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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, 26 March 2018 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices.

The agenda for the meeting is set out below.

RAY MORGAN Chief Executive

NOTE: Filming Council Meetings

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

AGENDA

PART I - PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT

Part I - Press and Public Present

1 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 Minutes

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 February 2018 as published.

3 Urgent Business

To consider any business that the Chairman rules may be dealt with under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 <u>Declarations of Interest</u>

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

Performance Management

5 Performance and Financial Monitoring Information

To consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book).

Reporting person: Councillor I Johnson

Matters for Determination

6 Work Programme (Pages 5 - 18)

Reporting Person: Councillor I Johnson

7 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 19 - 30)

Reporting Person: Cllr Ian Johnson

Presentations

8 Countryside Access

Reporting Person: Tracey Haskins

9 Surrey Heathland Project

Marcus Turley of the Surrey Heathland Project will be attending the meeting to give a presentation on the work of the Project.

Matters for Scrutiny

10 Safer Woking Partnership - Community Safety Plan (Pages 31 - 46)

Reporting Person: Camilla Edmiston

11 <u>General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)</u> (Pages 47 - 62)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the attached report of the Executive in respect of the General Data Protection Regulation, with a view to submitting any comments to the next meeting of Council.

Reporting Person: Joanne McIntosh

12 Parliamentary Review of Overview and Scrutiny Functions (Pages 63 - 76)

Reporting Person: Councillor I Johnson

Task Group Updates

13 <u>Task Group Updates</u> (Pages 77 - 80)

To receive updates following the recent meetings of the following Task Groups:

- Economic Development Task Group
- Finance Task Group
- Housing Task Group

Reporting person: Cllr I Johnson

AGENDA ENDS

Date Published - 14 March 2018

For further information regarding this agenda and arrangements for the meeting, please contact Frank Jeffrey, Democratic Services Manager, Ext 3012, Email frank.jeffrey@wokin.gov.uk





WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

CIVIC OFFICES
GLOUCESTER SQUARE
WOKING GU21 6YL
01483 755855
www.woking.gov.uk

INTRODUCTION TO WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL'S

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 is published in five sections as follows:-

- Section A Details items for consideration at future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Section B Outlines the proposed topics for future review by Woking Borough Council.
- Section C Provides the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan, showing all changes to the Forward Plan since last considered by the Committee. Key decisions to be taken by the Executive are identified by an asterisk in the left hand column.
- Section D Sets out the topics identified for pre-decision scrutiny.
- Section E Lists the current Task Groups, including Membership details, resource implications and purpose of the reviews.

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 published reports (with the exception of confidential information) can be viewed at the Civic Offices, or are available on the Council Web site (www.woking.gov.uk). A notice setting out the outcome of the meeting will be available following the relevant meeting. For further details contact Members Services on 01483 743863 or e-mail memberservices@woking.gov.uk.

Chairman

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Section B – Proposed Review Topics	No topic suggestions received
Section C – Forward Plan	11
Section D – Pre-Decision Scrutiny	No items proposed
Section E – Current Task Groups	15

The Committee

Chairman: Councillor I Johnson Vice-Chairman: Councillor K Davis

Councillor H J Addison
Councillor J Kingsbury
Councillor A-M Barker
Councillor J Bond
Councillor G G Chrystie
Councillor C Rana
Councillor C Rana

Officers

Corporate Management Group

Chief Executive: Ray Morgan

Deputy Chief Executive: Douglas Spinks

Strategic Director Sue Barham

Head of Democratic & Legal Services/ Peter Bryant

Monitoring Officer

Chief Finance Officer Leigh Clarke

Section A

Committee's Approved Activity Plan Matters For Future Consideration

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 21 May 2018

Decision to be Taken	Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person
	Matters for Detern	nination	
Election of Chairman – To elect the Chairman of the Committee for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.	Selection Panel	None	Frank Jeffrey
Appointment of Vice-Chairman – To appoint the Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the 2018/19 Municipal Year.	Selection Panel	None	Frank Jeffrey
Working Groups and Task Groups – To appoint Members to the Working Groups and Task Groups within the Committee's remit.	Selection Panel	None	Frank Jeffrey

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 18 June 2018

Decision to be Taken	Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person					
	Matters for Determination							
Work Programme – For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.	None	None	Frank Jeffrey					
	Performance Mana	agement						
Performance & Financial Monitoring Information – For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)	None	None	Cllr I Johnson					
	Presentation	is						
Network Rail – Rail Track Modifications.	None	None	Douglas Spinks					
Representatives of Network Rail to be invited to discuss their plans for rail link modifications and the stations within the Borough, together with timescales.								
South Western Railways – New Franchise.	None	None	Douglas Spinks					
Representatives of South Western Trains to be invited to discuss their plans for the rail links through Woking.								

Matters for Consideration					
Overview of Complaints Received – Six Mone None Peter Bryant those complaints received since 1.1.18.					
Task Group Updates					
Economic Development Working Group Update. To receive an update on the work of the Economic Development Task Group following its meeting on 28 March 2018.	None	None	Cllr I Johnson		

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 16 July 2018

Decision to be Taken	Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person					
	Matters for Determination							
Work Programme – For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.	None	None	Frank Jeffrey					
Performance Management								
Performance & Financial Monitoring Information – For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)		None	Cllr I Johnson					

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 17 September 2018

Decision to be Taken	Consultation	Background Documents	Contact Person			
Matters for Determination						
Work Programme – For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.	None	Frank Jeffrey				
Performance Management						

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Performance & Financial Monitoring	None	Cllr I Johnson
Information – For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)		
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Section C

Latest Version of the Forward Plan

The Forward Plan gives an indication of the decision to be taken by the Executive. Published monthly, the Forward Plan has traditionally given an indication of the decisions to be taken over the following four months.

07 June 2018

Key Decision	Subject	Decision to be Taken	Consultation (Undertaken prior to the meeting unless otherwise stated)	Background Documents	Contact Officer
	Face and Davids mant Strategy	To report on the progress of the	Faanamia Davalanmant	None	Dauglas Caiales
14	Economic Development Strategy Annual Report 2017-18	To report on the progress of the Economic Development Strategy during 2017-18.	Economic Development Task Group, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Douglas Spinks
*	Hoe Valley Flood Alleviation and Environmental Enhancement Scheme	Authorisation to release remaining funds to allow scheme to be constructed.	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Douglas Spinks
	Woking Integrated Transport Package	To support a bid for further Enterprise M3 funding for sustainable transport.	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Douglas Spinks
	Performance and Financial Monitoring Information	To consider the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information contained in the Green Book.	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Ray Morgan

28 June 2018

Key Decision	Subject	Decision to be Taken	Consultation (Undertaken prior to the meeting unless otherwise stated)	Background Documents	Contact Officer
*	Treasury Management Annual Report 2017-18	To receive the Annual Treasury Management Report.	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Leigh Clarke
	Risk Management and Business Continuity Annual Report	To receive the annual report on Risk Management and Business Continuity.	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Ray Morgan
Page	Performance and Financial Monitoring Information	To consider the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information contained in the Green Book.	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Ray Morgan
e 15	Contaminated Land Strategy Review Report and Future Funding	To receive the Contaminated Land Strategy Review Report and the requirements for future funding of desk top studies and site investigations. (The press and public will be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item in view of the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the press and public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Local Government Act 1972.)	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Ian Tomes

Section E

<u>Current Task Groups Responsible to the Committee</u>

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.

Task Group	Topic	Membership	Resources	Date Established	Anticipated Completion Date
Economic Development Task Group	To identify and seek the implementation of measures to mitigate the impact of the economic downturn on the residents, community organisations and businesses in the Borough of Woking.	Cllrs Addison, Ali, Barker, Chrystie. Hussain, Johnson and Kingsbury.	Officer and Councillor time.	11.03.09	Ongoing
Standing Finance Task Group	To review Financial issues as and when identified by the Committee. Financial Performance of the Council Management and Administration of Accounts procurement Strategy, Pension fund, Financial Strategy.	Cllrs Bond, Chrystie, Davis, Hughes, Morales, Pengelly and Rana.	Officer and Councillor time.	25.05.06	Ongoing
Standing Housing Task Group	To review Housing issues as and when identified by the Committee, including Housing Strategy, Housing Business Plan, Housing Service Plans, Housing Revenue Account, Housing Conditions, Housing Needs, Private Sector Housing, Home Improvement Agency, Housing and Council Tax Benefits, and monitor/review progress of the PFI Scheme	Cllrs Addison, Aziz, Barker, Bridgeman, Harlow, Johnson and Mohammed.	Officer and Councillor time.	25.05.06	Ongoing

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 26 MARCH 2018

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Executive Summary

Each year, the Chairman of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee prepares a report outlining the activities undertaken by the Committee. This year, the Committee has reviewed a wide range of topics and has completed both scrutiny and pre-decision scrutiny of the work of the Executive and the Council as a whole. The three Task Groups of the Committee – the Economic Development, Finance and Housing Task Groups – have continued to monitor and review these three core areas of the Council's activities.

The Work Programme of the Committee continues to be developed and in the coming year the Members will be welcoming presentations from both Network Rail and South Western Trains on their plans and aspirations for their services in the Borough. The potential and management of Woking's Heathlands are to be explored in the coming months, with a presentation at the next meeting of the Committee and a site visit planned for all Councillors to Sheet's Heath.

The Committee is now invited to agree the draft report for submission to the next meeting of Council, on 5 April 2018.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be submitted to the next meeting of Council subject to any comments made by Members of the Committee.

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

Background Papers: None.

Reporting Person: Councillor I Johnson, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Email: cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

Contact Person: Councillor I Johnson, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Email: cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

Date Published: 14 March 2018

Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This is the 13th Annual Report made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Council in accordance with its constitutional provision. The report sets out the work undertaken by the Committee and its task groups over the last year.

2.0 Summary of Work Undertaken

Boiler maintenance and replacement policy of New Vision Homes.

2.1 The Portfolio Holder (Councillor C S Kemp) introduced a report on the review of the New Vision Homes boiler maintenance and replacement policy, making clear that there were outstanding issues which needed to be addressed. The key areas of improvement were highlighted in the report which outlined the measures proposed to address the outstanding issues, though it was noted that significant improvements had already been achieved. Members also noted that New Vision Homes (NVH) was undertaking a review of the compensation policy for breakdowns, which had been an issue for residents, and the need to improve communication with residents was understood by NVH.

Raynes Close lessons learned

2.2 Ian Lelliott of Thameswey Housing gave a presentation outlining the issues that had faced the residents of Raynes Close in respect of the pioneering energy efficient technology installed, including a heat exchanger, rain water harvester and the heating. Residents were also present to draw attention to their concerns and felt little progress had been made to address all the issues. It was agreed by the Committee to ask for a report to suggest solutions to all the problems raised. This was done and later in the municipal year Mr Lelliott returned to the Committee to explain what progress had been made.

<u>Thameswey Protocol</u>.

2.3 The Chairman and Councillor J Kingsbury undertook to carry out a review of the communications and reporting protocol between the Thameswey Group and the Council. This had originally been established in 2011 and required updating in view of the significant changes in the Company structure and in the light of practice. The Committee recommended a number of changes to the Executive. It was noted that few members attended Thameswey Group company meetings and they might find it helpful to do so to better understand.

Action Surrey.

- 2.4 John Scott of Thameswey Sustainable Communities Ltd (TSCL) presented information on the Action Surrey project, outlining the project's aims, initiatives and achievements. It was noted that several areas within the Borough had a higher than average level of fuel poverty because of older housing stock and a higher percentage of lower income families.
- 2.5 There would be an estimated £1.6m saved for Woking residents over the future lifetime of the measures put in place so far. The scheme relied more upon referrals from Adult Social Care and local authorities to ensure that fuel poor households were prioritised, though all residents were welcome to ask for advice. Action Surrey aimed to raise awareness of energy efficiency schemes and grants available to families and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) within the area and that more work with local SMEs was being looked into in partnership with Woking Works and Woking Chamber of Commerce and more SMEs were urged to contact Action Surrey. The Committee appreciated the work done by Action Surrey.

Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<u>Private Rented Sector Access Scheme Policy and Selective Licensing Policy- Canalside</u> Ward

2.6 The Committee scrutinised proposals to introduce a policy to incentivise landlords as part of a drive to improve the supply of private sector housing and satisfy the Council's obligations to house people deemed homeless. This was part of an overall strategy to reduce homelessness. Separately the Council was seeking to introduce a licensing scheme for HMOs in Canalside ward which had been selected in view of the high proportion of rented properties and the lower standards in that area. Members supported both proposals but also asked for the costs, including staff resources and fees, to be re-considered.

Complaints

2.7 The Committee received and reviewed a schedule of complaints received by the Council over the 6 months to 30 September 2017. This was the first 6 monthly report and included information about complaints to New Vision Homes. Over time it would become possible to track any trends in complaints to enable the Committee to decide whether to investigate further.

Celebrate Woking.

- 2.8 The Committee received a presentation from Riette Thomas on the Celebrate Woking events in 2017. Despite average weather, the food and drink festival had again been a huge success and the Party in the Park had been a massive success. It was noted Woking had been named as the 8th happiest place in the UK and the happiest in Surrey. Promotional videos had been made.
- 2.9 In 2018 Celebrate Woking would be focusing on the Suffragettes and Dame Ethel Smyth, as well as work on the war memorials of those who paid the ultimate price in World War 1.

Health and Wellbeing.

- 2.10 The Committee received a report which highlighted the work carried out under the Government's Syrian Refugee resettlement programme. It had taken some time for the traumas experienced by the Syrians to manifest themselves in mental ill health and there had been occasional disputes. However, it was noted that the Council had very skilled staff managing the programme.
- 2.11 (The Committee reviewed the 6 monthly treasury statements and reports from the Housing Economic Development and Finance Task Groups).

Community Support and Development Sythwood.

2.12 Nicola Norman, Manager of Sythwood Children's Centre, and Reverend Kate Wyles, Vicar at St Andrews Church, Goldsworth Park gave a presentation on the work being undertaken in the local community to support the residents, in particular those from an ethnic minority background, including refugee families from Syria. Through the support of the Lakeview Action Group and partner organisations, individuals unable to speak English were offered the opportunity of weekly language classes managed by a tutor from Woking College and to socialise with people from all different backgrounds. It was noted that the biggest issue faced by the Group was a lack of funding and constant waiting list for the support and that the Group had been asked to draw up a proposal on the future provision of the support for consideration by the Council.

Online transactions.

2.13 David Ripley, Head of Revenues and Benefits, presented a report on the background to benefit payments and the Council's old cash desk. Initial payments of Universal credit by the government were often delayed, causing arrears in housing payments, and also more recently a change of approach by some housing associations demanding rent payments in advance which was very difficult for tenants. In relation to payments generally, 74% of council tax payments were now made by direct debit and the closure of the cash office in May 2015 had gone smoothly.

Woking 2050 and Climate Change Agenda.

2.14 Lara Beattie and Tracey Haskins gave a presentation explaining what the Council was doing to encourage sustainable Woking, tracing the roots of action in the Borough as far back as 1992 with the establishment of LA21. The Council seeks to lead by example and in terms of the vision to 2050 there are various projects from green sustainability and biodiversity to flood relief schemes and renewable energy all of which contribute to enhancing the Borough environment and reducing carbon footprint. Action plans are managed on a rolling three year and are overseen by the Climate Change Working Group.

Waste and Recycling Contract.

2.15 Representatives of the teams responsible for the new waste contract gave a performance update to the Committee in February. The number of missed collections was very small and mainly related to assisted collections. Anecdotal evidence suggested that staff were quick to rectify errors and overall members were impressed with the work done.

Air Quality Monitoring.

2.16 Emma Bourne, the Council's Environmental Health Manager, reported on work being carried out to monitor air quality in the Borough. There were currently 2 Air Quality Management Areas – Anchor Hill in Knaphill and Guildford Road in Mount Hermon. Technical changes to traffic signaling at Anchor Hill had been installed and data on the impact on air quality was awaited. An Action Plan for Guildford Road was being prepared and this was particularly important given the pending increase in town centre development.

