



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, 23 January 2023 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Gloucester Square, Woking, Surrey GU21 6YL.

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

- 1 Apologies for Absence
To receive any apologies for absence.
- 2 Minutes (Pages 5 - 14)
To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 November 2022 as published.
- 3 Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes OSC23-002 (Pages 15 - 26)
To review any 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.

Presentations

6 Water Resources Management Plan - Affinity Water OSC23-004 (Pages 27 - 30)

For the Committee to receive a presentation from Affinity Water regarding the proposed Water Resources Management Plan 2025-2075.

7 Thames Water - Waste Overspill & Woking Waterways Presentation OSC23-005 (Pages 31 - 34)

For the Committee to receive a presentation from, and hold discussion with, Thames Water regarding potential sewage overspill into Woking Borough's waterways. A briefing paper is included to provide background.

8 Joint Waste Solutions Performance Review, Forward Plan and Interim Strategy OSC23-003

For the Committee to be updated on the performance of the Joint Waste Collection Contract for the year 2021-22, the Resources and Waste Strategy for England and Surrey's Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Reporting Person: Mark Tabner / Joint Waste Solutions / Amey

Matters for Scrutiny

9 Play Area Provision OSC22-057 (Pages 35 - 48)

For the Committee to receive a report on the refurbishment of play areas.

Reporting Person: Arran Henderson

Matters for Determination

10 Work Programme OSC23-001 (Pages 49 - 66)

Reporting Person: Councillor Ayesha Azad

Performance Management

11 Performance and Financial Monitoring Information

To consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information.

Reporting Person: Councillor Ayesha Azad

Task Group Updates

12 Finance Task Group Update OSC23-006 (Pages 67 - 68)

To receive an update from the Finance Task Group following its meeting on 10 November 2022

Reporting Person: Councillor James Sanderson

13 Housing Task Group Update OSC23-007 (Pages 69 - 70)

To receive an update from the Housing Task Group following its meeting on 15 November 2022

Reporting Person: Councillor Tahir Aziz

AGENDA ENDS

Date Published - 13 January 2023

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



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MINUTES
OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

held on 21 November 2022

Present:

Cllr A Azad (Chairman)
Cllr J R Sanderson (Vice-Chair)

Cllr K M Davis
Cllr C S Kemp
Cllr J P Morley

Cllr P J T Graves
Cllr A Kirby

Also Present: Councillors A-M Barker, J Brown and R N Leach

Absent: Councillors H Akberali, A Caulfield and M I Raja

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Akberali, Caulfield and Raja.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on Monday, 17 October 2022 be approved and signed as a true and correct record subject to the following amendment:

Item 7: Centres for the Community (OSC22-050)

The sixth paragraph, second sentence be amended to read:

“Members asked that the development of a centralised, online booking system for facilities at the Community Centres be considered in addition to the phone booking system.”

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES OSC22-054

The Chairman introduced the report on matters raised at previous meetings of the Committee, drawing the Committee’s attention to actions undertaken subsequently.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

4. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business to discuss.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were made.

6. CELEBRATE WOKING 2022/2023 REVIEW AND FORWARD PLAN OSC22-056

Riëtte Thomas, Business Liaison Officer, presented a review of the past year of the Celebrate Woking Programme and a draft of the proposed programme for Celebrate Woking 2023.

The Committee discussed the 2022 Summer in the Square programme and what improvements could be made if repeated in 2023. There had been incidents of anti-social behaviour that had increased costs by £5,000 due to the need for additional security. A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) had been in force in the Town Centre since February 2022 which granted specific powers for Surrey Police to tackle anti-social behaviour. Whilst Members were mindful of the resource implications for Surrey Police, they were concerned that it had been necessary to employ private security rather than the Police respond to anti-social behaviour issues, especially in the Town Centre where the PSPO was fully operational. Members recognised that Summer in the Square carried a monetary cost to the Council but noted the positive impact it had on the Town Centre and local businesses.

Members wished to know if there were any plans to hold events connected to the Football World Cup. It was not possible to host such an event in Henry Plaza due to fire safety concerns: the glass roof prevented the installation of a sprinkler system and therefore limited what could be held in the space. It was additionally noted by officers that the Police had advised hosting World Cup-related events required a significantly raised police presence. Members commented that maybe the Council should be mindful that the lack of promotion of football events in comparison with, for example, Wimbledon as a part of Summer in the Square may promote a stereotypical image of football fans. Officers noted Members' observations about the promotion of football events and in particular the present World Cup. However, due to the short period of time to organise an event for the World Cup, Officers recommended promoting local hospitality venues, a number of which were already showing the football matches.

Photos that had adorned Market Walk for a number of years had been removed and Officers undertook to establish further details and inform Members if and when they would be reinstalled.

In recognition of the Council's budget constraints, it had been proposed that the events surrounding the Coronation of King Charles III in May 2023 be coordinated with a partner, Nova Cinema, which would reduce the cost to the Council. On days around the Coronation, Community Centres were to host tea parties. The previous Coronation had encouraged communities to produce artworks and photography and it had been proposed that this be emulated for the Coronation of King Charles III. The Group shared concern that the simultaneous running of the May elections and Coronation events could put too much pressure on Council Officers. However, it was anticipated that the partnership with

Nova Cinema may assist to reduce the amount of council resources required for the Coronation.

Officers undertook to consider if there was appetite for a food festival as part of future Celebrate Woking Programmes following a request by Members.

The Committee enquired as to the possibility of buying a screen for Jubilee Square as opposed to continuing to hire. Officers noted that the cost of hire included a support package provided by the contractor and the cost had not increased for several years. It was suggested that a sponsor be sought for the screen.

In previous years local sports clubs had been included in Celebrate Woking, as part of Party in the Park. However, Party in the Park was not scheduled to be held in 2023 and Members requested that alternative opportunities be considered for local clubs.

Members requested Italia Conti, and other local dance schools, be offered opportunity through Celebrate Woking. Officers informed the Committee that Italia Conti had been given rehearsal space at the Rhoda McGaw Theatre for 32 weeks per year and alternative locations for other dance schools was being sought.

[Post-Meeting Note: The information provided by Officers at the meeting contained an error. Italia Conti had a contractual agreement for 9-weeks rehearsal space at the Rhoda McGaw theatre per year, not 32 weeks. Buzz Theatre rehearsal space continued to be available for hire throughout the year for any interested in hiring it.]

The Woking Jazz festival had relocated to Send due to the cost of hiring space in Woking.

The Committee expressed their wish that the Council continued to fund Celebrate Woking for 2023.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

7. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW OSC22-058

Leigh Clarke, Director of Finance, presented the Treasury Management Mid-Year Review, in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Code of Practice for Treasury Management.

Much of the information contained in the Review continued to be provided in the monthly Performance and Financial Monitoring Information (PFMI or Green Book).

Throughout November, a large maturation of loans, £65mil, was due to occur with a further £30mil due in December. Previously, the Council preferred to take long-term loans but, due to recent economic instability, a series of laddered, short-term loans was taken, following independent professional advice. A number of loans had been taken out for either three, six, or nine months. Interest rates on long-term loans had been deemed excessively high and it was anticipated that these would reduce over time.

The Council continued to review whether to reschedule any debt given the recent increase in interest rates.

The Council secured loans from two sources: the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and the inter-Local Authority loans market, which was facilitated by brokers. Due to recent volatility in rates, a number of Local Authorities had chosen not to offer loans on the loans market. There was a difference in fees between the PWLB and brokerages which was considered when choosing which source to use for loans.

Subsequent to the recent demotion of the UK's credit rating, to AA-, the Council amended its investment policy to ensure it could continue investment in the UK.

It was noted that the Council's total borrowing was £1.9bil as at 30 September 2022 with an approved limit of £2.3bil. The limit was part of the Investment Programme and allowed for any slippage or speeding-up of Council projects or if the Council's companies required additional financing.

Following a question, officers confirmed that the flexibility provided by not having a minimum threshold for amount of debt as access to long-term loans was beneficial to the Council.

Members enquired whether a review of financial indicators could take place and feed back either to the Finance Task Group or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee discussed interest rate volatility during the past quarter and Officers confirmed that they had spiked in August and September and were mobile throughout each week. The Green Books for October and November, once published, would reflect that. Officers confirmed that multiple sources from industry professionals were used when assessing the likely values of future rates.

RESOLVED

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

8. ENERGY EFFICIENCY REPORT OSC22-059

Tracey Haskins, Green Infrastructure Manager, presented an overview of the Energy Efficiency Report that had been requested by Members. Other contributors were available to answer Members queries: Jade Bowes, Daniel Ashe, Adam Browne and Sam Pepper.

The UK Government had announced new policy subsequent to the publication of the report. The Energy Price cap had been extended beyond April 2023 and increased to £3,000. There were a number of means-tested financial aids announced in addition.

As part of the report, Officers contacted private developers, architects and planning agents to seek their input. Members were appreciative that EcoWorld London, the developer of a project on Goldsworth Road, had responded but were disappointed that other developers of sites in the Borough had not. There was concern that no response suggested developers were not prioritising energy efficiency in their builds.

The Committee was interested in using the commitment that the Council had to energy efficient construction as a means of friendly competition with private developers to spur them into making their projects more energy efficient.

