

Notice of Meeting

Executive

Councillor Temperton (Chair),
Councillor Neil (Vice-Chair),
Councillors Bailey, Bidwell, Gillbe, Jefferies, Purnell and Wright

Tuesday 12 December 2023, 5.30 pm
Council Chamber - Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD



Agenda

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

Item	Description	Page
1.	Apologies	
2.	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>	
3.	Minutes	5 - 6
	To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 14 November 2023.	
4.	Urgent Items of Business	
	Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.	

Executive Key Decisions

The items listed below all relate to Key Executive decisions, unless stated otherwise below.

5.	Capital Programme 2024/25	7 - 40
	To approve the Council's budget proposals for budget consultation.	

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	Reporting: Calvin Orr, Head of Finance & Business Services	
6.	Revenue Budget 2024/25	41 - 182
	To approve the Council's budget proposals for consultation Reporting: Arthur Parker, Chief Accountant	
7.	Making (adoption) of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2037	183 - 202
	To agree that the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' if the majority of those who vote at the referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan are in favour of Bracknell Forest Council using the Neighbourhood Plan to help decide planning applications in the Winkfield neighbourhood area. Reporting: Andrew Hunter, Executive Director Place, Planning & Regeneration	
8.	Personal Budgets Policy	203 - 206
	To seek approval for the revised Personal Budgets Policy. Providing a Personal Budget where requested is a duty the council must meet as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015. Reporting: Grainne Siggins, Executive Director People	
9.	Serious Violence Strategy 2024-2027	207 - 254
	To endorse the Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy 2024 and governance arrangements for implementation of the strategy. Reporting: Grainne Siggins, Executive Director People	
10.	Community Support: Winter Update	255 - 284
	To present to updated financial hardship plan, having reviewed this ahead of Winter cost of living pressures and to align with emerging priorities. Reporting: Katie Flint, Policy and Performance Lead	
11.	Safety Valve Programme Plan	285 - 290
	To endorse the Council's initial Safety Valve proposal for submission to the Department for Education (DfE) and recommend submission to full Council of the final proposal, amended as necessary to reflect DfE feedback. Reporting: Grainne Siggins, Executive Director People	

Exclusion of the Press and Public

Agenda items 12 and 13 are supported by annexes containing exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. If the Committee wishes to discuss the content of these annexes in detail, it may choose to move the following resolution:

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That pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2012 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 12/13 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (3) *Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

12.	Building Maintenance and Repairs Services Contract	291 - 308
	To seek approval of the strategic procurement plan to commence with a procurement process to commission a new contractor to undertake the building maintenance and reactive repairs contract Reporting: Kamay Toor, Assistant Director: Property Services	
13.	Neutral Agency Vendor and Specialist Recruitment Provider Procurement	309 - 324
	To agree to the commencement of procurement of a neutral agency vendor to provide temporary workers, a special specialist provider to provide permanent recruitment and a specialist provider of both temporary and permanent social care to directly follow on from the termination of the current neutral agency vendor contract, which terminates on 31 March 2025. The new contract will be effective from 1 April 2025. Reporting: Paul Young, Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development	

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: 4 December 2023

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**EXECUTIVE
14 NOVEMBER 2023
5.30 - 5.58 PM**

Present:

Councillors Temperton (Chair), Purnell and Wright

Present Virtually:

Councillors Bailey, Gillbe and Jefferies

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Neil and Bidwell

Also Present:

Councillor Haffegge

40. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

41. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 17 October 2023 together with the accompanying decision records be confirmed as a correct record.

42. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

Executive Decisions and Decision Records

The Executive considered the following items. The decisions are recorded in the decision sheets attached to these minutes and summarised below:

43. New Waste Collection Truck

RESOLVED that the Executive:

- i. Agrees to the purchase of a new 26 tonne waste collection vehicle in 2023 for delivery in 2024 subject to funds being approved by Council.
- ii. Agrees to a trial of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil for this vehicle subject to viability and a future report to the Executive.

RECOMMENDED that Council approves a Supplementary Capital Approval of £0.205m with the associated borrowing costs being accounted for within the figures in section 5.15 of the report.

44. Housing Allocation Policy

RESOLVED that:

- i. the proposed changes to the Housing Allocation Policy are approved.
- ii. the proposed consultation plan to enable applicants, stakeholders, partner organisations, councillors, and the wider public to give their views on the proposed policy changes prior to presenting the findings and any subsequent amendments to the Executive for approval.

45. **Council Plan 2023-2027**

RESOLVED that the Executive:

- i. **RECOMMENDED** to Council to approve the Council Plan attached at Appendix A;
- ii. Support delivery of the Council Plan and ensure the organisation remains resilient and sustainable by endorsing the proposed Business Change programme summarised in Appendix A;
- iii. **RECOMMENDED** that Council adopts with effect from 1 December 2023 a flexible use of capital receipts strategy as set out at Appendix B to provide funding needed to ensure the Council Plan and Business Change programme are successfully delivered.
- iv. Review and consider the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, included as Appendix D.

CHAIRMAN

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
12 DECEMBER 2023

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/2025 - 2026/2027 Executive Director: Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Under the Council's constitution, the Executive is required to consult on its detailed budget proposals with the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Commission and any other interested parties or individuals for a period of at least six weeks. This report summarises the current position on the Council's Capital Programme budget preparations for 2024/25.
- 1.2 This report draws together all service area proposals so that the Executive can agree a draft capital programme for 2024/25-2026/27 as the basis for consultation. In compiling the draft programme, the main focus is inevitably on determining the requirements for 2024/25, although potential future year's schemes do also form an important part of the programme.
- 1.3 The financial implications of the recommendations in this report are reflected in the subsequent report on the Council's draft revenue budget. Any revisions to the proposals put forward by each service would also need to be reflected in that report which will also be published as the basis for consultation following the Executive's meeting.

2 Recommendations

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **Approves, for consultation, a Council funded capital programme of £8.328m for 2024/25 as set out in paragraph 5.17 and summarised in Annex A, including the new schemes listed in Annexes B – D;**
- 2.2 **Approves, for consultation, the inclusion of £4.554m of expenditure to be externally funded (including £0.380m of S106 funding) as outlined in paragraph 5.18;**
- 2.3 **Approves, for consultation, the inclusion of an additional budget of £1m for Invest-to-Save schemes.**

3 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The reasons for the recommendations are set out in the report.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The final budget proposals will include consideration of any alternative options highlighted during the required consultation period.

5 Supporting Information

Capital Resources

- 5.1 Each year the Council agrees a programme of capital schemes. These schemes are funded from these main sources:
- the Council's capital receipts
 - Government Grants
 - other external contributions
 - internal and external borrowing
- 5.2 The Council's total usable capital receipts generated from disposing of assets at 31st March 2023 are zero as all receipts have been applied to fund prior capital investment. Similarly, all receipts realised during the current financial year will be used to finance the 2023/24 Capital Programme. The Council is partly reliant on capital receipts and other contributions to fund its capital programme, although interest generated from capital receipts can also help support the revenue budget in the short term. However, with borrowing rates at historically high levels it is advantageous to use capital receipts to reduce the level of external borrowing.
- 5.3 The proposed capital programme for 2024/25 has been developed, therefore, on the assumption that it will be funded by a combination of Government grants, other external contributions, capital receipts and borrowing only if required. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contributions and some small miscellaneous property sales should enable £2.0m of the capital programme to be funded from receipts. Additionally, the one-off capital receipts from the Coopers Hill site being developed by the Council's Joint Venture with Countryside properties UK can be used to minimise the level of borrowing resulting from these proposals. Internal resources will be used in the first instance and borrowing from external sources (e.g. the PWLB) will be used only when necessary. The financing costs associated with the General Fund Capital Programme have been provided for in the Council's revenue budget plans which also appear on tonight's agenda.

New Schemes

- 5.4 Within the general financial framework outlined above, Service Departments have considered priority schemes for inclusion within the Council's Capital Programme for 2024/25 – 2026/27. Given that both capital and revenue resources are under pressure, each Department has evaluated and prioritised proposed schemes into broad categories in line with the Council's agreed Asset Management Plan approach. Having done this, only the very highest priority schemes and programmes are being recommended for inclusion in the Capital Programme.

Other Unavoidable & Committed schemes.

- 5.5 This category covers schemes which must proceed to ensure that the Council is not left open to legal sanction and includes items relating to health and safety issues, new legislation etc. Committed schemes also include those that were approved as part of the 2023/24 Capital Programme but profiled to spend in 2024/25. Also included within this category are those schemes that were previously funded from the General Fund Revenue Account, but which by their nature could be legitimately capitalised, thereby reducing pressure on the revenue budget. Schemes in this category form the first call on the available capital resources.

Maintenance (Improvements and capitalised repairs)

5.6 The figures below are based on the information held in the Building Groups' property management system as of June 2023. The bid agreed by Asset Management Board for 2024/25 of £1.84m is considered an acceptable level of maintenance to ensure the Council can effectively operate across its property portfolio.

5.7 The priorities can be broken down as follows:

Maintenance Backlog

		£ (000)	£ (000)
Schools	Priority 1C & 1D	1,567	
	Priority 2C & 2D	7,545	9,112
Corporate Properties	Priority 1C & 1D	3,319	
	Priority 2C & 2D	5,244	8,563
Total		17,675	

5.8 There are also Landlord liabilities left with the Council with regard to the Leisure sites and based on updated condition surveys these works are necessary in order for the Council to fulfil these responsibilities. Annex E and the table below summarises the key investment areas for planned maintenance in 2024/25 for non-school properties. Based on anticipated capacity £1.689m will be spent in 2024/25 and the remaining £0.151m in 2025/26 (to allow for retentions and slippage).

Service	£
Community	65,000
Corporate Buildings	1,055,000
Culture	95,000
Leisure	435,000
Library	135,000
People	55,000
Grand Total	1,840,000

5.9 Some works, whilst urgent, cannot be legitimately capitalised and must be met from a revenue budget. An overall allowance of £200,000 is available to meet these liabilities; however, this will not be sufficient to meet the level of works that continue to be identified within the 1C and 1D categories considered to be of a revenue nature. It is clear that there is a diminishing proportion of the 1C and 1D works that can be legitimately met from the Capital Budget. Unless additional revenue funds are identified then the level of outstanding works will increase. These combined bids will go some way to addressing the most urgent works within the estimated backlog identified above, with the potential to resolve some of the works currently prioritised as 1C and 1D. However, other essential, albeit slightly lower priority, works will remain. The implications of failing to maintain buildings are progressive deterioration leading to building closures, health & safety problems, service delivery impacts and reduced property values.

Schools

- 5.10 Identified planned maintenance for 2024/25 will be drawn from building condition surveys carried out by the Council's Managing Partner Atkins Ltd and there is approximately £1.6m of Priority 1 (Urgent) planned maintenance works in schools on the current building condition surveys. Capital funding for planned maintenance is allocated for schools, but non-school buildings (Youth Service, Childrens Social Care, Adult Learning and Early Years) form part of the Council-Wide programme. The Asset Management Board recommends the Council-Wide programme of works, and the Schools Planned Works Programme Board recommends the programme of works for schools.
- 5.11 A Schools Planned Works Programme of £1.324m is being put forward based on the level of grant expected to be received from DfE. This includes Planned Maintenance, Fire Safety, Asbestos and Legionella works which is normally funded from DfE Schools Capital Maintenance Grant. The programme of works will be matched to the available budget.

ICT Schemes

- 5.12 The Council will be required to invest in technology and IT infrastructure over the coming years as exiting hardware and infrastructure becomes obsolete. The two key areas requiring funding in 2024/25 are hardware and Infrastructure assets. More details on specific areas of spend are laid out in the Annexes.

Rolling programmes

- 5.13 These programmes cover more than one year and give a degree of certainty for forward planning schemes to improve service delivery. They make an important contribution towards the Council's established Asset Management Plans.

Other Desirable Schemes

- 5.14 In addition to the schemes identified in the above categories, each service has requested funding for other high priority schemes that meet the needs and objectives of their service. The net cost of schemes which attract partial external funding are included in the schemes put forward.

Invest-To-Save Schemes

- 5.15 These are schemes where the additional revenue income or savings arising from their implementation exceeds the Council's borrowing costs. Each year the Council has allocated £1m per annum to fund potential Invest-to-Save (ITS) schemes that may present themselves during the year. Those schemes that are less than £400,000 are considered by CMT for approval in that years Capital Programme.

Capital Programme 2024/25 – 2026/27

- 5.16 A summary of the cost of new schemes proposed by Departments is set out in the table below and in Annex A. A detailed list of suggested schemes within the draft capital programme, together with a brief description of each project, for each service is included in Annexes B – D.
- 5.17 Total requested Council funding for schemes amounts to £8.328m, which includes £0.660m for schemes that have been committed in 2023/24.

Capital Programme 2024/25-2026/27				
Annex	Service Area	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000
B	Delivery	3,937	2,062	490
C	People	1,790	1,695	250
D	Central Directorates	7,155	6,110	6,110
	Total Capital Programme	12,882	9,867	6,850
	less Externally Funded schemes	4,554	4,675	3,230
	Council Funded Programme	8,328	5,192	3,620

Externally Funded Schemes

- 5.18 A number of external funding sources are also available to fund schemes within the capital programme. External support has been identified from two main sources:

Government Grants (£4.174m)

A number of capital schemes attract specific grants. As in previous years, it is proposed that all such schemes should be included in the capital programme at the level of external funding that is available.

A significant element of the grant-funded capital programme relates to the planned investment in Schools. The schools investment programme included in this report reflects the highest priority schemes identified by the People Department and the Education Capital Programme Board. A second key constituent of capital grant funding relates to the Highway Maintenance and the Integrated Transport Block totalling £2.85m for 2024/25.