Basingstoke Canal.

- 2.17 The Chief Executive presented an update on the progress in making proposals to improve the Basingstoke Canal following requests by this Committee in February 2017. There were clear plans for work in 2018/19 on the town quay and Chobham Bridge towpath subject to planning permission, while Lockfield Drive Bridge connectivity would require funding but with a target of 2019/20 for completion, and a barge at the Lighthouse was currently an aspiration for pushing forward in 2019/20. A Canal Boat basin at Brook House was another opportunity but required both funding and resolutions of Green Belt and common land legal issues.
- 2.18 The Chief Executive was thanked for the evident progress for this key asset and the Committee resolved to instruct him to investigate opportunities for both dredging the Canal and tidying up the Canal bank for the benefit of boat users and visitors generally.

3.0 Membership

3.1 The Constitution permits membership of 10 councillors. The membership this year has been: Councillor I Johnson (Chairman), Councillor K Davis (Vice-Chairman), Councillor H Addison, Councillor A-M Barker, Councillor J Bond, Councillor G Chrystie, Councillor J Kingsbury, Councillor R Mohammed, Councillor M Raja and Councillor C Rana.

Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3.2 Attendance at meetings this year has been better than in 2016/17 though again the subjects for the agenda have largely arisen from the Chairman and Vice Chairman, rather than Committee members. The attendance record for the Members of the Committee is set out at Appendix 1.

4.0 Task Groups

- 4.1 Scrutiny of the Council's activities often takes place in task groups. There are three task groups which come under the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
 - Economic Development Task Group (Chairman Councillor I Johnson)
 - Finance Task Group, (Chairman Councillor G Chrystie)
 - Housing Task Group and Economic Development Task Group (Councillor I Johnson)
- 4.2 Appendix 2 contains summary reports by the respective Chairs on the activities and objectives of each Task Group for the year.

5.0 Further Areas of Scrutiny

5.1 The main subjects are shown in 2.1 above. In addition the Committee monitors financial and other indicators in the "Green book" which is a monthly set of management information and also looks at the treasury mid-year review. This report is necessarily written before the meeting in March and therefore there will be items not included as part of this report. This will include a "first" in that we will be on a field trip to Sheets Heath.

6.0 Acknowledgements

6.1 As Chair I would like to thank particularly the Chief Executive for his support in putting agendas together, to officers for the administration and to my Vice-Chair, Councillor Kevin Davis, for his continued enthusiasm. The attendance of Portfolio Holders to cover their topics at meetings has been much appreciated.

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The Committee is challenging and needs input from across the Council to be effective. Having said that, the Committee has been able to make progress on behalf of residents in a number of areas such as boiler policies, Raynes Close eco systems and the Basingstoke Canal. We have also been reassured on, most recently, the new waste contract and have been able to learn more about the environmental work of the Council.

REPORT ENDS

Appendix 1

Attendance at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2017/18

Date	Committee Members in Attendance		
22 May 2017	Cllr Johnson (Ch) Cllr Davis (V-Ch) Cllr Mrs Addison Cllr Barker Cllr Bond	Cllr Chrystie Cllr Kingsbury Cllr Mohammed Cllr Raja Cllr Rana	
24 July 2017	Cllr Johnson (Ch) Cllr Davis (V-Ch) Cllr Mrs Addison Cllr Barker Cllr Bond	Cllr Chrystie Cllr Kingsbury Cllr Mohammed Cllr Raja Cllr Rana	
18 September 2017	Cllr Johnson (Ch) Cllr Davis (V-Ch) Cllr Mrs Addison Cllr Barker Cllr Bond	Cllr Chrystie Cllr Kingsbury Cllr Mohammed Cllr Rana	
27 November 2017	Cllr Johnson (Ch) Cllr Davis (V-Ch) Cllr Mrs Addison Cllr Bond	Cllr Kingsbury Cllr Raja Cllr Rana	
22 January 2018	Cllr Johnson (Ch) Cllr Davis (V-Ch) Cllr Mrs Addison Cllr Bond Cllr Chrystie	Cllr Kingsbury Cllr Mohammed Cllr Raja Cllr Rana	
26 February 2018	Cllr Johnson (Ch) Cllr Davis (V-Ch) Cllr Bond Cllr Kingsbury	Cllr Mohammed Cllr Raja Cllr Rana	

Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Reports of the Task Groups

Housing Task Group

Chairman – Cllr Ian Johnson

Purpose	Membership
To review Housing issues as and when identified by the Committee, including Housing Strategy, Housing Business Plan, Housing Service Plans, Housing Revenue Account, Housing Conditions, Housing Needs, Private Sector Housing, Home Improvement Agency, Housing and Council Tax Benefits, and monitor/review progress of the PFI Scheme.	Cllrs Addison, Aziz, Barker, Bridgeman, Harlow, Johnson and Mohammed.

The year was characterised by a large volume of work due to the upcoming introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act which is the biggest piece of legislation on homelessness in 40 years. Changes to existing practices would require additional staff and team restructuring, together with training in new procedures. Woking has a good record in avoiding homelessness but the legislation will require an even more pro-active approach. The existing IT system wasn't sufficiently robust and would be upgraded in May 2018. Personal Housing Plans, including an action plan, would be introduced for clients.

Other issues reviewed by the Task Group included the following:

- 1. a consultation by Surrey County Council (SCC) about housing-related support due to SCC seeking to save money;
- 2. improved compensation to tenants for boiler and heating breakdowns to reflect more fairly the additional costs incurred;
- 3. proposals for a new policy on service charges for leaseholders which was to be discussed by the Leaseholder Forum;
- 4. Housing Allocations Policy which was being updated for the first time since 2013 which proposed to amalgamate bands and the removal of age limits for sheltered accommodation, along with greater reliance on the private sector;
- 5. a number of units of affordable housing had been provided through the use of rooms or spaces not used to their potential;
- 6. the tenants of Sheerwater in the red line area were placed into Band B. The Task Group was assured that the Council was exploring all opportunities to make adequate provision for social housing but in any event, lettings would be offered on the basis of need;
- 7. the Task Group pre-scrutinised the Council's proposals for Selective Licensing in Canalside. There were 800 private landlords in the area;
- 8. 'Let's Rent' was a rebranded scheme to encourage private landlords to help address the Borough's housing need; and
- 9. the Transformation Agenda was looking at better ways of multi-agency working, partly to ensure effectiveness of provision and partly for reasons of financial efficiency.

Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Economic Development Task Group

Chairman – Cllr Ian Johnson

Purpose	Membership
To identify and seek the implementation of measures to mitigate the impact of the economic downturn on the residents, community organisations and businesses in the Borough of Woking.	

The Task Group meets twice a year to review the progress of the Economic Strategy. The Chairman also attends ad hoc events to support the Council's public relations effort. The primary focus of the mid-year meeting was the conclusion of the previous Economic Development Strategy 2012 - 2017 and the transition to the new version for the period 2017 - 2022. Simon Matthews, who had helped with the formulation of both of our strategies, assisted us with a transition paper which highlighted how the priorities dove-tailed and how the new strategic priorities could be readily monitored.

Additionally, the Task Group discussed member concerns about the impact on local firms of development in West Byfleet. Officers confirmed they would be happy to assist wherever possible and monitor any proposals.

Towards the end of March, the Task Group would be reviewing the performance of the strategy in its first full year.

The Finance Task Group

Chairman - Cllr Graham Chrystie

Purpose	Membership
To review Financial issues as and when identified by the Committee. Financial Performance of the Council Management and Administration of Accounts procurement Strategy, Pension fund, Financial Strategy.	Hughes, Morales, Pengelly and

The programme of the Committee has continued largely upon the format adopted for several years where the Committee has monitored events which have occurred. However with the recent major increase of borrowing and large projects it has been deemed that the Committee needs to be more active at an early stage if it is to be effective in its task.

Several factors are significant and these are as follows:

- Green Book issue is now often weeks after a month end and whilst this has recently been due to acceptable reasons, it is not wholly satisfactory. The Committee has indicated a need to be appraised as soon as possible of significant issues such as borrowing costs and loan drawdown and the Chairman proposes to regularly contact Leigh Clarke between Committee meetings.
- 2. Change in say the tenant position in Wolsey Place/Peacocks is significant and the Committee have regularly requested the rent role and projections. This will continue at each meeting for the foreseeable time.
- 3. The Committee feel that it is necessary for the E & Y model for Victoria Square to be updated and re-run from time to time.
- 4. The Green Book now contains a Sheerwater Regeneration page and this is useful but the Committee has asked for not only a list of THL purchases but also a list of forward legal commitments to purchase too. Whilst the Committee appreciate that THL carry out the transactions, as WBC supplies loan finance then it is necessary for the total legal commitment to be stated. Transparency is vital on all Sheerwater finance as THL are acting as WBC's agent.

Some Committee members have pointed out that the Committee seems to operate in some isolation from other WBC committees also dealing with finance and that exchange of data would be useful.

For example there is no information passed to the Committee concerning the progress of development contracts and in particular any material variation therein. The recent woes of several retailers is significant and it is hoped that professional assessment of the impact upon WBC's Victoria Square development would be available to the Committee long before its next formal meeting.

To sum up the Committee have been very pleased with the service and support from Leigh Clarke and her team. However due to the current situation of WBC's exceptional major commitments, an uncertain national finance situation due to Brexit and Global Trade concerns, increased prompt focus upon material issues seems required of the Committee.

Graham Chrystie

Chairman, Finance Task Group

11th March 2018

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 26 MARCH 2018

COUNTRYSIDE ACCESS

Summary

Access to nature and the countryside contributes greatly to our health and well-being. Woking Borough Council is one of a number of organisations responsible for managing greenspaces for local residents, workers and visitors to enjoy in this area. It fulfils this role directly and indirectly, working with relevant partners. This report provides brief background information as context for the presentations to be given at the meeting.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the report be noted.

Background Papers:

Sustainability Impact Assessment Equalities Impact Assessment

Reporting Person:

Tracey Haskins, Green Infrastructure Manager Ext. 3477, E Mail: Tracey.Haskins@woking.gov.uk

Arran Henderson, Green Spaces Development Officer Ext. 3669, E Mail: Arran.Henderson@woking.gov.uk

Contact Person:

Tracey Haskins, Green Infrastructure Manager Ext. 3477, E Mail: Tracey.Haskins@woking.gov.uk

Arran Henderson, Green Spaces Development Officer Ext. 3669, E Mail: Arran.Henderson@woking.gov.uk

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Beryl Hunwicks E Mail: CllrBeryl.Hunwicks@woking.gov.uk

Shadow Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Ken Howard E Mail:cllrken.howard@woking.gov.uk

Date Published:

15 March 2018

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Access to nature and the countryside has been proven to benefit human health and well-being, both mental and physical. The responsible conservation and sensitive improvement of the natural environment for local residents, workers and visitors to the Borough to enjoy also safeguards these for wildlife, benefitting a wide range of biodiversity.

2.0 Strategy

- 2.1 As Committee members heard at its January meeting, Woking 2050, the Council's latest Climate Change Strategy, provides an overarching vision to coordinate our efforts to create a sustainable Borough by reducing our impact on the environment. It looks at the type of place and community we hope Woking Borough will be and how we can all help shape and achieve it. Its vision includes that Woking will be a borough that 'protects and enhances its high quality natural environment' and 'recognises, prepares and adapts to the socio-economic, environmental and demographic changes that the future will bring'.
- 2.2 The strategic local plan for development, the Core Strategy, seeks a 'green Borough where people will have easy access to good quality open spaces and infrastructure for recreation and leisure'. Steps towards this include ensuring green infrastructure provision keeps pace with growth and preserving, enhancing and making accessible local biodiversity features.
- 2.3 The Natural Woking strategy takes forward these ambitions for biodiversity and accessible high quality green Infrastructure. 'Green infrastructure' is defined as: 'A network of multifunctional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities' (National Planning Policy Framework). It's an umbrella term used to describe a wide variety of natural and managed land uses, including open spaces, parks and recreation grounds, sports grounds, allotments, watercourses and ponds, natural and semi-natural greenspaces including sensitive habitats such as the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Areas (SPA), and open countryside.
- 2.4 Natural Woking sets out the Council's strategic approach to green infrastructure in the Borough by identifying the existing network of spaces and routes and identifying gaps for potential new provision. It also looks to connect the individual elements to make strong recreational, ecological and environmental networks in Woking Borough.

3.0 Countryside management

- 3.1 Open spaces and habitats in the Borough, as elsewhere; reflect a mosaic of differing land ownerships and management. Key land managers include the Borough Council, Surrey County Council, Surrey Wildlife Trust and Horsell Common Preservation Society.
- 3.2 Surrey County Council also has responsibility for the management and maintenance of the County's network of public footpaths, bridleways and byways. It also maintains the Definitive Map that is a legal record of the position and status of Rights of Way.
- 3.3 The Surrey Countryside Access Forum is an independent body that advises the County Council and others on improving access to the countryside and its membership represents a broad range of interests including farmers, landowners and those who earn their living in the countryside; users who enjoy the countryside in many different ways; and other relevant interests, such as nature conservation.

- 3.4 The Countryside Code sets out the responsibilities for visitors to the countryside and those who manage the land. For more information see www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code
- 3.5 Woking Borough Council itself is responsible for an extensive and expanding range of green infrastructure assets, which it manages both directly and indirectly, working with relevant partners. A map of greenspaces in the Borough is provided at Appendix 1.
- 3.6 The Council's Green Spaces Development Officer and Support Assistant manage these sites, working in conjunction with relevant colleagues elsewhere within the Borough Council including those in the Asset Management, Neighbourhood and Engineering Teams.
- 3.7 Management works to maintain high standards of safety and quality of greenspaces are typically procured directly through the Council's environmental grounds maintenance contractor, Serco, or other supplier relevant to the task.
- 3.8 For some sites medium to long-term land management arrangements are put in place. For example, the Borough Council has a contract with Surrey Wildlife Trust to manage Westfield Common for accessibility (including volunteering opportunities) and biodiversity.
- 3.9 The Surrey Heathland Partnership (SHP) is a further example. SHP provides a heathland management service by working to restore, enhance and manage heathlands across three boroughs, funded by Surrey County Council, together with Woking, Waverley and Guildford Borough Councils.
- 3.10 There are four sites within Woking Borough that are managed by the SHP; these are Brookwood Heath, Prey Heath, Sheet's Heath and Smart's Heath.
- 3.11 The project involves organised grazing and clearance of invasive scrub and bracken, as well as promoting an understanding of heathland and encouraging good practice in its management. The work that the SHP carries out is essential in supporting our heathlands and the rare species that need heathland in order to survive.
- 3.12 A copy of the 'Summary Guide to Surrey Heathland: An introduction to the heathland habitat and its management' (SHP) is attached at Appendix 2.

4.0 Implications

Financial

4.1 No additional resource requirements arise from this report. Future contributions to the SHP are to be confirmed.

Human Resource/Training and Development

4.2 No implications.

Community Safety

4.3 No implications.

Risk Management

4.4 No implications.

Sustainability

4.5 No additional implications arising from this report. Management and improvement of greenspaces and countryside access contributes positively to sustainability, as detailed in the Sustainability Impact Assessment.

Equalities

4.6 No implications.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Woking Borough Council and delivery partners such as the Surrey Heathland Partnership manage a wide range of countryside greenspaces, for the benefit of people and wildlife. This remains an area to which the Council is strongly committed, to maintain and continually improve our green infrastructure network.
- 5.2 More information about countryside access and the work of the Surrey Heathland Partnership will be provided at the site visit (17 March 2018) and presentations to the meeting (26 March).