Adam Browne, Housing Assets Manager, confirmed that residential rental properties were required to have a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Rating of E. The priority was to ensure that all Council Stock was at least an EPC Rating of E. The Council had recently employed a new Head of Housing Assets, Craig Humphrey and efforts had begun on developing a strategy to raise properties to EPC rating C, in line with the Government's proposed minimum C rating by 2030. Of the 2% that were below E rating, the majority were due to non-engagement by tenants. A number of strategies had been considered, including formal action against tenants, however that had been considered excessive. The Council had recently had success by educating residents in non-compliant Council Stock properties that improvements would reduce their utility costs and, without the improvements, their properties would be ineligible for future grants, preventing possible future improvements to the properties.

Members were surprised that the Council had not applied for funds from the most recent Decarbonisation Housing Fund. Officers confirmed that the Council lacked the software and resource required to pull together the large amount of data required for the bid. Additionally, the most recent round of funding required Local Authorities to match the amount of funding provided by the Decarbonisation fund and that a minimum of 100 properties were improved. The Council had the means to match the funding for ten properties and there had been a countywide attempt to form a consortium with neighbouring authorities for the remaining 90. However, the total number of properties that could be joined together was insufficient.

The Committee discussed fuel-poverty and enquired how many of the Council's tenants were possibly in fuel-poverty and if this was an appropriate metric of who to target with help. Members also enquired what projections there were that estimated how many would be in fuel poverty in the coming months. Officers undertook to supply the information outside of the meeting.

Sam Pepper, Environmental Programme Manager for ThamesWey Group, confirmed that there had been national funding to provide insulation in homes, but there had not been the same for installation of LED bulbs. ThamesWey had run the Woking Energy Champions Project and through that had financed the replacement of bulbs from a Legacy Fund provided by Action Surrey.

Sam Pepper confirmed that ThamesWey Group had committed to applying ISO 14001 to housing and development from next year onwards. It was already applied to energy assets.

Members enquired what support was provided to park homes in aiding them to access the Energy Support Grant. Previous projects had provided help to park homes, but there were some limitations due to fire safety where homes were in proximity with each other. Additionally, many park homes were on sites with management companies that were not always receptive to working with the Council or ThamesWey. However, ThamesWey was bidding for funding specifically aimed at properties that were off grid for gas, which could benefit some park homes sites. Officers undertook to provide more information outside of the meeting.

The Committee enquired what actions could be used to encourage developers to focus on energy efficiency through national and local planning policy. Officers confirmed that energy efficiency matters were being considered as part of the upcoming update of the Climate Change Strategy Supplementary Planning Document.

Members commented that proposals could be made by Councillors to help residential areas using Community Infrastructure Levy funding.

National Future Homes Standard references the 'fabric first approach', by maximising the performance of the parts and materials that make up the building's fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems. Although spending more on each property would increase efficiency there were diminishing returns that made it not feasible to construct with energy efficiency in mind beyond a certain point.

Officers confirmed that they actively sought external funding for energy efficiency improvements in the Borough but there had been no more found to date.

The Council had recently run a project to identify privately rented properties in the Borough that were below EPC rating E. It had resulted in enforcement action being taken on the owners of several properties. Officers confirmed that identified properties would continue to be followed up.

The Chairman noted the Recommendations which highlighted some of the work that the Council was taking as part of its actions of Climate Change.

RESOLVED

That:

- (i) the outcomes of these enquiries, as set out in the report be noted;
- (ii) the Council prepares for the further planned changes of the National Future Homes Standards, to ensure that new homes and extensions meet the highest possible energy efficiency standards;
- (iii) welcomes the forthcoming revised Climate Change Strategy and Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document in order to secure the latest energy efficiency best practice in development;
- (iv) supports the Council continuing to prepare bids for external funding opportunities that directly relate to energy efficiency improvements; and
- (v) recommends that Planning Development Management develops standard conditions in line with Building Regulations to secure energy efficiency outcomes.

9. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE OSC22-043

Kevin Foster, Strategic Director for Corporate Resources, presented the report on Risk Management that was due to go before the Executive on 19 January 2023.

A review of how the Council handled risk management had elicited several recommendations. One of the recommendations had been to provide Members with training on risk management. This had been provided.

The Council had committed to making its Strategic Risk Register public, which was included at appendix two of the Item.

Members recommended several changes to the Risk Register: the inclusion of how risks change between editions; the removal of acronyms or inclusion of a glossary of terms, for the benefit of residents; implicit in several other risks, energy costs and inflation be more overtly displayed; and risk of not meeting the Council's 2030 Carbon Neutral target. Officers undertook to consider the recommendations.

It was emphasised that the register contained risks to the Council rather than issues experienced by the Council. The Medium Term Financial Strategy had been developed in recognition of the Risk Register.

Each directorate operated its own Risk Register and items were considered for inclusion on the Council's Strategic Risk register if the corresponding Strategic Director considered that the risk required input at a corporate level.

RECOMMENDED TO THE EXECUTIVE

That the Strategic Risk Register reflects the key risks currently facing the Council and that measures to mitigate each risk have been recorded and are being actioned by officers.

10. WORK PROGRAMME OSC22-055

Councillor Azad introduced the report on the updated Work Programme, drawing the Committee's attention to the key changes since the document had last been received.

Subsequent to publication, the agenda for 23 January 2023 had changed. The Committee was to receive a presentation from Affinity Water on their proposed Water Resources Action Plan. The JWS Performance Review item had been broadened to include a Forward Plan and Interim Strategy Presentation. Members requested that JWS and Amey provide an update on the renewal of garden waste disposal as part of the presentation.

The Committee requested that Thames Water be invited to the 23 January meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Officers undertook to extend an invitation.

To accommodate the additional items, it had been proposed that the Noise Complaints Update and Overview and Scrutiny Committee Communications Plan be postponed to March 2023.

Giorgio Framaliccio, Strategic Director of Place, updated the Committee on the Suggested Additions to the Work Programme. It had been recognised that Members wanted the Annual Review of Complaints Report structured in such a way to provide Members with more details about the complaints received by the Council. It was noted that several other reports covering complaints and department-specific caseloads were regularly submitted to Committees and Working Groups of the Council. Officers therefore confirmed that in response to Members' comments, a review of the operational management of complaints, as well as the structure and process of the Complaints reports, was being undertaken and Members would be updated as soon as a unified approach had been formulated.

It was recognised that Surrey County Council's Bus Strategy proposal, as part of the National Bus Back Better Policy, could not be scrutinised at Overview and Scrutiny. This was due to the consultation process ending before the next meeting of the Committee. The Committee agreed that a response would be drafted by Officers and presented to both

the Portfolio Holder and members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee outside of the meeting and submitted to Surrey County Council as part of their consultation.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

11. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MONITORING INFORMATION

The Members of the Committee were invited to raise any points in respect of the recently published Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (PFMI).

Following the publication of the August PFMI, the Committee requested that the Exceptions Report be included once again, which was reflected in the September edition.

Following a query, Officers confirmed that the energy cost estimates had recently been reviewed and reflected the fluctuations that had occurred through August and September.

Officers confirmed that the new, quarterly, Working For All Performance Indicators, set to replace the PFMI, were expected to begin operation at the start of the next Municipal Year.

RESOLVED

That the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information (September 2022) be noted.

12. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK GROUP UPDATE OSC22-060

The Committee received the update report of the Economic Development Task Group.

RESOLVED

That the Economic Development Task Group Update be noted.

13. HIF TASK GROUP UPDATE OSC22-062

The Committee received the update report of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) Task Group.

The respective Chairs of the HIF and the dormant HIF Housing Outputs Task Groups agreed to discuss if further meetings of the HIF Housing Outputs Task Group were required subsequent to the meeting.

RESOLVED

That the HIF Task Group Update be noted.

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and ended at 9.17 pm.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2023

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on matters arising from the previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. 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 a regular report that is brought the Committee and covers the actions identified at the previous meetings. 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 20 February 2023.

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 Ayesha Azad cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Ann-Marie Barker cllrann-marie.barker@woking.gov.uk
Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Ayesha Azad cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	13 January 2023

Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes
 Update on Actions Arising from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 held on 21 November 2022

Minute 3		Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes
3.1	Action	The Committee requested at the meeting held on 26 September 2022 that information on how the Centres were monitored by the Communities Team be provided.
	Progress	KPIs are being developed and will be reported as part of the Living Well stats that are reviewed by the Health and Wellbeing Task Group.
	Responsible Person	Adam Thomas
	Status	Completed

Minute 6		Celebrate Woking 2022/2023 Review and Forward Plan
6.1	Action	Officers were asked to explore the reinstallation of photos that bedecked Market Walk for a number of years.
	Progress	Officers are investigating if and when the photos can be reinstalled.
	Responsible Person	Riëtte Thomas / Daid Loveless
	Status	Ongoing
6.2	Action	Officers were asked to explore whether a food festival could be considered as part of future Celebrate Woking programmes.
	Progress	Officers are investigating if a food festival could be added in future years.
	Responsible Person	Riëtte Thomas
	Status	Completed

Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

6.3	Action	Officers were asked to explore means of promoting events held by local sports clubs in the 2023 Celebrate Woking programme.
	Progress	Officers are what events are being run and can be added into the programme.
	Responsible Person	Riëtte Thomas
	Status	Ongoing

Minute 8		Energy Efficiency Report
8.1	Action	Officers requested to provide statistics on Council tenants in fuel-poverty and what there projections are for fuel-poverty this Winter.
	Progress	There is little information on the rates of fuel poverty specifically. The Government publishes data at a high level periodically; however, the most recent subregional data is from 2020. The Government produced a briefing on 9 May 2022 examining likely fuel poverty trends: Fuel Poverty in the UK.
	Responsible Person	Tracey Haskins / Adam Browne
	Status	Completed
8.2	Action	Members enquired what specific elements of national and local planning policy could be used to compel private developers to include more energy efficient designs and specific renewable energy technologies.
	Progress	This is being addressed as part of the review of the Supplementary Planning Document.
	Responsible Person	Planning Policy
	Status	Completed

Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

Minute 9		Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Risk Management Update
9.1	Action	The Committee made several recommendations to change the Strategic Risk Register: inclusion of tracking risk changes between editions of the register; removal of acronyms or inclusion of a glossary of terms; energy costs, inflationary risks and risk of not meeting 2030 Carbon Neutral target be more overtly represented; and climate risks be represented.
	Progress	Officers have taken the recommendations on board and they have been reflected in the Report to the Executive.
	Responsible Person	Strategic Directors
	Status	Completed

Minute 10		Work Programme
10.1	Action	The Committee requested that Thames Water be invited to discuss the local waterways.
	Progress	Thames Water have joined the meeting on 23 January 2023.
	Responsible Person	Democratic Services
	Status	Completed
10.2	Action	The Committee requested that Mark Rolt, ThamesWey CEO, be invited to provide an update.
	Progress	With the introduction of a new governance structure, including a ThamesWey Shareholder Advisory Group and Members briefing, it is considered not necessary at this time. This will be considered by the Committee as part of a review of the new Company Governance Structure in the 2023-24 Municipal Year.
	Responsible Person	Strategic Directors
	Status	Completed

Matters Arising from the Previous Minutes

10.3	Action	The Committee requested that senior representatives of Victoria Square Woking Limited (VSWL) be invited to provide an update to the Company.
	Progress	With the introduction of a new governance structure, including a VSWL Shareholder Advisory Group and Members briefing, it is considered not necessary at this time. This will be considered by the Committee as part of a review of the new Company Governance Structure in the 2023-24 Municipal Year.
	Responsible Person	Strategic Directors
	Status	Completed
10.4	Action	Accept Affinity Water's offer to make a presentation to Members.
	Progress	Affinity Water have agreed to attend the meeting on 23 January 2023.
	Responsible Person	Strategic Directors
	Status	Completed
10.5	Action	Review of Surrey County Council's proposed bus route changes in response to the National Bus Back Better Policy. It had been recognised that the end of the consultation period prevented the item from being brought to the Committee.
	Progress	Officers have provided a response after having consulted the Portfolio Holder and Members of the Committee outside of the meeting. The response submitted is attached as an appendix to this report.
	Responsible Person	Planning Policy
	Status	Completed

REPORT ENDS

Surrey Future Bus Network Review Consultation

Section 1: Route Investment Opportunities

1. Consider the following proposals. Do you think these are the right things to invest in? Please select one of the options below.

We are investing over £50m to improve bus services and supporting infrastructure across Surrey which supports our Greener Futures agenda. The aim of this investment is to grow bus patronage and improve our environment by:

- Increasing the number of zero emission buses,
- Helping buses to arrive on time through more bus priority measures such as bus friendly traffic management, bus lanes and bus stop clearways, and
- Expanding our Real Time Passenger Information displays and improving information available online.



Strongly agree

2. Consider the following proposals. Do you agree? Please select one of the options below.

We would like to invest in areas of Surrey that offer the best opportunity to grow bus patronage and therefore the locations where we are proposing for investment to be prioritised are:

- The east of Surrey, focusing on Reigate, Redhill, and access to Gatwick Airport
- Guildford and Woking, including the surrounding areas where routes start or terminate at the town centres
- The Blackwater Valley, including access to Frimley Park Hospital
- Links to Heathrow Airport and Kingston Upon Thames in London, as well as Sunbury, West Byfleet, Weybridge and Chertsey



Strongly agree

3. Do you think improvements in these locations will encourage you to use bus services more? Please select one of the options below.

Yes

4. Is there another area of Surrey where you would like to see investment in buses?

The proposal to invest in Woking and the surrounding areas with improved bus infrastructure is welcome and feeds into WBC's aims in terms of promoting less polluting means of travel.

In order to lower the Borough's carbon emissions it is important for Woking that people are able and encouraged to commute into their local Town or Village Centre by bike, bus, or on foot. This objective will not only lower carbon emissions but will encourage active travel for good health/wellbeing, reduce car dependency, and has potential to reduce pressure on the strategic road network (SRN) where people are able to access rail/bus services to make longer trips.

Improving bus links into Town/Village centres contributes towards enhancing thriving local neighbourhoods as people have better access to their local centre and can benefit from local services and events. This removes car dependency in local areas and creates more sustainable neighbourhoods. Improving bus access to bigger centres such as Byfleet and Woking Town Centre should be considered for further improvements.

To support local communities the proposed bus improvements should consider the accessibility of the service for all members of society irrespective of age or background. This means ensuring bus services are flexible, reliable and reflect the needs of the areas they visit. For example, many Town/Village centres in Woking feature communal green spaces and independent shops/businesses (which may be inaccessible for some residents). These uses are considered vital in ensuring local centres are attractive and distinguishable places for visitors and residents. Improving the bus network in these places will ensure residents can connect to and support their local area.

Older and less mobile residents would benefit if an existing service could occasionally be diverted through Horsell Village. This would enable people to visit independent shops in Horsell and could provide a commuter service, taking vehicles off the road. Similarly, Pyrford residents would benefit from services to local centres.

More regular and smaller buses that operate on a continuous loop around village centres and the Town Centre would also be supported.

Improve access to local centres for Pyrford residents via services.

Section 2: Maintaining or Changing Bus Services

We have looked in detail at the whole bus network, considering where to invest and where to manage the increased cost of running bus services. As a result of rising fuel and maintenance costs, driver competition, and reduced patronage pressures, bus operators are telling us they need more financial support to keep some bus routes running in their current form, from being reduced, and in some cases from being withdrawn altogether. This is a national problem. In Surrey, we have worked with all bus operators to identify where financial pressures are strongest.

Based on the current level of patronage, the increased cost needed to operate bus services in future, and where individual bus services fit into the overall bus network, we have set out proposals for:

- *Keeping most services as they are,*
- *Investing in infrastructure to support and prioritise bus services such as bus lanes, bus gates, and clearways,*
- *Changing some services to reduce their frequency, daily operating hours, or days of operation, and*
- *Transforming some services into Digital Demand Responsive Transport services.*

Broadly, we are looking to support bus services and their operators where we, and they, believe that patronage may recover close to pre-pandemic levels or where there is a current high level of demand at specific times of day or to specific destinations, such as schools and hospitals. However, there are some routes that are unlikely ever to recover to the levels of use seen before the pandemic. In these instances, we are proposing amending the bus service to better reflect how people are travelling.

5. *Do you agree with our overall approach? Please select one of the options below.*

Agree

6. We would like to provide you with the opportunity to comment on individual routes where a change is proposed. Please select the individual route(s) you want to comment on from the drop-down menus below the table. You may select up to three routes. If you don't select any routes, you will be taken to the next section of the questionnaire.

Please note that for some of the routes listed we are looking to introduce Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT). This is explained in more detail in Section 3 of the survey.

Main Service Proposals			
Service	Route	Days of operation	September 2023 proposals
520	Aldershot-Tongham-Ash-Normandy-Woking/Guildford	Tue/Wed/Fri	Combine with service 17 OR convert services 520 and 17 to DDRT.
592	Addlestone-Rowtown-New Haw-Woodham-Kettlewell Hill-Woking Station-Morrisons	Thur/Fri/Sat	Combine service 592 and 593 routes to operate five or six days a week. Withdraw extension to Brooklands.
593	Ottershaw-Lyne-Chertsey-Penton Park-Staines	Mon/Wed/Fri	See service 592 above

Route 520

The main concern regarding the proposal to convert the route to DDRT is around ensuring the general public is aware a service like this is available, and that the service is accessible for those who find it difficult to travel from Town to Town.

Converting the 520 service should be supported where it is demonstrated that this service will be widely advertised, accessible for those with difficulty travelling, and be targeted across age-groups-although we are aware this is not a service intended for school children to commute to/from school during peak periods. Not all users may be fluent with technology and so there should be further consideration as to how the service is advertised and communicated with the public.

The proposal to convert the 520 service to DDRT is especially supported where it can encourage more members of the public to use public transport to make shorter distances, as highlighted within the recent draft Town Centre Masterplan (TCM)...

“Transport accounts for 30% of the Borough’s carbon footprint. Whether you live, work or visit the Borough, the Council would like travelling around Woking to be easy while also contributing to and maintaining cleaner, greener borough. The Council’s priority would be that walking, cycling and public transport will be the first choice for short journeys.”

Therefore, improving public transport services (that reduce car dependency) and the proposal to increase the fleet of zero emissions buses is especially encouraged. Has consideration been given towards introducing hydrogen buses, as recently implemented in London/Birmingham?

There is a concern that some members of the public will still prefer to travel by bus regardless of how reduced the proposed bus service is. DDRT is a new method of travel for the majority in Woking. So, it is important that any new DDRT services are well advertised to the public as an alternative but similar transport service with more benefits i.e., reduced fares in comparison to current bus operators (journeys under 5 miles are even cheaper), the reliability of the service and the ability to book 7 days in advance.

Route 593

Key for Woking is ensuring that more people are encouraged to walk/bike or Bus into their local Town or Village centre. The TCM outlines the council's intentions to encourage more use of public transport for shorter journeys and improve connections into and around the Town Centre.

Relevant General Infrastructure objectives outline the TCM will...

"... deliver committed and emerging schemes that will provide efficient and sustainable transport networks – create a high-quality network of streets in and around the town centre, and improve the environment for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport."

