



TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on Monday, 22 November 2021 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices.

The agenda for the meeting is set out below.

JULIE FISHER
Chief Executive

NOTE: Filming Council Meetings

Please note the meeting will be filmed and will be broadcast live and subsequently as an archive on the Council's website (www.woking.gov.uk). The images and sound recording will also be used for training purposes within the Council. Generally the public seating areas are not filmed. However by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed.

AGENDA

PART I - PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT

Part I - Press and Public Present

- 1 Apologies for Absence
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2 Minutes (Pages 5 - 12)
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 October 2021 as published.
- 3 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes OSC21-036 (Pages 13 - 18)
To review and outstanding items from the previous minutes.
- 4 Urgent Business
To consider any business that the Chairman rules may be dealt with under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5 Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.

Matters for Determination

6 Work Programme OSC21-037 (Pages 19 - 40)

Reporting person: Councillor J Sanderson

7 Celebrate Woking Review and Forward Plan OSC21-038 (Pages 41 - 44)

Reporting person: Riette Thomas

This item will be a presentation at the meeting.

8 Freedom Leisure Performance Review OSC21-040 (Pages 45 - 54)

Reporting person: Steve May

9 Executive / Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocol OSC21-043 (Pages 55 - 62)

Reporting person: Councillor James Sanderson

10 The Scrutiny Toolkit OSC21-044 (Pages 63 - 116)

Reporting person: Councillor James Sanderson

11 Treasury Management Mid-year Review 2020/21 OSC21-039 (Pages 117 - 124)

Reporting person: Leigh Clarke

12 Financial Review Monthly Update OSC21-041 (Pages 125 - 132)

Reporting person: Leigh Clarke

Matters for Scrutiny

13 Housing Infrastructure Fund Scrutiny Review OSC21-042 (Pages 133 - 164)

Reporting person: Giorgio Framaliccio

Performance Management

14 Performance and Financial Monitoring Information (to follow)

To consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book). Members are asked to bring their copy of the Green Book to the meeting.

Reporting person: Councillor J Sanderson

Task Group Updates

15 Finance Task Group Update OSC21-045 (to follow)

To receive an update from the Finance Task Group following its meeting on 11 November 2021

Reporting person: Councillor James Sanderson, Chairman of the Finance Task Group

16 Housing Task Group Update OSC21-046 (to follow)

To receive an update from the Housing Task Group following its meeting on 16 November 2021

Reporting person: Councillor Anne-Marie Barker, Chairman of the Housing Task Group.

17 Economic Development Task Group Update OSC21-047. (Pages 165 - 166)

To receive an update from the Economic Development Task Group following its meeting on 4 November 2021.

Reporting person: Councillor Dale Roberts, Chairman of the Economic Development Task Group.

AGENDA ENDS

Date Published - 12 November 2021

For further information regarding this agenda and arrangements for the meeting, please contact Aadam Ahmed, Scrutiny & Democratic Services Officer, Ext 3056, Email Aadam.Ahmed@woking.gov.uk



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MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

held on 18 October.

Present:

Cllr J R Sanderson (Chairman)
Cllr S Hussain (Vice-Chair)

Cllr J Brown	Cllr R Mohammed
Cllr S Dorsett	Cllr E Nicholson
Cllr A Kirby	Cllr M I Raja
Cllr R N Leach	

Also Present: Councillor K Davis.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

2. MINUTES

Councillor Raja raised that the circulated version of the minutes of the previous meeting had an error in the attendance records. It was confirmed by the Chairman that the issue was noted and had since been rectified.

Councillor Kirby queried the minute under item 8. Scrutiny Review Proposal – Housing Infrastructure Bid and the sentence which read “It was made clear that, whilst the review would not look at how decisions had been made and why, there would be an element of background information to set the scene for the review.” which in his opinion, wrongly suggested that a limit should be put on the re-examination of decisions made regarding this project. The Chairman commented that this matter was on the agenda for the 22 November 2021 meeting and could be discussed further at that time. Some Members commented that they thought the minutes did accurately reflect the discussion at the 13 September 2021 meeting and they were keen not to duplicate work already being done by the HIF Oversight Panel.

RESOLVED

That the amended minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Monday, 13 September 2021 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES OSC21-033.

The Chairman welcomed the new format of the Matters Arising report and went through each item, noting the action needed and the status of each action.

Attention was drawn to item 3.5 and the Chairman noted that the Portfolio Holder Councillor Davis was in attendance to answer any questions, particularly on the garden waste service. A question was raised by Councillor Dorsett as to whether there were any new updates and Councillor Davis confirmed that all the latest information had been shared with Councillors and the public. Councillor Davis brought to the Committee's attention that there was evidence that residents in a particular road had been falsely logging bins as being 'missed'. Councillor Davis stated that addressing this issue would be one of his priorities. Councillor Nicholson asked whether there was a process in place to penalise residents involved in this behaviour, Councillor Davis advised that currently there was not but he would be willing to explore possibilities if the issue persisted through the November collection. Councillor Kirby asked whether this behaviour has been more prevalent in light of the current circumstances around the Country and Councillor Davis responded that this behaviour was rare.

Councillor Davis highlighted that the only foreseeable risk to the November and January collections of green waste would be if circumstances necessitated the reallocation of drivers to gritting lorries, which would take priority over the green waste collection.

Councillor Davis shared with the Committee that it was hoped that regular waste collection would resume in the Spring once the academy fast track programme yielded new drivers.

The Chairman drew attention to the review of the Housing Infrastructure Fund Scheme and invited Kevin Foster, Project Consultant, to provide an update. It was stated that the initial discussion with the internal audit providers had taken place and an update would be coming to the Committee meeting on 22 November 2021

Councillor Dorsett went on record to praise the format of this 'Matters Arising from Previous Minutes' document and thanks were extended by the Committee to Frank Jeffrey for his work in developing it.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

Councillor Nicholson asked if there was a need for the Council and Officers to review the security of Members in light of the death of Sir David Amess MP for Southend West. It was noted that this concern would be considered outside of the meeting.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Officer Procedure Rules, the Director of Housing, Louise Strongitharm declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 9 – Rutland and Thamesway Update – arising from her position as a Council appointed director of the Thamesway Group of Companies, including Rutland Ltd. The interests was that it would not prevent Mrs Strongitharm could advise the Committee on the item.

6. WORK PROGRAMME OSC21-030.

The Chairman introduced the Work Programme for the Committee, which sought to assist Members with the overview and scrutiny role of the Council by providing an indication of the Committee's workload and the future work programme of the Executive.

The Chairman commented that the timing of the play areas provision item was still to be decided.

The Chairman went through the work programme for the upcoming meetings in November, January, February and March and briefly went over the work programme for the meetings in the next municipal year.

The Chairman referred to the Executive Forward Plan and commented again that it would be beneficial for Members to see an extended Executive Forward Plan as part of the Work Programme which allowed the Committee to view a year ahead.

RESOLVED

That the Work Programme be noted.

7. THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S BUDGET OSC21-029.

Officers briefly introduced this report and highlighted that the £20,000 budget would run from the 1st April to the 31st March each year. Unspent funds would be returned to the Council's reserves with any allocated funds which were not yet spent being taken forward to the next financial year. The record of expenditure would be maintained by the Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer and the status of the budget would be included in the Committee's annual report. The Council finance team would retain records for audit purposes. If approved the budget management procedure would be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit.

RESOLVED

That the protocol for the management of the Overview and Scrutiny budget is agreed.

8. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING INFORMATION

The Chairman invited questions and comments from Members about the content of the August Performance and Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book).

Councillor Kirby advised the Committee that some particular statistics he had obtained from Officers weren't included in this version of the Green Book but wanted to note that it was hoped these could be covered next time.

The Chairman drew attention to page 63, the level of non-decent Council Homes, noting that there had been an increase compared to prior years and highlighted that there was a desire to improve this. Louise Strongitharm was invited to comment and stated that it had been hoped to reduce this number back to zero but issues relating to contractors and supplies had prevented this. Louise Strongitharm also highlighted that the New Vision Homes contract was due to end in March 2022 and as a result the Council could not have any works partially completed at the end of that period, meaning some kitchen and bathroom replacements had been suspended. Members were advised that the non-decency rate would be around 1.5% at the end of this year but it should be reduced at the end of next year.

Following a question from the Chairman regarding household waste on page 67, Councillor Davis confirmed that the reduction in the percentage of Household Waste Recycling going down from 60% to 56% between June and July was a general month on month variation. It was noted that quarterly statistics on this matter were sent to the Chairman.

Councillor Nicholson raised a question regarding the desired recycling target and Councillor Davis stated that the Council had always aimed for a 60% recycling target and commented that it generally runs between 57% and 62%. Councillor Davis commented that he would like to see more re-use as well as achieving the recycling target.

Councillor Kirby asked whether there was any way to get metrics prior to the Joint Waste Management Performance Review item being brought to the January meeting to prepare informed questions. Councillor Davies highlighted that IT issues had caused problems with metrics to date, though it was hoped to be able to provide metrics in advance of the meeting. It intended that the Committee could be provided with all the information they require to allow them to scrutinise the topic in full.

Councillor Leach asked whether it would be better to use percentages of relative recycling and non-recycling, to better illustrate what the Council was doing. Councillor Davis stated that whilst a higher recycling rate would be ideal there were issues with recycling waste being contaminated. Councillor Leach followed up stating that it seemed it was a matter of educating people about recycling and Councillor Davis concurred, advising that he had just signed off on the latest communications material aimed at educating the public on waste and recycling.

Councillor Dorsett asked if communal bins exacerbated the issue. Councillor Davis confirmed that this was the case and that the number of contaminated bins in communal areas was significantly higher than in normal households.

Councillor Raja raised a question on page 64 of the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information, regarding the average length of stay for homeless households in bed and breakfast accommodations. He brought to the Committees attention a case of one particular household who had been living more than six years in temporary accommodation. Louise Strongitharm stated that the figures were an average of those moved on and thus those not moved on would not be included in the figures. Louise Strongitharm also said that in reference to the case of the household raised by Councillor Raja, it would be better addressed outside of the Committee and if he provided her with all the details she would happily look into the case.

Councillor Kirby asked whether there was a target for a maximum target for length of stay and whether those in Sheerwater unsecured accommodation were the most prominent in the statistics provided and whether it was anticipated that this figure would improve as the Sheerwater regeneration progressed. Louise Strongitharm highlighted that the Council had significantly reduced the number of households in temporary accommodation compared with two years ago. She also highlighted that the only specific maximum that the Council tried to work to was six weeks for families in bed and breakfast accommodations. Louise Strongitharm stated that to set targets for other forms of temporary accommodation it would most likely be a discussion on whether the Council wanted to be firmer about whether people should go into private accommodation or if a system of auto-bidding on properties needed to be brought in.

Councillor Mohammed questioned whether living standards would be maintained in the case of where a family was moved from one house to another drawing attention to a specific case of a family who had moved into a house that was in poor condition. Louise Strongitharm stated that houses should be in a safe and liveable condition and that this particular case should be addressed outside of the meeting.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Davis for attending the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information (August 2021) be noted.

9. RUTLAND AND THAMESWEY UPDATE OSC21-031.

The Chairman invited Officers to introduce the report. Louise Strongitharm highlighted that over the years the Council had undertaken a range of projects and as a result of these a number of Companies had been set up. External advice had now been commissioned through Thameswey, particularly around tax and company structures to feed into a review about what the Council needed going forward, primarily founded on the view that the Council may not need the number of companies that it had currently. Louise Strongitharm went on to state that in line with the normal process the Thameswey Business Plans would be going to Council in November 2021, with the recommendation to roll them forward another year so the Corporate Strategy process could be completed and business plans aligned for 2023 with the Corporate Strategy's priorities.

Councillor Hussain shared his view that the relationship between the Companies and the Council was often misunderstood and highlighted the Companies contribution to the Council's finances through the payment of interest and how there was little risk to the Authority Louise Strongitharm commented that the Companies were an asset to the Council and had enabled the authority to deliver projects for the benefit of Woking residents. The main purpose of the review was to ensure that the structures were efficient and fit for purpose for the future.

Following a question from Councillor Kirby regarding risk, Louise Strongitharm advised that the risks were managed through a risk register that was considered at every Thameswey meeting. Although it was not possible to say these Companies were risk free, they were very well managed and allowed the Council to take a longer term view on some projects, which would otherwise not be possible.

The Chairman asked Louise Strongitharm to explain in more depth why the Thameswey Business Plans would be rolled forward. Louise Strongitharm advised that to ensure that the Business Plans were aligned with the Council corporate priorities it made sense to do a more thorough review next year and in addition to this the findings of the review on the Companies structure would be available, meaning that a more comprehensive review could be completed in the following year.

The Chairman queried if the cost of the independent financial advice had been covered by Thameswey and Louise Strongitharm confirmed that this was the case.

The Chairman asked if it would be likely that there would be fewer companies following the review. Louise Strongitharm stated that it was quite likely that the number of Companies would be reduced, although it was more important to understand the Companies purpose moving forward and ensure that purpose aligned with Council's Corporate Priorities. The Chairman followed this up asking when it was expected that this review would take place and Louise Strongitharm stated that some advice was imminent, specifically on tax elements, however further advice would be needed after that, and a specific date could not be provided at this moment.

RESOLVED

That the Rutland and Thameswey Update be noted.

10. FINANCIAL REVIEW MONTHLY UPDATE OSC21-032.

Kevin Foster was invited to introduce the item and provided some context to the report. Kevin Foster noted that this commission came out of the Notice of Motion from the Council meeting on 29 July 2021 and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Kevin Foster advised that a contract award had been made in the previous week and that a mobilisation meeting was being set up later in the week. The commitment was to provide monthly updates to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as per the terms of the Notice of Motion and report back to the Committee in January 2022 with the outcomes as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy Report.

The Chairman wished to add that he had been kept updated on the process of this review since August.

Councillor Hussain asked if there was an open book cost for the reviewers and Kevin Foster confirmed that there was a final contract price and no ceiling was had been put on the bid.

Councillor Kirby noted that there was a £500,000 cost allocated at the time and suggested that it may be worth approving additional funds in due course to be used on this project if need be to provide a clearer picture.

The Chairman closed discussions on this item and advised that he would be meeting with the Auditor and would provide an update at the next meeting on 22 November 2021 and that the report would be on the agenda for the Committee's consideration in January 2022.

RESOLVED

That the Financial Review Monthly Update be noted.

11. FINANCE TASK GROUP UPDATE OSC21-034.

The Chairman introduced the report from the Finance Task Group. He drew attention to the outstanding audit of the Council accounts, highlighting that the pandemic was partially responsible but also that the audit was already behind prior to the pandemic and it had been emphasised to be completed as soon as possible. The Chairman also noted that there was a forecast improvement in the financial performance.

Following a point raised by Councillor Kirby on noting the costs of the planning enquiry and the financial review Kevin Foster clarified that the commissioned financial review is costing significantly less than £500,000 and that the £500,000 is a budget delegated to the Chief Executive to support the Fit for the Future Programme and associated corporate change activity and this budget is being used to fund the Financial Review.

RESOLVED

That the Finance Task Group Update be noted.

12. HOUSING TASK GROUP UPDATE OSC21-035

Louise Strongitharm highlighted the standard items which appeared on the Housing Task Group Update. She shared that the main topic that had been considered at the last meeting was the new first homes tenure, noting that it was a significant change to the tenure given that 25% of affordable housing had to be sold to first time buyers at a 30% discount, with the discount price being capped at £250,000.

The Chairman queried if it was a minimum 25% of homes to be offered to first time buyers and Louise Strongitharm clarified that it was 25% of affordable homes and through an example stated that if there were viability issues the percentage of homes to be sold on this first homes tenure would be proportional.

Councillor Hussain stated that on the viability aspect, there were not many coming forward on new developments but there was an issue on getting the viability sorted to ensure that the affordable housing was delivered. Louise Strongitharm stated that she believed there would be better affordable housing delivery out of the Greenfield sites which were being released through the DPD. Mrs Strongitharm stated that the Council was awaiting further clarity on elements on the first homes tenure as there was uncertainty as to whether this applied to schemes the Council brought forward itself.

Councillor Kirby raised the question of whom was expected to provide the 30% subsidy, whether it is the developer or the Council. Louise Strongitharm responded that it was the developer who provides the subsidises. Councillor Kirby followed up by stating that this came back to the viability issue, highlighting that this made viability more difficult and that the £250,000 maximum price was unrealistic for Woking.

RESOLVED

The Housing Task Group Update be noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 8.35 pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2021

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on matters arising from the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 September 2021 and 18 October 2021. The details summarise the progress made on achieving the desired outcomes from decisions taken by the Committee and requests from individual Elected Members. Once an action has been closed and the outcome reported to the Committee it will be removed from future reports.

Actions arising from the Committee are managed through the Council's Action Management system which was developed to capture and monitor the actions arising from (i) meetings of the Council and (ii) Internal Audit Reviews.

This is the second such report to be brought to the Committee and covers the actions identified at the previous meetings on 13 September 2021 and 18 October 2021. The next version of this report, listing any actions previously identified together with the progress achieved shall be brought to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2022.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

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

Background Papers:	None.
Reporting Person:	Aadam Ahmed, Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer Email: Aadam.ahmed@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3056
Contact Person:	Aadam Ahmed, Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer Email: Aadam.ahmed@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3056
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Ayesha Azad Email: cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk
Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Ann-Marie Barker Email: cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	12 November 2021

REPORT ENDS

Update on Actions Arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 September 2021

1.0		Agenda Item 7 - Work Programme
1.1	Action	To bring an update on the financial review to the meeting of the Committee on 22 November 2021.
	Progress	A report on this item appears later in this agenda.
	Responsible Person	Giorgio Framaliccio
	Status	Closed
1.2	Action	To advise whether the review of play areas could be moved forward from early 2023 to late 2022 following a request by the Chairman of the Committee.
	Progress	It has been provisionally agreed that this review will come to the November 2022 meeting, subject to the approval of Committee dates at Council in December 2021. Once confirmed the review will be added to the Work Programme.
	Responsible Person	Geoff McManus
	Status	Open
1.3	Action	To arrange a meeting between the Chairman of the Committee and the Independent Reviewer (once appointed) to discuss the Financial Review.
	Progress	Meeting held between EY and Chairman of the Committee.
	Responsible Person	Giorgio Framaliccio
	Status	Closed

2.0		Agenda Item 8 – Scrutiny Review Proposal – The Housing Infrastructure Bid.
2.1	Action	To take forward a proposal by the Members of the Committee to undertake a scrutiny review of the Housing Infrastructure Fund scheme.
	Progress	A report on this item appears later in this agenda. The Committee will be invited to discuss what further work is to be undertaken.
	Responsible Person	Giorgio Framaliccio
	Status	Closed

3.0		Agenda Item 9 – Overview and Scrutiny Guidance by the MHCLG
3.1	Action	A communications plan be established on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which would promote the work of the Committee within the resources available.
	Progress	Research is currently being undertaken to ascertain what other Councils are doing and what works best for Woking Borough Council.
	Responsible Person	Aadam Ahmed
	Status	Open
3.2	Action	A formal opportunity for discussion between the Chairman of the Committee and the Leader of the Council be established.
	Progress	The details regarding these meetings have been included in a report which appears later in this agenda.
	Responsible Person	Aadam Ahmed

	Status	Closed
3.3	Action	The Scrutiny Tool Kit be updated to include, amongst other points, reference to the new Officer support arrangements, the budget available for Scrutiny work and the guidance available, notably that issued by the Local Government Association, the MHCLG, South East Employers and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.
	Progress	A report setting out the revised Scrutiny Toolkit appears later in this agenda.
	Responsible Person	Aadam Ahmed
	Status	Closed
3.4	Action	A draft Executive / Overview and Scrutiny Committee protocol be drawn up for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and recommendation onto the Executive, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Leader of the Council.
	Progress	The report on this item appears later in this agenda.
	Responsible Person	Aadam Ahmed
	Status	Closed

4.0	Agenda Item 11 – Performance and Financial Monitoring Information.	
4.1	Action	To consider whether future Green Books can provide data for refuse collections made on time for each type of refuse, as requested by Councillor Kirby.
	Progress	We currently provide performance data consistently with other partners which normally reflects a small proportion of missed collections relative to the scale of the operation across the borough each week.

Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

		As part of the waste management service report scheduled for January 2022 officers will be in attendance to talk through the processes in place to monitor waste collections and consider any further reporting information which could be made available for members.
	Responsible Person	Geoff McManus
	Status	Open

Update on Actions Arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

18 October 2021

1.0		Agenda Item 4 – Urgent Business
1.1	Action	To address if Councillor security needs to be reviewed by Officers and the Council in light of the death of Sir David Amess MP for Southend West.
	Progress	Jo McIntosh, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, circulated updated guidance to Councillors which addressed safety and security. Information about a training session on personal safety which was run externally was also circulated to members.
	Responsible Person	Aadam Ahmed
	Status	Closed

2.0		Agenda Item 6 - Work Programme
1.1	Action	To update the Executive forward plan as far as possible.
	Progress	This information has been updated and mirrors how far forwards the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme goes.
	Responsible Person	Aadam Ahmed & Julie Northcote
	Status	Closed



Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

This Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme is published with the purpose of assisting the Council in its overview and scrutiny role. The Work Programme covers the following areas:

- Items for consideration at future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Any Scrutiny Review Topics proposed by Members of the Council for inclusion on the Work Programme.
- Any topics identified for pre-decision scrutiny.
- The draft forward programme of work for the Executive.
- Details of the current Task Groups under the Committee's remit.

The Work Programme is designed to assist the Council with its overview and scrutiny role by providing Members with an indication of the current workload, subjects to be considered for review and items which the Executive expects to consider at its future meetings, so that matters can be raised beforehand and/or consultations undertaken with a Member of the Executive prior to the relevant meeting.

Any changes to the Work Programme since it was last published have been highlighted in green.

The Committee	
Chairman: Councillor J Sanderson	
Vice-Chairman: Councillor S Hussain	
Councillor J Brown	Councillor R Leach
Councillor S Dorsett	Councillor R Mohammed
Councillor A Kirby	Councillor E Nicholson
Councillor M I Raja	
2021/22 Committee Dates	
7 June 2021	22 November 2021
12 July 2021	24 January 2022
13 September 2021	21 February 2022
18 October 2021	21 March 2022

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

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

Background Papers: None.

Reporting Person: Councillor James Sanderson
Email: cllrjames.sanderson@woking.gov.uk

Contact Person: Aadam Ahmed, Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer
Email: Aadam.ahmed@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3056

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ayesha Azad
Email: cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk

Shadow Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ann-Marie Barker
Email: cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk

Date Published: 12 November 2021

REPORT ENDS

Suggested Additions to the Work Programme

Following the last meeting of the Committee, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman provided Officers with a list of items for consideration over the coming year. Where possible, these have been added to the Work Programme. Set out below are any ideas which have been requested but are yet to be included against a specific meeting of the Committee.

