

Notice of Meeting

Council

Councillor Ejaz (Mayor)
Councillor Penfold (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors Penfold, Allen, Bailey, Barnard, Bidwell, Brown, Cochrane, Collings, C Eberle, T Eberle, Egglestone, M Forster, S Forster, Frewer, Frost, Gaw, Gillbe, Haffegée, Harrison, Hayes MBE, Jefferies, Karim, McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Mossom, Neil, O'Regan, Pickering, Purnell, Robertson, Smith, Temperton, C Thompson, P Thompson, Virgo, Watts, Webb, Welch, Wright and Zahuruddin



Tuesday 19 March 2024, 7.30 - 9.30 pm
Council Chamber - Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD

Susan Halliwell
Chief Executive

Agenda

All councillors at this meeting have adopted the Mayor's Charter which fosters constructive and respectful debate.

Item	Description	Page
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting	7 - 30
	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 10 January 2024 and Special Council held on 21 February 2024.	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
	<p>Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or affected interests in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.</p> <p>Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.</p> <p>Any Member with an affected Interest in a matter must disclose the interest to the meeting. There is no requirement to withdraw from the meeting when the interest is only an affected interest, but the Monitoring Officer should be notified of the interest, if not previously notified of it, within 28 days of the meeting.</p>	
4.	Mayor's Announcements	

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5.	Executive Report	31 - 36
	<p>To receive the Leader's report on the work of the Executive since the Council meeting held on 10 January 2024.</p> <p>Council is asked to resolve a recommendation in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a Joint Committee – The Berkshire Prosperity Board 	
6.	Adoption of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan	37 - 46
	<p>To adopt the Bracknell Forest Local Plan incorporating the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspectors and Additional Modifications.</p> <p>The appendixes to the report can be found on the following links:</p> <p>Appendix A - Bracknell Forest Local Plan for adoption https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304536</p> <p>Appendix B:</p> <p>Polices Map 1 – Binfield https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304573</p> <p>Policies Map 2 – Warfield and Winkfield North https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304575</p> <p>Policies Map 3 – Bracknell and Winkfield South https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304576</p> <p>Policies Map 4 – Crowthorne and Sandhurst https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304574</p>	
7.	Pay Policy Statement	47 - 78
	To review and agree the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.	
8.	Establishment of a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)	79 - 86
	Council to agree to establish a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC).	
9.	Submissions under the Scheme of Public Participation	
	<p><i>To make a Statement to a Council meeting about a Council Service, about something the Council has or has not done, or about a matter of local interest or concern.</i></p> <p>Statement received by Bracknell Forest resident:</p> <p>I don't think there is anyone more angry about the chronic underfunding of SEND services than parents of disabled children. I also think a great disservice is done to parents when it is implied that we just don't understand</p>	

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	<p>the scale of the challenge for statutory services: we do. However, the problems that the council face in terms of its provision for SEND come down to so much more than money.</p> <p>The Local Government Ombudsman cases and frequent news stories show that poor or misinformed attitudes are not isolated incidents in Bracknell. The September 2023 council 'SEND Written Statement of Action implementation update' - which reports 'iterative improvements [...] at pace' - does not reflect the opinion of families. In November 2023 the Bracknell Parent Carer Forum stated 'we know that the majority of us are not seeing the changes on the ground [...]. We know improvements made at council level have not started to have the impact we would have hoped for at this point.'</p> <p>While parents of children with severe Emotionally Based School Avoidance are still being threatened with prosecution, we can never say we are a fair place to live for children with significant mental health needs. While the LA continues with arbitrary policies preventing the use of bespoke education packages for children in extreme need, we cannot say we have a needs based system. While we still have harsh behaviour policies in schools which humiliate and discriminate against disabled children, we can never claim equity.</p> <p>SEND Case Officer time should not be wasted preparing to fight tribunal cases that they will not win and the LA should find better use of its time and resources than arguing with or fining parents who are already struggling. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for some of the solutions parents ask for to cost less than the highly specialist school placements their children will require if accommodations are not made at an early stage. Believe parents the first time round.</p> <p>Nothing will change until everything changes. While Bracknell's SEND services are being overhauled, I urge the council, along with schools, to radically review school behaviour policies, approaches to attendance and Education Otherwise and Alternative Provision pathways.</p> <p>The evidence for a new model is mounting - what side of history will Bracknell Forest Council be on?</p>	
10.	Questions Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 10	
	<p><u>By Councillor Smith to Councillor Wright, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health & Housing</u></p> <p>Can the Executive Member give an update on what is being done to encourage the Department of Health and Social Care and the NHS to ensure that there are sufficient NHS dental services in Bracknell Forest? This is important as more and more of our residents are having difficulty accessing an NHS dentist. This is of particular concern for children's dental health and due the fact that private dental treatment is increasingly unaffordable for many of our residents, who face significant cost of living pressures.</p>	
11.	Motion (or Motions) Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 11	
	<u>Motion 02/2024 moved by Councillor C Eberle and seconded by Councillor Smith</u>	

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The future of public healthcare provision is of paramount importance to Bracknell Forest residents.

The aging nature of many of our hospitals in combination with the recent RAAC concrete crisis in public buildings is driving an accelerated decision making process, with major redevelopment projects for healthcare facilities being brought forward at an increased pace. This Council welcomes proposals to fully replace Frimley Park Hospital by 2030 as part of the government's New Hospital Programme. We also note longer term plans for the replacement of the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading. Council recognises that Bracknell Forest residents rely upon these two hospitals for provision of a wide range of critical medical services including accident and emergency, maternity, surgical units and many more.

Whilst healthcare is not a Council run service, and decisions regarding future provision are ultimately made by others, the Council is none-the-less a significant consultee and has a duty to represent the views and needs of our residents at all appropriate opportunities. We understand this is specifically to be achieved via our engagement in a new Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHSOC), to be formed jointly with Hampshire County Council and Surrey County Council, with regards the Frimley Park redevelopment, and likely similar joint committees formed with other neighbouring authorities in relation to future projects.

Council notes that Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust has already completed initial public consultations in relation to future proposals. While the returns were geographically balanced, there was significant imbalance on gender and minority representation.

This Council believes that it is important that our appointed representatives to the JHSOC (and other future joint committees in relation to healthcare provision) hear directly from our residents, particularly those who are under-represented in the existing public consultations, to ensure that we are able to properly advocate for their needs in these forums. Council therefore requests that the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing commission our own public consultation (or alternative process as appropriate) to solicit the views of our residents in relation to future healthcare provision in and around the borough. Furthermore, we request that, so far as possible, any such process actively seeks to address the demographic imbalances in the public responses to the Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust consultation and that all reasonable efforts are made to engage with minority groups who have been under-represented in the consultation responses so far.

Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media is permitted. Please contact Hannah Harding, 01344 352308, hannah.harding@bracknell-forest.gov.uk, so that any special arrangements can be made.

Published: 11 March 2024

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COUNCIL
10 JANUARY 2024
7.30 - 9.50 PM



Present:

Councillors Ejaz (Mayor), Allen, Bailey, Barnard, Bidwell, Brown, Cochrane, Collings, C Eberle, T Eberle, Egglestone, M Forster, S Forster, Frewer, Frost, Gaw, Gillbe, Haffegge, Harrison, Hayes MBE, Karim, McLean, O'Regan, Pickering, Purnell, Robertson, Smith, Temperton, C Thompson, P Thompson, Virgo, Watts, Webb, Welch, Wright and Zahuruddin

Present Virtually:

Councillors McKenzie-Boyle and Mossom

Apologies:

Councillors Jefferies and Neil

38. Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 29 November 2023 be approved and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

39. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Smith declared an affected interest in Item 7, Bracknell Forest Council's Participation in the Department for Education's Safety Valve Intervention Programme as his wife was employed as a teacher at a school in the borough.

40. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reported on her activities since the last Council meeting, which included updates on the following:

- White Ribbon Vigil
- A visit to Pinewood Gymnastics Club
- School Choir event in The Lexicon
- Sleeping Beauty panto at South Hill Park
- Mayor's Christmas card competition
- Home-Start Christmas Party
- Bracknell Choral Society
- Buckler's Lodge Christmas Market
- Visit to Forestcare

41. Executive Report

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Temperton, presented the report on the work of the Executive since the Council meeting on 29 November 2023. The Executive had met once since the last Council meeting, on 12 December 2023.

The Leader highlighted the following matters that had been considered:

Finance and Business Change | Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27 and Revenue Budget 2024/25

- The Executive agreed to consult on the draft capital programme, based on £8.328m of new spending.
- The Executive also agreed to consult on the draft revenue budget proposals for 2024/25. This totals £103.429m.
- The Executive approved writing-off £54,150 for a commercial property debt that was no longer recoverable.
- The draft revenue budget and capital programme will now be considered by Overview and Scrutiny. Their views will be reported back to the executive and full council in February, alongside feedback from residents, local groups and businesses. The final 2024/25 budget will be agreed in February.

Finance and Business Change | Building maintenance and repair service contract

- The Executive approved the procurement plan for an organisation to provide 24-hour maintenance and reactive repairs for the council's corporate buildings and 'buy back' schools.
- The current contract has been in place since February 2020. The contract was based on a fixed price for three years, with the option to extend for a further two years.
- In February 2023, the council granted a one-year extension to the current contractor.
- Based on the current provider's performance, the council would extend the contract for a further year, meaning the contract would expire on 1 February, 2025.

Finance and Business Change | Procurement of neutral agency vendor/specialist providers of agency staff

- The Executive approved the re-procurement of a neutral vendor contract to provide the council with agency staff, in accordance with the strategic procurement plan.
- The council spends more than £7m a year on agency staff.
- Procurement would be split into three lots to address the current issues with recruiting specialist social care and education roles under a neutral agency vendor arrangement.
- This approach should reduce the overall costs to the council.

Planning and Transport | Making (adoption) of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2037

- The Executive agreed the formal 'making' of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Development Plan. This will form part of the statutory Bracknell Forest Development Plan.
- The council, as the local planning authority, has a statutory duty to 'make' a neighbourhood development plan if more than half of those voting at a referendum, vote in favour of 'making' the neighbourhood development plan.
- The referendum was held on Thursday, 23 November 2023 with a total of 1,245 votes being cast.

Children, Young People & Learning | Personal budgets policy

- The Executive approved the revised Personal Budgets Policy and agreed to publish and implement it in December 2023.
- In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice January 2015, local authorities must provide information on Personal Budgets as part of the Local Offer.

Culture, delivery and public protection | Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy

- The executive endorsed the Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy 2024-2027. It agreed that a more detailed action plan should be compiled, which will be reviewed and approved by the executive director and the executive member for culture, delivery and public protection.
- The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced a Serious Violence Duty on specified authorities within a local government area. As part of the duty, a strategy was required to be prepared, publicised and implemented.
- The serious violence and exploitation strategic sub-group of the community safety partnership will now work within the recommendations in the strategy to develop an action plan.

Adult Services, Health and Housing | Community support winter update

- The Executive endorsed the updated financial hardship action plan and agreed the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) spending plan.
- In 2022, the council recognised a need for a strategic, sustainable, and preventative approach to supporting residents who may be at risk of, or experiencing, financial hardship.
- There continues to be a lasting impact from the pandemic on health and wellbeing for communities across the borough.

There being no recommendations to Council, the report of the Executive was noted.

42. **Polling District and Polling Place Review 2024**

The Council received a report on the Polling District and Polling Place Review 2024. The matter had been out to consultation and all comments from residents and councillors had been taken into consideration in the review.

On the proposition of Councillor Temperton, Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Council Strategy and Climate Change and seconded by Councillor Gillbe, it was

RESOLVED that the Returning Officer's proposed polling district and polling place scheme, summarised in Annex B of the report is agreed.

43. **Bracknell Forest Council's Participation in the Department for Education's Safety Valve Intervention Programme**

The council received a report on Bracknell Forest Council's Participation in the Department for Education's Safety Valve Intervention Programme.

Councillor Temperton introduced the report and explained the urgency of increasing and improving local SEND provision due to the growing cost of funding placements outside the borough. An overspend of around £8 million on SEND placements was forecast for the current year, and there were not sufficient local places available for

young people whose needs could not be met in mainstream school. The proposed local provision at Sandhurst and Edgbarrow secondary schools and the new units proposed at the site of the former Warfield All Saints Primary School, along with the agreed new school at Buckler's Park, would need to be built as soon as possible. The Department for Education had invited Bracknell Forest to join the Safety Valve programme to balance the annual budget and repay the accrued deficit, using both Council reserves and a contribution from the Department for Education. The council's reserves from the 2018/19 business rates pilot meant that this contribution could now be met, but in addition, a top-slice of 0.5% of individual school budgets would be required.

Councillor Bailey commented that the consultation process with regard to the programme had been rigorous, and he thanked schools leaders, parents, carers and school governors for their co-operation despite their acknowledged reservations. Councillor Bailey also thanked headteachers and governors for their expertise on the new proposed local provisions, and for being open, honest and constructive throughout the process.

Councillor Smith expressed his concern around the implications of the programme on the local authority's budget and on future provision for schools and SEN provision. There were concerns that the debt to the Department for Education had accrued due to the funding gap for the High Needs Block and the fact that local authorities had been expected to run a deficit. Councillor Smith commented that the safety valve programme was unlikely to resolve issues of growing demand for SEND provision, and the deal would require schools to make significant compromises. However, Councillor Smith acknowledged that to refuse the deal would put this council in a worse position.

Councillor Allen reminded members that the council's reserves had been growing since 2016, and he was pleased that these had not been spend in previous years when there had been pressure to do so, as the Safety Valve would not be possible without this fund.

Councillor Watts explained that without the right setting and provision, the education, social skills and confidence of children with SEND would be damaged. SEN providers needed as much training and resource as possible, and so Councillor Watts explained she would support the proposal to increase support to young people with SEN.

Councillor Barnard thanked all who had been involved in the programme's development thus far, particularly headteachers and school leaders who would be delivering the programme. While councillors' concerns about SEN funding were recognised, it would be important to focus on early intervention with young people to keep them in mainstream provision wherever possible. The new units at Sandhurst, Edgbarrow, Warfield All Saints and Bucklers Park would ensure that children would have the right support locally. Councillor Barnard hoped that the programme would mean that the needs of children could be met early enough that fewer Educational Health Care Plans would be required.

On the proposition of Councillor Temperton, Executive Member for Council Strategy and Climate Change and seconded by Councillor Barnard, it was

RESOLVED that Council:

- 1 Approves the Council's Safety Valve proposal detailed in confidential Annex A for submission to the Department for Education by 12 January, including both

the management plan and mitigations endorsed by the Executive at its meeting on 12 December 2023 and a plan to fund the cumulative Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit when a balanced in-year financial position is reached in 2028/29, using a combination of grant from the Department for Education and set-aside Council reserves.

- 2 Approves the addition to the current year's capital programme of schemes to secure new local SEND provision at Sandhurst and Edgbarrow secondary schools and the former Warfield All Saints primary school site as detailed in paragraph 5.12 a) to c), which are key to achieving a sustainable local SEND system to support Bracknell Forest's children and young people.
- 3 Authorises the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make changes to the Council's proposal if necessary in response to any further feedback from the Department for Education and prior to the proposal being formally presented for Ministerial approval, so long as any such changes continue to reflect the nature of the proposal in confidential Annex A.

44. **Question Submitted Under the Public Participation Scheme**

Bracknell resident, Dr Michael Brown, asked Councillor Gillbe, Executive Member for Planning and Transport the following question:

"I would like to understand the latest status of the diverted footpaths at the Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club fields in Winkfield.

As you know this issue has been ongoing for more than 3 years without resolution despite numerous efforts by the public and councillors to resolve. There is a proposed diverted path however it is,

1. Still not signposted (temporary signs have been removed from a significant proportion of the route) and therefore not clear
2. The diverted route is partly along a road shared with cars, vans and heavy trucks - this is not a footpath and has the potential to increase the council's liability to maintain it in the future
3. Large sections of the "path" are entirely waterlogged and virtually unusable - it is the responsibility of the local authority to maintain the surface of public footpaths.

My question therefore is when and how will this all be resolved so the users of the public footpath can do so safely and free of risk of injury?"

In response, Councillor Gillbe provided the following published response:

"I thank the resident for their question, and provide reassurance that this matter continues to be a focus of the time of our SANG and Rights of Way Officer. The answers to the specific questions are set out below;

1. The signposting of the temporary diversion route is the responsibility of the Polo Club. The council met with the Polo Club in December 2023 to clarify the current issues with the diversion and the various surface upgrades required before a formal Diversion Order can be confirmed. Once the formal diversion order is confirmed then the council will install new waymarking along the route.
2. The diverted route does follow the verge of short sections of shared use track. The traffic use is minor and is considered acceptable where

the surface is good and sightlines are clear. Due to the vehicular use the Polo Club remain responsible for upkeep and it would be expected that these sections would be of a more resilient surface than other rural footpaths (e.g. across arable or wet fields).