REPORT ENDS

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – greenspaces map from https://www.woking.gov.uk/leisure/greenspaces/explorewoking/greenspacesmap

Appendix 2 - Add the 'Summary Guide to Surrey Heathland: An introduction to the heathland habitat and its management' (Surrey Heathland Partnership) from https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/ data/assets/pdf file/0020/49421/Heathland-GuideR.pdf

Natural Woking

Surrey Heath



To Heathrow

Airport

West

Byfleet

Pyrford



To London

To London

Common land

SANG

Footpath

Cycle Route

Countryside

River Wey

Hoe Stream

Millmoor Common (SNCI)

Basingstoke Canal

Urban open space

Byfleet







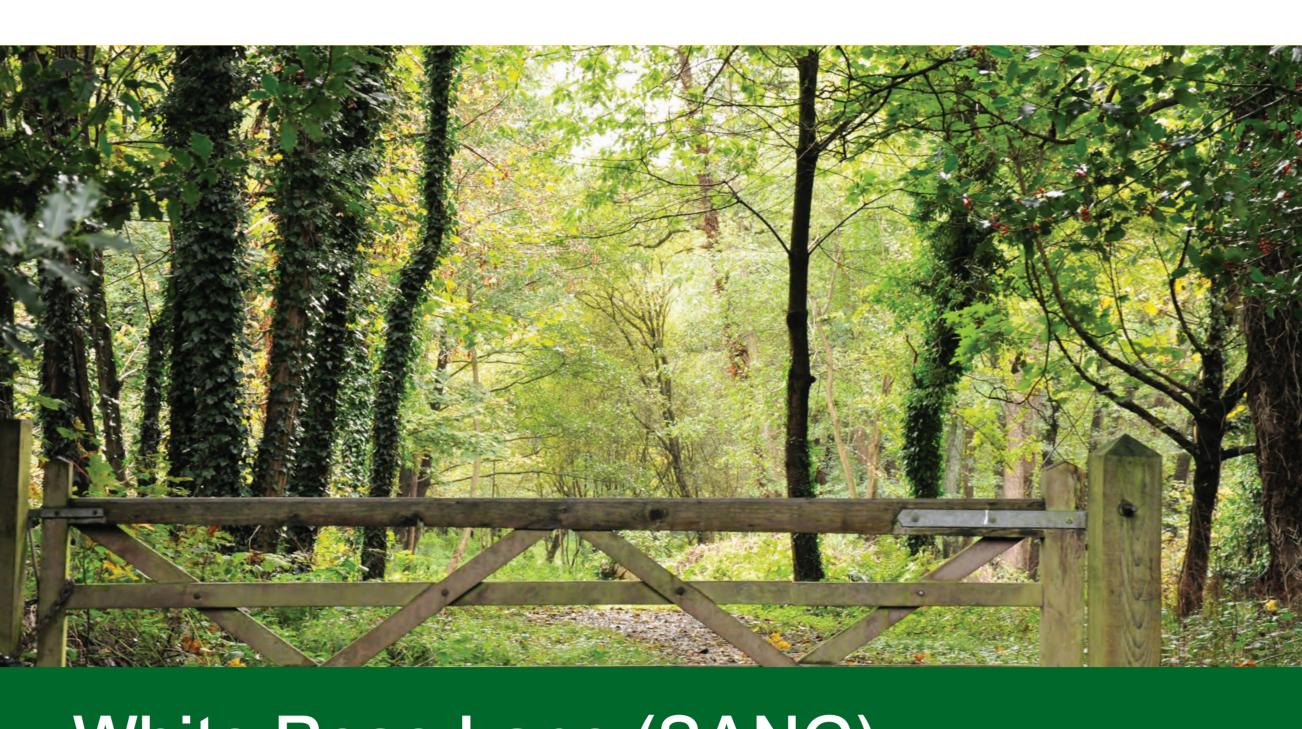
Sheets Heath (SSSI)



Brookwood Heath (SSSI)



Smarts Heath (SSSI)



White Rose Lane (SANG)





Guildford To Guildford and the South Coast

Prey Heath (SSSI)

Page 35



Hoe Valley



Woking Park

Summary Guide to Surrey Heathland

An introduction to the heathland habitat and its management

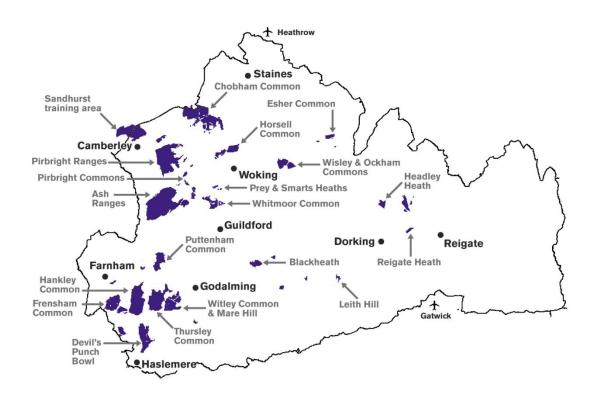
Surrey Heathland Project





Heathland areas in Surrey

In Surrey, heathland is largely confined to two **National Character Areas**: the Thames Basin Heaths (on Tertiary sands and gravels overlying the London Clay) in the north west of the county and the Wealden Greensand in the south west and centre. Additionally, there is some heathland (notably Headley Heath) on superficial gravels overlying the chalk in the North Downs National Character Area.



Thames Basin Heaths



Ash Ranges

Along with contiguous heathland in Hampshire and Berkshire, heathland in this part of Surrey amounts to approximately two thirds (about 2,000 hectares) of the county's surviving heathland. This forms a discontinuous band of sites from Epsom, Esher and Oxshott Commons in the east and westwards to the Hampshire border. Heathland has also developed

here on the Bagshot Beds and the Windlesham and Camberley Sand formations.

The topography of these heaths is generally gentle and there are large areas of lowlying land supporting humid and wet heathland although, in places, steep hills support dry heath. Three sites, Ash Ranges, Pirbright Ranges and Chobham Common, account for three quarters of the heathland in the Thames Basin; nevertheless other smaller sites have considerable importance in maintaining biodiversity across the range of heathland within the National Character Area.

Wealden Greensand

Heathland on the Wealden Greensand makes up one third (about 1,000 hectares) of the county's heathland and forms part of a larger area extending into Hampshire and West Sussex. With the notable exception of Thursley National Nature Reserve and its environs (which supports an internationally important mire), the Wealden Greensand heaths are



Thursley Common

predominantly dry sites, lying on the Folkestone, Sandgate and Hythe Beds of the Lower Greensand. The topography of these heaths, especially in the south west of the area, is more varied than in the Thames Basin - higher ground often rising steeply and forming a deeply incised landscape as at the Devil's Punch Bowl. The bulk of the surviving heathland is centred on or close to Thursley, Hankley and Frensham Commons, with Blackheath an important outlier to the north east. Fragments of heathland at higher altitude and of different character are found further east at Leith Hill and on the Hurtwood in the characteristic 'Surrey Hills' landscape, now heavily wooded.

North Downs

In a very few places, superficial soil deposits over the chalk of the North Downs support heathland. The largest example is Headley Heath where the more 'typical' acidic heathland plant communities are accompanied by small areas of 'chalk heath' that are interesting mixtures of chalk downland and heathland species. There are probably no more than 20 hectares of heathland over the chalk.

Heathland history

How did heathland come about?



Ash Ranges

Although heathland may appear wild and natural, it is an ancient landscape that has been influenced by people over thousands of years. It is thought that many large areas of heathland were created at least 6,000 years ago in the Late Stone Age and Bronze Age. Our ancestors had recently become farmers, and as they cleared the original vegetation and trees to grow crops, nutrients were washed out of some soils

by the rain, leaving them poor and acidic. Heathland plants were well suited to these poor acid conditions, and while some open areas may have been heathland already, much of the exhausted farmland gradually became heath too.

Over the following centuries local people used the heaths as part of their everyday lives. They grazed their animals for meat, milk, wool and hides and used the dung and urine for fertiliser. They cut firewood, collected gorse and turf for fuel, and made besom brooms from heather and birch. The heather was also cut for thatching, and bracken for animal bedding, soap and glass making. The rights of local people to use the heaths in



this way became known as commoners' rights. Regular cutting, grazing by animals and burning kept the landscapes open.

History of heathland in Surrey

This way of life continued for many centuries but by the 1800s it had begun to decline. As people stopped cutting and grazing the heaths, the heathland areas began to revert to scrub and poor woodland. In Surrey as in other parts of the country, large areas of heathland were lost to development in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Advances in agriculture meant that even poor soils could be planted with crops or plantations of trees for timber. Heaths were viewed as wastelands, roads were built across them and towns such as Woking expanded over them. The military used the heaths extensively during this time for training troops, and today own about 60% of Surrey's remaining heathland.

In Surrey 85% of the heathland has been lost in just 200 years, leading to a severe loss of biodiversity. In recent decades heathland has been recognised for its wildlife value and its historical and cultural interest, and much is now protected from development. However it has continued to disappear, and since the last war much of the loss has been due to natural succession (growth of dense trees and scrub to

form woodland). Today, apart from military training, Surrey's heaths are mostly used for recreation. Heathland is now almost entirely disconnected from the farming communities that created it, and which it helped to sustain, but it still has an important role to play. With its wild looking landscape and distinct wildlife, heathland adds great variety to Surrey. By managing heaths through clearing scrub and



Cattle grazing heathland

bringing back grazing, we can keep areas open for people to enjoy and maintain links to our past.

Heathland habitat

Definition of heathland



Lowland heathland is an open landscape generally found on poor, acid, sandy soils less than 300 metres above sea level. It usually contains dwarf shrubs of the heather family, notably ling (*Calluna vulgaris*), bell heather (*Erica cinerea*), crossleaved heath (*Erica tetralix*) and bilberry. However the term 'heathland' generally describes a type of landscape, which may include areas of gorse, bracken, acidic grassland, valley bogs, bare sandy or peaty ground, scattered trees and shrubs and sometimes water.

Where is heathland found?

In Europe, heathland is found in areas that have an oceanic climate of mild winters and wet summers. This occurs to the west of the continent, and areas of heathland are found in southern Scandinavia, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Western France and the north and west of the Iberian Peninsula.



Ash Ranges

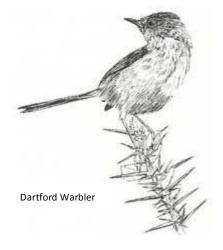
Geology is also important. In the south and east of Britain, heathland is usually found on sands and gravels, and sometimes clays, which have led to acidic soils. In the north and west of the country, heathland can be found over igneous and metamorphic rocks.

Heathland wildlife

Heathland is a habitat of outstanding importance, supporting a range of species which are nationally or internationally rare or endangered. It should be emphasised that it is not only the heather dominated land which is important but the whole matrix including bare ground, scattered scrub, grassy areas and trees, all of which support a rich diversity of species.

Surrey's Heathland Habitat Action Plan highlights the value of heathland and identifies action required to maintain and enhance the status of heathland in Surrey and its associated species mix. For further information about Surrey's Biodiversity Action Plan please contact Surrey Wildlife Trust, School Lane, Pirbright, Surrey, 01483 488055.

Heathland birds



Surrey heathland is outstandingly important for birds. Although the number of characteristic heathland species is small, heathland in Surrey supports internationally important numbers of three bird species listed on Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive. These are the nightjar, woodlark (both UK Priority List) and Dartford warbler ('Amber List').

The Surrey populations of national numbers of these species are: nightjar - 4%, woodlark - 11% and

Dartford warbler - 10%. Whilst Dartford warblers are virtually tied to heathland habitats, the other two species occupy afforested sites at appropriate stages of the forestry cycle. The majority of heathland sites are notified as SSSIs (sites of special scientific interest).

Other characteristic species include the linnet, stonechat, tree pipit and hobby. Nightingale, snipe and curlew breed very locally.

Heathland invertebrates

Lowland heathland in Surrey is extremely important for invertebrates, especially insects and spiders, and many rare and characteristic species occur. Some of these, such as its diverse dragonfly fauna (including the local small red damselfly and keeled skimmer), silver-studded blue butterfly, emperor moth, bog bush-cricket and raft spider, are well known; many others, especially the wide range of Hymenoptera (ants, bees and wasps) are less



Damsel flies

known, except to specialists. Surrey is the richest county in Britain for this group, with dozens of rare species on its heaths, including the dark guest ant and red barbed ant.

Characteristic species of dry heathland include the bee-fly, the heath sand wasp and red banded sand wasp, wood tiger beetle, slave-making ant, mason wasp and many

others. Dry heathland on the Lower Greensand of the Weald supports thriving populations of the hornet robberfly and has produced the only modern records of the rare broken-banded wasp-hoverfly.

Green Tiger Beetle

Heathland in Surrey holds nationally important populations of grayling butterfly, a species which has declined significantly in recent decades. Surrey contains the majority of British sites for the heathland spider Uloborus walkenaerius and all the known populations of lynx spider, found mainly in the Thames Basin.

Many invertebrates of lowland heathland are dependent upon a warm microclimate and sheltered conditions providing 'hot spots'. Bare sand and peat, including banks and gravel pits are particularly important together with a good nectar supply from flowering plants. Locally, patches of acidic grassland or 'grassy heath' may be extremely important, the blue plunderer ground beetle which has recently been rediscovered in Britain is found on one such area in Surrey.

The very rare field cricket Gryllus campestris, which once occurred on Surrey heathland is being re-introduced by Natural England under its Species Recovery Programme.

Heathland mammals and reptiles

Reptiles and amphibians



Surrey is one of only three counties in the British Isles which support all of the native heathland reptiles and amphibians, including the rare and specially protected sand lizard, smooth snake and natterjack toad. Although the natterjack toad disappeared from Surrey in the late 1960s, it has been re-introduced from a nearby population in Hampshire and successful breeding has taken place.

Native populations of the other species have survived in the county, albeit at a very restricted number of sites for the sand lizard and smooth snake, but sympathetic habitat management and re-introductions have established these species at a number of other sites. Despite recent improvements in their status, especially the sand lizard, all three rare heathland species remain vulnerable.

The Surrey heaths therefore, hold a position of paramount importance in the conservation of our indigenous reptiles and amphibians.

Mammals

The most obvious and locally abundant mammal on heathland in Surrey is the rabbit. The commonest rodents are field voles and wood mice, found in the grassier areas, but two much scarcer members of this group occur on heathland in the county. Rank grass, especially purple moor-grass, can support harvest mice and water vole have been found in small heathland streams.

Foxes, stoats and weasels prey on smaller mammals. Roe deer favour scrub invaded heath and areas developing into

Harvest mouse

secondary woodland, though they have little effect on scrub control. In recent years, the introduced muntjac deer has spread into the county and may be encountered on heathland.

Heathland plants

Dry heaths that are dominated by common heather (sometimes called ling) often



Bog cotton grass

have a fairly small range of plants. However dry grassy heaths are often more varied, and can be home to uncommon plants such as the smooth cat's-ear which is nationally scarce, and the Deptford pink. Wetter heaths and mires in Surrey support rich assemblies of plants including cotton grass, and important communities of mosses, liverworts and lichens.

A substantial part of Surrey's heathland and mires has been designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the European Habitats Directive. This reflects its international importance.

Fungi

Fungi are abundant on lowland heathland, as there are different conditions to suit a

range of often specialised species. In late summer and autumn, increasing numbers of people are visiting heaths to collect edible fungi. Over-collecting may threaten the long-term future of some species on heathland. As well as the larger fungi, many species of microfungi are found on heaths.

Some uncommon species are found on bare peat soils, or soils which have been burned recently. A large cap fungi (*Anthracobia subatra*) that was found on a burnt area at Witley Common was new to the British Isles. Nationally rare nail fungus (*Poronia punctata*) has been found on heathland in Surrey and is associated with pony dung.

Managing heathland



Plants and animals that have specialised and adapted to the open heathland landscape over thousands of years, disappear when their habitat becomes overgrown. Trees, scrub, bracken and grass have been invading the heaths as traditional heathland management has declined.