Decision to be Taken	Proposed by	Officer Comment
Play Area Provision.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	This was last reviewed by the Committee in January 2021. It has been agreed that this item will be brought to the November 2022 meeting, subject to the confirmation of Committee dates at the December Council. Upon confirmation it will be added to the Work Programme for November 2022.
Review of Performance and Financial Monitoring Information	Chairman and Vice Chairman	<p>The Performance and Financial Monitoring Information will be subject to a review following agreement of a new Corporate Plan at the meeting of the Executive on 3rd February 2022. The Green Book should report on the Corporate Priorities of the Council and the Key Performance Indicators that support these priorities.</p> <p>The purpose of it going through O&S is to get input into what information should be reported to the Executive, aligned to the strategic priorities of the Council.</p>

The Work Programme 2021/22

Set out over the coming pages are the items programmed for consideration over the 2021/22 Municipal Year.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 24 January 2022

1 – Performance Management

1.1 Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Adam Ahmed

2 – Matters for Consideration

2.1 Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Adam Ahmed

2.2 Joint Waste Management Performance Review. To review the level of complaints and service KPI's provided by JWS.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Geoff McManus Richard Bisset

2.3 Lessons Learnt through the Covid-19 Response.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Geoff McManus

2.4 Woking Borough Council's Support of Local Businesses During Covid-19.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Giorgio Framalico

2.5 Dr Gifty Edila's Report – Update on Recommendations. To receive an update report on the recommendations from Dr Edila's report in advance of an update being presented to Council in February 2022.

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Joanne McIntosh
2.6 Financial Review. To receive a report on the Financial Review of Woking Borough Council.		
Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Girogio Framalicco Leigh Clarke

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the three Task Groups under the remit of the Committee.		
Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Chairman of each Task Group

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 21 February 2022

1 – Performance Management

1.1 Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2 – Matters for Consideration

2.1 Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2.2 Freedom of Information Requests Annual Report. To review the statistics and requests that proceed to the Information Commissioners Office.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Natalie Khan

2.3 Overview of Complaints Received and Contract Review Annual Report. A review of the complaints received over the past year and identify any trends.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Joanne McIntosh Adam Browne

2.4 Enterprise M3. Stephen Martin, Operations Director of Enterprise M3, will attend the meeting to provide an update of the Organisation's work.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2.5 Guide to Scrutiny of Risk and Commercialisation. The guide to scrutiny of risk and commercialisation, published by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, will be received by the committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the three Task Groups under the remit of the Committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Chairman of each Task Group

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 21 March 2022

1 – Performance Management

1.1 Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2 – Matters for Consideration

2.1 Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2.2 Safer Working Partnership – Community Safety Plan. The Police and Justice Act 2006 gave local authorities responsibility for considering crime and disorder matters. In 2010 the Committee agreed that the Safer Working Partnership Plan would be brought forward annually for scrutiny.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Camilla Edmiston

2.3 Annual Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Chairman

2.4 Annual Update on Climate Change.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Lara Beattie

2.5 Family Centres – Service Delivery Plan.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Adam Thomas

2.6 Review of use of Lakeview Community Centre. The Committee to receive an update on planned projects and activities at the Lakeview Community Centre.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team

None	None	Adam Thomas
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3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the three Task Groups under the remit of the Committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Chairman of each Task Group

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – June 2022

1 – Performance Management

1.1 Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2 – Matters for Consideration

2.1 Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2.2 Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny Committee. To receive a short briefing on the roles and responsibilities of the Committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2.3 Survey of Leisure Facility Users. To consider the arrangements for the survey of Leisure Facility Users to be undertaken over the Summer.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Steve May

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the three Task Groups under the remit of the Committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Chairman of each Task Group

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – July 2022

1 – Performance Management

1.1 Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2 – Matters for Consideration

2.1 Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the three Task Groups under the remit of the Committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Chairman of each Task Group

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – September 2022

1 – Performance Management

1.1 Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2 – Matters for Consideration

2.1 Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the three Task Groups under the remit of the Committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Chairman of each Task Group

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – October 2022

1 – Performance Management

1.1 Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

2 – Matters for Consideration

2.1 Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Frank Jeffrey Aadam Ahmed

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the three Task Groups under the remit of the Committee.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Chairman of each Task Group

The Draft Executive Work Programme

The following list sets out the draft forward programme of work for the Executive over the coming year. The programme is subject to additions and alterations and will be updated for future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The purpose of the list is to enable the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to identify those items they would like to scrutinise under the Committee's function of pre-decision scrutiny. The list includes those items for recommendation to Council as well as those for determination by the Executive.

Executive – 18 November 2021

Matters for Consideration

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1) | Notice of Motion – Cllr W Forster – Location of Woking's rail aggregates yard |
| 2) | Woking Borough Council Digital Strategy 2022-2025 |
| 3) | Thameswey Business Plans (to include company consolidation plan) |
| 4) | Town Centre Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) |
| 5) | Calendar of Meetings 2022-23 |
| 6) | Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and General Fund Budget 2022-23 |
| 7) | Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget Update 2022-23 |
| 8) | Draft Investment Programme 2021-22 to 2025-26 |
| 9) | Review of Fees and Charges 2022-23 |
| 10) | Community Memorial Trees Project |
| 11) | Loan Agreement Proposal |
| 12) | Monitoring Reports – Projects |
| 13) | Performance and Financial Monitoring Information |
| 14) | Loan Agreement Proposal (Part II) |

Executive – 8 December 2021 (Special Meeting)

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Grants for Voluntary and Community Organisations 2022/23
-

Executive – 20 January 2022

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Review of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)
 - 2) Review of the Outlook, Amenity and Daylight Supplementary Planning Document
 - 3) Review of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas Avoidance Strategy
 - 4) Phase 2 - Infrastructure Capacity Study and Delivery Plan (IDP)
 - 5) Safeguarding Policy
 - 6) Housing Assistance Policy
 - 7) Community Engagement and Consultation
 - 8) Update on the Housing Service
 - 9) Climate Change Response and SCC Greener Futures
 - 10) Surrey's Spatial Framework: A Strategic Vision for Place Leadership, Infrastructure & Good Growth
 - 11) Recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Executive/Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocol
 - 12) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
-

Executive – 3 February 2022

Matters for Consideration

- 1) General Fund, Service Plans, Budgets and Prudential Indicators 2022-23
 - 2) Housing Revenue Account Budgets 2022-23
 - 3) Investment Programme 2021-22 to 2025-26
 - 4) Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategies
 - 5) Corporate Plan
 - 6) Smarts Heath Road Woking Gymnastic Centre
 - 7) Monitoring Reports - Projects
 - 8) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
-

Executive – 24 March 2022

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Directorate Plans
 - 2) Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 – Annual Monitoring Report
 - 3) Medium Term Financial Strategy
 - 4) Write off of Irrecoverable Debt
 - 5) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
-

Executive – June 2022

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Treasury Management Annual Report 2021-22
- 2) Risk Management and Business Continuity Annual Report
- 3) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
- 4) Monitoring Reports - Projects

Executive – July 2022

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Equalities Annual Report - 2022
- 2) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information

Executive – September 2022

Matters for Consideration

1. Performance and Financial Monitoring Information

Executive – October 2022

Matters for Consideration

1. Confidentiality Protocol Annual Report
2. Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
3. Monitoring Reports - Projects

Current Task Groups Responsible to the Committee

The table below provides a list of current Task Groups established by the Committee, including an indication of the resource requirements and the anticipated completion date. Updates on the progress of individual Task Groups are included elsewhere on the Committee's agenda.

Economic Development Task Group	
Remit:	<p>The Economic Development Task Group shall comprise seven Members of the Council representing all Groups on the Council based on proportionality. The Elected Members to be appointed annually by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in May. The Portfolio Holder for Promoting the Local Economy shall be an ex-officio member.</p> <p>Members of the Task Group will be expected to gain the views of Councillors/ Officers/ other representatives with a view to reporting those views to the Task Group.</p> <p>Members of the Task Group may also be charged with specific areas to research and report back on to the Task Group.</p> <p>Members of the Task Group may be expected to present proposals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, where necessary, prepare written reports.</p> <p>Substitutes may be appointed when necessary.</p>
Membership:	Councillors Ali, Barker, Davis, Johnson, Mohammed, Roberts and Whitehand.
Resources:	Officer and Councillor time.
Date Established:	11.03.09
Completion Date:	Ongoing

Finance Task Group	
Remit:	<p>The Task Group has been established as a Standing Task Group to review financial issues as identified either by itself or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Task Group will receive financial information, including reports to the Executive, to enable it to undertake effective scrutiny of the financial performance of the Council.</p> <p>The Task Group will receive reports on areas such as Treasury Management, Budget Process and Financial Forecast, Statement of Accounts, Investment Programme, Review of Fees and Charges, General Fund Budget, Update on Commercial Rents, Update on Irrecoverable Debt, and matters arising from the Green Book. Its Work Programme will be received at each Task Group meeting.</p>
Membership:	Councillors Azad, Aziz, Davis, Johnson, Kirby, Sanderson and Whitehand
Resources:	Officer and Councillor time.
Date Established:	25.05.06
Completion Date:	Ongoing

Housing Task Group	
Remit:	<p>The Housing Task Group shall comprise seven Members of the Council representing all Groups on the Council based on proportionality. The Elected Members to be appointed annually by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in May.</p> <p>Members of the Task Group will be expected to gain the views of Councillors/ Officers/ Portfolio Holder / External Advisors and other representatives with a view to reporting those views to the Task Group.</p> <p>Members of the Task Group may also be charged with specific areas to research and report back on to the Task Group. Any investigation requiring funding would normally be expected to be part of the existing housing budget. Offsite visits will be ad hoc. Requests for additional funds for the purpose would be submitted to the Portfolio Holder.</p> <p>Members of the Task Group may be expected to present proposals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, where necessary, prepare written reports.</p>
Membership:	Councillors Aziz, Barker, Bridgeman, Dorsett, Harlow, Hughes, Kirby and Whitehand.
Resources:	Officer and Councillor time.
Date Established:	25.05.06
Completion Date:	Ongoing

Draft Celebrate Woking Programme for 2022

Date	Event	Support Option	Comment
1 Feb	Chinese New Year – (Year of the Tiger)	Promotion	Delivered by the Chinese Association
5 February	Woking Young Musician of the Year	Promotion	Delivered by Woking Music Festival
17 Feb – 17 Mar	Sport Relief	Promotion	Supporting the National Programme
18 March	Red Nose Day	Promotion	Part of Sport Relief
6 March	Surrey Half Marathon	Promotion	Organised by aat-events.
6 – 26 March	Woking Festival of Dance	Promotion	Organised by Dance Woking. This is a qualifying festival for the All England Dance Competition 2022.
26 March	Earth Hour	Promotion	Take the lead from WWF
April	Woking in Bloom launch	Promotion	WBC has an existing partnership with Esquires Garden Centre. Perhaps look at partnerships with RHS Wisely. Tie in with Platinum Jubilee.
April	Basingstoke Canal events	Promotion	Organised by The Basingstoke Canal Society and promoting Canal Wharf. They have a boat called Kitty that regularly deliver canal rides from Canal Wharf.
April	Woking Literary Festival (TBC)	Promotion	Organised by The Lightbox
2 May	Surrey Day	Promotion	Organised by SCC and Visit Surrey. WBC to promote Woking's Heritage.
14 May	ROC Woking Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Group to host an event in the Town Centre (TBC)	Promotion	Organised by Christ Church and ROC
18-23 May	Wild about Woking (TBC)	Promotion	Tracy Haskins & Surrey Wildlife Trust.
May	Lark in the Square (TBC)	Promotion	Christ Church in Jubilee Square
May – Sept	Summer Sounds at Woking Park Bandstand	Promotion	Rose Blackley Also discussed the potential of taking it on tour around the Community Centres.
2 – 5 June	Queen's Platinum Celebrations. See below for details of the programme so far.	Promotion and deliver event	See more detailed programme.
June to Aug/Sept	Town Centre Summer Zone (TBC)	Promotion	This year's programme was supported by

			Government Funding and delivered by Woking Shopping. WS to hear about their budgets in January. Work with ATG/The Nova to show films. WWF could show some documentaries on Big Screen.
9 July	Pyrford & Wisely Flower Show	Promotion	Organised by Pyrford Community
17 July	Peace Garden Commemorative Service	Promotion	Organised by WBC in partnership with Armed Forces and HCPS. Zafar is involved with this every year.
28 July to the 8 Aug	Common Wealth Games	Promotion	WS could possibly show on Big Screen in Jubilee Square. Part of the Summer events.
9-18 Sept	Heritage Open Days	Promotion	WBC informing and giving support to local organisations participating in the national scheme.
21 September	International Peace Day	Promotion	WPOF organisers / Zafar Iqbal
September	Interfaith Cricket Tournament	Promotion	WPOF organisers/ Zafar Iqbal
Oct	Woking Drama Festival	Promotion	Part of the National Drama Festivals Association. Woking has also hosted the British All Winners Festival in previous years.
Oct	Poppy Day Appeal in Jubilee Square	Promotion of Launch	British Royal Legion
24 Oct	Diwali (tbc)	Support Programme and Promotion	RB has coordinated and supported the event in previous years.
Nov	Woking Park & The Vyne Field Fireworks	Promotion	Woking Fire Works/ Knaphill Scouts
Nov	Woking Music Festival	Promotion	
Nov	Woking Beer Festival (tbc)	Promotion	Event hosted at the Leisure Centre
Nov	Interfaith Week	Promotion	WPOF organisers
13 Nov	Remembrance Sunday	Deliver event	WBC delivers event
Nov	Christmas Light Switch on (TBC)	Promotion	Woking Shopping
Dec	Christmas Activities in Town Centre TBC	Promotion	Woking Shopping
Dec- Jan	Pantomime	Promotion	ATG

Note: The above events can all be listed in the calendar on the Celebrate Woking website.

Other events not on the list above;

- The Lightbox summer programme for 2022
- Italia Conti Programme
- Regular monthly Vegan Market on the EcoWorld International site next to the Fire Station and a night market once a month.
- Other markets in the Town Square
- Pride in Surrey. Promotion only.
- Other Cultural “pop ups” in the town square including buskers, singers, dancers etc.
- Knaphill Village Fair (either at The Vyne Field or Mizen’s Railway)
- Horsell Village Show (Horsell CofE Junior School)
- Carters Steam Fair (Wheatsheaf Common)
- Old Woking Summer Fair
- Byfleet Parish Day
- All other village events

The above events need to be referenced against the open space bookings managed by Arran Henderson’s team.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2021

FREEDOM LEISURE PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Executive Summary

This report sets out the performance review of Freedom Leisure, including assessments on quality and performance management, KPIs and the priorities for year 2020/2021. Complaints, feedback and achievements are reviewed in the report as Freedom Leisure provide a wide range of services to the public.

The reporting period starts just after the first national lockdown, meaning that any comparisons to previous years are very difficult.

This report will assist in identifying the support that Freedom Leisure has received during the pandemic during this period and what they have done to minimise the impact of the pandemic.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the content of this report be noted.

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

Background Papers: None

Reporting Person: Steve May, Leisure Services Manager
Email: steve.may@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3302

Contact Person: Steve May, Leisure Services Manager
Email: steve.may@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3302

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Kemp
Email: cllrcolin.kemp@woking.gov.uk

Shadow Portfolio Holder: Councillor Johnson
Email: cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

Date Published: 12 November 2021

1.0 Introduction

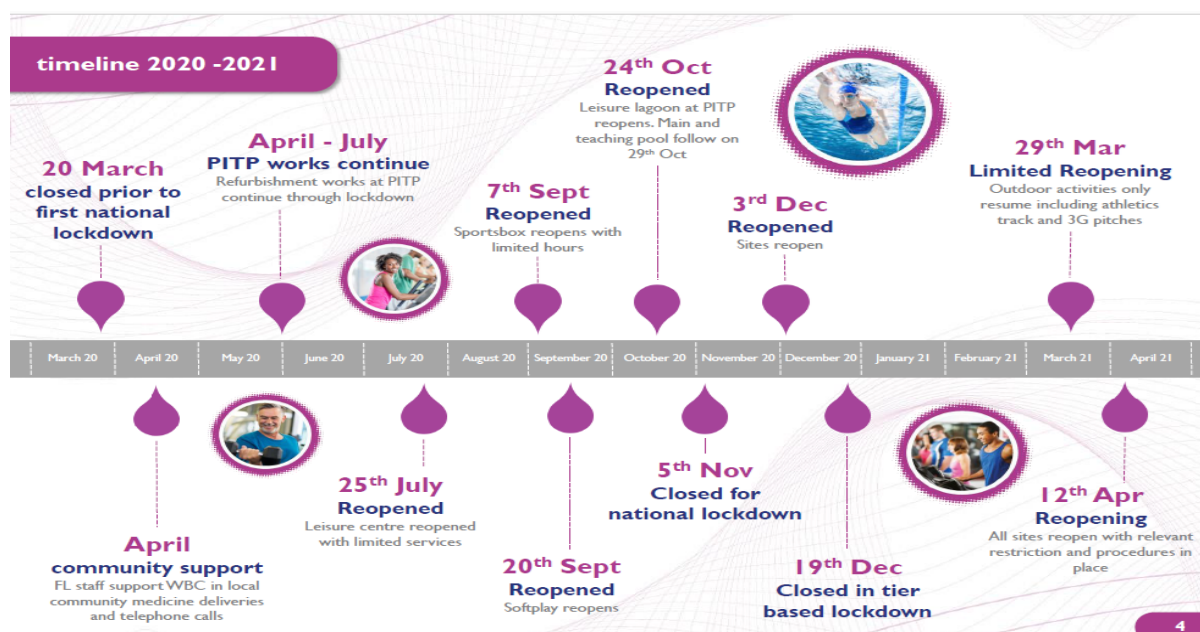
- 1.1 The Leisure Partnership Agreement commenced on 1st December 2011. The Woking and Guildford partnerships were procured as part of a joint process that required a turnover threshold/scale of organisation that would have been challenging for Freedom Leisure to have met at the time on their own. Freedom Leisure therefore asked GLL to be the “principal” contractor, with Freedom Leisure delivering the contract, as a sub-contractor to them. The bid was written by Freedom Leisure who are fully responsible for its delivery. GLL receive an annual fee from Freedom Leisure for underwriting the original bid and holding the risk of Freedom Leisure failing to perform.
- 1.2 Since the original agreement, the contract has had several major changes which include 3 new pavilions and the Sportsbox at Hoe Valley.
- 1.3 The inclusion of Sportsbox also triggered the contract extension clause in the main contract which is for a further 4 years. Contract end is now 30th November 2025
- 1.4 Separate to the contract, following an open tender process Freedom Leisure has also been successful in securing the contract to run the kiosk in Woking Park from Summer 2018.
- 1.5 In September 2018, Woking Park Tennis Courts were removed from the Leisure Contract and returned to the management of Woking Borough Council. This was to allow a funding bid to improve the courts from the Lawn Tennis Association and for us to be included in the LTA led Club Spark community tennis programme.
- 1.6 In February 2021 the Eastwood Leisure Centre was also added to the remaining contract.

2.0 Priorities for 2020-2021

- 2.1 Freedom Leisure in consultation with Officers and their customers set a list of key priorities for 2020-2021. These were presented to the Leisure Partnership Board at the end of 2019 and agreed by this Board. However due to the circumstance around COVID 19 these priorities could not be achieved and the whole landscape of the contract changed significantly.

3.0 Performance during the 2020-2021

3.1 What happened Time line



Freedom Leisure Performance Review

- 3.2 Woking Borough Council took a cautious and pragmatic approach to the early stages of the pandemic. WBC instructed Freedom Leisure to close all its leisure centres before the national lockdown came into force. At this time WBC agreed to cover all financial losses of the contract on an open book basis but expected Freedom to do everything possible to mitigate these losses. WBC also requested 40 staff to work for the Council. These staff were then utilised in community support.
- 3.3 The timeline shows that the rest of the year was then a rollercoaster with partial openings and then closures take place through this whole period. It was not until 12th April 2021 that full opening could occur. (Even then there were some restrictions on capacity in place.)
- 3.4 Freedom utilised the Furlough scheme. For the initial 3 month period WBC had agreed to top up the staff payment to 100% of salary. This decision was made prior to the knowledge of the furlough scheme being announced and full salary had already been agreed.
- 3.5 After the initial 3 months, to reduce the financial burden to the Council the payments were reduced to 80% as per the furlough scheme apart from those staff there were still required to ensure the building remained safe and secure. The Freedom Team Members that were supporting the community support were no longer needed to assist in a full time capacity so these were stood down also but with many voluntarily staying on to assist in a part time capacity.
- 3.6 Whenever Government guidelines allowed, Freedom Leisure reopened the service in consultation with WBC in the most financially viable fashion to minimise the financial exposure of the Council.
- 3.7 The Leisure Contract was only open for 20.5%, just under 75 days, (Woking Leisure Centre, Sportsbox, Pool in the Park and the Sports Pavilions) of the year due to the national lockdown restrictions and all of this was under some form of restriction allowing partial opening and/or reduced capacity.

4.0 Improvements and significant changes to the service provision

- 4.1 The closure of the facilities left an opportunity to progress with some planned works in a more productive manner. A changing room refurbishment has started in a phased manner that was going to take over a year to complete. The lockdown meant this could be progressed more quickly without the concern of trying to keep facilities open to the public at the same time.
- 4.2 The following is a list with short description of the works completed:
- Pool in the Park Changing room refurbishment: This included, new ceiling, lighting and flooring. A complete redesign of the changing room layout and the development of 3 fabulous disabled changing facilities, one of which is to the full changing places specification.
 - Heating system for Pool in the Park: New boilers, to include some air handling and pool pipework replacement.
 - Café refurbishment: Redesign of counter, new lighting, air handling and roof repairs (It was leaking).
 - New flooring to the main entrance area and refurbished counter.
 - Sauna installed on poolside. This was following customer feedback and specifically feedback from Dolphin's disability group. A sauna facility can really help many people with disabilities and has been very well received.
 - Redecoration of all other areas of Pool in the Park.