By improving the environment and street condition for those who cycle, walk or bus, it is anticipated more people will choose to travel sustainably, or only use car travel for a portion of the journey which can reduce pressure on the strategic road network (SRN).

Within Transport objectives it is outlined the TCM will...

*"Support the town centre regeneration and other development planned in Woking Borough, by improving access to the town centre and helping to lower traffic congestion; and
Increase the range of sustainable travel options, which have a lower impact on local air quality and lower carbon emissions"*

On this basis both proposed changes to the 520/592/593 bus services are supported as long as all proposals ensure routes into and around Woking Town Centre remain viable.

One concern with merging the 592 and 593 bus service and removing the extension to Brooklands is that this will not encourage further use of the bus service as journeys, in some case, will become longer. Key to ensuring that more people travel sustainably means ensuring services remain feasible for people in terms of time, frequency, reliability, and proximity to healthcare/education/green spaces and other priority infrastructure.

Please note, although it falls just outside the Borough, the Brooklands retail park is one of a few retail centres (outside Woking Town Centre) that provides a place to shop for Woking residents. Therefore, removing the 593 extension to Brooklands may deprive others of access to this location and may encourage use of private vehicles, and so would not be supported.

Section 3: Expanding Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT)

Surrey County Council has successfully introduced a new on demand, door to door shared bus service in north Mole Valley. User feedback has been extremely positive, and we are looking to introduce more DDRT services in areas where we believe it will improve the local transport offer. In areas where the timetabled bus network is more limited, a DDRT scheme may provide a better travel offer for

residents than a timetabled service. In those instances, we are proposing that those bus services be replaced with a DDRT scheme.

What is Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT)?

Rather than being restricted by traditional bus timetables, accessible electric minibuses are available for travel when you need them. To register and book to travel you only need an email address or phone number; the minibus is available to book online or via a smartphone app (to support all users a telephone booking service is also available). Bookings can be made up to seven days in advance or on the same day, with a minimum of 30 minutes notice required.

For more information visit the web site: www.surreycc.gov.uk/molevalleyconnect

9. Looking at the list of areas and routes proposed for transition to DDRT, do you think these are the right areas and routes to choose? Please select one of the options below.

DDRT Service Proposals			
Service	Route	Days of operation	September 2023 proposals
520	Aldershot, Ash Road, Tongham, Ash Green, Shawfields, Ash, Normandy, Fairlands, Royal Surrey Hospital, Park Barn, and Guildford	Tues/Wed/Fri	Convert to DDRT.

Agree

10. Is there another location in Surrey where you would like to see DDRT in the future?

Woking maintains good transport links across the Borough and with neighbouring Towns. However, as highlighted within the TCM an issue is ensuring people use more sustainable means of travel to other local areas. From this perspective increasing DDRT services around Town/Village Centres in Woking would be considered more sustainable as journeys can be concentrated within an area and demand pinpointed directly to areas where people travel more often than what current bus services would allow.

Places to consider for future DDRT services: Horsell, Pyrford, Byfleet

If DDRT is planned to roll out further, it would be important to outline the financial implications of running such a service i.e. How much is being budgeted to educate the public on DDRT? How long will this service run for and be maintained? Will the app provider ensure the technology is kept up to date? Has the cost of effective DDRT communications been factored into calculations on cost savings? There is concern that those who may benefit most from this service may not be fluent with technology and so additional costs would be needed to ensure those people can be reached.

Currently the connect service provides text notifications to inform users about their bus booking, is there scope for the app expand and show where the buses are at times of the day? If a bus is seen in the local area people may be more inclined to use it.

AFFINITY WATER

Executive Summary

Affinity Water's draft Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) has been launched for consultation. The plan is published every five years and sets out the future actions needed to combat water shortfall and provide reliable, resilient, sustainable, efficient, and affordable water between 2025 and 2075.

Affinity Water is seeking engagement with their consultation from stakeholders and customers, including Woking Borough Council and residents of Woking Borough. A representative of Affinity Water will present to the Committee to explain the key details of the plan, the options Affinity Water has identified, and answer any questions.

The consultation is running until 20 February 2023. Full consultation documents and the questions can be found at <https://affinitywater.uk.engagementhq.com/wrmp>.

Recommendation

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

- (i) the report be noted; and
- (ii) the presentation be noted

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

Background Papers:	None.
Reporting Person:	Lucy Parr, National Management Trainee Email: lucy.parr@woking.gov.uk , Extn: 3243
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Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Josh Brown Email: cllrJosh.Brown@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	13 January 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Affinity Water's Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) aims to address a significant future shortfall in water resources within their supply area. The plan is published every five years, and provides a roadmap for ensuring the supply of reliable, sustainable, and affordable water between 2025 and 2075.
- 1.2 The draft plan has been launched for consultation, inviting comment from stakeholders and customers, and is running until 20 February 2023. The final plan will be published in Autumn 2023.

2.0 Affinity Water

- 2.1 Affinity Water operates across the southeast of England, supplying, on average, 950 million litres of water every day to more than 3.83 million people.
- 2.2 Woking borough is exclusively supplied water by Affinity Water.
- 2.3 Affinity Water produces a WRMP every five years to address future problems for their water supply.

3.0 The Water Resources Management Plan

- 3.1 The WRMP sets out a roadmap for how Affinity Water will cope with a possible future shortfall of water caused by a rising number of customers and the need to reduce groundwater abstractions. The shortfall is estimated to be 449 million litres a day by 2050. The aim is to create a reliable, resilient, sustainable, efficient, and affordable water supply to customers between 2025 and 2075.
- 3.2 Currently, 65% of Affinity Water's supply is abstracted from groundwater sources. As part of their 'environmental destination', to provide sustainable, high-quality water while making better use of water supply and safeguarding the local environment, these abstractions must be reduced and alternative sources found.
- 3.3 Possible actions detailed in the WRMP include reducing customer demand, reducing leakage further than ever before, smart metering, and investment in new infrastructure for new sources of water, including working across the water industry to plan and share resources regionally. The plan will also make Woking Borough's water supplies more resilient to droughts, which are becoming more frequent due to climate change.
- 3.4 The plan has been put together by Affinity Water working closely with the Environment Agency, Natural England, river restoration groups and environmental organisations.
- 3.5 A representative of Affinity Water will present to the committee to explain the key details of the plan, the options Affinity Water has identified, and answer any questions.

4.0 The consultation

- 4.1 The consultation consists of eight open questions, inviting stakeholder and customer feedback on different sections of the WRMP.
- 4.2 The questions can be viewed on page 30 of the WRMP's 'Non technical summary document', viewable from the WRMP webpage at <https://affinitywater.uk.engagementhq.com/wrmp>.

5.0 Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 The consultation supports the Corporate Strategy's Greener Communities strand by helping to develop a more sustainable approach to water supply in the Borough, and making our supply more resilient to droughts.
- 5.2 The consultation supports the Corporate Strategy's Healthier Communities strand by helping to ensure long term access to clean, reliable water for residents.

6.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 6.1 There are no finance and risk implications associated with the consultation.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 6.2 There are no equalities and human resources implications associated with the consultation.

Legal

- 6.3 There are no legal implications associated with the consultation.

7.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 7.1 The consultation opened on 14 November 2022 and will close on 20 February 2023. The final plan will be published in Autumn 2023. Affinity Water is welcoming responses from stakeholders and customers.
- 7.2 The consultation can be accessed online on the Affinity Water website at <https://affinitywater.uk.engagementhq.com/wrmp>. Alternatively, responses can be submitted by email to water.resources@defra.gov.uk, or by post to Defra Water Resources Seacole 3rd Floor, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF.
- 7.3 Affinity Water is also running a number of engagement events regionally and locally to explain more about the plan. Future events can be viewed on the Affinity Water website at <https://affinitywater.uk.engagementhq.com/wrmp>.

REPORT ENDS

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2023

THAMES WATER BRIEFING

Executive Summary

At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 October 2022 Members agreed to invite representatives of Thames Water to discuss concerns that are held over the health of the Rivers Bourne and Wey that run through the Borough, particularly in relation to the effects of sewage overflow. Thames Water operates wastewater and sewage treatment infrastructure adjacent to waterways in the Borough.

Thames Water has accepted an invitation to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, provide a presentation, and answer queries raised by Members.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

- (i) the report be noted; and
- (ii) the presentation be noted.

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

Background Papers:	None.
Reporting Person:	Toby Nash, Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer Email: toby.nash@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3056
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Shadow Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Josh Brown Email: cllrJosh.Brown@woking.gov.uk
Date Published:	13 January 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Following a request made by Councillor John Morley, the Committee agreed to invite Thames Water to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 Members are concerned that Water Treatment Plants operated by Thames Water in the Borough are discharging untreated sewage into waterways.
- 1.3 It is hoped that the session will; assist Members and residents in understanding the issue of sewage overflow and water quality, the responsibilities of relevant organisations, and possible actions that might be taken in the future.

2.0 Thames Water

- 2.1 Thames Water is the largest provider of water and wastewater facilities in the UK.
- 2.2 Over 15 million people have their wastewater processed by Thames Water across London and the Thames Valley. In addition, Thames Water provides water to 10 million people.
- 2.3 Thames Water provides all mains wastewater services in Woking Borough and the surrounding area.

3.0 Processing Plants

- 3.1 Thames Water operates a Sewage Treatment Works on Carters Lane, Old Woking, adjacent to Hoe Stream.
- 3.2 Thames Water also operates a Sewage Treatment Works on Broadford Lane adjacent to The Bourne river. The works is along the border shared with the neighbouring borough of Surrey Heath.