3. The waterlogged areas of the diversion route have been discussed with the Polo Club following the site meeting in December 2023. The works required to get these sections up to the standard expected for a rural footpath have been highlighted and the next meeting is currently being arranged with Wooldridge, the company developing the site, who the Polo Club will use for the completion of practical works, for January 2024. It is worth noting that many rural paths are suffering particularly this winter from the wet weather conditions and whilst issues have been raised and need to be agreed, ground conditions may slow progress.

It is anticipated that the diverted route will be complete and functioning by the end of Spring 2024, with works subject to the weather conditions but seeking to ensure improvements are made in phases as soon as conditions allow.”

As a supplementary question, Dr Brown asked the following:

Given that this whole process has gone on for many years, what will be the next step if the polo club do not complete the ground work within the timeframe expected now?”

Councillor Gillbe responded to explain while the Council was in current dialogue with the polo club and wished to maintain a positive relationship, the Council had legal remedy which it could use as a last resort if the polo club did not comply with requirements. Councillor Gillbe remained in conversation with the Chair of the Local Countryside Access Forum who had also raised the same concerns.

45. **Questions Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 10**

Councillor McLean asked Councillor Wright, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing the following question:

“Could the Executive Member please confirm the numbers of homes delivered annually in Bracknell Forest, which were available on the basis of affordable rents and shared ownership since 2017?”

Councillor Wright responded with the following published response:

“I can confirm that 595 affordable rented and shared ownership homes were delivered in Bracknell Forest between April 2017 and March 2023, with a further 265 affordable rent and shared ownership homes forecast for completion by the end of this financial year, a total of 860 homes within the period April 2017 to April 2024.

These figures can be provided by year with 75 homes delivered in 2017/18, 95 in 2018/19, 149 in 2019/20, 107 in 2020/21, 117 in 2021/22, 52 in 2022/23 and 265 forecast for 2023/24. Of the total number of homes delivered (and forecast to be delivered this financial year) 501 are affordable rented homes and 359 are shared ownership homes.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor McLean asked the following:

There is a lot of misinformation about the delivery of the housing numbers that Bracknell Forest has achieved since 2017. Does the Executive Member join me in condemning this propagation of disinformation as it's detrimental to the work of the Council in supporting our residents?

Councillor Wright commented that while she was not aware of such comments on social media, she agreed to investigate the matter and ensure the record is corrected.

Councillor Gaw asked Councillor Bailey, Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning the following question:

“Can the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning please update Council on the progress, completion and implementation of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's) during the last six months and provide statistical information on those EHCP's still outstanding/ in progress?”

Councillor Bailey responded with the following published response:

“The SEND Team are responsible for co-ordinating the Education Health and Care needs assessment (EHC na) process. They also co-ordinate the review of EHC plans once they are in place for children and young people.

The current census year runs (reporting period for published data) runs from 1 January – 31st December.

During the above period for 2023:

- 258 EHC needs assessments were completed
- 126 EHC needs assessment currently open to assessment.

The data above is regularly shared with the Department for Education.”

As a supplementary question, Councillor Gaw asked the following:

“In the interests of good practice and transparency, will you ensure that there are opportunities for members to receive regular information on key aspects relating to children, young people and learning and additionally, the opportunity to scrutinise the information whilst ensuring that the protocols of check and balance are employed? Currently there is no such opportunity in place.”

In response, Councillor Bailey responded it was very important to keep parents and carers updated and make sure the council acted swiftly. Councillor Bailey committed to undertaking Councillor Gaw's proposal.

46. **Motion (or Motions) Submitted Under Council Procedure Rule 11**

Motion 01/2024

Motion 01/2024 was moved and seconded by Councillors McLean and Barnard respectively as follows:

Residents and local businesses across the Borough have suffered travel chaos and inconvenience over the last few months, caused by a series roadworks. This Council,

working with our local MPs, will lobby central government for greater powers to better plan all but emergency works, and to issue higher penalties for those that over-run, in order to minimise disruption.

Councillor Gillbe proposed an amendment which was accepted by Councillors McLean and Barnard as follows:

Residents and local businesses across the Borough have suffered travel chaos and inconvenience over the last few months, caused by a series of roadworks. **Most of these are directed by providers outside the Council – including gas, electricity, water, and telecommunications – and the reasons for refusal of streetwork permits are limited. Whilst the importance of upgrading this infrastructure is recognised, to ensure that residents and businesses continue to receive these critical services to their homes and premises, local authority powers to control these roadworks are insufficient.** This Council, working with our local MPs, will lobby central government for greater powers **to control** all but emergency works, **making it a requirement for utility companies to collaborate on their programmes of work and enabling higher penalties to be issued to those that over-run.**

On being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

47. **Presentation by Thames Valley Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner**

Councillors welcomed Chief Constable Jason Hogg, Superintendent Andy Cranidge and the Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Barber to the meeting.

Police and Crime Commissioner, Matthew Barber gave an update on the key pieces of work from his office including the development of a victims' portal where victims could find updates on their crimes in order to reduce pressure on 101 requests, improving digital channels for reporting community intelligence and strengthening police neighbourhood teams. Matthew commented that cyber crime and fraud remained the biggest risk to residents, but there remained work to improve confidence in neighbourhood policing. The budget was due to be published in the coming weeks.

Chief Constable Jason Hogg of Thames Valley Police presented some statistics for the force, and introduced the senior management team. The force was a diverse organisation which had been recognised nationally for pushing boundaries of diversity, however there was a need to invest further in special constables and volunteering. There had been a 16% increase in calls to 999 since April 2023, and the nature of calls had become more complex than ever before. A recent inspection from HMIC had indicated that the Thames Valley Police workforce was overstretched and feeling exhausted. Retention was a struggle for the force as officers were moving to jobs in the private sector and recruitment processes had been reviewed in light of this. The organisation was being restructured to combine 11 local command areas into 5 to manage demand more effectively. The number of neighbourhood police officers was being doubled to improve the visibility of police officers.

The Chief Constable also explained the new approach to mental health, Right Care Right Person which had been developed in collaboration with the Home Office, the Department for Health and Social Care and NHS England. The new approach was that the police would only deal with someone in mental health crisis if a crime had been committed, if there was a threat to their life or the individual was being threatening to someone else. Thames Valley Police had a good relationship with

mental health providers and partners locally and stressed that any frontline worker who felt threatened would be supported by the police.

The Chief Constable highlighted that Thames Valley was the safest force in the country in relation to serious violence due to proactive work on knife crime and violence against women and girls.

Superintendent Andy Cranidge, Local Police Area (LPA) Commander presented some statistics on a local level. There had been an increase in crime in the last year in Bracknell, however this was likely do to the growing population and increased footfall in the town centre. There had also been an increase in domestic abuse cases, however this could be due to increased police engagement and closer work with partners and third parties rather than an increase in actual cases. The Police work closely with partners to commission services around accommodation and support services for domestic abuse.

Reductions continued around violence and knife crime, and prevention work with schools was critical to this.

There had been a 7% increase in sexual offences during the year, largely due to an increase in child to child sharing of images which would be addressed through education.

The LPA reviewed key indicators including hate crime on a daily basis, to identify trends and patterns and use resources from across the LPA or wider force. The increasing trend around dwelling burglaries had slowed down and was on track to have a reduction in Bracknell in the current year. Officers were working on attendance at burglaries to discuss crime prevention with victims, as some perpetrators were from crime groups and some were opportunist offenders. Drug dealing hotspots at Great Hollands and Birch Hill had been identified through discussion with partners and the public, and work was ongoing to tackle these hotspots. County Lines feedback from perpetrators was that organised crime groups tended to be caught if they came to Bracknell, and one current County Line in the area was being tackled. Officers were working with housing associations on cuckooing.

Councillors noted some Police case studies relating to retail theft from Marks and Spencer's on Bagshot Road and anti-social behaviour at the Meadows in Sandhurst.

Questions

Councillor Bailey asked about information on complaints against the police, and whether the press coverage had had an impact on recruitment. In response, it was noted that the force would not hesitate to sack more officers to address the crisis of confidence in the Police and every opportunity would be taken to remove officers who didn't support Police values. There were emerging themes arising from complaints about victims of crime not being kept up to date, and officers not taking sufficient action when a crime was reported. There were plans to launch measures to assess public perception of Thames Valley Police.

Councillor Bidwell asked about what was being done to deter the use of cycles and e-scooters in the Lexicon in order to prevent accidents. In response, it was noted that there was a gap in legislation around Police response to e-scooters. Thames Valley Police had launched a new approach for frontline officers to engage with those e-scooter users who were stopped, as e-scooters were illegal to ride on the road or pavement unless covered by a Council scheme. More signage had been installed in

The Lexicon and officers were making use of CCTV to identify individuals using e-scooters. It was noted that behaviour while using e-scooters was perhaps more key to tackle, as it was likely that they would be legalised in some form in the future. Councillor Wright asked about specific data rather than percentage change headlines, and all Councillors were invited to contact the Police for any information they need as lots of local level data was available.

Councillor Virgo asked a question about the increase in unsocial behaviour such as graffiti, bad parking and speeding, and whether the increase in police officers would result in more police on the streets. It was commented that although there was no evidence that increasing the number of police officers drives down crime, it was understood that residents feel safer with a police officer presence. The number of neighbourhood officers would be doubled, and it was down to LPA Commanders to decide where they should go. In Bracknell and Wokingham, it was hoped that there would be an identifiable officer in each parish.

Councillor Forster asked a question about whether the Police were satisfied with the levels of public confidence. It was noted that the only data available was the Crime Survey of England and Wales which showed that the public had a higher level of satisfaction in Thames Valley Police than the national average. The Police and Crime Commissioner's officer were looking into securing a private company to gather information on public confidence on demographics.

Councillor Forster asked another question about the engagement with Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust and whether the Trust could meet the demands of the Right Care Right Person policy. It was commented that Julian Emms, Chief Executive of Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust was engaged with the programme and was meeting with Police on a strategic level to discuss plans for the policy.

Councillor Forster asked a final question on whether the force had the resource it needs to meet the Policing Plan and residents' expectations. In response, it was commented that when the budget was published it would show a growth of £50m, and the Police and Crime Commissioner was lobbying government on the funding formula for police forces.

CHAIRMAN

COUNCIL
21 FEBRUARY 2024
7.30 - 8.48 PM



Present:

Councillors Penfold (Deputy Mayor), Allen, Bailey, Bidwell, Brown, Cochrane, Collings, C Eberle, T Eberle, Egglestone, M Forster, S Forster, Frewer, Frost, Gaw, Gillbe, Haffegée, Harrison, Hayes MBE, Jefferies, Karim, McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Neil, O'Regan, Pickering, Purnell, Robertson, Smith, Temperton, C Thompson, P Thompson, Virgo, Watts, Webb, Welch, Wright and Zahuruddin

Present Virtually:

Councillors Hayes MBE

Apologies:

Councillors Ejaz, Barnard and Mossom

48. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

49. Financial Plans and Revenue Budgets 2024/25

The Council considered the report by the Executive Director: Resources which set out the financial plans and revenue budgets for the financial year 2024/25. The recommendations had been submitted to the Council by the Executive and covered all planned spending, service developments and expenditure reductions for next year. A separate document presented an overview of the Council's spending plans for 2024/25 and the Council's Council Tax Resolution.

Questions of clarification were asked by Councillor Phillip Thompson and Councillor Christoph Eberle.

Councillor C Eberle stated that on page 87 of the report, an additional savings proposal of £186,000 had been put forward. This was to be achieved by reducing the support being given to young people who were disadvantaged by not being in education, training or employment; reducing the support provided to schools which need to improve; and other measures.

These specific savings proposals had only been made public following the end of the consultation period on the draft budget and there were concerns about the possible impact these proposals could all have on vulnerable children and young people without proper consultation.

The report indicated that the specific measures to achieve these savings were still to be determined and that further consultation on the specific implementation of the savings would be conducted with schools 'if required'. In

light of this Council's commitment to giving residents a stronger genuine voice in Council business, it was requested that the Executive Member commit to running a full and proper public consultation before the final proposals for implementing the savings be approved.

Councillor Bailey, Executive Member of Children, Young People and Learning responded that this hadn't been part of the initial proposals but came out of the Safety Valve proposals and discussions. Any opportunities to gain additional funding would be maximised, and full and inclusive consultations would be maintained.

Councillor P Thompson stated that Paragraph 3.6.5 of the report stated that it would be necessary to draw a significant sum from the Council's accumulated reserves to meet its legal obligation to set a balanced budget. Under recommendation 2.2 it was proposed that £1.509 million be taken from reserves to support revenue expenditure within the next year. Elsewhere the report acknowledges the growing costs of demand-led services and the continued uncertainty over central Government funding for the Council.

Whilst it was recognised that there was an unavoidable need to draw upon the Council's financial reserves for this budget year, given the short-term financial outlook, reserves were by nature finite and would eventually run out. This was clearly an unsustainable long-term financial position, as the Council could not rely upon use of reserves to achieve a balanced budget indefinitely. It was asked that the Executive Member confirm their intent to distance themselves from reliance on the use of financial reserves in future budgets and to provide an indication of the period within which they hoped that this would be achieved.

Councillor Neil, Executive Member of Finance and Business Change responded that the budget update report which had been presented to the Council's Executive in October 2023 had included an illustrative medium term financial position of the Council, this had shown a cumulative budget gap over the next three years to 2026/27 of nearly £9.5m with £8m of that in 2024/25 this had been due mainly to inflation at that point. The report noted that reserves could be used to smooth the phasing of actions needed to address the situation but reinforced that reserves could only be used once and didn't provide a permanent solution. Budget planning for 2024/25 aimed to draw less from reserves than the Council did in 2023/24 when £3.6m of reserves had been used to balance the budget. Achieving this would mean the Council was moving towards a more sustainable long term financial position. The Executive's draft budget proposals would have used £3.1m of reserves based on the proposed Council Tax increase which would have been £0.5m lower than 2023/24. However, with the extra money available since December, it was proposed that only £1.5m be used from reserves to balance the 2024/25 budget which was a more sustainable position to move forward from. It was impossible to predict the future pressures and demand for services. The plan was to reduce the use of reserves to balance the budget each year with the hope that by 2027 they would not need to be used.

Councillor Neil, Executive Member of Finance and Business Change, gave a presentation on the financial plans and revenue budgets for the financial year 2024/25 placing particular focus on the following matters:

- This was the first Labour budget in 25 years.
- This budget had been approached during a very difficult economic situation.
- Local Government funding had been in decline since 2010, with 40 MPs lobbying Government for more funds for Local Government services.
- All Councils had a duty to set a balanced budget each year. An increasing number of Local Authorities, including others in Berkshire, were currently unable to do this.
- A potential overspend of £4m had been reported last summer which was the most difficult in year position that the Council had ever faced.
- Due to a range of measures put in place, the potential overspend had been reduced to £0.5m.
- Many of the pressures experienced in the current year would also move into next year.
- It was impossible not to notice the deterioration of the road surfaces across the Borough caused mainly by weather conditions. This was being combated with an extra £5m on highways. This received overwhelming support in the budget consultation.
- Investment in the Boroughs property assets was also important to ensure they didn't deteriorate and that they were fit for purpose for current and future use.
- An additional £1.3m had been received from SILVA Homes which related back to the transfer of the Councils housing stock back in 2008. This would be used to supplement maintenance and enhancements on the Councils current smaller housing stock.
- Suicide prevention measures had been included within the capital funding.
- This year's budget consultation had been very different, with active engagement and a number of events in local communities. There had been 330 responses, which was a record.
- Feedback from residents and the Overview and Scrutiny Commission had been listened to ahead of the final budget proposals.
- The provisional Local Government Finance settlement was announced on the 18 December 2023 and set out grant figures for individual authorities. The net impact for Bracknell Forest Council was an additional grant of £0.5m compared to what was expected.
- The other significant change in funding, which was known, was the level of retained business rates income. As expected, following the large number of business rate refunds to businesses, there was a deficit of £3.7m in income this year which would need to be carried forward. Following an adjustment to the business rates baseline, which had been backdated to 2023/24, the Council had benefited from a gain of £1m.
- Feedback from the consultation had been listened to carefully and the reduction of bins and grass verge cutting had been removed from the

final proposals. It was believed that there was still work to do in those areas from an environmental perspective.

