

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18 MARCH 2024

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE: ANNUAL OVERVIEW OF COMPLAINTS

Executive Summary

With continuing improvements in mind for the Corporate Complaints procedure, it is anticipated that a summary of the response to the complainant will be recorded both at Stage 1 and 2. It is hoped that this type of recorded information will assist the Council to undertake a more comprehensive analysis and help to identify any particular areas which require specific attention and/or additional service delivery improvement.

Background Papers: Council's Complaints Procedure.

Reporting Person: Gareth John, Director of Legal and Democratic Services
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Date Published: 15 March 2024

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18 MARCH 2024

UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF) – PROCESS REVIEW

Executive Summary

This report provides the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with details of the process by which projects were brought forward for consideration for UKSPF funding and approved by the Executive at its meeting on 18 January 2024.

Following a request from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Officers agreed to submit to the Committee a report on the process followed, including details of how they were determined against the criteria as set out by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to review the report and make recommendations as appropriate.

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report, and any associated recommendations, be noted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

Background Papers:	None.
Reporting Person:	Beverley Kuchar, Acting Strategic Director – Place Email: Beverley.Kuchar@woking.gov.uk
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Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Dale Roberts Email: CllrDale.Roberts@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	15 March 2024

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In April 2022 the Government launched the [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#) (UKSPF). Following a successful bid Woking Borough Council was allocated £1 million pound in funding pending submission of an investment plan.
- 1.2 Approval of the Council's investment plan by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) was received in October 2022.
- 1.3 A report on the process for agreeing projects was requested to be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 28 February 2024.

2.0 Funding

- 2.1 To be eligible for consideration for funding a project must meet one of 41 criteria, known as interventions, as set out by [the guidance released by DLUHC](#).
- 2.2 The funds were allocated over a period of three years from 2022/23 to 2024/25. The amounts received in years 1 and 2 have been spent and the remainder, £865,483, is to be allocated in the current financial year. Spend to date, £134,517, has focussed on Green Infrastructure and in particular, improvements at Horsell Moor and Oakfield play areas. A £50,000 commitment to the Surrey decarbonisation programme has also previously been agreed and will be taken forward in 2024/25. However, in the light of a key project, the Digital Centre of Excellence, not proceeding, consideration was then given to how the funds for that project (£601,000) could be re-committed.

3.0 Criteria for Selecting Projects

- 3.1 In order to reallocate the £601,000 Officers at the Council were asked to put forward suggestions for projects or schemes that have been key priority areas for members of the Council and would meet the eligibility criteria for UKSPF funding. The Business Liaison Manager then worked with the presenting Officers to score each project or scheme against the following criteria: DLUHC UK SPF criteria; the Woking for All Strategy and the Commercial Protocol; their economic, social, and environmental impact.
- 3.2 A matrix of projects, scored in line with the above criteria, was then shared with the Commercial and Finance Governance Board (consisting of Council Officers and Commissioners) on the 29 November 2023. The Board moderated the officer scores and agreed a number of projects to scope in more detail and bring forward for Member approval.
- 3.3 The process and outcomes were shared with DLUHC colleagues to ensure transparency of process at the earliest possible stage.
- 3.4 A key use of UKSPF funding is to allow organisations that provide significant benefit to the community to aid them in transforming their organisations. In recognition of the reduced grant funding from the Council to Citizens Advice Woking and their need to change the way in which they deliver services and following a cross-party meeting with Councillors to review the equalities impacts of the Council budget proposals, officers considered that UKSPF funding could be considered for allocation to CAW. Any UKSPF funding would be for transformation to allow CAW to transition away from Local Authority funding, so that it could continue to offer important services to Woking residents.
- 3.5 As with the other projects that had been put forward for consideration, funding to CAW was assessed against UKSPF, Commercial Protocol and Woking for All criteria.

3.6 A meeting was held with CAW on 10 January 2024 where the potential for UKSPF was discussed and welcomed. Following this meeting, funding to CAW was added to the list of projects that were put forward for Executive approval.

3.7 A plan to show how the UKSPF funding would be used by CAW was requested. A draft plan was received on 12 March 2024 and a Memorandum of Understanding will now be developed between the Council and CAW.

