

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.

Action updates relating to Quarter 3 of the 2022/23 financial year have been completed; a total of 217 actions have been recorded against the WFAS, of which, 184 (85%) have a RAG status of Green, 31 (14%) a RAG status of Amber, and 2 (1%) a RAG status of Red. 40 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 (Q3. being October to December 2022), a RAG flag rating, and a status arrow to highlight how the action is performing compared to the last report. 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

progress against the actions resulting from the Woking For All Strategy and the Supplementary and Amended Priorities document be noted.

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 Relevant officers have been assigned as WFAS action owners, and meetings have been held to produce Quarter 3 progress updates and to assign a RAG rating and status arrow 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.

The introduction of a status arrow against each action serves to highlight how the RAG status is performing against the previous quarterly report; each arrow indicating if the status is the same, has improved, or is worse.

- 2.3 Action updates relating to Quarter 3 of the of the 2022/23 financial year have been completed; a total of 217 actions have been recorded against the WFAS, of which, 184 (85%) have a RAG status of Green, 31 (14%) a RAG status of Amber, and 2 (1%) a RAG status of Red. 40 different officers has been assigned as action owners.

3.0 Monitoring Frequency

- 3.1 As agreed by the Executive, WFAS monitoring is 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 (Q3. being October to December 2022), a RAG flag rating, and a status arrow to highlight how the action is performing compared to the last report. For the purpose of this report, a brief narrative has also been prepared which highlights some of the key developments against a range of WFAS Themes and Outcomes. 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. A local Community Interest Company called 'Fresh Start' commenced the operation of the food and café offer at St Mary's Community Centre over the autumn, and a new Moorcroft provider is scheduled to commence in January 2023. This drive serves the dual purpose of delivering savings whilst allowing closer work with community-based initiatives.

4.4 In leisure, project 500 has continued to progress in partnership with Active Surrey to train ladies to be sports coaches. The first cohort of 12 ladies is complete, with an aim of a further 12 to be trained each quarter.

4.5 WFA Outcome: High quality homes for all:

4.6 A Head of Housing Assets has been appointed to further embed the in-sourcing of housing and asset management services back into the Council. Work on the development of an Asset Management Strategy for Council-owned stock can now progress.

4.7 The Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (AHSPD) has been developed and is currently in the consultation phase, with a target publication date of Spring 2023.

4.8 WFA Outcome: Health and wellbeing for all:

4.9 The Health and Wellbeing Action Plan continues to progress well and is being monitored and reported to the Health and Wellbeing Task Group.

4.10 Work also continues with Public Health England and Surrey Heartlands to identify the causes of a spike in obesity in Canalside and Goldsworth Park. A range of activities have been undertaken including installation of a cycle track and free coaching, plus a Holiday Activity Fund to feed children healthy options during school holidays.

WFA Theme: Engaged Communities (25 actions)

4.11 WFA Outcome: Informed and consulted residents:

4.12 The revised Community Grants scheme, which was agreed by the Executive in July, will be managed by the Surrey Community Foundation and community groups can now start to apply; the first Woking Community Fund Panel will sit early April 2023.

4.13 Work to update the Council's Climate Change Strategy is underway, with the draft scheduled to be submitted to the March Executive, after which consultation with the public will follow.

4.14 WFA Outcome: A borough with a strong voice

4.15 The Council is tendering a place branding and marketing project which will include a detailed marketing strategy to showcase the borough to attract external investment. The place branding and marketing launch is proposed for Autumn 2023.

4.16 WFA Outcome: Strong and effective partnerships

4.17 Work has continued to support the Woking Means Business Event. This initiative is supported by the Council's Economic Development Action Plan which is specifically aimed at helping local businesses and enterprises post Covid.

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- 4.18 The Council has also recently collaborated with the Surrey Chambers of Commerce to create an International Trade Forum which features on the Woking Works and Surrey Chamber of Commerce websites.