- It was never the plan to close libraries.
- Further considerations would be made to how the home library service could be delivered more cost effectively but changes to the service would not be made in the next year.
- Plans to reduce management and supervisory roles in libraries was being taken forward.
- An additional £0.010m would be used to fund a library assistant post as set out in the tabled recommendations.
- Plans to dim streetlights by 10% would be taken forward.
- £4.5m would be provided for the cost of inflation.
- £7m would be added to service budgets to meet higher demand.
- It was proposed that a total net revenue budget of £97.356m be funded by a 4.99% increase of Council Tax and £1.5m be drawn from the Council's future funding reserve.
- An additional Social Care grant of £0.753m had been received and £0.268m was also received through the funding guarantee grant. Both would be used for Social Care and SEND services.
- It was known that the Council Tax increase would be unpopular, but it was the only realistic way to protect services for the future.
- Council Tax was the only income source entirely in the Council's control.
- It was understood that the maximum Council Tax increase would be taken in almost all other Local Authorities. The administration would continue to lobby the Government for more grant funding, but the case for that was limited if the full Council Tax increase wasn't taken.
- It was known that this increase may affect some households harder than others, and therefore it was proposed that a £75 discount be provided for those lowest income working age households, funded from reserves.
- This had been a hard budget to bring forward, but it was thought it was a fair one.

On the proposition of Councillor Neil, Executive Member for Finance and Business Change, seconded by Councillor Temperton, the recommendations as set out on the tabled papers were moved.

In line with tradition the Opposition Groups were invited to respond to the budget.

Councillor Allen spoke on behalf of the Conservative Group, and made the following observations:

- The change in administration had not meant that the Council Tax increase would not be taken.
- The consultation outcome had removed some of the less popular items set out in the draft proposals.
- The additional spend on the road network was welcomed.

- It was pleasing to see that the Shepards Meadow footbridge had been included as it had been out of commission for 18 months as it had been deemed unsafe.
- Thanks was given to the Blackwater Valley Countryside Trust for the generous donation of £0.020 towards the replacement of the bridge.
- It was noted that the carparks in Great Holland had been resurfaced.
- There was no detail included in the budget on how the decision was made or how changes may be implemented.
- There had been mixed messages from Officers and the Executive to how the dimming of streetlights would work.
- Concerns were raised about public safety with the dimming of streetlights from 12 – 4am.
- It was hoped that any savings made through the climate change savings be ringfenced and reinvested in other climate change options.
- There were concerns that the budget for the resident's survey had been removed for the rest of the administration.
- It was pleasing to see that the home library saving had been removed.
- The Conservative Group were pleased to see that their request had been included within the tabled recommendations this evening.

Councillor Mike Forster, spoke on behalf of the Liberal Democrats, and made the following points:

- The Liberal Democrats had asked for two changes to the budget proposals.
- The first was the reduction of litter bins, a request also made by residents, and the Liberal Democrats were thankful for this change.
- The second was in relation to not charging Officers for parking whilst at work, this was a request that had not been fully accepted but had been informed that lower paid staff members would not be charged.
- Two questions had been asked of which were very important areas to the Liberal Democrats, and the responses provided by the Executive Members would be monitored.
- The Government were letting the Council and its residents down badly.
- It was thought by Officers that any changes made by the Government to the Local Government Funding system would have a long-term detrimental impact on the funding of the Council.
- In the face of challenging circumstances, the Liberal Democrats thought that the Executive and Officers had made a credible attempt in steering the Council.
- The Liberal Democrats would be supporting the recommendations with a heavy heart, as nobody wants to see reductions in services or an increase in Council Tax.
- Bracknell Forest Council, like other Councils, was a victim of inadequate grant funding by Central Government and would support any approach by the Executive to Government.

Councillor Collings, spoke on behalf of the Green Party, and raised the following points:

- It was clear that there were significant pressures on Local Government spending and grant funding across the Country,
- Demand for services was increasing whilst there was also a cost of living crisis and high inflation.
- This was the Green Party's first involvement in the budget setting process.
- The amount of hard work that makes up the budget setting process was greatly appreciated, and Officers and Councillors were thanked for their time.
- The Green Party were thankful to Officers and the Executive for answering questions.
- The desire to reach more residents in the budget consultation process was welcomed and were pleased with the increase in responses from 2 in 2023 to 330 this year. It was hoped this would be increased next year.
- Councillor Temperton had attended surgeries in Binfield and Warfield in January primarily to discuss and promote the budget consultation. Turn out had exceeded expectations.
- It was thought that more detail needed to be provided for some of the budget proposals to avoid misinterpretation such as incorrect information about libraries. It was requested that more detailed written proposals be included going forward.
- Multi questions in the consultation didn't give residents the opportunity to select which proposals they were or weren't in favour of.
- The continued investment in Social Care was welcomed.
- The new suicide prevention measures in high-risk areas were also welcomed.
- The retention of bus subsidy through grant funding was welcomed and greater bus usage throughout the Borough needed to be promoted.
- The highways proposals were welcomed.
- The dimming of streetlights was welcomed, and it was understood that underpasses wouldn't be included, this should have been made clear from the outset.
- The proposed amendment to the recommendation would be supported.
- It was hoped that the home library provision be as good, if not better, than the current provision.
- There was little detail around the reduction of bins and grass cutting included in proposals.
- The Green Party would be supporting the budget and hoped that next year more detail would be included.

A recorded vote was taken on the substantive motion and the voting was as follows:

FOR (37): Councillors Allen, Bailey, Bidwell, Brown, Cochrane, Collings, C Eberle, T Eberle, Egglestone, M Forster, S Forster, Frewer, Frost, Gaw, Gillbe, Haffegge, Harrison, Jefferies, Karim, McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Neil, O'Regan, Penfold, Pickering, Purnell, Robertson, Smith, Temperton, C Thompson, P Thompson, Virgo, Watts, Webb, Welch, Wright, Zahuruddin

AGAINST (0): None

ABSTAIN: (0) None

Therefore, it was **RESOLVED** that:

Capital Programme 2024/25 - 2026/27

- i. General Fund capital funding of £13.016m for 2024/25 in respect of those schemes listed on pages 175 to 177 as amended by recommendation i, of which £8.462m be funded from Council resources;
- ii. The inclusion of £4.554m of expenditure to be externally funded (including £0.380m of S106 funding) as outlined in the summary report for Council (page 170) and included on pages 175 to 177;
- iii. That those schemes that attract external grant funding be recommended to the Council for inclusion within the 2024/25 capital programme at the level of funding received;
- iv. Capital schemes that require external funding can only proceed once the Council has received confirmation that the grant will be awarded;
- v. The inclusion of an additional budget of £1m for 'Invest to Save' schemes.

Revenue Budget 2024/25

- i. The budget proposals set out in Table 1 (page 2) of the summary report for Council, subject to the changes identified in sections 3.2 to 3.5 (pages 3 to 6), 3.7 (pages 7 to 8), 3.9 to 3.10 (pages 9 to 10), 4.1 to 4.5 (pages 10 to 14), 4.7 (page 16) and 6.2 to 6.4 (page 18) of the report, be agreed;
- ii. That additional funding be provided for a Library Assistant post (at a cost of £0.010m in 2024/25 with a fully year effect of £0.040m) to maintain the current number of front-line staffing hours in libraries;
- iii. Fees and charges as set out in Annexe G (pages 109 to 164) be approved;
- iv. A provision for inflation of £4.507m be approved;
- v. A further council tax discount is funded by Bracknell Forest Council in 2024/25 of £75 for working age households receiving council tax support (section 3.10.1(a) page 9);
- vi. The additional grant funding received in the Final Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 5 February 2024 be allocated to social care services (£0.754m in Social Care Grant) and to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities services (£0.268m in Funding Guarantee and £0.010m in Services Grant) with no net budget impact;
- vii. The commitment budget as set out in Annexe A be approved (pages 20 to 21);

- viii. That the Council should make additional funding available for distribution to schools through the local funding formula at the level set out in section 4.1 (pages 10 to 11) of the summary report for Council subject to any minor amendments made by the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning following the receipt of definitive funding allocations for Early Years and High Needs pupils;
- ix. A general contingency totalling £4.000m be included, use of which is authorised by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Executive Director: Resources in accordance with the delegations included in the Council's constitution;
- x. Subject to the above recommendations the revised draft budget proposals be agreed;
- xi. A contribution of £1.519m to be made from the Future Funding Reserve (including £0.038m additional interest from the use of balances) to support revenue expenditure;
- xii. Total net expenditure (after use of balances) of £97.356m (page 19), be approved;
- xiii. The Council's Council Tax requirement, excluding Parish Council precepts, be set at £80.312m (page 19);
- xiv. The Council Tax for the Council's services for each Valuation Band be set as follows:

Band	Tax Level Relative to Band D	£
A	6/9	1,077.42
B	7/9	1,256.99
C	8/9	1,436.56
D	9/9	1,616.13
E	11/9	1,975.27
F	13/9	2,334.41
G	15/9	2,693.55
H	18/9	3,232.26

- xv. The Council approves the following indicators, limits, strategies and policies included in Annexe E (pages 78 to 99):
- The Prudential Indicators and Limits for 2024/25 to 2026/27 contained within Annexe E(i);
 - The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy contained within Annexe E(ii);
 - The Treasury Management Strategy Statement, and the Treasury Prudential Indicators contained in Annexe E(iii);
 - The Authorised Limit Prudential Indicator in Annexe E(iii);
 - The Investment Strategy 2024/25 to 2026/27 and Treasury Management Limits on Activity contained in Annexe E(iv);
- xvi. The following additional Council Tax premiums be applied from 1 April 2025:

- A 100% premium for properties which have been empty and unfurnished for longer than one year (rather than 2 years as currently) and;
- A 100% premium for second homes.

xvii. The formal Council Tax Resolution contained in section 3 be approved.

Council Tax Resolution

- i. That the recommendations of the Executive outlined in sections 2.1 and 2.2, as amended, be agreed.
- ii. That it be noted that the amounts calculated for the year 2024/25 in accordance with Section 67 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 are:

(a) 49,694 TAX BASE FOR THE WHOLE COUNCIL AREA

being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended, as its council tax base for the year

(b) TAX BASE FOR PART OF THE COUNCIL'S AREA

EACH PARISH AREA

Binfield	4,799
Bracknell	20,968
Crowthorne	3,429
Sandhurst	7,999
Warfield	5,538
Winkfield	6,961

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with regulation 6 of the Regulations, as amended, as the amounts of its council tax base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate

- iii. That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2024/25 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government and Finance Act 1992 as amended (the Act):

- (a) £353,214,472 **TOTAL EXPENDITURE INCLUDING GENERAL FUND, PARISH PRECEPTS AND THE COUNCIL'S SHARE OF ANY DEFICIT ON THE COLLECTION FUND**

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act

- (b) £268,699,150 **TOTAL INCOME INCLUDING GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND THE COUNCIL'S SHARE OF ANY SURPLUS ON THE COLLECTION FUND**

being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act

- (c) £84,515,322 **BOROUGH AND PARISH PRECEPTS NET EXPENDITURE TO BE FINANCED FROM COUNCIL TAX**

being the amount by which the aggregate at 3.3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3.3(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its council tax requirement for the year

- (d) £1,700.71 **AVERAGE BAND "D" COUNCIL TAX FOR WHOLE BOROUGH**

being the amount at 3.3(c) above, divided by the amount at 3.2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B(1) of the Act, as the basic

amount of its council tax for the year (including Parish precepts)

(e) £4,203,358 **PARISH PRECEPTS**

being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act

(f) £1,616.13 **BOROUGH COUNCIL TAX FOR BAND "D" PROPERTIES**

being the amount at 3.3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3.3(e) above by the amount at 3.2(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its council tax for the year if there were an area of the Borough to which no special item relates

(g)	Part of the Council's area	BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH PARISH FOR BAND "D"	£
		Binfield	1,676.84
		Bracknell	1,715.43
		Crowthorne	1,709.77
		Sandhurst	1,694.67
		Warfield	1,665.89
		Winkfield	1,703.04

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 3.3(f) above the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 3.2(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its council tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate

(h) Part of the Council's area **BOROUGH AND PARISH COUNCIL TAX IN EACH PARISH FOR EACH VALUATION BAND**

Parish	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Binfield	1,117.89	1,304.21	1,490.52	1,676.84	2,049.47	2,422.10	2,794.73	3,353.68
Bracknell	1,143.62	1,334.22	1,524.83	1,715.43	2,096.64	2,477.84	2,859.05	3,430.86
Crowthorne	1,139.85	1,329.82	1,519.80	1,709.77	2,089.72	2,469.67	2,849.62	3,419.54
Sandhurst	1,129.78	1,318.08	1,506.37	1,694.67	2,071.26	2,447.86	2,824.45	3,389.34
Warfield	1,110.59	1,295.69	1,480.79	1,665.89	2,036.09	2,406.29	2,776.48	3,331.78
Winkfield	1,135.36	1,324.59	1,513.81	1,703.04	2,081.49	2,459.95	2,838.40	3,406.08

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 3.3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands

- iv. That it be noted that for the year 2024/25 the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, subject to confirmation by the Fire Authority on 15 February, in accordance with Section 40 of the Act, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Royal Berkshire Fire Authority	54.21	63.24	72.28	81.31	99.38	117.45	135.52	162.62

- v. That, having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 3.3(h), 3.4 and 3.5 above, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Act, hereby sets the following amounts as the amounts of council tax for the year 2024/25 for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

(a) Part of the Council's area **TOTAL COUNCIL TAX FOR EACH VALUATION BAND**

Parish	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Binfield	1,351.62	1,576.89	1,802.16	2,027.43	2,477.97	2,928.51	3,379.05	4,054.86
Bracknell	1,377.35	1,606.90	1,836.47	2,066.02	2,525.14	2,984.25	3,443.37	4,132.04
Crowthorne	1,373.58	1,602.50	1,831.44	2,060.36	2,518.22	2,976.08	3,433.94	4,120.72
Sandhurst	1,363.51	1,590.76	1,818.01	2,045.26	2,499.76	2,954.27	3,408.77	4,090.52

Warfield	1,344.32	1,568.37	1,792.43	2,016.48	2,464.59	2,912.70	3,360.80	4,032.96
Winkfield	1,369.09	1,597.27	1,825.45	2,053.63	2,509.99	2,966.36	3,422.72	4,107.26

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To: Council
19 March 2024

Executive Report to Council The Leader

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 Since the Council agenda for the meeting on the 10 January 2024 was published, the Executive met on the 23 January and 6 February 2024. This report summarises decisions taken by reference to the relevant portfolio within which they fall.

1.2 Updated Forward Plans for the Executive and other Council meetings are published every Friday and can be viewed online at www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk. Full details on the decisions taken by individual portfolio holders can also be accessed online through the Council's website.

2 Recommendation

2.1 Council is asked to consider the recommendations set out at paragraph 5.1.1.

3 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 The reasons for recommendations are set out in the supporting information and in the reports considered by the Executive. The relevant reports that the Executive considered can be found [here](#).

4 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 Alternative options are discussed in the relevant individual reports considered by the Executive. The relevant reports that the Executive considered can be found [here](#).

5 Supporting Information

Council Strategy and Climate Change

5.1 [Establishment of a Joint Committee – The Berkshire Prosperity Board](#)

5.1.1 The Executive RECOMMENDED to Council:

- That the establishment of a fully constituted Joint Committee (to be known as the Berkshire Prosperity Board) from May 2024 to deliver a Berkshire-wide vision for inclusive green and sustainable economic prosperity is approved.
- That the proposed constitution for the Joint Committee as set out in Appendix A of the Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regenerations report - Functions and Procedure Rules for a Joint Committee, Appendix B of the Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regenerations report - Responsibilities of the accountable body and Appendix C - Governance structure is approved subject to the Monitoring Officer being authorised to make minor amendments to the Functions & Procedure Rules in conjunction with the participating authorities.

- **That the Chief Executive be delegated to reach a legally binding agreement between the member Authorities setting out the supporting arrangements and responsibilities between the Authorities, particularly that between the Lead Authority, known as the Accountable Body and the other member Authorities and go through the relevant democratic process if required.**

5.1.2 Developing a Joint Committee and sharing common goals across a functional economic area will provide Berkshire Authorities with exciting new opportunities for collaboration on economic development. Providing more flexibility and influence than a single council would have on its own. Helping local authorities speak with one voice to secure more funding from Government and other agencies and sources to help get key projects and initiatives off the ground.

5.1.3 The first official board will take place in May following the decision making for each of the six Unitary Council's to establish the Board. The Board will meet four times a year. Each Council will lead on one of the six themes, with Bracknell Forest Council leading on Climate Change, and assisting on the Affordable Housing theme.

5.2 [Council Plan Overview Report](#)

5.2.1 The Executive noted the performance of the Council over the period from July-September 2023 highlighted in the Overview Report. This includes recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny.

5.2.2 At the end of the quarter, 15 actions were completed (14%), 67 actions (75%) were rated as "green", 21 actions (26%) were "amber" and 1 action (1%) was "red".

5.2.3 For Q2, there were 47 indicators presented. Progress against key performance indicators across the Council was positive with 32 (68%) "green", 0 (0%) were "amber" and 3 (6%) were "red". 12 indicators (26%) have no target set as they are for monitoring only.