4.0 Water quality in Woking borough

- 4.1 Water quality is a complex issue in relation to our rivers and has many factors, with sewerage overflows being just one of them. Others are:
 - highway discharges - road network runoff is discharged directly into rivers untreated, resulting in microplastic (tyre particles) and chemicals from our highways entering our watercourses)
 - misconnections (foul discharges connected to the surface water sewer system (domestic property extensions are at times a cause of this)
 - agricultural land runoff (fertilisers and pesticides)
 - parks and golf course land run off (fertilisers, pesticides)
- 4.2 Often many of these pollutants are held within the silt and settle to the beds and banks of the rivers for many years to come until they are disturbed. To improve water quality within the rivers it is necessary to also address how we deal with our land management practices within the catchment and look at more sustainable options, such as different fertilisers, installation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (including in our highways) and our general water management practices. With regard to highway runoff, Woking borough is retrofitting raingardens in some areas to treat, attenuate and control surface runoff before it enters the river.
- 4.3 Often during summer months water quality drops within rivers as the water levels drop in the channels, meaning the chemicals that enter our waterways are no longer sufficiently diluted, the rivers also become more accessible, and the silts often get disturbed. Dry conditions often mean the build-up of chemicals on our roadways, and result in further disturbances of the silts that historically hold some of these pollutants. Summer rain often washes the build-up of

pollutants from our highways directly into the river, which are frequently low, causing sudden drops of water quality. Intense summer storms that cause surface water flooding often result in the foul system becoming hydraulically overloaded - foul systems in highways are aerated (holes in the manholes) allowing the flood water to enter - this causes the sewer overflows to the rivers but also the highway drainage transfers this untreated water directly to the watercourses as well.

- 4.4 It is important to monitor the areas that possible pollutants can enter the watercourse. Downstream of outfalls, with the aim of identifying key sources and incorporating mitigation to help reduce these pollutants entering. Highway run off is however more difficult to address.
- 4.5 Woking Council has been part of the Wey Landscape Partnership for a number of years, helping to address some issues in the catchments (including water quality and invasive species), improve monitoring and undertaking enhancement work. The Partnership is chaired by Surrey Wildlife Trust.
- 4.6 The Wildlife Trust also runs a program called river fly monitoring through which volunteers are trained and record the presence of river fly (a key indicator on the quality of the river water and its habitat) as well as water quality testing. The majority of this work to date however has focused in the upper catchment, led by the River Wey Trust who have been helped and supported by Surrey Wildlife Trust.
- 4.7 In terms of sewerage overflows, the two main local treatment plants are located at Byfleet (Wisley Lane) and Old Woking (Carters Lane discharges to the Hoe Stream, a tributary of the River Wey).
- 4.8 Thames Water consulted this year in relation to its Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan. For more information see www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/regulation/drainage-and-wastewater-management This document will be a key component to helping ensure water quality is improved in our waterways in the future.
- 4.9 Defra is currently looking into implementation of the Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB), which would mean that any works that have a drainage implication would need SAB consent. If implemented correctly with the correct organisation identified as the SAB, this would mean all development including highway works and permitted development works will need to incorporate Sustainable drainage systems. Therefore, new highway works would no longer rely solely on the traditional gully drainage system that transfers pollutants quickly to the watercourse but would need to treat the water before it enters as well as controlling the runoff rates. These systems can also reduce the risk of surface water flooding from intense storms, reducing the risk of hydraulically overloading the foul sewers. Whilst such a step would not retrofit to address current issues, it could ensure the problem is not made worse.
- 4.10 A further local opportunity to assist water quality in our waterways is by designing areas into any future local flood risk reduction schemes.

5.0 Commitments from Thames Water

- 5.1 On 15 March 2022 Sarah Bentley, CEO of Thames Water, spoke at the Rivers Trust Spring Conference on the topic of untreated discharges into waterways.
- 5.2 At the conference, Sarah Bentley reiterated Thames Water's stance "that all discharges of untreated sewage are unacceptable, even when they are permitted."¹
- 5.3 Thames Water is currently reviewing all of its sites to ensure that they are compliant with the requirements made by regulatory bodies under all conditions ⁽¹⁾.

¹ www.thameswater.co.uk/media-library/home/about-us/newsroom/latest-news/2022/April/sarah-bentley-rivers-trust-speech.pdf [accessed 19 December 2022]

5.4 At the same conference, Thames Water committed to reducing the total annual duration of spills to 50% and reducing spill duration by 80% in sensitive catchments by 2030.

5.5 The commitment to reduce sewage discharges has been reiterated in the Thames Water 'Annual Report and Sustainability Report'².

6.0 Statistics

6.1 A temporary licence (TH-TEMP.2484-001) to discharge prior to processing was granted on 2 November 1989 which ran until 2 September 2010³. A new licence (TH-TEMP.2484-002) was granted on 3 September 2010 and is in effect⁴

6.1.1 Storm overflow annual return statistics for 2021 indicate there has been 1139.87 total hours of spill into the Bourne⁵ from commissioning in 2019.

6.2 A licence (CTCR.1977) to discharge prior to processing has been in operation since 18 March 1983 covering the Thames Water site at Lyne Lane in Chertsey.

6.2.1 Storm overflow annual return statistics for 2021 indicate there has been 654.22 total hours of spill into Chertsey Bourne⁶ from commissioning in 2019

7.0 Corporate Strategy

7.1 The invitation to discuss sewage and wastewater overspill supports the Woking For All Strategy's Greener Communities strand by scrutinising the health of local waterways, seeking to protect environmental quality, conserve and restore existing habitats.

7.2 It also supports the Corporate Strategy's Healthier Communities strand by helping to ensure long term access to clean, reliable water for residents.

8.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

8.1 There are no finance or risk implications associated with this report.

Equalities and Human Resources

8.2 There are no equalities or human resource implications associated with this report.

Legal

8.3 At this stage there are no legal implications associated with this report.

9.0 Engagement and Consultation

9.1 Woking Borough Council reviewed and responded to Thames Water's Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan consultation that was released in 2022.

REPORT ENDS

² www.thameswater.co.uk/media-library/home/about-us/investors/our-results/current-reports/thames-water-annual-and-sustainability-report-2021-22.pdf [accessed 19 December 2022]

³ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/water-discharges/registration/TH-TEMP.2484-001>

⁴ <https://environment.data.gov.uk/public-register/water-discharges/registration/TH-TEMP.2484-002>

⁵ [Event Duration Monitoring - Storm Overflows - Annual Returns - 2021 \(data.gov.uk\)](#) (zipped dataset)

⁶ [Event Duration Monitoring - Storm Overflows - Annual Returns - 2021 \(data.gov.uk\)](#) (zipped dataset)

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2023

PLAY AREA PROVISION

Executive Summary

Council Officers previously reported on play areas to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November 2019 and January 2021. At these meetings Councillors expressed a desire for a review of play area refurbishment requirements beyond those previously identified in the current refurbishment programme. Of those four remaining sites identified for refurbishment, Loop Road Recreation Ground was completed in December 2021, providing an inclusive and accessible design. Progress is now also well underway towards completing the remaining three play areas (Horsell Moor, Oakfield and Sutton Green) within the next year.

Alongside this, officers have been developing a system for assessing the future refurbishment needs across the borough's existing play areas. This takes into consideration the age, life expectancy and general condition of the play equipment. A scoring system for these criteria will provide a priority score for each play area and help to identify the most urgent works. Through this approach officers will also be able to identify those cases where play areas are in generally good condition but may have individual items or issues that require more urgent attention.

Further to these most essential works, a strategic assessment of the Council's play areas is also proposed, to assess the distribution and effectiveness of all existing play areas and identify where improvements can be made, subject to funds being available, to have the greatest impact to the communities that they serve. With support from Members of this Committee, and subject to any amendments, it is the intention to submit this report for consideration at the Executive in February 2023.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RECOMMEND TO EXECUTIVE That

- (i) the proposed approach to assessing play area refurbishment priorities outlined in the report be agreed;**
- (ii) officers begin developing a programme of works for those priorities identified through the refurbishment assessment, within the available project budgets for the coming year; and**
- (iii) officers seek proposals from appropriate consultants to undertake a strategic assessment of the Council's play areas, as outlined in the report.**

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

Background Papers: None.

Reporting Person: Giorgio Framalitto, Strategic Director – Place
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Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ellen Nicholson
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Shadow Portfolio Holder: Councillor Melanie Whitehand
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Date Published: 13 January 2023

1.0 Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Council manages 42 play areas across the borough, including Cowshott Crescent which is just outside of the borough boundary at a Woking Borough Homes development near the Army Training Centre in Pirbright. These range in size from small local play areas, designed primarily for toddlers, to larger destination play areas which cater for children of all ages.
- 1.2 General maintenance of play areas is currently undertaken by Serco through the Environmental Grounds Maintenance Contract. However, where necessary specialist play contractors are engaged to carry out more significant or specialist works.
- 1.3 Serco have suitably qualified operatives who undertake weekly visual and quarterly operational inspections of all Council owned play areas, to ensure maintenance issues are highlighted and resolved appropriately. In addition, all play areas receive an annual independent inspection from an external inspector, usually in the autumn.