Heathland has been recognised as a rare and important habitat, and most heathland areas in Surrey have been designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Many also fall within the international designations of Special Areas for Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). Many areas of heathland are now managed for their nature conservation and recreational value.

Management techniques

Much of the funding for heathland management work comes from agri-environment schemes such as Higher Level Stewardship. We use a number of different techniques, some of which are outlined in the paragraphs below.

Controlled burning

Burning stands of heather can be very effective at promoting their regeneration, particularly as, unlike cutting, the burning may remove some of the organic matter that builds up under the stand. Controlled burning needs skill to achieve the best results and ensure that the fire does not get out of control. Ideally, it is done in late winter to minimise damage to heathland wildlife.

Burning is an ancient practice, and a recognised form of heathland management, especially on Britain's upland moors, but also in areas such as the New Forest. However Surrey is no longer the wild uninhabited place it was at the end of the 18th century. Even our wildest areas are not far from roads, housing and businesses, and a deliberate controlled burn for managing any of these areas needs to be carefully planned. As burned heathland is an extremely good firebreak, managing heaths by controlled burns has the benefit of helping to prevent large areas being burned by summer wildfires.

Uncontrolled fires during the summer months often caused by arsonists or carelessness can cause long-term damage to heathland and its wildlife. In summer, heath fires burn much hotter - especially if there is a covering of scrub. There is a greater chance that a summer fire will kill the roots of the heather plants, and sometimes a summer fire is so severe that even heather seed will be killed. Summer burns will kill any wildlife unable to move quickly enough.

Controlling bracken

In recent years, the spread of bracken has become a major problem on heathland. It could be that the bracken, like grasses, is benefiting from nutrient enrichment through air pollution. The vigour of bracken can be reduced by mechanical treatment - regular cutting or rolling, especially with a special



roller called a 'bracken bruiser'. Mowing and rolling are most effective when done when the bracken frond has just finished unfurling and food reserves in the underground root system (rhizome) are most depleted. This is also the time when it is best to treat bracken with a herbicide. Usually on heathland the selective chemical Asulox is used for this and, in normal circumstances, it does not affect the growth of plants such as heathers that may be growing with the bracken.

There are disadvantages to the mechanical methods of bracken control. Regular cutting keeps all vegetation short and rolling works best where the vegetation is short, this makes control of bracken in taller vegetation a difficult proposition. Both methods can harm ground-nesting birds.

Under dense stands of bracken, there is often a thick layer of litter. Stripping this away can help heathers and other heathland plants to re-establish.

Grazing heathland

Grazing by hardy breeds of livestock can benefit heathland in a number of ways. It can reduce the amount of scrub that develops, as animals graze off seedling trees. Grazing can promote diversity of flora and fauna by reducing the dominance of grasses such as purple moor-grass and wavy hair-grass. Grazing can promote



'structure' in the vegetation to the great benefit of heathland wildlife. It can also benefit heathland invertebrates that make use of dung. Different grazing animals - cattle, ponies, sheep and goats - will have different effects on the vegetation. The nature of the site - its size, topography and the make-up of its vegetation - and the level of stocking are also important determinants on the effects of grazing.

Managing trees and scrub

An important part of managing heathland is removing young trees, which are often called 'scrub'. This is necessary to prevent the heathland being lost and replaced



with poor quality secondary woodland. Ancient woodland, by contrast has a much longer history and is much richer in wildlife.



In Surrey, the main tree species growing on heaths are Scots pine and silver birch. These are cut and sometimes turned into woodchip, which can be converted to compost or used to generate heat and power. Some cut trees send up several new shoots (or 'coppice') when they are cut. In these cases we sometimes use a herbicide to treat the tree stump. If an area is being grazed, this might control the regrowth without needing the herbicide.

Restoring heathland

In some cases when heathland has disappeared under invading trees, it can be restored. Heather seed can survive for as long as 80 years in the soil. When the tree cover is removed and more light reaches the ground, the dormant seeds can germinate and new plants grow.

Turf stripping

To speed up the process of heather regeneration, sometimes the 'litter layer' of leaves and pine needles on the surface is removed. Turf stripping can also be useful where an area has been taken over by bracken



or invasive grasses like wavy hair-grass and purple moor-grass. It initially leaves bare ground, which is very valuable for heathland invertebrates such as solitary bees and wasps.

Cutting heather

Sometimes heather is cut to regenerate it. This leads to plants of different sizes and suits a range heathland wildlife that depends on different ages of heather. Cutting heather is mostly used to create firebreaks, which help to stop fires spreading across the heath.

Keeping the soil poor

Removing scrub, leaf litter and some heather from heathland helps to stop nutrients and fertility building up in the soil. Heathland plants are adapted to poor conditions, but if the soil becomes richer it is easier for more common plants to move in, and harder for them to compete.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 26 MARCH 2018

SAFER WOKING PARTNERSHIP, COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

Summary

This report provides the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise the draft Safer Woking Partnership Plan 2018-21.

The plan for 2018-21 has 5 key priority areas of: Anti-Social Behaviour; Crime; Drugs and Alcohol, Reducing Reoffending and Preventing Violent Extremism.

The draft plan is being reviewed by the Community Safety Task Group at its meeting on 21 March 2018 where it is expected to be approved in principle for publication subject to scrutiny by this Committee. The Joint Committee agreed to delegate approval to the Strategic Director (People), in consultation with the Chair of the Community Safety Task Group, to make any minor amends as a result of scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee so that the Partnership Plan may be published as promptly as possible after this meeting. Should the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have any significance issues of concern, the matter will be referred back to the Community Safety Task Group to consider prior to publication.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

The Safer Woking Partnership Plan 2018-21 be endorsed

Background Papers:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27 March 2017, 4 April 2016, 23 March 2015, 31 March 2014, 25 March 2013, 19 March 2012, 21 March 2011, 6 December 2010 and 29 March 2010 Safer Woking Partnership Plan 2017-2020 Police and Justice Act 2006 Guidance for the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters - England Sustainability Impact Assessment Equalities Impact Assessment

Reporting Person:

Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager Ext. 3080, E Mail: Camilla.Edmiston@woking.gov.uk

Sue Barham, Strategic Director

Ext. 3810, E Mail: Sue.Barham@woking.gov.uk

Contact Person:

Camilla Edmiston, Community Safety Manager Ext. 3080, E Mail: Camilla.Edmiston@woking.gov.uk

Safer Woking Partnership, Community Safety Plan

Date Published:

14 March 2018

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the Committee with the opportunity to scrutinise the draft Safer Woking Partnership Plan 2018-21. The Woking strategic assessment supported the decision making on the priorities for the plan, as well as other data, such as crime and anti-social behaviour, Surreyi and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and officers' knowledge and experience.
- 1.2 The Police and Justice Act 2006 gave local authorities new responsibility for considering crime and disorder matters. On 6 December 2010 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed a recommendation in a report on a suggested scrutiny agreement. This agreed that the new Safer Woking Partnership Plan would be brought annually to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for appropriate scrutiny.

2.0 Woking Strategic Assessment 2018

- 2.1 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 placed a new duty on the police and local authorities to work together to develop and implement three year strategies to tackle crime and disorder. These strategies are now based on an annual strategic assessment which aims to provide partnerships with intelligence and evidence of the priorities and problems for their partnership that will inform effective and responsive delivery structures.
- 2.2 The annual strategic assessment work identifies current and possible future crime, disorder and substance misuse issues from sound evidence and analysis of data obtained via Surreyi, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and relevant agencies. This year there was a light touch approach while Surrey Community Safety Board agree a new dashboard assessment. The Surrey Community Safety Unit are leading on this work and will produce these for future assessments. Locally officers have considered appropriate data and information which, when coupled together with their knowledge and experience, has led us to agree to carrying forward the current priorities for the production of the draft Safer Woking Partnership Plan 2018-21 (see Appendix 1).
- 2.3 The plan has 5 key priority areas as follows:
 - a) <u>Anti-Social Behaviour</u> includes identifying and supporting victims and addressing key hotspot locations and problem individuals
 - b) <u>Crime</u> which will target domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation (a national and local priority), hate crime and serious organised crime.
 - c) <u>Drugs and Alcohol</u> which will address the priorities contained in the Surrey Substance Misuse Strategy.
 - d) Reducing Reoffending which will focus on the support and development of the current multi-agency approaches with suitable interventions targeted at the most prolific offenders.
 - e) <u>Preventing Violent Extremism</u> which will involve awareness raising and training for frontline staff.
- 2.4 Following scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the final plan will be published on the Woking Borough Council web site, unless there is a significant issue in which case the matter will be referred back to the Community Safety Task Group for further consideration. The implementation of the plan will be monitored by the Community Safety

Task Group of the Joint Committee with quarterly action plan reports. The quarterly reports will continue to be circulated to all borough and county members.

3.0 Implications

Financial

3.1 It is anticipated that the work on the implementation of the partnership plan can be accommodated within existing resources.

Human Resource/Training and Development

3.2 It is anticipated that the implementation work can be accommodated within existing resources.

Community Safety

3.3 The production of the strategic assessment and the publication of the partnership plan fulfil some of the statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Risk Management

3.4 There are no implications.

Sustainability

3.5 There are no implications.

Equalities

3.6 There are no implications.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The scrutiny of the draft proposals for the Safer Woking Partnership Plan 2018-2021 is an important function of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee this year and helps it meet the requirements of the Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009, section 20 (3) and (4) of the Police and Justice Act 2006. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is designated the Council's crime and disorder overview and scrutiny committee.
- 4.2 The Committee is asked to scrutinise the plan and either endorse the plan, or if there is a significant area of concern feedback such to the Community Safety Task Group for them to re-consider prior to publishing.

REPORT ENDS



Safer Woking Partnership Partnership Plan 2018-2021

Aims

The Safer Woking Partnership has the following aims:

- To identify, protect and support the most vulnerable people and areas in our communities, and tackle offenders who are involved in criminal and/or anti-social behaviour
- To promote crime prevention to maintain the low levels of crime and disorder
- To promote reassurance to involve the public and work with all communities to reduce the fear of crime and provide people with a sense of safety and reassurance

The partnership will:

- Work jointly with other statutory and voluntary agencies
- Build capacity within the neighbourhoods and communities to enable them to contribute to the delivery of the aims of this plan.

Key Priorities for the Safer Woking Partnership

The priorities that were identified through a local assessment and agreement are set out in the table on page 3. They were identified by an analysis of key data sets, a review of national and regional targets and draw on the knowledge and experience of local partnership officers.

For each priority issue, we will use the following methods to address them:

- 1. Established partnership delivery mechanism, including:
 - JAG: The Joint Action Group (JAG) is a multi agency problem solving group which deals with problem locations in the borough and meets every six or seven weeks. They consider issues including antisocial behaviour, rough sleeping and arson.
 - CHaRMM: The Community Harm and Risk Management meeting (CHaRMM) is a
 multi agency problem solving group which supports victims and deals with problem
 individuals or families in the borough and meets on a monthly basis. This has
 replaced the old CIAG, Community Incident Action Group.
 - PPOMP: Priority and Other Prolific Offenders Management Panel meets monthly, works with prolific offenders and fast tracks them through the Criminal Justice System.
 - MAPPA: Multi-agency Public Protection Agreement meets monthly and monitors dangerous individuals, including sex offenders.
 - MARAC: Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference where high risk domestic abuse cases are assessed and appropriate actions agreed on a monthly basis.
 - CSERMM: Child Sexual Exploitation Risk Management Meeting meets weekly to monitor and risk assess missing and exploited children.
 - MASH: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub see page 6.
 - Domestic Abuse Forum is a multi-agency group that helps to deliver the county domestic abuse strategy at a local level.
 - Domestic Abuse Management Board meets quarterly and oversees county wide domestic abuse work, including any campaigns.
 - Licensing Tasking Meeting: This group meets monthly and provides Surrey Police, Surrey County Council Trading Standards and Woking Borough Council the opportunity to discuss any concerns regarding licensed premises, agree actions and is used as the primary source for arranging joint agency enforcement work.
 - The Family Support Programme is a programme of intensive support offered to the most vulnerable and/or chaotic families in the borough to help them achieve positive changes in their lives.
 - Youth Engagement Scheme (YES) run by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service, which
 is aimed at addressing anti-social behaviour, youth crime, low self esteem and low
 motivation for those aged 14-17.
 - Firewise Scheme run by Surrey Fire and Rescue Service which offers counselling for juvenile fire setters.
 - The Health and Wellbeing Action Plan of the Woking Joint Committee.
 - Woking Integrated Youth Strategy and Action Plan.
 - Voluntary organisation networks, including Woking Neighbourhood Watch, Residents Associations and Woking Street Angels.
- 2. Mainstream agency work: Where the issue identified is the core responsibility of one of the partner agencies this will be dealt with through those particular agencies business processes. This includes the local authority's plans, relevant CCG plans, the Surrey Fire and Rescue Local Station Plan for Woking, and the Local Policing Plan.

Safer Woking Partnership Priorities

Note: The priorities below are not listed in a priority order

Priority	Detail
1	 Anti-social behaviour (ASB) Identify and support repeat and vulnerable victims of ASB and tackle the antisocial behaviour of individuals and families through the CHaRMM process and the Family Support Programme (FSP) Identify and address hotspot locations of ASB, particularly repeat locations, reported and actioned as appropriate through the JAG process
2	Tackling domestic abuse is a key priority recognised county wide Raise awareness of domestic abuse, how to report it and how to get support Work with the Domestic Abuse Development Group to implement the Surrey Domestic Abuse Strategy and support county wide campaigns Raise awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation in Woking working with partner agencies To tackle and raise awareness of Hate Crime across the Borough and build up community confidence in reporting incidents Develop an appropriate response to local problems of Serious Organised Crime with partners and police working together to use all available powers
3	 Support appropriate partnership work that will assist with the implementation of the Woking Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Development and implementation of suitable activity to tackle issues of concern in the town centre, particularly around the night time economy, which includes supporting the Chertsey Road road closures, town centre dispersal orders and the Street Angels project Support the local implementation of the Surrey Substance Misuse Strategy Support delivery of Surrey's Local Alcohol Action Area Programme 2017-19

4 Reducing reoffending

- To work in partnership in assessing, managing and implementing Court sentences for those convicted offenders who have the greatest impact on the community in Woking through MARAC, Integrated Offender Management (IOM) and MAPPA
- To support, evaluate and implement the learning (once available) from the North Surrey IOM pilot being led by Surrey Police in the West Surrey area
- To contribute to the assessment and action planning of offenders who present a detrimental impact upon the community in Woking via the CHaRMM process.
- To continue to support the work of the Surrey Women's Support Centre by referring eligible women offenders to the project and contributing to the Surrey wide Women's justice project
- To work with Surrey Family Support Service in successfully managing the transition of young adult offenders into the adult Probation system
- To support and monitor Woking offenders in accessing and engaging with the treatment pathway for drug and alcohol misuse
- To work in partnership with the Community Forensic Mental Health Service in identifying personality disordered offenders and accessing appropriate intervention

5 Preventing violent extremism

 Work together on the implementation of relevant aspects of local agency Prevent plans

Action Plan for 2018/19

Action Delaste Land Times and						
Action	Priority	Lead	Timescale			
Plan a programme of awareness raising events for domestic abuse including DA Awareness week, support other campaigns planned through the DA Manangement Board and Development Group, including work with voluntary sector eg CAB, residents associations and Woking Neighbourhood Watch	1, 2, 3 and 4	Community Safety Manager, Woking Borough Council (WBC)	Domestic Abuse Awareness week (11-15 June 2018) Surrey DA Management Board and DA Development Group meet quarterly			
Review location hotspots regularly through JAG	1, 2, 3 and 4	JAG Chairman (Community Safety Manager, WBC)	JAG meetings (every 6-7 weeks)			
Review individuals and families causing ASB regularly through CHaRMM and FSP as appropriate	1, 2, 3 and 4	CHaRMM Chairman (Community Safety Manager, WBC) FSP Manager, WBC	Monthly Monthly			
Support the County ASB awareness week, including working with the voluntary sector, such as Woking Neighbourhood Watch	1 and 3	Community Safety Manager, WBC	Provisional date 9- 13 July 2018			
Tackle town centre issues, including Dispersal Orders, implementation and monitoring of the PSPO and Chertsey Road road closures	1, 2, 3 and 4	Neighbourhood Inspector, Surrey Police	Monitored at the JAG meetings (every 6-7 weeks)			
Interventions (including training of licensees, Best Bar None, Pubwatch) and awareness raising around alcohol issues	1, 2, 3 and 4	Health and Wellbeing Task Group Police and Borough Licensing Teams	Monitored at the JAG meetings (every 6-7 weeks)			
Develop a process for routinely reviewing and responding to A&E assault data which relates to Woking	1 and 3	CSP, Police, Public Health	2017-19			
Raise awareness and educate members, professionals and the public (including young people) on what Child Sexual Exploitation is, the risk indicators and warning signs	2 and 4	Community Safety Manager, WBC	Ongoing			
Develop awareness raising on hate crime, how to report in Woking and how we can better support victims	2	Neighbourhood Inspector, Surrey Police	March 2019			
Raise awareness with partner agencies and develop an appropriate response to local problems of Serious Organised Crime using all available powers	2	Neighbourhood Inspector, Surrey Police	Ongoing			
Work with the Women's Support Centre, Surrey Police and other relevant agencies on the Transforming Women's Justice pilot project for Surrey	4	Community Safety Manager, WBC	Ongoing			
Continue to raise awareness around preventing violent extremism	5	Community Safety Manager, WBC, Police Neighbourhood Inspector	Ongoing			

Background

The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act gave local agencies shared responsibility for developing and introducing strategies to reduce crime and disorder in their area. The agencies come together as the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), known locally as the Safer Woking Partnership. Statutory members include:

- Surrey Police
- Woking Borough Council
- Surrey County Council
- Surrey Fire and Rescue Service
- National Probation Service
- Kent, Surrey and Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company
- North West Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group

Strategic Assessment and Data Collection

The Safer Woking Partnership is required to carry out an annual partnership strategic assessment. The purpose of this is to assist in producing the priorities for the annual 3 year rolling partnership plan.