Economic Development and Regeneration

5.3 [Bracknell Forest Economic Strategy 2024-2034](#)

5.3.1 The Executive noted the consultation responses and the suggested amendments to the strategy and approved the Bracknell Forest Economic Strategy 2024-2034 and action plan. The Executive also endorsed the repositioning of the Bracknell Forest Economic & Skills Development Partnership to the Bracknell Forest Economic Partnership.

5.3.2 The Council is committed to achieving growth and prosperity through a thriving and connected economy. The role the Council plays is both as an enabler and through direct delivery, working collaboratively with employers, business representatives, regional and national government, and residents.

5.3.3 The strategy will be delivered in partnership with residents, employers, businesses, skills, and training providers, and through working with neighbouring local authorities/government agencies.

Children, Young People & Learning

5.4 [Procurement Plan for the Children's Residential Framework 2024](#)

- 5.4.1 The Executive agreed to the recommendations contained in the Strategic Procurement Plan which included that the Council enter into a partnership agreement (the Partnership) with 20 local authorities', and Southampton City Council would be the lead procuring authority for the procurement of a new framework for children's residential provision (4 + 2 + 2 year contract commencing in October 2024).
- 5.4.2 It was anticipated that the total expenditure by the Council through the South Central Children's Residential framework would be between £3.5m and £4m per annum, giving an estimated total expenditure for the initial four year term of £16m. Approval of this Strategic Procurement Plan therefore authorised all future call offs from this Framework up to £16m for the initial 4 year term of the framework, and up to a maximum of £40m for the total 4 + 2 + 2 year term of the framework.
- 5.4.3 At the Framework Board Meeting on the 12 December 2024, Bracknell Forest Council voted for the following uplift approach for the new Framework recognising that a quorate (50%) decision needs to be reached which may be slightly different from Bracknell Forest Council's preferred position:
- Placements on the current residential framework would be uplifted in line with new framework placements.
 - Uplifts would be given annually at the start of the financial year from the second year of the framework onwards. This means providers would be eligible for their first uplift in April 2026 and every April thereafter Uplifts should be determined by Consumer Price Index including owner occupiers housing costs (CPIH) average for the year with a cap applied.
 - The cap should be set at a maximum of 7-8%.
 - Uplifts would apply to both existing and new placements.

5.5 [Youth Services Strategy Public Consultation](#)

- 5.5.1 The Executive approved the draft strategy and agreed that the final consultation plan would be agreed with Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning. The Executive also noted the invitation to councillors to join a dedicated session to provide feedback on the draft strategy and that the final strategy would be brought back for Executive approval following the consultation which would also include a detailed action plan.
- 5.5.2 The proposed Youth Services Strategy 2024 – 2027 policy has been created following a comprehensive data analysis, consultation and feedback on the proposed draft. The proposed strategy supports the Council's plan to ensure engaged and healthy communities.
- 5.5.3 Stakeholder consultation is an important part of the development of the youth strategy, enabling young people, families, members, key stakeholders, and wider residents to understand and comment on the proposed strategy.

Finance and Business Change

5.6 [Design and Construction Multi Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract](#)

- 5.6.1 The Executive approved the Strategic Procurement Plan to tender appointment of a Design & Construction Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract. Approval of

this Strategic Procurement Plan authorised a proposed contractual term for a duration of up to ten years with an initial period of five years and further 3 + 2 years based on key performance indicators of optional extensions with a contract value of £12m for 10-year contract and for the Design & Construction Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract to be procured from a single provider.

- 5.6.2 The Executive also agreed to delegate authority to the Executive Director, Delivery and the Executive Member for Finance and Business Change to award the contract to the provider meeting the requirements of this contract.
- 5.6.3 The current Managing Partner framework expires on the 30 June 2025, therefore there is a requirement to commission an external organisation to provide Design & Construction Multi-Disciplinary Consultancy Services Contract to implement and manage the delivery of construction projects. This will enable the Property, Education and other areas within the Council to use this approved supplier to assist when consultancy is required, at times when the in-house teams cannot provide support or does not have the expertise in house.

6 Advice Received from Statutory and Other Officers

Legal Advice

- 6.1 The Borough Solicitor's comments have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 The Executive Director: Resources' comments have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Equalities issues, where appropriate, have been addressed in the reports to the Executive.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Any strategic risks have been identified in the reports to the Executive.

Climate Change and Ecological Implications

- 6.5 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO₂.

The reason the Council believes that this will have no impact on emissions is that the report is providing an update on decisions taken rather than proposing any action. The impact or not of each of the individual decisions was set out in the respective reports.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.6 There are no considerations.

Background Papers

Executive Agenda – [23 January 2024](#)
[6 February 2024](#)

Contact for further information:

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To: **COUNCIL**
19th MARCH 2024

ADOPTION OF BRACKNELL FOREST LOCAL PLAN (2020-2037)

Executive Director: Place Planning and Regeneration

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Bracknell Forest Council has been working to provide an up-to-date planning framework for Bracknell Forest to 2037.
- 1.2 Following extensive consultation, the Bracknell Forest Local Plan and accompanying Policies Map was submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination in December 2021. This marked the beginning of the examination phase. Public hearings were held in May, June and October 2022.
- 1.3 A consultation on Main Modifications took place between October and December 2023. The Inspector's Final Report was received on 1st March 2024 and concludes that the Bracknell Forest Local Plan is capable of adoption with Main Modifications to make the Plan sound, as set out in an appendix to the Final Report (see Background Papers).
- 1.4 On adoption, the Plan replaces the saved policies in the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (adopted 2002), the Core Strategy (adopted 2008) and specific policies in the Site Allocations Local Plan (adopted 2013).
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to seek Council's agreement to adopt the Bracknell Forest Local Plan incorporating Main Modifications and non-material additional modifications (see Appendix A) together with the accompanying Policies Map (see Appendix B) in accordance with the recommendation of the Executive of 19th March 2024.

2 Recommendations

That, in accordance with the recommendation of the Executive, Council:

- 2.1 **Adopts the Bracknell Forest Local Plan incorporating the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspectors and non-material additional modifications (see Appendix A).**
- 2.2 **Agrees to make the alterations to the Policies Map (see Appendix B) that are necessary to give effect to the policies of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan, as modified.**
- 2.3 **Agrees that on adoption, the Bracknell Forest Local Plan will become part of the Development Plan for the Borough and that its policies will supersede all saved policies in the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (adopted 2002), the Core Strategy (adopted 2008) and Policies CP1, SA11, SA12 and SA13 of the Site Allocations Local Plan (adopted 2013) for the purposes of decision making in Bracknell Forest.**
- 2.4 **Agrees that any other non-material additional modifications to the Bracknell Forest Local Plan, can be agreed by the Executive Director: Place Planning and**

Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Transport, prior to final publication.

2.5 Carries forward adopted Supplementary Planning Documents, as related to relevant policies in the Bracknell Forest Local Plan (see Appendix C).

3 Reasons for Recommendations

3.1 It is important that the Council has an up to date and robust planning framework to guide development which reflects current national policy and guidance. The Bracknell Forest Local Plan contains a spatial strategy and policies for managing development that help meet the environmental, social and economic opportunities and challenges facing the area. It also helps achieve the aims of the Council Plan and is a key corporate document.

4 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 The Bracknell Forest Local Plan can only be adopted with all of the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspectors. Not adopting the Bracknell Forest Local Plan would result in a waste of resources incurred in preparing the Plan and existing out of date local policies would remain in place. This could result in speculative planning applications and subsequent appeals which might lead to significant costs. It could also provoke intervention by the Secretary of State under Section 27 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ('the 2004 Act'). This can be applied if it is thought that a local planning authority is failing or omitting to do anything it is necessary to do in connection with the preparation, revision or adoption of a local plan. Such intervention by the Secretary of State has recently been undertaken in respect of West Berkshire and Mole Valley Councils' local plans.

5 Supporting Information

Plan making process

5.1 Officers commenced preparation of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan in 2016. The Plan has undergone five formal periods of public consultation during its evolution. These are summarised below:

- Issues and Options (June – July 2016)
- Draft Bracknell Forest Local Plan (February - March 2018)
- New Sites (September 2018)
- Revised Growth Strategy (October - December 2019)
- Pre-Submission Bracknell Forest Local Plan (March – May 2021)

5.2 The Plan has been informed by a Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulations Assessment and a wide range of other evidence, including technical reports. The consultations have attracted many responses from residents, amenity groups, agencies, utility providers and other stakeholders which have been analysed. In addition, the Government has amended legislation and updated the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accompanying guidance during the preparatory process. As a result, a number of significant changes have been made to the content of the policies and supporting text during the plan making process.

It has also been necessary to update the Policies Map for the Borough. This shows the geographical extent of allocations and designations arising from policies in local

plans. Draft versions have been produced at key stages during the process and final changes have now been incorporated in the Map (comprises of four geographical components - see Appendix B).

5.3 In December 2021, the Pre Submission version of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan and accompanying documents (including the Policies Map) were submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination. At the same time, the Council requested that the Inspectors recommended Main Modifications to make the Plan sound and capable of adoption. Independent Planning Inspectors, Louise Nurser and David Troy were appointed to undertake the examination of the Plan. This resulted in the following events:

- May and June 2022 – Stage 1 hearing sessions.
- October 2022 – Stage 2 hearing sessions.
- January 2023 – Post hearings letter in which the Inspectors indicated that whilst they had found the production of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan to have met the Duty to Co-operate and be legally compliant, it was considered that a number of changes known as ‘Main Modifications’ were required to make the Plan capable of being found ‘sound’ and suitable for adoption.
- October to December 2023 - publication of Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications for public consultation for six weeks. Responses received were subsequently sent to the Inspectors.
- 1st March 2024 - Inspectors’ Final Report received. The Report concludes that the preparation of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan has met the duty to cooperate and that with the recommended Main Modifications, satisfies the requirements referred to in Section 20(5)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the soundness criteria set out in the NPPF. The Inspectors consider that the Plan is capable of adoption with the incorporation of the Main Modifications recommended by the Inspectors (see Background Papers).

5.4 The Main Modifications recommended by the Inspectors are substantially the same as the Proposed Main Modifications published for consultation between October and December 2023, with some small amendments. The most significant of the Main Modifications are set out below:

- Revisions to the Spatial Strategy to make it clearer where future growth and development is being directed and to provide guidance on the approach to be taken to development proposals in different parts of the Borough. This is supported by the addition of a settlement hierarchy policy.
- Extensions to the settlement boundaries to reflect committed development and the ‘suburban residential character’ of the park homes development at Warfield Park.
- The deletion of Policy LP7 involving the construction of a Garden Village at Jealotts Hill, Warfield on the basis that the exceptional circumstances required by para. 140 of the NPPF have not been demonstrated. The Inspectors concluded that the proposal would have a significant and unavoidable impact on openness and would result in a substantive encroachment into the Green Belt. They also consider that it would have an impact on a sensitive rural landscape. In terms of the business case, the Inspectors state that Syngenta has a highly educated and specialised workforce based in the area, has links to academic institutions and commercial organisations across the country and

beyond and has existing specialist buildings on site. They therefore found that there is no realistic suggestion that this position would change if the Science and Innovation Park was not built. Doubt is also expressed about the need for the proposed amount of speculative employment floorspace. It is considered that there may be opportunities for further intensification of the existing site which could assist collaborative working. The Inspectors are not convinced that any future investment decision would be solely driven by the funding gap argument or that the model promoted is pivotal to Syngenta's future at the site.

- Deletion of three smaller housing allocation sites due to potential adverse impacts on the setting of nearby heritage assets (two in Sandhurst and one in Binfield).
- Inclusion of an over-arching climate change policy
- Sustainable construction standards are to be encouraged rather than required.
- Deletion of policies relating to strategic gaps and wedges and the separation of settlements since it is considered that the Landscape Character and Countryside policies are adequate to cover the issue.
- A number of other modifications to ensure that the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
- A revised housing trajectory and updated housing supply position.
- Moving certain policies from Part 2 of the Plan (non-strategic policies) to Part 1 (Strategic Issues).
- A number of other modifications to ensure that the Plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Policies and proposals for land use in Bracknell Forest

- 5.5 To date, the Council has had to rely heavily on the saved policies in the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (2002), the Core Strategy (2008) and the Site Allocations Local Plan (2013). However, the weight attached to these policies has been reduced over time by changes in planning legislation and policy.
- 5.6 Following the adoption of the Plan, the Development Plan will comprise of the following documents:
- Bracknell Forest Local Plan (2024)
 - Joint Minerals and Waste Plan to 2036 (Adopted 2023)
 - Saved policy NRM6 of the partially revoked South East Plan
 - Five 'made' neighbourhood plans covering Binfield, Bracknell Town, Crowthorne, Warfield and Winkfield
- 5.7 Any planning applications submitted by developers, agents and landowners will be assessed against the relevant policies contained within these plans, amplified by the supporting text, to determine whether planning permission should be granted, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Bracknell Forest Local Plan will supersede the saved policies in the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (adopted 2002), the Core Strategy (adopted 2008) and policies CP1, SA11, SA12 and SA13 of the Site Allocations Local Plan (2013). These will no longer be of relevance in decision making.
- 5.8 The Council also has a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which have been adopted to supplement saved policies in the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan and policies in the Core Strategy. These provide further guidance on the implementation of the Council's approach to particular issues, such

as design. Officers have reviewed these SPDs for their relevance and consistency with the new Bracknell Forest Local Plan policies. Where SPDs still contain relevant technical guidance and are reasonably consistent, it is proposed to carry them forward as providing supplementary guidance to the specified new policies (see Appendix C).

- 5.9 Over the next few months, the SPDs will be reviewed (insofar as that is possible, depending on the content and enactment of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 which ushers in the new planning system). The intention is to produce new guidance related to specific new policies such as those on affordable housing and housing mix so that they are in full alignment with policies contained in adopted development plan document.

Next stages

- 5.10 Following adoption, Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 ('the 2012 Regulations') requires the Council to make the Bracknell Forest Local Plan, the Sustainability Appraisal Report and the Adoption Statement available in accordance with Regulation 35. This will involve placing documents on the Council's website and making paper copies available at the Council's offices at Time Square and in libraries across the Borough. There is also a requirement to notify those who asked to be notified of the adoption of the Local Plan and send a copy of the Adoption Statement to the Secretary of State.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 Local plan documents are produced under the '2004 Act', as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The process to be followed in producing local plans is set out in the '2012 Regulations'.
- 6.2 Pursuant to Section 23 of the '2004 Act', a local planning authority may only adopt a submitted development plan document (such as the Bracknell Forest Local Plan) in accordance with the Inspectors' Main Modifications and additional modifications if the 'additional modifications (taken together) do not materially affect the policies that would be set out in the document if it was adopted with the main modifications but no other modifications'. The decision to adopt under Section 23(3) must be taken by Full Council.
- 6.3 Following adoption, the Council will need to comply with the requirements of Regulations 26 and 35 of the '2012 Regulations' relating to making documents available and notifying people who asked to be notified (and other consultees) as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 6.4 On adoption of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan, any person aggrieved may, under Section 113 of the '2004 Act', make an application to the High Court to legally challenge the Plan. This application must be made during the six-week period starting with the date of adoption. The High Court may quash the Plan wholly, or in part.

Financial Advice

- 6.5 The cost of preparing the Bracknell Forest Local Plan is being met through the existing Planning Policy budget. This has covered the costs of the consultation stage, submission and the examination process, although, the Planning Inspectorate has yet to send the final invoice.

- 6.6 The adoption process itself does not carry significant costs. However, if the Council was faced with one or more legal challenges to the Bracknell Forest Local Plan after its adoption, defending these would need to be funded and may impact on resources available.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.7 Extensive public consultation has taken place during the preparation of the Plan. The Examination was also conducted in a very thorough and considered manner by the appointed independent Planning Inspectors and included public consultation on the Proposed Main Modifications.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.8 The Scoping Assessment identifies that an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is not relevant to this document. A full EqIA is not therefore required.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.9 There are no direct financial risks associated with the report.

Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.10 The Bracknell Forest Local Plan contains an overarching policy on Climate Change which signals ways of mitigating and adapting to changes in our climate. The supporting text to this policy, refers to a range of more detailed policies that set out the approach to be taken on particular topics. These include travel, sustainable drainage systems and the protection of trees and hedgerows. The combined effect should be to reduce the impact of any increase in emissions of CO₂ due to the need to accommodate future growth.
- 6.11 Similarly, there are a number of policies that cover ecological impact. These address matters such as protecting and improving green infrastructure, securing avoidance and mitigation measures to retain the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. There is also a policy that seeks to ensure that biodiversity in the Borough is protected and enhanced. Generally, development should incorporate biodiversity improvements and secure at least a 10% measurable net gain for biodiversity. This is to be achieved through planting schemes, new habitats, new roosting or nesting features, or through the enhancement and management of existing habitats.
- 6.12 All policies have been subject to sustainability appraisal work at key stages. This assesses the effect of the Plan and proposals on environmental, social and economic objectives, and is a statutory requirement in the plan making process. The sustainability objectives cover environmental objectives relating to the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases, managing flood risk and conserving and enhancing the diversity of wildlife and habitats.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.13 The Plan acknowledges that developments (either individually or cumulatively) can have an adverse impact upon health and amenity, both during construction and on completion. The location of development and placing limits on the entry of pollutants

that present a significant threat are important considerations. Provisions are included to require suitable mitigation measures to reduce the risk of unacceptable adverse impacts of dust, noise, vibration and odour.