- 4.3 Note that a lot of work has now taken place at Pool in the Park especially over the past 3 years Freedom Leisure has also replaced the water slides, significantly upgraded the children's play equipment and installed a small café to the reception area as well. Even with all of this work we need to recognise the building is old and many areas are still to be addressed. The pool plant is aging and will be more expensive to maintain and more susceptible to issues in the future. In particular the leisure lagoon plant which is bespoke design does need specialist works done to it when things do break meaning that downtime is often longer.
- NHS physiotherapy integration to Woking Leisure Centre: 5 new state of the art physiotherapy rooms were built at Woking Leisure Centre. Alongside these a NHS office was also built to house the Physiotherapy team from St Peters Hospital. This allowed the return to treatment to be quicker for patients during the pandemic period and significantly enhanced the facilities available to the team. It is hoped and a case study is being built that patients will utilise the leisure service to enhance their recovery and longer term stay customers of the leisure centre having built a report with the leisure centre team.
 - Introduction of the "inflatazone" at Woking Leisure Centre. This inflatable play zone that takes up 5 badminton courts has a twofold impact. Commercially the investment has less than a 1 year pay back with many casual and party bookings being made. It also entices those less active or "sporty" to come and have some active fun. The pandemic did delay the launch of this product but it has now launched and is being very successful.
 - 3G pitch netting at Woking Leisure Centre: Replaced or tightened as required.
 - Redecoration throughout Woking Leisure Centre.
 - Private Physiotherapy room built at Sportsbox. This was following a request from a physio for space which was easily converted and a good service to offer the customers of this facility.
- 4.4 One of the biggest and most challenging additions to the service was the Eastwood Leisure Centre. This new facility has been built on the site of Bishop David Brown School as the first phase of the regeneration of Sheerwater.
- 4.5 It has been designed for general community use on a school site so a huge amount of work has been done to make the site safe by design, working with both the school and the Department for Education. Other very important considerations were to make the leisure Centre accessible both for people with physical and mental disabilities but also to meet the needs of users from faiths and cultures that are prominent in the local community.
- 4.6 Youth provision is an integral part of the contract with Freedom at this venue. They are tasked with further expanding the Friday Night Project offering at Woking Leisure Centre to Eastwood Leisure Centre along with supporting a range of other junior projects. This will aid Woking Borough Council with its Health and Wellbeing Objectives around childhood obesity.
- 4.7 The Eastwood Centre was planned to open in September 2021. There was a need for WBC to take control of the new building in February to allow for the next phase of the development to take place. This meant that Freedom Leisure was asked to take on the management of the building in a care taking role much earlier than anticipated.
- 4.8 The next phase was to demolish the school canteen and old PE facilities and as both of these are part of the Leisure Centre Building we had to take over this building to facilitate this.
- 4.9 Bishop David Brown were not in a position to be able to offer swimming lessons to its students due to staffing commitments. However working with our Freedom team we managed to offer the whole school the opportunity to participate in swimming lessons by asking our furloughed learn to swim team if any of them would like to voluntarily deliver some lessons to the school. Many of the team were happy to get out for this worthwhile cause.

- 4.10 To build a positive relationship with Bishop David Brown School was very important from the outset. The engagement in the project has been very good and they are extremely happy with the new facilities available to them for PE and the new dining room. The relationship with Freedom has started off very well with plenty of collaborative working taking place to really aid the schools provision but also the overall community offer.
- 4.11 Eastwood is also the home of Sheerwater Football Club with them being displaced from their previous venue as part of the regeneration project. Moving the football club to this location has caused problems with noise complaints from local residents and what can be done to mitigate this is being investigated.

5.0 Financial position

What normal looked like prior to the pandemic:

- 5.1 For context the Leisure Partnership Agreement is normally a payment from Freedom Leisure to Woking Borough Council. This payment has changed throughout the term of the contract linked to additions to the contract. The payment expected for this financial year was £689,809
- 5.2 There is an allowance in the contract for major events that may affect the financial position of the contract. Woking Borough Council and Freedom Leisure worked together to minimise the impact of the national lockdown on the finances by:
- Furloughing as many staff as safe to do so. Only keeping on staff to meet the statutory requirements in keeping the venues safe and ready to re-open once allowed. For example pool venues must either be completely decommissioned or have a daily check of the pool and pool plant. This is due to the chemicals involved in these areas.
 - Deferring any financial commitments where possible. Lease or loan payments wherever possible to do so
 - Minimising the burden on utilities by changing boiler settings, reducing air handling loads where safe and appropriate to do so.
- 5.3 Woking Borough Council has worked with Freedom Leisure on an “open book” process throughout the pandemic. Woking has paid Freedom for any losses that have occurred throughout the closure and partially re-opened times and continues to do so during the staggered re-opening of the services.
- 5.4 During this contract year Woking Borough Council has paid Freedom Leisure £1.4M. It is worth noting that the first three months of closure where Freedom were providing a number of staff to help with community support the cost was £500K alone.
- 5.5 Once this support was reduced to volunteer time the support costs dropped significantly with the rest of the year costing a further £900K. Of this the partial and very short term reopening in November 2020 cost us a further £140K due to needing to install all the privacy screens, hand sanitising stations and then running in many cases at less than 30% of original capacity making the service very expensive to run. The service was then closed back down in December.
- 5.6 Further to this cost of £1.4M the management fee (£689,809) has not been paid of which we are able to claim 70% back from the government as lost income due to the Pandemic.
- 5.7 The Department of Culture, Media and Sport released a fund to aid the reopening of leisure facilities. Whilst this money was for the operation of the leisure service the local authorities had to apply for this funding. Woking was able to demonstrate the amazing work that is done in the community by our leisure service and secured the maximum grant fund of £171K.

6.0 Key Performance Indicators

6.1 Freedom Leisure reports a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to the Leisure Partnership Board twice a year. Even with the closure some of these KPI's were still able to be reported on as follows:

Customer Satisfaction:

- 6.2 The following is an extract from the Freedom Annual Report presentation to the Leisure Partnership board. Much of the year customer communication was limited to COVID communication but during the periods when the centres were open or partially open customer comments, complaints and suggestions were recorded in the normal way.
- 6.3 There was positive comment about the way in which the facilities reopened in a secure manner, but then complaint that people could not get booked for the activities they wanted to do. In many cases such as group exercise classes the number of attendees was reduced significantly. Some classes that would have attracted 40 people were restricted to just 8.
- 6.4 Being able to get through on the phone was also cited as a problem. This was a problem pre-pandemic also but with the need to book in advance for all activities becoming mandatory this got far worse during this time Freedom are working on an advancing booking "app" to work alongside their management software to aid this problem in the future.

Customer Satisfaction

Working Leisure Centre:

"Great job with social distancing and cleaning carried out professionally"

"Can highly recommend I've been around my fair share of gyms at both ends of the spectrum for budget (The Gym) and top end (David Lloyd). This gym has the best of both, friendly staff that care about their job. Rarely too busy (when pre-Covid hours operated)"

Pool in the Park:

"It was great and everything worked well. All staff from reception, lifeguards and cleaner all very helpful and friendly. It is great to be back"

"Great to be back...very safe and clean...staff very good following all Covid guidelines"

Month	Compliment	Complain	Comment/Suggestion
April	0	0	1
May	0	0	2
June	0	0	2
July	0	0	2
August	0	1	3
September	3	4	10
October	3	5	8
November	0	1	2
December	3	5	10
March	0	0	1

"...since re opening I have only been able to book 1 class, all others have been full. Whilst I appreciate that you need to social distance and protect all, I am nevertheless paying membership for classes which I cannot book."

"I can't get through to anyone on the phone. Have tried lots of times"

Month	Compliment	Complain	Comment/Suggestion
April	0	0	1
July	0	0	2
September	0	1	1
October	2	3	6
November	3	2	3
December	0	1	2
February	0	0	1
March	0	0	1

"looking forward to swimfit returning ASAP"

"The phone doesn't get answered. Every single option on the menu goes to an answerphone"

Audits:

6.5 Freedom would normally undergo a range of audits each year. These include a range of pool safety, health and safety and quality assessments. All internal audits continued but the external audits did not take place during this time. However WBC officers did conduct both adhoc spot checks and a more formal inspection of COVID secure protocols and risk assessments.

7.0 Moving forward

- 7.1 The return of leisure since May has been good but is not back to pre-pandemic levels. As of September 2021 the overall number was just below 80% of 2019 attendance figures but to an extent this is slightly misleading as we have the “inflatazone” driving a higher than normal children’s attendance and the first month of Eastwood being open. However it is a good sign that confidence is returning and we are slightly ahead as a borough of the national average.
- 7.2 We have had to really focus on the reopening of what is most commercially viable and the most beneficial to the community we serve which has led to some programme changes. Getting the Friday Night Project back up and running has been critical for our youth provision along with working really hard with our health care colleagues to get the Cardiac Rehab and GP referral programmes running again.
- 7.3 The launch of Eastwood has been a stunning success so far. Membership is already at 610 members (8/11/2021) and there are over 2100 young people using the facility as club visitors a week. Maximising the impact of this facility for the Sheerwater and surrounding facilities is essential for the success of the leisure centre but also has a big impact on the regeneration overall.

8.0 Corporate Strategy

- 8.1 The work that Freedom Leisure does mainly falls within the Corporate Strategy priority of “Improving the Health and Wellbeing of all Residents. Offering a wide ranging, affordable whilst high quality and accessible to all leisure provision ensures we are giving every opportunity for our residents to become or remain fit and healthy.
- 8.2 Freedom Leisure also plays a part the Corporate Strategy priority of “Engaging our Communities”. Many of the sports clubs and other organisations that use the leisure facilities are local community groups or sports teams. These are often made up of volunteers who are engaging in touching or coaching others to better themselves.
- 8.3 The Corporate Strategy priority of “Promoting a Strong Economy” is also critically important. The Leisure Contract historically was an income generator for Woking Borough Council and will return to be one in the future. It is also a base for a number of other businesses all paying back into the community. (e.g. private physios, beauty therapists etc.)

9.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 9.1 Financially the service is still being supported and it is expected that the service will be back to breakeven by Spring 2022 with some reduced management fee payments being made by Freedom from then onwards. This is making the assumption that no further restrictions are put in place.
- 9.2 Further investment may be required into the aging pool filtration and circulation system at pool in the park. Significant front of house refurbishment as already detailed above has been made however the system is still original and has had some major failures in the past 6 months. These are being assessed currently to understand the scope of the works required.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 9.3 There are no equalities or human resource implications arising from this report.

Legal

9.4 This report has been reviewed by Legal Services who haven't raised any issues.

10.0 Engagement and Consultation

10.1 As part of the Leisure Partnership Agreement there are a range of surveys and customer feedback mechanisms in place. However in the past year much of these could not take place but all are now back up and running again.

REPORT ENDS

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2021

EXECUTIVE/OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROTOCOL

Executive Summary

The report sets out the proposed protocol between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This follows the decision of the Committee on 13 September 2021, which was supported by Leadership, to establish a protocol to clarify the relationship between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to support a framework of strong democratic transparency and accountability and to establish effective communication between Scrutiny and Executive Members.

The proposals within this report and the Protocol, as set out in Appendix 1, have been drawn up in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Subject to the adoption of the arrangements by the Committee and the Executive, the protocol arrangement will be included as an appendix in the revised version of the Scrutiny Toolkit and form part of a future iteration of the Council's Constitution.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE That the Executive/Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocol, as set out in the appendix to this report, be agreed.

The item above will need to be dealt with by way of a recommendation to the Executive.

Background Papers:	None
Reporting Person:	Councillor J Sanderson Email: cllrjames.sanderson@woking.gov.uk
Contact Person:	Aadam Ahmed Email: Aadam.ahmed@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3056
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Ayesha Azad Email: cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk
Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Anne-Marie Barker Email: cllrannemarie.barker@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	12 November 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13 September 2021, Members received a report which explored the provisions of the statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in 2019. The report reviewed the Council's arrangements in light of the guidance and identified a wide range of recommendations for the Committee as a means of strengthening the Council's overview and scrutiny work.
- 1.2 The recommendations had been developed within the context of recent developments at Woking Borough Council which impacted on the way in which the scrutiny responsibility of the Authority was taken forward.
- 1.3 Included within the recommendations was the proposal for the establishment of a protocol in order to support a framework of strong democratic transparency and accountability and to establish effective communication between Scrutiny and Executive Members.

2.0 Ensuring regular engagement between the Executive and scrutiny

- 2.1 The Council should ensure early and regular discussion takes place between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive, especially regarding the latter's future work programme. Members should be mindful of their distinct roles:
 - The Executive should not exercise control over the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. All Members and Officers should consider the role the Committee plays is to be that of a 'critical friend'.
 - The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should determine the nature and extent of an Executive Member's participation in a Scrutiny Committee meeting, and in any informal scrutiny task group meeting.
- 2.2 The Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive a Work Programme report at each meeting and are able to select items from the Executive's Forward Plan for pre-decision scrutiny. The Committee sets its own work programme and this is a principle enshrined in the Council's Constitution.
- 2.3 It is noted that individual Members of the Executive can each be held to account by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Managing participation falls within the normal role of a Chairman in managing a meeting. Executive Members are invited to attend meetings of the Committee at which topics within their Portfolio areas are to be discussed and may be invited to give evidence to Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups.

3.0 Managing Disagreement

- 3.1 The MHCLG guidance highlights the benefits of adopting a protocol to clarify the relationship between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to support a framework of strong democratic transparency and accountability and to establish effective communication between Scrutiny and Executive Members. Such protocols can lead to more effective scrutiny of and support for the Executive, resulting in better outcomes for the residents of the Borough.
- 3.2 Effective scrutiny involves looking at issues that can be politically contentious. It is therefore inevitable that, at times, an Executive will disagree with the findings or recommendations of a Scrutiny Committee. It is the job of both the Executive and Scrutiny Committee to work together to reduce the risk of this happening. One way in which an authority can take steps to predict, identify and act on disagreement is via an 'Executive-Scrutiny protocol' which can help

define the relationship between the two and mitigate any differences of opinion before they manifest themselves in unhelpful and unproductive ways.

- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to 'call in' decisions, i.e. ask the Executive to reconsider them before they are implemented, but this should not be viewed as a substitute for early involvement in the decision-making process or as a party-political tool.
- 3.4 The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should routinely be presented to the Executive in relation to items that have been the subject of pre-decision scrutiny or call-in and fully reflect the balance of views expressed across the political spectrum. The Executive will always consider these views.

4.0 Corporate Strategy

- 4.1 The adoption of a protocol will support a number of areas within the Corporate Strategy but primarily in support of the 'Us' theme – creating an innovative, proactive and effective Council by ensuring democratic transparency and accountability and effective communication.

5.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 5.2 There are no equalities or human resource implications arising from this report.

Legal

- 5.3 Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000, states that Overview and Scrutiny Committees have statutory powers to scrutinise decisions of the Executive. These decisions can include those the Executive is planning to make, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken/implemented.
- 5.4 Call-in is the exercise of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's statutory power in section 21(3) of the Local Government Act 2000, to review an Executive decision that has been made but not yet implemented.
- 5.5 Additional access rights to information for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is provided by Regulation 17 - Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012. Under Regulation 17(4) the Law does however recognise that there might be instances where it is legitimate for an authority to withhold information and places a requirement on the Executive to provide the Scrutiny Committee with a written statement setting out its reasons for that decision.

6.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 6.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with the lead officers around Scrutiny support at Woking Borough Council and follows the Government's guidance on overview and scrutiny as considered at the meeting on 13 September 2021. It builds on the existing practices of the Authority, seeking to strengthen the relationship between the Committee's role and that of the Executive.
- 6.2 The Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were provided with the opportunity to discuss the report with Officers before its publication.

REPORT ENDS

Woking Borough Council

Protocol between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive

November 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of the Protocol is to establish a protocol to clarify the relationship between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to support a framework of strong democratic transparency and accountability and to encourage effective communication between Scrutiny and Executive Members. This will promote an effective role for Scrutiny and foster a good working relationship between the Committee and the Executive that will ensure the Committee makes a valuable contribution to the effective running of Woking Borough Council, resulting in positive outcomes for residents of the borough.
- 1.2 This Protocol applies to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, any Member who may sit on a Scrutiny Task Group, Working Group, and all Members of the Executive (comprising the Leader and the various Executive Members).
- 1.3 This protocol provides guidance on the way in which Members in their respective roles interact to enable the Authority to carry out the Overview and Scrutiny function. The Protocol also outlines the framework and procedures underpinning the operation of scrutiny and provides guidance on the role of officers who support this process.

2.0 Key functions of Overview and Scrutiny at Woking Borough Council

- 2.1 As per the Constitution and within its terms of reference, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will:
 - (a) Review and/or scrutinise decisions made (or to be made) or actions taken (or to be taken) in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
 - (b) Make reports and/or recommendations to Full Council and/or the Leader/Executive;
 - (c) Consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants;
 - (d) Exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, Executive decisions made but not yet implemented; and
 - (e) Deal with crime and disorder matters referred to it under the Police and Justice Act 2006;
 - (f) Consider any valid Councillor Call for Action.

3.0 The Scrutiny Process

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution sets out the process for carrying out the Scrutiny role. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may:
 - (a) Question Members of the Executive and/or Committees and Officers of the Council about their decisions and/or performance;
 - (b) Make requests for information from external organisations and partners authorities;
 - (c) Seek independent expert advice or appoint specialist advisers;
 - (d) Appoint non-voting co-opted members as necessary;
 - (e) Gather information informally by working individually or in small Task Groups.

- 3.2 Once a Scrutiny review topic has been agreed the relevant Executive Member and Corporate Leadership Team Member will be informed of the scope of the review or the Terms of Reference if it is agreed to set up a Task Group (the terms of reference would be added to the agenda for approval at the first meeting of the Task Group). The Executive Member and Corporate Leadership Team Member will also be invited to attend the Committee meeting when the Scrutiny Review/Task Group's final review report is considered.
- 3.3 When a Scrutiny review report is approved for submission to the Executive or Council, the relevant Executive Member and Corporate Leadership Team Member will be invited to submit comments on the report, including which recommendations they accept. For each recommendation accepted they will set out how and when it will be implemented. For each recommendation that is not accepted reasons will be given.
- 3.4 With the approval of the Leader of the Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman and/or Chairman of the relevant task group may attend the relevant meeting of the Executive to introduce the Scrutiny report.
- 3.5 The Executive or Council will consider any Scrutiny review report within two months of receipt. Details of decisions made by the Executive or Council will be circulated to all members of the Council.

Call-In

- 3.6 The Call-In process is set out in the Constitution and will be used in exceptional circumstances.
- 3.7 The Council's constitution only states that "The notice to the Proper Officer shall state the reasons for the call-in, and these reasons shall be made available to all members of the Council". It does not therefore define what is regarded as a **valid** reason for a call-in. Notwithstanding this, where the Overview and Scrutiny Chairman or three Members of the Committee want to exercise the right to call-in, then **valid** reasons will be determined in the context of the following principles:
- Proportionality (action proportionate to the desired outcome);
 - Due consultation and the taking of professional advice from Officers;
 - Human rights will be respected and considered at an early stage in the decision-making process;
 - A presumption in favour of openness;
 - Clarity of aims and desired outcomes;
 - For Executive decisions, details of options taken into account and the reasons for decisions will be recorded.
- 3.8 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee cannot overturn the decision that has been called in. It may either concur with the decision (in which case it will take immediate effect) or refer it back to the Executive for further consideration, including any recommendations from Scrutiny Members.

4.0 Relationship between Overview and Scrutiny and the Executive

- 4.1 The following principles set out how the working relationship between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should operate:
- I. The Executive and members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recognise that they each have different functions and responsibilities that contribute to securing the best outcomes for the residents within the Woking Borough.

- II. All participants in the working relationship between Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will do so in a spirit of mutual respect and constructive challenge.
- III. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should bear in mind the statutory guidance that scrutiny work should be conducted in a non-party political manner.
- IV. The Executive recognises that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a number of rights, for example requiring Portfolio Holders to attend its meetings or calling-in Executive decisions which have not yet been implemented should they consider a decision to be reviewed. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will exercise those rights responsibly.
- V. One of the principal responsibilities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the ability of non-executive members to hold the Executive to account. An important method to ensure accountability is through examining performance and decisions taken by the authority. To facilitate this challenge the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may:
 - a. Challenge the Executive about decisions which have been taken by Cabinet;
 - b. Consider performance information;
 - c. Query or ask for information about items which are set out in the Forward Plan.

5.0 Expectations of the Executive Members

- 5.1 A Portfolio Holder, in receipt of a request to attend an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, should make reasonable efforts to do so in order to present reports relevant to their portfolio and answer any subsequent/relevant questions or if they have been Called-in.
- 5.2 The Executive, when given written notice, will respond to Scrutiny's recommendations within two months and for each recommendation accepted they will set out how and when it will be implemented. For each recommendation that is not accepted reasons will be given.
- 5.3 The Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall formally meet at least four times during each Municipal Year, in-person or virtually. These meetings should be spaced out quarterly unless there is valid reason not to. The dates of the meetings will be set at the start of each Municipal Year during the first Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, with the prior agreement of the Leader of the Council.

6.0 Expectations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 6.1 That the Committee will provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge to the Executive's proposals and decisions.
- 6.2 That the Committee will remain non-political and be effectively led by Members who take responsibility in their role to drive service improvements and voice the concerns of the public.
- 6.3 The Executive's response to Scrutiny's recommendations will be published in the agenda of the next scheduled Committee meeting.
- 6.4 To monitor the effectiveness of services and undertake regular review of performance in relation to the Council's services.

7.0 The Work Programme and Executive Forward Plan

- 7.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme will be updated and reviewed at each meeting. The Chairman, Committee Members and relevant Officers will be able to put forward items to go on the Work Programme, subject to approval.

7.2 Alongside the Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan the Committee will be provided with the Executive Forward Plan to enable the Committee to have an oversight of the work being carried out by the Executive and thus be able to deliberate if any items should be brought to the attention of the Committee.

8.0 Conduct of Meetings

8.1 The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be carried out in a bipartisan manner to ensure that the needs of residents in the Borough are being put at the heart of its work.

8.2 All Members should promote an atmosphere of openness at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and should strive to ensure that questioning and debate takes place within a climate of mutual respect and trust between Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members, the Executive Member and other participants.

8.3 Scrutiny Committee Members should be prepared to ask searching questions of Executive Members, who in turn should be willing to respond to any question put. It should however be stated that Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members should be aware of and show an understanding of the fact that Executive Members may not be in a position to answer every question immediately or in detail.

8.5 Executive Members should, in so far as possible, anticipate and be prepared to answer questions on decisions taken, or proposed to be taken, which fall within their remit. Executive Members should also value the contribution of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members who raise questions under these headings and respond in an appropriate and professional manner.

8.6 Executive Members should normally be authorised by the Committee to speak upon any item on the agenda which falls into their portfolio area of responsibility and may at any time offer to assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the provision of factual information or advice in relation to the matters under discussion.

8.7 The Chairman of the meeting shall at all times ensure that the conduct of the meeting shall be fair and that all participants are treated courteously.

8.8 The Chairman, supported by the Lead Officer and the Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer, should provide leadership and guidance to the Committee on all scrutiny matters and should promote the Committee's role to improve services and monitor the effectiveness of Council policies.

END

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2021

UPDATE TO THE SCRUTINY TOOLKIT

Executive Summary

This update to the Scrutiny Toolkit reflects the recent changes to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, namely the Officer arrangements, with a dedicated Scrutiny Officer and a Corporate Leadership Team member, and the inclusion of information on the budget protocol which was approved at the meeting on 18 October 2021.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That:

The updated version of the Scrutiny Toolkit be adopted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation set out above.
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Background Papers:	None
Reporting Person:	Councillor James Sanderson Email: cllrjames.sanderson@woking.gov.uk
Contact Person:	Aadam Ahmed, Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer Email: Aadam.ahmed@woking.gov.uk , Extn: 3056
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Councillor A Azad Email: cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk
Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor A-M Barker Email: cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	12 November 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undergone significant changes since the last version of the Scrutiny toolkit was received at the meeting on 7 June 2021. The updated Scrutiny Toolkit seeks to reflect these changes and provide accurate and up to date information to the Committee.
- 1.2 The first update to the Scrutiny Toolkit is regarding the Officer support arrangements. This updated version reflects the new Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer role, the Legal Officer support and the dedicated Corporate Leadership Team member support. These changes can be found on page 19.
- 1.3 The second update to the Scrutiny Toolkit draws attention to the budget protocol which was adopted at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 October 2021. This can be found on page 31 as well as within the 'Supporting Documents' section.