The data, which forms the basis of this analysis, has been drawn from a variety of sources and partner agencies across Woking and the broader Surrey area. These include:

- · County Council data and intelligence
- Borough Council data and intelligence
- Police crime and incident data, intelligence and tactical assessment
- Health data

Woking Joint Committee

Woking Joint Committee aims to improve outcomes and value for money for residents and businesses in Woking by strengthening local democracy and improving partnership working through joint decision making. The Joint Committee has taken over the delegated community safety responsibilities of the borough council and county council in Woking and acts as the local Community Safety Partnership. A Community Safety Task Group has been established with representatives from the statutory partners to review actions and monitor progress in between formal reports to the Committee.

Community Safety Board

In two tier areas such a Surrey, there is a requirement for a county level strategy group. In Surrey the multi agency Community Safety Board fulfils this duty. The Community Safety Board is chaired by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey and includes a wide range of partners that oversee the development of strategies and plans that aim to increase the sense of safety of the people of Surrey. The Community Safety Board works collaboratively with other county boards to ensure effective strategic join up.

The key county-wide priorities for 2018-19 are expected to be the same as 2017-18. The following will be overseen by the Community Safety Board:

Tier one priorities (the primary focus of the CSB):

- High Harm Crime (Child Sexual Exploitation, Serious Organised Crime including Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery)
- Prevent
- Domestic Abuse

Tier two priorities (CSB will have oversight):

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Mental Health Crisis
- Re-Offending
- Resilience
- Road Safety
- Substance Misuse

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is expected to be reviewed in Sept 2018 for publication of new priorities in April 2019.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The Surrey Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is the initial point of contact that aims to improve the safeguarding response for children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect through better information sharing and high-quality and timely responses.

The Surrey MASH achieves this by bringing together Surrey County Council social care workers, early help services, health workers, the police, and a vast array of virtual partners across Surrey – all under one roof at Guildford Police Station. By being able to share relevant information between us, the MASH aims to identify need, risk and harm accurately to allow timely and the most appropriate intervention.

Communication

The partnership needs to ensure that local residents feel well informed about the steps being taken to deal with the priority issues. This will be done via media coverage, awareness campaigns such as Domestic Abuse Awareness Week (June 2018), through existing Woking Neighbourhood Watch and Residents Associations communication, emails, newsletters and social media etc.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of abuse which involves children under 18, male and female, of different ethnic origins and of different ages, receiving something, usually food, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gifts and/or money, in exchange for sexual activity. It can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example, being persuaded to post images on the internet or mobile phone without immediate payment or reward. Child Sexual Exploitation involves children bring groomed into a relationship where they are forced or coerced into sexual activity in return for something and it can occur on the internet without the child's immediate recognition or gain. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common. Involvement in exploitative relationships is characterised by the child's or young person's limited availability of choice as a result of their social, economic and emotional vulnerability. A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not

recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation.

Surrey Safeguarding Children's Board has produced Child Sexual Exploitation leaflets for children signposting them to the www.surreycc.gov.uk/cse for support and advice and there are posters for children and parents.

There are weekly Risk Management Meetings to discuss those children that have been identified at risk and to ensure that appropriate safeguarding measures are put in place to protect the child.

Child Sexual Exploitation is a hidden crime, victims are often too afraid to come forward and do not always see themselves as a victim of crime. Therefore it is essential that partners work together to try and prevent this abuse.

The Partnership needs to educate everyone, professionals and members of the public, on what Child Sexual Exploitation is, the risk indicators and warning signs in order to protect children by spotting it and reporting it. Children and young people also need educating to ensure they know what a healthy relationship looks like and what exploitative behaviour looks like.

Hate Crime

Hate crimes are crimes committed against someone because of their disability, gender-identity, religion or belief or sexual orientation. It covers a wide range of crime types and often is committed against vulnerable members of the community who for a wide variety of reasons do not report them. The partnership will look to scope what type of incidents take place in the Borough, working with organisations and voluntary groups that support victims of hate crime to do this. The partners will also look to educate everyone about hate crime to highlight the issues, build up confidence in the community to report incidents of hate crime, look at how to reduce incidents and support victims.

Serious Organised Crime

Serious Organised Crime (SOC) costs the UK at least £24 billion per year. It is estimated that there are approximately 5,800 active Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) operating in the UK, comprising about 39,000 people. SOC overlaps with many other issues, because it largely describes a mode of operating, rather than a particular offence. For example, OCGs can be actively engaged with facilitating modern slavery or CSE. OCGs in Surrey are mainly associated with drugs criminality, specifically drugs supply, but are also engaged in the following:

- · counterfeit goods
- CSE
- cyber-crime (ransomware, software support scams, phishing)
- large scale high volume fraud/financial crimes
- modern slavery (car washes, nail bars, construction workers, farm workers, restaurant staff)
- organised acquisitive crime
- organised illegal immigration
- trafficking people and firearms

Communities vulnerable to SOC may include (but are not limited to):

- looked after children and children at risk of CSE
- new communities
- prolific drug and alcohol users
- vulnerable and elderly adults

Preventing Violent Extremism

The Government's Prevent strategy aims to challenge the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it, protect vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorist-related activity and to support sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

Surrey Police has a team of Prevent Officers who work with the public and partner agencies to prevent terrorism and violent extremism from taking root in our communities. These officers aim to safeguard individuals and institutions from all forms of terrorist ideology and work closely with partner agencies such as local authorities, schools, universities and health institutions, to ensure communities in Surrey are well placed to report and respond to terrorist related concerns.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires all partners to consider local implementation and each agency develops its own annual action plan.

Substance misuse: Drugs and Alcohol

Addressing the harm caused by alcohol and substance misuse on individuals, families and communities remains a priority for Woking. We will be supporting the objectives of the County's Drugs & Alcohol strategies with a particular focus on:

- Prevention and education:
- Early identification and referrals into specialist treatment services;
- Safer communities:
- Support to local treatment providers in enabling and sustaining recovery among clients.

Locally work in Woking is ongoing through the JAG and CHaRMM where appropriate.

Surrey Local Alcohol Action Area

On the 27 January 2017 the Home Office launched a second phase of this programme to tackle alcohol-related crime and health harms and create a more diverse night-time economy. The programme initially launched in February 2014 covering 20 areas. This phase sees 33 new regions coming on board.

Each area will be supported by the government to implement their plan which will see local agencies including licensing authorities, health bodies and police coming together with businesses to address problems caused by alcohol in their local area.

Violent crimes involving alcohol have fallen over the last decade - but it is clear that alcohol misuse has a significant impact on communities across the country. Our pubs, bars and restaurants make a valuable contribution to our economy and our society and it is important that people are able to enjoy them without the fear of becoming a victim of crime. Alcohol-related crime and disorder costs an estimated £11 billion per year in England and Wales, and the government wants to support local communities in reducing the scenes of drunkenness and violence that blight communities, particularly at night.

The first phase of LAAA saw a variety of interventions introduced to reduce street drinking, vulnerability and violence. Surrey will be supported in developing and implementing their plans by specialist support managers. They will receive support and expertise in crime prevention, licensing and public health from the Home Office, Public Health England and Nightworks, a company that specialises in diversifying the night-time economy.

High Impact Complex Drinkers Project

Surrey Public Health is running a two year High Impact Complex Drinkers project to address those alcohol dependant users who resist engaging with agencies. Responding to high impact complex drinkers (HICD) in Surrey will become an enhanced element of the existing substance misuse service provided by Catalyst. This service is for adults aged 18 years and over with a problematic substance misuse issue, including the use of opiates, stimulants, hallucinogens and alcohol, as well as their families, carers or partners. The Catalyst High Impact Team element will focus solely on people who find it hard to engage with structured interventions and are alcohol dependent. This client group commonly has multiple disadvantage and vulnerability and has been marginalised from society and services. Across the two year extensive evaluation, the service will develop responding to local needs, it will be responsive and flexible whilst adapting the Blue Light Model (https://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/blue-light-project) to Surrey's geography and residents.

Woking is one of four borough and district areas who have been invollved in the first phase of working with the local CHaRMM groups. This means that Public Health have been working with members of CHaRMM to:

- Support the delivery of Blue Light training for non-alcohol specialist staff (health, social care, housing and criminal justice services) to strengthen a partnership response to these clients
- Support the development of a High Impact Complex Drinkers multi-agency discussion and response at CHaRMM, to agree on identification and actions to support the highest impact clients and ensure a consistent focus on these individuals.

Delivery and Review Mechanism

The Safer Woking Partnership has established delivery mechanisms through a series of multi-agency problem solving groups, such as CHaRMM and JAG (as detailed on page 2). Delivery is monitored through regular meetings, as set out on page 2, and will be reported to the Safer Woking Partnership through the Community Safety Task Group and Joint Committee.

New legislation, policy and guidance

Over the last few years there has been a significant amount of new legislation, policy and guidance which all impacts on the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

This includes the following:

- Prevent Duty 2015 for specified authorities in England and Wales on the duty in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- Serious Crime Act 2015 Coercive or controlling behaviour became an offence on 29 December 2015. Victims who would otherwise be subjected to sustained patterns of domestic abuse will be better protected under this new offence. The government's new coercive or controlling behaviour offence will mean victims who experience the type of behaviour that stops short of serious physical violence, but amounts to extreme psychological and emotional abuse, can bring their perpetrators to justice. The offence will carry a maximum of 5 years' imprisonment, a fine or both.
- Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 in particular this includes provision for civil sanctions prohibition notices, premises notices, prohibition orders and premises orders (breach of the two orders will be a criminal offence) to enable the police and local

authorities to adopt a graded response to the supply of psychoactive substances in appropriate cases.

Domestic Abuse Bill 2018 - currently out to consulatation until 31 May 2018. The
consultation sets out the government's approach to dealing with domestic abuse. It seeks
to address it at every stage from prevention through to rehabilitation and reinforces the
government's aim to make domestic abuse everyone's business. The consultation is
wide-ranging and they are seeking views on both legislative proposals for the draft
Domestic Abuse Bill and a package of practical action.

This consultation asks questions under four main themes with the central aim of prevention running through each:

- promote awareness to put domestic abuse at the top of everyone's agenda, and raise public and professionals' awareness
- protect and support to enhance the safety of victims and the support that they receive
- pursue and deter to provide an effective response to perpetrators from initial agency response through to conviction and management of offenders, including rehabilitation
- improve performance to drive consistency and better performance in the response to domestic abuse across all local areas, agencies and sectors

Funding

A small amount of funding is provided by some of the local partners into a joint fund to support the priorities contained within this plan, otherwise work is supported by core funding from the various partner organisations or funding bids are made, for example to the Police and Crime Commissioner's grant scheme.

Police and Crime Commissioner

David Munro, the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Surrey, was elected in May 2016. He is responsible for overseeing the work of Surrey Police, holding the Chief Constable to account, setting the budget and helping to tackle the crime issues. The PCC has responsibility for reducing crime and disorder and the PCC office works with CSPs and criminal justice partners to achieve their objectives. The PCC is able to call CSP chairmen to meetings, request reports and commission services.

The PCC has also made available funding to commission services that improve community safety in Surrey. Local organisations, community and voluntary groups can apply for grants which meet the PCCs priorities. To find out more visit; www.surrey-pcc.gov.uk.

New priorities for the PCC are due to be published in May 2018.

The legislation provides a scrutiny system in the form of a Police and Crime Panel (PCP) to look at how the PCC exercises their statutory functions and effectiveness. The panel is made up of councillors from each of the 11 local district and borough councillors (one from each), a county councillor and two independent co-opted individuals.

EXECUTIVE - 22 MARCH 2018

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

Executive Summary

This report presents the progress made at the Council on compliance with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the work that must still be carried out. It also includes a draft of a new Data Protection Policy which will assist in compliance.

The GDPR comprises of three main parts: the principles on which personal data should be processed, the lawful bases on which organisations can rely on and the rights available to individuals. There are also provisions relating to accountability and good governance which should be adhered to.

A significant portion of the compliance work necessary has already been carried out by a GDPR Steering Group, including an audit of current personal data processing activities across the Council. This audit, along with the guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office, has allowed the Steering Group to recommend to the Corporate Management Group specific actions in order to achieve compliance. Those which can be carried out centrally have been assigned the responsibility of the Steering Group, while for those that concern the personal data processing activities of the Sections themselves, the Steering Group will work with CMG members to provide the tools and guidance necessary.

The two aspects of the report requiring a decision by Full Council are the adoption of a new Data Protection Policy and the appointment of Peter Bryant (Head of Democratic and Legal Services/Monitoring Officer) as Data Protection Officer.

Reasons for Decision

Consideration of these matters will enable the Council to comply with the EU's General Data Protection Regulation when it comes into force in May 2018.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RECOMMEND to Council That

- (i) the progress made on compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation, as well as the need for further work, be noted;
- (ii) the draft new Data Protection Policy be adopted; and
- (iii) Peter Bryant (Head of Democratic and Legal Services/Monitoring Officer) be appointed Data Protection Officer.

This item will need to be dealt with by way of a recommendation to the Council.