4.0 Executive Report

4.1 At its meeting on 18 January 2024 the Executive received an Officer report (Appendix 1) on the proposed projects for the remaining UKSPF. The report requested approval of the projects that had been agreed to be carried for Member approval by the Commercial and Finance Board.

4.2 The Finance Working Group reviewed the Executive report on 15 January 2024, with no objections. The Executive [agreed the resolutions of the Officer report](#).

4.3 The Council has advised DLUHC of the projects approved by the Executive.

5.0 Corporate Strategy

5.1 This report supports the themes of the Working for All strategy in increasing transparency of decision-making thereby promoting the Engaged Communities strand.

6.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6.2 There are no known risks arising from this report.

Equalities and Human Resources

6.3 There are no known equalities impacts arising from this report.

6.4 There are no known resource implications from this report.

Legal

6.5 There are no known legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 Engagement and Consultation

7.1 Engagement or consultation has not been considered necessary for this report.

REPORT ENDS

EXECUTIVE – 18 JANUARY 2024

UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF)

Executive Summary

In April 2022 the Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) with the aim of helping local places to build pride in place and increase life chances.

Woking Borough Council received £1m of the UKSPF plus an additional £20,000 in investment plan preparation and reporting budget. An investment plan was submitted to DLUHC and approved in October 2022.

Spend to date, £134,517, has focussed on Green Infrastructure and in particular, improvements at Horsell Moor and Oakfield play areas. A £50,000 commitment to the Surrey decarbonisation programme has also previously been agreed and will be taken forward in 2024/25 as part of the overall previously agreed allocation of £349,000 for Green Infrastructure. However, in the light of a key project, the Digital Centre of Excellence, not proceeding, consideration needs to be given to how this now uncommitted £601,000 may be used in 2024/25. A number of projects have been put forward and these have been assessed against both UKSPF criteria and Woking's own Commercial Protocol, both of which are set out below. Six priority projects have been identified, with an additional three projects which could benefit from allocation of funding should the priority schemes not be progressed.

Once the priority projects have been agreed, a change request will be submitted to DLUHC to formally agree the proposed replacement projects.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RESOLVE That

- (i) the priority projects listed in the report be confirmed;
- (ii) on the basis of the agreed projects, a change request be submitted to DLUHC; and
- (iii) authority be delegated to the UKSPF Group, in consultation with the S.151 Officer, to authorise the reallocation of funding to the additional projects listed in the report should the priority schemes not be bought forward within the required timeframe.

Reasons for Decision

Reason: The priority projects meet the UKSPF criteria for the funding available, which, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding with DLUHC, required the local authority must have been spent within this funding period.

The Executive has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

Background Papers: None.

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Date Published: 10 January 2024

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In April 2022 the Government launched the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) with the aim of helping local places to build pride in place and increase life chances. Woking Borough Council received £1m of the UKSPF plus an additional £20,000 in investment plan preparation and reporting budget. An investment plan was submitted to DLUHC and approved in October 2022.
- 1.2 This agreed plan included Green Infrastructure improvements, Surrey County Council decarbonisation loan scheme, and the creation and management of a green innovation hub (renewable energy/ green tech) titled “The Digital Centre of Excellence”. The latter project is not being taken forward. The provider is longer able to meet the requirements of the service and the obligations on them as a provider.
- 1.3 To date, £134,517 (Y1 & Y2 allocation) has been spent (contracted works) leaving a balance of unspent funds of £865,483, and this is set out in the table below, including the balances for those previously agreed projects.

SPF Project	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Digital Centre of Excellence			£601,000	£601,000
Green Infrastructure	£44,839	£89,678	£214,483	£349,000
SCC Loan Scheme			£50,000	£50,000
Total	£44,839	£89,678	£865,483	£1,000,000

- 1.4 In the light of the Digital Centre of Excellence not proceeding, consideration needs to be given to how this uncommitted £601,000 may be used in 2024/25. A number of projects have been put forward and these have been assessed against both UKSPF criteria and Woking’s own Commercial Protocol, both of which are set out below. Once the priority projects have been agreed, a change request will be submitted to DLUHC to formally agree the proposed replacement projects.

