a new vision for Windsor and delivery of the Ascot High Street Project and</p>	<p>This goal reflects our increased focus and ambition on placemaking, on supporting thriving town centres, and the importance of including our residents, businesses and partners in shaping the future of our places. This goal reflects our refreshed approach and responds to new developments including the opening of the Elizabeth Line.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximising the opportunities offered by Elizabeth Line and wider regeneration, to develop Maidenhead as a commercial centre and key driver of the West of London economy.

<p>associated Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Vision for Windsor over the next 20 years, to ensure a high-quality experience and a world class visitor destination. Enhanced public realm and rationalised transport links that presents a highly attractive location for businesses activity and corporate events. • Developing aligned plans for the future of Ascot, through redevelopment and an enhanced High Street area <p>This goal incorporates the following existing goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in footfall in Windsor between 2021-2026, and in Maidenhead, following its regeneration. • Undertake a master planning exercise for central Windsor by 2023 and submit a business case for government funding for identified improvements along Ascot High Street.
<p>6. Embed accessibility into the planning and design of our streetscape, buildings and public spaces</p> <p>(Equality Objective)</p>	<p>This goal is included within our revised Equality objectives. It responds to the increasing numbers of older people in the borough (as evidenced through the 2021 Census), and findings from the Residents Survey that highlight some of the challenges faced by residents with a disability. Accessibility is important in preventing social isolation and loneliness, in supporting health outcomes, and ensuring that those with mobility issues are able to access employment opportunities, services, and wider community life within the borough. Barriers to accessibility have been raised through our engagement with the Disability and Inclusion Forum, and this goal prioritises a focus on securing improvements.</p> <p>Key activities to take forward this goal include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with communities most likely to experience accessibility issues, specifically people with long term conditions, disabilities and age-related mobility problems, to identify priorities and establish where accessibility improvements have the greatest impact • Identify an annual allocation of capital funding to be spent on accessibility priorities, based on assessment of need. • Reviewing public transport accessibility as part of the new Transport Plan • Incorporate an engagement step into the capital design process, giving the Disability and Inclusion Forum the opportunity to provide feedback on accessibility at the planning stage • Seek to expand the AccessAble online accessibility guide to Maidenhead town centre, and reviewing the provision of changing places.

Revise existing goals

Current Corporate Plan goal	Proposed revision	Rationale
<p>Improvement in outcomes for children leaving our care – increased proportions supported to live locally (at least 95%) and in education, training or employment (EET) (at least 75%), supported by a Corporate Parenting service judged good or better.</p>	<p>Improvement in outcomes for children leaving our care – increased proportions living in suitable accommodation (at least 95%) and in education, training or employment (at least 65%) by March 2026, supported by a Corporate Parenting service, judged good or better.</p>	<p>The proposed amendment to this goal adjusts the original focus on “living locally” to “suitable accommodation”. It is acknowledged that, in some instances, it is beneficial for care-leavers to move to or remain in another local authority’s area. This could be because the child or young person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is already living in a foster or residential placement out of the local area and is settled there; • Has been assessed as presenting risk if accommodated in the local area; • Requires university vacation accommodation outside of the local authority area; • Wishes to live nearer to a family member or a former carer; • Is moving away to take up employment or training. <p>Where a care-leaver resides in a different local authority area, the council would still seek to ensure that a service is provided that is commensurate with the service which they would receive if they had remained resident in the local area.</p> <p>A further amendment is proposed in relation to the target for care-leavers to be in education, training or employment, adjusting the original target from 75% to 65% by 2026. A review of benchmarking data shows strong performance for RBWM in 2020/21 (58%). The highest outturn among comparator groups has been in the low 50s. It is proposed that the original target of 75% is recalibrated to 65% by March 2026 to better fit with past performance and comparators.</p>
<p>Deliver new and enhanced community and youth facilities, including at Blackamoor Lane, Larchfield and Windsor.</p> <p>Increase attendance at leisure centres by at least 10% (from 2019 baseline), among over</p>	<p>Deliver an enhanced and more connected Sport & Leisure offer, with more people, more active, more often using our leisure centres and community facilities across the borough. Participation levels within key target groups are increased</p>	<p>The proposed amendment combines the two existing goals on leisure and community facilities, .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase attendance at leisure centres by at least 10% (from 2019 baseline), among over 60s, people with disabilities and individuals who have a medical referral (including for cardiac, stroke and cancer rehabilitation). • Deliver new and enhanced community and youth facilities, including at Blackamoor Lane, Larchfield and Windsor. <p>This reflects a more joined up, strategic approach to improving our sport, leisure and community offer and an enhanced focus on the direct contribution that use of these facilities makes to public health outcomes. Key activities to achieve this goal include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new programmes and capital investment to improve the quality of our offer. • A new offer designed using insights provided by a refreshed Sport & Leisure, Built Facilities & Playing Pitch Strategy

<p>60s, people with disabilities and individuals who have a medical referral (including for cardiac, stroke and cancer rehabilitation).</p>	<p>by at least 10% (baseline 2019).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new leisure contract re-let for the next 12+ 5 years from August 2023. <p>It should be noted that the community facilities in Holmanleaze, referenced in the existing goal will continue with their current arrangements, with a focus on sustaining and improving those sites for community usage.</p>
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Re-position in Corporate Plan:

<p>Increase in respondents to the Social Care Survey in 2024 who are satisfied with adult social care (ASC) and support provided by the council to at least 70%</p>	<p>It is proposed that this goal is relocated to the Thriving Communities objective for a better fit. It currently sits under the “A council trusted to deliver its promises” objective.</p>
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Appendix E. Revised Equality Objectives and Progress Update

Over the past 12 months, we have made significant progress towards strengthening the Council's approach to equalities, recruiting a new Equalities and Community Engagement Officer, who came into post in May. This work has focused on developing an updated set of equality objectives and strengthening our equality impact assessment process. Together, these help to strengthen and embed the importance of equalities as a key consideration in our decision making and in how we work with and for our residents. We present a summary of these key pieces of work here as we start to implement them across the organisation.

Equality Objectives

A final update of the 2018-2022 equality objectives was undertaken, with input from the relevant service areas. A number of the previous objectives, particularly those around EQIAs, engagement and the workforce, either relate to ongoing projects or have continuing relevance and so have rolled over to the new objectives. Confirmation has been received from the service areas involved that the remaining objectives have been completed and none have been left unresolved.