Background Papers:

Sustainability Impact Assessment Equalities Impact Assessment

Reporting Person:

Peter Bryant, Head of Democratic and Legal Services/Monitoring Officer Ext. 3030, E Mail: Peter.Bryant@woking.gov.uk

Contact Person:

Robert Bishop, Graduate Trainee Ext. 3001, E Mail: Robert.Bishop@woking.gov.uk

Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Ayesha Azad

E Mail: CllrAyesha.Azad@woking.gov.uk

Shadow Portfolio Holder:

Cllr Ann-Marie Barker

E Mail: CllrAnn-Marie.Barker@woking.gov.uk

Date Published:

14 March 2018

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The impact on the Council of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was first considered by the Corporate Management Group (CMG) on 24 July 2017, when a high-level briefing was presented. On 16 October 2017, a timetabled Action Plan, based on the Information Commissioner's Office compliance guidance, was presented to the CMG and approved.
- 1.2 Since that meeting, the execution of this Action Plan has been carried out by a GDPR Steering Group, formed of Robert Bishop (Graduate Trainee and Project Manager for GDPR Compliance), Adele Devon (ICT Manager), Jacqueline Hutton (Solicitor), Pino Mastromarco (Senior Policy Officer) and Sarah Reed (Principal HR Advisor).
- 1.3 Definitions used in the GDPR and in this report are as follows:
 - 'Personal data' is any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person, either through their name or another identifier such as an identification number.
 - 'Processing': any operation performed on personal data, whether or not by automated means, such as collection, use or disclosure. It should be noted that the GDPR applies to processing of personal data in hard copy form as well as by electronic means.
 - 'Data subject' is the term used to describe any given person when identified in relation to their personal data.
 - 'Data controller' is the label for organisations which decide how and why personal data is used, while 'data processors' is a label for organisations responsible for processing personal data on behalf of a controller. Woking Borough Council is a data controller, while its suppliers are data processors.
 - 'Special categories' of personal data encompasses ethnicity and data concerning health, among other categories. To process these, there are extra requirements. Similar requirements exist in the GDPR for processing data on criminal convictions or offences.

2.0 The GDPR

- 2.1 The GDPR, along with the Data Protection Bill currently going through the UK Parliament, will represent the new data protection regulatory regime after 25 May 2018. The GDPR's purpose is to bring data protection law in Europe up to date, which has not changed significantly since the late 1990s. In the UK, it will replace the Data Protection Act 1998 ('DPA'). It should be noted that the GDPR represents an evolution of the current law, and the existing compliance infrastructure whose purpose is to meet the requirements of the DPA will still be relevant, necessary and useful.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Data Protection Bill is to 'fill in the gaps' where the GDPR provides them for EU member states. These gaps allow member states to legislate to exempt some principles in the GDPR from certain kinds of personal data processing. These exemptions will be taken into account when achieving compliance at the Council.
- 2.3 The GDPR lays out six principles for personal data processing (Article 5), which are very similar to those in the DPA. They dictate that personal data shall be:

- 5(1)(a) Processed according to the law, fairly and in a transparent manner;
- 5(1)(b) Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner incompatible with those purposes;
- 5(1)(c) Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purpose;
- 5(1)(d) Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
- 5(1)(e) Kept for no longer than is necessary for the purpose; and
- 5(1)(f) Processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data.

As well as these principles, there is a requirement that data controllers:

- 5(2) "shall be responsible for, and be able to demonstrate, compliance with the principles".
- 2.4 In order to process any given personal data, the organisation undertaking the processing must identify a lawful basis for that processing (Article 6). There are six available lawful bases, similar to the 'grounds for processing' in the DPA. No single basis is 'better' than the others which basis is most appropriate in each case depends on the purpose for that processing and the relationship with the data subject.
 - 6(1)(a) The data subject has given clear **consent**
 - 6(1)(b) The processing is necessary for a **contract** with the data subject
 - 6(1)(c) The processing is necessary to comply with the **law**
 - 6(1)(d) The processing is necessary to protect someone's **life**
 - 6(1)(e) The processing is necessary for you to perform a task in the **public interest** or for an organisation's **official functions**, and the task or function has a clear basis in law.
 - 6(1)(f) The processing is necessary for an organisation's **legitimate interests** or the legitimate interests of a third party unless there is a good reason to protect the individual's personal data which overrides those legitimate interests.

In order to process special categories of personal data, both a lawful basis must be identified from the list above, as well as an additional lawful basis from another list (Article 9). A similar mechanism is included in the GDPR concerning the processing of personal data on criminal offences or convictions (Article 10).

- 2.5 The aspect in which the GDPR extends furthest beyond the DPA is rights. Under the GDPR, data subjects are afforded:
 - The right to be **informed**: data subjects must be told the purpose for which their personal data is being processed, any other recipients of their personal data and the existence of their rights, among other information, at the first available opportunity.
 - The right of access: data subjects can obtain confirmation that their data is being processed, access to that personal data and other supplementary information, free of charge.

- The right to **rectification**: data subjects can have their personal data rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete.
- The right to erasure: under certain circumstances, an individual may have their personal data erased. It should be noted that this does not apply to personal data processed on the lawful bases of statutory obligation and public interest or official authority.
- The right to **object**: data subjects can object to their personal data being processed, and depending on their personal circumstances and the lawful basis used, its processed may have to be restricted, at least temporarily.
- The right to data portability: if the personal data is processed on the lawful basis of consent or a contract, data subjects have the right to receive their personal data in such a format that is structured, commonly used and machine readable.
- In cases where personal data is used to analyse data subject's behaviour, performance or movements or to make decisions about them through whollyautomated means, data subjects are afforded with additional, specific rights.
- 2.6 Children have the same rights under the GDPR as adults, and the same principles from Article 5 apply to the processing of their personal data. However, it should be noted that, if consent is relied upon as the lawful basis when offering an online service directly to a child, only children aged 13 or over are able to provide consent. Privacy notices aimed at children should also be written in a way in which they understand.
- 2.7 The GDPR includes provisions that promote accountability and good governance. In order to fulfill Article 5(2) (see paragraph 2.3), the Council must:
 - Implement technical and organisational measures that ensure and demonstrate compliance;
 - Maintain documentation on processing activities;
 - Appoint a Data Protection Officer;
 - Undertake and record Data Protection Impact Assessments, where appropriate;
 - Review contractual arrangements with suppliers to ensure that their use of personal data is governed by appropriate standard clauses; and
 - Review procedures for detecting, investigating and reporting personal data breaches.

3.0 Compliance activity

3.1 The requirements under the GDPR detailed in Section 2 above have dictated the compliance activity taking place at the Council. As identified in paragraph 1.1, a GDPR Steering Group has been guiding compliance activity according to those requirements.

3.2 The original timetable for GDPR compliance activity, included in the report on GDPR to the Corporate Management Group meeting of 25 September 2017, is included as follows:

September 2017 – March 2018

Raise awareness of GDPR within the Council;

Document personal data held by the Council;

Review privacy notices;

Review procedures to ensure that individuals' rights are protected (this includes amending contracts and updating software systems);

Updating procedures for dealing with subject access requests;

Identify the lawful basis on which personal data is processed;

Review procedures for detecting, investigating and report data breaches

Assess situations where it will be necessary to carry out a Data Protection Impact Assessment;

Designate a Data Protection Officer.

22 March 2018 Report to Executive

26 March 2018 Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5 April 2018 Report to Council

9 April 2018 – 24 May 2018 Delivery of e-training for staff

- 3.3 The most significant task thus far has been the detailed audit of personal data processing activities at the Council and by its wholly-owned companies. This has resulted in an Information Asset Register of over 400 individual inbound and outbound 'flows' of personal data being identified.
 - In short, the detail recorded in it allows CMG members and their Sections to improve the security of their data processing operations and to make sure they are GDPRcompliant by 25 May in a targeted way.
 - After this date, maintenance of the Information Asset Register will allow the Council to fulfil the requirement in Article 30 to document personal data processing activities.
- 3.4 The Steering Group has identified a legal basis for all of the data processing in the Information Asset Register. To the Council's advantage, large amounts of personal data processing can be justified on the basis of a statutory or contractual obligation. The remaining processing must be justified on alternative legal bases. In addition, regardless of the legal basis, a Data Protection Impact Assessment might be necessary. This is a small number of cases and those cases are identified in the Information Asset Register.

- 3.5 Adherence to the GDPR principles will be strengthened by:
 - Provision of e-training to officers, separate e-training to members and a guidance document for officers and volunteers who do not use a PC. An awareness campaign will also be undertaken in the Civic Offices, including posters in the offices and notices on the staff intranet.
 - Enforcement of new corporate retention periods for both digital and hard copy content. These are being implemented as part of migration from SharePoint 2010 to SharePoint 2016, and for hard copy, CMG members have been made aware that a proportion of the personal data residing in the Council's archives may have to be disposed of.
 - Enhanced security measures for both digital and hard copy content. First, personal
 data will be protected following restriction and closure of existing shared drives and
 migration to SharePoint 2016. Second, where large amounts of personal data or any
 amount of special categories of personal data are being stored in hard copy, locks will
 be provided.
 - Use of new privacy notices provided upon collection of personal data from data subjects, such as at the end of paper forms or digital e-forms.
 - Implementation of updates to ICT systems, such that they have GDPR-compliant functionality, including the ability to erase personal data without trace and to hold information on whether consent has been offered by a data subject.
 - An **update to the website** page on Data Protection and the creation of a new inbox to receive information rights requests (for those rights outlined in paragraph 2.5).
 - Appointment of Peter Bryant (Head of Democratic and Legal Services/Monitoring Officer) as **Data Protection Officer** ('DPO'), a statutory position required by the Regulation. Mr Bryant is currently the Council's Senior Information Risk Owner, a role with which the responsibilities of a DPO are closely associated.
- 3.6 Members of the Steering Group attended the Corporate Management Group on 19 February to report on the progress of the compliance activity and to gain approval for necessary compliance actions, including those outline above. Appendix 2 of the report written for that meeting delineated responsibility for those actions.
 - Many could be completed centrally by the Steering Group or the Steering Group in liaison with one other Section.
 - However, others cut across many sections and depend on the personal data processing activities each carries out. For these, it was decided that the tools necessary to remedy specific compliance issues would be provided by the Steering Group to those sections through their relevant CMG members. These tools include a relevant excerpt of the Information Asset Register, a self-assessment 'process map' to direct them towards compliance, a template for a Data Protection Impact Assessment and the standard letter and clauses for varying contracts.

4.0 Wholly-owned companies

4.1 Meetings have been held with representatives of wholly-owned companies – Brookwood Park Ltd and the Thameswey Group – in order to assess their readiness for the GDPR.

- No major compliance issues were identified for Brookwood Park Ltd. Regardless, they will be included in the same compliance process as WBC Sections.
- Thameswey Group's Data Manager has already started to prepare that organisation for GDPR. The Steering Group will be in frequent contact to share material and track progress in the lead up to 25 May 2018.

5.0 Policy change

- 5.1 Guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office recommends that in order to meet the accountability and good governance requirements of the GDPR, organisations review and update their internal policies.
- 5.2 In order to prepare for the GDPR, a new Data Protection Policy has been drafted (attached as Appendix 1). This deals with the 'high level' principles of data protection. Guidance notes detailing how these principles will be complied with will be drafted subsequently and appended to the policy. These guidance notes will be approved by the Data Protection Officer.
- 5.3 Paragraph 5.4 of the amended Data Protection Policy deals with members registering, on an individual basis, with the Information Commissioner's Office. Where a member processes personal information on behalf of the Council (e.g. as a Committee member), he/she does so under the Council's registration. When members process personal data whilst acting as a Ward Councillor (e.g. casework on behalf of individual residents), they do so as data controllers in their own right, and should have a separate "registration" with the Information Commissioner. As part of the changes resulting from the GDPR, any "registration" requirements for members will be dealt with by the Data Protection Officer.

6.0 Implications

Financial

- 6.1 The annual fee payable by the Council to the Information Commissioner's Office will rise from £500 to £2,900.
- 6.2 It is anticipated that the fee payable to register each member with the Information Commissioner will be £35-£40. An allowance of £1,200 should be made for this activity.
- 6.3 No further budgetary needs have been identified in order to achieve GDPR compliance, except for those that fall within existing budgets:
 - Separate GDPR e-training for staff and members.
 - Updates to ICT systems, such that they have GDPR-compliant functionality.

Human Resource/Training and Development

6.4 The need for updated data protection e-training for all staff has been identified. This is currently being sought through Surrey Learning Pool, who are providing GDPR e-training to other Surrey district councils. It is expected that this e-training will be rolled out to staff between 9 April 2018 and 24 May 2018 and will form part of the mandatory training for new starters thereafter.

6.5 The LGA is in the process of producing an e-training package for members. If ready in time, this will form part of the training provided to members in the new municipal year. If the LGA training package is not ready, alternative training will be provided.

Community Safety

6.6 The Multi-Agency Information Sharing Protocol (MAISP) managed by Surrey County Council currently governs information sharing relating to Community Safety. It is constructed and operates within the confines of the DPA. Woking Borough Council will continue to take direction from Surrey County Council on any changes to the MAISP in light of GDPR.

Risk Management

6.7 The Council will be at risk of not complying with its statutory obligations if it does not take action in light of the new data protection legislation.

Sustainability

6.8 There are no specific sustainability impacts.

Equalities

6.9 There are no specific equalities impacts.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 Progress on compliance with the GDPR is being made at good pace and the Council is on track to achieve compliance by the in-force date of 25 May 2018.
- 7.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be invited to comment on this report and the work at the Council surrounding GDPR compliance at its meeting on 26 March 2018. The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reported to Council.

REPORT ENDS

Woking Borough Council

Data Protection Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out Woking Borough Council's ('the Council') Data Protection Policy and how it complies with the Council's duties under the EU General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act 2018 (which in combination constitute 'the legislation').
- 1.2 The legislation regulates the way in which personal data about individuals, whether held digitally or in a manual filing system, is subjected to any processing operation, including collection, storage, use, disclosure and destruction.
- 1.3 The Council needs to process personal data and sometimes sensitive personal data about people with whom it deals in order to carry out its statutory duties, perform its functions and to comply with terms of contracts it has entered. This includes information on current, past and prospective service users, employees, suppliers, clients, customers, and others with whom it communicates. It may include all persons who live, work or visit the Borough and many others who do not.
- 1.4 The Council regards the lawful and correct treatment of personal information as critical to the success and effectiveness of its operations, and to maintaining the confidence of those it serves. It is essential that it respects the rights of all persons whose personal information it holds, that it treats personal information lawfully and correctly in accordance with the legislation and that it is able to show that this is the case.
- 1.5 Failure to comply with the legislation infringes the rights of individuals and may place them at risk of loss or harm. It also exposes the Council to challenge, legal claims and substantial financial penalty.
- 1.6 This policy applies to all staff and elected Members and the Council expects all of its staff and elected Members to comply fully with this policy and the principles laid down in the legislation (set out in Section 3 below). Elected Members should adhere to the policy so as to ensure compliance with the Members' Code of Conduct and the Council's obligations in relation to confidentiality.
- 1.7 Third parties such as partners, public and private organisations or contractors with whom the Council shares personal data or who hold data on the Council's behalf will be expected to enter into and adhere to formal agreements or contractual obligations with the Council incorporating the principles of this policy and the requirements of the legislation. Such agreements or contracts must define the purposes for which personal data is supplied to or held by the other party and require contractors to have in place appropriate organisational and technical

measures to protect the data and processes to enable the exercise of the rights of individuals.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 Definitions used in the GDPR and in this policy are as follows:
 - 2.1.1 **'Personal data**' is any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person, either through their name or another identifier such as an identification number.
 - 2.1.2 **'Processing**' refers to any operation performed on personal data, whether or not by electronic or automated means, such as collection, use, storage, disclosure or destruction.
 - 2.1.3 **'Data subject'** is the term used to describe any given person when identified in relation to their personal data.
 - 2.1.4 'Data controller' is the label for organisations which decide how and why personal data is used, while 'data processors' is a label for organisations responsible for processing personal data on behalf of a controller. Woking Borough Council is a data controller, while its suppliers are data processors.
 - 2.1.5 **'Special categories**' of personal data encompasses ethnicity and data concerning health, among other categories. To process these, there are extra requirements. Similar requirements exist in the GDPR for processing data on criminal convictions or offences.