- 6.13 The Sustainability Appraisal referred to in para 6.12 above included an objective concerned with protecting and enhancing human health and wellbeing. In assessing the policies in the Plan against this objective, it was concluded that they would have a predominantly neutral or positive effect on this objective.
- 6.14 Para 13 of the Inspectors' Report deals with the Public Sector Equality Duty and confirms that the Inspectors have considered the protection of health, safety and amenity and sustainable accessibility for all persons including those with relevant protected characteristics during the Examination. This has fed into their conclusion that the Plan is legally compliant.

Background Papers

Inspectors' Report

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-03/inspectors-report-bracknell-forest-local-plan.pdf>

Main Modifications

<https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-03/schedule-of-main-modifications-bracknell-forest-pre-submission-local-plan.pdf>

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

[Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/24)

Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

[The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/2742)

National Planning Policy Framework, 2023

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65a11af7e8f5ec000f1f8c46/NPPF_December_2023.pdf

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA)

<https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/resources/portal/supportingfiles/716530>

<https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/5941302>

<https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6244566>

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Appendix A - Bracknell Forest Local Plan for adoption
<https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304536>

Appendix B:

Polices Map 1 – Binfield
<https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304573>

Policies Map 2 – Warfield and Winkfield North
<https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304575>

Policies Map 3 – Bracknell and Winkfield South
<https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304576>

Policies Map 4 – Crowthorne and Sandhurst
<https://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/file/6304574>

Appendix C

Supplementary Planning Documents that provide further guidance on policies that are to be deleted and equivalent policies in the Bracknell Forest Local Plan

Supplementary Planning Document	Key policy ‘hooks’ in Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan and/or Core Strategy	Equivalent policy ‘hook(s)’ in Bracknell Forest Local Plan
Design (2017)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS7: Design • Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Policy EN20: Design considerations in new development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP28: Design principles • Policy LP50: Design • Policy LP51: Tall buildings
Character Area Assessments (2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS7: Design • Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Policy H4: Areas of special housing character 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP28: Design principles • Policy LP54: Protection and enhancement of trees and hedgerows • Policy LP50: Design • Policy LP51: Tall buildings
Sustainable Resource Management (2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS1: Sustainable development principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP27: Climate change

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS10: Sustainable resources • Core Strategy Policy CS12: Renewable energy • Core Strategy Policy CS13: Sustainable waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP33: Flood risk • Policy LP50: Design • Policy LP53: Biodiversity • Policy LP55: Sustainable construction • Policy LP58: Pollution and hazards • Policy LP59: Development of land potentially affected by contamination
Streetscene (2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS7: Design • Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Policy EN20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP 28: Design principles • Policy LP 50: Design • Policy LP 51: Tall buildings • Policy LP 53: Biodiversity
Designing for Accessibility (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS16: Housing needs of the community • Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Policy EN22: Designing for accessibility • Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Policy H14: Accessible housing • Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Policy M7: Access for people with disabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP26: Transport infrastructure provision • Policy LP38: Accessible and adaptable dwellings • Policy LP40: Housing mix • Policy LP50: Design
Parking Standards (2016)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS24: Transport and new development • Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Policy M9: Vehicle and cycle parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP25: Transport principles • Policy LP62: Parking
Planning Obligations (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS6: Limiting the impact of development • Core Strategy Policy CS7: Design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP24: Infrastructure • Policy LP50: Design • Policy LP16: Affordable housing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Policy CS13: Sustainable waste management • Core Strategy Policy CS17: Affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LP53: Biodiversity • Policy LP38: Accessible and adaptable dwellings
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N.B. Three other SPDs provide further guidance on policies that will remain in place (Amen Corner SPD (2010) Policy SA8 of the Site Allocations Local Plan, Warfield SPD Policy SA9 of the Site Allocations Local Plan, Thames Basin Heaths SPD (2018) 'saved' Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan.

To: **COUNCIL**
19 March 2024

Annual Update of The Council's Pay Statement Executive Director: Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Since 2012, and in accordance with the 2011 Localism Act, the Council has been required to publish an annual Pay Statement. The Statement is also aligned with the requirements of the Transparency Regulations. The pay statement is applicable for the financial year 2024/25.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 Council review and agree the Pay Policy Statement for 2024/25.**

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 To comply with the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) guidance and 2014 Transparency Code requirements.
- 3.2 To Highlight the Council commitment to transparency and equity in pay.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 None. It is a legal requirement to produce and publish the statement.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 The 2024/25 Pay Policy Statement is attached. As the statement confirms how the Council will apply the pay arrangements, this should be produced prior to the financial year in which it applies. The production of this statement will enable that to be introduced.
- 5.2 The Pay statement has been considered at Local Joint Council and subsequently agreed at Employment Committee on 7 February 2024. Council is required to agree the statement prior to publication.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 Legal Advice 6.1 Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to produce a pay statement to be agreed by Members before the beginning of each financial year. The Act does not apply to local authority schools. This document meets the requirements of the Act for the Bracknell Forest Council. This Pay Policy Statement presents the expected position at 1 April 2024. The provisions of the Localism Act require that local authorities are more open about their own local policies and how their local decisions are made. The Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency enshrines the principles of transparency and asks Authorities to follow three principles when publishing data they hold: responding to public demand, releasing data in open 31 Agenda Item 8

formats available for re-use, and, releasing data in a timely way. This includes data on senior salaries and the structure of the workforce.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 There are no financial implications arising from the report.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 Trade unions have been consulted on the statement – there were no challenges on any of the detail included.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 Discussed across the document.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 Failure to explicitly respond to guidance on the content of published information will run the risk of challenge from the DCLG.

Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO₂.

The reasons the Council believes that this will have no impact on emissions are the fact that this is a statement of pay policy and remuneration of staff.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 Ensuring a transparent pay system is in place should ensure staff feel valued and recognise the mechanism for staff remuneration.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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Bracknell Forest Council
PAY STATEMENT FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/25

INTRODUCTION

Source and scope of pay statement

This Pay Statement has been produced in accordance with Sections 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011 (the Act), which, from 2012 onwards, require local authorities to publish an annual statement of their approach to pay for the relevant financial year in relation to:

- The remuneration of their most senior employees (which the Act defines as the head of paid service (Chief Executive), the Monitoring Officer, the Assistant Directors (or Directors), and the Deputy Assistant Directors (i.e. managers who report directly to a Director));
- The remuneration of their lowest-paid employees; and
- The relationship between the remuneration of the most senior employees and that of other employees.

The statement is for the financial year 2024/25. Data on existing salaries, job roles and statistics contained within the statement are based as at 1 December 2023.

The Secretary of State has produced guidance on the Act's provisions relating to openness and accountability in local pay, which local authorities must have regard to in preparing and approving their annual pay policy statements and the Council's statement takes full account of this guidance to date as well as the provisions of the Act.

It also takes account of:

- Local Government Transparency Code 2014
- Guidance issued by the Joint National Council (JNC) for Local Authority Chief Executives on pay policy statements, published in November 2011
- Guidance under section 40 of Localism Act 2011, published by DCLG
- Employment and equalities legislation affecting local authority employers, where relevant.

To aid transparency, this statement also contains or refers to information which the Council is already required to publish under other legislation, i.e.

- Information on the actual level of remuneration paid to senior managers, as required by The Accounts and Audit (Amendment No. 2) (England) Regulations 2009
- Policies on the exercise of its discretions over payments upon termination of employment under the Local Government Pension Scheme, as required by Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations
- Policies on the exercise of its discretions over payments upon termination of employment under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, as required by Regulation 7 of those regulations.

The Government's guidance on the Localism Act's pay provisions states that it is open to Councils to include in this Statement their policies on the remuneration of employees who

are neither the most senior officers nor the lowest paid. Accordingly, this Policy Statement also gives details of:

- The policies applied to employees earning in excess of £50,000, as required by Local Government Transparency Code 2014
- Elements of remuneration which apply to all employees, regardless of their pay level, status or grading within the Council.

As such, this Statement draws together all the relevant existing policies and can therefore be seen as a comprehensive document covering all relevant aspects of pay and remuneration within the Council.

Status of pay statement

In line with the requirements of the Localism Act, the Pay Statement will be reviewed on an annual basis, with a new version approved at the start of each subsequent financial year, which will need to be complied with during that year.

The Pay Statement can also be amended during any financial year, but only by a resolution of the full Council. If it is amended during the year to which it relates, the revised version of the statement will be published as soon as reasonably possible after the amendment is approved by the Council.

Transparency and autonomy

It is important to recognise that, whilst producing national legislation relating to their pay policies, the Government also explicitly recognises that each local authority remains an individual employer, and, as such, has the autonomy to make decisions on pay that are appropriate to local circumstances and deliver value for money for local taxpayers.

SECTION 1: REMUNERATION OF STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY DIRECTORS, ASSISTANT DIRECTORS, MONITORING OFFICER AND OTHER SENIOR POSTS

1.1 REMUNERATION COVERED IN THIS SECTION OF THE POLICY

This section covers the Council's policies in relation to the remuneration of its senior employees, including:

- Its Chief Executive;
- Its Executive Directors and Assistant Directors who report to and are directly accountable to the Chief Executive – this includes both statutory and non-statutory Executive Directors;
- Its Assistant Directors, who report to and are directly accountable to Executive Directors;
- Its Section 151 Officer (the Executive Director of Resources), who is also an Executive Director and remunerated as such;
- Its Monitoring Officer (the Borough Solicitor, who is the officer responsible for ensuring the Council's compliance with the law in all its activities) is also an Assistant Director and is remunerated as such.

1.2 CONTEXT

These senior employees are responsible for working with elected politicians to determine the overall strategic direction of the Council, to develop the scale, nature, efficiency and effectiveness of all the services provided by the Council, and to provide day-to-day leadership and management of those services.

In relation to other organisations in all sectors across the UK, the Council is a large, complex organisation providing a very diverse range of services. Many of those services are vital to the wellbeing of individuals and groups of residents in the local community and are delivered in very challenging circumstances, taking account of levels of need and the availability of resources to meet them.

The Council's senior employees are responsible for:

- 2703 employees (equivalent to 2164.87 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees). These numbers are as at 1 December 2023 and include LA schools
- Services to an estimated 124,600 residents within the local community (source: ONS Population and Household Estimates: Census 2021)
- The following services to the local community:
 - Adult social services
 - Children and families social services
 - Countryside and open space management and maintenance
 - Education and schools
 - Elections and local democracy
 - Environmental including pest control
 - Environmental Services, including refuse collection, recycling, street cleaning and waste disposal
 - Housing and welfare
 - Housing and Council tax benefits
 - Leisure and Arts provision
 - Libraries
 - Planning
 - Roads, transport, street lighting and car parking
 - Youth and Community Services
 - Public Health
 - Regeneration and economic development
 - Community Safety
- The following facilities:
 - 23 LA schools (including one Pupil Referral Unit and one special school) and 13 Academies
 - Two respite services (overnight and daytime)
 - 4 Family Hubs
 - 9 libraries
 - Over 80 park sites totalling over 1,000 acres of land
 - 24 play areas, plus wheeled sports areas, tennis courts, soccer pitches, a baseball diamond and a sports pavilion
 - 14 community centres
 - One town centre office and the commercial centre plus offices at Waterside Park and New Hope.

- The Council:
 - Is responsible for the education of around 18,900 children
 - Deals with around 1,100 planning applications per year
 - Manages and maintains around 456 kilometres of roads, 700+ kilometres of paths and cycleways, 200+ bridges, underpasses and other structures
 - Manages and maintains cutting almost 2.5 million square metres of grass and manages and maintains approximately 625,000 square metres of woodland
 - Is responsible for around 155 looked-after children
 - Licences 255 premises and clubs and 296 taxis
 - Currently has over 1,680 open cases on adults and provided long term services to over 1,064 people.

The Council must compete with other employers in the area (and, in many cases, in the country) to recruit and retain managers and staff who are capable of meeting the challenges of delivering this diverse range of services to the required standards. This has an important bearing on the levels of remuneration it offers which has been kept under review on a regular basis by the Employment Committee. At the same time, the Council is under an obligation to secure the best value for money for its residents and tax-payers in taking decisions on pay levels. In recent years the Employment Committee has sought to strike a fair balance between these competing pressures.

1.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENIOR ROLES

To give further contextual information for remuneration levels, the main accountabilities of the Chief Executive and Directors are set out below.

- **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive is the Council's most senior employee who leads and takes responsibility for the work of the Council. It is a full time appointment and post holders are selected on merit, against objective criteria, following public advertisement.

The role of Chief Executive is complex with ultimate responsibility for managing expenditure of 263.9 million of public funds, serving around 122,549 people in the Council's area.

As head of the paid service of the Council's employed staff, the Chief Executive is a non-political post. Whilst the elected councillors provide the policies, Council paid employees put them into practice. The Chief Executive is responsible to and accountable to, the Leader of the Council, the Executive and the whole Council in delivering their political and policy objectives.

The Chief Executive works closely with elected councillors to deliver:

Leadership: to ensure strong and visible leadership and direction, encouraging and enabling managers to motivate and inspire their teams;

Strategic direction: ensuring all staff understand and adhere to the strategic aims of the organisation and follow the direction set by elected councillors;

Policy advice: acting as the principal policy adviser to the elected councillors to lead the development of workable strategies which will deliver the political objectives set;

Partnerships: leading and developing strong partnerships across the local community to achieve improved outcomes and better public services for local people;

Operational Management: overseeing financial and performance management, risk management, people management and change management within the Council.

Staff under indirect management responsibility: 2702

- ***Executive Director – People***

This post has a statutory role in relation to both adult and children's social care, and is responsible and accountable for assessing local needs and ensuring the availability and delivery of a full range of services, and ensure that children and young people achieve the best possible outcomes for their lives through education

The directorate provides advice and information about the range of services that may be available to support individuals or families. Practitioners will work with individuals and their carers to identify needs for care and support and/or housing and how those needs can be met. If people are not eligible, the department can give them information about other ways of accessing support and organisations where they could go to get help. There is joint work with Children's Services to ensure support is in place when the young person reaches 18 years of age.

The focus of support is to enable people to maximise their ability and retain their independence, which will mean people can stay in their own homes for as long as possible. Support may be needed for a crisis or a longer period, and the directorate will generally commission this. Depending on assessed needs, a range of services could be provided in partnership with other organisations to meet the social care needs of adults and older people. Services include home support, day opportunities, the provision of equipment for daily living and residential and nursing care. The Directorate also has a responsibility to ensure that the needs of "informal" carers (usually family or friends) are identified, and appropriate support is offered to enable them to continue in their caring role, should this be what they wish.

The post is also responsible for ensuring the provision of Housing Advice and Homelessness Prevention as well as the provision of Housing and Council Tax Benefits.

The Welfare and Housing Service aims to maximise customers' income and independence. The Welfare Service provides national and local welfare payments to households in the Borough and provides advice to households so that they can maximise their income including budgeting advice and employment opportunities. The Housing service provides advice to households so that they can resolve their housing need, provides advice and if necessary, accommodation for homeless households and overall helps customers secure a home that meets their needs. The Forest care service provides an emergency and re-assurance service to its customers so that they can maintain their independence in their home and feel safe and secure in the knowledge that if an emergency occurs there is help to call upon.

Its duties include specific support for the following:

Children's Social Care

- Child Protection / Family Safeguarding
- Looked After Children
- Specialist Support
- Youth Offending Service

Adult Social Care

- Adult Community Team (ACT)
- Learning Disabilities
- Safeguarding

Mental Health and Out of Hours

- Mental Health
- Emergency Duty Team
- Forestcare
- Drug and Alcohol Services (DAAT)

Early Help and Communities

- Housing
- Community Safety
- Early Help

Education and Learning

- School Advisory team
- School Sufficiency and Commissioning
- Community Learning
- Governor Services
- Education Centre and Education Library Service
- Special Educational Needs Service incl Ed Psychology
- Education Property, Places and Admissions
- Early Years

Commissioning

- Operational Finance
- Strategic Commissioning
- Safeguarding
- Quality Assurance
- Data Insights & Performance

Budget responsibility: £68.8 million per annum

Staff under direct or indirect line management responsibility: 727 (excluding schools)

- ***Executive Director – Delivery***

The directorate is responsible for the strategic planning and operational delivery of services covering a wide range of functions and activities. It targets its services to meet the high standards residents, local businesses and visitors expect. Some of these services are delivered directly, others in partnership with the voluntary and charitable sectors and some through contracts with private companies. The directorate operates with 5 service divisions as follows:

- Digital, Customer Focus and ICT
 - Digital Change & Service Improvement
 - Customer Services
 - ICT

- Legal Services
- Democratic Services
 - Registration & Councillor Services
 - Scrutiny & Democratic Services
 - Corporate Complaints
- Contract Services
 - Environmental services
 - Climate change
 - Parking Management & Leisure
 - Cemetery and crematorium
- Property Services
- Libraries, Arts and Heritage

The Director also acts as Statutory Overview & Scrutiny Officer

Budget responsibility: £17.6 million per annum

Staff under direct or indirect line management responsibility: 184

- ***Executive Director – Place, Planning and Regeneration***

This post is responsible and accountable for the effective planning and delivery of the regeneration, development and future infrastructure of the Borough, within the statutory policy guidelines and planning framework agreed by the Council. The directorate targets its services to meet the high standards residents, local businesses and visitors expect.