2.0 Assessment Criteria

- 2.1 UKSPF has 41 interventions across three topic areas. The full list and detail of these interventions can be found at [Interventions list for England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/interventions-list-for-england). For the purposes of this report, only the detailed interventions associated with priority projects are specifically referred to expanded on. However, the three topic areas and broad objectives for each of these areas are set out below.

2.2 Communities & Place:

- Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities, such as community infrastructure and local green space, and community-led projects.

- Building resilient, safe and healthy neighbourhoods, through investment in quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in, through targeted improvements to the built environment and innovative approaches to crime prevention.

2.3 Supporting local business:

- Creating jobs and boosting community cohesion, through investments that build on existing industries and institutions, and range from support for starting businesses to visible improvements to local retail, hospitality and leisure sector facilities.
- Promoting networking and collaboration, through interventions that bring together businesses and partners within and across sectors to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and stimulate innovation and growth.
- Increasing private sector investment in growth-enhancing activities, through targeted support for small and medium-sized businesses to undertake new-to-firm innovation, adopt productivity-enhancing, energy efficient and low carbon technologies and techniques, and start or grow their exports.

2.4 People & Skills:

- Boosting core skills and support adults to progress in work, by targeting adults with no or low level qualifications and skills in maths, and upskill the working population, yielding personal and societal economic impact, and by encouraging innovative approaches to reducing adult learning barriers.
- Reducing levels of economic inactivity through investment in bespoke intensive life and employment support tailored to local need. Investment should facilitate the join-up of mainstream provision and local services within an area for participants, through the use of one-to-one keyworker support, improving employment outcomes for specific cohorts who face labour market barriers.
- Expected cohorts include, but are not limited to people aged over 50, people with a disability and health condition, women, people from an ethnic minority, young people not in education, employment or training and people with multiple complex needs (homeless, care leavers, ex/offenders, people with substance abuse problems and victims of domestic violence).
- Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support, including access to basic skills.
- Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work, and supplement local adult skills provision e.g. by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based and non-qualification based. This should be supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes.

3.0 Recommended Priorities

- 3.1 A total of 15 projects were initially put forward and assessed against the agreed framework above. The following projects have been identified as meeting the criteria and funds have been provisionally allocated funding. These are listed below with no's 1-6 being officer recommended priorities and no's 7-9 as potential additional options should the agreed projects not come forward. A further 6 projects were assessed as not meeting the criteria and so are not included below.

Priority projects

1. Transfer of sports pavilions to community groups. **Allocation £150,000.** The funding would be for assisting with the transition of pavilion ownership to sports organisations and the costs involved with maintenance and utilities. This will give additional time to complete the asset transfers required to ensure grassroots sports clubs do not fold due to the pavilion closures. This is in line with the UKSPF intervention E10: Funding for local sports facilities, tournaments, teams and leagues; to bring people together.
2. Transfer of Community Centres to the community. **Allocation £140,000.** The funding would be assisting with the transition of community centre ownership (Moorcroft, St. Mary's, The Vyne and Parkview) to community groups as well as costs involved with maintenance and utilities. This will give additional time to complete the asset transfers required to ensure community groups are not immediately burdened with financial pressures. This is in line with UKSPF intervention E11: Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups.
3. Parks and Play areas. **Allocation £101,000.** The funding would be to support the most urgent works where the Council has a legal duty (as landowner) to maintain a condition to ensure health & safety for users, Works will reduce the ongoing maintenance burden and pressure on existing / future budgets by bringing the facility into a better condition. Specific works will include replacement and refurbishment of safety surfacing and equipment, works to footpaths and car park areas. This is in line with UKSPF intervention E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces.
4. Support for arts and culture. **Allocation £130,000.** This would enable the establishment of a new community based model for The Lightbox that secures alternative funding - a commercially viable operating model, shop, café, venue hire, renting creative studio space that underpins the community, well-being outreach work. This is in line with Intervention E6: Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities.
5. Supporting Economic Growth and Local Businesses. **Allocation £50,000.** The funding would be to support economic growth across Woking to bring together businesses to work collaboratively as a "Place Board" to ensure the economic success of the Borough. This funding would facilitate that collaboration, driving a programme of work that supports growth, attracts new business, promotes our strong cultural offer and seeks to retain business as well as talent and skills. This is in line with intervention E8: Funding for the development and promotion of wider campaigns and E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial systems and supporting businesses at all stages of their development to start, sustain, grow and innovate, including through local networks.
6. Citizen's Advice - securing our volunteer base. **Allocation £30,000.** The funding would support Citizen's Advice Woking to move to a more sustainable business model, and secure funding from alternative sources. This funding links to E9: Funding for impactful volunteering and/or social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

