

MONITORING REPORTS – WOKING FOR ALL STRATEGY

Executive Summary

The Woking For All Strategy (WFAS) and the Supplementary and Amended Priorities document clearly sets-out the Council's key objectives and priorities for the period 2022 to 2027.

A robust performance management regime around the delivery of the WFAS has been established. This will allow officers to monitor progress against each of the objectives in the Strategy which in turn will facilitate the compilation of regular reports to Councillors as to the status of each action. Performance management reports will provide updates as to successes, as well as identifying areas of concern that may require additional support or information.

The first round of action updates has been completed; a total of 218 actions have been recorded against the WFAS in relation to the 2022/23 financial year. Of the actions listed, 181 (83%) have a RAG status of Green, 35 (16%) a RAG status of Amber, and 2 (1%) a RAG status of Red. 41 different officers have been assigned as action owners.

The full detail of every action is attached at Appendix 1. The Appendix provides an overview of the action, the action owner, a progress update for the quarter (Q2. Being July to September 2022), and a RAG flag rating to indicate how the action is performing overall. For the purpose of this report, a brief narrative has also been prepared which highlights some of the key developments against each WFAS Theme and Outcome.

In-line with recommendations arising from a review of performance management, it is recommended that the WFAS should be monitored on a quarterly basis, with either a full breakdown of action status or reports by exception.

Recommendations

The Executive is requested to:

RESOLVE That

- (i) progress against the actions resulting from the Woking For All Strategy and the Supplementary and Amended Priorities document are noted; and
- (ii) the performance monitoring regime as detailed in the report, and the content of Appendix 1 to the report, be agreed and implemented moving forward.

Reasons for Decision

Reason: To ensure that robust performance monitoring is in place to support the delivery of the Council's Woking For All Strategy.

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

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Background Papers: None.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on how the Council is performing against the actions resulting from the Woking For All Strategy (WFAS) and the Supplementary and Amended Priorities document.
- 1.2 It is essential that a robust performance management regime around the delivery of the WFAS is established. This will allow officers to monitor progress against each of the objectives in the Strategy which in turn will facilitate the compilation of regular reports to Councillors as to the status of each action. Performance management reports will provide updates as to successes, as well as identifying areas of concern that may require additional support or information.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The WFAS and the Supplementary and Amended Priorities document clearly sets-out the Council's key objectives and priorities for the period 2022 to 2027. The WFAS is structured around four service facing community themes (Healthier Communities, Engaged Communities, Greener Communities, Prospering Communities), and an inward facing theme (High Performing Council) which is designed to underpin and support the wider Council.
- 2.2 Work has been underway to map the themes, outcomes, objectives, and priorities that are listed in the WFAS and the supplementary and amended priorities document. The mapping has then been cross-referenced with actions that were identified in the Directorate Service Plans to produce a detailed WFAS action plan.
- 2.3 Relevant officers have been assigned as WFAS action owners, and meetings have been held to produce progress updates and to assign a RAG rating to each action. The RAG rating process has been implemented to enable a quick way to identify if an action is on track or failing for any reason. RAG's will also allow exception reporting to be applied if required. The RAG criteria that have been applied is as follows:

Red: Action is failing in one or more areas and needs immediate attention.

Amber: Action contains areas of concern which are impacting on delivery and need attention.

Green: Action is progressing according to agreed plans and targets.

- 2.4 The first round of action updates has been completed; a total of 218 actions have been recorded against the WFAS in relation to the 2022/23 financial year. Of the actions listed, 181 (83%) have a RAG status of Green, 35 (16%) a RAG status of Amber, and 2 (1%) a RAG status of Red. 41 different officers have been assigned as action owners.

3.0 Monitoring Frequency

- 3.1 A review of performance management has recommended that corporate performance should move to quarterly reporting. It is also recommended that updates from the WFAS should form a key component of the reporting process. If the performance management recommendations are agreed by the Executive, WFAS monitoring would be produced on a quarterly basis, with either a full breakdown of action status or reports by exception.

4.0 Progress against the Woking For All Strategy Themes

- 4.1 The full detail of every action is attached at Appendix 1. The Appendix provides an overview of the action, the action owner, a progress update for the quarter (Q2. Being July to September 2022), and a RAG flag rating to indicate how the action is performing overall. For the purpose of this report, a brief narrative has also been prepared which highlights some of the key developments against each WFAS Theme and Outcome. These are as follows:

WFA Theme: Healthier Communities (66 actions)

4.2 WFA Outcome: Safe, thriving and sustainable communities:

- 4.3 Good progress is being made against this outcome. Work is continuing to broaden the offer in Community Centres to enhance the cultural and intergenerational community benefits, and a marketing and communication strategy to promote services is in development. A new Knaphill youth club was successfully launched in July, and a Martial Arts club has been opened in Moorcroft which is very popular with the local youth.
- 4.4 In the Leisure arena, the Council has led the initiative to open all Surrey District and Borough Leisure Centres for free-of-charge use to looked after children, care leavers and foster families. The programme went live in July across Surrey, and in Woking 33 children are now accessing our services. In addition, two ladies only gym and swim sessions have been introduced at Eastwood Leisure Centre followed by a social session.
- 4.5 Despite an initial delay in June as noted in the project monitoring report, the priority to invest in additional CCTV cameras to target fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour hotspots is also moving forward, with the specification completed and installation being planned once the order has been processed.
- 4.6 A play area improvement plan is being developed to identify priorities over the next 3 years. The draft programme of priorities will be submitted to the Executive for sign-off once it is ready.