The directorate operates with 7 service divisions including:

- Town and country planning
- Building Control and land charges
- Transport Development
- The Look Out Discovery Centre
- Highway Asset Management
- Parks and countryside management
- Regeneration and economy
- Public Health – Local Team
- Public Health – Shared Team

Budget responsibility: £9.7 million per annum

Staff under direct or indirect line management responsibility: 204.

The Directorate includes the Bracknell Forest Public Health Team. Public Health work aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the population, tackle health inequalities and reduce premature mortality. The team commissions a range of services including health visiting and school nurses, stop smoking support, weight management, health checks, sexual health, falls prevention, mental health and substance misuse treatment. The team also provides support and advice on health matters direct to the community via campaigns, events and social media, as well as providing support to other professional agencies on issues such as infectious disease control or patterns of health and healthcare outcomes within the local population. Collaboration is central to work of the Public Health team, particularly with colleagues in social care, the NHS and the voluntary sector. In addition to the Bracknell Forest

Public Health team, the Directorate also hosts the Berkshire-wide 'Shared' Public Health team which provides strategic, contracting and data support to the six unitary authority Public Health teams across the county. This team is led by the Strategic Director of Public Health.

- ***Executive Director – Resources***

This role fulfils the statutory obligations of the Chief Financial Officer, as set out in Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, Sections 112, 113 and 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, in order to ensure that the financial affairs of the Authority are properly administered. This role is the prime adviser to the Council on financial matters including the development and monitoring of financial strategies, policies, programmes and procedures. This role is also responsible for the strategic implementation of Organisational Development and Human Resources to support the Council Plan, Service Plans and associated budgets.

Areas of responsibility include:

- Accountancy
- Audit
- Finance & Business Services
- Procurement
- Revenue Services
- Human Resources
- Organisational Development

Budget responsibility: £6.5 million per annum

Staff under direct or indirect line management responsibility: 95

1.4 OVERALL POLICY ON REMUNERATION FOR SENIOR ROLES

The Council's overall approach to remuneration for its senior employees is based on:

Compliance with equal pay, discrimination and other relevant employment legislation, plus recognition of the demanding nature of the challenges which the Council faces, and the requirement to offer competitive remuneration in relation to the rest of the local government and public sectors, in order to secure the most talented managers. This means that, on the advice of the Employment Committee, the Council has always taken account of:

- pay levels in the local area, including neighbouring public sector employers
- the relative cost of living in the local area, particularly housing costs
- the responsibilities and accountabilities of posts which may be exceptionally demanding.

The Council seeks to maintain this overall approach by carefully monitoring pay data provided by the Joint National Councils (JNCs) for Chief Officers and Chief Executives, the Local Government Association/Employers, and other relevant pay surveys.

In terms of pay differentials, the Council recognises that the role of Chief Executive leads the organisation's workforce and has the greatest level of accountability, and so warrants the highest pay level in the organisation.

At Executive Director level:

- The Council recognises that all its Executive Directors have a collective and corporate responsibility for contributing to and delivering the overall strategy of the organisation, however the size and scope of their responsibilities differ and therefore an appropriate grade from the senior salaries structure is determined through a job evaluation conducted by Korn Ferry.

At Assistant Director level:

- The Council recognises that certain roles are more demanding than others and has identified those with a greater level of accountability through job evaluation, (which provides a careful analysis of job demands) and offers them higher remuneration than other Assistant Director posts. Evaluation is based upon the Hay system and evaluations are carried out independently by the Korn Ferry Group including the Director of Public Health.

Below Assistant Director level, the Council recognises that the demands on and accountabilities of different management roles vary considerably and seeks to align pay levels with the relative importance and responsibilities of jobs, using a process of job evaluation, and including Market Premia, where applicable, to match certain posts with the market rate for similar jobs. There are, additionally, some posts which are on different national pay-scales such as the teaching pay-scales, NHS pay-scales or Soulbury conditions.

1.5 SPECIFIC REMUNERATION OFFERED TO SENIOR EMPLOYEES

At Chief Executive, Executive Director and Assistant Director level, the Council offers only an annual salary and access to the Local Government Pension Scheme. No other cash benefits or benefits in kind are offered - except any benefits purchased by the employee under the Council's Flexible Benefits scheme under which all employees may purchase

benefits from a range offered to all staff. The only one of these benefits which gives an opportunity to increase income is the selling of annual leave, which is available to most employees but not to those at Assistant Director level and above (see section 4).

Geographical/location allowance (local weighting) is not payable to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors or Assistant Directors.

The Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors are not eligible to participate in the Council's flexible leave scheme whereby employees are able to "buy and sell" annual leave within certain parameters (See section 4, below).

Annual salaries

Annual salary levels for senior employees are fixed in accordance with the overall principles set out in section 1.4. At Chief Executive, Executive Director and Assistant Director level and for other senior managers, they consist of a grade range which is determined locally by the Council. This grade range consists of several incremental salary points.

Remuneration of senior employees on recruitment

The Council's policy is that any newly appointed senior employee will normally commence employment at the lowest pay point in the pay range for their job, other than when taking account of the successful applicant's current salary and the market requirements. Any decision to appoint a senior employee on a higher pay point within the relevant pay range would be made by the Appointments Committee.

Pay progression

Pay progression within a specific grade is by annual increment, payable from 1 April, until the employee reaches the top pay point of their grade.

Pay awards

The salaries of senior employees are reviewed annually in line with any pay award agreed in the Joint National Councils (JNCs) for Chief Executives/Chief Officers, the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services, NHS or Soulbury conditions, as appropriate for the contracts of the senior managers. Periodic reassessments will benchmark the grades against market rates for similar roles in the region.

Bonuses

The Council does not pay bonuses to any of its employees.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The Council offers all its senior employees' access to the Local Government Pension Scheme, in accordance with the statutory provisions of the scheme, on the same basis as all its employees. Any pension payments made to its senior employees on termination of employment either on grounds of redundancy, in the interests of the efficiency of the service or on grounds of ill health are made within the statutory terms of the LGPS.

- The employer's contribution rate for senior employees who join the scheme is the same as for all other employees, as set out in Section 4 "**POLICIES COMMON TO ALL EMPLOYEES**"
- The discretions which the Council can apply under the scheme upon termination of employment are the same for senior employees as for all other employees who are LGPS members and are set out in Section 4 "**POLICIES COMMON TO ALL EMPLOYEES**".

Payments on Termination of Employment

Other than payments made under the LGPS, the Council's payments to managers whose employment is terminated on grounds of redundancy or in the interests of the efficiency of the service will be in accordance with the policy the Council has adopted for all its employees in relation to the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, as set out in Section 4 "**POLICIES COMMON TO ALL EMPLOYEES**".

Other than payments pursuant to the LGPS (including the exercise of the Council's discretions) or payments in accordance with the Council's policies under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, the Council's policy is not to make any other termination payments to its senior employees. The only exception to this, which is very rarely used, is where it has received specific legal advice to the effect that a payment is appropriate to settle proceedings in an Employment Tribunal or court of law or may be required to eliminate risk of claims against the Council.

Election fees

Election fees are paid separately. Returning Officer fees for national elections are set by central government. Local election fees are paid in accordance with a scale of fees which is based on national election rates and agreed locally.

1.6 RE-ENGAGEMENT OF SENIOR MANAGERS

Re-engagement of Chief Executives, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors who have left Bracknell Forest Council with a severance or termination payment

Re-engagement as employees

(1) Subject to any relevant provisions in employment and equalities legislation, the Council's policy is not to re-employ *in any capacity* any former Chief Executive, Executive Director or Assistant Director who was in receipt of a severance or termination payment for any reason other than compulsory redundancy, for a period of three years from the date of termination of employment.

(2) Where a Chief Executive, Executive Director or Assistant Director's employment has been terminated compulsorily on grounds of redundancy, they will not be re-employed in the same or a similar post for a period of three years following the date of termination of employment. If they are re-employed in another post within four weeks after the effective date of redundancy, they will lose their right to a redundancy payment, including any enhancements under the provisions of the LGPS or the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006. Any re-employment will be subject to the Council following the strict application of the normal process of competitive selection for employment.

(3) Any former Chief Executive, Executive Director or Assistant Director who is employed by the Council who has previously received a severance, termination or redundancy payment from this or any other Council or related body will not have previous service counted when determining any further entitlements to notice periods, sickness payments, annual leave or other benefits/entitlements based on continuous service.

Re-engagement under a contract for services

The Council's policy is not to re-engage under a contract for services any former Chief Executive, Executive Director or Assistant Director who left the Council for any reason

and was in receipt of a redundancy, severance or termination payment, for a period of three years from the cessation of employment.

Policy variation

This re-engagement policy may be varied only in exceptional circumstances and then subject to the agreement of the Employment Committee.

Employment of those in receipt of an LGPS pension

General:

Policy is set out in Section 4 **POLICIES COMMON TO ALL EMPLOYEES.**

Flexible retirement:

The LGPS regulations permit the Council to offer flexible retirement to employees (including Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Directors and Assistant Directors) aged 55 or over, so that they can reduce their hours of work, and receive a pension in respect of the proportion of full-time hours they are no longer required to work. This policy is set out in Section 4 **POLICIES COMMON TO ALL EMPLOYEES.**

1.7 PUBLICATION OF DETAILS OF EMPLOYEE REMUNERATION

In accordance with 39 (5) of the Localism Act, this policy will be published on the Council’s website.

The Council is also required to publish information about the remuneration of senior officers under The Accounts and Audit (Amendment No. 2) (England) Regulations 2009, and the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

For ease of reference, remuneration data for posts identified under these Regulations is set out below, individual annual salaries for staff in post can be found on the Council’s website.

The table below indicates the grades at 1 December 2023.

Chief Executive	£180,355 - £196,457
Executive Director - People	£150,628 - £174,850
Executive Director - Delivery	£126,406 - £146,224
Executive Director - Resources	£126,406 - £146,224
Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration	£126,406 - £146,224
Director of Public Health	£98,880 - £115,395
Asst Director: Adult Social Care	£98,880 - £115,395
Asst Director: Children’s Social Care	£98,880 - £115,395
Asst Director: Early Help & Communities	£98,880 - £115,395
Asst Director: Education and Learning	£98,880 - £115,395
Asst Director: Commissioning	£98,880 - £115,395
Borough Solicitor	£98,880 - £115,395
Assistant Director: Mental Health & Out of Hours	£98,880 - £115,395
Asst Director: Contract Services	£98,880 - £115,395
Asst Director: Digital, Customer Focus & ICT	£92,752 - £98,266

Asst Director: Property	£92,752 - £98,266
Consultant in Public Health	£92,752 - £98,266
Assistant Director: HR and OD	£85,877 - £92,752
Assistant Director: Chief Executives Office	£85,877 - £92,752
Assistant Director: Special Projects	£85,877 - £92,752
Assistant Director: Highways and Transport	£85,877 - £92,752
Assistant Director: Planning	£85,877 - £92,752
Chief Accountant	£85,877 - £92,752
Head of Finance and Business Services	£85,877 - £92,752
Assistant Director: Democratic & Registration	£85,877 - £92,752

Figures as at 1 December 2023 and are inclusive of supplements and/or market premia where payable. Teaching staff not included.

SECTION 2: REMUNERATION OF LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES

This section sets out the Council's policies in relation to the remuneration of its lowest-paid employees, as defined in this Pay Policy Statement.

2.1 ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

The Council considers it is important that its policy with regard to the remuneration of its lowest paid employees is seen within the broader organisational context, in particular the range and diversity of services for which it is responsible, either directly or indirectly, the number of residents within the local community, the level of its financial responsibilities and the numbers of staff directly employed.

2.2 OVERALL REMUNERATION POLICY: LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES

Aims, Objectives and Key Principles

The Council aims to develop, implement and maintain fair and equitable remuneration arrangements which enable it to recruit, retain, motivate and develop staff with the skills and capabilities necessary to ensure the continued provision of high-quality services and which are cost effective and provide value for money.

The Council's remuneration policy complies with all equal pay, discrimination and other relevant employment legislation.

When setting pay levels for specific posts the Council takes account of both internal differentials, as measured by job evaluation, and external relativities, as measured against the relevant employment market. The Council aims to ensure its pay rates for specific posts are set at a level which enables it to recruit and retain staff with the appropriate knowledge, skills and capabilities necessary for the role.

2.3 DEFINITION OF LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES

The definition of the "lowest-paid employees" adopted by the Council for the purposes of this statement is as follows:

The lowest paid employees within the Council paid on the Council's lowest hourly pay rate.

The current annual full-time equivalent value of this pay level, based on a 37-hour standard working week and including local weighting, is £23,055.

2.4 REMUNERATION OF LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES

Pay structure

The Council's lowest paid employees are on a grade range derived from the national pay spine, as set out in the National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service. This grade range consists of a number of incremental salary points through which employees may progress until the top of the grade is reached.

Pay Progression

Pay progression is normally by annual increment, payable from 1 April.

Pay progression is based on the period the employee has served in that grade, subject to satisfactory performance. Directors may accelerate incremental progression within the grade for employees who are considered to have demonstrated exceptional performance.

Annual Pay Review

The basic pay of the Council's lowest paid employees is reviewed annually at a national level, with any cost-of-living, or other, increase normally applied on 1 April in each year.

Any increase will normally be applied in accordance with that agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

Pension Provision

The Council's lowest paid employees may participate in the Local Government Pension Scheme in accordance with the statutory terms of that scheme.

Contributions are made to this scheme in respect of each participating employee as set out in Section 4, **Policies Common to all Employees**.

Any increases in or enhancements to the pension entitlement of the Council's lowest paid employees would be made in accordance with the discretions available to it under the statutory provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme, as exercised by the Council and set out in the relevant policy statement (see Section 4 of this Pay Policy Statement, **Policies Common to all Employees**).

Termination or Severance Payments

Any termination or severance payments made by the Council to its lowest paid employees, either on grounds of redundancy, in the interests of the efficiency of the service or on grounds of permanent ill-health, will be made in accordance with the statutory terms of the Local Government Pension Scheme, as applicable, and/or in accordance with the discretions available to it under that Scheme or under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, as set out in the relevant policy statement (see Section 4 of this Pay Policy Statement, **Policies Common to all Employees**).

Other than payments pursuant to the LGPS (including the exercise of the Council's discretions) or payments in accordance with the Council's policies under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006, the Council's policy is not to make any other termination or severance payments to its lowest paid employees, other than where it has received specific

legal advice to the effect that a payment may be necessary to eliminate risk of claims against the Council.

Other elements of remuneration

The other elements of remuneration which it is the Council's policy to offer to its lowest paid employees (where applicable) are listed below and are as set out in section 4, "Policies common to all employees":

Recruitment/retention payments

Reimbursement of removal/relocation costs/mortgage subsidy on appointment

Geographical/location allowance (local weighting)

Car allowances/mileage rates

Payment of professional subscriptions or membership fees

Subsistence or other expenses allowance

Provision of mobile telephones/personal devices

Honorarium/acting up/additional responsibility payments

Payment for reduced leave entitlement

In addition, the Council's lowest paid employees may have access to the following payments where patterns of work make them appropriate:

Working arrangements

Employees on national conditions, who are required to work beyond the Council's normal full-time equivalent working week of 37 hours and/or work other non-standard working patterns, as listed below, will receive payment in accordance with the provisions of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service for:

- Additional hours
- Saturday and Sunday working
- Night work
- Public and Extra Statutory holidays
- Sleeping-in duty

Standby and/or call-out payments

Employees who are required to be on standby at times which are outside their normal working week and/or who may be called-out to attend to an issue at the Council's premises or other location may receive an additional payment in accordance with the provisions of the relevant Council policy.

2.5 OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The other terms and conditions which apply to the Council's lowest paid employees are as set out in the National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service, as amended and/or supplemented by any local agreements which may apply.