SPF Project	2024/25	Total
Green Infrastructure (already agreed)	£214,483	£349,000
SCC Loan Schemes (already agreed)	£50,000	£50,000
E11 - Transfer of community centres	£140,000	
E10 - Transfer of sports pavilions	£150,000	
E6 – Support for arts and culture	£130,000	
E3 – Parks and Play areas	£101,000	
E8 and E23 – Supporting economic growth and local businesses	£50,000	
E9 – Citizen’s Advice Woking	£30,000	
Total	£865,483	£1,000,000

Additional projects which could be supported should funding become available, but not currently part of the priority list.

7. Street lighting and landscaping enhancements to the area where Church Street East meets Chertsey Road. It is proposed that the area between Church Street East and Chertsey Road is allocated for public realm improvements comprising landscaping, planting, pedestrian paving, and street furniture improvements. This is in line with Intervention E5: Design and management of the built and landscaped environment to ‘design out crime’.
8. Renew the digital inclusion project with a subsidy/ grant. The current digital inclusion project, managed by Alex Pullin is currently funded until March 2024 by a grant from the NHS. So extending this would be in line with Intervention E36 Intervention to increase levels of digital inclusion, with a focus on essential digital skills, communicating the benefits of getting (safely) online, and in-community support to provide users with the confidence and trust to stay online.
9. Rural Access tracks. Most urgent works where the Council has a legal duty (as landowner) to maintain a condition to ensure health & safety for users. Where applicable this has been risk assessed against a relevant industry specific standard. Works will reduce the ongoing maintenance burden and pressure on existing / future budgets by bringing the facility into a better condition. This is in line with Intervention E2: Funding for new, or improvements to existing, community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects including those that increase communities’ resilience to natural hazards, such as flooding. This could cover capital spend and running costs.

3.2 In accordance with the governance arrangements set out in the Terms of Reference for the UKSPF Group agreed by the Executive on 14 September 2023, these priorities are supported by the UKSPF Group, and accordingly are now reported to the Executive for decision.

4.0 Options

4.1 Agree the projects outlined above for completion in 2024/25 (recommended).

4.2 Agree different projects, presented in the additional list above.

5.0 Corporate Strategy

5.1 The delivery of the recommended projects would be consistent with all four priority outcomes with the Corporate Strategy: Healthier communities, Engaged communities. Greener communities, and Prospering communities.

6.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

6.1 There are no specific risks associated with the receipt of the grant. Where funding is not spent by the end of 2024/25 it must be paid back. Therefore, it is important that any projects are capable of being delivered in-year. As funding ceases in March 2025 all projects must end by the end of March 2025. It will be necessary to ensure that there is no expectation that funding will continue after this date. As plans become more developed then risks associated with the individual projects will be identified and controlled.

Equalities and Human Resources

6.2 Equality implications will be considered as part of each project plan in order to ensure that any implications (positive or negative) are understood and managed effectively.

Legal

6.3 While there are no specific legal implications associated with the receipt of the funding (other than the requirement for this to be used within the parameters set by Government), there will undoubtedly be legal implications associated with each of the individual projects, both in terms of scope and in terms of the grant conditions (for example regarding monitoring and potential recovery in whole or part).

7.0 Engagement and Consultation

7.1 Engagement and consultation will take place on individual projects as needed, once priorities are agreed.

REPORT ENDS

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 18 MARCH 2024

BROOKWOOD CEMETERY HS2 TASK AND FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT

Executive Summary

Attached is the Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report and appendices.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation(s) set out above.

Background Papers:	None.
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Date Published:	15 March 2024

Brookwood Cemetery High Speed 2 Funding Task and Finish Group Report

Statement

As part of the contract to maintain the HS2 memorial space, HS2 provided £2.8 million as an endowment designed to provide an income for 100 years. This money was directed to the WBC General Fund.