3. Data protection principles

- 3.1 The Council will comply with the principles included in the legislation, ensuring that personal data is:
 - 3.1.1 Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner;
 - 3.1.2 Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner incompatible with those purposes;
 - 3.1.3 Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to those purposes;
 - 3.1.4 Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
 - 3.1.5 Kept in a form which permits identification of data subjects for no longer than is necessary to fulfil the purposes for which the personal data is processed;
 - 3.1.6 Processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data; and
 - 3.1.7 Processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects.

4. General requirements

- 4.1 If follows from the principles of the legislation that, in practice:
 - 4.1.1 Personal data should only be processed when an appropriate lawful basis in the legislation can be identified;
 - 4.1.2 Personal data should only be accessed by those who need to for work purposes;
 - 4.1.3 Personal data should not be divulged or discussed except when performing normal work duties;
 - 4.1.4 Personal data must be kept safe and secure at all times, including at the office, public areas, home or in transit;
 - 4.1.5 Personal data should be regularly reviewed and updated; and
 - 4.1.6 Queries about data protection, internal and external to the Council must be dealt with effectively and promptly.

5. Responsibilities of officers and elected Members

- 5.1 The Council is a Data Controller under the legislation and must comply with the principles laid down in the legislation and be able to demonstrate compliance with them.
- 5.2 The Data Protection Officer shall be accountable for the implementation and effectiveness of this policy. The Data Protection Officer shall also have specific operational responsibility for data protection matters corporately.
- 5.3 All Corporate Management Group members are responsible for implementing safe and sound data protection procedures within their areas of responsibility.

 Corporate Management Group members should have regard to this policy and any accompanying guidance issued by the Data Protection Officer from time to time, when formulating procedures which make use of personal data.
- 5.4 Where an elected Member has access to and processes personal information on behalf of the Council, the Member does so under the Council's 'registration' and must comply with this policy. When Members process personal data whilst acting as a Ward Councillor, they do so as Data Controllers in their own right, with a separate fee having been paid to the Information Commissioner's Office.

6. Data security

All staff are responsible for ensuring that personal data which they use or process is kept securely and is not disclosed to any unauthorised person or organisation. Access to personal data should only be given to those who have and can show a need for access to the data for the purpose of their duties.

- 6.2 Personal data should not be left where it can be accessed by persons not authorised to see it or have access to it by reference to this policy and the principles in the legislation.
- 6.3 Personal data which is no longer required must be destroyed appropriately, for example, by shredding or, in the case of computer records, secure deletion. When required, computers must have all personal information securely deleted using the appropriate software tools. Personal data must be destroyed in accordance with the Council's retention schedule.
- 6.4 Staff and elected Members who work from home must have particular regard to the need to ensure compliance with this policy. The security and proper processing of data outside offices and usual places of work and whilst travelling must be ensured.
- 6.5 The Data Protection Officer shall ensure that personal data breaches are investigated and, where the breach is likely pose a risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals, reported to the Information Commissioner's Office in line the requirements of the legislation.

7. Information sharing

- 7.1 Personal data may need to be shared with third parties in order to deliver services or perform our duties. The Council will only share personal data when a lawful basis from the legislation can justify that sharing, where it is necessary to achieve a clear purpose and, with that purpose in mind, it is fair and proportionate to do so.
- 7.2 Disclosure within the Council either to staff or elected Members will be on a need to know basis or to enable the most effective discharge of their responsibilities. Such disclosure may only be carried out when a lawful basis from the legislation can justify that disclosure. It will be carried out in accordance with the principles laid down in the legislation.
- 7.3 Data Sharing Agreements should be concluded when setting up on-going or routine information sharing arrangements with third parties. However, they are not needed when information is shared in one-off circumstances, but a record of the decision and the reasons for sharing information should be kept. All Data Sharing Agreements must be signed off by the Data Protection Officer, who will keep a register of all Data Sharing Agreements.

8. Data Protection Impact Assessments

8.1 As required by the legislation, Data Protection Impact Assessments ('DPIAs') will be completed in instances when the processing of personal data is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

Such instances may include, but are not limited to:

- 8.1.1 Introduction of new technologies;
- 8.1.2 Systematic and extensive processing activities;
- 8.1.3 Large scale processing of special categories of data or personal data relating to criminal convictions or offences;
- 8.1.4 Large scale, systematic monitoring of public areas, such as CCTV; and
- 8.1.5 Before entering a data sharing agreement.

9. The rights of data subjects

- 9.1 Subject to the provisions of the legislation, Members, staff and members of the public have the following 'information rights' in relation to their personal data:
 - 9.1.1 to be informed about how and why their personal data is processed;
 - 9.1.2 to access their data;
 - 9.1.3 to rectification of their data;
 - 9.1.4 to erasure of their data;
 - 9.1.5 to restrict processing of their data;
 - 9.1.6 to data portability;
 - 9.1.7 to object to processing of their data; and
 - 9.1.8 not to be subject to fully-automated decision-making including profiling.
- 9.2 The Data Protection Officer will ensure appropriate processes are in place to ensure the Council enables the exercise of these rights, according to the provisions of the legislation.
- 9.3 Any information rights requests are processed by the Data Protection Officer. Individuals will be expected to submit requests in writing and provide any necessary proof of identification as part of the request.
- 9.4 The Council aims to respond promptly to these information rights requests and, in any event, within the statutory time limit (normally 30 days). Requests will be managed and tracked by the Data Protection Officer.

10. Complaints

- 10.1 Anyone who feels that the Council has broken the law can make a complaint. Examples of this are when they think their information has not been obtained fairly, it has not been handled securely or they have asked for a copy of their information and they are not satisfied with the Council's response.
- 10.2 Complaints regarding the processing of personal data should be made to the Data Protection Officer.

11. Training

11.1 Data protection training is important so that all staff elected Members understand their responsibilities. Legal advice and guidance on data protection matters are available to all staff and elected Members. Core guidance, practice, procedures and policies shall be held on the Council's intranet. The Data Protection Officer shall ensure that training resources are up to date and promote and ensure the take up of training and advice by staff.

12. Guidance notes

12.1 The Data Protection Officer shall, where appropriate to do so, be responsible for issuing guidance notes explaining the practices necessary to ensure compliance with this policy. These guidance notes shall, when issued, be appended to the policy.

13. Policy review

- 13.1 The Data Protection Officer has responsibility for co-ordinating the maintenance and review of this policy.
- 13.2 Reviews will take into account changes in legislation and best practice. The Data Protection Officer is authorised to amend this policy following a review.

This policy will take effect from 25 May 2018.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 26 MARCH 2018

PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY FUNCTIONS

Executive Summary

A Parliamentary Select Committee - the Communities and Local Government Committee - has completed a review of the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny in local government and has published a series of recommendations to address shortcomings in the current arrangements. The findings of the Committee were published on 15 December 2017 and on 5 March 2018 the Government published its response.

The review was closely followed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, who together drafted a response to the Select Committee's consultation in 2017, setting out the Borough Council's perspective.

Both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman now feel that the Council has the opportunity to benefit from the findings of the Select Committee and take forward any initiatives which would strengthen the roles of overview and scrutiny in the Borough of Woking. To this end, it is proposed that a Task Group is established to review the full report of the Select Committee and the subsequent response by the Government. Any proposals drawn from the study would then be recommended to Council for adoption in Woking.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

- a cross party task group (the 'Effective Scrutiny Task Group') consisting of five Councillors be established to review the findings of the Communities and Local Government Committee through its review of the effectiveness of the overview and scrutiny functions of local government;
- (ii) the membership of the Task Group to consist of Councillor I Johnson, Councillor K Davis, Councillor J Kingsbury, Councillor M I Raja and Councillor J Bond; and
- (ii) the Task Group to report its findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18 June 2018.

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

Background Papers: None.

Reporting Person: Councillor I Johnson, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Email: cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

Contact Person: Frank Jeffrey, Democratic Services Manager

Email: frank.jeffrey@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3012

Date Published: 14 March 2018

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 During 2017, a review of the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny functions of local government was undertaken by the Communities and Local Government Committee. The findings of the Committee were published on 15 December 2017 and set out a range of recommendations, including several proposing legislation changes to the Government. On 5 March 2018 the Government published its response to those recommendations calling on it to implement changes.
- 1.2 It is now considered an appropriate time for Woking Borough Council to study the report of the Communities and Local Government Committee, together with the response of the Government, and determine what, if any, of the recommendations could be taken forward in Woking. It is proposed that the initial review is undertaken by a Task Group established with the purpose of reporting back to the first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the new Municipal Year, on 18 June 2018.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Overview and scrutiny committees were introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 and were tasked with acting as a counterweight to the increased centralised power of the new executive arrangements. Whilst some authorities were not covered by the changes brought in by the Act, the Leader and Cabinet system is the predominant model of governance in English local authorities.
- 2.2 Since the Localism Act 2011, Councils have had the option of reverting to the committee system of governance. Several authorities choose to do so and many expressed dissatisfaction with the new executive arrangements, including concern at the limited effectiveness of scrutiny. Noting these concerns, and that there has not been a comprehensive assessment of how scrutiny committees operate, a Parliamentary Select Committee the Communities and Local Government Committee decided to conduct an inquiry into the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny.
- 2.3 The terms of reference placed an emphasis on considering factors such as the ability of committees to hold decision-makers to account, the impact of party politics on scrutiny, resourcing of committees and the ability of council scrutiny committees to have oversight of services delivered by external organisations.
- 2.4 As part of the review, the Committee invited feedback from Local Authorities (both Members and Officers involved in overview and scrutiny) and other Stakeholders. In March 2017 a formal response to the invitation for feedback was drawn up and submitted by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Appendix 1).
- 2.5 The Committee acknowledges that scrutiny varies significantly across the Country, and the level of interest in the inquiry enabled it to hear from a wide range of authorities and form a representative picture of local authority scrutiny in England. To assist in forming this picture, and to ensure as many authorities as possible were consulted, the Committee held oral evidence sessions and a less formal workshop event in October 2017. The workshop was attended by over 45 councillors and officers working in scrutiny across the Country.
- 2.6 In December 2017, the Committee published its findings in a detailed report and the Government has now published (5 March 2018) its response to those recommendations which would require Government approval. A summary of the recommendations of the Select Committee are set out in Appendix 2 to this report.

3.0 Findings of the Communities and Local Government Committee

- 3.1 The Communities and Local Government Committee concluded that the most significant factor in determining whether or not scrutiny committees are effective is the organisational culture of a particular council. Having a positive culture where it is universally recognised that scrutiny can play a productive part in the decision-making process is vital and such an approach is common in all of the examples of effective scrutiny that were identified.
- 3.2 The Committee found that senior councillors from both the administration and the opposition, and senior council officers, have a responsibility to set the tone and create an environment that welcomes constructive challenge and democratic accountability. When this does not happen and individuals seek to marginalise scrutiny, there is a risk of damaging the council's reputation, and missing opportunities to use scrutiny to improve service outcomes. In extreme cases, ineffective scrutiny can contribute to severe service failures.
- 3.3 The inquiry identified a number of ways that establishing a positive culture can be made easier such as the adoption of a more balanced relationship between the overview and scrutiny functions and the Executive, with clear independence of the Committee from the Executive. Organisational culture was found to impact on the access of Overview and Scrutiny Committees to the information needed to carry out their work, citing examples of where Committees had formally submitted Freedom of Information requests to their own authorities.
- 3.4 The Communities and Local Government Committee felt that scrutiny committees are ideally placed to review any public services in their area. However, study found that that there can be a conflict between commercial and democratic interests, with commercial providers not always recognising that they have entered into a contract with a democratic organisation with a necessity for public oversight. The Committee therefore concluded that scrutiny's powers in this area need to be strengthened to at least match the powers it has to scrutinise local health bodies. The Committee further considered that Councils to consider at what point to involve scrutiny when it is conducting a major procurement exercise.
- 3.5 The Committee is keen to emphasis that it is not seeking to impose particular models on councils, though does conclude that there should be an organisational culture that welcomes constructive challenge and has a common recognition of the value of scrutiny, both in terms of policy development and oversight of services. In order to achieve this, scrutiny committees must be independent and able to form their own conclusions based on robust and reliable data, and that decision-makers should not seek to obstruct their role by withholding information.

4.0 Moving Forward

- 4.1 It is felt that the findings of the review by the Communities and Local Government Committee should be explored in detail by Woking Borough Council to identify whether any of the recommendations could be adopted in the Borough. In doing so, it should be noted that a number of the recommendations are aimed at upper tier authorities and unitary authorities; however, it is felt by both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the opportunity to benefit from the work of the Select Committee should be embraced.
- 4.2 It is therefore recommended that a cross-party Task Group is established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to look at in detail the full report of the Communities and Local Government Committee, together with the response by the Government. The Task Group will complete its work in the coming weeks and will therefore be based on the 2017/18 Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee, it is proposed that the Task Group consists

- of five Members, comprising the Chairman (Councillor I Johnson), the Vice-Chairman (Councillor K Davis), Councillor J Kingsbury, Councillor M I Raja and Councillor J Bond.
- 4.3 The Members of the Task Group will be asked to consider the report and discuss what, if any, recommendations should be adopted by Woking Borough Council. The Members will be charged with preparing a report for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 18 June 2018, with a view to any recommendations being referred to Council. It is envisaged that the Members of the Task Group will hold at least one meeting in the coming weeks to draw together their initial thoughts, with the Members invited to review the documents in advance.

5.0 Implications

Financial

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

Human Resource/Training and Development

5.2 The proposals within this report will require the involvement of Members and Officers and will therefore have a resource impact on the Authority. However, it is envisaged that the work can be completed within a matter of weeks and any human resource impact can be met through existing resources. No training and development implications are envisaged as part of this review.

Community Safety

5.3 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

5.4 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

Sustainability

5.5 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Equalities

5.6 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Safeguarding

5.7 There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 An opportunity has arisen for the Council to benefit from review of the effectiveness of the overview and scrutiny functions of local government, undertaken by a Parliamentary Select Committee. It is proposed that a small team of Councillors is appointed to review the findings and bring forward any recommendations that would have the effect of strengthening the work of Woking's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

REPORT ENDS

Appendix 1

Written evidence submitted on behalf of the Woking Borough Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Chairman and Vice Chairman

Executive Summary:

- The Woking Borough Council O&S Committee feels able to hold the Executive and other Decision-Makers to account.
- The Committee is currently impartial but, due to the local Constitution, the Committee is aware that this could change in future.
- The Committee has no dedicated Scrutiny Officer or Scrutiny Team but is generally supported by the Democratic Services team, but specifically one support officer who does not administrate any other Committees.
- The Committee is generally supported by all officers, however the Committee and Senior
 Officers do sometimes oppose each other when it is felt that the other is acting as an
 obstacle to their aims.
- The Committee has no powers to summon witnesses, although there have been no refusals to date.
- Anyone can suggest a topic for Scrutiny or Review but the Committee does not necessarily have to agree to it.
- The Committee has and will continue to act as a voice for local service-users.
- To date, Woking Borough Council has not been affected by any devolution deals or negotiations.

Introduction:

1. The Woking Borough Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee meets ten times a year. Anecdotally, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has depended greatly on the drive of its Chairman to be used to its fullest potential and in past years this has meant that the Committee could have been more proactive in its scrutiny. Currently, the Committee is Chaired by Councillor Kevin Davis who has been proactive in seeking out further training in this role and topics for scrutiny; and is Vice-Chaired by an experienced Borough Councillor, Councillor Ian Johnson. Both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman felt that feeding into the House of Commons review was very important in helping to bolster O&S Committees around the country.

The Committee:

- 2. The make-up of the Woking Borough Council O&S Committee is somewhat unique; in 2015 the Constitution was changed so that any of the 30 members could be nominated to the Committee, to make the Committee more inclusive. However, it did not have the desired effect, as it meant that without a considerable amount of cross-party communication the majority party could vote one of their own in to Chair the Committee.
- 3. Currently, the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is a member of the Conservative party and the Vice Chairman is a member of the opposition (Liberal Democrats).