Section 106 (£0.380m)

Each year the Council enters into a number of agreements under Section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 by which developers make a contribution towards the cost of providing facilities and infrastructure that may be required as a result of their development. Usually, the monies are given for work in a particular area and/or for specific projects. Officers have identified a number of schemes that could be funded from Section 106 funds in 2024/25, where funding becomes available. These are summarised below.

Department	Schemes	Budget
		<i>£000</i>
Central	Local Transport Plan Schemes	100
Central	SANG	280
	Total	380

On-going Revenue Costs

- 5.19 There are £57k revenue costs associated with the schemes proposed for inclusion within the 2024/25 Capital Programme. These are reflected in the Revenue Budget report that follows on the agenda.

Funding Options

- 5.20 The Council introduced Community Infrastructure Levy, a charge that local authorities can impose on new developments to help fund the infrastructure needed to support them, in April 2015. It is difficult to estimate the potential amount of CIL that will be generated as this will depend on the delivery of additional housing development in the Borough, which is largely outside of the control of the authority. However, based on the economic climate, the most recent housing trajectory estimates and knowledge of development schemes that will come forward in the next 18 months, it is estimated that £2m is an appropriate assumption. This is a more conservative estimate than in previous years.
- 5.21 The proposed capital programme for 2024/25 has been developed, therefore, on the assumption that it will be funded by a combination of approximately £2m of capital receipts (CIL and other miscellaneous property disposals), Government grants, other external contributions and borrowing. The financing costs associated with the Capital Programme have been provided for in the Council's revenue budget plans.
- 5.22 In addition, the funding approach adopted for the Coopers Hill development being taken forward by the Bracknell Forest Cambium Partnership will result in a development loan repayment to the Council of £2.4m and a capital receipt of £0.3m representing the land value both being received during 2024/25. With the former having already been funded from use of the Council's reserves on a one-off basis, there will be no external loan to repay and therefore both of those sums will comprise additional one-off capital receipts that can be used to help fund the capital programme. However, this is a one-off arrangement and will not be repeated in future years.
- 5.23 Any capital expenditure approved over, and above capital receipts and external contributions will require the Council to borrow externally. The timing of this will depend on the level of surplus cash held by the Council which will be used in the first instance to fund the Capital Programme commitments. Any external borrowing will require a sum to be set aside as a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for debt repayment in addition to an interest charge, depending on the maturity of the loan. Current long-term borrowing rates are approximately 6% reflecting a steep rise in the cost of borrowing over the last 18 months.
- 5.24 Based on an internally funded Capital Programme of £3.628m (after taking account of potential capital receipts), and with long-term interest costs at 5.7%, the interest cost in 2024/25 would amount to £106k, and £212k in a full year. The MRP charge reflects the life of individual assets that are being funded – the charge is not payable until the year after the assets come into being. The MRP charge in relation to the capital programme for 2024/25 is estimated to be £0.08m and will be charged from 2025/26.
- 5.25 Following the introduction of the Prudential Borrowing regime local authorities are able to determine the level of their own capital expenditure with regard only to affordability on the revenue account. In practice this represents the amount of borrowing they can afford to finance and will necessitate taking a medium-term view of revenue income streams and capital investment needs.
- 5.26 To achieve its aim of ensuring that capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable, the Local Government Act requires all local authorities to set and keep under

review a series of prudential indicators included in the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities. The Capital Programme recommended in this report can be sustained and is within the prudential guidelines. Full Council will need to agree the prudential indicators for 2024/25 to 2026/27 in February 2024, alongside its consideration of the specific budget proposals for 2024/25 and the Council's medium-term financial prospects.

- 5.27 If any amendments are made to the capital programme, the revenue consequences will need to be adjusted accordingly. Executive Members will therefore need to consider the impact of the capital programme as part of the final revenue budget decisions. Members will need to carefully balance the level of the Capital Programme in future years against other revenue budget pressures and a thorough review, including the prioritisation of those schemes planned for 2025/26 onwards, will need to be undertaken during next summer.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 The authorisation for incurring capital expenditure by local authorities is contained in the legislation covering the service areas. Controls on capital expenditure are contained in the Local Government Act 2003 and regulations made thereunder.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 The financial implications are contained within the report.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 This report sets out the draft capital programme proposals that will form part of the Council's 2024/25 budget consultation. The Overview & Scrutiny Commission will be consulted on the budget proposals and may also choose to direct specific issues to individual overview and scrutiny panels. Targeted consultation exercises will be undertaken with business rate payers, the Schools Forum, town and parish councils and voluntary organisations. Comments and views will be sought on both the overall budget package and on the detailed budget proposals. In addition, this report and all the supporting information are publicly available to any individual or group who wish to comment on any proposal included within it. To facilitate this, the full budget package will be placed on the Council's web site. There will also be a dedicated mailbox to collect comments.

- 6.4 The timetable for the approval of the 2024/25 Budget is as follows.

Executive agrees proposals as basis for consultation	12 December 2023
Consultation period	13 December 2023 - 24 January 2024
Executive considers representations made and recommends budget.	06 February 2024
Council considers Executive budget proposals	28 February 2024

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.5 The Council's final budget proposals will potentially impact on all areas of the community. A detailed consultation process is planned in order to provide individuals and groups with the opportunity to comment on the draft proposals. This will ensure that in making final recommendations, the Executive can be made aware of the views of a broad section of residents and service users. Where necessary, impact assessments on specific schemes within the capital programme will be undertaken before work commences.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.6 The most significant risk facing the Council is the impact of the capital programme on the revenue budget. The scale of the Council's Capital Programme for 2024/25 will impact upon the revenue budget and will itself be subject to consultation over the coming weeks. All new spending on services will need to be funded from new capital receipts or borrowing. The generation of capital receipts in future years may mitigate the impact on the revenue budget, but as the timing and scale of these receipts is uncertain their impact is unlikely to be significant.
- 6.7 There are also a range of risks that are common to all capital projects which include:
- Tender prices exceeding the budget
 - Planning issues and potential delays
 - Uncertainty of external funding
 - Building delays due to unavailability of materials or inclement weather
 - Availability of staff with appropriate skills to implement schemes
- 6.8 These can be managed through the use of appropriate professional officers and following best practice in project management techniques. The report also identifies the risk associated with the shortfall in maintenance expenditure compared to that identified by the latest condition surveys. With only those highest priorities receiving funding in 2024/25, there will be a further build up in the maintenance backlog and a risk that the deterioration in Council assets will hamper the ability to deliver good services.

Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.9 The recommendations in Section 2 above will have no immediate impact on emissions of CO₂. Detailed consideration will be given to the impact of the final capital budget proposals in February 2024, although in general terms improvements to current assets and the construction of new facilities using modern designs and construction techniques are expected to have positive climate change implications.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

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**CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024/2025-2026/27
BY DIRECTORATE**

	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	TOTAL £000
Delivery	3,937	2,062	490	6,489
People	1,790	1,695	250	3,735
Central Directorates	7,155	6,110	6,110	19,375
Total Capital Programme	<u>12,882</u>	<u>9,867</u>	<u>6,850</u>	<u>29,599</u>
External Funding	4,554	4,675	3,230	12,459
Council Funding	<u>8,328</u>	<u>5,192</u>	<u>3,620</u>	<u>17,140</u>

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - DELIVERY

		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	TOTAL £000
Committed					
Warfield Memorial Ground Enhancements		-	250	-	250
Capitalisation of Project Management costs		300	300	300	1,200
London Road Landfill Works		100	-	-	100
Berkshire Records Office		60	-	-	60
Surface Car Parks		200	-	-	200
		660	550	300	1,810
Unavoidable					
No Schemes		-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Maintenance					
Buildings Planned Maintenance Programme	1	1,689	151	-	1,840
		1,689	151	-	1,840
			-	-	
Rolling Programme / Other Desirable					
IT Schemes - Hardware Replacement	2	300	420	-	720
IT Schemes - Infrastrucutre	3	110	250	-	360
Braccan Chapel	4	36	-	-	36
Surface Car Parks	5	41	134	-	175
BLC Flood Defence and Pool Lining	6	381	-	-	381
Coral Reef Backwash	7	97	-	-	97
Coral Reef Replacement Pumps	8	58	-	-	58
Cemetery Extension	9	75	367	-	442
Equipment Downshire Golf Complex	10	40	40	40	120
Feasibility Studies	11	150	150	150	450
Suicide Prevention Measures	12	300	-	-	300
		1,588	1,361	190	3,139
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING		3,937	2,062	490	6,789
External Funding					
No Schemes		-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING		-	-	-	-
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME		3,937	2,062	490	6,789

2024/25 Capital Programme

Summary of New Schemes funded from Council Funds

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE

01. Buildings Planned Maintenance Programme (£1.689m)

Buildings planned maintenance is an annual programme of repairs and maintenance to the Councils' building stock and associated assets. It encompasses a wide range of activities, but typically includes the repair or replacement of elements of building fabric, fixtures or fittings that are worn, obsolete or otherwise damaged. The purpose of the work is to maintain the Councils' buildings to a sufficient standard to provide a safe and appropriate environment from which various services can operate from. The works included in the programme are identified through a series of condition surveys, which are undertaken on our behalf by external engineers and surveyors. A full list of works is attached.

02. Hardware Replacement (£0.300m)

Several legacy end user devices were bought through separate projects without considering the future replacement needs. This leads to a lack of ICT budget to deal with problems and replace outdated or damaged equipment, especially when the business areas bought their own items in the past.

Previous capital investment focused on updating old laptops instead of a continuous plan of replacing all user end point devices that can be adjusted and updated every year. This request proposes to cover laptops, PC's, monitors, docks, and tablets to ensure the IT estate is adequate to meet the needs of the Council.

03. ICT Infrastructure (£0.110m)

It has been identified that the current Time Square network cabling needs to be replaced to maximise the speeds that the new switches can deliver which will turn the 1GB connection in to a 20GB connection. In addition, IT services is regularly requested to carry out surveys and installations for sites outside of Time Square which have never been within previous scope for refresh and upgrade relating to infrastructure. Switches and Wi-Fi access points become end of life at which point they are no longer supported and become a risk to the organisation if they fail or become inconsistent in their performance. Whilst the Network team have tried to future proof investment as much as possible the reality is that changes to occupation of a building and surrounding environments can hugely impact on the performance and longevity of these networking items.

04. Braccan Chapel (£0.036m)

Other local sites have had recent refurbishment and it is essential that the Council maintains its chapels in good decorative order as it has to compete for business. Following the construction of the new chapel in 2018 – the Wellington – it highlights the age of the Braccan chapel which is 50+ years. Modern chapels feature both energy efficient lighting integrated with natural lighting which complement the increasingly important audio-visual elements of funeral services. The

Braccan has limited natural lighting and the current artificial lighting is neither energy efficient, cheap to maintain, or complimentary to the AV screens within the chapel – often casting reflective lights directly across the images on screen. The proposed renovations would reduce the direct artificial glare and reduce running/maintenance costs. In addition, the increasing diversity of the local population is resulting in an increase in multi-faith ceremonies, several of which entail funeral service traditions which involve the scattering of decorative powders thereby lending themselves better to hard flooring areas than carpeted ones.

05. Surface car park resurfacing (£0.041m)

The Council has 26 surface car park sites across the borough which it manages as a mixture of fee-paying sites as well as small free car parks often located around neighbourhood centres. These sites are monitored and a reactive maintenance budget of £15k allows for pothole repair, patching and relining. Patching repairs only work for so long until such time as the surface completely deteriorates and then full replanning, resurfacing, and relining are required.

A request was submitted for a resurfacing programme for £400k in 23/24. £200k was made available for 23/24 for resurfacing at Albert Road, Bracknell Leisure Centre Athletics track and Great Hollands car park. These were the sites of most significant need and cost and therefore needed to be done first. The remainder of the request to be rolled into 24/25.

As the 23/24 projects have commenced and requoted (quotes are only valid for a minimum time period) the allocated costs of £200,000 have been deemed to be insufficient and an additional £25,000 has had to be vired from another capital project. Despite contingencies being included the cost of materials has risen dramatically and over and above the allocated contingencies. This request is to complete the original projects in scope and to commit an additional £134,000 in 2025/26 to finish all the sites of most significant need.

06. Bracknell Leisure Centre (BLC) – Flood Defence and Pool Lining (£0.381m)

The pools at BLC opened in 1973 so are now 50 years old. The expected life span of the pipe material is 30 years, and as such the age of the pool the pipes are currently nearing twice the recommended age. The scum channels around the main pool at BLC are not sealed and leak on to the pipework and pool tank structure in the plant room below. This is causing rusting to some of the structure of the pool tanks and the brackets that support the pipes. This rusting has caused damage to the pipe works and has required emergency repairs. Whilst emergency repair works can be managed this proposal is to install a pipework flood defence system to reduce the risk of significant pipework failure and protect the pool assets over the remaining 9 years of the contract. The flood defence system is an actuated valve system at a cost of £170,000, this is automatic system that seals the pool in the event of a leak.

In addition to the above the proposal also includes for pool relining on the learner, training and competition pools. The condition of the pool tiles is such that they are showing significant discolouration, not due lack of cleaning/maintenance but due to rust which is coming through the tiles. There has been an increase in customer dissatisfaction and due to an increase in water clarity it is more noticeable. Due to the number of new leisure sites around the areas there is an increase in local competition. Retiling is not considered financially viable, therefore the suggestion is to reline the pool floors and walls using a pool liner with felt underlay, this comes with a 15 year guarantee.

This closure and down-time resulting from these works will create a revenue loss of £57,000 that will be added as a pressure in the 2024/25 Revenue Budget.