4.7 WFA Outcome: High quality homes for all:

- 4.8 A great deal of focus has been around the priority of improving the Council's Housing Services by bringing housing and asset management services back in-house and commencing the new housing repairs and maintenance contracts. Good progress has been made with services now in place and mobilisation being completed.
- 4.9 Work is progressing in relation to the priority of meeting the target of 102 additional affordable homes, with the Ryden's Way development of affordable flats due to complete in 2022, and construction tenders for the Bonsey Lane development due back before the end of the year.
- 4.10 An Empty Homes Plan has been developed and submitted to the Housing Task Group. Public consultation on the Plan commenced in August after which the final version will be produced and submitted to the Executive for sign-off.

4.11 WFA Outcome: Health and wellbeing for all:

- 4.12 Good progress has been made in response to the priority of developing strong partnership working to support the integration of health facilities into Council and community facilities. One such example is the establishment of the Woking Place Based Transformation Group, which is a range of partners including Health, Social Care, Voluntary Sector, and the Council, meeting on monthly basis to discuss local initiatives for the good of the community.
- 4.13 The Leisure and Cultural team have been working with Public Health England Children and Adolescent Mental Service (CAMHS) to encourage the use of WBC leisure and cultural facilities. CAMHS use the facilities for discovery sessions (first point of contact with those in need) and are currently exploring whether a permanent base can be identified in the Sheerwater Community Campus.
- 4.14 Partnership working is also being enhanced within Community Centres, with partners and services such as health visitors, maternity support, chiropody, youth counselling, parent mental health, eye clinic, and dementia care all using the Centres for the Community facilities.

WFA Theme: Engaged Communities (24 actions)

4.15 WFA Outcome: Informed and consulted residents:

- 4.16 A Cost-of-Living Summit has been arranged in September in relation to the priority of meeting and supporting businesses, organisations, and residents to help the Council understand what is important to the local community. An action plan will be developed following the summit.
- 4.17 An engagement policy, strategy, and associated toolkit has been prepared and is now in place to support engagement across the organisation.
- 4.18 The Council's engagement platform (Woking Community Form) continues to host a range of consultations. Nineteen consultations have been hosted since December 2021, including engagement on the Animal Welfare Action Plan, Woking Works Business Surveys, Play Area Refurbishments, Community Safety Plan, Sheerwater and Maybury Living Well Survey, Empty Homes and Housing Register, and the Woking Town Centre Masterplan.
- 4.19 As part of the comprehensive Master Plan Borough wide consultation, numerous roadshows and engagement sessions with residents and key stakeholders have been delivered. The opening of a pop-up shop in Woking town centre to provide additional engagement opportunities for residents and key stakeholders has also been delivered.

4.20 WFA Outcome: A borough with a strong voice

- 4.21 A Levelling-Up (2) bid has been submitted in relation to Sheerwater. Submission has also been made to the Government for the allocation of £1m Shared Prosperity Fund with a focus on creating an incubator hub and supporting green infrastructure. Submission outcome awaited.
- 4.22 The Council is a member of the District Council Network which continues to be a source of information and support in relation to the Borough's priorities. The Woking town centre regeneration project was featured within a District Council Network publication.

4.23 WFA Outcome: Strong and effective partnerships

- 4.24 Partnership working with SCC is progressing. One such example is that the WBC Building Control team now delivers an independent local authority-based inspection service across all of Surrey and are also the partnership authority for SCC for all minor maintenance work.
- 4.25 Work continues in response to the priority of developing a community engagement plan in collaboration with SCC. Meetings are underway to address and consider changing local needs, with stakeholders from other Districts and Boroughs, as well as the Strategic Voluntary Sector of Surrey and the Community Volunteer Sector.

WFA Theme: Greener Communities (44 actions)

4.26 WFA Outcome: Greener living

- 4.27 In relation to the priority of delivering improved safer cycle parking, the Council has submitted a funding bid to Southwestern Railways Customer and Communities Improvement Fund for secure cycle parking at Woking Station.
- 4.28 The Council is exploring the development of a framework for achieving green flag standards in Woking Park. Site meetings with key stakeholders are being arranged and a proposal will be developed in consultation with portfolio holders and submitted for authorisation.

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4.29 72 electric vehicle charging points have been Installed and made operational in the new Victoria Place Red car park. Plans are now being developed to seek approval to install telemetry equipment to facilitate fee charging.

4.30 WFA Outcome: Greener economy

4.31 Work is ongoing to engage partners, including Woking Chamber of Commerce and SCC, to deliver a Green Tech led 'hub' to support business to meet the challenge of climate change.

4.32 The Implementation of further intelligent highway messaging boards to improve wayfinding around the borough has made good progress, with the installation of navigational totems and digital smart hubs in the town centre, and static highway signs on approaches to Victoria Place.