2.6 REMUNERATION OF EMPLOYEES WHO ARE PAID MORE THAN THE LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES BUT WHO ARE NOT ASSISTANT DIRECTORS

The Council's policy and practice with regard to the remuneration of employees who are paid more than its lowest paid employees but who are not Assistant Directors is the same as that which applies to its lowest paid employees, other than where any differences are indicated in this policy statement. Some specific groups of employees are paid on nationally determined Soulbury Conditions or Teachers Pay Agreement.

2.7 EMPLOYEES WHO ARE PAID LESS THAN THE COUNCIL'S LOWEST PAID EMPLOYEES, AS DEFINED IN THIS PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The following categories of employees *may* be paid less than the Council's lowest paid employees, as defined in this Pay Policy Statement:

- Apprentices
- Some casual workers, who are not included in this statement

The Council may apply a lower pay rate and/or different remuneration arrangements to these categories of employees, which reflects the nature and/or duration/frequency of their employment.

SECTION 3: PAY RELATIONSHIPS

This section sets out the Council's overall approach to ensuring pay levels are fairly and appropriately dispersed across the organisation, including the current pay multiples which apply, and its policy toward maintaining acceptable pay multiples in the future.

The Council believes that the principle of fair pay is important to the provision of high quality and well-managed services and is committed to ensuring fairness and equity in its remuneration practices. The Council's pay policies, processes and procedures are designed to ensure that pay levels are appropriately aligned with and properly reflect the relative demands and responsibilities of each post and the knowledge, skills and capabilities necessary to ensure they are undertaken to the required standard, as well as taking account of relevant market considerations. This includes ensuring that there is an appropriate relationship between the pay levels of its senior officers, as defined in this Pay Policy Statement, and of all other employees.

The Council has adopted several policies and practices to ensure fairness in the overall pay relativities within the Authority. These include:

- Using an analytical job evaluation scheme to determine the grading of all posts below Assistant Director level
- Jobs at Assistant Director level and above are also subject to measurement using a separate job evaluation scheme – evaluated externally
- Applying a clear and objective methodology for evaluating all new and changed jobs to ensure they are properly graded and that pay levels properly reflect their level of responsibility
- Establishing a defined procedure for employees who wish to request a review of their job grade or who wish to appeal against their grading outcome
- Providing for additional payments and allowances, with clearly defined eligibility criteria, to recognise and reward any working arrangements or requirements not reflected in basic pay levels
- Undertaking corporate monitoring of the application of pay progression arrangements to ensure these are applied and operated on a fair and consistent basis across the organisation
- Reviewing the roles and responsibilities of individual posts on a regular basis, for example, as part of the annual appraisal process, when a vacancy arises, as part of any organisational restructuring

Under the provisions of the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency, issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government under Section 2 of the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, the Council is required to publish its "pay multiple", i.e. the ratio between the highest paid salary and median full time equivalent salary of the whole of the local authority's workforce. The current pay multiple, based on full time equivalent earnings in the financial year ending 31 March 2023 including base salary, overtime pay, and any lump sum car allowances is 6.3 (Last year's multiple was 6.5).

The figures are not a direct comparison because of the number of hours actually worked; for example, senior officers do not have a specific number of required work hours/week in their contract of employment and will often work more than the standard 37 hours used in non-senior contracts.

The median salary is the salary value at which 50% of the full-time equivalent salaries which apply to the whole of the Council's workforce are below that salary value and 50% are above it. The lowest pay point in the overall salary range which has been used by the Council in

calculating the median salary is that which applies to its lowest paid employees, as defined in section 2 of this Pay Policy Statement.

If the mean salary is used in the above calculations instead of the median, the pay multiple is 5.5. (Last year's multiple based on mean was 5.8).

The Council considers that the current pay multiple, as identified above, represents an appropriate, fair and equitable internal pay relationship between the highest salary and that which applies to the rest of the workforce and has adopted the following actions to ensure an acceptable level is maintained:

Periodic benchmarking against the market rate for the Chief Executive will continue to take place and changes such as job evaluation outcomes or outsourcing of functions may impact on the median payment levels; both may affect the pay multiple. However, the multiple will be reviewed annually by means of this document to ensure it remains acceptable.

SECTION 4: POLICIES COMMON TO ALL EMPLOYEES

The following elements of remuneration are determined by corporate policies or arrangements which apply to all permanent employees of the Council (including its Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors), regardless of their pay level, status or grading within the Council:

Contracts of Employment

It is the Council's policy to engage all of its permanent employees on standard contracts of employment and to apply Pay As You Earn taxation arrangements to all remuneration under those contracts in accordance with HMRC rules.

Access to Local Government Pension Scheme

The Council offers all its employees' access to the Local Government Pension Scheme in accordance with the statutory provisions of the scheme (except where the Teachers' Pension Scheme applies). The employers' contribution rate for employees who join the scheme is currently 17.2% of salary for all employees. The employee contribution rate ranges from 5.5% to 12.5% dependent on salary. All employees, including casuals and those on very short-term contracts, have a right to be in the scheme. Casuals and those on very short contracts are not enrolled automatically but they can opt in if they choose

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) - discretions on termination of employment

Any termination or severance payments made by the Council to all its employees, either on grounds of redundancy, in the interests of the efficiency of the service or on grounds of permanent ill-health, will be made in accordance with the statutory terms of the Local Government Pension Scheme, as applicable, and/or in accordance with the discretions available to it under that Scheme.

The Council's policies on the exercise of these discretions under the LGPS are set out in the policies it has published under the requirements of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations. These are shown in Appendix A1.

Payments on Termination of Employment

Other than payments made under the LGPS, the Council's payments to any employee whose employment is terminated on grounds of redundancy or in the interests of the efficiency of the service will be in accordance with the policy the Council has adopted for all its employees in relation to the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006. This policy has been

published in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 7 of these regulations and, in summary, is:

- Actual weekly pay is used in all redundancy calculations
- Those with immediate access to pension are paid in accordance with the statutory number of weeks' pay
- Those with no immediate access to pension are paid 1.75 times the statutory number of weeks' pay

Employment of those in receipt of an LGPS pension

Subject to the administering authority's policy, pension benefits built up under regulations in force prior to 1 April 2014 (i.e., final salary benefits) may be subject to abatement where an individual in receipt of such a pension is re-employed. However, the policy of the administering authority to the Berkshire Pension Fund is not to abate pensions in these circumstances.

The only occasion where a re-employed pensioner may suffer some abatement to their pension is where they have previously been awarded compensatory added years in accordance with regulations 16 or 19 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England & Wales) Regulations 2000.

Flexible retirement

The LGPS regulations permit the Council to offer flexible retirement to employees aged 55 or over, so that they can reduce their hours of work, and draw a pension in respect of the proportion of full-time hours they are no longer required to work. The Council uses this discretion in the same way for all employees. The Council will consider requests for flexible retirement on a case-by-case basis. Approval will be sought through the Corporate Management team where all costs and benefits will be explicit; requests with carry no costs to the Employing Authority will be dealt with by officers.

Market Premia

The job evaluation scheme does not recognise market pay rates when determining the grade for a job. If Directors identify market scarcity through difficulty with recruitment and/or a lack of success with advertising, they may discuss the need for a market premium with the Assistant Director: HR and Organisational Development who will seek approval through CMT or Employment Committee as appropriate.

Recruitment/retention payments

Recruitment payments are a recruitment incentive which can be used for positions where there is a nation/regional/local shortage of qualified persons. They are used to induce an individual to take up employment within the Council and are in the form of a one-off lump sum. These are infrequently used and are repayable on a sliding scale if the individual leaves within 3 years of appointment.

Key staff retention payments may be given where it is important to retain the services of an employee to the end of a specific project. The period of tie in will not normally exceed three years and any lump sum payment will not be made if the employee leaves before the relevant date. Employees in some children's social work teams are currently in receipt of retention payments as part of strategies to retain these key staff in a recruitment shortage area.

Geographical/location allowance (local weighting)

The Council applies London and Fringe Area Allowances in accordance with the provisions of and rates agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service, or Soulbury or Youth and Community Conditions as appropriate. There are certain employees whose pay is determined locally who do not receive this type of allowance, and it is not payable to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors or Assistant Directors.

Reimbursement of removal/relocation costs on appointment

The Relocation Scheme provides assistance to people moving house in order to take up an appointment with the Council. The scheme will not necessarily cover the full expenses of moving and is not intended to do so. The maximum amount payable under the relocation scheme is £8,000, plus mortgage subsidy where appropriate. The scheme does not apply to all advertised roles, only to those where there is less likelihood of recruiting suitable staff locally.

Honorarium or ex gratia payments/acting up/additional responsibility allowances

The Council pays honoraria or *ex gratia* payments to employees only in accordance with its corporate scheme for such payments, and all such payments are made only with the express approval of the relevant Executive Director. Where employees are required to “act-up” into a higher-graded post or take on additional responsibilities beyond those of their substantive post for a temporary/time-limited period, they may receive an additional payment. Merit payments are like honoraria payments but are generally paid as a “one off” sum. They can be for a variety of reasons including examination success or for a particularly demanding or meritorious piece of work.

Car provision – employees using their own cars on Council business

The Council compensates:

- Employees who are required to use their own car on Council business paying an Essential Car User payment of £963pa plus mileage at below the HMRC rate; and
- Employees who are otherwise authorised to use their own car on Council business by paying a casual user mileage rate based on the HMRC rate.

Payment of professional subscriptions or membership fees

The Council will pay one professional subscription or membership fee on behalf of any employee where the subscription or membership is appropriate to the duties of the post.

Subsistence or other expenses allowance

The Council reimburses expenditure on meals and overnight accommodation and any other expenses necessarily incurred by employees on Council business, in line with the Council's Expenses policy.

Flexible benefits

The Council offers a range of flexible benefits which enable employees to elect to buy certain benefits from their salary. The only part of the range which enables employees to increase their pay is a flexible leave scheme whereby employees can “buy and sell” annual leave within certain parameters. Under this scheme, employees may be able to receive a day's additional pay for each day of leave they “sell” to the Council and agree to work. Assistant Directors and above may not participate in this scheme, although they may elect to buy other flexible benefits in the range. The maximum number of days that can be sold is 5 (pro rata for those working less than 5 days per week.)

Provision of mobile telephones and personal devices

Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors are issued with mobile phones and are required to be on an emergency duty list, other staff are issued phones in accordance with their workstyle in order to be more effective. The council funds the phone.

All employees working flexibly are issued with a softphone and a business case needs to be made if a mobile phone/device is required in addition to this.

SECTION 5: CONTRACTORS AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS WORKING FOR THE COUNCIL

There may be occasions where the Council procures, commissions or contracts-out one or more of the services for which it is responsible. This section sets out the Council's approach to and policies on the pay policies of contractors, partners and other organisations who may undertake work for, or on behalf of, the Council.

The terms and conditions of employment by contractors of their workers are non-commercial matters, so we are required to procure without reference to them (S17 (1) and (5) LGA 1988).

Where any of the Council's services are contracted-out or re-tendered or where a previously outsourced service returns to the Council, any matters relating to the remuneration of the transferred employees will be managed, as appropriate, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 as amended by the Collective Redundancies and Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Any payments to agency workers who may undertake work for the Council will be made in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract between the Council and the relevant agency provider, having due regard to the relevant provisions of the Agency Workers Regulations 2010 and any other relevant employment legislation.

SECTION 6: DECISION MAKING ON PAY

The Council recognises the importance of ensuring openness, transparency and high standards of corporate governance, with clear lines of accountability, in its pay decision-making processes and procedures. Any pay-related decisions must be capable of public scrutiny, be able to demonstrate proper and appropriate use of public funds and ensure value for money. The arrangements adopted by the Council are designed to reflect these requirements, as well as ensuring compliance with all relevant legislation and other statutory regulation.

The Council has agreed that the following roles and responsibilities about decision-making in remuneration matters will apply within the Authority as follows:

Full Council: consideration and approval of the annual Pay Policy Statement, as required under the Localism Act 2011. Approval of both the senior salary pay structure, within which senior appointments are made, and the severance policy, within which severance payments are made. Approval of any salary or severance payment over £100,000 which is not consistent with these policies.

Employment Committee: responsible for decisions relating to changes to terms and conditions of employment other than those dictated by employment law/statute, including scrutiny of this statement.

The provisions of this Pay Policy Statement will apply to any determination made by the Council in the relevant financial year in relation to the remuneration or other terms and conditions of senior officers of the Authority and of its lowest paid employees, as defined in this statement, and other employees who are paid more than the lowest paid employees but who are not senior officers.

The Council will ensure that the provisions of this Pay Policy Statement are properly applied and fully complied with in making any such determination.

This Pay Policy Statement has been approved by full Council.

The full Council will approve the appointment or dismissal of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) following the recommendation of such an appointment by a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council, which will include at least one Member of the Executive. Council will resolve that the post is remunerated in accordance with the Senior Salary Pay Structure.

For Executive Director posts, unless otherwise directed by the Council, a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council, the Council will appoint. The Committee or Sub-Committee will include at least one Member of the Executive. Council will resolve that the post is remunerated in accordance with the Senior Salary Pay Structure.

For Assistant Director posts, the Chief Executive or his nominated representative, with the relevant Executive Member or members and the Leader of the Council, may determine whether any appointment to an Assistant Director post is to be made exclusively from the Council's existing officers. Where the Chief Executive or his or her nominated representative, determines that it is to be made from existing Officers, the appointment may be made by the Chief Executive or his/her representative. Where a recruitment process is undertaken involving external candidates, a Committee or Sub-Committee will be appointed to interview the shortlisted candidates and make the final appointment. That Committee or Sub Committee will include at least one member of the Executive.

The above arrangements ensure that the Council meets the requirement of the Localism Act that any proposal to offer a new appointment on terms and conditions which include a total remuneration package of £100,000 or more, including salary, bonuses, fees or allowances which would routinely be payable to the appointee and any benefits in kind to which the officer would be entitled as a result of their employment (but excluding employer's pension contributions), will be referred to the full Council for approval before any confirmed offer is made to a particular candidate, if they fall outside the scope of the agreed senior salary pay scales.

SECTION 7: AMENDMENTS TO THIS PAY POLICY STATEMENT

This Pay Policy Statement relates to policy for the financial year 2024/25.

The Council may agree any amendments to this Pay Policy Statement during the financial year to which it relates in accordance with the decision-making arrangements set out in the introduction to this document.

SECTION 8: PUBLICATION OF AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Council will publish this Pay Policy Statement on its website as soon as is reasonably practicable after it has been approved by the Council. Any subsequent amendments to this Pay Policy Statement made during the financial year to which it relates will also be similarly published.

The information advised to be published by the Council in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code 2014 and in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Amendment No. 2) (England) Regulations 2009, as referred to in this Pay Policy Statement, is also available on its website.

The Council's policies in relation to the exercise of discretions under the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 and under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, are set out in this policy statement.

For further information about this Pay Policy Statement, please contact the Council as follows:

Paul Young
Assistant Director: HR and Organisational Development
paul.young@Bracknell-forest.gov.uk

EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS

**PART A – Formulation of COMPULSORY policy in accordance with Regulation 60 of the
Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013**

Regulation 16 – Additional Pension Contributions

The Scheme employer may resolve to fund in whole or in part any arrangement entered into by an active scheme member to pay additional pension contributions by way of regular contributions in accordance with **Regulation 16(2)(e)**, or by way of a lump sum in accordance with **Regulation 16(4)(d)**.

The Scheme employer may enter into an APC contract with a Scheme member who is contributing to the MAIN section of the Scheme in order to purchase additional pension of not more than the additional pension limit (£6,500 from 1st April 2014 subject to annual increase in line with the Pensions (Increase) Act 1971).

The amount of additional contribution to be paid is determined by reference to actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Consideration needs to be given to the circumstances under which the Scheme employer may wish to use their discretion to fund in whole or in part an employee's Additional Pension Contributions.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the whole or part funding of an active member's additional pension contributions

The Employing Authority has resolved not to adopt this discretion

Regulation 30(6) – Flexible Retirement

An active member who has attained the age of 55 or over and who with the agreement of their employer reduces their working hours or grade of employment may, with the further consent of their employer, elect to receive immediate payment of all or part of the retirement pension to which they would be entitled in respect of that employment as if that member were no longer an employee in local government service on the date of the reduction in hours or grade (*adjusted by the amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State – separate policy required under Regulation 30(8)*).

As part of the policy making decision the Scheme employer must consider whether, in addition to the benefits the member may have accrued prior to 1 April 2008 (which the member must draw), to permit the member to choose to draw all, part or none of the pension benefits they built up after 31 March 2008 and before 1 April 2014 and all, part or none of the pension benefits they built up after 1 April 2014.

Due consideration must be given to the financial implications of allowing an employee to draw all or part of their pension benefits earlier than their normal retirement age.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning flexible retirement

The Employing Authority will consider requests for flexible retirement on a case by case basis. Approval will be sought through the Employment Committee where all costs and benefits will be explicit; requests which carry no costs to the Employing Authority will be dealt with by officers and reported back to the Committee.