- 4. The Committee is also supported by a member of the Democratic Services team who carries out tasks that would be delegated to a Scrutiny Officer whilst also carrying out administration for Task Groups and Working Groups. This officer does not administrate any other Committees and so could be considered independent of those being scrutinised.
- 5. Members of the committee, members of the executive, the Chairman and Vice Chairman as well as members of the public are all able to suggest topics for the Committee. They are asked to fill out a Topic Review Request form and submit it to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Officer two weeks before the meeting, where it is discussed during the Work Programme item and is then considered by the entire Committee at the meeting.

Political Impartiality

6. Due to the constitution change, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman believe that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could not be indefinitely impartial; however, the cross-party dynamic of the Committee and the choice of particular chairs does mean that the Committee runs independently from the Executive and *is* currently impartial in meeting out its duties. It is argued that, while the majority party are able to nominate the Chair, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee cannot remain *indefinitely* impartial. Much depends on the current make-up of the Committee and the relationship between the Chair and Vice Chair and this is a concern going forward.

Holding Decision-Makers to Account

- 7. The Woking Borough Council Committee feel that they are able to hold decision makers to account when necessary, but it was stated that the extent of which the Committee could influence policy and scrutinise Decision-Makers was almost entirely dependent upon whether there were urgent issues that needed addressing and the level of encouragement that was given by the Chairman and Vice Chairman. In cases where there were not as many issues within the Borough like the past municipal year the Committee as a whole was more prone to apathy. However, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's Housing, Finance and Economic Regeneration Task Groups were generally very efficient in dealing with local housing, finance or economic issues and tended to delve into them with more depth than the Committee itself.
- 8. Key accomplishments from this year include:
 - Setting up a dialogue between local residents and representatives of Thames Water after considerable flooding in the area
 - Influencing the Executive's decision on Gypsy Traveller Site allocations
 - Resurrecting Canal Development Proposals to recommend them to the Executive
 - Reviewing Market Walk and whether it was meeting its KPIs and fulfilling the Council's expectations
- 9. Moreover, these examples highlight not only the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's capacity to hold decision makers to account but also illustrate how they are and will continue to act on behalf of local service-users. The Committee intends to highlight the latter further by requesting an Overview of the current train services between Brookwood Station and Woking Station once the franchise has been renewed, as there have been significant delays and disruptions on this particular line of late.
- 10. In summoning witnesses, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman feel that they only have reasonable authority to summon anyone either internally or externally, as the articles of association do not specifically say that officers should attend the meetings if summoned and

- external witnesses are only really intimidated by the Committee's title. However, to date, they have not had any one decline an invitation.
- 11. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman both agree that local authority Scrutiny of external organisations is highly important for residents to have their voices heard. This is evidenced by the Scrutiny of Thames Water and the following meetings set up for residents, officers and representatives of Thames Water to discuss plans to alleviate the flooding in the area and the creation of the Sheerwater Oversight Panel that was suggested by a local residents to ensure that the Sheerwater residents were updated on the plans for the areas redevelopment.
- 12. It is suggested that Overview and Scrutiny Committees could be given slightly more authority so that services and utilities in particular could be scrutinised further for the betterment of the local people.

Scrutiny and Devolution Deals

13. Both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are in agreement that the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in negotiating Devolution Deals would be incredibly important; however, they feel that presently the O&S Committee does not have enough authority to deal with some of the issues that would arise in these negotiations. At the moment, Woking Borough Council has not been impacted by devolution.

Scrutiny in Woking

- 14. The Chairman feels that the Scrutiny of the Gypsy Site Allocations and flooding of the local area worked very well as clear recommendations were made and followed up. However, there have been a few instances were scrutiny has not worked as well.
 - Scrutiny of the Outdoor Facilities Policy a couple of members attempted to use this
 item for their own political ends, focusing on issues regarding the North Meadow rather
 than scrutinising the policy as a whole.
 - Surrey Joint Waste Contract this topic had to be withdrawn as it was up for scrutiny during a quiet period in contractual negotiations. This was partly due to a miscommunications between CMG and the O&S Committee.
- 15. The Committee hope that their views have been helpful and are looking forward to reading the final report when it become available.

March 2017

Appendix 2

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Communities and Local Government Committee

The role of scrutiny

- 1. We therefore recommend that the guidance issued to councils by DCLG on overview and scrutiny committees is revised and reissued to take account of scrutiny's evolving role. (Paragraph 12)
- 2. We call on the Local Government Association to consider how it can best provide a mechanism for the sharing of innovation and best practice across the scrutiny sector to enable committees to learn from one another. We recognise that how scrutiny committees operate is a matter of local discretion, but urge local authorities to take note of the findings of this report and consider their approach. (Paragraph 13)

Party politics and organisational culture

- 3. However, all responsible council leaderships should recognise the potential added value that scrutiny can bring, and heed the lessons of high profile failures of scrutiny such as those in Mid Staffordshire and Rotherham. (Paragraph 19)
- 4. To reflect scrutiny's independent voice and role as a voice for the community, we believe that scrutiny committees should report to Full Council rather than the executive and call on the Government to make this clear in revised and reissued guidance. When scrutiny committees publish formal recommendations and conclusions, these should be considered by a meeting of the Full Council, with the executive response reported to a subsequent Full Council within two months. (Paragraph 23)
- 5. We believe that executive members should attend meetings of scrutiny committees only when invited to do so as witnesses and to answer questions from the committee. Any greater involvement by the executive, especially sitting at the committee table with the committee, risks unnecessary politicisation of meetings and can reduce the effectiveness of scrutiny by diminishing the role of scrutiny members. We therefore recommend that DCLG strengthens the guidance to councils to promote political impartiality and preserve the distinction between scrutiny and the executive. (Paragraph 25)
- 6. It is vital that the role of scrutiny chair is respected and viewed by all as being a key part of the decision-making process, rather than as a form of political patronage. (Paragraph 27)
- 7. We believe that there are many effective and impartial scrutiny chairs working across the country, but we are concerned that how chairs are appointed has the potential to contribute to lessening the independence of scrutiny committees and weakening the legitimacy of the scrutiny process. Even if impropriety does not occur, we believe that an insufficient distance between executive and scrutiny can create a perception of impropriety. (Paragraph 30)
- 8. We believe that there is great merit in exploring ways of enhancing the independence and legitimacy of scrutiny chairs such as a secret ballot of non-executive councillors. However, we are wary of proposing that it be imposed upon authorities by government.
 - We therefore recommend that DCLG works with the LGA and CfPS to identify willing councils to take part in a pilot scheme where the impact of elected chairs on scrutiny's effectiveness can be monitored and its merits considered. (Paragraph 35)

Accessing information

- 9. Scrutiny committees that are seeking information should never need to be 'determined' to view information held by its own authority, and there is no justification for a committee having to resort to using Freedom of Information powers to access the information that it needs, especially from its own organisation. There are too many examples of councils being uncooperative and obstructive. (Paragraph 37)
- 10. Councils should be reminded that there should always be an assumption of transparency wherever possible, and that councillors scrutinising services need access to all financial and performance information held by the authority. (Paragraph 41)
- 11. We do not believe that there should be any restrictions on scrutiny members' access to information based on commercial sensitivity issues. Limiting rights of access to items already under consideration for scrutiny limits committees' ability to identify issues that might warrant further investigation in future, and reinforces scrutiny's subservience to the executive. Current legislation effectively requires scrutiny councillors to establish that they have a 'need to know' in order to access confidential or exempt information, with many councils interpreting this as not automatically including scrutiny committees. We believe that scrutiny committees should be seen as having an automatic need to know, and that the Government should make this clear through revised guidance. (Paragraph 42)
- 12. We note that few committees make regular use of external experts and call on councils to seek to engage local academics, and encourage universities to play a greater role in local scrutiny. (Paragraph 45)
- 13. We commend such examples of committees engaging with service users when forming their understanding of a given subject, and encourage scrutiny committees across the country to consider how the information they receive from officers can be complemented and contrasted by the views and experiences of service users. (Paragraph 47)

Resources

- 14. We acknowledge that scrutiny resources have diminished in light of wider local authority reductions. However, it is imperative that scrutiny committees have access to independent and impartial policy advice that is as free from executive influence as possible. We are concerned that in too many councils, supporting the executive is the over-riding priority, with little regard for the scrutiny function. This is despite the fact that at a time of limited resources, scrutiny's role is more important than ever. (Paragraph 61)
- 15. We therefore call on the Government to place a strong priority in revised and reissued guidance to local authorities that scrutiny committees must be supported by officers that can operate with independence and provide impartial advice to scrutiny councillors. There should be a greater parity of esteem between scrutiny and the executive, and committees should have the same access to the expertise and time of senior officers and the chief executive as their cabinet counterparts. Councils should be required to publish a summary of resources allocated to scrutiny, using expenditure on executive support as a comparator. We also call on councils to consider carefully their resourcing of scrutiny committees and to satisfy themselves that they are sufficiently supported by people with the right skills and experience. (Paragraph 62)
- 16. We recommend that the Government extend the requirement of a Statutory Scrutiny Officer to all councils and specify that the post-holder should have a seniority and profile of equivalence to the council's corporate management team. To give greater prominence to the role, Statutory Scrutiny Officers should also be required to make regular reports to Full Council on the state of scrutiny, explicitly identifying any areas of weakness that require

improvement and the work carried out by the Statutory Scrutiny Officer to rectify them. (Paragraph 65)

Member training and skills

17. It is incumbent upon councils to ensure that scrutiny members have enough prior subject knowledge to prevent meetings becoming information exchanges at the expense of thorough scrutiny. Listening and questioning skills are essential, as well as the capacity to constructively critique the executive rather than following party lines. In the absence of DCLG monitoring, we are not satisfied that the training provided by the LGA and its partners always meets the needs of scrutiny councillors, and call on the Department to put monitoring systems in place and consider whether the support to committees needs to be reviewed and refreshed. We invite the Department to write to us in a year's time detailing its assessment of the value for money of its investment in the LGA and on the wider effectiveness of local authority scrutiny committees. (Paragraph 76)

The role of the public

18. The Government should promote the role of the public in scrutiny in revised and reissued guidance to authorities, and encourage council leaderships to allocate sufficient resources to enable it to happen. Councils should also take note of the issues discussed elsewhere in this report regarding raising the profile and prominence of the scrutiny process, and in so doing encourage more members of the public to participate in local scrutiny. Consideration also need to be given to the role of digital engagement, and we believe that local authorities should commit time and resources to effective digital engagement strategies. The LGA should also consider how it can best share examples of best practise of digital engagement to the wider sector. (Paragraph 82)

Scrutinising public services provided by external bodies

- 19. Scrutiny committees must be able to monitor and scrutinise the services provided to residents. This includes services provided by public bodies and those provided by commercial organisations. Committees should be able to access information and require attendance at meetings from service providers and we call on DCLG to take steps to ensure this happens. We support the CfPS proposal that committees must be able to 'follow the council pound' and have the power to oversee all taxpayer-funded services. (Paragraph 90)
- 20. In light of our concerns regarding public oversight of LEPs, we call on the Government to make clear how these organisations are to have democratic, and publicly visible, oversight. We recommend that upper tier councils, and combined authorities where appropriate, should be able to monitor the performance and effectiveness of LEPs through their scrutiny committees. In line with other public bodies, scrutiny committees should be able to require LEPs to provide information and attend committee meetings as required. (Paragraph 96)

Scrutiny in combined authorities

21. We are concerned that effective scrutiny of the Metro Mayors will be hindered by underresourcing, and call on the Government to commit more funding for this purpose. When agreeing further devolution deals and creating executive mayors, the Government must make clear that scrutiny is a fundamental part of any deal and that it must be adequately resourced and supported. (Paragraph 104)

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 26 MARCH 2018

TASK GROUP UPDATE

Executive Summary

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives regular updates on the work of the Task Groups that fall within its remit, namely the Economic Development Task Group, the Finance Task Group and the Housing Task Group. Attached are the reports prepared by each of the Chairmen on the current work of the Task Groups.

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.

Reporting Person: Councillor I Johnson, Chairman – Economic Development Task Group

and Housing Task Group

Email: cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

Councillor G G Chrystie, Chairman - Finance Task Group

Email: cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

Contact Person: Councillor I Johnson, Chairman – Economic Development Task Group

and Housing Task Group

Email: cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

Councillor G G Chrystie, Chairman - Finance Task Group

Email: cllrian.johnson@woking.gov.uk

Date Published: 14 March 2018

1.0 The Economic Development Task Group – Councillor I Johnson

- 1.1 The Task Group meets twice a year to review the progress of the Economic Strategy. The Chairman also attends ad hoc events to support the Council's public relations effort. The primary focus of the mid-year meeting was the conclusion of the previous Economic Development Strategy 2012 2017 and the transition to the new version for the period 2017 2022. Simon Matthews, who had helped with the formulation of both of our strategies, assisted us with a transition paper which highlighted how the priorities dove-tailed and how the new strategic priorities could be readily monitored.
- 1.2 Additionally, the Task Group discussed member concerns about the impact on local firms of development in West Byfleet. Officers confirmed they would be happy to assist wherever possible and monitor any proposals.
- 1.3 Towards the end of March, the Task Group would be reviewing the performance of the strategy in its first full year

2.0 The Housing Task Group - Councillor I Johnson

- 2.1 The Task Group had a presentation on the work being undertaken to implement the Homelessness Reduction Act. New online systems would be needed and officers had visited other authorities, which had acted as trailblazers, to check working practices. Various housing policies were impacted by the new strategy, one of which, the allocations policy, was discussed in depth and supported by the Task Group.
- 2.2 Housing performance data showed there had been a large increase in the number of registrations for housing as a result of the proactive work in Sheerwater. They had been logged in Band B which was the second highest priority and it was noted that some of the need would be met from new properties in the regeneration area. There was an average wait of 3.3 years for two-bed properties and 3.2 years for a three-bed.
- 2.3 Affordable housing numbers had increased due to reconfiguration of properties to use space in the existing housing stock not used to their full potential and included adaptations for families with multiple means.
- 2.4 The new Selective Licensing Policy was to come into effect on 1 April and until 31 March landlords could apply for a licence for no fee. There had been extensive publicity and opportunities for landlords to engage with the process and anyone not having a licence would be committing an offence from 1 April.
- 2.5 The Task Group had updates on the Lets Rent scheme which encourages landlords in the private sector to address the Borough's Housing need and the transformation agenda which involves joint working with third parties to achieve efficiencies in supporting residents.

3.0 The Finance Task Group – Councillor G G Chrystie

- 3.1 The Task Group met on 25 January 2018
- 3.2 The Group reviewed the General Fund budget for 2018-19 which would be considered by the Executive at it's meeting on 1 February. The proposed 3% increase in Council tax was noted, as was the success of the Surrey Business Rates pilot which is expected to generate additional income for the Council in 2018-19. Government funding forecasts, including New Homes Bonus, were reviewed and the impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy was discussed. It was noted that there was pressure within the staffing budgets in 2018-19 and that a greater proportion of overheads had been allocated to the General Fund this year. The Group discussed the risks identified and considered that retail income in particular should be closely monitored due to the difficult national position for retailers.

- 3.3 The draft Investment Programme, which had also been considered at previous meetings, was reviewed. Officers highlighted the most significant changes since the earlier drafts.
- 3.4 The Treasury Management Strategy was considered including the impact of rising interest rates, in particular on the Victoria Square project.
- 3.5 Given the size of the budget papers it was felt that a summary which explained the key points and relationship between the numbers in the various reports would be useful.
- 3.6 The Group noted bad debt write-offs between September and December 2017, and the latest position on Wolsey Place. The December Green Book was discussed in detail. Members of the Group raised a number of questions on the performance and financial information presented including requesting further information on the Opportunity Purchases reported.
- 3.7 The Group also considered the Earn Your Deposit scheme and were supportive of the proposals.

REPORT ENDS