WBC is contractually obliged to ensure that Brookwood Cemetery maintains the memorial space from April 2024 through to April 2124. The task and finish group sought to ensure that there was a solution in place to ensure that the space was adequately maintained for the duration of the contract and that WBC met its obligations.

Authors	CLlr Kevin Davis CLlr Leslie Rice
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Version	Date	Description
0.1	29/12/2023	Initial draft
0.2	11/03/2024	Final draft
1.0	13/03/2024	Published version

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1. Brookwood Cemetery Historical Context

Brookwood Cemetery is a nationally important Grade 1 listed park situated in the Heathlands ward of Woking borough. There is a civilian side and a military side. The civilian side is the largest cemetery in the UK and the military cemetery houses war graves managed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) and the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC).

Woking Borough Council (WBC) acquired the civilian side of Brookwood Cemetery in 2015 after extensive scrutiny of the cemetery as the cemetery was at risk due to ongoing litigation at the time.

Since the acquisition, WBC has invested heavily in the cemetery to ensure it is a safe and welcoming space for visitors and a place where people would wish to be buried at the end of their lives.

2. High Speed 2

The High Speed 2 (HS2) rail project had identified a requirement to exhume and rebury approximately 25,000 bodies from various closed London cemeteries that were directly on the route of the proposed rail line and initiated a tender exercise to identify a suitable space where bodies could be reburied and an appropriate memorial could be built to commemorate the dead.

Brookwood Cemetery management responded to the tender exercise and in 2020, it was announced that the cemetery had been successful, and work begun soon after.

As part of the contract, Brookwood Cemetery is required to maintain the HS2 burial area and memorial for 100 years and funding from HS2 was made available.

The work to rebury bodies and the memorial was completed in 2023 by HS2 with Brookwood Cemetery becoming responsible for maintenance from April 2024 and WBC responsible for remitting annual funds to Brookwood Cemetery and ensuring Brookwood Cemetery performs its responsibilities for maintenance and administration.

3. Overview and Scrutiny Task & Finish Group

In May 2023, a scrutiny topic request form was submitted by Cllr Davis due to concerns regarding the ongoing maintenance of the HS2 burial area and the funds supplied by HS2 for that purpose. The Scrutiny Topic Request form is included at Appendix 1.

WBC issued a S114 Notice in June 2023 and that provided some clarity on HS2 funding and exposed a scenario hitherto not considered.

3.1 Terms of Reference

At the October O&S meeting the Terms of Reference for the HS2 Brookwood Cemetery Task and Finish Group were agreed and the membership of the group determined as Cllr Davis and Cllr Rice. The Terms of Reference are included in Appendix 2 with the Roles and Functions documented below.

3.2 Roles and Functions

- a) Determine the status of the funding that was provided through HS2 scheme.
- b) Understand the purpose of the funding provided.
- c) Understand how the funding was provided.
- d) Review what funding is required for cemetery to operate.
- e) Understand the obligations on the Council towards the cemetery.
- f) Understand the treatment of these funds under S114 status, if applicable.
- g) Understand the steps taken to date to ensure that funding will be available for the full duration of the original period identified by the donor, HS2.
- h) Seek views and make recommendations on the sustainable running of the cemetery.

4. Outcomes

4.1 Method Statement

A series of meetings were held with the aim of gathering information from Brookwood Cemetery staff and Council employees including the S151 officer to determine the status of all aspects of the agreement between HS2, Brookwood Cemetery and WBC.

This work further determined responsibilities and how WBC intends to treat the finances to ensure that the agreement is implemented as contracted.

It was important to ensure that WBC was able to provide the funding over the next century and that the corporate Council memory is not lost regarding the agreement, together with the processes in place to guarantee its delivery.

There was a requirement identified that Brookwood Cemetery would need to provide a maintenance schedule and long-term investment plan enabling the HS2 space to be kept in good condition.

The Section 151 Officer has provided a summary at Appendix 3.

4.2 Analysis

- a) Determine the status of the funding that was provided through HS2 scheme.