The development of the new objectives drew upon the previous objectives; the LGA's Equality Framework; the Corporate Plan; discussion with colleagues across the Council; and engagement with residents and community organisations.

Five overarching objectives were defined, drawing largely on the structure of the LGA's Equality Framework, as follows:

- Investigating and engaging
- Cultural and organisational change
- Integrating equalities into service delivery
- Reducing inequalities within the borough
- Workforce diversity and inclusion

Within each objective, specific 'activities' have been identified to enable us to monitor our progress towards that objective and to ensure that the Council can be held accountable on its commitment to equality. The progress on the objectives and their associated activities will be reviewed on at least an annual basis.

One activity under Objective 2 seeks to establish clear political and officer leadership on equalities, in part through creating a greater role for the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel with the equalities agenda. This activity commits to providing members of the Panel with briefings on key equalities issues and activities so that they have an opportunity to raise issues which would benefit from further scrutiny, and creates another mechanism by which the Council's improvements in the area of equality can be monitored and driven forwards.

Another of the activities, which has been carried over from the previous set of equality objectives is the improvement of RBWM's equality impact assessments. Further information on this piece of work is provided below.

Equality Impact Assessment

The LGA Corporate Peer Challenge identified a need to improve RBWM's use of Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs). EQIAs are critical to our ability to fulfil our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and to ensure that our policies and decisions take into account the diverse needs of the Borough's residents. To this end, a review was carried out of the RBWM EQIA template and process and the following actions were undertaken.

The improvements made to EQIAs comprise:

1. Changes to the EQIA process
2. Improvements to the EQIA template
3. Introduction of a bespoke template for budget papers
4. Creation of an equalities evidence matrix
5. Development of training and support materials

1. Changes to the EQIA process

Completed EQIAs are now added as appendices to the relevant reports and published as part of the report, rather than being published separately on our website. This change has made the process more efficient and places the EQIA within its appropriate context.

The process of equality impact assessment would benefit from being carried out at an earlier stage within the development of policies/plans/strategies than is often the case, so that there is a greater potential for the assessments to feed into the development process and serve a greater function as a decision-making tool. The EQIA review has taken place alongside a process to rationalise and streamline the creation of strategies within the council. This has provided a valuable opportunity to embed the practice of conducting EQIAs at an earlier and more appropriate stage.

2. Improvements to the EQIA template

A new EQIA template has been created, which is designed to be more user-friendly and encourage more in depth and better quality assessments. The development of this template was informed by a review of the templates used by other local authorities; by engagement with equality leads at other local councils; and by discussion with colleagues in service areas including Public Health and Procurement.

The revised form is accompanied by an extended guidance document, which acts both as a step-by-step guide to completing an EQIA and an explanation of the importance of EQIAs within the wider equality duty of the Council.

3. Introduction of a bespoke template for budget papers

The budget-setting process has specific challenges and demands for the equality impact assessment process, due to the volume of proposals; the potential for cumulative impact; and the importance of effective EQIAs in supporting and justifying the decisions being made. In collaboration with colleagues in Finance, a

bespoke EQIA template was created for budget savings proposals, allowing multiple proposals with a shared 'theme' to be assessed on a single form and using a condensed version of the new template. This makes the process more efficient and provides more meaningful context for individual proposals.

4. Creation of an equalities evidence matrix

In order to support and promote the use of EQIAs as an evidence-based decision-making tool, an 'Equalities Evidence Matrix' has been created. This allows users to explore the intersections between the protected characteristics and various service areas and topics. The matrix highlights the main equalities considerations that need to be taken into account and provides key data and statistics which can be incorporated into an EQIA. There have been opportunities for individual services to contribute service level data into the matrix. This has provided a valuable local perspective, as well as identifying areas where the collection and monitoring of equalities data could be strengthened.

5. Development of training and support materials

The introduction of an updated template, a new evidence matrix and an adjusted process will be accompanied by supporting training materials one one-to-one assistance. The guidance document is intended to provide some of this information and support. In addition, opportunities will be sought to promote the new EQIA at service team meetings and through internal communications such as the Borough Bulletin.

The EQIA review process has highlighted the need for training and guidance for those reading and reviewing EQIAs, as well as for those who contribute to and complete the assessments themselves. Training materials will therefore be developed for elected Members, to support their understanding of the purpose and significance of EQIAs within Cabinet and committee reports.

Equality Objectives

Objective 1: Investigate and strengthen our understanding of the nature of inequality, disadvantage, and discrimination in RBWM

Outcome: A stronger understanding of the nature of equality, disadvantage, and discrimination in RBWM

1.1 Activities: Strengthen the council's insights and evidence on inequalities and disadvantage

- Develop a stronger, cross-council evidence base on inequality and disadvantage in the borough through Phase 1 of the Inequalities Project.
- Analyse and use information from census, the Residents Survey, to strengthen our understanding of the nature and impact of inequalities.
- Strengthen performance measures on equalities within the Corporate Plan and across Service Plans and contract monitoring.

1.2 Activities: Strengthen relationships with diverse groups in our communities, and specifically those with, or representing those with, protected characteristics

- Build and maintain relationships with groups who reflect the diversity of the community and represent the protected characteristics, including the Disability and Inclusion Forum, the Older Persons' Advisory Forum, KickBack and the interfaith WAM Community Forum.
- Develop a better understanding of the diversity of local faiths and cultures and take advantage of festivals, awareness events and celebration days to celebrate that diversity through external communications and engagement.
- Continue to empower and engage with the community through the Embedding Community Response programme and initiatives such as the World Cafés.

1.3 Activities: Ensure engagement activities are inclusive and provide opportunities for community involvement in decision making

- Support the identification of appropriate stakeholders to contribute to engagement activities that seek to improve equality and inclusion.
- Develop an engagement framework which can be used by RBWM staff to understand the different levels of engagement (i.e. informing, consulting, participating, co-producing) and identify opportunities for community engagement and participation.
- Undertake effective and mutually beneficial engagement activities, with a focus on ensuring that those with protected characteristics and from under-represented communities are encouraged to participate and have their voices heard.
- Communicate information in an inclusive way, taking account of the language and format preferences/needs of different groups

Objective 2: Acknowledge and respond to the equality impacts of our emerging proposals and seek to mitigate any adverse impacts where possible, whilst maximising positive impacts

Outcome: An organisation focused on reducing inequalities

2.1 Activities: Embed a greater awareness of equalities across the organisation

- Promote an evidence-based narrative around inequalities in RBWM and raise the profile of equalities work
- Engage with colleagues and partners to share insights gained from inequalities data gathering and communicate where findings have relevance for a certain service and area of work.