2.0 Corporate Strategy

- 2.1 The overall purpose of the Scrutiny Toolkit is to give the Committee the knowledge needed to fully engage with local communities as part of its overview and scrutiny responsibilities, one of the key elements of achieving the objectives of the Council's Corporate Plan. Such engagement may be around ensuring residents know who and where to go to discuss issues or make changes in their community, encouraging residents to play a greater role in supporting their communities, and helping residents to identify and make use of all the resources available to them. By ensuring the information in the Scrutiny Toolkit is up to date, the Council is ensuring that Councillors can positively facilitate Overview and Scrutiny-related engagement with local communities.

3.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

There are no financial implications arising from this report. The Protocol on the budget which was agreed at the meeting on 18 October has been incorporated into the Scrutiny Toolkit. This protocol seeks to minimise any risks around the management of the Committee's substantial budget and clarify the reporting procedures.

Equalities and Human Resources

There are no human resource or training and development implications arising from this report.

Legal

There are no legal implications arising from the update on the Scrutiny Toolkit.

4.0 Engagement and Consultation

The Lead Officer for Overview and Scrutiny (Giorgio Framallicco), has been consulted on the changes to the Scrutiny Toolkit, as has Becky Capon, Democratic Services Manager.

REPORT ENDS

The Scrutiny Toolkit

2021/22



Foreword

This toolkit aims to provide information, practical guidance and clarity to everyone involved in the overview and scrutiny process at Woking Borough Council.

The toolkit has been drawn from a variety of sources and includes many good practice points selected from leading authorities in the field.

The toolkit will enable members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that they concentrate on topics that matter to the residents of Woking, and this in turn will help us play a significant role in shaping the future direction of the Borough.



Contents

1. An Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny	5
What is Overview and Scrutiny?	
What Overview and Scrutiny is not	
The Work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
The Councils Structure	
Task Groups	
Annual Report	
2. Topic Selection and the Annual Work Programme	9
Work Programme	
Topic Selection	
Steps to setting a Work Programme	
3. The Overview and Scrutiny Process	13
Councillor Led	
Role of Chairman and Vice Chairman	
Chairman and Vice-Chairman Liaison	
The Role of Councillors	
Committee Members	
Carrying out a Scrutiny Review	
Officers	
4. Call-In	19
Call-In Procedure	
5. Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)	21
6. Public Participation	25
Witness/Expert attendance at the meeting	
7. Budget	
8. Supporting Documents	30
Scrutiny Review Topic Selection Form	
CCfA Form	
Work Programme Development - Overview and Scrutiny Topic Selection Flowchart	
Scrutiny Review Task Group Terms of Reference	
Guidance for Witnesses and Experts	
Questioning Techniques	

1. An introduction to Overview and Scrutiny

“Effective Public Scrutiny can be a powerful vehicle for change. It can improve the delivery of services; it can connect the public to decision makers and politicians; it can improve efficiency.” Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) December 2008

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny was introduced as part of the modernisation agenda for local government under the Local Government Act 2000. This Act required Local Authorities to develop a new political structure and arrangements to replace the old Committee system. An essential part of these new arrangements was the introduction of Overview and Scrutiny; designed to hold the Executive to account and to help in the development of new policies.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is not a decision making body and holds no executive authority over the business of the Council. The Committee’s role relates to scrutiny and review, and its power lies in raising awareness of important issues and placing influence on others to take action in certain ways.

The overview and scrutiny process provides an opportunity for Councillors and, in some cases, external representatives, to examine various functions of the Council, to ask questions about how decisions have been made and to consider whether service improvements can be put in place. It provides an opportunity for Councillors to champion issues of public concern and to participate in the development of new policies. It facilitates debate about priorities, budget, the strategy of the Council and its vision for the Borough.

Overview and Scrutiny is a positive activity and should contribute to the delivery of efficient and effective services that meet the needs and aspirations of the local community. The Committee should not shy away from the need to challenge and question decisions and make constructive criticism, but should avoid unnecessary conflict and confrontation.

The role of overview and scrutiny also provides new opportunities for public involvement and debate, supporting the Council in taking a community-orientated approach and bringing new ideas and wider experience into the Council processes.

Overview and Scrutiny requires new ways of working and different skills for all concerned. In particular, to work effectively, overview and scrutiny needs to be Member-led.

What Overview and Scrutiny is not

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee does not deal with complaints or regulatory matters such as planning applications or applications for licences. Overview and scrutiny focuses on strategic delivery of services, not individual issues. It is important that scrutiny reviews do not turn into a witch hunt – it is not about apportioning blame or seeking to interrogate people in public aggressively.

The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee can:

- review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken by the Executive, individual Executive Members or Officers of the Council;

- prepare reports and/or recommendations to Council and/or the Executive;
- consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants; and
- exercise the right to Call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee can also:

- require Executive Members and senior officers to attend meetings and to be challenged about matters within their areas of responsibility;
- invite expert advisors and other members of the Council and members of the public to take part in Scrutiny reviews;
- refer matters to 'Task Groups' made up of smaller groups of Councillors to undertake in-depth reviews;
- submit formal questions to the Chairman regarding matters that come within the remit of the Committee.

The Council's Structure

The Council has 30 Councillors in total who are elected by local residents and represent 10 wards. The whole Council agrees overall policies. Day-to-day decisions are then made by the Executive comprising a leader and six Councillors who are appointed by the Council. The Council also has a number of Committees to deal with such matters as Planning, Licensing and internal governance issues.

The rules governing the way in which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates can be found in the Council's Constitution.

At Woking Borough Council there is a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has 9 members and meets seven times per year. This Committee, along with a number of Task Groups, carry out the function of Overview and Scrutiny in Woking.

Task Groups

A Task Group is a small group of Councillors (usually no more than four to six) who are asked to carry out an in depth piece of work on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Task Groups are set up individually for each review. The topic to be reviewed is chosen by the Committee, but it is for the Task Group itself to decide upon the way it chooses to carry out the review. Membership of the Task Group can be drawn from all Councillors and it is not limited to the Members of the Committee. It is often useful to include Members with a range of views and perspectives.

A Task Group allows a topic to be looked into in some depth and it will normally take up to six months to complete their work. At Woking Borough Council there are two types of Task Group:

Standing Task Groups provide an overview of the services of the Council and report directly to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These Task Groups do not have a limited life span and are ongoing.

Ad Hoc Review Task Groups are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to carry out scrutiny reviews to investigate particular issues which cannot be adequately considered within a normal meeting.

The Task Group must be clear on the purpose, rationale and objectives of their review and set an anticipated completion date.

The Task Groups must feedback regularly to the Committee and at the conclusion of its investigation; the Group will prepare a report for the consideration of the Committee.

Task Groups normally meet in private, but can take place in various locations, depending on the type of work they are undertaking.

Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups 2021/22

WORKING GROUP	<u>Con.</u>	<u>Lib. Dem</u>	<u>Labour</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Economic Development Task Group (7)	Councillors Davis Mohammed Whitehand	Councillors Barker Johnson Roberts	Councillor Ali	Councillor –
Finance Task Group (7)	Councillors Azad Davis Whitehand	Councillors Johnson Kirby Sanderson	Councillor Aziz	Councillor –
Housing Task Group (8)	Councillors Dorsett Harlow Whitehand	Councillors Barker Hughes Kirby	Councillor Aziz	Councillor Bridgeman

The Annual Report

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee prepares an Annual Report which details the work that has been undertaken during the year. The Annual Report outlines the outcome of recommendations made by the Committee and highlights those measures and approaches which have proved effective during the scrutiny reviews. The Committee can also make recommendations for future Work Programmes through the Annual Report, and suggest amended working methods if appropriate. The Annual Report is written by the Chairman, although it must be agreed by the Committee before it is presented to Council.

2. Topic Selection and the Annual Work Programme

“Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well, it can help lay the foundations for targeted, inclusive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal” A Cunning Plan? Devising a Scrutiny Work Programme, CfPS, March 2011.

Work Programme

The setting of an Annual Work Programme is an important part of the Scrutiny process. Overview and Scrutiny is a Member led process and as such, Members should lead on developing the Work Programme for the Committee.

The Work Programme is a living document and should be subject to regular review. Members should consider the resource implications and be aware of the resource requirements of larger reviews. The Work Programme should also have capacity to consider matters referred to the Committee by the Executive and also to deal with Call-Ins. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the organisation. In putting the Work Programme together, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will need to have regard to Members’ capacity to deliver the Programme and the capacity of Officers to support them in that task. A good maxim would be **‘If in doubt, leave it out’**. **It is far better to do a few topics well, than many topics poorly.**

The Work Programme includes within it ongoing issues such as performance management and annual budget monitoring and one off issues and reviews that may be referred to smaller Task Groups for an in-depth investigation.

Submitting Topics for Scrutiny

Who can suggest a topic?

Councillors, Officers and members of the public can suggest a topic for the Committee to scrutinise. Topics can also be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the Executive or Council.

Recent changes in legislation also make it possible for Councillors to refer matters to scrutiny through what is called a ‘Councillor Call for Action’ (CCfA). More information on this is provided in section 5 of this toolkit.

Topic Selection

Before a subject is chosen for review, at least one of the following criteria should be met to establish whether the proposed topic should be selected:

- The Scrutiny Review is likely to result in improvements for local people.
- The topic falls within a Community or Corporate priority area, such as the Community Strategy and the Council’s priorities.
- The topic represents a key issue for the public.

- The service proposed for Scrutiny Review is performing poorly. A Review may pick up on areas of weakness identified through the Council's Audit reports or the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information published by the Council.
- There is a high level of dissatisfaction with the service.

Topic Rejection

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will not deal with a topic if:

- The topic is already being addressed.
- The matter is subjudice or prejudicial to the Council's interests.
- The specific case falls within the Council's complaints procedure.
- The topic involves an individual disciplinary or grievance matter.
- Scrutiny Review of the proposed topic is unlikely to result in improvements for local people.

It is important that all topics are assessed against the criteria to ensure that time is not wasted on impulse decisions. That way, less important matters can be rejected in a structured transparent way.

A Topic Selection Form has been developed to assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to select topics in a structured and consistent way, which can be recorded and justified if necessary. **A 'Scrutiny Review Topic Selection Form' must be completed for every topic suggested/selected in order to define the objectives, determine the methodology of the review and agree timescales.**

[This **Scrutiny Review Topic Selection** e-form is referenced in Section 7 – Supporting Documents.]

Steps to setting a Work Programme

Step 1 – Identify potential topics / issues

- Identify standard items such as performance monitoring and annual budgets.
- Review the Forward Plan.
- Discuss priorities with Portfolio Holders and senior officers.
- Invite suggestions for scrutiny from Members of the Council, officers and the public.
- Leave capacity to deal with unexpected issues throughout the year.

Step 2 – Filtering topics for further action

- Filter and prioritise each potential topic by measuring them against the selection and rejection criteria outlined above.
- Divide topics into two categories. An active list containing the topics that will be pursued by the Committee and a reserve list for topics that may be scrutinised at a future date.
- Reject all topics that fall in line with the criteria outlined under 'Topic Rejection' above.

Step 3 – Review and update the programme

Keep the Work Programme under constant review. Adjust as necessary to delete redundant topics, and add subjects as new topics/suggestions are received or revealed through reports on poorly performing services.

3. The Overview and Scrutiny Process

“Scrutiny will only work in the long run, if Members drive the process” (CfPS)

Councillor Led

There are many different approaches to running overview and scrutiny. There is no ‘one size fits all’ approach. However, what is clear is that successful scrutiny relies upon Member involvement.

In order for the Council to maintain and develop a successful scrutiny function, Councillors must take a leading role in the process. This is not a task just for Chairman or Vice-Chairman, scrutiny relies upon engagement from a wide number of enthusiastic Councillors to achieve success.

Councillors must act in a non-partisan manner, which places the needs and aspirations of the community above the consideration of party politics. They must encompass the appropriate skills and competencies required to be able to influence a wide range of public bodies with the aim of improving services for local people.

Councillors must take the lead in not only choosing topics for selection, but to take the lead in questioning witnesses, formulating recommendations and in preparing reports for consideration by decision makers. Councillors have to make time for detailed involvement in topics under review whilst demonstrating effective work management to make sure that scrutiny activities are timely and have impact.

Role of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Because overview and scrutiny is a Member led process, the role of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman is an important one. The Chairman has a pivotal role in maintaining the focus of scrutiny activity on issues that are of concern to the residents of Woking.

Each Chairman has to possess a range of abilities including good communication, listening, and analytical skills in order to balance the desire for Committee Members to have full and frank discussion about topics, with the need to ensure the Committee makes the best use of its time and resources. The Chairman has to encourage the Committee to operate in an open and robust manner, whilst also making sure that witnesses and officers are treated with respect and courtesy. It is also important that the Chairman summarises to confirm agreement and ownership of actions, decisions, and important points and at key stages refocus discussions.

Chairman and Vice-Chairman Liaison

It is good practice for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to meet in-between meetings of the Committee in order to discuss the Work Programme, any outcomes from previous meetings, potential agenda items, new developments in overview and scrutiny best practice etc. The Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer who supports the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also attends these meetings.

The Role of Councillors

Being a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is a rewarding responsibility, enabling a Member of the Council to really explore ways of improving the service the Council provides.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members need to take an equal part in scrutinising the Council's policies and Executive decisions, and be active in collecting and assessing evidence and producing recommendations. Overview and scrutiny provides Members with an opportunity to question Executive lead Members, Officers and others in order to gain knowledge of a topic and develop supporting evidence for recommendations.

Councillors will receive a considerable amount of paperwork to read and as a result, they need to set aside sufficient time to allow them to attend meetings, forums, workshops and site visits.

Councillors will:

- Agree a manageable Work Programme.
- Take an active role in Scrutiny reviews either in the full Committee or through Task Groups.
- Receive and examine information and monitor the performance of service areas and participate in reviews as appropriate.
- Hold Executive Members and Senior Officers to account.
- Take part in training and development programmes.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members 2021/22

Member:	Member Position:
Councillor James Sanderson, <i>Liberal Democrat</i>	Chairman
Councillor Saj Hussain, <i>Conservative</i>	Vice-Chairman
Councillor Josh Brown, <i>Conservative</i>	Committee Member
Councillor Ellen Nicholson, <i>Liberal Democrat</i>	Committee Member
Councillor Steve Dorsett, <i>Conservative</i>	Committee Member
Councillor Adam Kirby, <i>Liberal Democrat</i>	Committee Member
Councillor Rob Leach, <i>Liberal Democrat</i>	Committee Member
Councillor Rashid Mohammed, <i>Conservative</i>	Committee Member
Councillor Mohammed Ilyas Raja, <i>Labour</i>	Committee Member

Carrying out a Scrutiny Review

Stage 1 – Topic Selection

Scrutiny topics are selected by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Items can come from a variety of sources including Members of the Council, members of the public or be referred to the Committee by the Executive or Council. Scrutiny Reviews will be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee itself or in the majority of cases allocated to a Task Group.

Topic selection has been covered in detail in Section 2 of this guide.

Stage 2 – Scoping and Planning the Review

Before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can agree the Scrutiny Review, a ‘Scrutiny Review Topic Selection Form’ must be completed and submitted to the Committee.

Comprehensive scoping and planning is essential in order to ensure that the Scrutiny review is as effective as possible – if a Review is too broad, it may not be possible to identify the necessary resources to complete the Review within the proposed timescale and the Review may lose its focus, leading to ineffective outcomes.

Once a Scrutiny Review topic has been agreed, it is likely that a Task Group will be established to undertake the Review (although this is not always necessary). The Committee will encourage interested Councillors to volunteer to sit on the Task Group and will seek to achieve a politically balanced group.

Before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can formally agree the establishment of a Task Group, a ‘Terms of Reference’ form must be completed and submitted to the Committee for approval. [An example of this form can be found in Section 7 – Supporting Documents]

The Terms of Reference will consider-

- The purpose, rationale and objectives of the review.
- Key issues and areas of focus.
- Responsibilities of Councillors and Officers.
- The risks involved in undertaking the review (and how they can be minimised).
- How the review will be undertaken.
- Timescales

At the first meeting of the Task Group, the Members will -

- Elect a Chairman and appoint a Vice Chairman.
- Determine dates for future meetings of the Group.
- Establish a target date for completing the review and submitting a final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Task Groups are encouraged to consider innovative and imaginative ways of working. Examples of such working can include holding Task Group meetings at locations across the Borough, use of questionnaires and the staging of public meetings.

Stage 3 – Collecting Evidence

What information is going to be needed? Once the scope for the Review has been agreed, the Task Group will need to consider what information is required to fulfil the objectives of the Review.

When the information requirements have been identified, the Task Group will need to identify where and how the information can be gained, with consideration given to -

- Undertaking site visits.
- Calling on expert witnesses Council and external sources.
- Hearing evidence from community and voluntary groups, the public and business sector, and consulting service user groups and local interest groups.
- Commissioning research and researching best practice through local government organisations e.g. www.idea.gov.uk, www.lga.gov.uk.
- Joint working with other authorities and organisations.
- Officer reports and presentations

Stage 4 – Considering the Evidence

When the evidence has been collected, the Task Group will need to meet to consider and analyse the findings. It is important that both the findings and the recommendations are drawn out of the evidence and are adequately supported by it.

Stage 5 – Report

A draft report based on the Task Groups' finding and recommendations will be prepared by the Chairman of the Task Group and the appointed Lead Officer.

Recommendations should:

- Be based on clear evidence.
- Address identified need.
- Link to Council priorities.
- Demonstrate tangible benefits.
- Take account of resources.

The final report and any recommendations from the Task Group will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being recommended to the Executive. Any changes to the Council's policies will then need to be dealt with by way of a recommendation to Council.

In the event of there being dissent from the recommendations, a minority report will also be allowed to be forwarded to the Executive, Council or Partner Organisation, proposing an alternative course of action.

Stage 6 – Feedback and Monitoring

Following the reporting process, it is important that feedback is given to contributors to the Review and stakeholders concerned about the outcome. The feedback should make it clear what actions are proposed as a result of the Review.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will need to make suitable arrangements to monitor the implementation of the recommendations adopted, and request progress reports from officers and Portfolio Holders.

Officers

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is supported by a Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer, a Corporate Leadership Team member, a Legal Officer and Lead Officers throughout the Council.

Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer

The Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer will act as a contact, advisor and support for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to co-ordinate the work of the Councillors and Officers supporting the Task Groups. This Officer does not always necessarily participate in the work of the Task Groups, but does aid and assist Members with any necessary arrangements and application of overview and scrutiny. The Officer will also act as a link between the Task Group and the Council's Committee process. It is expected that the Officer will dedicate the majority of their time to the needs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer will also assist in:

- the arrangement and organisation of Task Group meetings;
- the development of terms of reference;
- the arrangement of site visits, workshops, etc. and the attendance of witnesses;
- use of the Internet/Intranet;
- applying the Tool Kit for Successful Scrutiny.

Corporate Leadership Team member

Giorgio Framalitto has been identified as the Lead Officer from the Corporate Leadership Team who will support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee through the provision of Corporate Leadership Team engagement on and with scrutiny matters.

Legal Officer Support

Kuldip Channa has been identified as the Lead Officer from Legal Services to support the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on matters requiring the legal expertise.

Lead Officer

Each Scrutiny Review will have a Lead Officer appointed, who will be best placed to advise and inform. The Lead Officer will be involved for the duration of the Review and will assist the Task Group in its consideration of the evidence collected and the production of the final

report. The Officer will assist in scoping the Review, establishing clear aims and objectives and ensuring that the right information and participants are available.

Responsibilities of the Lead Officer include:

- working with the Task Group to establish a plan to define the objectives, timetable and methodology;
- keeping the work of the Task Group under review in light of any additional issues or changes in timescale identified by the Task Group;
- assisting in assimilating information and data and present any findings or conclusions arising from the Review in an appropriate format;
- assisting in communications, including progress reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and consultation with stakeholders; and
- assisting in the preparation of the final recommendations and Committee report.

Additional Officers may be called upon by the Task Group for specific technical information, either written and/or verbal. Legal Services will provide procedural, legislative and constitutional advice.



Call-In Procedure

One of the main responsibilities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to hold the Executive to account. They can do this by Calling-In a decision of the Executive and preventing the decision from being implemented until it has been fully discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Although the Overview and Scrutiny Committee cannot change the decision, it can refer the matter back to the decision taker to ask for the decision to be reviewed or to consider an alternative course of action.

The Call-In procedure does not apply where the decision being taken by the Executive is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would be seriously prejudicial to the Council's or public interest.

Once a decision has been made by the Executive, Councillors have five working days to Call-In a decision. If the decision is called-in, it cannot be implemented until it has been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for advice.

The called-in decision must be considered by the Committee within five working days of the decision to call it in.

The decision will be referred to the first available meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if within timescales, or a special meeting of the Committee will be arranged. The Committee then has three options:

- To offer no advice, in which case the decision may be implemented immediately.
- To make a recommendation, in which case the matter must be referred to the Executive in order for a decision to be made upon it.
- To make a recommendation to Council (bypassing the Executive).

The Executive or Council is not bound to accept any recommendation to it and will have sole discretion on any further action to be taken.

Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee does decide to make a recommendation this must be clearly documented in the minutes.

Occasionally, matters subject to call-in will be confidential or exempt and the press and public may be required to leave the room for the whole or part of the proceedings in such circumstances.

The detailed procedure for 'Call-In' can be found in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution.

5. Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)

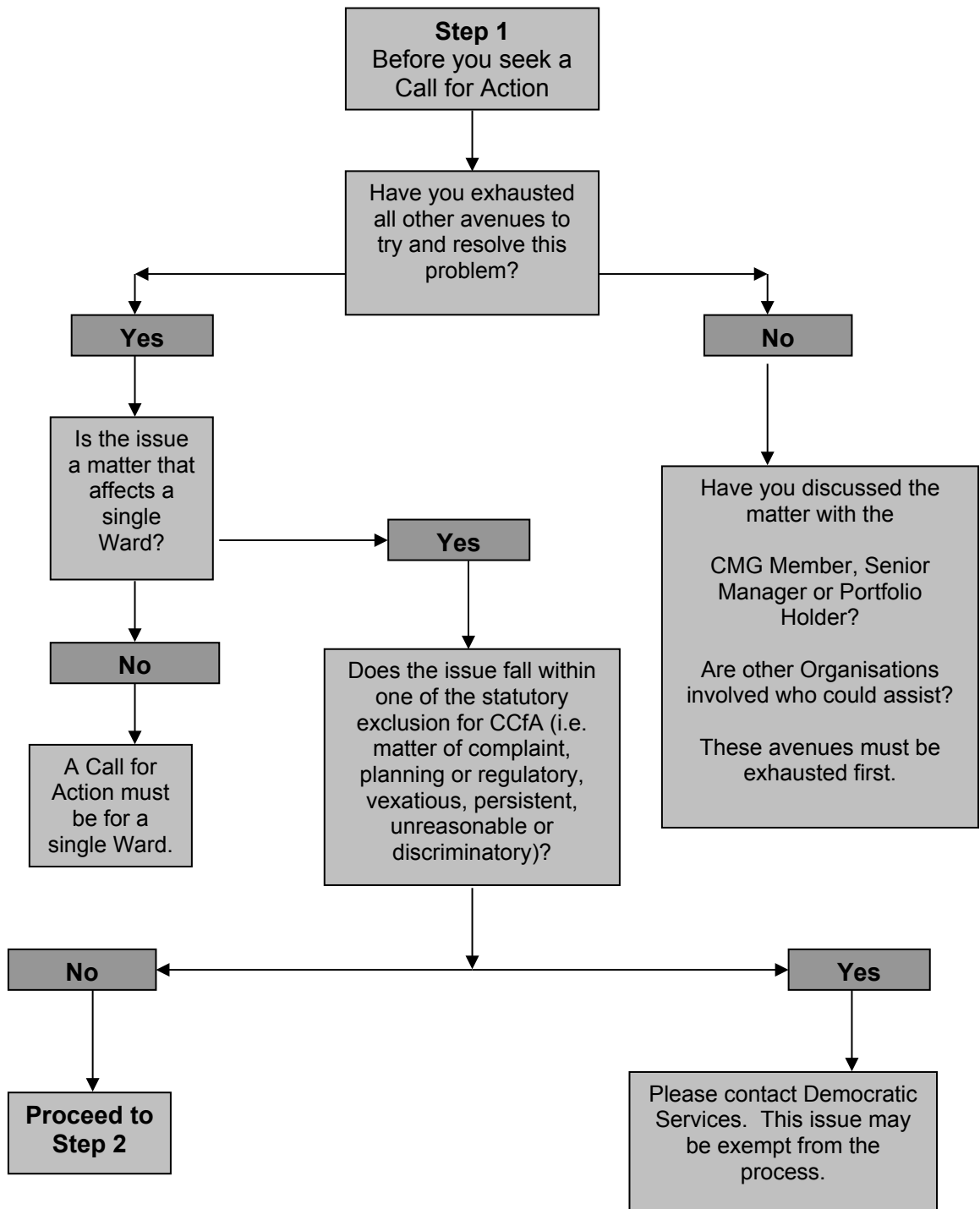
The Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) provides Members with the opportunity to ask for discussions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on issues where local problems have arisen and where all other methods of resolution have been exhausted.

CCfA was introduced as part of wider changes introduced to provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with greater powers to work more closely with partners across organisational boundaries. It enables Councillors, as the democratic representatives of their communities, to raise issues that it has not been possible to resolve by other means.

The power is limited to issues affecting single wards and any Councillor can make a CCfA irrespective of their existing role on the Council. It can be about any issue of the Councillor's choice, regardless of which organisation is responsible, subject to statutory exceptions (for example if the matter is the subject of an existing complaint or is vexatious in nature).

A flow diagram detailing the preparation of a CCfA is shown on the next page and a copy of the CCfA Request Form is included in Section 7 – Supporting Documents.

The procedure for CCfA can be found in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution.



Step 2 Call for Action Form

In completing the form you should:

- State what the issue is;
- State what action has been taken to resolve the issue;
- Include an outline of the resolution being sought;
- Indicate any other organisations that are involved in the CCfA
- **Send your completed form to Democratic Services.**

Step 3 Chairman's consideration of the CCfA Form

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee determines whether or not to accept the CCfA for consideration

In doing so he will ask if:

- All existing options to resolve the problem have been exhausted;
- There are potential resource implications in the Committee's work programme to accommodate the CCfA; and
- The statutory exclusions have been considered e.g. subject of a complaint, vexatious, persistent, unreasonable or discriminatory.

In the event a Call for Action is submitted by the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman will determine whether or not the Call for Action is considered.

Step 4 Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Initial Report allows the Committee to determine the appropriate priority in its work programme for the CCfA.

It will include information on:

- What the Councillor is requesting as the proposed outcome (with an opportunity to speak on the item);
- Action taken prior to the Call for Action being made;
- Any other known information;
- Exclusions process information;
- Which organisation/ Business Managers would be affected;
- Potential resource implications; and
- Whether and when to include CCfA into the work programme.

Details of requests for a Call For Action which have been rejected by the Chairman will be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee will consider any representations by the Member responsible for the request and determine whether to uphold the Chairman's decision or agree that the Call for Action be taken forward.

Step 5 Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Once the CCfA is in the Committee's work programme it will receive:

- a report including the background to the CCfA;
- comments from partner organisations;
- other information submitted for consideration by the Committee; and
- evidence from appropriate experts.

The Committee will seek to recommend a resolution to the CCfA.

Step 6 Seeking a resolution

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes recommendations to the Executive if it is a Council matter or to other partners.

CCfAs may be about matters that cut across the remit of partner organisations.

The Committee will send its recommendations direct to the organisation concerned.

The Committee might say that there is no action to be taken.

Step 7 Monitoring of Recommendation

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will monitor the implementation of its 'recommendations'.

6. Public Participation

Public participation is an important part of the scrutiny process and there are a number of ways members of the public can get involved and keep updated.

- Suggesting topics for scrutiny.
- Attending Committee meetings.
- Submitting written evidence or appearing as a witness when invited to do so.
- Committee agendas, reports and minutes.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may request a range of individuals to give evidence and answer questions on a particular topic. These can include:

- Executive Members.
- Senior Officers.
- Members of the Public.
- Outside organisations / Service Providers.
- Experts.

Most of the discussions in Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings will take place in public and the press are also invited to attend. Task Groups are usually not held in public, although their final report to the Committee will most likely be a public document.

Witnesses/Expert attendance at the meeting

Witnesses and experts have a key role to play in helping the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Task Groups to fulfil their objectives. Examples of experts and witnesses may include Members of the Executive, Portfolio Holders, Union representatives, external partners, local businesses and voluntary sector groups.

Prior to the meeting

The Chairman or the Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer will:

- Inform the witness of the time place and date of the meeting.
- Inform the witness of the issue the Committee would like to question them about.
- Inform the witness of any written information or documentation that the Committee may require.
- Provide the witness with copies of the agenda and relevant reports.
- Answer any questions the witness may have.

At the meeting

Overview and Scrutiny meetings are normally held in public and there will often be members of the press and public in attendance. There will also be Committee Members, Officers and possibly other Councillors and witnesses. The Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer will have contacted the witness/expert before the meeting to make arrangements to meet them and explain the format of the meeting. The Chairman will also introduce her/himself.

The witness/expert may have been asked to provide the Committee with a presentation. The Members of the Committee will then ask the witness/expert questions in an orderly and respectful manner. Witnesses and experts should take their time to answer the questions clearly, if they are unsure of an answer or do not understand a question, they are encouraged to say so.

Guidance for Witnesses and Experts and Questioning Techniques can be found in Section 7 – Supporting Documents.

After the meeting

It is good practice for the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to write to the expert/witness to thank them for their attendance and to also inform them of the outcome following the Committee's investigation.

7. Budget

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been assigned a budget which will be used to further the Committee's work.

The Budget

The annual budget for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been set at £20,000 for each financial year (1 April to 31 March). Any unused funds will be returned to the Council's Reserves.

Any funds allocated to a specific project or cost, which have not been used in the financial year within which they were allocated, will be accrued to the following year.

(The budget was agreed by Council at its meeting on 30 July 2021.)

Allocations of Funds

Examples of expenditure include professional fees by a third party, venue hire costs, public engagement and promotional costs.

Any request to allocate a sum of money from the budget to cover expenditure incurred in the activities of the Committee and its Task Groups is to be set out in a report to the next available Committee. The report, to be drawn up by the Member seeking funds, is to outline what the funds would be used for, the timescale for the use of the funds, the impact of the request on the overall budget and any financial risks associated with the proposal. Any Member of the Council may be appointed to a Scrutiny Review Task Group and accordingly any Member of the Council may submit a request for the allocation of funds from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's budget.

Where possible, requests for the allocation of funds should be accompanied by evidence of the expenditure such as a quote or an invoice.

Retrospective requests for the release of funds, where expenditure has already been incurred, will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Whenever a Scrutiny Topic Form is completed, the Lead Member should consider what, if any, funds may be needed in order to support the work of the Scrutiny Task Group. The financial implications of the scrutiny review are to be reviewed concurrently with the topic proposal. If necessary, requests for additional funds will be considered by the Committee for existing projects.

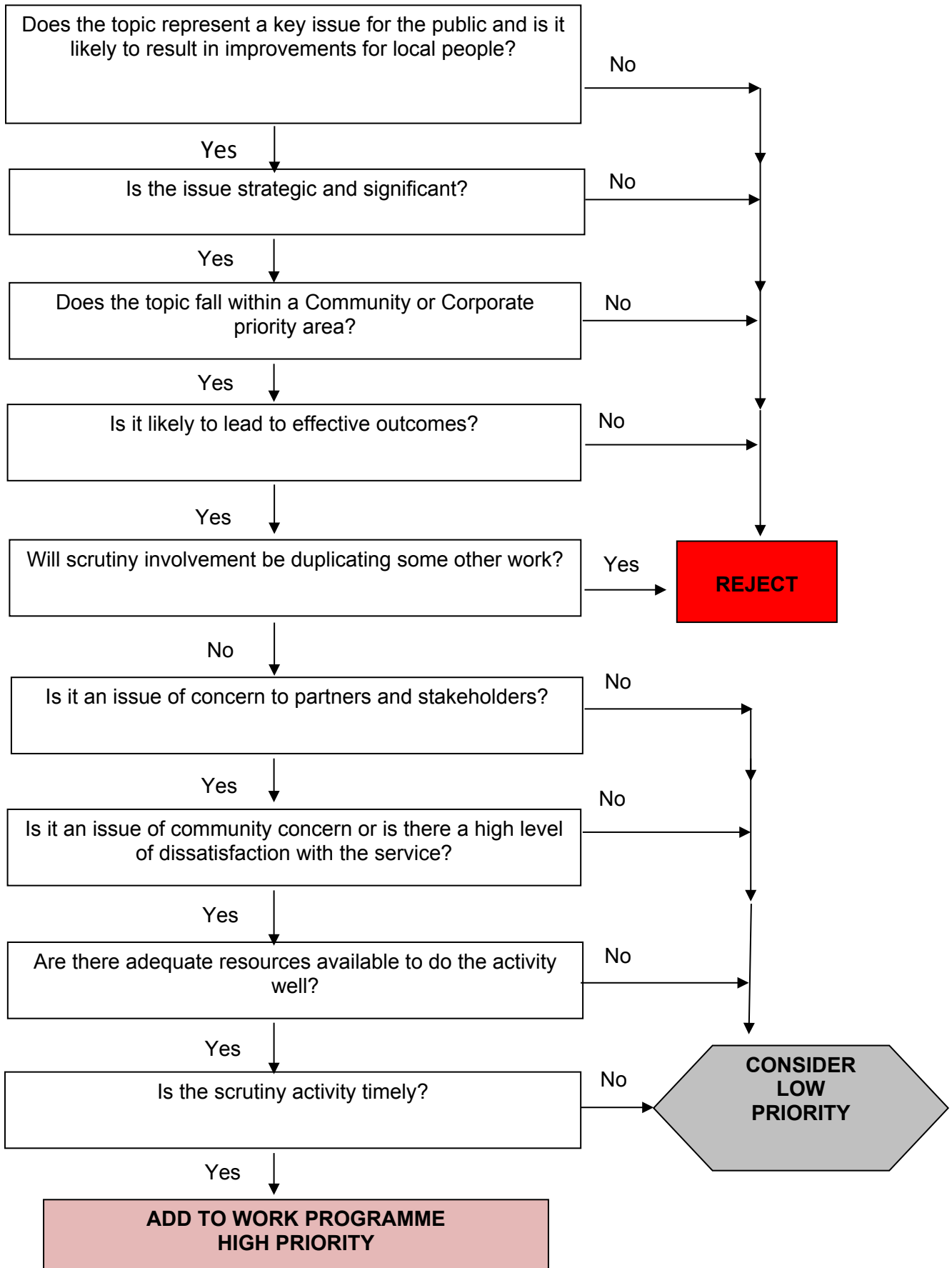
More information on the budget can be found under the Support Documents heading.

The following supporting documents are attached as appendices:

- Work Programme Development - Overview and Scrutiny Topic Selection Flowchart
- Scrutiny Review Task Group Terms of Reference
- Scrutiny Review Topic Selection Form
- CCfA Form
- Guidance for Witnesses and Experts
- Questioning Techniques
- The Budget Account Protocol

If you have any questions about Overview and Scrutiny or the application of this Toolkit, please contact the Democratic Services Team.

Work Programme Development - Overview and Scrutiny Topic Selection Flowchart



Scrutiny Review Task Group

Terms of Reference



PROPOSED NAME OF TASK GROUP	
------------------------------------	--

SECTION ONE – THE SCRUTINY REVIEW

Scrutiny Review Topic:

Topic Raised by:

Date Raised:

Purpose of Review:

What is the purpose of the Task Group? What will the Group scrutinise?

Rationale of Review:

Why does the review need to be undertaken?

SECTION TWO - THE TASK GROUP

Membership Of Task Group:

Who will make up the Group i.e. Elected Members from the different parties, Portfolio Holders, Officers, Witnesses etc.?

SECTION THREE - THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PROCESS

Methodology/Approach

How will the Task Group undertake the review? Meetings, questionnaires, engagement etc.

Sources of Information/Evidence:

Where will the Group gather information from? Council officers, Local Groups, reports etc.

Consultation Exercises:

Will you carry out any consultation exercises?

Witness/Expert Participation:

Will you involve any witnesses/ experts? Who?

Site Visits:

Will the Task Group carry out any site visits? Where? Why?

Resource Requirements:

Officer support, funding implications etc.

Risk Analysis:

Cost implications, unrealistic expectations, timescales etc.

SECTION 4 - SCRUTINY REVIEW COMPLETION

Reporting Process:

How will the Group report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee? Presentation, written report?

Monitoring of Outcomes:

Regular reports to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee? Members of the Task Group to monitor any recommendation and report back to the Committee?

Anticipated Completion Date:

Draft Report Deadline:

Meeting Frequency:

Dates of Meetings:

These will be identified by Member Services in consultation with the Task Group members.

Further Information:

Please ensure you complete this form in full with as much detail as possible

SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC SELECTION



SECTION ONE – THE SCRUTINY REVIEW

Scrutiny Review Topic:

--

Topic Raised by:

--	--

Date Raised:

--	--

SECTION TWO – SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection Criteria:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Scrutiny Review likely to result in improvements for local people. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Topic falls within a Community/Corporate priority. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Topic represents a key issue for the public. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Service proposed is performing poorly. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| High level of dissatisfaction with the service. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Rejection Criteria:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Topic already being addressed. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Matter is subjudice or prejudicial to the Council's interests. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Specific case falls within the Council's complaints procedure. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Topic involves individual disciplinary or grievance matter. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Proposed topic is unlikely to result in improvements for local people. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SECTION THREE – RATIONALE FOR SELECTION

Rationale

Why should the Review be undertaken?

How would the topic link to the Council's key aims and priorities?

What benefits could result from the Scrutiny Review?

SECTION FOUR – PRIORITISATION

Importance

- Strong evidence linking topic to the Council's key aims and priorities.
- Good evidence linking topic to the Council's key aims and priorities.
- Good evidence linking topic to the Council's key aims but not to current priorities.
- Some evidence that topic is indirectly related to the Council's key aims/priorities.
- No evidence that topic is related to the Council's key aims/priorities.

Impact

- Substantial benefits community wide or for a significant proportion or section of the Community.
- Moderate benefits for two or more client groups or substantial benefits for only one client group.
- Minor benefits for two or more client groups or moderate benefits for one client group.
- Minor benefits for only one client group.
- No benefits likely to result.

SECTION FIVE – CONCLUSIONS

Topic Selection

Select		Reject		Reserve List	
--------	--	--------	--	--------------	--

Refer Topic to:

Scrutiny Review Task Group		Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
----------------------------	--	---------------------------------	--

Other	
-------	--

Date Topic Considered:	
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Further Information:

Please ensure you complete this form in full with as much detail as possible

COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION



REQUEST FORM

This form should be used by any Councillor at Woking Borough Council who would like the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider a Call for Action in their ward.

Subject of the Councillor Call for Action:

Would you like the opportunity to speak to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee?

Yes:

No:

Have you approached the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the same issue in the past six months?

Yes:

No:

Why you think the issue should be looked at by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Please give a brief synopsis of what the main areas of concern are:

What evidence do you have in support of your Call For Action:

Which areas or Community Groups are affected by the Call for Action:

Have you exhausted all avenues to resolve the issue?

Yes:

No:

What action have you taken to resolve the issue:

Are there any deadlines associated with the Call for Action of which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to be aware:

What outcomes would you hope for in making this Call for Action:

Is the Call for Action currently the subject of legal action by any party (to your knowledge) or is being examined by a formal Complaints' process?: Yes: No:

Councillor (print):

Signature:

Ward:

Date Submitted:

For Office Use Only:

Received by:

Received on:

Guidance for Witnesses/Experts

The Scrutiny Process

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may identify topics for scrutiny and undertake a review of a service or function of the Council or an item of public concern with a view to identifying an Improvement Plan to bring about improvements.

Scrutiny provides the opportunity for elected Councillors to examine the various functions of the Council, to ask questions on how decisions have been made, to consider whether service improvements can be put in place and make recommendations to this effect. Scrutiny also provides the opportunity for Councillors to champion issues of local concern to residents and to participate in the development of new policy.

In order to ensure the Review is comprehensive and the improvements realistic, often a Task Group is established to oversee the process. As part of the evidence gathering exercise, witnesses or experts may be requested to attend a meeting of the Committee or Task Group to provide information for the Review.

The Committee

The Committee will hold formal meetings, the time and venue for these meetings will be set the previous year. These will usually take place in the evening at 7pm in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices.

The Committee is made up of 13 Councillors, although anyone can attend this meeting including other Councillors, Officers and members of the public.

The Task Group

The Task Group will hold informal meetings at times and venues suitable for those attending and the subject of the Review. For example, a Task Group reviewing the H G Wells Conference and Events Centre may therefore choose to hold its meetings at the H G Wells Centre rather than the Civic Offices.

The Task Group itself will comprise of between two and six Councillors together with supporting officers. An external representative may also sit on the Task Group. Notes of the meeting will be taken and a copy provided at a later date.

Attending the Meeting

You will be given advance notice of the date of the meeting and will be sent a copy of the agenda, together with any background and supporting documents, at least one week before the meeting. An indication of the type of questions likely to be put to you can also be sent to allow you to prepare your responses. Should you be unable to attend a meeting, the Committee/Task Group may request a written response from you on certain points. An indication of the timeframe for such responses will be given.

Upon arrival at the venue for the meeting, you will normally be met by an Officer or member of the Committee/Task Group. He or she will make contact with you prior to the meeting to confirm the arrangements and where possible give you an indication of when your evidence is likely to be heard and explain the format for the meeting. If you have any particular anxieties or questions then you should not hesitate to raise these. Those present at the

meeting, including the Chairman, will introduce themselves at the start of the meeting. All those present will have copies of the papers circulated in advance of the meeting.

Giving Evidence

Members of the Committee/Task Group will ask you questions in an orderly and respectful manner as directed by the Chairman of the meeting.

Remember:

- Take your time and speak slowly and clearly.
- Ask for questions to be repeated if you do not understand or cannot hear.
- If you are not sure of the answer then say so.
- You may ask questions of the Task Group for clarification or background information.

Questioning Techniques

Witnesses are often the most valuable sources of information that Councillors rely upon, when undertaking a review. Good questioning will ensure that Councillors make the best use of witnesses, whose time may be limited.

Witnesses attend reviews to impart their knowledge in their area of expertise. It is then for Councillors to debate the evidence gathered from all sources in formulating a view. Witness would not be expected to enter into arguments about the merits of what they have said.

Below is a selection of examples of questioning techniques:

Open and Closed Questions

A closed question usually receives a single word or very short, factual answer. For example: "Are you thirsty?" The answer is "Yes" or "No", "Where do you live?" The answer is generally the name of your town or your address.

Open questions elicit longer answers. They usually begin with what, why, how. An open question asks the respondent for his or her knowledge, opinion or feelings.

"Tell me" and "describe" can also be used in the same way as open questions. Here are some examples:

- What happened at the meeting?
- Why did he react that way?
- Describe the circumstances in more detail.

Open questions are good for:

- Developing an open conversation: "What did you get up to on holiday?"
- Finding out more detail: "What else do we need to do to make this a success?"
- Finding out the other person's opinion or issues: "What do you think about those changes?"

Closed questions are good for:

- Testing your understanding, or the other person's: "So, if I get this qualification, I will get a raise?"
- Concluding a discussion or making a decision: "Now we know the facts, are we all agreed this is the right course of action?"
- A misplaced closed question, on the other hand, can kill the conversation and lead to awkward silences, so are best avoided when a conversation is in full flow.

Double-Headed or Multiple Questions

These are questions which ask more than one question at a time and should be avoided as they can lead to confusion. Whilst both elements of the question may be valid, it would be more effective to ask each one separately.

Funnel Questions

This technique involves starting with general questions, and then homing in on a point in each answer, and asking more and more detail at each level. It is often used by detectives taking a statement from a witness:

- *“How many people were involved in the fight?”*
- *“About ten.”*
- *“Were they children or adults?”*
- *“Mostly children.”*
- *“What sort of ages were they?”*
- *“About 14 or 15.”*
- *“Were any of them wearing anything distinctive?”*
- *“Yes, several of them had red baseball caps on.”*
- *“Can you remember if there was a logo on any of the caps?”*
- *“Now you come to mention it, yes, I remember seeing a big letter N”*

Using this technique, the detective has helped the witness re-live the scene and gradually focus on a useful detail. It is unlikely he would have got this information if he is simply asked an open question such as “Are there any details you can give me about what you saw?”

Tip: *When using funnel questioning, start with closed questions. As you progress through the funnel, start using more open questions.*

Funnel questions are good for:

- Finding out more detail about a specific point: “Tell me more about Option 2.”
- Gaining the interest or increasing the confidence of the person you’re speaking with: “Have you used the IT Helpdesk?” “Did they solve your problem?” “What was the attitude of the person who took your call?”

Probing Questions

Asking probing questions is another strategy for finding out more detail. Sometimes it is as simple as asking your respondent for an example, to help you understand a statement they have made. At other times, you need additional information for clarification, “When do you need this report by, and do you want to see a draft before I give you my final version?”, or to investigate whether there is proof for what has been said, “How do you know that the new database can’t be used by the sales force?”

An effective way of probing is to use the “5 whys” method, which can help you quickly get to the root of a problem.

Tip: Use questions that include the word “exactly” to probe further: “What exactly do you mean by fast-track?”, “Who, exactly, wanted this report?”

Probing questions are good for:

- Gaining clarification to ensure you have the whole story and that you understand it thoroughly; and
- Drawing information out of people who are trying to avoid telling you something

Leading Questions

Leading questions try to lead the respondent to your way of thinking. They can do this in several ways:

- With an assumption: “How late do you think that the project will deliver?” This assumes that the project will certainly not be completed on time.
- By adding a personal appeal to agree at the end: “Lori’s very efficient, don’t you think?” or “Option 2 is better, isn’t it?”
- Phrasing the question so that the “easiest” response is “yes” (our natural tendency to prefer to say “yes” than “no” plays an important part in the phrasing of referendum questions): “Shall we all approve Option 2?” is more likely to get a positive response than “Do you want to approve option 2 or not?” A good way of doing this is to make it personal. For example, “Would you like me to go ahead with Option 2?” rather than “Shall I choose Option 2?”
- Giving people a choice between two options, both of which you would be happy with, rather than the choice of one option or not doing anything at all. Strictly speaking, the choice of “neither” is still available when you ask “Which would you prefer of A or B”, but most people will be caught up in deciding between your two preferences. Note that leading questions tend to be closed.