07. Coral Reef Backwash (£0.097m)

The design capacity of the Coral reef pool plant is ~650 Cubic metres of water per hour. As the filters start to clog from filtering out the various contaminants this flowrate declines which can eventually lead to problem with water cleanliness and the air quality in the pool hall. As the usage of Coral reef has changed over the years and pool hall environment concerns have been raised (via customer feedback and EHO visits) it has become increasingly difficult to maintain the pool filters in a clean condition. To date significant investment has been made to try to improve the pool hall atmospheric conditions. The ideal time to backwash the filters (the process of cleaning them) is in the early hours of the morning as it takes several hours for the filters to reach peak performance. The team can only backwash one filter every half hour due to constraints of an underground holding tank and replacing the water used in each backwash. With a need to have 6 clean filters each morning this would require starting to backwash at 3am. This raises issues with respect to operational working times (currently the site is none operational at this time), lone working and antisocial hours which have not been part of the normal operation since opening. This proposal is to invest in plant that would enable the automation of this process. There would be several benefits including ensuring filters are in the best possible condition, more efficient and intelligent operation of the plan and potential future energy savings.

08. Coral Reef Replacement Pumps (£0.058m)

Coral Reef Waterworld utilises belt driven primary heating pumps which were replaced in 2023/24. Existing secondary heating pumps are near to end of life, uneconomical and inefficient to run and maintain. Under the contractual split of responsibilities this element of mechanical service replacement falls to the Council to replace. The project would include new secondary heating pumps, electrical and mechanical installation, commissioning, system adjustment, sensors, and consumables. New pumps would have a lifespan of 20 years and would provide significant emergency savings and reduced CO2 emissions. Failure to replace could mean the site is exposed to high levels of risk and potential for closure if there is a pump failure. Loss of income costs would exceed project costs.

09. Cemetery Extension (£0.075m 2024/25, £0.367m 2025/26)

This request supports a change of the use of the land at Downshire Golf Course currently used as a "Pitch & Putt" to expand the burial provision at Easthampstead Park Cemetery. The council anticipates having no further burial space after the end of 2024. No longer providing burial provision potentially impacts negatively on several faiths as there are certain faiths, for whom burial is the only permitted option.

Once existing burial space runs out the cemetery will lose all 'new' burials income, whilst retaining the necessity and costs to continue to maintain the grounds. This would create an additional annual revenue pressure of circa £169,000. Were additional burial space to be provided it is estimated to guarantee another 25 years' worth of new burials income, extending the current roughly revenue-neutral situation.

The land at Downshire Golf Course has been identified as a potential solution for a cemetery extension and significant work has gone in to identifying its suitability for use as a cemetery and the implications arising from a change of land use. The site also benefits from being immediately adjacent to the existing cemetery with its associated chapel and parking making it an ideal location due to its proximity to these facilities, in addition to benefitting from the onsite staff presence. The project would entail an access road from the current cemetery to the land, coupled with the creation of a supporting network of road/pathways to serve as a new cemetery. The bulk of the existing landscape would remain largely unchanged save for the removal / levelling-off of any golf course bunkers. There will be a need for the provision of running water and electricity, but there are no plans for any additional buildings or parking.

Draft cemetery layout plans have been drawn up by our appointed consultants which indicate the council can expect project construction costs to be £442,000 allowing for inflation and contingency. The construction of a cemetery is best suited to the Spring/Summer months and given the anticipated timescales required to reach the point at which construction could begin it is currently envisaged that the project build would commence in March 2025.

10. Equipment Replacement – Downshire Golf Course (0.040m)

Downshire golf course is managed on behalf of the council by Everyone Active, and the contract details a split responsibility in terms of equipment provision. In essence, equipment previously funded from the revenue budget remains the responsibility of Everyone Active, and equipment previously provided through the council's capital programme remains the council's responsibility as it was concluded that this would result in lower long-term costs for the council and a better revenue return through the contract.

The budget required is £40k on a rolling annual programme which is required to replace existing machinery which is ageing, and ensure new machinery is available to enable the golf course to be suitably maintained. The investment in 2024/25 will see the replacement of two older tractors with a more efficient and modern one.

11. 2023/24 Feasibilities (£0.150m)

It is often the case that a scheme arises and must either be funded from a separate budget as a stop gap measure, or the project is delayed pending approval of a budget for the scheme. It is often not viable to wait up to a year pending approval of budgets to understand the viability of a scheme that has been requested by a department within the council. It is proposed that a figure of £150,000 is budgeted to allow for the various non education feasibilities that are proposed in 2024/25, which will also assist with cost certainty for any future capital bids for larger projects.

12. Suicide Prevention Measures (£0.300m)

There is a need to review suicide prevention measures at the Council's multi-storey car parks. The designs of the car parks are such that they need to be open and accessible for ventilation and whilst suicide risk has not changed over the years, it would appear the prevalence of incidents and attempts has increased over the recent years. Some mitigation measures have been implemented to date including working with the Samaritans to provide training for frontline staff and to display crisis signage. There is a Parliamentary Bill at early stages which, if successful, calls for all multi-story car parks to increase the minimum required height of guarding and implement 24-hour staffing.

Further work will be undertaken over the coming months to identify measures to reduce the risk at the Council's properties that represent the highest risk. This may include physical changes to structures but also measures to address other factors that contribute to the inherent risks of tall properties. A package of measures will be identified within the budget allocation.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - PEOPLE

		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	TOTAL £000
Committed					
No Schemes		-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Unavoidable					
No Schemes		-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Rolling Programme / Other Desirable					
Non-Schools					
Housing Planned Maintenance	13	250	250	250	750
Waymead Air Conditioning	14	115	-	-	115
Waymead Refurbishment	15	24	-	-	24
Departmental Bids:					
College Hall Security	16	20	-	-	20
Larchwood	17	57	-	-	57
Total		466	250	250	966
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING		466	250	250	966
External Funding - Other					
Non-Schools					
No Schemes		-	-	-	-
Schools					
DfE Grant: Schools Capital Maintenance	24	1,324	147	-	1,471
DfE Grant: Basic Needs Grant	24	-	1,298	-	1,298
DfE Grant: Devolved Formula Capital	24	<i>tba</i>	<i>tba</i>	<i>tba</i>	-
		1,324	1,445	-	2,769
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING		1,324	1,445	-	2,769
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME		1,790	1,695	250	3,735

2024/25 Capital Programme

Summary of New Schemes funded from Council Funds

PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

13. Housing Capital Programme (£0.25m)

Housings planned maintenance is an annual programme of repairs and maintenance to the Councils' housing stock. It encompasses a wide range of activities, but typically includes the repair or replacement of elements of building fabric, mechanical and electrical items, fixtures or fittings that are worn, obsolete or otherwise damaged. The purpose of the work is to improve and maintain the Councils' housing stock to a decent standard to provide a safe and appropriate environment for our residents to reside in and deliver the priorities set out in the Housing and Welfare Service Plan.

The works included in the current programme were identified through a series of Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) and property condition surveys, which were undertaken on our behalf by external engineers and surveyors during 2019/20 on a five-year programme. The focus of the programme will remain on the modernisation of properties to maintain a Decent Standard with the balance of activity over the next twelve months concentrating on property components e.g., kitchens, bathrooms, electrical installations and heating systems. This will in future be replaced on a fixed life cycle.

The projected costs include an allowance for a higher-than-normal uplift for construction inflation and to introduce energy saving measures as part of overall project to improve thermal comfort and reduce fuel poverty supporting Health and Wellbeing.

14. Waymead Airconditioning (£0.115m)

Waymead Short Term Care is a registered CQC Green rated service that provides respite services for up to 5 guests per night with its adjoining Day Care providing up to 10 plus guests per day. The demand for respite care and day services for people with Learning Disabilities & Autism is very high in Bracknell Forest. This service is the only provision within Bracknell and surrounding boroughs. To supplement the demand for respite and day care services, the Council commissions private providers at high costs.

The rise in temperatures over the past few years have resulted in unprecedented heat and humidity levels and this trend is expected to continue. Heatwave Level 3/4 warnings, which means that temperatures are very likely to rise to levels that increase the risk of ill health among vulnerable people like those in Waymead, is now a reality. The previous use of fans to alleviate the heat is no longer viable.

The extreme heat experienced in recent years poses a high risk to all the guests of Waymead and staff and have impacted heavily on the running of services. In some cases, services had to be cancelled or relocated to other locations. The ability to add air conditioning (AC) to the Waymead Services is essential for the future of the day and respite services meeting registration requirements effectively. The request is based on a feasibility study on the inclusion of an air conditioning solution at Waymead which confirmed that it was possible to safely install

AC at Waymead Services at a cost of around £115k. The installation will provide comfort cooling to 12 areas including bedrooms, the Day Centre and other regularly used areas of the building.

15. Waymead Refurbishment (£0.024m)

This related request to the works on Waymead is for the purchase and installation of a new bath which is needed in Room 3 and ancillary refurbishment. This specialist bath is no longer fit-for-purpose and due to its age cannot be repaired. The replacement is a highly versatile bathing system, ideal for patients with reduced posture control allowing easy patient access, and the high-low function prevents risk of caregiver back strain.

16. College Hall – Site Security (£0.020m)

The College Hall site is surrounded by 6ft high wooden fencing. Due to its age, the fence is rotting in places, and is easily damaged by students. Holes often appear, not only due to student damage but also due to animals digging under the fence to be able to cross the site. There have been several security incidents regarding access to the site due to the failure of the fencing. Given the vulnerability of the attending students, there is a significant safeguarding risk with the current perimeter fencing.

17. Larchwood – Site Security (£0.057m)

The perimeter fencing around Larchwood has been in situ since the unit was built. The fencing is standard wooden panels. The fencing needs replacement as it is no longer fit for purpose. The installation of an anti-climb fence would enable staff to focus on providing our children and young people a high-quality experience at Larchwood. This would also reduce the likelihood of staff having to use restraint and would facilitate staff to support our children and young people not only to have fun but to learn valuable life skills such as, self-regulation and risk identification whilst playing in the Larchwood garden. The external door entry system and access to office spaces is another area of identified risk, the current systems have become outdated and no longer fit for purpose. On three occasions children have been able to use their body size to override the current system and open the doors. The current open access arrangements necessitate a high staff ratio which could potentially be reduced through the addition of fob entry systems, enabling the support of additional children and young people dependent on their needs.

CAPITAL PROGRAMME - CENTRAL DIRECTORATE

		2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000	TOTAL £000
Committed					
No Schemes		-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Unavoidable					
No Schemes		-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-
Maintenance					
Council Funded Highways Maintenance	18	1,700	1,700	1,700	5,100
Council Funded Highways Maintenance - Additional Bid	19	2,000	1,000	1,000	4,000
		3,700	2,700	2,700	9,100
Rolling Programme / Other Desirable					
Play Areas	20	80	80	80	240
Shepherd Meadows Footbridge	21	55	-	-	55
Flood Alleviation	22	90	100	100	290
		225	180	180	585
TOTAL REQUEST FOR COUNCIL FUNDING		3,925	2,880	2,880	9,685
External Funding					
Highways Maintenance		1,888	1,888	1,888	5,664
Highways Maintenance - Incentive Element		236	236	236	708
Integrated Transport & Maintenance		726	726	726	2,178
Section 106 Schemes (LTP)		100	100	100	300
SANGS (Section 106)		280	280	280	840
		3,230	3,230	3,230	9,690
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING		3,230	3,230	3,230	9,690
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME		7,155	6,110	6,110	19,375

2024/25 Capital Programme

Summary of New Schemes funded from Council Funds

CENTRAL DIRECTORATE

18. Council Funded Highways Maintenance (£1.700m)

The adopted Local Transport Plan sets out the Council's strategy for capital investment in Highways and Transport infrastructure. The Highway Maintenance programme continues to focus on the integrity of a wide range of highway assets including carriageways, highway structures, drainage and street lighting. Nationally, local authorities are managing the implications of a background decline in overall network condition due to the long-standing fall in Government grant funding for highway maintenance. Increasing material costs due to industry inflation over the past 5 years has further impacted.

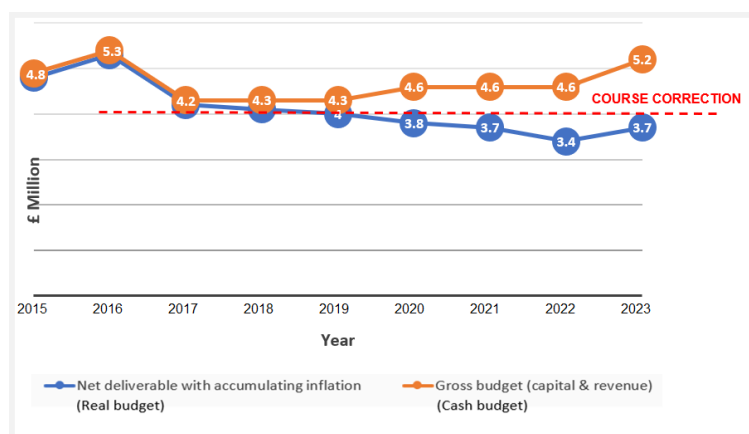
New town inheritance places an additional challenge in managing large scale asset maintenance and replacement within 'new town' areas where significant elements of highway infrastructure reach intervention points at around the same time and can be up to 60 years old.

Many significant maintenance projects are now beyond financial reach, and the residential highway network is necessarily a lower priority for intervention unless a public risk is identified. Increasing highway claims are expected due to reducing condition levels, particularly carriageways and footways.

The recently adopted Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) sets out the Council's strategic approach to managing the long-term maintenance of its highway assets over the coming 5-year period. The Department for Transport consider HIAMPs to be the benchmark for demonstrating an efficient and responsible approach to managing planned highway maintenance. Asset condition surveys, data and modelling will identify and prioritise planned highway maintenance activities and projects.