2.0 Current play area refurbishment programme

- 2.1 In addition to general maintenance, the Council also has a programme for play area refurbishments.
- 2.2 The current programme was adopted in 2003 and identified 29 play areas for refurbishment. The remaining seven at the time were less than 10 years old, so were not included in this. To date 25 have been fully refurbished, and two removed and reprovisioned locally. Most recently completed was the refurbishment of Loop Road Recreation Ground play area (winter 2021/22), which was designed to incorporate inclusive play opportunities, including equipment accessible for wheelchair users. The Council has also adopted several other new play areas, built as part of local residential developments, during this time. This leaves three play areas from the original programme remaining for full refurbishment - Horsell Moor, Oakfield (in Goldsworth Park) and Sutton Green.
- 2.3 £135,000 has been allocated in the investment programme to complete these three sites in 2022/23. Initially it was thought that all three would be procured and completed together. However, officers have been approached by the Sutton Green Residents Association, who wish to apply for external funding through Suez's Landfill Communities Fund to supplement the budget for refurbishment at Sutton Green play area. The Residents Association have made initial enquiries and established that the project would be eligible for this scheme, and it is anticipated that an application will be progressed Q1 2023. Due to the slightly longer timescales anticipated for securing this funding it was agreed that procurement of the new Sutton Green play area should take place separately from Horsell Moor and Oakfield.
- 2.4 Procurement of the Horsell Moor and Oakfield sites was undertaken during summer 2022. An open tender was run, through which four suppliers submitted proposals, and the contract awarded to KOMPAN. The designs for both sites will not only replace the existing play equipment, but also increase the number and variety of play activities on offer to achieve an overall uplift in play value.
- 2.5 A public consultation took place over the autumn via the Woking Community Forum, giving residents the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and we also received a range of suggestions for additional equipment at both sites, although unfortunately, most of these requests would not be feasible within the existing project budget.
- 2.6 However, during the consultation period, local Ward Councillors also expressed an interest in exploring opportunities to expand the scope of these designs, in line with consultation feedback. Possibly utilising neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations. Officers have since been liaising with the play provider to consider options and understand

implications of including different additional items. Once revised proposals have been submitted, with associated costs, officers will consult with Ward Councillors regarding additional funding requirements.

- 2.7 While it had been anticipated that these two play areas would be delivered by the end of March 2023, additional time has been required to explore options to enhance the designs, which is likely to result in the expected installation timeframes to be extended. It is now anticipated that installation will commence in the spring, with each site expected to take around 4 weeks to install. This means the new play areas would be ready ahead of the summer. Officers will continue to update Ward Councillors on any further revised timeframes as soon as these are known.

3.0 Recent works

- 3.1 In 2021/22 £100,000 funding was agreed to undertake more urgent repairs to address health and safety issues at several play areas across the borough, the cost for which could not be covered by the annual revenue budget for play area maintenance at the time.
- 3.2 This predominantly related to the rubber safety surfacing, which provides impact attenuation beneath equipment. Over time this is susceptible to damage through general wear and tear, as well as shrinkage around the edges. During the annual independent play area inspections, a number of these issues were highlighted as being a medium risk, meaning they required more urgent attention. The Council subsequently tendered for a package of works to complete surfacing repairs at 14 sites.
- 3.3 The appointed contractor completed the first block of these works during spring/summer 2022 and completed further works in the autumn. Since commencing the project, some sites have subsequently required a change in specification to ensure repairs are suitable. This uplift in specification has resulted in fewer sites from the original list being completed within the contract budget. Those remaining sites will now be completed separately.
- 3.3 In addition to the safety surfacing repairs, it was agreed that this funding would also be used to address significant works required to certain items of play equipment. This has included replacement of key component parts on three multi-play units, replacement of two swing frames, replacement of springers, and the re-painting of play equipment required at 10 sites.

4.0 Future refurbishment requirements

- 4.1 With the current refurbishment programme due to be completed once the remaining three sites are installed, it is now an appropriate time to consider future requirement for play area refurbishment works. Whereas the existing refurbishment programme took the approach of fully replacing play areas one by one, it is recognised that a new programme will need to take a slightly different approach.
- 4.2 Financial constraints, now and for the foreseeable future, mean it is not economical to fully replace a play area without strong justification that all equipment has or is soon reaching its end of life. As part of the independent annual play area inspection, the current condition of most play areas has been assessed as generally good overall.
- 4.3 Modern equipment generally carries a 25-30+ year guarantee. With the number of play areas refurbished under the current programme, it would be expected that a good proportion of equipment should still be in a generally good condition. However, as has been seen with the safety surfacing and other repairs required over the past year, certain parts do wear more quickly and therefore require refurbishment to maintain the overall condition and anticipated life expectancy.

- 4.4 As well as the condition of these play areas, it is also important to consider how effective they are at serving the community that they are intended for, both individually and between play areas within a given area. Then to determine how best to utilise funding available to provide the greatest overall benefit for local children. For example, might the community be better served by upgrading a larger play area at the centre of a community that is better connected and easier to access for more people, or might more modest improvements to smaller play areas that are currently less effective provide a greater overall benefit to the community.
- 4.5 It is therefore proposed that the approach to assessing play area refurbishment need is carried out in two phases. In the first instance, to identify where the most urgent need is based on the condition of existing equipment. Then beyond this to look more strategically at where investment would provide the greatest benefit to local children.
- 4.6 Through the existing play area inspection regimes, officers had identified a number of these more urgent repair / refurbishment requirements across the borough. Although these may not be significant enough that they justify wholesale replacement of the play area at this time, those issues identified will need addressing to ensure the site remains safe to use.
- 4.7 To address this, a further £100,000 project funding was allocated in the Investment Programme 2022/23, with a view to funding the same amount for each financial year up to and including 2024/25, to undertake priority refurbishment works. This was in addition to existing revenue budgets. The current financial position for this project is discussed in more detail further down in this report.
- 4.8 Moving forward, the intention would be to refurbish as far as is required to maintain a good condition, prolong the overall life expectancy and where possible to provide an uplift in the overall play value, with specific consideration for inclusive and accessible play. This approach will enable more play areas across the borough to receive the most necessary refurbishment works, rather than focusing the resource available on full replacement at fewer sites.
- 4.9 To understand and identify priorities across all play areas, and ensure the most effective use of the funding available, a spreadsheet has been developed to individually assess the current need at each play area. This includes a scoring system to evaluate each play area according to age, life expectancy and condition of equipment, to determine priority. A full breakdown of the scoring system and how it works can be found in Appendix 1. Taken together these factors provide a total score out of 60 for each play area, allowing them to be ranked from highest to lowest to indicate priority.
- 4.10 Alongside the scored criteria, various other details have been included in this review, which will help to identify works required at each site and opportunities for other improvements. This includes a play value assessment, opportunities for inclusive play, and specific issues identified through inspections. Full details of these can be found in Appendix 2.
- 4.11 The 'specific issues' will be the primary basis for informing the works which need to be undertaken to bring the play area into better overall condition. However, there are some cases where sites scoring lower for overall priority, may still have issues which individually require more urgent attention. By recording these through this heading it enables them to be picked up and actioned as a priority.
- 4.12 Information on inclusivity and play value will also help to better inform the works undertaken and ensure that the improvements target current deficiencies in play provision at any given site. This means that as well as simply addressing safety issues, the funding will be utilised to achieve an overall uplift in the standard of play provision where feasible.
- 4.13 This assessment is flexible and has been designed to be continuously updated. For example, the life expectancy of equipment is re-assessed yearly during the annual independent inspection. It is also possible that new, more urgent issues will arise through Serco's routine

inspections. The assessment spreadsheet will be kept updated with the latest information available, and the priorities list amended to reflect this. Likewise, as improvements are completed at each play area, its score will also be updated. The spreadsheet should therefore be considered as a snapshot of the current position.

- 4.14 Through this assessment mechanism an initial list of works will be compiled to begin working through over the course of the next year, subject to funding. It is anticipated that specialist contractors will be approached to undertake most of these works.
- 4.15 While this approach to assessing condition will help to identify initial priority works, officers will also seek to engage with a suitable play consultant to undertake a strategic assessment of play area refurbishment need. This will consider the distribution and effectiveness of all existing play areas and identify works that will provide the greatest overall benefits. Officers have already held initial discussions with one potential consultant and would intend to work with a consultant to develop an approach to this assessment, subject to agreement from the Executive in February.
- 4.15 This strategic assessment would not delay those more urgent priority works identified through the refurbishment assessment outlined above but will beneficially feed into the overall assessment to refine priorities for play moving forward.

5.0 Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 This report directly relates to the following objective in the 'Woking for All' supplementary strategy for 2022 to 2023:

'Put in place an updated programme for playground refurbishments, recognising the value and importance of accessible play provision.'

This includes the following actions:

Develop a play area improvement plan and ensure delivery of the current plan to upgrade three play areas.

Undertake an audit of the current play area provision and highlight options to achieve accessibility for all including provision for neuro-diverse children.

- 5.2 This work also relates to the Woking for All objective regarding adopting Green Flag standards for the Council's parks, starting in Woking Park. Ensuring our play areas are well maintained will form an important part of meeting Green Flag standards.
- 5.3 The agreed extension to the Environmental Maintenance contract with Serco, from April 2023, includes a requirement for Serco to deliver a Green Flag management plan for Woking Park. Officers will continue to liaise with Serco to develop this management plan over the coming year, while continuing to implement practices and other improvements in line with Green Flag standards.
- 5.4 The Woking for All strategy 2022-27 also highlights the delivery of the first play area in the Sheerwater redevelopment red phase as a priority for 2022/23. The latest update provided by ThamesWey advises that this will be completed by May 2023.
- 5.5 Play provision across the borough also helps to support the objectives of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Play provides many benefits to children, including encouraging physical activity and providing opportunities for inclusive social interaction, which all contributes to a child's development and positive physical and mental wellbeing.