Leading questions are good for:

- Getting the answer you want but leaving the other person feeling that they have had a choice
- Closing a sale: “If that answers all of your questions, shall we agree a price?”

Tip: Use leading questions with care. If you use them in a self-serving way or one that harms the interests of the other person, then they can, quite rightly, be seen as manipulative and dishonest.

Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions aren’t really questions at all, in that they don’t expect an answer. They are really just statements phrased in question form: “Isn’t John’s design work so creative?”

People use rhetorical questions because they are engaging for the listener - as they are drawn into agreeing (“Yes it is and I like working with such a creative colleague”) - rather than feeling that they are being “told” something like “John is a very creative designer”. (To which they may answer “So what?”)

Tip: *Rhetorical questions are even more powerful if you use a string of them. “Isn’t that a great display? Don’t you love the way the text picks up the colours in the photographs? Doesn’t it use space really well? Wouldn’t you love to have a display like that for our products?”*

Rhetorical questions are good for engaging the listener.

Using Questioning Techniques

You have probably used all of these questioning techniques before in your everyday life, at work and at home. By consciously applying the appropriate kind of questioning, you can gain the information, response or outcome that you want even more effectively.

Questions are a powerful way of:

- Learning: Ask open and closed questions, and use probing questioning.
- Relationship building: People generally respond positively if you ask about what they do or enquire about their opinions. If you do this in an affirmative way “Tell me what you like best about working here”, you will help to build and maintain an open dialogue.
- Managing and coaching: Here, rhetorical and leading questions are useful too. They can help get people to reflect and to commit to courses of action that you’ve suggested: “Wouldn’t it be great to gain some further qualifications?”
- Avoiding misunderstandings: Use probing questions to seek clarification, particularly when the consequences are significant. And to make sure you avoid jumping to conclusions, the “Ladder of Inference” tool can help too.
- Diffusing a heated situation: You can calm an angry customer or colleague by using funnel questions to get them to go into more detail about their grievance. This will not only distract them from their emotions, but will often help you to identify a small practical thing that you can do, which is often enough to make them feel that they have “won” something, and no longer need to be angry.
- Persuading people: No one likes to be lectured, but asking a series of open questions will help others to embrace the reasons behind your point of view. “What do you think about bringing the sales force in for half a day to have their laptops upgraded?”

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE'S BUDGET ACCOUNT PROTOCOL

Management arrangements for the release of, reporting on, and audit of, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's budget.

The Budget

The annual budget for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been set at £20,000 for each financial year (1 April to 31 March). Any unused funds will be returned to the Council's Reserves.

Any funds allocated to a specific project or cost, which have not been used in the financial year within which they were allocated, will be accrued to the following year.

(The budget was agreed by Council at its meeting on 30 July 2021.)

Allocation of Funds

Examples of expenditure include professional fees by a third party, venue hire costs, public engagement and promotional costs.

Any request to allocate a sum of money from the budget to cover expenditure incurred in the activities of the Committee and its Task Groups is to be set out in a report to the next available Committee. The report, to be drawn up by the Member seeking funds, is to outline what the funds would be used for, the timescale for the use of the funds, the impact of the request on the overall budget and any financial risks associated with the proposal. Any Member of the Council may be appointed to a Scrutiny Review Task Group and accordingly any Member of the Council may submit a request for the allocation of funds from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's budget.

Where possible, requests for the allocation of funds should be accompanied by evidence of the expenditure wherever possible such as a quote or an invoice.

Retrospective requests for the release of funds, where expenditure has already been incurred, will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Whenever a Scrutiny Topic Form is completed, the Lead Member should consider what, if any, funds may be needed in order to support the work of the Scrutiny Task Group. The financial implications of the scrutiny review are to be reviewed concurrently with the topic proposal. If necessary, requests for additional funds will be considered by the Committee for existing projects.

Release of Payments

The release of funds to third parties or dealt with by internal transfer, where previously approved by the Committee, is to be requested by the Chairman of the Committee, the Chairman of the relevant Task Group or, in their absence, the respective Vice-Chairman. The request should be made to the Lead Officer for Overview and Scrutiny (Giorgio Framallicco) and/or the Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer (Aadam Ahmed) who will arrange for the payment to be made through the Finance Team.

Any requests for the release of funds should be accompanied with evidence of expenditure such as receipts or invoices. Any invoices should be addressed to Woking Borough Council and should be proper tax invoices.

All invoices should be sent to the Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer (Aadam Ahmed, aadam.ahmed@woking.gov.uk) for checking against Committee's approved expenditure for the year, before they are passed electronically to Finance via E-Invoice@woking.gov.uk.

The Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer will preauthorise the invoice and send it to the Head of Democratic Services for authorisation on Integra, at which point payment will be made in the Council's payment run prior to the due date of the invoice.

Oversight of Expenditure

A record of all expenditure incurred will be kept by the Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer and will be available for inspection on request.

An outline of the year's expenditure and the status of the annual budget will be included in the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (published in March), setting out the projects on which funds were expended and any accruals for the following financial year. A full record of all expenditure will be held by the Finance Team for audit purposes.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2021

TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW 2021/22

Executive Summary

To comply with the 2009 CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants) Code of Practice on Treasury Management, the Council has agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies. In addition, the publication of comprehensive Treasury Management information in the Green Book enables scrutiny to be undertaken throughout the year.

This report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee provides an overview of Treasury Management for the first six months of the year against the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators for 2021/22.

The Strategy has been complied with, and there are no matters to report to the Committee.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE that the report be received and compliance with the Council's approved strategy be noted.

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

Background Papers:	None.
Reporting Person:	Leigh Clarke, Chief Finance Officer Email: leigh.clarke@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3277
Contact Person:	Neil Haskell Email: neil.haskell@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3246 Mike Stevens Email: mike.stevens@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3622
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Email:
Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Email:
Date Published:	12 November 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The 2009 CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants) Code of Practice on Treasury Management introduced the requirement for formal scrutiny of the Treasury Management function. In 2010/11, Council agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies. This report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee provides an overview of Treasury Management for the first six months of the year against the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators for 2021/22.
- 1.2 The monthly Green Book reports on total interest receipts and payments and also contains a comprehensive section on Treasury Management, detailing external commitments (borrowing, deposits and investments in and other advances to group companies, joint ventures and external organisations), details of long term loans, deals outstanding at the month end and any new deals taken in the month. The level of detail contained in these reports, and the frequency with which the information is published, goes beyond that suggested in the guidance issued by CIPFA.
- 1.3 Updated versions of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (Prudential Code) and Treasury Management in the Public Service Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes (Treasury Management Code) were issued in December 2017. Both of these codes are effective for the 2021/22 financial year.
- 1.4 There has been no change in the definition of Treasury Management in the Treasury Management Code, but the term “investments” has been specifically qualified to include non-financial assets which are held primarily for financial returns. The Code draws a clear separation between treasury and non-treasury investments and the role of the treasury management team. It is recognised that the treasury management team is unlikely to have specialist skills in non-treasury investments. The Treasury Management Strategy will therefore not include any level of detail on non-treasury investments and therefore reporting will focus solely on treasury (financial) investments.
- 1.5 There is overlap between the new Capital and Investment Strategies, and the Council’s Treasury Management strategy. Therefore the three strategies are presented together, as part of the budget setting papers in February, enabling the links to be highlighted whilst minimising duplication. A suite of appendices are included which can be referred to from any of the core strategies.

Capital Strategy

- 1.6 The Capital Strategy has a wide scope covering the Council’s overall approach to capital investment. It demonstrates how the Council takes capital expenditure and investment decisions in line with service objectives and properly takes account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability.
- 1.7 The purpose of the capital strategy is to give a clear and concise view of how the Council determines its priorities for capital investment, decides how much it can afford to borrow and sets its risk appetite. It includes references to elements of the Investment Strategy, Treasury Management Strategy and the Council’s Investment Programme.
- 1.8 The Capital Strategy sets out the Council’s long term approach in line with the long term nature of capital and investment decisions. There is a direct link to the Council’s Local Plan, place shaping activities and other long term strategies.
- 1.9 Group activities and joint ventures are also included in the Capital Strategy, including the processes for ensuring effective due diligence and defining the Authority’s risk appetite.

Treasury Management Mid-year Review 2020/21

1.10 The guidance requires that proportionality, in respect of overall resources, is also considered.

Investment Strategy

1.11 The Investment Strategy provides a better explanation of investment activities, explaining ‘why’ as well as ‘what’ investments are made. A range of indicators and disclosures are recommended in the guidance.

1.12 Investments held for treasury management purposes are covered by the Treasury Management Strategy (see below), with the focus of the Investment Strategy being other investments such as loans, shares and property.

1.13 Whilst the Council has a significant and increasing property portfolio, these assets are not held for investment purposes. Each acquisition has a strategic purpose with a direct link to Council objectives or services. Shares and loans are also used to support the Council’s objectives. Property, loans and shares are treated as capital expenditure and financed as with other Investment Programme projects. However these items are disclosed as assets held as investments on the Council’s balance sheet and so the guidance has been applied.

2.0 Treasury Management Prudential Indicators

2.1 On 4 February 2021 the Council approved Prudential Indicators for the period 2020/21 to 2024/25 as part of the annual budget process. Performance as at 30th September 2021 against the approved limits is shown below.

	2021/22	2021/22
TREASURY MANAGEMENT PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS	£'000	£'000
	Approved limit	Actual at 30/9/21
Authorised limit for external borrowing -		
Borrowing	£2,191,973	£1,870,335
Other long term liabilities	£23,482	£25,081*
Total authorised limit for external borrowing	£2,215,455	£1,895,416
Operational boundary for external borrowing -		
Borrowing	£2,181,973	£1,870,335
Other long term liabilities	£23,482	£25,081*
Total operational boundary for external borrowing	£2,205,455	£1,895,416
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%
Upper limit for variable rate exposure	70%	0%
Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days (per maturity date)	£3,000	£0

2.2 *Estimate based on September 2021 projections. The PFI Finance Lease Liability will reduce during 2021/22 and the budget reflects the end of year position

3.0 Current Treasury Position

3.1 The Council’s treasury position at 30th September 2021 comprised:

Treasury Management Mid-year Review 2020/21

	Principal	Ave Rate
<u>Borrowing</u>	£000	%
Long term borrowing	1,773,335	2.66%
Short term borrowing	97,000	0.25%
Total Borrowing	1,870,335	
<u>Deposits</u>		
External Investments		
- Short term on advice of TUK	0	0.00%
- Short term WBC Treasury	75,000	0.003%
- on call with Lloyds TSB	30,914	0.00%
Total External Deposits	105,914	
Long Term Investments in Group Companies/ Joint Ventures/External Organisations	1,103,781	2.97%

4.0 Borrowing Requirement

- 4.1 The borrowing requirement set out in the 2021/22 strategy was £317m.
- 4.2 The Covid pandemic has had a considerable impact on local government finances. Whilst the economy has reopened, the financial impact on the Council will take much longer to recover. The Council was particularly affected by reductions in parking income and commercial rents. It is still too early to be able to confidently forecast how this income will return. In preparing the draft Investment Programme for 2021/22 a number of projects were temporarily suspended. These were projects which had not yet been committed and would have revenue consequences through use of the Council's revenue reserves or financing costs of borrowing.
- 4.3 These projects continue to be suspended in the current draft Investment Programme going to the November Executive. A 3 year government settlement is expected in December and work continues to establish a balanced medium term financial position. Ahead of finalising the Investment Programme, suspended projects will be reviewed to establish if any can be re-instated. The approved limits in section 2 do not include these suspended projects.
- 4.4 Increases in gas and electricity prices are likely to lead to faster and higher inflation expectations and underlying wage growth, which would in turn increase the risk that price pressures would prove more persistent next year than previously expected. Recent Monetary Policy Committee meetings have indicated that its primary concern is that underlying price pressures in the economy are likely to get embedded over the next year and elevate future inflation to stay significantly above its 2% target and for longer. In order to mitigate this it is likely that the Bank of England will raise the base rate which could in turn increase PWLB rates.
- 4.5 The Council's treasury advisors (Link Group) are forecasting 50 year PWLB rates to rise from 1.83% (as at the 9th November) to 2.20% on 31st March 2022 and 2.40% on 31st March 2023. Link also provide forecasts by Capital Economics who are forecasting rates to increase to 2.60% by March 2023.
- 4.6 As at the 1st April 2021 the Council held £187,000,000 in temporary borrowing (less than 1 year). While short-term borrowing offers lower rates, the Council has long term borrowing commitments for projects such as the Victoria Square Development and the Sheerwater Regeneration. It is therefore important that long term rates are secured relating to these projects. The mix of long and short term borrowing is continually being reviewed to ensure an appropriate balance is maintained. With interest rates forecast to increase, 50 year PWLB borrowing has been taken in the first 6 months of the 2021/22.

Treasury Management Mid-year Review 2020/21

4.7 The following fixed rate loans have been taken from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) during the first six months of 2021/22:-

Loan number	Start date	Principal	Interest Rate	Type of Loan	Borrowing Period
337369	21/04/2021	£10,000,000	2.11	Annuity	50 years
353644	24/05/2021	£20,000,000	2.23	Annuity	50 years
362679	14/06/2021	£25,000,000	2.09	Annuity	50 years
363703	16/06/2021	£10,000,000	2.07	Annuity	50 years
365996	23/06/2021	£20,000,000	2.02	Annuity	50 years
368894	01/07/2021	£20,000,000	2.05	Annuity	50 years
370826	06/07/2021	£20,000,000	2.04	Annuity	50 years
372808	09/07/2021	£20,000,000	1.98	Annuity	50 years
374078	13/07/2021	£20,000,000	1.98	Annuity	50 years
376376	19/07/2021	£20,000,000	1.90	Annuity	50 years
378261	22/07/2021	£20,000,000	1.82	Annuity	50 years
380895	28/07/2021	£30,000,000	1.80	Annuity	50 years
389042	12/08/2021	£30,000,000	1.75	Annuity	50 years
410896	30/09/2021	£20,000,000	1.94	Annuity	50 years

4.8 Full details of the Council's loans are reported monthly in the Green Book.

5.0 Debt Rescheduling

5.1 No debt rescheduling has taken place to date in the 2021/22 financial year and therefore the Treasury Management Panel has not met.

6.0 Investment Strategy

6.1 The Council's investment priorities are the security of its capital, the liquidity of its investments and finally the return on the investment. The balances held in the last year have been minimised to assist in delaying the need to borrow, and so it has not been necessary to use the range of investments available in the strategy.

6.2 The investments used to manage cash flow to date in 2021/22, and the limits applied, are as indicated below.

- Money market funds – four funds, two with a limit of £50m per fund, one with a limit of £70m, and one with a limit of £30m.
- Deposits with other local authorities – up to £4m per authority.
- Deposits with Lloyds Bank – no limit as this is the Council's banker.

6.3 Whilst deposits with other local authorities and Building Societies are permitted by the Strategy, it has not been necessary to make such investments or place funds on the advice of Tradition UK (TUK) during the year to date.

Creditworthiness Policy

6.4 The Council uses Fitch ratings to derive its investment criteria for investments other than with other local authorities and Building Societies. Where a counterparty does not have a Fitch rating, the equivalent Moodys rating will be used.

- 6.5 The Council takes account of Link Asset Services' creditworthiness service, and receives notification of changes to ratings as well as a comprehensive weekly list. This service uses credit ratings from all three rating agencies (Fitch, Moodys and Standard and Poors), but also takes account of credit watches, credit outlooks and other information. These factors are combined to indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties and provide a recommended duration for investments.

Country Limits

- 6.6 Under the 2009 Code of Practice, the Council should determine the minimum credit limit on a country basis as well as for institutions. The Treasury Management Strategy sets out that the Council will only use approved counterparties from countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA- from Fitch Ratings (or equivalent agencies if Fitch does not provide). It should be noted that the UK is excluded from the minimum country limit as per the Executive decision on 30th June 2016; without this decision, the Council would have been unable to place investments in the UK.
- 6.7 Information on changes to country ratings is received as part of the Link Asset Services creditworthiness service, and records are updated by Treasury Management staff.
- 6.8 In the six months to 30th September, no deposits were placed outside of the UK.

7.0 Use of External Service Providers

- 7.1 The Council uses Link Group as its external treasury management advisors.

8.0 Corporate Strategy

9.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 9.1 The financial implications are implicit in the body of this report.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 9.2 The CIPFA code requires members and staff involved in treasury management to receive training and the Council's training requirements will be reviewed in order to provide appropriate training.
- 9.3 The contract with Link Asset Services provides for staff attendance at various conferences and seminars as well as providing a helpline facility, and Treasury Management staff have attended seminars and courses run by Link Asset Services during the year.

Legal

- 9.4 This report has been reviewed by Legal Services who have not raised any issues.

10.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 10.1 No general public consultations have been undertaken in connection with this report.

REPORT ENDS

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22ND NOVEMBER 2021

FINANCIAL REVIEW MONTHLY UPDATE

Executive Summary

The Council has commissioned a full, independent and comprehensive review of all the assets and liabilities of the Council and all companies of which it has an interest as a component part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and integrated service and financial planning.

This report provides an update as it progresses towards its completion for the end of December 2021 following the appointment of EY to complete the work.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the progress report be noted.

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

Background Papers:	None.
Reporting Person:	Councillor James Sanderson Email: cllrjames.sanderson@woking.gov.uk
Contact Person:	Leigh Clarke, Director of Finance Email: leigh.clarke@woking.gov.uk ,
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Ayesha Azad Email: cllraysheha.azad@woking.gov.uk
Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Ann-Marie Barker Email: cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	12th November 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting on 29 July 2021 a motion moved by Councillor Barker and seconded by Councillor Aziz was debated and following a discussion Councillor Azad moved and Councillor Ashall seconded the following amendment which was approved:

“This council calls for a full, independent and comprehensive review of all the assets and liabilities of Woking Borough Council; and all companies in which it has an interest whether by means of shareholding (however large or small) or any other means of influencing the activities of said company. The report is to contain a comprehensive Statement identifying, amongst other things:

- An independent reviewer’s assessment of the current net realisable value of each of the assets
- Full details of all borrowings including their terms and conditions
- Full details of outstanding contractual obligations involving future income to be received and future expenditure to be incurred
- Details of any fixed or floating charges on any assets
- Full details of any grants, loans or other contracts which contain performance conditions which, if not met, would incur financial penalties for the Council or any of its companies. Council officers should work with the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to appoint an appropriate independent reviewer

The reviewer must:

- Be allowed full and unfettered access to all the documents and information required
- Provide monthly progress reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Complete the review and the full report by the end of December 2021.”

- 1.2 The Council is an entrepreneurial and commercially orientated Council that has made significant commitment and investment into assets and activity within the borough in order to support:

- regeneration
- the supply of quality and affordable homes
- economic development and
- Council financial independency and resilience.

- 1.3 The Council prides itself on providing a comprehensive range of services for the benefit of the communities of Woking that are enabled and enhanced by its entrepreneurial and commercially orientated approach.

- 1.4 Aligned with our culture of adopting risk management as an integral component of good management and corporate governance and continually seeking new and improved ways of working and establishing sustainable and resilient approaches, the commissioned review will give the Council additional insight to:

- The extent that our interest in Companies aligns to supporting the priorities of the Council

- Opportunities and exposures arising from our long term assets and interests in Companies
 - Key strategic risks facing the Council
 - Market economy context and financing strategies related to key risks and opportunities
 - Short, medium and long term financial considerations
 - A comprehensive statement covering net realisable value of assets, borrowing, contractual obligations, fixed and floating charges, grants, loans or other contracts containing performance conditions
- 1.5 The commencement of the work began week commencing 25th October following agreement of contract terms with EY who have been commissioned to undertake the work following a procurement process.
- 1.6 An officer project team with EY has been established and is scheduled to meet weekly. The first meeting of the project team was on Thursday 4th November 2021. A meeting between the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the lead EY Partner in their Public Sector Advisory practice Darra Singh OBE has taken place.
- 1.7 The focus of the first meeting was agreement of the outline project plan and the schedule of data requests. The schedule of data requests is being responded to on a prioritised basis as agreed with EY.
- 1.8 Attached at Appendix 1 is the progress report considered by the project team
- 1.9 The review will produce a final report by the end of December 2021 which will be incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Strategy and implications reported in the Budget report to Executive on 3rd February 2022. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the report at its next meeting on 24th January 2022. Council will be required to approve the budget at their meeting on 10th February 2022.

2.0 Corporate Strategy

- 2.1 The financial review supports the Council's Corporate plan priority to ensure an innovative, proactive and effective Council by securing the effective use of resources.

3.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 3.1 The cost of the financial review is being funded from within the Fit For the Future change programme budget approval. The review has been commissioned via a procurement exercise in order to ensure a high quality report and value for money.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 3.2 There are no equalities or human resource implications arising from this report.

Legal

- 3.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

4.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 4.1 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee met with the Local Government lead Partner in Ernst Young (EY) on commencing the review.

- 4.2 A series of community roadshow events are being established through November 2021, alongside an engagement questionnaire to get community feedback into the priorities for the Council and Communities. This engagement is part of the integrated service and financial planning in order to reflect this engagement in the medium term financial strategy and new Corporate Plan.

REPORT ENDS

Progress Report for Financial
Review and Insight

Woking Borough Council

4th November 2021

Page 129



Building a better
working world



Governance Update – Project Plan

Key:

	Current Week
	Completed
	To Be Completed

Phase/Activity – Financial Review	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Phase 1: Initial Review and Findings								
1a. Project set-up								
1b. Initial document review								
1c. Conduct initial analysis								
1d. Summarise initial findings and next steps								
Phase 2: Insight Development and Report Drafting								
2a. Host playback sessions								
2b. Conduct further detailed analysis								
2c. Identify key risks and emerging themes								
2d. Finalise first draft of report								
Phase 3: Engage and Report								
3a. Share draft with key stakeholders								
3b. Refinement and finalisation								
3c. Share deliverable								

Page 30

Overview of weekly progress

- Project set-up complete and data requests sent out
- ▶ Initial review of Draft Annual Financial Report and Statement of Accounts commenced
- ▶ Initial financial ratio analysis commenced
- ▶ Initial review of Medium-Term Financial Strategy commenced
- ▶ Initial socio-economic analysis conducted

Key next steps

- ▶ Finalise analysis of the remainder of the key financial documents
- ▶ Conduct cost benchmarking on key council services
- ▶ Conduct analysis on the Council's debt and investment position
- ▶ Conduct analysis on Council's contract and grant obligations
- ▶ Conduct analysis on Council asset register
- ▶ Develop initial findings and next steps

Risk Assessment

- ▶ No delivery risks identified at this stage.