19. Council Funded Highways Maintenance (£2.000m)

The allocation of £1.7m per annum from Borough capital in 2023/24 has broadly enabled a 'course correction' (see red line). However, ongoing high levels of inflation are likely to threaten this position.



Regardless, within the next 5 years there are sizeable, planned maintenance projects that remain beyond financial reach. To accommodate these within the existing programme budget would require a redirection of funding from other core maintenance activities which would effectively cancel out the benefit of the 2023/24 budget uplift.

These projects are listed below:

Asset	Work	Cost (£000's)
A3095 Mill Lane	Street lighting cable replacement	500
A329 Berkshire Way	Resurfacing	350
A322 Bagshot Road	Resurfacing (3 phases)	2,400
Station Roundabout	Resurface/waterproof deck	500
TOTAL		3750

Furthermore, general carriageway condition is deteriorating at an accelerating rate. As mentioned, this is a national challenge faced by all authorities. The impact of extreme weather, as experienced last winter, creates a significant challenge in addressing potholes and avoiding insurance claims. Many roads now require full resurfacing but given the limited funding available this is reserved for the worst cases, or where asset life can be extended. This necessity leads to significant plugging and patching of defects with limited success. Therefore, a further increase in Borough capital funding towards highway maintenance is sought from 2024/25. Three options have been evaluated and summarised below. A modified Option A will add an additional £2m to the budget in 2024/25 with a commitment to a funding of £1m in each of the proceeding 4 years.

	Impact of additional 5 year funding					
	Additional annual programme funding (£000's)	Key asset projects delivered	Additional annual funding towards carriageway resurfacing (average £000's)	Total annual funding towards carriageway resurfacing (average £000's)	% outstanding carriageway resurfacing delivered over 5 years (from current data)	Rate of carriageway deterioration
Option A	2,000	Yes	1,730	3,730 [87% inc. from current]	75%	Stabilising
Option B	1,500	Yes	1,230	3,230 [62% inc. from current]	65%	Slowing
Option C	1,000	Yes	730	2,730 [37% inc. from current]	55%	Slowing
Existing	0	No	0	2,000	40%	Accelerating

Planned capital investment toward highway maintenance avoids an otherwise unmanaged reactive response which is typically less efficient in time and money, alongside the unexpected disruption to the travelling public. Revenue budgets will always be necessary to resolve defects of an unexpected and urgent nature but the current insufficient capital investment, particularly in carriageway resurfacing, is generating an increasingly disproportionate burden on revenue budgets. In parallel, insurance claims due to carriageway defects are increasing which introduces further resource pressures and exposure to risk.

20. Play Areas (£0.080m)

There are currently 30 equipped play areas that are owned and managed by Bracknell Forest Council, largely provided through the planning process as part of land transfers or secured through S106 agreements. Many of these play areas are now old and inevitably the equipment is reaching the end of its lifespan. Council play areas are maintained by the Parks & Countryside service with costs assigned to the revenue budgets, as a result of ongoing repairs and pre-emptive maintenance works.

Capital support is required on a rolling programme to refurbish the sites as the equipment eventually reaches the point it is beyond economical repair. The historic frequency is for the renewal of one play area per year under the capital programme, choosing the site most in need of the work on an annual basis. This puts all sites on a programme of renewal once every 30 years.

The priorities for 2024/25 programme have identified Chaucer Woods in Crowthorne as the site most in need of refurbishment. The proposed project includes the safer surface replacement, renewal of equipment beyond economical repair and the change of emphasis to a younger target market of 4-to-7 year-olds.

21. Shepherd Meadows Footbridge (£0.055m)

It is estimated the bridge was originally installed over 30 years ago. The bridge forms a popular well used link to Sandhurst via Shepherd Meadows and is part of a Public Right-Of-Way on the southern side of the Blackwater (Hampshire) which passes through to Blackwater shops and Blackwater train station.

During a routine inspection of the bridge the main load bearing timbers were identified with rot. A structural report was commissioned and carried out by Atkins contractor on behalf of the Council. The report concluded that the bridge was structurally compromised. According to the structural engineer's report, it is highly likely to be unfeasible to repair this footbridge, from both the financial and technical perspectives. They recommend the timber bridge deck is completely replaced.

22. Flood Alleviation (£0.090m)

Parks and Countryside manage over 100 open spaces, many of which contain water bodies including wetlands, ponds, streams, and rivers. The features vary in appearance from very natural, to the more formal lakes and ponds, but all provide essential services including flood alleviation functions, as well as being a rich biodiverse habitat. Some watercourses are relatively new having been delivered through the planning process, however many are much older, dating to the creation of the original housing infrastructure of Bracknell as a new town and work is required to prevent the watercourses from becoming blocked or silted up.

As landowners the council are responsible to "let water flow naturally" and any blockages or silting up which may cause flooding upstream must be dealt with. This project aims to highlight the work required and commence a rolling programme of maintenance and enhancements to water features on council land. Benefits will include the better functioning of balancing ponds, improved local biodiversity, increased resident satisfaction and long-term reduced costs to the Council. The initial schemes to be progressed over the next 3 years include Snaprails Pond, Harvest Hill Pond and Manor Farm Ditch.

2024/25 Capital Maintenance Programme


Ref.	Service	Site	Works	Description	Costs
C1	Corporate Buildings	Depot Sheds	Various Works	Roof replacement, the roller shutters, fire alarms, power & lighting, and partitioning	£330,000
C1	Corporate Buildings	Time Square	Heating replacement	Replace 2no boilers in basement boiler plant room with more efficient heating system.	£105,000
C2	Corporate Buildings	Time Square	Flue replacement	Replace boiler flues in basement Boiler Plant Room.	£65,000
C3	Culture	South Hill Park Arts Centre	Replace ventilation unit	Replace air handling unit in Second floor roof space	£60,000
C4	People	Larchwood	Boiler replacement	Replace gas boilers in boiler room	£55,000
C5	Community	Willows CC	Boiler replacement	Replace gas boilers in boiler room	£65,000
C6	Corporate Buildings	Great Hollands	Gas upgrade to run 2nd boiler	Essential works	£45,000
C7	Leisure	The Lookout	Landlord Repairs for external repairs	Essential repairs to building.	£55,000
C8	Corporate Buildings	11-14, 15-18 Priestwood Square	Fire Stopping works	Essential works	£45,000
C9	Corporate Buildings	Yoevil Road	Roof replacement	Replacement of pitched roof - essential works.	£330,000
C10	Corporate Buildings	6 Priestwood	Internal refurbishment of communal areas	Essential works	£25,000
C11	Leisure	Look Out (The)	Replace sanitary fittings	Refurbish toilet facility	£75,000
C12	Leisure	Westmorland Park Pavilion	LED lighting upgrade	Replace external lighting generally.	£45,000
C13	Library	Sandhurst Library	Boiler replacement	Boiler room - 1no Keston C40 boilers reached end of its life and needs replacing including allowance for asbestos R&D survey	£45,000
C14	Library	Whitegrove Library	Replace ventilation	Replace AHU	£40,000
C15	Leisure	Look Out (The)	Replace external rubber surface	Renew rubber play surface 1m fall height	£35,000
C16	Corporate Buildings	7 Portman Close	Window upgrade	Upgrade single glazed windows into double glazed	£35,000
C17	Corporate Buildings	7 Portman Close	Lighting upgrade	Replace lighting with LEDs	£30,000
C18	Culture	South Hill Park Arts Centre	Replace air conditioning	Air conditioning systems are R22 and over 20+ years old.	£35,000
C19	Library	Birch Hill Library	Electrical Services - Lighting	Replace fluorescent lighting generally with LEDs	£25,000
C20	Corporate Buildings	Magistrates Court	Thermal Improvements	Thermal Improvements	£45,000
C21	Library	Crowthorne Library	Lighting upgrade	Replace lighting with LEDs	£25,000
C22	Leisure	Coral Reef	Landlord Repairs	Essential Landlord Repairs	£75,000
C23	Leisure	Bracknell Learning Centre	Landlord Repairs	Essential Landlord Repairs	£75,000
C24	Leisure	Downshire Golf Club	Landlord Repairs	Essential Landlord Repairs	£75,000
				Total Expenditure --->	£1,840,000

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Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening:	Directorate: Delivery	Section: Property	
1. Activity to be assessed	Capital PAD for 24/25 Feasibility Studies		
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Christopher Chewter		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Alex Bennett		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	To commission feasibility reports for projects where capital funding has not been identified / agreed. The number of feasibility reports required or for which projects is unknown at this stage.		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	General Public		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	As part of the feasibility reports, designers are to take into account Part M of the Building Regulations and BS8300. Consideration to be given to colour contrasting and layout to suit people with disabilities. Shall be encompassed within feasibility report.
9. Racial equality	Y	N	No Impact N/A
10. Gender equality	Y	N	No Impact N/A
11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	No Impact N/A

12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N	Should toilets be proposed as part a scheme, consideration could be given to gender neutral facilities.	N/A
13. Age equality	Y	N	No Impact	N/A
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	No Impact	N/A
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	No impact	N/A
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No Impact.	N/A
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	None.			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	Not Applicable.			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	Not considered significant. The above will provide a positive impact towards advancing equality.			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	Not applicable	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Minutes of update meetings plus final feasibility report will show how these sites can provide an impact upon equality.			

22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	The designers for the building are already knowledgeable with designing for different service user groups as outlined above, therefore this should be designed out as part of the design phase for the project.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Not applicable			
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	N/A		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	Feasibility report		
26. Assistant director's signature.	<p>Signature: </p> <p>Date: 21/11/2023</p>		


Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: November 2023	Directorate: Delivery	Section: Property
1. Activity to be assessed	Capital PAD for 24/25 Corporate and Schools Planned Maintenance Programme	
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Alex Bennett	
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Julian Munday	
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	<p>Schools Planned maintenance programme for 2024/25 the programme is made up 9 projects which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garth Hill College - Resurfacing MUGA Birch Hill Primary School - Flat Coverings and Insulation Wooden Hill Primary School - Toilet refurbishment Cranbourne Primary School - Heating system Meadow Vale Primary School - Boundary Birch Hill Primary School - Electrical Services Garth Hill College - Chillers Ascot Heath School - Flat roof The Pines School - Flat roof <p>Corporate Planned maintenance programme for 2024/25 the programme is made up 24 projects which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time Square - Heating replacement Time Square - Flue replacement South Hill Park Arts Centre - Replace ventilation unit Larchwood - Boiler replacement Willows CC - Boiler replacement Great Hollands - Gas upgrade to run 2nd boiler – The Lookout - Landlord Repairs for external repairs 11-14, 15-18 Priestwood Square - Fire Stopping works Yoevil Road - Roof replacement 6 Priestwood - Internal refurbishment of communal areas Look Out (The) - Replace sanitary fittings 	

	<p>Westmorland Park Pavilion - LED lighting upgrade Sandhurst Library - Boiler replacement Whitegrove Library - Replace ventilation Look Out (The) - Replace external rubber surface 7 Portman Close - Window upgrade 7 Portman Close - Lighting upgrade South Hill Park Arts Centre - Replace air conditioning Birch Hill Library - Electrical Services - Lighting Magistrates Court - Thermal Improvements Crowthorne Library - Lighting upgrade Coral Reef - Landlord Repairs Bracknell Learning Centre - Landlord Repairs Downshire Golf Club - Landlord Repairs</p>		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	General Public		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	As part of the feasibility reports, designers are to take into account Part M of the Building Regulations and BS8300. Consideration to be given to colour contrasting and layout to suit people with disabilities. Shall be encompassed within design
9. Racial equality	☒	N	No Impact N/A
10. Gender equality	☒	N	No Impact N/A
11. Sexual orientation equality	☒	N	No Impact N/A
12. Gender re-assignment	☒	N	No Impact N/A

13. Age equality	Y	N	No Impact	N/A
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	No Impact	N/A
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	No Impact	N/A
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No Impact	N/A
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	None.			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	Not Applicable.			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	Not considered significant. The above will provide a similar level of accessibility and inclusion as the existing site.			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	Not applicable	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Minutes of update meetings, and design and specification documentation will show how any equality measures can be achieved.			
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	The designers for the building are already knowledgeable with designing for different service user groups as outlined above, therefore this should be designed out as part of the design phase for the project.	


23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.

Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Not applicable			
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	N/A		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	Design and Specification information to be inspected and provided.		
26. Assistant director's signature.	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Signature: Date: 21.11.2023 </div>		

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: November 2023	Directorate: Delivery	Section: Property	
1. Activity to be assessed	Capital PAD for 24/25 Depot Site – Refurbishment of existing Block A – Sheds		
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Alex Bennett		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Julian Munday		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Replacement of the asbestos roof, shutters and lighting to Block B (previously known as block D)		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	BFC staff and contractor based at the Depot Site		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	As part of the feasibility reports, designers are to take into account Part M of the Building Regulations and BS8300. Consideration to be given to colour contrasting and layout to suit people with disabilities. Shall be encompassed within design. The facility will not be open to the public. Reasonable Adjustments will be considered for staff In line with the council’s commitment to Equalities Act.
9. Racial equality	Y	N	No disproportionate impact N/A
10. Gender equality	Y	N	No disproportionate impact N/A
11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	No disproportionate impact N/A

12. Gender re-assignment	☒	N	No disproportionate impact	N/A
13. Age equality	☒	N	No disproportionate impact	N/A
14. Religion and belief equality	☒	N	No disproportionate impact	N/A
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	☒	N	No disproportionate impact	N/A
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	☒	N	No disproportionate impact	N/A
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	None.			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	Not Applicable.			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	The above will provide a similar level of accessibility and inclusion as the existing site, therefore affect is not significant.			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	☒	N	Not applicable	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Minutes of update meetings, and design and specification documentation will show how any equality measures can be achieved.			