HS2 paid WBC a grant of £2,800,000 in 2020. WBC treats this as cash on its balance sheet and will each year on the 31 March add accrued interest at the Bank of England rate less half of one percent.

The contract was set-up with WBC responsible for the funding arrangements.

- b) Understand the purpose of the funding provided.

To allow Brookwood Cemetery to provide ongoing administration and maintenance of the HS2 burial site and its environment.

- c) Review what funding is required for cemetery to operate.

Through the Task and Finish Group, it was identified that Brookwood Cemetery would be required to provide a maintenance schedule and investment plan for the upkeep of the site over the period of the contract.

- d) Understand the obligations on the Council towards the cemetery.

WBC will invest the grant and remit annual amounts to Brookwood Cemetery.

WBC will ensure that Brookwood Cemetery performs its responsibilities under the contract.

- e) Understand the treatment of these funds under S114 status, if applicable.

As there is a legally binding contract in place between the three entities, the S114 status that prevents non-statutory spending is exempted regarding the funding of the HS2 site.

- f) Understand the steps taken to date to ensure that funding will be available for the full duration of the original period identified by the donor, HS2.

The £2,800,000 has been allocated in ear-marked reserves and separately recorded and reported on in the Council's annual accounts.

- g) Seek views and make recommendations on the sustainable running of the cemetery.

Following the fact-finding period, it was determined that WBC has sufficient provisions in place to ensure the sustainable funding of the HS2 burial site for the contract period.

The Task and Finish Group is satisfied that the appropriate funding is available, and the corporate memory of this agreement will last for the duration of the contracted 100 years.

Therefore, there is no formal recommendation to the Overview and Scrutiny.

Appendix 1: Scrutiny Review Topic Selection

Set out below is a copy of the online form set up for Councillors to submit a Scrutiny Review Topic Selection for consideration at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

This form must be completed in full with as much detail as possible.

Your name:	Kevin Davis
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Date Drafted:	27/05/2023
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Proposed Scrutiny Topic:	Scrutiny of the Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Funds
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<p>Selection criteria If your proposed Scrutiny Review Topic falls under any of these rejection criteria, it may not be a suitable topic to progress</p>	
Criteria for Scrutiny Review:	
Scrutiny Review likely to result in improvements for local people.	XX
Topic falls within a Community or Corporate priority.	X
Topic represents a key issue for the public.	X
A service is performing poorly.	
High level of dissatisfaction with a service.	
Criteria for rejecting a Scrutiny Review Topic:	
Topic already being addressed.	
Matter is subjudice or prejudicial to the Council's interests.	
Specific case falls within the Council's complaints procedure.	
Topic involves individual disciplinary or grievance matter.	
Proposed topic is unlikely to result in improvements for local people.	

Outcomes of the Review	
<p>Why should the Scrutiny Review be undertaken?</p> <p>As part of the HS2 project to move bodies from London to Brookwood, the fund of £2.6 million was given to Brookwood Cemetery to maintain the HS2 memorial area for 100 years. This endowment was redirected to Council funds whereas arguably it should have been deposited with the cemetery companies. What guarantees are there that the money will be spent on the cemetery and continue to do so for the full 100 years, and should an alternative strategy be taken to safeguard the funds for cemetery use?</p>	
<p>What benefits could result from the Scrutiny Review?</p> <p>The cemetery is guaranteed the income it should have and the transparency around the initial deposit of the £2.6 million is better understood.</p>	
<p>What level of impact will the Scrutiny Review have?</p>	
Substantial benefits community wide or for a significant proportion or section of the Community.	X
Moderate benefits for two or more client groups or substantial benefits for only one client group.	X
Minor benefits for two or more client groups or substantial benefits for only one client group.	
Minor benefits for only one client groups.	
No benefits likely to result.	
Topic Review Process	
<p>Resources to be included in the Scrutiny Review:</p>	
WBC Officer Time Committee.	Finance team / Asset Manager
Report and/or presentation.	
Councillor time.	
Portfolio Holder Involvement.	No
Expert or External Representatives participation.	Chairman of the Brookwood Cemetery board HS2 representation
Establishment of a Task Group.	No
Site visits.	No
Research and Evidence.	Original decision-making information and definition of processes in place to protect the funding.
Consultation Exercise.	No

Other

Please add explanatory note for any resource selected above.