Financial Review Data Requests

EY Requirements			
Query Number	Date	Document	Purpose
1	25.10.2021	2019-20 & 2020-21 Draft Statement of Accounts	<i>To review the Council's underlying financial position and to develop initial lines of enquiry for further analysis</i>
2	25.10.2021	Latest Medium Term Financial Strategy & Associated Working Papers	<i>To review the Council's budgeted financial position and to help develop initial lines of enquiry for further analysis</i>
3	25.10.2021	Review of Council Green Book	<i>To review key investments that the Council has undertaken.</i>
4	25.10.2021	Latest Budget Monitoring Reports - Revenue and Capital	<i>To help identify and key challenges or trends emerging within the Council's current financial position and to develop initial lines of enquiry for further analysis.</i>
5	25.10.2021	Latest Budget Outturn Reports - Revenue and Capital	<i>To help identify and key challenges or trends emerging within the Council's current financial position and to develop initial lines of enquiry for further analysis.</i>
6	25.10.2021	All key documents related to the Council's subsidiary companies	<i>To help develop an understanding of relationship with key subsidiary companies and overarching corporate structure.</i>
7	25.10.2021	Council Asset Register	<i>To develop an understanding of Council's asset base and to develop initial lines of enquiry for further analysis.</i>
8	25.10.2021	Any further breakdown and documentation related to the Council's Debt Position	<i>To conduct initial analysis on the Council's debt portfolio.</i>
9	25.10.2021	Any further breakdown and documentation related to the Council's Investment Position	<i>To conduct initial analysis on the Council's Investment portfolio.</i>
10	25.10.2021	Any already collated documentation focussed on key contracts that the Council holds	<i>To conduct initial analysis on the Council's Category Management Strategy.</i>
11	25.10.2021	Council's Asset Management Strategy	<i>To review the Council's asset management strategy.</i>
12	25.10.21	List and detail of Councils contractual obligations and obligations related to any grants	<i>To help establish future obligations of the Council.</i>

Page 131

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 22 NOVEMBER 2021

HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND SCRUTINY REVIEW

Executive Summary

At their meeting of the 13 September 2021, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approved a review of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) scheme. It was proposed that the review would initially be undertaken by Internal Audit subject to the agreement of the Standards and Audit Committee. The review has been completed and a number of recommendations have been made all of which are accepted and will be actioned as set out in the report and appendices.

The Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the audit report and subsequently propose how a review would help to develop a vision for the project and how this connects with related Council strategy and other change activity.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That:

- (i) the recommendation of the audit report and the management response be noted;
- (ii) the audit and management response be reported to the next HIF Oversight Panel (1 December 2021); and
- (iii) the Members of the Committee indicate the need for a further scrutiny of the project and, if so, the activity they wish to focus on and the outcomes they are looking to achieve.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendations set out above
--

Background Papers:	None.
Reporting Person:	Giorgio Framalico, Director of Planning Email: Giorgio.framalico@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3440
Contact Person:	Giorgio Framalico, Director of Planning Email: Giorgio.framalico@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3440
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Azad Email: cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk
Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Barker Email: Cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	12 November 2021

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At their meeting in September 2021 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a proposal for the establishment of a scrutiny review of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) scheme. The topic for Scrutiny review is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 In introducing the review paper to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Chairman highlighted the need to avoid any overlap with the existing HIF Oversight Panel and that the focus of the proposed O&S review was intended to provide effective constructive critical friend challenge, focussing on:
- the decisions the project was planning to make;
 - how these were planned to be implemented;
 - amplifying the voices and concerns of communities;
 - improving outcomes; and,
 - contributing to the development of a vision for the project and how this connected with related Council strategy and other change activity.
- 1.3 At the meeting and as set out in the Scrutiny review form it was agreed that the review be initially undertaken by Internal Audit with a view to:
- provide assurance that all the risks in respect of the scheme had been identified and that there was sufficient mitigation in place to manage the risks;
 - provide assurance that due processes in decision making and project management had been applied and assess how the demands and potential conflicts of multiple major projects occurring concurrently were managed; and
 - identify the wider lessons from a project of this scale with very significant external dependencies.
- 1.4 In receipt of the audit, the Members of the Committee would subsequently propose how they would help to develop a vision for the project, setting out how it connected with related Council strategies and other change activities.

2.0 The Audit

- 2.1 The completed audit with management responses is appended as Appendix 2. The audit noted that while elements of the control framework were operating effectively, including regular governance meetings, and meetings with external stakeholders to manage external dependencies as well as risk registers being in place, it identified several areas for improvement:
- Some key risks not being included in the Council's project risk register, and the risk descriptions and mitigating actions on the register being high level. Risks are also not allocated to individual risk owners.
 - The lack of a Terms of Reference for the Project Board.
 - The project spend against the project budget is not being reported to the Oversight Panel in the Project Dashboard.
 - Formal contracts with WH Stephens Limited and WSP UK Limited not being finalised.
 - The project not having a RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed) chart, and decisions log.

- The project not having a formal change request and approval process, and change log.

2.2 The audit outcomes are welcome and support the current arrangements in place to ensure the effective management of the project. The management response set out in the Appendix responds positively to the recommendations and sets a clear timeframe for the actions. This is reflected in the recommendation above which also proposes that the audit outcomes be shared with the HIF Oversight Panel.

3.0 Next Stage

3.1 Going forward the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will now need to agree if further scrutiny is required and, if so, how it would help to develop a vision for the project and how this connects with related Council strategy and other change activity.

3.2 A subsequent review could also consider if further public consultation and involvement is required in order to address any concerns raised noting the commitment to consult on the housing HIF numbers as part of the Woking Town Centre Masterplan and noting the recent motion at Council which has called for:

- The HIF scheme housing to be put to public consultation with full honest disclosures.
- The Council cease to make any further promises on HIF to any bodies until such consultation is complete.
- The Council re assess the scheme's housing targets under new market conditions, (especially post COVID) public opinion and if needed is open to renegotiations with central government.

3.3 At the meeting in September the Chairman stressed that, whilst the review would be forward looking, it would consider how the scheme had developed and how the decisions of the Council had been reached. On this basis attached as Appendix 3 is a time line setting out the key report dates and decisions.

3.4 In discussing the remit of the review at previous meetings of the Committee, officer and member concern was expressed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review would revisit and review the decisions of the Members at the time, rather than being a forward looking review. The Chairman advised that an element of 'looking back' would be needed and that a timeline would be helpful. The proposals had been drafted in such a way that the work would support that of the HIF Oversight Panel, rather than duplicate efforts. In the minute of the meeting it states that, 'whilst the review would not look at how decisions had been made and why, there would be an element of background information to set the scene for the review'.

3.5 Since reporting to the September 2021 Overview and Scrutiny meeting a further report on HIF was considered at the Executive meeting in October. The report updated on the work to date in relation to the Housing Infrastructure Fund project and also identified a number of key issues and actions in relation to the delivery of the project namely:

- The need to submit and have determined two planning applications for a temporary and permanent access to the aggregates site from York Road.
- Further work in relation to the project dependencies of the land at the junction of Goldsworth Road and Church Street West with Victoria Way to secure sufficient land for the proposed highway widening of Victoria Way and sufficient land for the construction and positioning of the new bridge platform.

Housing Infrastructure Fund Scrutiny Review

- The commencement of engagement with the residents' panel on the Woking Town Centre Masterplan and the commitment from the Executive to consult on the housing numbers proposed by Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) as part of the masterplan process.
- 3.6 The Executive agreed that, taking the key issues into account and the implications of the above work streams to the project, works proposed to begin this winter in relation to the relocation of utilities under the bridge be rescheduled meaning a physical start (other than investigative surveys) to the project later in 2022/23.
- 3.7 Taking into account:
- The agreed topic for Scrutiny review (Appendix 1);
 - The outcomes of the audit and the management response (Appendix 2);
 - The HIF chronology (Appendix 3);
 - The role and function of the HIF Oversight Panel; and,
 - The decision of the Executive in October 2021

the Members of the Committee are asked to consider whether there is a need for further scrutiny and, if so, what matters they wish a future Overview and Scrutiny review to consider and the outcomes it is looking to achieve.

4.0 Corporate Strategy

- 4.1 The proposals set out in this paper support the Council Strategy primarily in support of the 'Us' theme – creating an innovative, proactive and effective Council by ensuring democratic transparency and accountability. The delivery of the HIF project itself supports the place ambitions including securing sustainable development and the provision of infrastructure.

5.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 5.1 There are no current financial and other risks to report although the scope and activity related to any future review of HIF may have an implication.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 5.2 None

Legal

- 5.3 There are no current legal matters to report although the scope and activity related to any future review of HIF may have an implication.

6.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 6.1 There are no current matters to report related this paper although the scope and activity related any future review of HIF may have a need for engagement.

REPORT ENDS

Scrutiny Review Topic Selection

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

Your name:	James Sanderson
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Your email:	CllrJames.Sanderson@woking.gov.uk
-------------	-----------------------------------

Selection criteria	
Criteria for Scrutiny Review:	
Scrutiny Review likely to result in improvements for local people.	
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.	

If your proposed Scrutiny Review Topic falls under any of these rejection criteria, it may not be a suitable topic to progress.

Outcomes of the Review

Why should the Scrutiny Review be undertaken?

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider that a scrutiny review of the HIF project would add value to ensure that the project is focused on the delivery of outcomes that reflect the needs of and improves the outcomes for Woking communities. The O&S Committee acknowledge that there is a process in place to support the project via the HIF Oversight Panel.

The role of the HIF Oversight Panel is to:

- oversee the governance and implementation of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF);
- oversee project communications;
- receive updates on the Project; and,
- note and monitor progress of the Project, through the receipt of programme reports, against key milestone dates, budget and key risks.

For reference, this panel has proportional constitutional representation of Councillors in order to ensure that members of the authority that are not part of the Executive can hold the Executive to account as an integral part of the delivery of the project.

The focus of the proposed O&S review is intended to provide effective constructive critical friend challenge, focussing on:

- the decisions the project is planning to make;
- how these are planned to be implemented;
- amplifying the voices and concerns of communities;
- improving outcomes; and,
- contributing to the development of a vision for the project and how this connects with related Council strategy and other change activity

To support the O&S Committee to focus on outcomes, and as an initial action of its scrutiny, it would assist the Committee if they have assurances around the HIF systems of governance, risk management and control that are delivered through by the HIF project under the existing oversight of the HIF Oversight Panel.

To give assistance on this it is proposed that the Standards and Audit Committee approve an additional audit within the audit plan to accommodate the HIF project which would:

- provide assurance that the Council has fully identified all the risks in respect of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) project and it has sufficient mitigation in place to manage these risks.
- provide assurance that due processes in decision making and project management have been applied and assess how the demands and potential conflicts of multiple major projects occurring concurrently are managed. To identify the wider lessons from a project of this scale with very significant external dependencies.

The final scope for this audit is agreed with the respective Chairs of the Standards and Audit Committee and the O&S Committee.

The O&S Committee will then consider this audit report and subsequently propose how it would help to develop a vision for the project and how this connects with related Council strategy and other change activity.

Briefing Paper No. 1 – Submitting a Topic for Scrutiny Review

A subsequent review could also consider if further public consultation and involvement is required in order to address any concerns raised noting the commitment to consult on the housing HIF numbers as part of the Woking Town Centre Masterplan and noting the recent motion at council which has called for:

- The HIF scheme housing to be put to public consultation with full honest disclosures.
- The council cease to make any further promises on HIF to any bodies until such consultation is complete.
- The council re assess the scheme's housing targets under new market conditions, (especially post COVID) public opinion and if needed is open to renegotiations with central government.

What benefits could result from the Scrutiny Review?

Through an audit of the current systems of governance, risk management and control, identify as early as possible whether further mitigation is required in order to ensure the successful completion of this project. This is a very major project that the Council is undertaking involving other stakeholders and is going to have a significant impact of residents. O&S is in a position to scrutinise the background behind this and it will provide assurance to members and residents of that this project is best placed to complete successfully.

What level of impact will the Scrutiny Review have?

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.	
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

Resources to be included in the Scrutiny Review:

WBC Officer Time Committee.	X
Report and/or presentation.	X
Councillor time.	X
Portfolio Holder Involvement.	X
Expert or External Representatives participation.	X

Briefing Paper No. 1 – Submitting a Topic for Scrutiny Review

Establishment of a Task Group.	X
Site visits.	
Research and Evidence.	X
Consultation Exercise.	
Other:	
Please add explanatory note for any resource selected above.	
<p>Sources of information and evidence should include all relevant Council and Executive papers, details of the HIF project itself including the bid document, the Homes England conditions, correspondence from stakeholders, communication to residents and the papers of the HIF Oversight Panel. It should also include reaching out to relevant experts and stakeholders.</p> <p>For the scrutiny review itself, no specific consultation is planned but the Residents Panel or community engagement panel could be involved.</p>	
Please add any further information that you think would be useful in the consideration of this Scrutiny Review Topic.	
Risk analysis is critical for this topic and there is a high degree of public interest. It should be conducted on a timely basis including an early as possible completion of the audit review.	

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.



Woking Borough Council – Internal Audit Report
Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Project 2021/22
November 2021

Draft Report

mazars

Contents

01 Introduction	1
02 Background	1
03 Key findings	2
04 Areas for further improvement and action plan	4
A1 Audit information	10

Disclaimer

This report (“Report”) was prepared by Mazars LLP at the request of Woking Borough Council (WBC), and terms for the preparation and scope of the Report have been agreed upon with them. The matters raised in this Report are only those which came to our attention during our internal audit work. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the information provided in this Report is as accurate as possible, Internal Audit have only been able to base findings on the information and documentation provided and consequently, no complete guarantee can be given that this Report is necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist, or of all the improvements that may be required.

The Report was prepared solely for the use and benefit the WBC, and to the fullest extent permitted by law, Mazars LLP accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability to any third party who purports to use or rely for any reason whatsoever on the Report, its contents, conclusions, any extract, reinterpretation, amendment and/or modification. Accordingly, any reliance placed on the Report, its contents, conclusions, any extract, reinterpretation, amendment and/or modification by any third party is entirely at their own risk. Please refer to the Statement of Responsibility in Appendix A1 of this report for further information about responsibilities, limitations, and confidentiality.

01 Introduction

We have undertaken an internal audit of the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and key controls relating to the delivery of the HIF project.

This review was requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) at their meeting on 13 September 2021. The OSC was of the opinion that a scrutiny review of the HIF project would add value to ensure that the project is focused on the delivery of outcomes that reflect the needs of and improves the outcomes for Woking communities. As per the Scrutiny Review Proposal, the OSC wanted this review to:

- I. Provide assurance that the Council has fully identified all the risks in respect of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) project, and it has sufficient mitigation in place to manage these risks.
- II. Provide assurance that due processes in decision making and project management have been applied and assess how the demands and potential conflicts of multiple major projects occurring concurrently are managed.
- III. To identify the wider lessons from a project of this scale with very significant external dependencies.

Further detail on the areas considered as part of our review are set out in Appendix A1.

The fieldwork for this review was completed remotely, and we have obtained all relevant documents required to complete the review and deliver the agreed scope.

We are grateful to the Director of Planning, Strategic Project Manager, Project Support Officer, and all other staff interviewed for their assistance during the audit.

This report summarises the results of the internal audit work and, therefore, does not include all matters that came to our attention during the review. Such matters have been discussed with the relevant staff.

02 Background

The Council has partnered with Surrey County Council (SCC) to secure a HIF grant of £95 million from the central Government agency, Homes England. The HIF is a government capital grant programme of up to £2.3 billion, which will help to deliver up to 100,000 new homes in England.

As Woking's current infrastructure prevents further housing developments, this grant was welcomed as it would deliver enhanced highways, pedestrian and rail links for Woking's town centre, improving transport within the Borough, which in turn could unlock development sites for 3,300 new homes in the town centre above the targets set out in the Local Plan.

The Council HIF Project is aligned to the Council's Core Strategy and consists of three elements:

- I. Acquisition of key sites
- II. Widening and improvements to the arterial A320 highway
- III. Replacement of the Victoria Arch railway bridge

The governance and implementation of the project is overseen by the HIF Oversight Panel. The Project Board and Project Management Team report to the Oversight Panel. Key partners in the delivery of the project include SCC as the highways authority who will deliver elements within their remit, as well as providing oversight and assurance within the project; WH Stephens, who are the Council's contracted project managers; and Network Rail, who will deliver the rail-related elements of the project.

The total cost of the scheme is £115 million. The HIF recovery strategy seeks to bridge the gap between the total scheme cost (£115 million) and the HIF grant (£95 million) through a Section 106 tariff (HIF recovery strategy for Woking Town Centre) which secure developer contributions towards infrastructure provision and funding from Network Rail.

The project is currently in the design stage and faces a number of risks from its stakeholders, most notably challenge from local residents impacted by the plans and delivery challenges on the number of homes being built. The

target practical completion dates for the infrastructure works and owned housing outputs are 31 March 2024 and 31 January 2025 respectively.

03 Key findings

Assurance on the effectiveness of internal controls



Limited Assurance

Rationale

Whilst we noted elements of the control framework operating effectively, including regular governance meetings, and meetings with external stakeholders to manage external dependencies as well as risk registers being in place, we have identified several areas for improvement for which we have made recommendations.

These recommendations are all categorised as High and Medium and relate to:

- Some key risks not being included in the Council's project risk register, and the risk descriptions and mitigating actions on the register being high level. Risks are also not allocated to individual risk owners.
- The lack of a Terms of Reference for the Project Board.
- The project spend against the project budget is not being reported to the Oversight Panel in the Project Dashboard.
- Formal contracts with WH Stephens Limited and WSP UK Limited not being finalised.
- The project not having a RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed) chart, and decisions log.
- The project not having a formal change request and approval process, and change log.

Further detail on the above areas are provided in Section 04.

Please see **Appendix A1** for definitions of our assurance levels and recommendations.

Priority	Number of recommendations
High (Fundamental)	3
Medium (Significant)	3
Low (Housekeeping)	-
TOTAL	6

3.1 Examples of areas where controls are operating reliably

- We confirmed through interviews that risks were identified at the start of the project and a project risk register was created. We also confirmed via interviews and review of Project Board meeting minutes that the risk register is reviewed prior to the Project Board meetings and risks are updated during these meetings if needed. We have however noted areas for improvement regarding the risk management processes. Further details regarding this can be found in 4.1.

Network Rail also has a separate risk register maintained by them. Review of this risk register noted that risks are fed into Network Rail's Victoria Way Dashboard reported to the Project Board.

- Review of the Project Dashboard noted that risks and issues are reported to the Oversight Panel.
- We reviewed the draft Project Governance Framework, minutes, agendas, and meeting notes from the following meetings:

- HIF Oversight Panel;
- WBC Executive and Full Council;
- SCC Cabinet;
- WBC/SCC Monthly coordination;
- WBC HIF project team, and
- Day Aggregates/NR/WBC/SCC Technical Meetings- access relocation

Review confirmed that these meetings align with the draft Project Governance Framework, and appropriate information was discussed during these meetings.

- We reviewed the Project Dashboards presented to the Oversight Panel in the July and September 2021 meetings, the September 2021 Victoria Way Dashboard produced by Network Rail, and the September 2021 Highways, Demolition and Multi-Contractor Utilities dashboards produced by WH Stephens. We confirmed that project progress is reported via these dashboards.
- We reviewed the Milestone Tracker as of September 2021. The tracker is maintained by the Project Management Team. The milestones in the tracker have been set by Homes England as per the requirements of the HIF Fund Agreement. We confirmed that project progress is monitored via the tracker and the project is currently on track.
- We reviewed the Update on Council Decisions following the Independent Investigation into the Woking Football Club and Associated Developments. Review of the draft Project Governance Framework and minutes from the Project Board meetings indicated that the project has been sponsored by a member of the Council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and the CLT forms part of the Project Board. This is in line with the Council's response to recommendation 1 in the report.
- We confirmed via interviews with WBC staff that they have been

involved in the delivery of major projects in the past and are using this experience to guide this project.

- We reviewed change request forms, emails and the contract with Homes England and interviewed staff to confirm that, in the absence of a change request process (which forms one of our Recommendations in Section 04), changes to the project are currently raised and approved via governance meetings, and terms set out in the contracts with Homes England and Network Rail.
- We confirmed via interviews that internal dependencies within the project are managed via Project Board meetings. Review of minutes from the July, August and September 2021 Project Board meetings noted that they are attended by representatives from WBC, SCC, Network Rail, Homes England, and WH Stephens. Review of the outline programme plan noted that internal dependencies have been identified in the plan.
- We reviewed minutes from the meeting between WBC, SCC and local bus operators, notes from engagement meetings with Woking residents, and the newsletter regarding the project sent out to residents to confirm that external dependencies are being managed.
- We confirmed via review of meeting notes and agenda pack from the July 2021 Victoria Square Oversight Panel meeting that it was attended by the Director of Planning and WH Stephens and the HIF Project was discussed during this meeting.
- We reviewed the 'Housing Infrastructure Fund – Update' presented to the Council's Executive on 7 October 2021 and confirmed that Woking residents and Network Rail are being consulted to draw up the Town Centre Master Plan. We were informed that a consultation meeting with Network Rail took place on 27 October 2021. We reviewed a timetable of consultation meetings with residents regarding the Town Centre Master Plan. We were informed that these meetings were video recorded.

04 Areas for further improvement and action plan

Definitions for the levels of assurance and recommendations used within our reports are included in Appendix A1.

We identified areas where there is scope for improvement in the control environment. The matters arising have been discussed with management, to whom we have made the recommendations detailed in the management action plan below.