22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	☒	N	The designers for the building are already knowledgeable with designing for different service user groups as outlined above, therefore this should be designed out as part of the design phase for the project.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Not applicable			
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	N/A		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	Design and Specification information to be inspected and provided.		
26. Assistant director's signature.	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>Signature: Date: 21.11.2023</p>		

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
DATE: 12 DECEMBER 2023

GENERAL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2024/25 (Executive Director: Resources)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Under the Council's constitution, the Executive is required to consult on its detailed budget proposals with the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Commission and any other interested parties or individuals for a period of at least six weeks. This report summarises the current position on the Council's revenue budget preparations for 2024/25 as a basis for that consultation. A separate report on the agenda sets out capital expenditure proposals for consultation.
- 1.2 The papers for this Executive meeting have had to be published before detailed funding for local authorities is set out in the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement announcement. This is expected to be announced in the week commencing the 18 December. Therefore, in the absence of the Provisional Settlement, the figures in this report can only be based on high-level assumptions regarding government funding.
- 1.3 All comments received on these budget proposals will be submitted to the Executive on 6 February 2024 alongside any impact from the announcement of the Finance Settlement. This will allow the Executive to determine its final budget package and recommend an appropriate Council Tax level to Council, which will formally approve the 2024/25 budget and Council Tax on 21 February 2024.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **Agrees the draft budget proposals for 2024/25 as the basis for consultation with the Overview & Scrutiny Commission and other interested parties or individuals.**
- 2.2 **Agrees the Treasury Management Strategy and associated documents at Annexe E and request that the Governance and Audit Committee review each of the key elements.**
- 2.3 **Agrees that the 2024/25 Schools Budget be set at the eventual level of the Dedicated School Grant income plus any accumulated DSG balances.**
- 2.4 **Authorises the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning to agree the allocation of the sums available for schools and Early Years funding as set out in recommendation 2.3, having regard to the decisions and recommendations of the Schools Forum and to agree detailed budgets for services centrally managed by the Council.**
- 2.5 **Notes that a separate report is included on the agenda for this Executive meeting regarding the Council's participation in the Department for Education's Safety Valve programme, that is likely to significantly affect the Council's**

medium to long-term financial prospects and may impact on the draft budget proposals for 2024/25 included in this report.

- 2.6 Agrees that the Council Tax Base be set at 49,694 (Band D equivalents) for 2024/25 as outlined in Annexe H.**
- 2.7 Approves the virements relating to the 2023/24 budget as set out in Annexes F and G and recommends those that are over £0.100m for approval by Council.**
- 2.8 Approve the write-off of £54,150 for a commercial property debt that is no longer recoverable (see paragraph 12.1).**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The recommendations are designed to allow the Executive to consult on its draft budget proposals for 2024/25 as required by the Local Government Act 2003.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The range of options being considered is included in the report and its Annexes.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

5 COMMITMENT BUDGET 2024/25 – 2026/27

- 5.1 Initial preparations for the 2024/25 budget have focussed on the Council's Commitment Budget for 2024/25 – 2026/27. This brings together the Council's existing expenditure plans, taking account of approved commitments and the ongoing effects of service developments and efficiencies that were agreed when the 2023/24 budget was set.
- 5.2 Several changes are proposed to the Commitment Budget since it was last considered and approved by the Executive in February and are reflected in the summary in Table 1. The most significant changes in 2024/25 are set out below:
 - Removal of one-off initiatives agreed for 2023/24 only, relating to additional Council Tax Support, Town Centre events and an additional Housing and Welfare Officer (cost neutral on the budget as they were met from Earmarked Reserves or one-off grants).
 - The full year effect of savings relating to the transfer of housing stock from Downshire Homes Limited (a wholly owned subsidiary) to the Council which were identified as part of the 2023/24 budget process (-£0.240m).
 - An increase in the Minimum Revenue Provision for capital expenditure, primarily relating to the need to increase the annual provision for Commercial Property resulting from changes in government guidance (£0.249m).
 - An increase in the payments required to meet prior year pension deficits (£0.295m). This reflects the phased increase agreed with the Berkshire Pension Fund and the impact of schools converting to academies.
 - A pressure was included in the 2023/24 budget to give the Forestcare service the necessary capacity to move to a sustainable position. This was due to be reversed in 2024/25 but with the service not projecting a break even position in the current year that is no longer possible (£0.153m).
 - The full year effect on interest payments, of the use of balances in 2023/24 (£0.111m).

Unrestricted

The overall impact of these changes is to increase the Council's Commitment Budget for 2024/25 by £0.613m compared to the position reported in February 2023.

- 5.3 Taking account of these changes, Table 1 summarises the position and shows that base expenditure (excluding schools) is planned to increase by £0.915m to £90.748m next year, before consideration is given to allowances for inflation and the budget proposals identified by individual services in 2024/25. The commitment budget is shown in more detail in Annexe A.

Table 1: Summary Commitment Budget 2024/25-2026/27

	Planned Expenditure		
	2024/25	2024/25	2026/27
	£000	£000	£000
Base Budget	89,287	90,202	90,445
<i>Movements in Year:</i>			
Central	-103	-7	-90
Delivery	-241	16	-15
People (excluding schools)	37	-20	0
Non-Departmental / Council Wide	1,222	254	337
<i>Total Movements</i>	915	243	232
Adjusted Base	90,202	90,445	90,677

6 PROVISIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2024/25

- 6.1 On 12 December 2022, the Government published a policy statement which not only covered its high level intentions for the Local Government Finance Settlement in 2023/24 but also provided additional information relating to the 2024/25 settlement. It confirmed that the core settlement would continue in a similar manner for 2024/25. The major grants would continue as set out for 2023/24: RSG will continue and be uplifted in line with Baseline Funding Levels (i.e., linked to CPI and the Business Rates multiplier) and the Social Care Grant and other social care grants would increase as set out in the Autumn Statement 2022 (published on 17 November 2022).
- 6.2 The Autumn Statement 2022 confirmed the following increases in social care funding for 2024/25:
- Further repurposed money from delaying charging reforms of £612m (from £1.265 billion in 2023/24 to £1.877 billion in 2024/25). Based on the 2023/24 allocations this would increase Social Care Grant by a further -£0.682m.
 - An additional £400m distributed through the Better Care Fund to get people out of hospital on time into care settings and split 50:50 between Local Government and Health. Based on the 2023/24 allocations this would increase the Adult Social Care (ASC) Discharge Fund by -£0.143m.

- An additional £283m to help support capacity and discharge. Based on the 2023/24 allocations this would increase the ASC Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund by a further -£0.427m.
- 6.3 The policy statement also referred to a potential new funding stream in 2024/25, subject to successful delivery of the Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging (EPR) scheme in 2023/24. Under the EPR regulations, retailers and packaging suppliers would have to pay for the full cost of recycling and disposing of their packaging. Implementation of the proposals has now been deferred until October 2025 with first payments to councils now expected to be made between then and December 2025. As a result, any impact on the finance settlement will be pushed back until 2025/26.
- 6.4 The Autumn Statement 2023 (published on 12 November 2023) provided some additional information on Business Rates for 2024/25. The small business multiplier will be frozen for a fourth consecutive year whereas the standard multiplier will be uprated in line with September CPI inflation (6.7%). This is the first time that the two multipliers have had different increases applied to them and this will have an impact on the finance settlement. A technical consultation issued at the end of September talked about the possibility of decoupling the two multipliers, however, as its outcome has not been published, the finer details of how this will operate in practice and be factored into the settlement are still uncertain. The 75% Business Rates discount for retail, hospitality and leisure sites has also been extended for another year. It is expected that, as in previous years, additional Section 31 grant will be provided to compensate for the loss of income from the freezing of the small business multiplier and the granting of additional reliefs.
- 6.5 In terms of the local government funding system and the long-term Fair Funding and Business Rate Retention System reviews, it seems very unlikely that any changes will be introduced until 2026/27 at the earliest.
- 6.6 Each of these issues are discussed in more detail below, insofar as this is possible before the announcement of the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement.

Revenue Support Grant

- 6.7 Funding from central government is currently received through Revenue Support Grant (RSG), a share of Business Rates and Specific Grants. For planning purposes, it has been assumed that RSG will increase by -£0.043m (2%) to -£2.191m in 2024/25.

Business Rates

- 6.8 Business Rates is an important income stream for the Council with a proportion being retained locally following the introduction of the Business Rates Retention reforms in April 2013. The level of Business Rates changes each year due to inflationary increases (set by central government), periodic revaluations, the impact of appeals and local growth or decline as local businesses and economic conditions expand or contract. The Government sets a baseline level of funding against which any growth or reduction is shared between local and central government. The baseline tends to be linked to the change in the Business Rates multipliers which are in turn linked to September CPI. It has been assumed that the baseline will only increase by -£0.349m (2%) to -£17.811m in 2024/25. This assumption will be revisited when the finer details of the decision to freeze the small business multiplier but inflate the standard multiplier have been published.

6.9 There are a number of other factors that can impact on the overall level of Business Rates income that the Council can expect and the final budget position:

- A revaluation exercise was carried out in 2023/24 where changes in business rates collectable were typically matched by compensating adjustments to grant funding to ensure no impact (at least immediately) on local authorities' resources. This exercise was completed based on the data available at the time, but this will now be updated in 2024/25 to reflect the final valuation list and information included the Council's end of year return on the 2022/23 outturn position.
- The Council receives section 31 income to cover the loss of income resulting from the capping or freezing of Business Rates increases in several previous years and the impact of several Business Rate Reliefs. The changes announced in the Autumn Statement 2023 will impact on the level of this income, but that impact has still to be determined.
- In January 2023 a large deficit of £4.980m was projected on the Business Rates element of the Collection Fund for 2022/23. This was partly funded in the 2023/24 budget by a one-off contribution from the Business Rates Reliefs Reserve (£4.480m) which has now been reversed. The position on the Collection Fund will need to be projected for 2023/24 by the end of January 2024. At this stage a significant deficit is expected, which is primarily linked to the VOA's decision to reduce the rateable values of a number of properties within the Lexicon and to backdate this to 2017. With any deficit on the Collection Fund needing to be recovered in the next year's budget, this will need to be met either by reducing spending by an equal sum in 2024/25 or from the Council's reserves. A sum of £6.26m is included in the Council's Earmarked Reserves for Business Rates Revaluations.
- Successful appeals in the Lexicon will also impact on the level of Business Rates income receivable by the Council in 2024/25 and future years. At this stage a net ongoing reduction of £0.5m has been assumed.

The overall impact on the Council's budget will not be known until the provisional settlement is published, the deficit on the Collection Fund for 2023/24 has been finalised, and the Council has completed its estimate of the Business Rates collectable for the year and the impact of any reliefs and grant income receivable. The latter exercise forms part of the completion of the National Non Domestic Rates (NNDR1) return which is usually required to be submitted to Government at the end of January.

6.10 While the Government has signalled for many years that it would like to make fundamental changes to the current Business Rates retention system of local government funding, it is unlikely that this will happen until 2026/27 at the earliest. To coincide with this, it is expected that a Fair Funding review will be used to calculate new baseline funding levels for individual councils based on an up-to-date assessment of their relative needs and resources. It has been envisaged that existing grants including RSG and most likely the Public Health Grant will be incorporated into the revised baseline and more responsibilities are likely to be transferred to Local Government to ensure that the new system is fiscally neutral overall when it is introduced. The outcome of these deliberations is impossible to determine, although it will almost certainly have a significant long-term detrimental impact on the funding of the Council.

Specific Grants

6.11 The Council also receives substantial external funding through several specific grants. The future of these is currently unclear and assumptions have had to be made in projecting the Council's grant funding, as follows.

a) New Homes Bonus (NHB)

The NHB rewards local authorities for net additional homes added to the Council Tax Base, thereby seeking to incentivise authorities to encourage housing growth in their areas. It is unringfenced and can therefore be used for local priorities. There have been several changes in the way NHB is calculated since it was introduced in 2011/12 which have reduced the funding available to the Council. These have included:

- reducing the number of years for which legacy payments are made to 4 years from 2018/19;
- setting a national baseline for housing growth below which the Bonus will not be paid, to sharpen the incentive for councils to deliver more new homes. This was set at 0.4% in 2017/18 and has remained at this level in subsequent years;
- confirming that the allocations from 2020/21 onwards would be for one year only.

A consultation was launched in February 2021 and made it clear that the government did not intend to reintroduce the concept of legacy payments for future allocations. Although the consultation closed on the 7 April 2021, the Government's response has yet to be published and the 2023/24 allocation was based on the existing methodology.

At this stage it has been assumed that the allocation methodology remains unchanged and that NHB grant will reduce by £0.300m. This reflects the fact that although the level of housing growth has been sustained, the number of properties empty for more than six months has also increased (which has a negative impact on grant levels). The actual grant amount will be confirmed in the Provisional Settlement.

b) Services Grant

It has been assumed that the grant will be maintained at the same level in 2024/25.

c) Other Specific Grants

Some of the largest specific grants received by the Council are for Public Health and Social Care. The 2022 Autumn Statement confirmed further increases to social care grants in 2024/25 and this has been covered in paragraph 6.2.

The Better Care Fund (BCF) is a pooled budget which consists of several schemes, some of which are managed by the Council and some by the Clinical Commissioning Group. The NHS contribution to adult social care through the BCF is expected to increase in real terms in 2024/25, in line with the overall NHS

long-term settlement. It has been assumed that this will be cost neutral for the Council at this stage.

The ring-fence on Public Health is likely to be retained in 2024/25 but there have been no indications of funding levels for 2024/25 at a national or local level.