2.2 Activities: Improve the consistency and quality of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) to influence and support decision-making

- Develop comprehensive guidance in relation to EqIA development, including training and support for officers and elected members
- Improve the use of evidence to support EqIAs through an Equalities Evidence Matrix and targeted support to services to ensure equality impacts are assessed and reflected in key decisions
- Ensure that appropriate action plans are developed in cases where EqIAs identify negative equality impacts and monitor the delivery of these mitigating actions
- Review and improve the efficiency of the EqIA development process by grouping relevant papers under a single EqIA, particularly those relating to the budget
- Embed EqIAs into the early development of policies, strategies and related projects to improve their potential impact on decision-making
- Promote the use of EqIAs as iterative documents which should be reviewed and updated over the course of the development and delivery of a policy/strategy/project
- Include 'Children in care/Care leavers' alongside other protected characteristics, in recognition of the council's responsibilities as Corporate Parent

2.3 Activities: Establish clear political and officer leadership on equalities

- Elected members demonstrate personal knowledge and understanding of local communities and demonstrate a public commitment to reducing inequality, fostering good community relations and challenging discrimination.
- Provide briefings and reports to councillors, including the Corporate Oversight and Scrutiny Panel, on key equalities issues and activities
- Mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training is provided for elected members as part of new member induction and on an ongoing annual basis.
- Support members to be more effective in their ward work and aware of the diversity of the communities they represent
- Mandatory attendance on KickBack's Total Respect Training for members of the Corporate Parenting Forum, and attendance encouraged for other officers and Members as part of their role as a Corporate Parent

Objective 3: Integrate equality considerations into planning and procurement processes, in order to deliver services effectively for all communities

Outcome: A council which delivers services effectively for all its communities

3.1 Activities: Ensure that the accessibility of physical and digital spaces and resources is considered in the planning and delivery of policies and services

- Ensure that digital and printed resources continue to meet accessibility requirements
- Consider the impact of the digitisation of key resources and services and aim to mitigate any negative or exclusionary impacts
- Ensure that the Report It tool is effective and inclusive for reporting accessibility issues
- Develop a Customer Strategy which serves all members of our diverse community

3.2 Activities: Strengthen the incorporation of equality considerations within the development of KPIs as part of the pre-procurement process

- Use EqIAs consistently within pre-procurement to ensure that any equality considerations are identified at an early stage
- Ensure that appropriate KPIs are developed and monitored, where potential equality impacts have been identified
- Encourage ongoing monitoring of recruitment-related equality considerations by suppliers and partners

3.3 Activities: Integrate equality objectives into planned service outcomes

- Integrate equality objectives into organisational strategies and plans, including the Corporate Plan and its associated goals
- Demonstrate evidence of a link between equality objectives, business planning and performance management
- Service plans monitored to ensure equality objectives are met, with action taken if risks to achievement are identified

3.4 Activities: Develop a stronger, community-based approach to prevent and reduce inequalities

- Strengthen our approach to preventing and reducing inequalities through community-based solutions as identified in Phase 2 of the Inequalities Project

Objective 4: Reduce inequalities within the borough

Outcome: A reduction in inequalities within the borough, focused particularly upon the following priorities which are also goals within the Corporate Plan:

4.1 Activities: An increase in the proportion of women and girls who feel safe in the borough, including through a safe, thriving night-time economy (Existing Corporate Plan goal)

- Continue the White Ribbon communication campaign and/or work towards White Ribbon accreditation
- Use Residents Survey data to assess women and girls' perception of safety in their local area

4.2 Activities: An increase in the attainment ranking for children in care, SEND and children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) in GCSE English and Maths (Existing Corporate Plan goal)

- Increase the number of children in care, SEND and children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) achieving Grade 4 English and Maths at GCSE. 2022 data will be used to set the baseline

4.3 Activities: More people with learning disabilities live in their own homes or with their families, increasing the proportion by 10 percent points by 2025 (Existing Corporate Plan goal)

- Increase the percentage of working age learning disabled clients who are living in their own home to 82.4% by 2025 (from a baseline of 72.4% in March 2020)
- Improve outcomes for adults with a learning disability in settled accommodation by improving their safety, reducing their risk of social exclusion and promoting a positive experience of social care

4.4 Activities: Help to reduce the impact of cost of living rises on our residents, with a focus on those most at risk, through targeted financial and practical support (New Corporate Plan goal)

- Key activities under this goal will include:
 - Delivery of a range of central government grants, including Energy and Council Tax rebates
 - Here to Help campaign
 - Household Support Fund delivery – partnership approach
 - Warm Spaces Network
 - Forthcoming work on budgeting skills through the Multiply Fund
- Incorporate socio-economic considerations into EqIAs alongside protected characteristics

4.5 Activities: Embed accessibility into the planning and design of our streetscape, buildings and public spaces (New Corporate Plan goal)

- Engage with communities most likely to experience accessibility issues, specifically people with long term conditions, disabilities and age-related mobility problems, to identify priorities and establish where accessibility improvements have the greatest impact
- Identify an annual allocation of capital funding to be spent on accessibility priorities, based on analysis of need.
- Reviewing public transport accessibility as part of the new Local Transport Plan
- Incorporate an engagement step into the capital design process, giving the Disability and Inclusion Forum the opportunity to provide feedback on accessibility at the planning stage
- Seek to expand the AccessAble online accessibility guide to Maidenhead town centre, and reviewing the provision of changing places.

4.6 Activities: Ensure that every child in the borough is able to experience positive outcomes in childhood, through healthy living, readiness to learn, and positive parenting, and support targeted at those most at risk (New Corporate Plan goal)

- Key activities and metrics are set out in the new Children and Young People's Plan and will include:
 - Improve school readiness in disadvantaged children, particularly those who are eligible for Free School Meals
 - Reduce differences between wards/communities in the proportion of children who are overweight or obese.