Ref	Observation/Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Timescale/ responsibility
4.1	<p>Risk Management</p> <p>We noted some key risks have not been included in the Council's project risk register. For instance, via interviews with staff we note that planning applications for tall buildings were previously refused and are currently being appealed by developers. The outcome of those appeals will influence the Woking Town Centre Master Plan.</p> <p>Additionally, as per the terms of the Housing Infrastructure Fund Grant Determination Agreement, in the event of a 'Fundamental Default' Homes England is entitled to require WBC to immediately repay the HIF Funding and all other amounts due under the Agreement together with Interest. Review of WBC's risk register noted that the risk of the appeal being denied and the event of a 'Fundamental Default' along with any associated mitigations have not been included.</p>	<p>(i) The Council's project risk register should be reviewed and updated to include the risk of a 'Fundamental Default', the risk of the appeal for tall building planning applications being denied, and any other missing key risks. Risk management should be a standing item on the agenda for Project Board meetings.</p> <p>(ii) The risk descriptions and mitigating actions should be updated to include the appropriate amount of detail. As per best practice, the risk register should detail the risk event, cause and impact. The risks should be allocated to individual risk owners within the stakeholder organisations.</p>	High	<p>The project risk register will be reviewed thoroughly including a detailed review of each individual risk with further detail added in order to ensure project risks and mitigating actions are managed appropriately including risks associated to a fundamental default.</p> <p>Risk register scoring will be reassessed</p> <p>Risk register stakeholder discussions will be held to allocate risks to an individual risk owner within each stakeholder group</p> <p>A review of risks will be added as a standing agenda item to the Project management Team, Project Board and Member Oversight Panel meetings.</p>	<p>This action will be implemented by the Project Manager with the assistance of the Project Support Officer.</p> <p>The revised risk register will be agreed with the Project Lead and Director of Planning, and taken to the HIF Oversight Panel members for review.</p> <p>Completion by 31 December 2021</p>

Ref	Observation/Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Timescale/ responsibility
	<p>We noted that the risk descriptions and impacts within the Project risk register are high level. The risk descriptions do not fully capture the risks and their possible impact on the project and the Council. For example, Risk E2 'Properties owners do not enter into negotiations with WBC' states 'The scheme will not be able to commence in its current form unless the land within the "Triangle" site is acquired and demolished.' We understand that one of the ways in which WBC could default on their agreement with Homes England would be if on or before the Initial Certificate of Title Delivery Date, they are unable to provide a Certificate of Title to Homes England in respect of the ownership of the Triangle Site Buildings.</p> <p>This could mean that the Council have to immediately repay the HIF Funding and all other amounts due under the Agreement together with Interest. Therefore, Risk E2 lacks details which stakeholders would require to effectively appraise the risk and to manage it.</p> <p>Further, the planned mitigating actions are high level and so they may not be sufficient to mitigate the risks. We noted that in 10/33 cases the post mitigating action risk impact score was the same as the pre mitigating action risk impact score.</p>				

Ref	Observation/Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Timescale/ responsibility
	<p>Additionally, risks are reviewed when needed and risk management is not a standing item on the Project Board meeting agenda. Lastly, risks have been allocated to stakeholder organisations within the project instead of individual risk owners within the stakeholder organisations.</p> <p><i>Risk:</i> Project risks are not adequately mitigated which may lead to the programme not being delivered successfully. Not assigning responsibility of risks to individuals could result in action not being taken to mitigate the risk which could turn into issues impact cost, time, scope or quality.</p>				
4.2	<p>Terms of Reference for the Project Board</p> <p>The Project Board has been operating since October 2019.</p> <p>However, we confirmed via interviews with Council staff that the Board’s terms of reference have not been developed.</p> <p><i>Risk:</i> If escalation and decision-making roles and responsibilities are not defined then this could cause undue delay in delivery.</p>	<p>A Terms of Reference setting out the roles and responsibilities of the Project Board should be drawn up and agreed at the appropriate authorisation level.</p>	High	<p>Terms of Reference will be set up for the Project Board to include a list of members and accountabilities.</p>	<p>This ToR will be drafted by the Project Manager in discussion with the Project Lead and Director of Planning.</p> <p>Completion by 31 January 2022</p>

Ref	Observation/Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Timescale/ responsibility
4.3	<p>Formal contracts with WH Stephens Limited and WSP UK Limited</p> <p>Formal contracts with WH Stephens Limited and WSP UK Limited are in the process of being finalised at the time of our review.</p> <p>We were informed by the Strategic Project Manager that the Council is currently working under an informal instruction to WH Stephens on the basis of fee quotations totalling £484,600 provided by WH Stephens in August 2019. The specific contract for the HIF project is currently being arranged.</p> <p>Additionally, the Council has been working with WSP on the project for over a year. While we were provided with a draft agreement with WSP for the provision of support to the Council and SCC in the development of an improvement scheme for Guildford Road, we were informed by staff that this agreement has not been agreed yet.</p> <p>The approximate value of this contract will be £125,470 not including any additional updates to the Town Centre Model.</p> <p>We did not consider the procurement of consultants as part of our review. The Council aims to finalise the contracts within the next couple of weeks. Finalising the contracts as soon as possible could</p>	<p>As planned, the contracts with WH Stephens Limited and WSP UK Limited should be agreed and signed as soon as possible.</p>	High	<p>To correct this finding the project team are prioritising the completion of these contracts. At the time of writing the draft contracts with both WSP and WH Stephens have been agreed between parties and signatures are imminent.</p>	<p>The Project Manager, Director of Planning and Head of Legal Services, are the responsible officers within the Council to get these contracts expedited.</p> <p>It is expected that these contracts will be signed and in place by 31 December 2021.</p>

Ref	Observation/Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Timescale/ responsibility
	<p>help to mitigate Risk T10 'Poor contractor performance' in WBC's risk register.</p> <p><i>Risk:</i> Without a formal signed contract with WH Stephens and WSP, there is a risk of the contractor not meeting the Council's needs and providing it with legal comfort that should things go wrong, it can seek specific performance, damages or other suitable remedies at the discretion of the Court.</p>				
4.4	<p>Project spend against budget</p> <p>Review of the Project Dashboard presented to the Oversight Panel noted that it only includes the estimated project funding and costs. It does not indicate the actual project spend to date against the budget.</p> <p>We were provided with the HIF Expenditure Profile which indicates the monthly expenditure and the funding estimate. This information could be used to produce a budget vs actual spend report. As of September 2021, £29,642,328.60 has been spent on the project.</p> <p><i>Risk:</i> There is a risk that those charged with governance are not aware of the project spend against the budget. Consequently, issues regarding under or</p>	<p>The Project Dashboard should be updated to include the project spend to date against the project budget.</p>	Medium	<p>The Oversight Panel dashboard will be updated to include the expenditure profile information.</p>	<p>Project Manager working with WH Stephens. To be complete by next HIF Oversight Panel 1 December 2021.</p>

Ref	Observation/Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Timescale/ responsibility
	overspend cannot be effectively managed.				
4.5	<p>RACI chart and decisions log</p> <p>The project does not have a RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed) chart, and decisions log.</p> <p>We confirmed (via staff interviews and review of meeting minutes, meeting notes and emails) that project decisions are made during project monitoring meetings. However, we confirmed via interviews with staff that there is no RACI chart outlining all the activities undertaken within the HIF project set against all the people and/or roles.</p> <p>This, along with the lack of a Terms of Reference for the Project Board (as mentioned in 4.2) and the Project Governance Framework being in the draft stage could signal a lack of clarity on accountabilities and responsibilities. Clear accountabilities and responsibilities are important for a project of this size with several stakeholders.</p> <p>There is also the lack of a decision log outlining past, current and upcoming project decisions along with deadlines and the level at which the decisions need to be authorised.</p>	<p>(i) The Project Governance Framework should be finalised and approved. A RACI chart based on the finalised Project Governance Framework should be created. It should outline all the activities or decision-making authorities undertaken within the HIF project set against all the people and/or roles.</p> <p>(ii) A decision log outlining past, current and upcoming project decisions along with deadlines and the level at which the decisions need to be authorised (based on the RACI chart) should be created and reviewed regularly.</p>	Medium	<p>A RACI chart, and decisions log will be set up. This will outline all the activities and decisions undertaken within the HIF project which will be recorded against people and/or roles. This will strengthen the clarity on accountabilities and responsibilities for all individuals involved in the project which is important for a project of this size with several stakeholders.</p> <p>The documents will be discussed with all stakeholders and individuals to ensure understanding and agreement with all involved.</p> <p>The RACI and decisions log will be live documents and kept under review on a monthly basis</p>	<p>The Project Manager will be responsible for the initial preparation of the RACI and decisions log with the assistance of the Project Support Officer.</p> <p>The documents will be agreed with the Project Lead and Director of Planning</p> <p>The Project Manager with the assistance of the Project Support Officer will be responsible for reporting and updating on a monthly basis.</p> <p>31 January 2022.</p>

Ref	Observation/Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management response	Timescale/ responsibility
	<p><i>Risk:</i> There is a risk that project decisions are made at incorrect level, and past, current and upcoming decisions are not tracked. Potential gaps in the audit trail in the event decisions need to be revisited.</p>				
4.6	<p>Formal change management process</p> <p>We confirmed via interviews with staff that there is not a formal change request and approval process, and change log for the project.</p> <p>We acknowledge that in the absence of a change request process changes to the project are currently raised and approved via governance meetings, and terms set out in the contracts with Homes England and Network Rail.</p> <p><i>Risk:</i> Without a formal change request process and change log, there is a risk that changes to the project may be authorised at the incorrect level or changes that have been approved may not be tracked which may lead to them not being implemented and project documents not being amended to reflect the changes. Cost and delivery implications are not readily understood which leads to project objectives not being achieved.</p>	<p>A formal change request and approval process should be agreed and implemented within the project.</p> <p>A change log should be created and updated when needed.</p>	Medium	<p>A formal change request and approval process and change log will be set up in order to ensure the correct level authorisation and that changes are tracked.</p> <p>The process and log will be live documents and kept under review on an ongoing basis by Louisa Calam with the assistance of Alice Peplow.</p>	<p>The Project Manager will be responsible for the initial preparation of the request and approval process and change log.</p> <p>This process will be set up with input from the Surrey County Council Project Management Office who have similar projects ongoing.</p> <p>The overall process will be agreed with the Project Lead, and Director of Planning.</p> <p>31 January 2022.</p>

A1 Audit information

Audit Control Schedule	
Client contacts:	Giorgio Framalicco: Director of Planning
	Louisa Calam: Strategic Project Manager
	Alice Peplow: Project Support Officer
Internal Audit Team:	Graeme Clarke: Director Juan Fosco: Manager
	Syed Shah: Programme Assurance Associate Director Priyadarshini Kumre: Programme Assurance Senior Auditor
Finish on-site / Exit meeting:	1 November 2021
Draft report issued:	5 November 2021
Management responses received:	
Final report issued:	

Scope and Objectives

The overall objective of this internal audit was to provide the project leaders, and other officers, assurance as to the adequacy and effectiveness of governance, risk management and key controls relating to the delivery of the HIF project.

Our review considered the following areas:

- Identification, management and mitigation of risks;
- Governance, escalation and decision-making arrangements;
- Change management and planning; and
- Dependency management including managing dependencies with other projects and external dependencies.

In giving this assessment, it should be noted that assurance cannot be absolute. The most an Internal Audit service can provide is reasonable assurance that there are no major weaknesses in the framework of internal control. Testing was performed on a sample basis, and as a result our work does not provide absolute assurance that material error, loss or fraud does not exist.

We have not provided an opinion on the decisions made in relation to the project, or the justification for the project – rather, we have reviewed the governance and administration arrangements to determine whether there is an appropriate control framework to support good decision making.

Definitions of Assurance Levels	
Level	Description
Substantial	The framework of governance, risk management and control is adequate and effective.

Moderate	Some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control.
Limited	There are significant weaknesses in the framework of governance, risk management and control such that it could be or could become inadequate and ineffective.
Unsatisfactory	There are fundamental weaknesses in the framework of governance, risk management and control such that it is inadequate and ineffective or is likely to fail.

	high level of residual risk.	
Low (Housekeeping)	Scope for improvement in governance, risk management and control.	Remedial action should be prioritised and undertaken within an agreed timescale.

Statement of responsibility

We take responsibility to Woking Borough Council for this report which is prepared on the basis of the limitations set out below.

The responsibility for designing and maintaining a sound system of internal control and the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities rests with management, with internal audit providing a service to management to enable them to achieve this objective. Specifically, we assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the system of internal control arrangements implemented by management and perform sample testing on those controls in the period under review with a view to providing an opinion on the extent to which risks in this area are managed.

We plan our work in order to ensure that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting significant control weaknesses. However, our procedures alone should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses in internal controls, nor relied upon to identify any circumstances of fraud or irregularity. Even sound systems of internal control can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance and may not be proof against collusive fraud.

The matters raised in this report are only those which came to our attention during the course of our work and are not necessarily a comprehensive statement of all the weaknesses that exist or all improvements that might be made.

Recommendations for improvements should be assessed by you for their full impact before they are implemented. The performance of

Definitions of Recommendations		
Priority	Definition	Action required
High (Fundamental)	Significant weakness in governance, risk management and control that if unresolved exposes the organisation to an unacceptable level of residual risk.	Remedial action must be taken urgently and within an agreed timescale.
Medium (Significant)	Weakness in governance, risk management and control that if unresolved exposes the organisation to a	Remedial action should be taken at the earliest opportunity and within an agreed timescale.



our work is not and should not be taken as a substitute for management's responsibilities for the application of sound management practices.

This report is confidential and must not be disclosed to any third party or reproduced in whole or in part without our prior written consent. To the fullest extent permitted by law Mazars LLP accepts no responsibility and disclaims all liability to any third party who purports to use or rely for any reason whatsoever on the Report, its contents, conclusions, any extract, reinterpretation amendment and/or modification by any third party is entirely at their own risk.

mazars

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*where permitted under applicable country laws.

www.mazars.co.uk

Chronology Report: HIF

(If you are having trouble viewing the links in this paper, cut and paste the web address into explorer)

1. 14th September 2017: WBC Executive Meeting

The Executive authorised the Finance Director be authorised to draft and submit a bid for Marginal Viability Funding under the Housing Infrastructure Fund for the Victoria Square Project; and that the Chief Executive was authorised to work with Surrey County Council to draft and submit an expression of interest for Forward Funding under the Housing Infrastructure Fund for the highway network upgrade south of the railway.

[Click here](#) for all related information

REPORT Housing Infrastructure Fund

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s299/Housing%20Infrastructure%20Fund.pdf>

Appendix 1

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s300/Appendix%201.pdf>

2. 6th February 2020: WBC Executive Meeting

To accept funding that will enable rail infrastructure, highway enhancements, remove congestion, and promote town centre growth and development.

The Executive welcomed the Government's commitment, through Homes England, to invest in Woking Town Centre and deliver major infrastructure. It was noted that the grant would fund the replacement of Victoria Arch and critical highway improvements which would support Woking to meet its housing needs, support growth and sustain economic and community vitality.

[Click here](#) for all related information

Links below to individual related papers:

REPORT: Housing Infrastructure Fund - Funding Allocation of £95Million to Woking Town Centre

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10768/EXE19-060%20Housing%20Infrastructure%20Fund%20-%20Funding%20Allocation%20of%2095Million%20to%20Woking%20Town%20Centre.pdf>

Appendix 1 - Triangle Acquisition Status

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10749/EXE19-060%20Appendix%201%20-%20Triangle%20Acquisition%20Status.pdf>

Appendix 2 - Highways Proposal North Plan

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10750/EXE19-060%20Appendix%202%20-%20Highways%20Proposal%20North%20Plan.pdf>

Appendix 3 - Highways Proposal South Plan

<https://modern.gov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10751/EXE19-060%20Appendix%203%20-%20Highways%20Proposal%20South%20Plan.pdf>

Appendix 4 - Housing Unlocked by HIF

<https://modern.gov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10752/EXE19-060%20Appendix%204%20-%20Housing%20Unlocked%20by%20HIF.pdf>

Appendix 5 - Woking Town Centre Housing Market Analysis

<https://modern.gov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10753/EXE19-060%20Appendix%205%20-%20Woking%20Town%20Centre%20Housing%20Market%20Analysis.pdf>

Appendix 6 - Draft HIF Programme

<https://modern.gov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10754/EXE19-060%20Appendix%206%20-%20Draft%20HIF%20Programme.pdf>

Appendix 7 - HIF Recovery Strategy

<https://modern.gov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10755/EXE19-060%20Appendix%207%20-%20HIF%20Recovery%20Strategy.pdf>

Appendix 8 - A320 Consultation

<https://modern.gov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s10756/EXE19-060%20Appendix%208%20-%20A320%20Consultation.pdf>

3. 20th February 2020: Planning submission for screening opinion for demolition at Evans Triangle

PLAN/2020/0156

Screening opinion for the proposed demolition of the Evans Triangle.
Evans Triangle Guildford Road Woking Surrey GU22 7PX

Decided: Environmental Statement NOT Required

[PLAN/2020/0156](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=Q5OWN7RU01300&activeTab=summary>

4. 18th March 2020: Planning submission for prior approval for demolition of Southern House and Jubilee House

PLAN/2020/0178

Prior Approval for the demolition of Southern House and Jubilee House.
Southern House & Jubilee House Guildford Road & Station Approach Woking Surrey GU22 7UY

Decided: Prior Approval - Not required

[PLAN/2020/0178](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=Q5OWN7RU01300&activeTab=summary>

5. 30th July 2020: WBC Council Meeting

Resolution by Full Council on 30 July 2020 approving the use of compulsory purchase powers order under the relevant statutory powers (being the powers under the Highways Act 1980 or the powers under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as appropriate) in respect of the "Order Land" identified in Annex 1 to facilitate the carrying out of the scheme.

[Click here](#) for all related documents

Please note: As the time of writing, the papers are currently not accessible on the website but will be available in due course.

6. 9th September 2020: Planning submission for the erection of hoarding to enclose Triangle site

PLAN/2020/0681

Erection of hoarding to enclose site.

Triangle of Land between Guildford Road, Victoria Road and Station Approach Guildford Road, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7PX

Decision: Permitted

[PLAN/2020/0681](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QENERRRU01300&activeTab=summary>

7. 9th September 2020: Planning submission for advertisement consent on hoarding at Triangle site

PLAN/2020/0543

Advertisement Consent to display non-illuminated advertisements on site hoarding

Triangle of Land between Guildford Road, Victoria Road and Station Approach Guildford Road, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7PX

Decision: Permitted

[PLAN/2020/0543](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QCF7LSRUI4Z00&activeTab=summary>

8. 9th December 2020: Planning submission for Prior Approval for the demolition of No's 1-11 Guildford Road and RSP House, Victoria Road

Plan/2020/1017

Prior Approval for the demolition of No's 1-11 Guildford Road and RSP House, Victoria Road
1-11 Guildford Road and RSP House Victoria Road Woking GU22 7PX

Decided : Prior Approval not required

[PLAN/2020/1017](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QJQ90SRUJGP00&activeTab=summary>

9. 21st January 2021: Planning submission for the erection of hoarding to triangle site

PLAN/2020/1020

Erection of hoarding to enclose site
Evans Triangle Guildford Road Woking Surrey GU22 7PX

Decision: Permitted

[PLAN/2020/1020](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QJQFW4RU02X00&activeTab=summary>

10. 21st January 2021: Planning submission for advertisement consent for Triangle site hoarding

PLAN/2020/1014

Advertisement Consent to display non-illuminated advertisements on site hoarding.
Triangle of Land between Guildford Road, Victoria Road and Station Approach Guildford Road Woking Surrey GU22 7PX

Decision: Permitted

[PLAN/2020/1014](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QJOXV1RUJGC00&activeTab=summary>

11. 10th February 2021: Planning submission for Certificate of Lawfulness for highway works

PLAN/2020/1191

Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed highway works.

Guildford Road, Victoria Road, Victoria Way and Station Approach Woking Surrey GU22 7PX

Decision: Permitted

[PLAN/2020/1191](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QLSBOKRUJVN00&activeTab=summary>

12. 29th June 2021: Planning submission for prior approval for the reconstruction of Victoria Arch

PLAN/2021/0483

Prior Approval for reconstruction of Railway Underbridge over Victoria Way.

Railway Arch Victoria Way Woking Surrey GU22 6DD

Decision: Prior Approval - Approved

[PLAN/2021/0483](#)

<https://caps.woking.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QS9QV4RU0C700&activeTab=summary>

13. 15th July 2021: WBC Executive Meeting Commencement of Town Centre Masterplan

The Executive resolved that

- (i) the overview of the Town Centre Masterplan, as set out in the report, be noted;*
- (ii) the budget for the preparation of the Masterplan, which is estimated to be £100,000, be approved; and*
- (iii) delegated authority be given to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to oversee the preparation of the Town Centre Masterplan to its adoption.*

Reason: To help provide a framework to guide development within the Town Centre.

Town Centre Masterplan Report

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s18390/EXE21-057%20Town%20Centre%20Masterplan.pdf>

Appendix 1 - LDD Timeline

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s18391/EXE21-057%20Appendix%201%20-%20LDD%20Timeline.pdf>

Appendix 1 - Shaping the future

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s18392/EXE21-057%20Appendix%201%20-%20Shaping%20the%20future.pdf>

14. 17th June 2021: Executive Meeting Motion for Public Consultation on Housing Infrastructure Fund Scheme

*This motion calls for: 1) The HIF scheme housing to be put to public consultation with full honest disclosures.
2) The council cease to make any further promises on HIF to any bodies until such consultation is complete.
3) The council re assesses the scheme's housing targets under new market conditions, (especially post COVID) public opinion and if needed is open to renegotiations with central government.*

The Executive agreed an amended Motion to read as follows:

"When the successful Housing Infrastructure Fund bid for £95m was made, the Council did not know it would succeed and therefore did not consult in detail on building the homes in the town centre afforded by the scheme. In order to address this, this Council agrees:

i) the HIF scheme housing requirement be part of the Town Centre Masterplan consultation;

This Council also notes:

ii) the commitment already made by the Council as part of the HIF project; and

iii) the housing numbers already agreed by the Government."

RECOMMENDED to Council that the Motion, as amended by the Executive, be supported.

Notice of Motion

REPORT Notice of Motion

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s17931/EXE21-044%20Notice%20of%20Motion%20-%20Cllr%20T%20Aziz%20-%20Public%20Consultation%20on%20Housing%20Infrastructure%20Fund%20HIF%20.pdf>

15. 29th July 2021: WBC Council Meeting Notice of Motion - Cllr T Aziz - Public Consultation on Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Scheme

The motion calls for:

- 1) The HIF scheme housing to be put to public consultation with full honest disclosures.*
- 2) The council cease to make any further promises on HIF to any bodies until such consultation is complete.*
- 3) The council re assesses the scheme's housing targets under new market conditions, (especially post COVID) public opinion and if needed is open to renegotiations with central government."*

This motion was carried by 13 votes in favour to 12 votes against.

Council resolved that the Motion be supported.

Notice of Motion - Cllr T Aziz - Public Consultation on Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Scheme

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=12928&PlanId=0&Opt=3#A114880>

16. 7th October 2021: WBC Executive Meeting Housing Infrastructure Fund Update

Executive resolved that:

- (i) the content of the report, including the progress of the project to date, next actions and project dependencies, be noted; and*
- (ii) the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Executive Member, be delegated to reach agreement with Homes England and Network Rail on the proposed revised timetable for the project noting a revised start date to the commencement of physical works until later in 2022/23.*

REPORT Housing Infrastructure Fund Update

<https://moderngov.woking.gov.uk/documents/s19805/EXE21-148%20Housing%20Infrastructure%20Fund%20-%20Update.pdf>

REPORT ENDS

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 12 NOVEMBER 2021

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK GROUP

Executive Summary

The Economic Development Task Group met on 4 November 2021. Set out below is the report from the Chairman of the Task Group.

Economic Development Action Plan

The Economic Development Task Group met to review the mid-year update of the *Economic Development Action Plan* approved in September 2021 and setting out prioritised activity focused on post-pandemic recovery.

Members received updates on across each of the five priorities 1) Focus on business, 2) Build on business advantages and skilled people, 3) Future proofing the town and village centres, 4) Making Woking the place to be and 5) Destination Woking.

Draft Digital Strategy

Members were also updated on the Draft Digital Strategy covering the period 2022-2025. The document which sets out a digital first approach to all new projects and services across three themes, Smart People, Smart Place and Smart Council. Consultation on the strategy concluded on the 2nd November. The Group also welcomed the appointment of Adam Walther, formerly of FutureGov, as the Head of Digital and Transformation.

Members were grateful for the updates from Chris Norrington and the work being undertaken by the Business Liaison Team.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation set out above.
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Background Papers: None.

Reporting Person: Councillor Dale Roberts
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Shadow Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ian Johnson
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Date Published: 12 November 2021