Information on several other smaller grants normally follows several days or weeks after the Provisional Settlement and changes from these announcements will be incorporated into the February budget report to the Executive.

7 COUNCIL TAX

- 7.1 Council Tax at present levels will generate total income of -£75.053m in 2024/25, before any change to the Tax Base is factored in. It was expected that the number of properties paying Council Tax would increase significantly over the coming years and to date the Council Tax Base has remained broadly in line with predictions. The Council Tax Base for 2024/25 reflects the actual taxbase position at the end of November and an allowance for further properties being added to the Council Tax list until March 2025. It has been calculated as 49,694 Band D equivalents (see Annex H) which at current levels would generate total income of -£76.497m in 2024/25. This represents a net increase of 725 (-£1.116m) arising from the occupation of new properties during 2024/25 combined with a 7% decrease in the take-up of the Local Council Tax Benefit Support Scheme (-£0.328m).
- 7.2 The surplus/deficit on the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund in 2023/24 will need to be assessed by the 15 January 2022 and reflected in the final budget proposals. Indications at this time are that a small deficit may be expected.
- 7.3 The Government limits Council Tax increases by requiring councils to hold a local referendum for any increases equal to or more than a threshold percentage which is normally included in the Local Government Financial Settlement. The Government's December 2022 Policy Statement confirmed that for 2024/25 the core council tax referendum principles would be the same as 2023/24. The referendum limit for increases to council tax will remain at 3% per year and in addition, councils with social care responsibilities will be able to increase the adult social care precept by up to 2%. The maximum Council Tax increase that could be agreed without a referendum in 2024/25 would therefore be 4.99%. Each 1% increase in Council Tax would generate approximately -£0.765m of additional income.
- 7.4 The Executive at its meeting in February will recommend to Council the level of Council Tax considering the Local Government Finance Settlement, the results of the budget consultation and the final budget proposals.

8 BUDGET PROPOSALS 2024/25

- 8.1 The Council's medium-term financial strategy is underpinned by an assumption that any new service pressures and developments will be funded by identifying an equivalent level of economies and savings. This recognises that additional grant and council tax income is normally sufficient to fund only inflationary cost pressures. The draft budget proposals set out in this report for consultation broadly achieve this, with proposed pressures and economies both totalling around £5.6m.

Service Pressures and Developments

- 8.2 In preparing the 2024/25 draft budget proposals each directorate has evaluated the potential pressures on its services and these are set out in Annexe B. Table 2 summarises the pressures by directorate.

Table 2: Service Pressures/Development

Directorate	£'000
Central	1,504
Delivery	1,296
People (excluding schools)	2,585
Non-Departmental / Council Wide	270
Total Pressures/Developments	5,655

- 8.3 Many of the pressures are simply unavoidable as they relate to current levels of demand or legislation changes. They do, however, also support the three borough priorities included in the new Council Plan in the following way:

- Engaged and healthy communities (£2.956m);
- Thriving and connected economy (£0.219m);
- Green and sustainable environment (£1.117m).

- 8.4 Service pressures will be kept under review throughout the budget consultation period. There is always the risk, in particular in Social Care services, that the numbers of people requiring care packages, the content of existing care packages and contract inflation will vary considerably from the assumptions included in these draft budget proposals. Any revisions to service pressures will be reported to the Executive in February.

- 8.5 In addition to these revenue proposals the Council continues to invest in its priorities through targeted capital expenditure. Details are contained in the capital programme report, but any revenue cost implications arising from the capital proposals are included in these draft budget proposals.

Service Economies

- 8.6 Members and officers have held regular meetings to determine options for savings and a list of potential draft budget savings has been developed. This list totals -£5.490m and is attached at Annexe C and summarised in Table 3. As in previous years, savings have focused as far as possible on increasing efficiency, income generation and reducing central and directorate support rather than on front line services. There will potentially be some impact on services, although this has been minimised to a large degree.

Table 3: Summary Service Economies

Directorate	£'000
Central	-1,224
Delivery	-874
People (excluding schools)	-2,601
Non-Departmental / Council Wide	-791
Total Savings	-5,490

Significant Budget Decisions

- 8.7 Consideration and approval of the budget is a major policy decision. However, the budget, by its nature, includes a range of proposals, some of which in themselves represent important policy decisions. More details on each of the proposals are included in Annexe C.
- 8.8 As the budget report is a policy document and is subject to at least six weeks consultation, the identification of these issues within the budget report facilitates detailed consultation on a range of significant policy decisions.

Council Wide Issues

- 8.9 Apart from the specific budget proposals contained in Annexes B and C there are some Council wide issues affecting all directorates' budgets which need to be considered. The precise impact of these corporate budgets is likely to change before the final budget proposals are recommended, however the current view on these issues is outlined in the following paragraphs.

a) Capital Programme

As outlined above, the scale of the Council's Capital Programme for 2024/25 will impact upon the revenue budget and will itself be subject to consultation over the coming weeks. All new spending on services will need to be funded from new capital receipts (including Community Infrastructure Levy receipts), government grants, developer contributions or borrowing. The proposed Council Funded Capital Programme of £8.328m and externally funded (including self-funding schemes) programme of £4.554m for 2024/25 features in a separate report on tonight's agenda. After allowing for projected receipts of approximately £5.2m (including CIL), S106 and other contributions, and carry forwards, the additional revenue costs will be £0.163m in 2024/25 and £0.295m in 2025/26.

b) Interest and Investments

The Council reviews the annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement under the requirement of the 2011 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code"). The Local Government Act 2003 required the Council to "have regard to the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable". Annexe F outlines the Council's prudential indicators for 2024/25 – 2026/27 and sets out the expected treasury management activities for this period. It is recommended that the Executive agree the Treasury Management Strategy and associated documents and in line with the Code of Practice request that the Governance and Audit Committee review each of the key elements.

The first half of 2023/24 saw interest rates rise by a further 1%, taking the Bank Rate from 4.25% to 5.25% and possibly the peak in the tightening cycle. Short- and medium-term gilts remain elevated as inflation continually surprised on the upside. Whilst CPI Inflation has fallen from 8.7% in April to 4.7% in October, its lowest rate since February 2022, it is still significantly above the Bank of England's target of 2%. Further, a cooling in labour market conditions has not led to any easing of wage growth, which is still rising at over 7%.

The registering of 0% GDP for Q3 suggests that underlying growth has lost momentum since earlier in the year and with output falling in 10 out of the 17 sectors, there is an air of underlying weakness.

As the growing drag from higher interest rates intensifies over the next six months, the economy may continue to lose momentum and soon fall into a mild recession. Strong labour demand, fast wage growth and government assistance have all supported household incomes over the past year. With CPI inflation past its peak and expected to decline further, the economy has got through the cost-of-living crisis without recession. Even though the worst of the falls in real household disposable incomes may be over, the phasing out of financial support packages provided by the government during the energy crisis mean real incomes are unlikely to grow strongly. Higher interest rates will soon bite harder too. The Bank of England is expected to keep interest rates at the probable peak of 5.25% until the second half of 2024. Mortgage rates are likely to stay above 5.0% for around a year.

In its latest monetary policy meeting on 06 November, the Bank of England left interest rates unchanged at 5.25%. The vote to keep rates on hold was a split vote, 6-3. It is therefore clear that some members of the MPC are still concerned about the stickiness of inflation. In terms of the current market view, pricing suggests that rates will be on hold for some months to come, with easing in the latter half of the financial year.

The Council has long-term borrowings; however, its level of internal resources has enabled the Council to avoid any new long-term external borrowing since 2018. The historically high interest rates will benefit the Council if it can continue to rely on internal resources to fund its Capital Programme and offers the potential for higher investment returns in the short-term. However, this must be off-set against the much higher cost of borrowing that the Council will increasingly face. The option of using internal working-capital and reserves has diminished and there is the requirement to re-finance part of its PWLB debt in November 2024.

c) Provision for Inflation and Pay Awards

The Commitment Budget excludes the cost of inflation on both expenditure and income. In past years, the Council has restricted the provision for inflation on prices as a general economy measure, to help address the underlying budget gap, although pay awards have been fully funded. In the context of the Council's overall financial position, it is again prudent to consider where the provision for inflation on prices can be limited as an economy measure, although some exceptions will be necessary to reflect actual increases that will not be containable without real service reductions or to meet contractual commitments. It will be important to have realistic discussions with key providers about what level of inflation is genuinely necessary on some contracts and placements.

Although inflation has reduced in the current year it remains well above the 2% target for the Consumer Prices Index (CPI). It is therefore inevitable that the allowance for inflation will need to be significantly higher than the typical provision of £2m - £3m, albeit not at the elevated level of nearly £10m required in 2023/24.

This year the national employers' body offered a flat rate pay rise of £1,925 or 3.88% for employees on scale points 43 and above and this has been accepted.

Unrestricted

For Bracknell Forest the cost is £0.531m more than the 4% built into the budget. This will need to be reflected in the 2024/25 inflation provision, in addition to an allowance for next year's pay offer. At this stage a 3.5% pay award has been assumed for 2024/25 resulting in a total provision for pay of £3.14m.

For non-pay costs it is proposed that a number of budgets will not be inflated at all for 2024/25 and directorates have been asked to restrict contract inflation to 4.7% (September CPI less 2%). This is unlikely to cover the full price rise implicit in all contracts and consequently discussions may need to focus on service levels as well as pricing. It is recognised that it may not be possible to negotiate smaller increases or flex service levels in all cases and a further 1% has been set aside for priority areas. A case will need to be made for any increases above the 4.7%. The overall non-pay provision (excluding gas and electricity) has been set at £4.94m.

Energy prices have begun to reduce in comparison to the all-time highs experienced in 2023/24. The Council has arrangements in place to forward purchase these commodities and over half of the predicted energy required in 2024/25 has been secured to date. This allows the impact of energy inflation to be estimated with some accuracy. The expectation is that electricity and gas prices will reduce by 25% next year and this combined with actual costs being less than budgeted in the current year has meant that a reduction of £1.16m can be built into the inflation provision. This figure will be refined as further forward purchases are made.

Assuming a 5% increase in fees and charges would reduce the overall inflation provision required by £2.14m (see section d below).

For planning purposes, a total sum of £5.280m (£9.761m in 2023/24) has been added to the draft budget proposals based on the assumptions above.

The Council will need to consider in detail where it is appropriate and necessary to provide for inflation over the coming weeks so that the actual inflation provision can be added to the final budget report in February 2024.

d) Fees and Charges

Increases in fees and charges are determined by the overall economic conditions, the willingness of customers to pay the higher charges and continued demand for Council services. Although directorates have been asked to work towards increases of 5%, Council policy requires the level of charges to be considered against the following criteria:

- fees and charges should aim, as a minimum, to cover the costs of delivering the service;
- where a service operates in free market conditions, fees and charges should at least be set at the market rate;
- fees and charges should not be levied where this is an ineffective use of resources, i.e. the cost of collection exceeds any income generated.

Certain other fees will attract the percentage determined by statute. The proposed fees and charges are included in Annexe D.

e) Contingency

The Council manages risks and uncertainties in the budget by way of a general Corporate Contingency added to the Council's budget. Every year the Council faces risks on its budget in relation to demand led services, Business Rates and the general economic climate. At this stage the Contingency has been increased by £0.250m to £3.0m, and the change has been included in Non-Departmental / Council Wide pressures in table 2. The level of Contingency will be kept under review as further information becomes available.

The Executive will need to make a judgement on the appropriate level of contingency at its February meeting, taking advice from the Executive Director: Resources who will need to certify the robustness of the overall budget proposals in the context of the latest performance data, continuing progress on the Business Change Programme and the Council's remaining general and earmarked reserves. All the reserves will be reviewed to ensure that they are sufficient to manage the financial risks facing the Council in the coming years. Of particular significance is the Council's participation in the Department for Education's Safety Valve programme, referred to later in this report in paragraphs 8.17 to 8.20 and in a separate report on this Executive agenda.

Spending on Schools

- 8.10 Schools and education services in general are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This is a specific grant allocated to local authorities through a national formula by the Department for Education (DfE). Separate calculations are made for school budgets, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from age 0-24 which is generally referred to as the High Need Block (HNB), Early Years funding for 0-4 year olds, and a small number of services that support schools and pupils which councils are permitted to manage centrally.
- 8.11 Other than for Early Years functions, provisional funding allocations have been published for 2024/25 and as usual, proposals will be developed with the Schools Forum to agree relevant budgets. Of the main published grant allocations, delegated school budgets are expected to increase by 1.7%, which has reduced from the initial announcement of 2.6% following a recalculation by the DfE, with a 3% increase in funds for pupils with SEND.
- 8.12 Taking account of this information, -£139.272m of grant income is estimated to be available to the Council for 2024/25 through the specific ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This comprises -£96.231m for the Schools Block, -£16.589m for the Early Years Block, -£25.604m for the High Needs Block and -£0.848m for the Central Schools Services Block.
- 8.13 In addition to the DSG, schools also receive revenue funding from other specific grants, which for maintained schools includes School Sixth Forms (2024/25 estimate - £1.269m), the Pupil Premium (-£1.876m), Primary PE and Sports Premium (-0.345m), the Universal Infant Free School Meals Grant (-£0.630m) and Teachers' Pay Addition Grant (-£0.673m). All these amounts are subject to change in 2024/25.

Spending on schools and Early Years Provisions – decision making

- 8.14 Setting the overall level of the Schools Budget and the operation of the funding formula that distributes the money to schools and Early Years providers is a statutory

council function. In practice, the Schools Forum is asked to consider a range of proposals and it is expected that its recommendations are implemented, except in exceptional circumstances. The Schools Forum is legally required to determine how much of the overall schools funding is centrally managed by the council.