Objective 5: Recruit and retain a diverse workforce that reflects the communities we serve and ensure our people feel valued and respected

Outcome: A diverse workforce, reflective of the communities we serve, in which all colleagues feel equally valued and respected

5.1 Activities: Continue to encourage and welcome increasing numbers of job applications from candidates with disabilities, who are care leavers, and from the Armed Forces community

- Continue to encourage and welcome job applications from disabled candidates using the Disability Confident Scheme (current accreditation runs until October 2025), which guarantees disabled applicants who meet the minimum job criteria an interview.
- Provide support and opportunities to ex-military and reservists, as holders of the Armed Forces Covenant Gold Award
- Provide training and employment opportunities to Borough care leavers in our capacity as Corporate Parent

5.2 Activities: Seek to understand the needs of employees with protected characteristics through engagement with employee networks and data gathering through staff surveys and personal diversity records

- Continue to support the Council's organisational intelligence capability in relation to protected characteristics data through the update of records of existing employee (which recently saw an 89% response rate) and through information collected about protected characteristics from job applicants as part of the Applicant Tracking System (ATS)
- Improve the number of staff who provide information about their ethnicity and religion. The workforce profile for 21/22 identified that there has been a slight increase in the number of staff who prefer not to provide this information.
- Continue to work with the council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion staff network to promote a culture of inclusion and to develop wellbeing support relevant to our workforce.

5.3 Activities: Deliver a range of measures to improve opportunities for those who want to combine work with family or caring responsibilities

- Continue to offer a wide range of flexible working options including a flexi-time scheme, part-time working, term-time only working, nine-day fortnights, remote working, and flexible retirement. Since March 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the majority of the workforce working from home and therefore flexibility and employee wellbeing has been at the forefront of supporting all our staff but particularly those with caring responsibilities.
- Continue to support employees who are Foster Carers through additional paid leave and to support families with military connections as an employer holding a Gold Award of the Armed Forces Covenant.

- Maintain the ‘family friendly’ policies which are part of the Members Allowances scheme, including a Dependants’ Carer’s Allowance, and maternity, adoption and paternity leave.

5.4 Activities: Commit to becoming an anti-racist organisation

- Create an environment where all members of staff feel able to be their authentic selves in the workplace
- Explore the use of Reverse Mentoring as a means of promoting awareness of diversity and equality issues with senior management
- Strengthen the requirement to ensure diversity in all recruitment panels
- Review employee-related policies and procedures to ensure they contain no bias or discrimination
- Review corporate policies and decisions through an anti-racist lens using tools such as Equality Impact Assessments

Report Title:	LGA Corporate Peer Challenge: Follow Up Visit
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Johnson, Leader of the Council
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 26 January 2022
Responsible Officer(s):	Emma Duncan, Monitoring Officer and Deputy Director of Law, Strategy and Public Health
Wards affected:	All



REPORT SUMMARY

This report updates Members on the progress on the Action Plan resulting from the recommendations of the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge, which took place from 24 – 27 January, 2022. The Royal Borough invited the LGA into the council to conduct the review, in order to provide an external assessment of its progress, and recommendations for further improvement. Their assessment and recommendations were set out in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report.

Cabinet considered the recommendations in March 2022 and agreed to accept the 11 recommendations subject to minor amendments and agreed to the preparation of an Action Plan.

The Peer Team then revisited the Council on 20th October 2022 to review progress.

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION:

That Cabinet notes the report and the comments of the Peer Review Team.

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

Options

Table 2: Options arising from this report

Option	Comments
Cabinet agrees to note the comments.	This is the recommended option
Cabinet doesn't agree to note the comments.	The Royal Borough invited the LGA into the council to assess our progress and make recommendations for further improvements. Failing to accept

Option	Comments
	progress against the recommendations of the Peer Review team, would call into question the purpose of the review, and show the council in a poor light with the LGA.

1. KEY IMPLICATIONS

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge: background

1.1 The Corporate Peer Challenge is part of the LGA sector support offer. It provides independent and external improvement support and challenge through a peer review, conducted by a team of Members and Senior Officers from other local authorities.

1.2 The review is a tried, and trusted method of improvement and provides a practitioner perspective and critical friend challenge. The Royal Borough invited in the LGA to conduct the review, to provide an assessment of its progress and recommendations for further improvement. It was delivered at no cost to the council.

1.3 The 2022 review was a Corporate Peer Challenge and covered five key areas:

- Local priorities and outcomes;
- Organisational and place leadership;
- Governance and culture;
- Financial planning and management;
- Capacity for improvement.

1.4 The 2022 Peer Review followed a prior review in 2017, and a briefer progress review in 2019. The results of all three reviews are published on our website.

1.5 The 2022 review was a mix of face to face, online and desk-based research. The team undertook interviews and focus groups with a wide range of Members, officers, stakeholders and citizens, speaking to nearly 100 people in total. The team also observed several key officer and Member meetings and visited sites within the borough. They also reviewed key documents and a self-assessment by the council. The findings from the review were developed into feedback and recommendations, which were shared through a presentation to those participating in the review, and were embedded into an Action Plan, progress on which was reported to Cabinet earlier in the year.

1.6 The LGA returned to the Royal Borough in October 2022, to review progress as part of a process designed to;

- Update peers on the early progress made and to receive feedback on this

including how the action plan aligns to the CPC's recommendations

- Consider peer's reflections on any new opportunities or challenges that may have arisen since the peer team were 'on-site' including any further support needs
- Discuss any early impact or learning from the progress made to date

1.7 The report that details the Peer Team's comments is attached at Appendix A and Members will note the progress made against the recommendations.

1.8 The direction of travel set by the Peer Review will be incorporated into the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan and Corporate Plan.

2.

2.1

Table 3: Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Date of delivery
The council agrees the LGA recommendations and takes these forward through a robust Action Plan.	The council makes poor progress in responding to the recommendations	LGA six month review concludes that good progress has been made in delivering the recommendations	LGA six month review concludes that excellent progress has been made in delivering the recommendations	Autumn 2022

3. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

3.1 The financial implications of taking forward the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge recommendations are being considered as part of the budget process.