WFA Theme: Greener Communities (43 actions)

4.19 WFA Outcome: Greener living

- 4.20 Work is progressing to draft a Planet Woking Garden guide to help residents and community groups support wildlife through sustainable gardening. Consultation on the guide will follow.

- 4.21 The Council is continuing to explore funding options to develop safe, secure, and well-located cycle parking provision, and a bid to the South Western Community Fund has been shortlisted. The outcome of the bid is expected to be received by March 2023.

4.22 WFA Outcome: Greener economy

- 4.23 Progress is being made in relation to delivering further energy efficiency measures across the Council estate. An Energy Management Officer is now in post and has commenced an energy audit review of the six highest energy consuming buildings owned by the Council.

- 4.24 A further phase of Sustainable Warmth funding has been awarded to Surrey County Council by central Government and is being managed by Active Surrey.

4.25 WFA Outcome: Greener place leadership

- 4.26 The design of Rain Gardens on Woodlands Avenue, Sheerwater Road, and Albert Drive are progressing as part of a phase of works which is funded by Surrey County Council. A project programme has been compiled with a view to implementation over the next three years.

WFA Theme: Prospering Communities (35 actions)

4.27 WFA Outcome: A borough of opportunity

- 4.28 Advanced discussions are ongoing with a possible operator to partner and manage a Digital Centre of Excellence in the town, to deliver a high growth, high-tech incubator hub with a niche 'Green Tech' focus.

4.29 WFA Outcome: Strong and sustainable economy

- 4.30 Victoria Place and the wider town centre has continued to be promoted and revised Saturday parking fees have been introduced to encourage longer stays and increased footfall. A number of events and promotions have taken place in the town, including an ethical market, a Christmas Festive Fare, pop-up retailers, and an ice-rink.

- 4.31 Good progress has been made on the development of a Strategic Asset Management Plan which will support commercial and strategic capacity across the Council's asset portfolio and investments, and also help to deliver positive outcomes for the borough.

4.32 WFA Outcome: A borough with an enabling infrastructure

- 4.33 Work continues with partners to review the Victoria Arch project. Regular fortnightly meetings and monthly board meetings are being held between the Council and Homes England. Homes England are undertaking a review of all HIF schemes across the Country which face cost implications due to market conditions.

WFA Theme: High Performing Council (48 actions)

4.34 WFA Outcome: A transparent, listening and learning council

4.35 The final Cyber Security Audit report and recommendations have been received and work is now underway to factor actions into schedules for completion.

4.36 Consultation on Woking’s Community Safety Plan 2023 is underway – this will allow the Council and its partners to gather feedback on where best to place resources to improve services and outcomes.

4.37 WFA Outcome: A high performing council

4.38 As part of the drive to deliver efficiencies and service improvements, consultants have been appointed to review the principle of the ‘One Stop Shop’ which Customer Services currently operate under and maximise a ‘Digital First’ approach. An analysis of current arrangements will be undertaken with recommendations for improvements to follow.

4.39 Work continues to embed Microsoft 365 across the Council with over 350 devices now rolled out and refreshed. A successful pilot of docking stations will be expanded which will support the priority of delivering a hybrid working platform tailored to the needs of services.

4.40 WFA Outcome: A modern employer with a progressive workforce

4.41 The Council was successfully reaccredited into the Investors in People award in October, which continues a long-term commitment to the global benchmark for people management.

4.42 A new intranet has been developed and tested and will be rolled out imminently. The intranet will enable teams to work closer together to achieve consistent and integrated services for residents.

5.0 WFA Outcome: A financially responsible Council with sustainable and affordable plans

6.0 Work is continuing to support the delivery of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. A Council-wide savings initiative has been undertaken which is currently being mapped and monitored, and the development of a Fit For Future programme is underway.

7.0 Corporate Strategy

7.1 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.

8.0 Implications

Finance and Risk

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

Equalities and Human Resources

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

Legal

8.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9.0 Engagement and Consultation

9.1 None.

REPORT ENDS