- 8.15 The DfE requires councils to confirm the basis on which actual school budgets will be allocated, including per pupil and all other funding rates, by 22 January 2024. To meet this requirement, 2024/25 school budgets will have to be set based on the estimated level of DSG plus any other grants and accumulated balances. The draft budget proposals are prepared on this basis.
- 8.16 The approval timescale is very tight, with the DfE only expected to release the data that councils must use to set school budgets towards the end of December 2023. To meet the DfE's timescale of approval by 22 January, council statutory decisions around the Schools Budget together with endorsement of the decisions that the Schools Forum has the statutory power to take are normally delegated to the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning. Importantly, such decisions need to be made within the context of the overall level of funding agreed by the Executive, which is covered by recommendation 2.4 in this report.

Spending on the High Needs Block and the Safety Valve Programme

- 8.17 It is widely known that for many councils, the cost of supporting pupils with SEND is significantly above the amount of DSG funding allocated by the DfE. For Bracknell Forest, an £8.928m overspend on HNB is currently forecast for 2023/24. Recognising the scale of this issue across the country, the Government introduced regulations to ensure that any accrued deficit is not a liability on councils but remains a DfE responsibility, initially until 31 March 2023, recently extended to 2026.
- 8.18 Alongside this, the DfE has also introduced a more rigorous monitoring and intervention regime where council areas are accruing large deficit balances or experiencing a significant reduction in a surplus. It has previously been reported to the Executive that Bracknell Forest was invited to join this regime – called the Safety Valve programme - in July 2023 and through this is expected to agree plans to bring spending back in line with grant levels over the coming years. Should this be achieved to the DfE's satisfaction, the Government will make a contribution to help write off the deficit that has accumulated up to the point of that equilibrium being reached.
- 8.19 The timescale for Safety Valve proposals to be submitted and considered are determined by the DfE and are extremely challenging. The Council needs to submit its initial proposals by 15 December, and a final submission by 12 January. Details are set out in a specific report dealing with Safety Valve, which indicates that work on the initial proposal with informal feedback from the Council's DfE appointed Safety Valve advisors is continuing and is unlikely to be completed much in advance of the 15 December deadline. For the purposes of this report, it has been assumed that any immediate implication of Safety Valve on the Council's 2024/25 general fund budget will be neutral.
- 8.20 The Safety Valve process is initially focused on options to reduce spending on SEND services, predominantly by investing in more local provision to enable a significant reduction in the current reliance on expensive out-of-borough schools, with limited immediate impact on the Council generally. However, the need to identify funding to write off the Council's share of the accumulated deficit, that is expected to be around £30m by the end of the current financial year and will continue to grow for some time

in the years ahead, presents an enormous financial challenge for the Council. While its balance sheet is currently healthy, with a higher level of usable general and earmarked reserves than many local authorities, the total of these may not be sufficient. Moreover, if the Council's reserves were to be reduced to a bare minimum level, there would be no protection against spending pressures and rising demand that all local authorities typically face. The Council has therefore requested that consideration be given to allowing it to access financial flexibilities that have been offered to local authorities experiencing extreme financial difficulties, to help ensure it can avoid reaching this position.

Reserves

- 8.21 The Council has an estimated £11.08m available in General Reserves as at 31 March 2024, if spending in the current year matches the approved budget. Details are contained in Table 6.

Table 6: General Reserves as at 31 March 2024

	£m
General Fund	11.08
Planned use in 2023/24	0.00
Estimated Balance as at 31 March 2024	11.08

- 8.22 The Council has, in the past, planned on maintaining a minimum prudential balance currently assessed to be £4.5m. This assessment is based on the financial risks which face the Council and the Executive Director: Resources considers these in the February report to the Executive at which a final decision on the use of balances can be taken, taking account of the financial position likely to face the Council over the next five years.
- 8.23 The Council used a one-off contribution of £3.590m from the Future Funding Reserve to balance the budget in 2023/24. This reserve was deliberately established to help manage the Medium Term financial position and is expected to have a balance of £16.3m available at the 31 March 2024.

9 SUMMARY

- 9.1 Adding the draft proposals to the Commitment Budget and taking account of the corporate issues identified above would result in total expenditure of £103.429m as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Summary of proposals:

	£'000
Commitment Budget	90,202
Reversal of the one-off transfer from the Business Rates Reliefs Reserve used to fund the estimated Collection Fund - Business Rates deficit for 2022/23.	4,480
Reversal of one-off transfer from the Future Funding Reserve used to balance the budget in 2023/24.	3,590
Reduction in Business Rates income	500
Reduction in New Homes Bonus	300
Increase in Social Care Grants	-1,251
Budget Pressures (including increase in Contingency)	5,655
Budget Economies	-5,490
Capital Programme	163
Inflation Provision	5,280
Draft Budget Requirement 2024/25	103,429

- 9.2 Without the Provisional Finance Settlement, assumptions have had to be made on the level of grant income. It has been assumed that the Council can anticipate income of up to -£96.499m. This arises from Revenue Support Grant (-£2.191m), Business Rates baseline funding (-£17.811m) and Council Tax at 2023/24 levels (-£76.497m).
- 9.3 With the potential overall cost of the budget package being consulted on in the region of £103.429m, this leaves a potential gap of around £6.930m. Members can choose to adopt any or all of the following approaches in order to bridge the remaining gap:
- an increase in Council Tax;
 - an appropriate contribution from the Council's revenue reserves, bearing in mind the Medium Term financial position;
 - identification of further savings proposals.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The Council's constitution requires a consultation period of at least six weeks on the draft budget proposals. In this context, it is inevitable that, of the broad range of options proposed for consultation, not all will necessarily be included in the final budget package. It is also likely that some further issues with a financial impact will arise between now and February. When the Final Settlement is known, the Executive can consider the prudent use of revenue reserves to support expenditure in line with the overall medium term financial strategy, along with any further expenditure reductions.
- 10.2 It is suggested, therefore, that the normal process whereby the Overview & Scrutiny Commission reviews the overall budget package during the consultation period is followed. The proposals will also be placed on the Council's website for public consultation.
- 10.3 All comments from the Overview & Scrutiny Commission and all others will then be submitted to the Executive on 6 February 2024. This will allow the Executive to

determine the final budget package and recommend the appropriate Council Tax level to the Council on 21 February 2024.

11 BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24- VIREMENT REQUEST

- 11.1 A virement is the transfer of resources between two budgets but it does not increase the overall budget approved by the Council. Financial Regulations require formal approval by the Executive of any virement between £0.050m and £0.100m and of virements between directorates of any amount. Full Council approval is required for virements over £0.100m. During 2023/24 several virements have been identified which require the approval of the Executive. These have been previously reported to the Corporate Management Team which recommends them to the Executive for approval. They have been included in the Quarterly Service Reports. Details of virements between directorates are set out in Annexe F. Details of internal virements exceeding £0.050m are set out in Annexe G.

12 WRITE-OFF REQUEST

- 12.1 A prior commercial property tenant accumulated a significant level of rental arrears over a number of years. All opportunities for recovery have now been exhausted and the only option is to now write off this debt, totalling £54,149.60. This situation had been envisaged and the Council is able to draw down on a revenue reserve to cover the total value of this write off in the current financial year. All write-offs exceeding £50,000 require Executive Approval, which is now sought.

13 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Legal Comments

- 13.1 The Council is legally obliged to calculate the Council Tax Base for 2024/2025 by 31 January 2024. Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as inserted by the Localism Act 2011, imposes a duty on the Council, as a billing authority, to calculate its Council Tax by applying a formula laid down in that Section. The formula involves a figure for the Council Tax Base for the year, which must itself be calculated. The Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 require a billing authority to use a given formula to calculate the Council Tax Base.

Finance Comments

- 13.2 The financial implications of this report are included in the supporting information.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 13.3 The Council's final budget proposals will potentially impact on all areas of the community. A detailed consultation process is planned in order to provide individuals and groups with the opportunity to comment on the draft proposals. This will ensure that in making final recommendations, the Executive can be made aware of the views of a broad section of residents and service users. Several of the budget proposals require specific equality impact assessments to be carried out and draft versions of these are attached in Annexe I. Consultation with equalities groups that are likely to be affected by the proposal is part of the assessment process.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 13.4 A contingency of £3.000m is currently included in the draft proposals to meet the costs of unpredictable or unforeseen items that would represent in year budget risks. The Executive will need to make a judgement on the level of contingency at its meeting in February.
- 13.5 The Executive Director: Resources, as the Council’s Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer), must formally certify that the budget is sound. This will involve identifying and assessing the key risk areas in the budget to ensure the robustness of estimates and ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage those risks, including maintaining an appropriate level of reserves and Contingency. This formalises work that is normally undertaken each year during the budget preparation stages and in monthly monitoring after the budget is agreed. The Executive Director: Resources will report his findings in February, when the final budget package is recommended for approval.

Climate Change Implications

- 13.6 There are no implications arising from the proposals in this report, which are presenting draft budget options for consultation.

14 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 14.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Commission will be consulted on the budget proposals and may also choose to direct specific issues to individual overview and scrutiny panels. Targeted consultation exercises will be undertaken with business rate payers, the Schools Forum, town and parish councils and voluntary organisations. Comments and views will be sought on both the overall budget package and on the detailed budget proposals. In addition, this report and all the supporting information are publicly available to any individual or group who wish to comment on any proposal included within it. To facilitate this, the full budget package will be placed on the Council’s web site at <http://consult.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/portal> and it is intended that consultation events will be organised in local community settings during January. There will also be a dedicated mailbox to collect comments.
- 14.2 The timetable for the approval of the 2024/25 Budget is as follows.

Executive agrees proposals as basis for consultation	12 December 2023
Consultation period	13 December 2023 - 23 January 2024
Executive considers representations made and recommends budget.	06 February 2024
Council considers Executive budget proposals	21 February 2024

Background Papers

None

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Commitment Budget 2023/24 to 2025/26

	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Central				
Approved Budget	15,145	15,312	14,901	15,104
Residents Survey			20	-20
Local Development Framework		14	133	-141
Revenues		-320		
The Look Out		-50	-50	
Queens' Platinum Jubilee		-55		
External Auditor Fees			100	
Net Inter Departmental Virements	167			
Central Departments Adjusted Budget	15,312	14,901	15,104	14,943
Delivery				
Approved Budget	17,184	17,310	17,007	16,766
Waste Disposal PFI		55	50	31
Neighbourhood Plan Referendums - Warfield and Winkfield		-60		
Greening Waste Collection Arrangements		-13	-15	-15
Borough Elections		120	-120	
Revenue impact of 2022/23 Capital Programme - London Road Landfill Works		30		
ICT - Rationalisation		-90		
ICT - Business Change Programme		-150	-150	
Leisure Contract Management Fee		-189		
Invest to Save - Carbon Reduction Initiatives		-6	-6	
Net Inter Departmental Virements	126			
Delivery Adjusted Budget	17,310	17,007	16,766	16,782
People				
Approved Budget	68,908	69,293	69,863	69,790
Suitability surveys			20	-20
Schools Budget - Funding for New Schools		-182		
Schools Budget - High Needs deficit to be charged to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account		TBC		
Heathlands		-14		
Forestcare			-153	
Foster Care Allowances - Mainstream		371		
Enhanced Foster Care Pilot		-86	86	
Social Worker Recruitment and Retention Package		456		
Children's Support Services – Pathway for Adulthood SEND Officer		52		
Invest to Save - Carbon Reduction Initiatives		-27	-26	
Net Inter Departmental Virements	385			
People Adjusted Budget	69,293	69,863	69,790	69,770
Total Service Departments	101,915	101,771	101,660	101,495
Non-Departmental / Council Wide				
Approved Budget	-13,124	-13,802	-12,639	-12,346
Minimum and Voluntary Revenue Provision		198	168	53
Increase in employers Pension Fund contributions		330	125	125
2022/23 Capital Programme - (Full Year Effect) Interest		66		
2022/23 Use of Balances (Full Year Effect) - Interest		12		
Earmarked Reserve - Funding for New Schools		182		
Schools Budget - High Needs deficit to be charged to the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account		TBC		
Earmarked Reserves - Revenues		320		
Earmarked Reserves - Queens' Platinum Jubilee		55		
Net Inter Departmental Virements	-678			
Non-Departmental / Council Wide Adjusted Budget	-13,802	-12,639	-12,346	-12,168
TOTAL BUDGET	88,113	89,132	89,314	89,327
Change in commitment budget		1,019	182	13

For management purposes budgets are controlled on a cash basis. The following figures which are used for public reports represent the cost of services including recharges and capital charges:

	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Central	21,608	21,197	21,400	21,239
Delivery	17,585	17,282	17,041	17,057
People	96,417	96,987	96,914	96,894
Non-Departmental / Council Wide	-47,497	-46,334	-46,041	-45,863
	88,113	89,132	89,314	89,327

Movements

Central
 Delivery
 People
 Non Departmental/Council Wide

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Central	-411	203	-161
Delivery	-303	-241	16
People	570	-73	-20
Non Departmental/Council Wide	1,163	293	178
	1,019	182	13

Description of Commitment Budget Items for 2023/24 to 2025/26

Directorate and Item	Description
Central	
Residents Survey	The Council commissions a survey of residents in the Borough to help guide future policies. The surveys are every three years with the next survey due in 2024/25.
Local Development Framework	<p>The Framework comprises a set of Local Plans containing policies to guide the future development of the Borough including where new development should go and policies to protect valuable and sensitive areas. The Council is required to produce evidence to support their policies and to be able to demonstrate that they are sound to an independent Inspector. This requires a large amount of specialist consultancy advice to provide information on the levels of need for housing, employment, leisure, retail, and other forms of development. The identification of areas for development requires assessments of many factors such as archaeological potential, landscape quality, ecology, accessibility, and flood risk.</p> <p>The regulations covering the preparation of Local Plans also require the Council to carry out extensive consultation at various stages in the process and the Council is required to cover the cost of holding public examinations into Local Plans.</p>
Revenues	Reversal of the payments of £100 to households in receipt of Council Tax support (households paying council tax on lowest incomes) which was for 2022/23 only. This was funded from the Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve.
The Look Out	Additional income generated from Phase Two of the transformation of The Look Out.
Queen's Platinum Jubilee	Reversal of the budget built into 2022/23 for one year only to fund a programme of events to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with a corresponding transfer from Earmarked Reserves.
External Auditor Fees	Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) is currently procuring audit services for local authorities spanning the audits from 2023/24 to 2027/28. Although firm figures have yet to be provided, external audit fees are expected to increase significantly due to the turbulent market and a local audit system that is facing unprecedented difficulties in delivering audit opinions on time.
Delivery	
Waste Disposal PFI	Projection of contract costs for Recycling and Waste Disposal. The contract is shared with Wokingham and Reading Borough Councils.
Neighbourhood Plan Referendums - Warfield and Winkfield	The referenda took place in 2022/23 and therefore the associated budget can be removed in 2023/24.