Regulation 30(8) – Waiving of Actuarial Reduction

Where a Scheme employer's policy under regulation 30(6) (flexible retirement) is to consent to the immediate release of benefits in respect of an active member who is aged 55 or over, those benefits must be adjusted by an amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State (commonly referred to as actuarial reduction or early payment reduction).

A Scheme employer (or former employer as the case may be) may agree to waive in whole or in part and at their own cost, any actuarial reduction that may be required by the Scheme Regulations.

Due consideration must be given to the financial implications of agreeing to waive in whole or in part any actuarial reduction.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the waiving of actuarial reduction

The Employing Authority has resolved to examine such issues on a case by case basis.

Regulation 31 – Award of Additional Pension

A Scheme employer may resolve to award

- (a) an active member, or
- (b) a member who was an active member but dismissed by reason of redundancy, or business efficiency, or whose employment was terminated by mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency,

additional annual pension of, in total (including any additional pension purchased by the Scheme employer under Regulation 16), not more than the additional pension limit (£6,500 from 1st April 2014 subject to annual increase in line with the Pensions (Increase) Act 1971).

Any additional pension awarded is payable from the same date as any pension payable under other provisions of the Scheme Regulations from the account to which the additional pension is attached.

In the case of a member falling within sub-paragraph (b) above, the resolution to award additional pension must be made within 6 months of the date that the member's employment ended.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the award of additional pension

The Employing Authority resolves to use the scheme for awarding additional pension in cases of redundancy, efficiency of the service and severance, only in exceptional circumstances.

Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions and Savings) Regulations 2014

Schedule 2 – paragraphs 2 and 3

Where a scheme member retires or leaves employment and elects to draw their benefits at or after the age of 55 and before the age of 60 those benefits will be actuarially reduced unless their Scheme employer agrees to meet the full or part cost of those reductions as a result of the member otherwise being protected under the 85 year rule as set out in previous Regulations.

So as to avoid the member suffering the full reduction to their benefits the Scheme employer can 'switch on' the 85 year rule protections thereby allowing the member to receive fully or partly unreduced benefits but subject to the Scheme employer paying a strain (capital) cost to the Pension Fund

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the 'switching on of the 85 year rule

The Employing Authority resolves not to adopt this discretion.

PART B – Formulation of RECOMMENDED policy in accordance with the

Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013

Regulation 9(1) & (3) – Contributions

Where an active member changes employment or there is a material change which affects the member's pensionable pay during the course of a financial year, the Scheme employer may determine that a contribution rate from a different band (as set out in Regulation 9(2)) should be applied.

Where the Scheme employer makes such a determination it shall inform the member of the revised contribution rate and the date from which it is to be applied.

Scheme Employer's policy concerning the re-determination of active members' contribution bandings at any date other than 1st April

The Employing Authority has resolved to make changes to employee contribution rates throughout the year from the effective date of any change in employment or material change to the rate of pensionable pay received.

Regulation 17(1) – Additional Voluntary Contributions

An active member may enter into arrangements to pay additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) or to contribute to a shared cost additional voluntary contribution arrangement (SCAVCs) in respect of an employment. The arrangement must be a scheme established between the appropriate administering authority and a body approved for the purposes of the Finance Act 2004, registered in accordance with that Act and administered in accordance with the Pensions Act 2004.

The Scheme employer needs to determine whether or not it will make contributions to such an arrangement on behalf of its active members.

Scheme Employer’s policy concerning payment of Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions

The Employing Authority has resolved not to adopt this discretion

Regulation 22 – Merging of Deferred Member Pension Accounts with Active Member Pension Accounts

A deferred member’s pension account is automatically aggregated with their active member’s pension account unless the member elects within the first 12 months of the new active member’s pension account being opened to retain their deferred member’s pension account.

A Scheme employer can, at their discretion, extend the 12 month election period.

Scheme Employer’s policy concerning merging of Deferred Member Pension Accounts with Active Member Pension Accounts

The Employing Authority has resolved not to extend the 12 month election period

Regulation 100(6) – Inward Transfers of Pension Rights

A request from an active member to transfer former pension rights from a previous arrangement into the Local Government Pension Scheme as a result of their employment with a Scheme employer must be made in writing to the administering authority and the Scheme employer before the expiry of the period of 12 months beginning with the date on which the employee first became an active member in an employment (or such longer period as the Scheme employer and administering authority may allow).

Scheme Employer’s policy concerning the extension of the 12 month transfer application period

The Employing Authority has resolved to examine such issues on a case by case basis

Regulation 21(5) – Assumed Pensionable Pay

A Scheme employer needs to determine whether or not to include in the calculation of assumed pensionable pay, any ‘regular lump sum payment’ received by a Scheme member in the 12 months preceding the date that gave rise to the need for an assumed pensionable pay figure to be calculated.

Scheme Employer’s policy concerning inclusion of ‘regular lump sum payments’ in assumed pensionable pay calculations

The Employing Authority has resolved that “Regular lump sum payments” will always be included in the calculation of assumed pensionable pay

Regulation 74 – Applications for Adjudication of Disagreements *(see guidance note 9 in employer’s guide)*

Each Scheme employer must appoint a person (“the adjudicator”) to consider applications from any person whose rights or liabilities under the Scheme are affected by:

- (a) a decision under regulation 72 (first instance decisions); or
- (b) any other act or omission by a Scheme employer or administering authority,

and to make a decision on such applications.

Responsibility for determinations under this first stage of the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) rests with “the adjudicator” as named below by the Scheme employer:

Name: Susan Halliwell
Job Title: Chief Executive
Full Address: Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell
Post Code: RG12 1JD
Tel No: 01344 355609

Adjudicator’s Signature: _____

Date: _____

Or alternatively:

Name: Stuart McKellar
Job Title: Executive Director of Resources
Full Address: Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell
Post Code: RG12 1JD
Tel No: 01344 355605

Adjudicator’s Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B1 – EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS: INJURY ALLOWANCE

Formulation of COMPULSORY policy in accordance with Regulation 14 of the

Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011

Regulation 3 - Reduction in remuneration

Whilst an employee is receiving reduced pay as a direct result of an injury or disease contracted in the course of carrying out their employment, a relevant employer may consider paying the employee an allowance while the reduction in pay continues.

The relevant employer shall from time to time determine whether the employee should be entitled to continue to receive the allowance.

Any allowance payable must be paid directly by the relevant employer and, when added to the value of the reduced pay being received by the employee, must not be of a value that means the employee receives total pay in excess of the pay that they would normally expect to have received but for their injury or disease.

Employer's policy concerning the award of an allowance due to reduction in remuneration

The Employing Authority has resolved to examine such issues on a case by case basis in line with its existing Standing Orders.

Regulation 4 – Loss of employment through permanent incapacity

Where an employee ceases employment due to permanent incapacity as a direct result of injury or disease contracted in the course of carrying out their employment, a relevant employer may consider paying the employee an allowance not exceeding 85 per cent of the employee's annual rate of remuneration at the point the employment ceased.

The relevant employer shall from time to time determine whether the employee should be entitled to continue to receive the allowance.

Any allowance payable must be paid directly by the relevant employer and, where the employee was receiving no pay or reduced pay at the time the employment ended because of absence, the employer must assess the remuneration on the basis of the pay the employee would have received but for being absent.

The relevant employer may suspend or discontinue the allowance if the (former) employee secures gainful employment (paid employment for not less than 30 hours in each week for a period of not less than 12 months).

Employer's policy concerning the award of an allowance due to loss of employment

The Employing Authority resolves not to adopt this discretion.

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TO: **COUNCIL**
19 March 2024

**Establishment of a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)
(Statutory Scrutiny Officer)**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks agreement to establish a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC).

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That the Council approves the establishment of a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, jointly with Hampshire County Council and Surrey County Council, to scrutinise the relocation of Frimley Park Hospital.**
- 2.2 **That the Council approves the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's (O&S) recommendation to agree the Draft Terms of Reference for the JHOSC which are attached as Appendix A.**
- 2.3 **That the Council approves the O&S Commission's recommendation to appoint Councillors Egglestone and Virgo to sit on the JHOSC in accordance with political balance requirements and the wishes of the political groups.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Frimley Park Hospital needs to be replaced by 2030 because it was built in the 1970s using Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), which makes up around 65 per cent of the current hospital.
- 3.2 Health Services are required to consult a local authority's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee about any proposals they have for a substantial development or variation in the provision of health services in their area under Regulation 30 (5) Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Well-being Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013. When these substantial developments or variations affect a geographical area that covers more than one local authority (according to patient flow), the local authorities are required to appoint a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) for the purposes of the consultation.
- 3.3 Setting up a JHOSC will fulfil the legislative requirements for health scrutiny that covers more than one geographical area.
- 3.4 The draft Terms of Reference sets out the guiding principles and governance structure for the JHOSC.
- 3.5 As proposed in the draft Terms of Reference, Bracknell Forest Council is invited to appoint two councillors as representatives on the JHOSC. The number of

representatives was determined by the number of residents using the hospital, across the three local authorities.

- 3.6 The O&S Commission considered this item at its meeting on 29 February and its recommendations from the basis of this report. The Commission sought two nominations, one each from the Labour and Conservative Groups in accordance with political balance requirements, drawn from the overview and scrutiny membership. The proposed nominations are Councillors Egglestone and Virgo.
- 3.7 The draft Terms of Reference state that observers would be welcome at meetings of the JHOSC, as well as the use of time-limited working groups, which may require additional representation from each authority. The Chair of the Health and Care O&S Panel has committed to updating the O&S Commission on the progress of the JHOSC quarterly.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The JHOSC will operate formally as a statutory committee. The purpose of the JHOSC and its proposed operating procedures are outlined in **Appendix A** 'Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Frimley Park) Draft Terms of Reference.'
- 5.2 A new set of health scrutiny regulations came into force in January 2024. These included statutory guidance for health scrutiny guidance, updated to reflect amendments to the local authority scrutiny function following the introduction of the [Health and Care Act 2022](#) ('the 2022 Act'), which inserted schedule 10A into the [National Health Service Act 2006](#) ('the NHS Act 2006'). It also allowed for the Secretary of State to intervene on commissioning arrangements. Given the consultation process for Frimley Park Hospital has already begun it could be assumed it will be carried out under the old regulations, which gives more weight to health scrutiny than the new regulations are likely to do so. [BLOG: DHSC confirms new health scrutiny arrangements to start in January - Centre for Governance and Scrutiny \(cfgs.org.uk\)](#)
[Local authority health scrutiny - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- 5.3 Guidance on what constitutes a substantial variation to current service provision can be found in this document by NHS England. However, it should be noted there is no single, accepted definition of substantial service change, although it usually involves a change to the geographical location where services are delivered. [NHS England » Planning, assuring and delivering service change for patients](#)

6. Borough Solicitor's comments

- 6.1 There are potential legal implications if a JHOSC is not established.

7. Borough Treasurer's comments

- 7.1 Any proposals would need to be delivered within existing budgets.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment

None.

9. Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 9.1 Not being part of the JHOSC means the Council will not fulfil its legislative requirements for health scrutiny that covers more than one geographical area.
- 9.2 Having representation on the JHOSC will mean Bracknell Forest residents will have their views represented during the building of the new hospital.

10. Background Papers

- 10.1 A link is provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 29 February 2024. Representatives from Frimley Park Hospital attended the meeting and informed members of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission about plans for the hospital. The O&S Commission also discussed the draft Terms of Reference and representation on the JHOSC. [Agenda for Overview and Scrutiny Commission on Thursday, 29 February 2024, 6.30 pm | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](#)

11. Contact for further information

Kevin Gibbs, Statutory Scrutiny Officer
Kevin.gibbs@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
01344 355621

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Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Frimley Park) Draft Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. Health Services are required to consult a local authority's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee about any proposals they have for a substantial development or variation in the provision of health services in their area. When these substantial developments or variations affect a geographical area that covers more than one local authority, the local authorities are required to appoint a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) for the purposes of the consultation. (Where those authorities consider the change a 'substantial' change).
2. These terms of reference set out the arrangements for Hampshire County Council, Surrey County Council and Bracknell Forest Borough Council to operate a JHOSC in line with the provisions set out in legislation and guidance.

Terms of Reference

3. The JHOSC will operate formally as a statutory joint committee i.e. where the councils have been required under Regulation 30 (5) Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Well-being Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 to appoint a joint committee for the purposes of providing independent scrutiny to the Frimley Park programme.
4. The purpose of the JHOSC is to:
 - a) make comments on the proposal consulted on
 - b) require the provision of information about the proposal
 - c) gather evidence from key stakeholders, including members of the public
 - d) require the member or employee of the relevant health service to attend before it to answer questions in connection with the consultation.
 - e) Request a review by the Secretary of State only on where it is not satisfied that:
 - consultation on any proposal for a substantial change or development has been adequate in relation to content or time allowed (NB. The referral power in these contexts only relates to the consultation with the local authorities, and not consultation with other stakeholders)
 - the proposal would not be in the interests of the health service in the area

- a decision has been taken without consultation and it is not satisfied that the reasons given for not carrying out consultation are adequate
5. With the exception of those matters referred to in paragraph [4] above responsibility for all other health scrutiny functions and activities remain with the respective local authority Health Scrutiny Committees.

Governance

6. Meetings of the JHOSC will be conducted in accordance with the Standing Orders of the host Local Authority (Surrey County Council).

Host authority

7. The JHOSC will be hosted by Surrey County Council. However, the administration of meetings will be shared amongst the three local authorities.

Membership

8. Membership of the JHOSC will be appointed by the respective Local Authorities and their appointments notified to the host authority. A Local Authority may amend their appointments to the JHOSC and this will take effect when formal notification has been received by the host authority.
9. Each member of the JHOSC must be a properly elected Councillor to a seat on their respective authority and will cease to be a member of the JHOSC with immediate effect should they no longer meet this requirement.
10. Seats on the JHOSC are allocated in proportion of patients from each area attending the Frimley Park Hospital.

Accordingly, the JHOSC will comprise 10 voting Members, with 4 being appointed by Hampshire County Council, 4 by Surrey County Council, 2 by Bracknell Forest Council.

11. Appointments by each authority to the JHOSC will reflect the political balance of that authority.
12. The quorum for meetings will be 3 voting members.
13. Local Members for the divisions closest to Frimley Park Hospital (and any new location if different) will be invited to meetings of the Joint Committee as non voting observers.

14. If additional Local Authorities wish to join the Joint Committee in future, provided they are being consulted by the NHS on this topic, 1 seat per authority would be provided, subject to approval by that Local Authority.

Chair & Vice Chair

15. The Chair of the JHOSC for the duration of the Committee shall be elected at its first formal meeting and drawn from those Members in attendance at that meeting. Should the Chair cease to be a member of the JHOSC, a new Chair shall be elected at the next formal meeting.
16. The Vice-Chair of the JHOSC for the duration of the Committee shall be elected at its first formal meeting and drawn from those Members in attendance at that meeting. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair shall assume all of the Chairs' responsibilities. Should the Vice-Chair cease to be a member of the JHOSC, a new Vice-Chair shall be elected at the next formal meeting.
17. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair at any Meeting of the JHOSC, Members in attendance shall appoint a Chair for that meeting from amongst their number, who shall, while presiding at that meeting, have any power or duty of the Chair in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

Task & Finish Groups

18. The Committee may appoint such Working Groups of their members as they may determine to undertake and report back to the Joint Committee on specified investigations or reviews. Appointments to such Working Groups will be made by the Committee, ensuring political balance as far as possible. Such working groups will exist for a fixed period, on the expiry of which they shall cease to exist.

Committee support

19. The responsibility for overall coordination, facilitation of meetings, policy support and other administrative arrangements will be undertaken by the host authority, but arrangements may be delegated between the Local Authorities.
20. Meetings of the committee will be arranged and held by the host authority in accordance with Access to Information Regulations and other relevant legislation.
21. Communications with the media will be led by the host authority on behalf of the JHOSC.

22. Legal advice and support to the JHOSC will be provided by the host authority.

Meetings

23. The JHOSC will meet as often as required to fulfil its purpose, which is likely to include:

- An initial meeting to establish and set the scene of the proposals;
- a meeting to comment on the planned public consultation process;
- a meeting to monitor the consultation process and response
- a meeting to comment on the results of the public consultation and any further relevant analysis of the options; and
- a meeting to agree whether to support the proposed outcome

24. Dates for meetings will be arranged in advance and notified by the host authority.

25. Meetings of the JHOSC will be avoided during the county council pre-election period (late March through to early May 2025) if possible.

26. Once the purpose of the JHOSC has been fulfilled, the Committee will cease.

Reporting

27. Members of the JHOSC may provide updates to their Local Authority on its proceedings in accordance with the requirements of their respective authority.

28. Any recommendations of the JHOSC will be published and communicated to relevant parties by the host authority.