3.2 At this stage, there are no financial implications of taking the decisions recommended in this report. .

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

Table 4: Impact of risk and mitigation

Risk	Level of uncontrolled risk	Controls	Level of controlled risk
LGA are dissatisfied with the council's response to the review.	Low	Ongoing engagement with the LGA and maintenance of existing strong relationships.	Low

6. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

6.1 Equalities. None

6.2 Climate change/sustainability. None

6.3 Data Protection/GDPR. There are no data protection issues associated with this report.

7. CONSULTATION

8.1 The process of undertaking the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge involved interviews with a wide range of Members, staff, stakeholders and citizens, in order to assess the council and generate its findings and recommendations. The initial findings of the review were shared with all who participated on 2 February 2022, with opportunities provided for feedback and comment.

8. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 The implementation stages are set out in table 5.

Table 5: Implementation timetable

Date	Details
20 October 2022	Six month follow up visit from the LGA, to assess progress on delivering the recommendations of the Report. This concludes the Peer Review.

9. APPENDICES

9.1 This report is supported by 1 appendix.

10. CONSULTATION

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Adele Taylor	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer	20/12/22	

Emma Duncan	Deputy Director of Law and Strategy / Monitoring Officer	Author	
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)	20/12/22	
Elaine Browne	Head of Law (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	20/12/22	
Karen Shepherd	Head of Governance (Deputy Monitoring Officer)	20/12/22	
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Tony Reeves	Interim Chief Executive	20/12/22	
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place	20/12/22	
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Children's Services	20/12/22	
<i>Heads of Service (where relevant)</i>			
<i>External (where relevant)</i>			
<i>Insert as appropriate or N/A</i>			

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Leader of the Council	Yes/No <i>delete as appropriate</i>
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
Non-key decision	No	No

Report Author: Emma Duncan, Monitoring Officer and Director of Law, Strategy and Public Health
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LGA Corporate Peer Challenge – Progress Review

Royal Borough of Windsor and
Maidenhead

20th October 2022

Feedback



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1. Introduction

The council undertook an LGA Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) during January 2022 and promptly published the full report with an action plan.

The progress review is an integral part of the Corporate Peer Challenge process. Taking place approximately nine months after the council published the CPC action plan, it is designed to provide space for the council's senior leadership to:

- Update peers on the early progress made and to receive feedback on this including how the action plan aligns to the CPC's recommendations
- Consider peer's reflections on any new opportunities or challenges that may have arisen since the peer team were 'on-site' including any further support needs
- Discuss any early impact or learning from the progress made to date

The LGA would like to thank the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for their commitment to sector led improvement. This review was the next step in an ongoing, open and close relationship that the council has with LGA sector support.

2. Summary of the approach

The progress review at Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead took place remotely on October 20th 2022 over three hours and additional discussion with the outgoing Chief Executive and leaders of the main opposition parties.

The progress review focussed on each of the recommendations from the Corporate Peer Challenge, under the following theme headings:

Local Priorities and Outcomes

Recommendation 1: Prioritise embedding the Corporate Plan across the Council and establish a new performance framework which links service plans and priorities to budget and risks over the medium term.

Financial Management

Recommendation 2: Refresh the Medium- Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with stronger links to the savings made by the Transformation Strategy and underpinned by the creation of a Transformation Fund to deliver the benefits needed. The first priority of the strategy should be to improve the customer experience.

Governance and Culture

- **Recommendation 3:** Establish a Member development programme, including a

new induction package for May 2023 which aligns to the strategic priorities of the Royal Borough. Group Leaders need to be fully involved in developing the programme to ensure ongoing member participation, throughout the term of office.

- **Recommendation 4:** Put in place stronger support for member casework that provides consistency and timeliness of response across all council functions. This will help members to carry out their ward work more efficiently and maintain residents' confidence that their issues are being dealt with.
- **Recommendation 5:** Review the current model of scrutiny committees. There are currently 4 scrutiny panels and one health scrutiny panel. It may be better for the committees to be more closely aligned to the priorities in the Corporate Plan and service delivery arrangements covering people, place and corporate functions.
- **Recommendation 6:** Revisit the terms of reference and remit of the joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for East Berkshire as part of the establishment of the ICS.
- **Recommendation 7:** Review Cabinet portfolios so that they are re-balanced across people, place and corporate functions to enable more capacity to influence at a sub-regional and national level alongside local place leadership responsibilities.
- **Recommendation 8:** Develop a clear and consistent framework on the role and governance of the arms-length Council entities including Optalis, AFC and the Property Company. Shareholder responsibilities should be separated from those of the strategic client.

Organisation and Place Leadership

- **Recommendation 9:** Develop a localism strategy with town and parish councils and community groups which promotes greater subsidiarity of decision making and thus enabling RBWM to be more strategic.
- **Recommendation 10:** Take advantage of the 25th anniversary of being a unitary council to work with the Youth Council and partners to set out a new 25-year vision for the Royal Borough.
- **Recommendation 11:** Once the improvement plan for the Planning function is in place and beginning to have an impact, consider a peer review of the Planning Service to drive continuous improvement in 2023/24 and beyond

For this progress review, the following members of the original CPC team were involved:

- Kate Kennally – Lead Peer
- Councillor David Renard – Member Peer
- Tim Ryder – Officer Peer
- Gill Elliott - Peer Challenge Manager, Local Government Association

The peer team met virtually via MS Teams over the course of 3 hours with the following representatives from the council:

- Councillor Andrew Johnson – Leader of the Council
- Councillor Samantha Rayner – Deputy Leader of the Council
- Adele Taylor - Executive Director of Resources
- Emma Duncan - Monitoring Officer and Director of Governance, Law, Strategy & Public Health
- Kevin McDaniel - Executive Director of People Services
- Andrew Durrant - Executive Director of Place Services
- Rebecca Hatch - Head of Strategy

3. Progress Review - Feedback

The peer team was pleased to see evidence of good progress against all the corporate peer challenge recommendations. We noted that overall, there was a greater feeling of confidence in the Council to take decisions. In particular, the decision to accept the peer team's recommendation that the portfolio of Children, Adults and Public Health should be divided, had taken political bravery. A number of other legacy issues which have been challenging for the Borough have also been addressed since the CPC. These include the redevelopment of the golf course site in Maidenhead and the adoption of the Borough Local Plan. We saw examples of strong place leadership by RBWM in pan Berkshire discussions, positive engagement in investment zones as well as levels of resident trust and satisfaction in the Council that are above LGA benchmarks. The peer team also acknowledged the key role that the Council had played in the funeral of the late Queen Elizabeth II and the considerable burden that this had placed on Council resources. There was evidence that Members' behaviour has improved, with fewer complaints from residents and less problems apparent on social media.