4.33 Work continues to help residents access energy efficiency improvements via Action Surrey's delivery of the Government's Sustainable Warmth funding. Delivery of Sustainable Warmth Funding is due to be completed in September, with further funding due to be released by March 2023. There is ongoing communication through Planet Woking and the Woking Magazine to signpost saving opportunities and to support the public in reducing their environmental impact.

4.34 WFA Outcome: Greener place leadership

4.35 The review of the Council's carbon footprint is progressing and will be completed in Autumn 2022. This will provide evidence as to areas of focus for the Council and directly feed into the revised draft Climate Change Strategy which will be submitted to the Executive by March 2023.

4.36 Work continues in relation to the priority around assessing the implications of the Government's Waste Strategy and the development of local implementation plans. The Surrey Environmental Partnership has issued a collective response to Government consultation and is developing an interim plan to deal with waste for the next three years.

4.37 A biodiversity awareness event, Wild About Woking, was delivered to the public in Jubilee square in May 2022 to promote nature and greenspaces in the local area. The event raised awareness of how the public can help care for the environment through local biodiversity and greenspace projects.

WFA Theme: Prospering Communities (34 actions)

4.38 WFA Outcome: A borough of opportunity

4.39 The priority of developing a detailed sales and marketing plan to establish the borough as a destination is progressing well. The collation of marketing collateral (Invest in Woking) relating to business investment is ongoing and the aim is to launch in 2023.

4.40 The production of a gap analysis as part of Destination Woking to inform the Estate Management Sales Strategy & Action Plan is schedule to commence in early 2023 once the Strategic Asset Management Plan has been completed.

4.41 WFA Outcome: Strong and sustainable economy

4.42 Activity around the priority to support and celebrate the opening of Victoria Place is progressing well. The introduction of concessions to parking fees on a Saturday, and the appointment of a Commercial Officer to animate the public realm spaces within the town centre, are all part of a strategy to increase town centre footfall from September 2022.

4.43 The Council is working closely with The Apprenticeship Hub to promote apprenticeships and inform local businesses in the knowledge-based sector how they can use the apprenticeship

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levy to fund apprenticeship training. The Council is also working closely with DWP to assist in the placement of job seekers into the care home, hospitality, and IT sectors.

4.44 Eight business advice clinics continue to be delivered each month, alongside workshops and individual business support sessions which are delivered by Woking Works. These sessions offer tailored advice in relation to social media, marketing, and business strategy.

4.45 WFA Outcome: A borough with an enabling infrastructure

4.46 Work continues with partners to review the Victoria Arch project. Homes England are undertaking a review of all HIF schemes across the country which face cost implications due to market conditions. Findings of the review will be reported back to Executive in November.

WFA Theme: High Performing Council (45 actions)

4.47 WFA Outcome: A transparent, listening and learning council

4.48 The priority of actively seeking resident feedback to drive service improvement is progressing well. The Council actively seeks feedback via the Woking Community Form and Resident Panel. Examples of engagement includes supporting Business Liaison in relation to Woking Works Business Survey (seeking views from businesses on how the Council can better support them), Private Sector Housing (seeking views on how to improve the choice-based lettings process), and Social Prescribers (seeking views on social prescribers and service delivery).

4.49 Business continuity arrangements in respect of cyber security resilience have been strengthened as a result of a recent internal audit exercise. The final version of the audit report is imminent after which recommendations will be scheduled for implementation.

4.50 WFA Outcome: A high performing council

4.51 A detailed review of current performance management arrangements has been undertaken and recommendations as to how processes can be enhanced will go to the Executive in October. Implementation phase will commence once recommendations have been agreed.

4.52 Work is underway in relation to the priority of ensuring the financial stability of the Council. An initial update was made to the July Executive and a further savings exercise across the Council has been initiated. An update will go to the November Executive.

4.53 Work to review the governance of Council investments and interests is underway. A company governance review has been completed and proposed new arrangements were agreed at Full Council in July 2022. Revised arrangements are now in the process of being implemented.

4.54 WFA Outcome: A modern employer with a progressive workforce

4.55 The Council is currently undergoing reaccreditation for the Investors in People award, the outcome of which will be known in October 2022.

4.56 The priority of adopting a service and team collaboration platform has been significantly progressed through the roll-out of Microsoft Teams and SharePoint online. A refresh of the Council intranet is also underway. The longer-term piece of work around this area includes adoption, training, and continuous improvement.

4.57 The Council continues to work towards reviewing and developing opportunities for shared services with other Local Authorities. A recent example is the appointment of STAR to develop options and proposals for a shared procurement service with Surrey Heath. Work is ongoing to look at the partnership landscape in a broader context, and partnership development is a workstream in the Fit For Future Programme.

5.0 Corporate Strategy

5.1 The ongoing review and monitoring of all actions resulting from the WFAS is an essential function to ensure that that the Council's ambitions remain on track.

6.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

6.1 There are no financial or risk implications arising from this report.

Equalities and Human Resources

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

Legal

6.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7.0 Engagement and Consultation

7.1 None.

REPORT ENDS