6.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

- 6.1 £135,000 has already been committed to the refurbishments at Horsell Moor, Oakfield and Sutton Green play areas.
- 6.2 The Sutton Green Residents Association have expressed an interest in applying for additional external funding. Officers are currently in discussion with members of the groups to take this forward.
- 6.3 £100,000 project funding was agreed to get started with the most urgent repairs identified in 2021/22.
- 6.4 A further £100,000 was identified in the Investment Programme 2022/23 to continue these works, with a view to extending this into 2023/24 and 2024/25. It is now anticipated that £50,000 of this proposed budget will be drawn down in the current financial year to meet requirements.
- 6.5 It is also intended to use part of the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) allocation to support future spend on this project. Though it should be noted that the majority of the Council's UKSPF allocation will be available in 2024/25.
- 6.6 The UKSPF is the UK Government's replacement for the EU Structural Investment Fund. The Autumn 2021 budget provided commitment of £2.6bn for UKSPF as part of the Government's Levelling-Up Fund, starting in 2022/23 with £0.4bn, 2023/24 with £0.7bn and 2024/25 with £1.5bn. In line with the other Surrey local authorities, Woking was allocated £1m over the three-year period, with a yearly allocation of 4% of the fund in 2022/23, 9% in 2023/24 and 87% in 2024/25. Of this, £349,000 has been identified for green infrastructure projects, of which £150,000 is proposed for play area improvements in 2024/25.
- 6.7 Beyond this, other future spend will be subject to suitable funding being identified, including the yet to be finalised 2023/24 Investment Programme.
- 6.8 There may also be opportunities to fund improvement work through other funding sources. For example, through the neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allocations or other external community funding.

Equalities and Human Resources

- 6.6 Local play areas provide important opportunities for children to play together, or alone, enjoying exciting and challenging activities, contributing positively to a child's development. In particular for those who may not otherwise have access to such opportunities. The proposed approach to assessing play area refurbishment priorities will ensure that play areas across the borough are refurbished according to greatest need, reducing the risk of old equipment needing to be taken out of use, or in a worst-case scenario, play area closures.
- 6.7 The play area refurbishment assessment spreadsheet also highlights opportunities to improve inclusivity and accessibility in our play areas. Where play areas are presenting a similar priority score, those with the greater opportunities for children with additional needs could be afforded additional prioritisation.

Legal

- 6.8 The legal team have confirmed that there are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 Engagement and Consultation

- 7.1 Public consultation has taken place on the designs for refurbishments at Horsell Moor and Oakfield.
- 7.2 The local residents association are engaged in the replacement play area at Sutton Green, so will have input when writing the specification requirements for the new play area. It is also anticipated that a wider public consultation would be undertaken once the proposal for the new equipment is received.
- 7.3 Public consultation would also be considered on any other larger refurbishment scheme, where a significant proportion of any given play area is being replaced.

REPORT ENDS

Appendix 1 - Play Area Refurbishment Scoring System

Introduction

Scoring for each play area to be divided into the following categories:

- Age
- End of life assessment
- Condition of equipment

The criteria outlined in this document will be used to award scores, which will then be adjusted accordingly to ensure each category carries an appropriate weighting. The scores for each category are then combined to give a total score for each site out of 60.

Age

Each site has been attributed a score from 0 – 4 as outlined in the table below. The score awarded is based on the year in which the play areas was last refurbished or first installed, whichever is most recent. The score awarded is then multiplied by 5, meaning the maximum that can be scored is 20.

Age (years)	Points Awarded
21 +	4
16 – 20	3
11 – 15	2
6 – 10	1
0 - 5	0

Example:

Strathcona Gardens was adopted as a new play area in 2007, so is 15 years old and therefore awarded 2 points.

$$2 \times 5 = 10$$

Meaning this site scores 10 for the age category.

End of life

The annual independent play area inspection includes an estimated end of life assessment for each item of play equipment.

To score this category, each item of equipment is scored individually, using the table below as a guide, and added together to give a total score for each play area. To standardise this across sites with different numbers of equipment, this total is then divided by the number of items at the site to calculate an average.

Averaged score is then multiplied by 5, meaning the maximum that can be scored is 20.

End of life estimate (years)	Points Awarded
< 3	4
3 - 5	3
5 - 8	2
8 – 10	1
10+	0

Example

Strathcona Gardens has the following equipment with expected end of life:

Equipment	End of life estimate (years)	Points Awarded
Seesaw	8 - 10 years	1
Springer (fish)	8 - 10 years	1
Junior multi-play	10+ years	0
Toddler swings	10+ years	0
Junior swings	10+ years	0
Total		2

$2/5 = 0.4$ (averaged score)

$0.4 \times 5 = 2$ (weighted score)

The site therefore scores 2 overall for the end-of-life category.

N.B. It should be noted that end of life estimations are only approximations and cannot always be guaranteed. It is anticipated that the annual inspector will include end of life assessments in future inspections to ensure accuracy of these is maintained as best possible. Where there are changes from year to year, this scoring matrix will be updated accordingly.

Condition of equipment

As part of the annual play area inspections, the condition of each play equipment asset is attributed with a rating of either poor, average, good or as new.

To score this category each individual item of equipment is scored individually as indicated in the table below and added together to provide a total score for each play area. To standardise this across sites with different numbers of equipment, this total is then divided by the number of items at that site to calculate an average.

Score for each site to then be multiplied by 4 to give a score out of 20.

Asset condition	Points Awarded
Poor	5
Average	2
Good	1
As New	0

Example

Strathcona Gardens has the following equipment with condition rated accordingly:

Springer - average

Seesaw - average

Junior multi-play – average

Toddler swings – average

Junior swings - average

Each item would therefore be given a score of 2,

$$2+2+2+2+2 = 10$$

$$10/5 = 2$$

$$2 \times 4 = 8$$

The site would therefore score 8 for the condition of equipment category.

Overall scores

The scores out of 20 for age, life expectancy and condition are combined to give a total out of 60. Taking the example of **Strathcona Gardens** scores are summarised in the table below.

Category	Score
Age	10
End of Life	2
Condition	8
Total	20

Other criteria (not scored)

	Description
LAP / LEAP / NEAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LAP - Local Area for Play (small local playgrounds primarily for under-6s) • LEAP - Locally Equipped Area for Play (For children who are beginning to go out and play independently) • NEAP - Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (destination play areas mainly for older children but with play opportunities for younger children too) <p>More info on playground standards guidance at: http://www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance</p>
Play Value	<p>Assessment completed by play inspector from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA). Play areas are given a rating of Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average or Poor in each of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SITE OVERALL (Ignoring Equipment) • AMBIENCE (Visual appeal/condition) • TODDLER PROVISION • JUNIOR PROVISION
Inclusivity	<p>Inclusive play is the idea that all children should have the same opportunities to access play and play together in the same space. Although the focus of inclusive play is often associated with catering to special needs and disabilities, it broadens further to include a variety of factors including age, background etc. Use of the term has grown in recent years, but it is now widely recognised that all play area designs should incorporate inclusivity.</p> <p>The following 5 principles for inclusive design are taken from guidance produced by the play company HAGS (see link below), which provides useful guidance to understand current provision and identify opportunities to improve inclusivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility – ensuring accessible routes to and within the play area where possible, with consideration to wheelchairs and mobility aids in particular, e.g. car parking, surfaced footpaths etc. • Multi-sensory elements – inclusion of equipment that

	<p>stimulates the following sensory systems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Auditory i.e. sound - Proprioceptive e.g. climbing, jumping - Tactile i.e. touch, texture etc. - Vestibular e.g. rocking, spinning, bouncing, swinging - Visual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play for all – items with varying levels of challenge which engages children of various ages and abilities. • Opportunities for calm- secluded areas for children to retreat to for quiet play. • Social environments – incorporating a variety of social environments which encourage different types of social play. <p>https://www.hags.com/en-us/designing-inclusive-playgrounds</p>
<p>Priority Areas</p>	<p>The borough has three areas which fall below the 4th decile nationally, according to the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) at the Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) Level. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lakeview Estate (3rd decile) • Sheerwater – Dartmouth Avenue / Devonshire Avenue (2nd decile) • Maybury – Boundary Road / Board School Road (4th decile) <p>Map data available at:</p> <p>http://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html#</p> <p>This is included to consider the socio-economic importance of play provision geographically within the borough.</p>
<p>Recent works</p>	<p>Significant works that have taken place in the last three years, which would be considered outside the scope of general ongoing maintenance. Examples would include replacement of play equipment (e.g. springer), component parts (e.g. slide on a climbing frame) or major surfacing repairs.</p> <p>This does not include replacements of items such as swing seats, chains or other high wearing parts which are replaced periodically as part of regular maintenance.</p>
<p>Specific Issues</p>	<p>Particular points to note from inspections e.g. items with particularly short life expectancies or significant maintenance issue affecting a single item.</p>
<p>Action Points</p>	<p>Items to be addressed and taken forward in programme of works, subject to funding.</p>



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 A Azad	
Vice-Chairman: Councillor J Sanderson	
Councillor H Akberali	Councillor C Kemp
Councillor A Caulfield	Councillor A Kirby
Councillor K Davis	Councillor J Morley
Councillor P Graves	Councillor M I Raja
2022/23 Committee Dates	
6 June 2022	21 November 2022
11 July 2022	23 January 2023
12 September 2022 (cancelled)	26 September 2022
20 February 2023	17 October 2022
20 March 2023	

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

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

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Background Papers: None.