The team's view is that the focus now needs to be on embedding the changes so that they are "hard wired" into the DNA of the Council and lead to demonstrable improvement. This is particularly important in light of the changes at executive officer level. The team were concerned about the realism of some of the financial assumptions underpinning the MTFs, such as the proposed rates of pay under local negotiations. They would urge the Council to continue to link performance, budget and risk through the prism of corporate plan goals with an outcomes-based approach. Other areas for further consideration by the Council are the sustainability of the arrangements for people services following on from the creation of an Executive Director covering People Services during 2022. The Chief Executive with the Executive Director for People Services should undertake a test of assurance on the scope and remit of the joint role covering the DASS and DCS in order to inform the Council's review of its delivering arrangement for children services with Achieving for Children. RBWM currently has an interim Chief executive and will shortly be recruiting for a permanent holder of the post. We suggest that the interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO) could usefully bring new perspectives to the Pan Berkshire work from other Combined Authority areas to support the pan Berkshire work on devolution, helping build on RWBM's proactive leadership in this area. This might in turn help to attract a new

CEO. We feel that it will be important for the Council to keep engaging with the LGA, perhaps having some further bespoke leadership support post elections. This would help to ensure that the changes and progress made around culture are not lost in the future. Post-election there will be a need to restart the work on community governance to maximise opportunities for local devolution of assets and services.

It should also be acknowledged in this review that opposition members were less than positive about the Council's progress on the CPC recommendations. Whilst they see the changes to member committees and training as positive steps they also said that there is more to do on scrutiny, member culture, parish and town councils and the MTFs.

Local Priorities and Outcomes

The CPC's first recommendation was that the Council should prioritise embedding the Corporate Plan across the Council and establishing a new performance framework linking service plans and priorities to budget and risks over the medium term. The Council reported that it has strengthened the alignment between the Corporate Plan and the MTFs with resourcing decisions being linked to the Plan's priorities and objectives and business planning and budget setting being brought more closely together. As an immediate step, it is developing Directorate-level Plans, which include performance, finance and risk and using these as a core document for the 2023-24 budgeting decision process. The Council's 2022 Residents Survey has been undertaken and published. The findings have set the baseline for some of Corporate Plan goals and will provide evidence to inform the annual refresh of Corporate Plan's priorities, as well as wider service and policy design. A new approach to performance management has also been driven forward based on delivery against Corporate Plan priorities. Key achievements reported by the council include:

- Launch of a new Citizens Portal, in April 2022. This shares performance information against all 50 Corporate Plan goals, to enable greater transparency and accountability on the council's performance and progress. The Portal is updated with new data monthly and provides the public facing layer of the new performance framework.
- Corporate Overview & Scrutiny have taken on overarching responsibility for reviewing council performance – assessing quarterly performance reports on an exception basis.
- A new Performance and Risk Management Board was set up in May, to provide a safe space and increased focus on performance among the senior leadership.
- The new performance approach has been set out clearly in a Performance Management handbook, alongside a capacity building programme which is being initiated with staff.

The peer team recognise that good progress has been made and agree with the Council that there is

more to do to align budget and risks with priorities in the context of a constrained economic environment.

Financial Management

The peer team's second recommendation was that the Council should refresh its' Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) with stronger links to the savings made by the Transformation Strategy and underpinned by the creation of a Transformation Fund to deliver the benefits needed. It added that the first priority of the Transformation Strategy should be to improve the customer experience. The Council confirmed that the MTFS had been refreshed and agreed by Council in September 2022. However, due to the significant changes to the economic environment since the CPC in January 2022, the Council's focus was on the immediate issues of inflation, interest rate rises and the need for sound financial management. This was to be achieved by introducing more grip and rigour into budget management processes. The Council confirmed that it still has in year budget pressures with a budget gap but that it expected that these would be successfully managed and there were contingencies in place to achieve this.

The Council reported that it had made good progress on aligning the budget and risks with priorities although there was more to do. The peer team concluded that it was indeed very close to "stitching together" an outcome-based budget, priorities and risks. Further alignment was needed between the finance and performance dashboards and that work needed to be completed in time for the new administration in May 2023. For the Council a key factor of its MTFS going forward would be demand management in key services. Discussions were taking place with Health colleagues to develop this approach.

We understand that the Transformation service has been restructured to bring corporate transformation into the Resources Directorate, alongside IT, Digital and customer services. The intention is that the recent alignment of these key services together will be able to drive forward customer transformation in a more cohesive way and through the development of a new customer strategy, underpinned by the digital journey. Rather than create a specific and separate transformation fund as recommended by peers, the Council is currently considering through its budget setting process, those areas to invest in that will lead to actions around demand management, the use of technology to improve both efficiency and customer experience with a view to reconsidering the need for a fund over the medium term as the transformation strategy develops. Whatever approach is taken, there must be flexibility to allow an "invest to save" approach where there are clear and measurable service improvements and financial savings to be made.

The peer team were concerned that local pay increases being modelled in next year's budget were only at 2% compared to national pay negotiations considering around 6%. This could be detrimental to staff recruitment and retention in an already tight employment environment. The Council agreed that it is off the pace on locally negotiated pay. It was meeting the Trade Unions soon to discuss the issue, but the pay award would come down to affordability. The draft budget will model more scenarios e.g. around levels of council tax subject to Government policy on referendum caps.

Governance and Culture

Under this theme the peer team made six recommendations. These covered:

- Establishing a Member development programme, including a new induction package for May 2023 which aligns to the strategic priorities of the Royal Borough.
- Putting in place stronger support for member casework that provides consistency and timeliness of response across all council functions.
- Reviewing the current model of scrutiny committees to make them more closely aligned to the priorities in the Corporate Plan and service delivery arrangements.
- Revisiting the terms of reference and remit of the joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for East Berkshire as part of the establishment of the ICS.
- Reviewing Cabinet portfolios so that they are re-balanced across people, place and corporate functions to enable more capacity to influence at a sub-regional and national level alongside local place leadership responsibilities.
- Developing a clear and consistent framework on the role and governance of the arms-length Council entities including Optalis, AFC and the Property Company.