Representatives of HS2 and Brookwood Cemetery should be present to set the scene, outline intentions and to ensure absolute transparency.

Please add any further information that you think would be useful in the consideration of this Scrutiny Review Topic.

Once submitted, if your Scrutiny Review Topic meets the selection criteria and enough information has been provided, it will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their next meeting, where they will decide whether to add the topic to their Work Programme.

Appendix 2: HS2 Brookwood Cemetery Task & Finish Group

Terms of Reference

Adopted: October 2023

Introduction

The HS2 Brookwood Cemetery Task & Finish Group ('the Group') shall report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Significant changes to the Terms of Reference must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Minor changes may be made by the Monitoring Officer.

Role and Functions

The OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report was established to:

- Understand the purpose of the funding provided.
- Determine the status of the funding that was provided through the HS2 scheme.
- Review what funding is required to support the HS2 reburials at the cemetery.
- Understand the obligations on the Council towards the HS2 reburials at the cemetery.
- Understand the treatment of these funds under S114 status, if applicable.
- Understand the steps taken to date to ensure that funding will be available for the full duration of the original period identified by HS2.
- Seek views and make recommendations on the sustainable running of the HS2 reburials at the cemetery.

Membership

The membership shall be decided by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Membership of the OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report shall be two (2) Councillors.

Quorum

The quorum shall be two (2) members of the Group.

Chairman (and election thereof)

The election of the Chairman shall take place at the first meeting of the Group.

Recommendations of the OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report

It is expected that the OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report shall reach its recommendations through consensus.

Meetings of the OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report

Appendix 2 – HS2 Brookwood Cemetery Task & Finish Group Terms of Reference

Formal meetings of the OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report shall be held virtually and serviced by Democratic Services.

The OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report shall have two (2) meetings. Should the Group require more meetings a request must be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Meetings of the OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report shall be held in private. Any recommendations shall become public once at Committee.

As the OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report is private all papers shall be treated as confidential.

Any Council Member may attend as an observer and may, with the consent of the Chairman, contribute to the OSC24-022 Brookwood Cemetery HS2 Task and Finish Group Final Report.

Outcome

The Group shall be expected to report its outcomes to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix 3: BROOKWOOD CEMETERY – HS2 MONIES

In accordance with the tri-partite agreement, HS2 paid £2.8m to Woking Borough Council on 3 March 2022 to be held on behalf Brookwood Cemetery for 100 years for the administration and maintenance of the HS2 burial site within the overall cemetery.

The requirement of the tri-partite agreement is that:

WBC will invest the £2,800,000 Grant and make annual payments to Brookwood to secure the Administration and Maintenance of the HS2 Burial Site and its environment within Brookwood Cemetery for 100 years following completion of the Stage 2 Works.

The agreement requires investment of the funds and payments to Brookwood but is silent on the exact basis of these. At the time some illustrative figures were drafted by the then Chief Executive, but these were not incorporated in the agreement. The arrangements now need to be firmed up.

The funds are held within the Council's overall balances in an earmarked reserve that will be separately recorded and reported on in the Council's annual accounts. The Council cannot invest in any other instruments than cash, hence the HS2 monies will be credited each year with interest at the Bank of England rate less half a percent (the rate as at 31 March each year end).

The estimated amount accrued to date (this will be confirmed as part of the Council's final accounts for 2023/24) on this basis is:

- Interest year to 31 March 2022 = £536
- Interest year to 31 March 2023 - £52,728
- Interest to 31 March 2024 (estimated) = £128,693
- The actual balance as at 31 March 2023 was therefore £2,827,420 and the estimated balance at 31 March 2024 is £2,942,607

There was a proposal that £12,500 be paid as a basic annual maintenance fee, rising in line with (an unspecified rate of) inflation. Suggestions of larger payments on periodic larger maintenance works were also proposed. The Council is willing to follow this route.

However, we suggest that an alternative proposal would be to ask the Company to put forward a long-term asset maintenance programme, this could include £12,500 with an annual uplift using an appropriate index (e.g. construction index) but within a longer-term plan.

Eugene Walker
Interim Strategic Director of Finance
March 2024