Reporting Person: Councillor Ayesha Azad
Email: cllrayesha.azad@woking.gov.uk

Contact Person: Toby Nash, Scrutiny and Democratic Services Officer
Email: toby.nash@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3056

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

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

Date Published: 13 January 2023

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
Biannual Overview of Complaints Report	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	Following the meeting of the Committee on 21 February it was expressed by Members that the possibility of having this report appear at the Committee twice a year, as opposed to once a year would be beneficial.
Update on Company Governance Structure	Leader	The Committee would receive a report on the progress made to Company Governance Structure once sufficient progress had been made.
Review of Company Governance Structure	Chairman & Vice-Chairman	To be reviewed one year after the structure is in place.

The Work Programme 2022/23

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 20 February 2023

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	Democratic Services

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	Democratic Services

2.2 Presentation from WEAct. For the Committee to receive a presentation from representatives of WEAct.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Tracey Haskins

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

Requested by Members of the O&S Committee 16 July 2018

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

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

Requested by Members of the O&S Committee 28 November 2016

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Joanne McIntosh

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

2.5 Enterprise M3. To receive a presentation on the work carried out by Enterprise M3 and future plans.

Requested by Members of the O&S Committee 13 September 2021

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Stephen Martin & Giorgio Framalico

2.6 Annual Update on Climate Change.

Requested addition to the Work Programme by the Chairman 19 October 2020

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Lara Beattie

2.7 Review of the Constitution. For the Committee to review the revisions to the Constitution.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Jo McIntosh

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the 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 – 20 March 2023

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	Democratic Services

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	Democratic Services

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	Consultation	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 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Communications Plan. For the Committee to receive an update on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Communications Plan.

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Democratic Services

2.5 Noise Complaints Update. For the Committee to receive the Noise Complaints Update (pending the Review of Performance and Financial Monitoring Information).

Requested by Members of the O&S Committee 7 June 2021

Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person/Team
None	None	Emma Bourne

3 – Task Group Updates

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

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

2023/24 Committee Dates

At the meeting of the Council held on 1 December 2022 the following dates were agreed for the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held in the Municipal Year 2023/24. All meetings will be held on Mondays at 7:00pm unless otherwise stated.

6 June 2023	10 July 2023
11 September 2023	16 October 2023
20 November 2023	22 January 2024
19 February 2024	18 March 2024

The Work Programme 2023/24 (provisional)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 6 June 2023

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		Chairman

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	Chairman

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	Toby Nash/Frank Jeffrey

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the 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 – 10 July 2023

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	Chairman

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	Chairman

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the 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 – 11 September 2023

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	Chairman

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	Chairman

3 – Task Group Updates

3.1 Task Group Update. To receive an update from any meetings of the 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 – 19 January 2023

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Notice of Motion – Cllr S Dorsett – Renaming of Henry Plaza
 - 2) Notice of Motion – Cllr S Dorsett – Minutes of Council Meetings
 - 3) Notice of Motion – Cllr W Forster – Community Diagnostic Centre in Woking
 - 4) Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
 - 5) Review of the Constitution
 - 6) Cost of Living Crisis Update
 - 7) Risk Management Update
 - 8) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
 - 9) Monitoring Reports - Projects
-

Executive – 2 February 2023

Matters for Consideration

- 1) ThamesWey Business Plan
- 2) Masterplan Update and Next Stage
- 3) Play Areas Refurbishment Update
- 4) SEP 2025 – A Partnership Approach to Waste Prevention and Recycling
- 5) CIL – Application for Funding – All Saints Church, Woodham
- 6) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
- 7) Monitoring Reports – Woking For All Strategy

Executive – 23 March 2023

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- 2) Greener Woking - Draft Revised Climate Change Strategy
- 3) Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- 4) Affordable Housing Delivery Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- 5) Review of the Constitution
- 6) Cost of Living Crisis Update
- 7) Revocation of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at Anchor Hill, Knaphill
- 8) Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 – Annual Monitoring Report
- 9) Write off of Irrecoverable Debt
- 10) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
- 11) Monitoring Reports - Projects

Executive – 15 June 2023

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Treasury Management Annual Report 2022-23
- 2) Risk Management and Business Continuity Annual Report
- 3) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
- 4) Monitoring Reports - Projects
- 5) Monitoring Reports – Woking For All Strategy

Executive – 13 July 2023

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Equalities Annual Report - 2023
- 2) Woking For All Performance Report

Executive – 14 September 2023

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Monitoring Reports - Projects

Executive – 5 October 2023

Matters for Consideration

- 1) Confidentiality Protocol Annual Report
- 2) Performance and Financial Monitoring Information
- 3) Woking For All Performance Report

Executive – 16 November 2023

Matters for Consideration

- 1) ThamesWey Business Plan
 - 2) Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and General Fund Budget 2024-25
 - 3) Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget Update 2024-25
 - 4) Draft Investment Programme 2023-24 to 2027-28
-

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 Akberali, Aziz, Davis, Elson, Morley, Oades and Roberts.
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 Akberali, Azad, Aziz, Davis, Kirby, Oades and Sanderson.
Resources:	Officer and Councillor time.
Date Established:	25.05.06
Completion Date:	Ongoing

HIF Task Group	
Remit:	<p>The HIF Task Group has been established following the decision on 23 May 2022 to taking on the responsibilities of the Aggregates Site Working Group and the HIF Oversight Panel.</p> <p>The 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>Task Group Members may be expected to present proposals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, where necessary, prepare written reports.</p>
Membership:	Councillors Akberali, Ali, Azad, Johnson, Kemp, Lyons and Nicholson.
Resources:	Officer and Councillor time.
Date Established:	23.05.22
Completion Date:	Ongoing

HIF Housing Outputs Task Group	
Remit:	<p>The HIF Housing Outputs Task Group has been established following the decision on 22 November 2022 to set-up a task group to look at the housing element of the Housing Infrastructure Fund. The Task group shall comprise seven Members of the Council representing all Groups on the Council based on proportionality.</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 Overview and Scrutiny Budget. Offsite visits will be ad hoc.</p> <p>Task Group Members may be expected to present proposals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, where necessary, prepare written reports.</p>
Membership:	Councillors Akberali, Ali, Azad, Forster, Johnson, Kemp and Kirby.
Resources:	Officer and Councillor time.
Date Established:	24.01.22
Completion Date:	To be confirmed.

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>Task Group Members may be expected to present proposals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, where necessary, prepare written reports.</p>
Membership:	Councillors Akberali, Aziz, Cosnahan, Dorsett, Johnson, Lyons and Whitehand.
Resources:	Officer and Councillor time.
Date Established:	25.05.06
Completion Date:	Ongoing

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2023

FINANCE TASK GROUP UPDATE – 10 NOVEMBER 2022

Executive Summary

The Finance Task Group discussed the following matters.

Statement of Accounts

There had not been much progress with the audit of the 2019/20 accounts. In particular delays caused by the further assurance being required for the Thamesway Group. The current status of the audit will be addressed by the Standards & Audit Committee.

Looking ahead, BDO have not retendered for the audit contract and Grant Thornton will be taking over the audit from 2023/24 onwards

Medium Term Financial Strategy update

The Task Group revisited the update provided by the July report: the £11m budgetary gap, the lower expected income from car parking and commercial rents and taking out the margin on group companies loans. There was a savings exercise over the summer which identified savings of £5m but these have been offset by further cost pressures from higher energy costs and general inflation. This has put even greater pressure on the council's revenue reserves.

Both commercial rents and car parking income are broadly in line with the July forecast and therefore continue to be significantly below pre-pandemic levels. There are also interest rates pressures with significant short-term borrowing needing to be refinanced over the next 12 months (approximately £130m). These are likely to be borrowed on a short-term basis while long term rates remain high

The expectation for longer term rates included in the MTFs planning was reviewed. It is based on the assumption that rates would converge back towards the 2% inflation target that the Bank of England has.

Annual review of Fees and Charges

The draft version of this report was reviewed and some significant increases were highlighted. It had been prepared in the context of the council's challenging financial situation with the intention to reduce the subsidy to provide non statutory services.

Other matters

The quarterly report of irrecoverable debts was approved with no major issues highlighted.

No further update was provided regarding the Victoria Square development following recent briefings, it will be reviewed again at a future meeting.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

the report be noted.

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

Background Papers: None.

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Date Published: 13 January 2023

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 23 JANUARY 2023

HOUSING TASK GROUP UPDATE – 15 NOVEMBER 2022

Executive Summary

Affordable Housing Delivery Update

The delivery of affordable properties as part of the Sheerwater regeneration was reviewed. The Group also discussed working with private developers to encourage the inclusion of affordable housing as part of developments.

Officers updated Members on the status of a number of affordable and social housing developments that were being built throughout the Borough.

Housing Services Update

Members were updated on the continued mobilisation of services following the decision to bring them in-house from New Vision Homes. Reflecting the increased pressures on households due to the cost-of-living crisis Housing Services had continued to work with residents to help manage rent payments.

Homes for Ukraine Update

Following the invasion of Ukraine, the Government setup a scheme to facilitate the arrival of Ukrainian refugees. The Group discussed the progress of the scheme to date and recognised the speed and amount of work that officers had so far undertaken.

Work was continuing to be done to ensure that both hosts and guests were supported in the coming months.

Empty Homes Plan: Executive Report

The Empty Homes Plan was reviewed by Members. The report had incorporated discussions that had been held at previous meetings of the Housing Task Group along with the results of a public consultation that was held.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

the report be noted

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

Housing Task Group Update – 15 November 2022

Background Papers: None.

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