The Council confirmed that all the recommendations under this theme had been progressed. Regarding a new Induction process for Members, it had established an officer working group, which had met, to engage with all the Group Leaders in the development of the new Member Induction Programme to follow the elections in May 2023. Funding for this was being considered as part of the budget process for next year. Group Leaders had given a clear steer to include sessions focussed on the culture and values of the Council and to support any new Cabinet Members in the administration. A proposed programme to cover the period following the election was in draft and due to be discussed with Group Leaders later in the year. A continuous development programme should then be drafted to continue throughout the four-year term.

The Council has reviewed how Member queries are dealt with and has restructured the Corporate Teams to allow focus on Member Support through the funding of a caseworker (currently subject of a growth bid for 23/24). This should see an improvement in response times to Member queries. It has also evaluated a number of different software support packages after a trial earlier in the year and will be implementing Caseworker.gov to provide additional support, tracking and oversight which again, should aid Members and the Council in managing queries.

In terms of the Overview and Scrutiny function of the Council, the Panels have been reconstituted in line with the Peer Review recommendations. The Council has also benefited from a bespoke support package offered by the LGA through the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. The first session with Chairs of the Panels has taken place and the next planned is planned for November. The Council acknowledge that this is a work in progress as cultural behaviour was embedded and difficult to change but is determined to keep the focus up in key corporate governance, financial and cross cutting priority areas such as transformation and equalities. This will be embedded in the improvement journey through a resourced Corporate Improvement Plan to build on the work done through the Peer

Review.

After giving considerable thought to the issue the Council had agreed to split the Adults, Public Health and Children's portfolio into two roles. One for Adults and Public Health and one for Children.

The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee is being reviewed with colleagues in public health to reflect the footprint of the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

The Council said that the role and governance of the arms-length companies will be the subject of work through the Annual Governance Statement this year, to ensure that the governance arrangements are sufficiently robust and transparent.

In terms of the culture of the organisation work is underway to strengthen the approach to equalities, and to embed equalities considerations more effectively across the organisation. A new, more outwards-focused set of equality objectives has been developed and will be incorporated into the refresh of the Corporate Plan in January 2023. Key topics include the cost of living, Early Years and Disability and Accessibility. The approach to Equality Impact assessments (EQIAs) has been strengthened. A new form has been drafted and is currently being piloted in a number of areas. An evidence grid is being drafted to support officers to take a more evidence-based approach to equality considerations. Corporate Overview and Scrutiny will monitor and review the progress on equalities work going forwards. New draft equality and diversity objectives are currently being discussed with the corporate team and Overview and Scrutiny and through the Induction Programme post May 2023. The Council reported some improvement in member culture and behaviour with fewer complaints and social media problems. The issue is being addressed with Group Leaders. The peer team commented that there have been significant improvements in the culture and behaviour of members since 2016. There was more to do but there was an opportunity to ensure that progress continues after the next set of elections. The Council said that it was part of the "Be a Councillor" campaign to increase councillor diversity. Hybrid working was encouraging a broader range of people to take up the role of councillor. The Council was also upgrading its IT in the council chamber to enable better remote working and involve residents more in Council meetings.

Organisation and Place Leadership

The peer team recommended that the Council needed to develop a localism strategy with town and parish councils and community groups which could promote greater subsidiarity of decision making and enable RBWM to be more strategic.

The Council reported that the Corporate Plan has recognised the need to improve the way in which it engages with residents and invest in listening, learning and working in partnership. The plan includes a commitment to build stronger trust and relationships with communities; to develop stronger, more community-centric ways of working; and to empower and enable community-led action. It said that progress had been made on developing community relationships over the past six months, for example through its response to the Cost of Living increases, where it has brought together community and council-led support into a targeted campaign -'Here to Help' – communicated through

the VCS and community partners. We heard that it is also working with both community and health partners on the delivery of support to residents who are struggling, through the Household Support Fund and a 'Warm Spaces' network. Relationships with Frimley Integrated Care System (ICS) have been strengthened. The Council are facilitating 'World Cafes' in every ward, in partnership with the ICS, to generate community-led solutions to identified problems, which could then be allocated seed funding through the Innovation Fund. The Council believe that these community-based activities have helped to take forward its' Place Leadership role at a more strategic level. A new Head of Service role has been created to lead partnerships with the VCS and Health and a new Equalities and Community Engagement officer started in May and is leading the development of a strengthened approach to engagement. The next step is to bring this work together into a strategy for community engagement and partnership working. This is currently in development.

The peer team heard that relationships with parishes are being strengthened through the Parish Liaison Forum. Conversations had taken place with the 14 individual parishes, to identify whether they could provide any services such as grounds management. Parishes are also playing an active role in the World Cafes project and in supporting residents on the cost of living. The peer team were told that a consultation about establishing a town council for Windsor has been undertaken but only 3% of residents responded. Consequently, the Council felt that it did not have a mandate to proceed with this at present, although there was scope to re-run the consultation in the future. It is the view of the peer team that RBWM should pursue the parish and town council agenda more forcefully as part of the council's longer-term approach to financial sustainability and acting as a strategic place leader.

The peer team reminded the Council that in January it had described the organisation as a unitary authority with a district council mentality with regard to place leadership. The challenge then to the Council was to be more ambitious and act on a larger scale. One key to this would be the Borough Local Plan which was due to be adopted in February 2022. The Plan has been adopted and the peer team acknowledge that this was a considerable achievement for the Council. The Council recognises that its Place offer has been under-utilised and under leveraged due to a lack of resources on regeneration and economic development. However, it believes that it has demonstrated a greater level of ambition to lead placemaking, although there was more to do. Evidence of increased place leadership include partnership working with neighbouring authorities, for example pan Berkshire working groups on key themes such as growth, climate, housing, transport and skills and with placemaking leads. The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are a key part of this work but are not the driving force. The Council is involved in bidding for investment zones and infrastructure funding bids. It wants to play a key role in developing Berkshire through the tourism and pharmaceutical sector as well as a future Berkshire skills academy for film and TV.

The Council agree that it still needs to carve out its own unique selling point and be more ambitious. It sees huge placemaking scope around Windsor and its heritage with potential to make it a future destination town for major events. The funeral of her Majesty the Queen had shown Windsor to the world and generated great interest in the town. Work on developing the vision for Windsor has started with a two-day workshop with stakeholders and key partners. A tourism partnership board has been

established which included Legoland and the Crown Estate working together with the council to rebrand Windsor as a tourist destination. It was also working on disability access and raising skills and employment levels in the hospitality sector. In Maidenhead the station redevelopment and other regeneration in the town was progressing well. The golf club site would see 2,600 new homes with additional space for businesses and possibly an Investment Zone. £18m of infrastructure was going into the site part funded by the developers. In Ascot the High Street project was connecting key partners with parish and ward councillors all working together.

Under recommendation 10 peers suggested that RBWM should take advantage of the 25th anniversary of being a unitary council in 2023 to work with the Youth Council and partners to set out a new 25-year vision for the Royal Borough. We were pleased to be told that the Youth Council has been engaged and has agreed to undertake a piece of work in partnership with Council. The Youth Council will report back the end of the calendar year.

Under recommendation 11 peers asked the Council to consider a peer review of its planning service once the improvement plan for the Planning function is in place and beginning to have an impact. During the progress meeting we were advised that the Planning Service Improvement Plan is now operational and subject to monthly and quarterly review. A Peer Review of the Planning service is likely to be scheduled for 2023/24.

4. Final thoughts and next steps

The LGA would like to thank the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for undertaking an LGA CPC progress review.

We appreciate that senior managerial and political leadership will want to reflect on these findings and suggestions in order to determine how the organisation wishes to take things forward.

Under the umbrella of LGA sector-led improvement, there is an on-going offer of support to councils. The LGA is well placed to provide additional support, advice and guidance on a number of the areas identified for development and improvement and we would be happy to discuss this.

Mona Sehgal (Principal Adviser) is the main point of contact between the authority and the Local Government Association (LGA) and her e-mail address is mona.sehgal@local.gov.uk

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqIA : LGA Corporate Peer Challenge - Action Plan Progress

Essential information

Items to be assessed: (please mark 'x')

Strategy		Policy		Plan		Project		Service/Procedure	
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Responsible officer	Emma Duncan,	Service area	Strategy	Directorate	Law, Strategy & Public Heath
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Stage 1: EqIA Screening (mandatory)	Date created: 20/12/2022	Stage 2 : Full assessment (if applicable)	Date created : n/a
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Approved by Head of Service / Overseeing group/body / Project Sponsor:

"I am satisfied that an equality impact has been undertaken adequately."

Signed by (print): E Duncan

Dated: 20/12/22

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ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : LGA Corporate Peer Challenge - Action Plan Progress

Guidance notes

What is an EqlA 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.

EqlAs 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. All completed EqlA 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.

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 EqlA?

The process for conducting an EqlA 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.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqIA : LGA Corporate Peer Challenge - Action Plan Progress

1.1 What is the overall aim of your proposed strategy/policy/project etc and what are its key objectives?

LGA Corporate Peer Challenge: Action Plan Progress

The Royal Borough invited the LGA into the council to conduct a Corporate Peer Challenge review in January 2022, in order to provide an external assessment of its progress, and recommendations for further improvement. Their assessment and recommendations were set out in the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Feedback Report. Cabinet considered the recommendations in March 2022 and agreed to accept the 11 recommendations subject to minor amendments and agreed to the preparation of an Action Plan. This report updates Members on the progress to date following a return visit by the Recommendations with particular relevance to the Equalities have been summarised below although these do not form part of the recommendation for this report and have been included for completeness:

Recommendation1

Prioritise embedding the Corporate Plan across the Council and the establishment of a new performance framework which links service plans and priorities to budget and risks over the medium term.

- The Corporate Plan contains a cross-cutting commitment to reducing inequalities and a range of specific goals focused on improving outcomes for people with protected characteristics. The council is currently revising its Equality objectives and undertaking an ambitious research project to strengthen our understanding of inequalities and disadvantage in the Borough. Revised equality objectives will be included in a refresh of the Corporate Plan by the end of 2022. This reflects feedback from the CPC Review team to strengthen our approach to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.

Recommendation 3

Establish a Member development programme, including a new induction package for May 2023 which aligns to the strategic priorities of the Royal Borough. Group Leaders need to be fully involved in developing the programme to ensure ongoing member participation, throughout the term of office.

- The Member development programme will include specific training on Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqlA : LGA Corporate Peer Challenge - Action Plan Progress

Recommendation 5

Review the current model of scrutiny committees. There are currently 4 scrutiny panels and one county-wide health scrutiny. It may be better for the committees to be more closely aligned to the priorities in the Corporate Plan and service delivery arrangements covering people, place and corporate functions.

- Corporate Overview & Scrutiny will review progress on strengthening the council's approach to Equalities.

Recommendation 9

Develop a localism strategy with town and parish councils and community groups which promotes greater subsidiarity of decision making and thus enabling RBWM to be more strategic.

- Development of the strategy includes strengthening engagement with a range of groups representing the views and interests of groups with protected characteristics.

Recommendation 10

Take advantage of the 25th anniversary of being a unitary council to work with the Youth Council and partners to set out a new 25-year vision for the Royal Borough.

- The development of the vision, strengthens engagement with our Youth Council and ensures that young people's views and priorities are reflected within the council's long term vision.

Stage 1 : Screening (Mandatory)

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".

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqIA : LGA Corporate Peer Challenge - Action Plan Progress

Protected characteristics	Relevance	Level	Positive/negative	Evidence
All protected characteristics	Relevant		Positive	<i>Increased focus on equality, diversity and inclusion across the council, through embedding of the Corporate Plan, Member induction, and strengthened engagement with stakeholder groups.</i>
Age	Not relevant		Positive	<i>Youth Council leading on the development of the 25 Year Vision, enhancing youth engagement and voice in the borough's vision and priority setting.</i>
Disability	Not relevant			
Gender re-assignment	Not relevant			
Marriage/civil partnership	Not relevant			
Pregnancy and maternity	Not relevant			
Race	Not relevant			
Religion and belief	Not relevant			
Sex	Not relevant			
Sexual orientation	Not relevant			

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Outcome, action and public reporting

ROYAL BOROUGH OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

EqIA : LGA Corporate Peer Challenge - Action Plan Progress

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?	No			
Does the strategy, policy, plan etc require amendment to have a positive impact?	No			

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).

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