Directorate and Item	Description
Green Waste Collection Arrangements	A food waste collection service and a change to the refuse collection frequency to once every three weeks was introduced from March 2021. This will reduce the Council's impact on Climate Change and generate savings over the life of the contract.
Borough Elections	Borough Elections will be held in May 2023.
London Road Landfill Works	Revenue impact of the 2022/23 capital programme. Costs associated with the audit and inspection of gas and leachate systems.
ICT - Rationalisation	Now new technology solutions are in place, there is an opportunity to decommission legacy applications and replace them with low-code developments, and to reduce the size of the ICT infrastructure estate required to support those applications. Achieving this level of saving will require corporate buy-in to the rationalisation programme, and sufficient resource in the digital development area.
ICT – Business Change Programme.	The future support model for the Cloud infrastructure will either enable a reduction in staffing if management of the Azure environment is delivered by a Cloud Service Provider, or a reduction in the cost of the Cloud Service Provider if management of the environment is brought in-house.
Leisure Contract Management Fee	In the 2022/23 budget there was a one-off reduction in the Management Fee (£0.150m). This will be repaid in equal instalments over the next 5 years (£0.030m). Additional Covid-19 support of £0.094m will also be repaid over the next 10 years (£0.009m). The original budget has also been re-instated in 2023/24.
Invest to Save - Carbon Reduction Initiatives	Implementation of several projects to help reduce the Council's energy costs and its carbon footprint. All schemes deliver savings at least equal to the cost of interest and the Minimum Revenue Provision resulting from the capital expenditure.
People	
Suitability surveys	Suitability and access surveys are undertaken every three years to update the Asset Management Plan so that up to date information is available to inform investment decisions on the capital programme.
Schools Budget – Funding for New Schools	There is a significant medium-term financial pressure on the Schools Budget arising from the cost of new schools that are being built in response to new housing and the resultant need for more school places. New schools generally need to open at the start of the developments and will take several years to fill up as house building continues. During this period, they need additional financial support to cover what can be significant diseconomies of scale. This cost pressure is not adequately resourced in the funding settlement from the government and to protect school

Directorate and Item	Description
	budgets the Council agreed to provide up to £1m of funding over four years. All funding has now been allocated and therefore the £0.182m provided in 2022/23 has been reversed in the Commitment Budget.
Schools Budget - High Needs deficit	Bracknell Forest along with many other councils has had to set a deficit budget for the High Needs Block. This deficit will be balanced in the Council's budget by a contribution from school reserves as it will need to be met from the DSG over the medium term. The Government is currently reviewing the arrangements for managing these deficits, with the current approach due to end in April 2023. The Council's budget proposals, informed by discussions with Government officials and the Local Government Association, assume that the current arrangements will be extended for a further period of three years.
Heathlands	New care home which opened in 2022. The Council has a contract for 36 of the beds at a competitive price. This is the full year effect of the savings
Forestcare	Removal of the pressure required while the trading account is moved to a sustainable position.
Foster Care Allowances - Mainstream	To ensure we can continue to recruit and retain high-quality local foster carers, increase resilience and improve permanence, allowance payments have been increased to a more competitive offer. This is expected to lead to some cost savings and cost avoidance by reducing reliance on more expensive alternative care options.
Foster Care Allowances - Enhanced Enhanced Foster Care Pilot	This scheme would initially focus on a six-month pilot with the expectation that it will be expanded if successful, using an "invest to save" approach. The proposal is to supplement the "core" allowances with additional weekly skills and complexity payments, where very experienced and skilled foster carers can support children who would otherwise require independent placements. The pilot includes two children "stepping down" from residential placements.
Social Worker Recruitment and Retention Package	Long-standing difficulties in recruiting and retaining these specialist staff has resulted in a review of current market factors and comparative salaries (locally and nationally). From the evidence gathered through the review, there is a justification to increase the base salary level for social workers generally which is expected to lead to a reduction in use of more expensive agency staff.
Children's Support Services – Pathway for Adulthood SEND Officer	A permanent Pathway for Adulthood Officer will address specific feedback from Ofsted that there is a lack of future aspiration and appropriate placements for children as they approach adulthood which has led to relatively high numbers of young people with SEND who are classed as Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET).

Directorate and Item	Description
Invest to Save - Carbon Reduction Initiatives	Implementation of several projects to help reduce the Council's energy costs and its carbon footprint. All schemes deliver savings at least equal to the cost of interest and the Minimum Revenue Provision resulting from the capital expenditure.
Non-Departmental / Council Wide	
Minimum and Voluntary Revenue Provision	The change in the principal repayment on borrowing used to finance capital expenditure.
Increase in employers Pension Fund contributions	Increase in payments required to meet prior year deficits at the level required by the Berkshire Pension Fund.
Interest on External Borrowing	Interest on borrowing required to finance the Council's Capital Programme. Reflects the impact of prior year underspends, the cash flow position and current interest rates.
2021/22 use of balances (full year effect) -Interest	The full year effect of the additional interest arising from the use of balances in 2021/22.
Earmarked Reserve – Funding for New Schools	There is a significant medium-term financial pressure on the Schools Budget arising from the cost of new schools that are being built in response to new housing and the resultant need for more school places. New schools generally need to open at the start of the developments and will take several years to fill up as house building continues. During this period, they need additional financial support to cover what can be significant diseconomies of scale. This cost pressure is not adequately resourced in the funding settlement from the government and in order to protect school budgets, up to £1m of funding will be provided by the Council over the next four years. All funding has now been allocated and therefore the £0.182m provided from Earmarked Reserves in 2022/23 has been reversed in the Commitment Budget.
Schools Budget - High Needs deficit	Bracknell Forest along with many other councils has had to set a deficit budget for the High Needs Block. This deficit will be balanced in the Council's budget by a contribution from school reserves as it will need to be met from the DSG over the medium term. The Government is currently reviewing the arrangements for managing these deficits, with the current approach due to end in April 2023. The Council's budget proposals, informed by discussions with Government officials and the Local Government Association, assume that the current arrangements will be extended for a further period of three years.
Earmarked Reserves - Revenues	Payments of £100 to households in receipt of Council Tax support (households paying council tax on lowest incomes) for 2022/23 only. This was funded from the Covid-19 Earmarked Reserve.
Earmarked Reserves - Queen's Platinum Jubilee	Reversal of the budget built into 2022/23 for one year only to fund a programme of events to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with a corresponding transfer from Earmarked Reserves.

CENTRAL

Description	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<p>Revenue – Council Tax</p> <p>Reduction in income budget to better reflect recent income received. Council Tax costs recovered through court judgements have been consistently below budgeted income since 2020, when courts were not sitting.</p>	25	0	0
<p>HR - Occupational Health</p> <p>The budget for Occupational Health services is held centrally and managed on behalf of the organisation by the Human Resources and Organisational Development team.</p> <p>The annual cost for the Counselling Service provided by VIVUP exceeds the £0.008m budget by £0.023m. There is also an annual cost of £0.002m for eye tests, for which there is no specific budget.</p> <p>The Occupational Health contract is due for renewal in July 2024. Early market indications are that costs will increase by around 10% resulting in a pressure of approximately £0.010m.</p>	33	2	0
<p>Internal Audit</p> <p>Creation of In-House audit team, see saving proposal that offsets additional costs.</p> <p>Two apprentices have been appointed, taking the level of staff employed temporarily above the agreed establishment, while they undertake professional training.</p>	61	0	0
<p>Internal Audit</p> <p>Making available budget provision to procure some external resources to help deliver the Internal Audit programme while the apprentices undertake training and develop skills to be able to undertake audit work.</p>	25	0	-25
<p>Technical Accountancy</p> <p>The small in-house team that manages the Council's core financial system Agresso requires external specialist support to maintain and develop the financial system. The need for this may reduce when the system is hosted by Agresso directly, which is set to become their only available model from the end of 2024. Cloud hosting costs</p>	50	0	0

in this environment are currently unknown but are likely to be more expensive than purchasing the specialist external support as proposed.			
HR/Payroll			
An extension is currently being negotiated with Midland Software, whose product is used for HR and Payroll	25	80	0
CENTRAL – RESOURCES TOTAL	219	82	-25

Description	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Engagement & Equalities			
Increase to the Involve Core Grant to support their free Funding Advisor/Grant Writer service for Bracknell Forest's voluntary, community and non-profit organisations and groups. This funding is matched by Wokingham Borough Council enabling a Funding Advisor role over 5 days.	6	0	0
Policy and Performance			
The In Phase contract value has increased above the budget available since the procurement was completed in 2023. The licence allows use of the performance management software, which enables the corporate reporting of essential performance information reported to residents and councillors quarterly.	5	0	0
Policy and Performance			
Cost of corporate performance reporting system migration, enabling investment to support the migration of our corporate performance reporting system from InPhase to a more cost-effective Microsoft alternative utilising Power BI and SharePoint lists.	15	0	0
CENTRAL – CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE TOTAL	26	0	0

Description	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<p>The Look Out</p> <p>Under recovery of income to meet current income target for the site as a whole.</p> <p>Additional capital investment and changes in charges may see The Look Out increase income, but this will not be until at least 2025/26.</p>	235	0	0
<p>Land Charges - Non Chargeable Account</p> <p>Reduction in income budget due to LLC1 income targets not being achieved for several years.</p>	10	0	0
<p>Traffic - Monitoring Street Works</p> <p>Reduction in income budget as increased target over time has exceeded recovery opportunities.</p>	50	0	0
<p>Planning - Development Management</p> <p>Reduction in the income target as the budget is not being achieved.</p> <p>The pressure is based on an extrapolation of the income received so far in 2023/24, taking into account fee increases of between 25% and 35% (depending on application type).</p>	720	-320	0
<p>Parks & Countryside</p> <p>Reduction in income budget due to Licensing income targets not being achieved.</p>	30	0	0
<p>Parks & Countryside - Tree Service</p> <p>In order to maintain public safety, an increase in regular monitoring of and works to trees within the Borough.</p>	25	0	0
<p>Public Transport Strategy</p> <p>Income target not achievable as the purchase of the Bracknell Forest Council modelling service by developers has continued to decline.</p>	20	0	0
<p>SANG Drawdown</p> <p>Due to a slowdown in receipts, the current drawdown to support budgets is unsustainable and needs to be reduced.</p>	0	200	0

<p>Planning - Development Management</p> <p>An increase in the budget for appeal costs awarded against the Council. Appeals costs exceed the current budget as a result of Committee decisions.</p>	29	0	0
<p>Planning</p> <p>Planning System upgrade (also covers Trees, Building Control and Highways).</p> <p>The Uniform system is based on very dated software architecture and the annual licence fees are relatively costly. The dated nature of the system results in frequent service issues that affect officer work and customer experience. It also results in the need to resolve unanticipated problems that arise following system upgrades such as loss of mapping functionality.</p>	140	-95	-95
<p>CENTRAL – PLACE, PLANNING & REGENERATION TOTAL</p>	1,259	-215	-95

DELIVERY

Description	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<p>Democratic & Registration Services A new post is required to support the opposition political groups following the May 2023 election and the change in administration. Due to the increased size and mix of opposition, it is now necessary to have a post that can support them.</p>	22	0	0
<p>Waste Disposal Budget increase to match the anticipated spend on the Waste Disposal PFI arrangement.</p>	962	0	0
<p>Waste Collection/Recycling Ongoing revenue costs relating to the purchase of a new waste collection vehicle. These costs are partially offset by a corresponding saving relating to Brown Bin income, and also an increase in the fees and charges from 1st April 2024.</p>	130	0	0
<p>Leisure Due to the aging buildings, the reactive maintenance budget has been overspent consistently over the last few years. This pressure increases the budget to the anticipated level of expenditure required.</p>	40	0	0
<p>Car Parking Due to the closure of High Street Car Park, a proportion of the income generated at this site will be lost. It is expected that some income will be retained at other town centre car parks, so this pressure will reduce down the income target accordingly. (Links to the corresponding saving relating to expenditure budgets at High Street Car Park).</p>	50	0	0
<p>Office Accommodation Previous savings relating to the letting out of Time Square have not been achieved. This pressure therefore reduces the income target. Possible options for the use of this space are being considered.</p>	92	0	0
DELIVERY TOTAL	1,296	0	0

PEOPLE

Description	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<p>Adult Social Care Costs This pressure represents the current cost of care packages and population data on the increase in population and therefore the likely increases in number requiring Social Care particularly in the over 65s cohort. It also includes an estimate of the costs arising from young people turning 18 and transferring into Adult Social Care.</p>	2,090	1,585	997
<p>Housing and Welfare Updating of Software systems.</p>	37	25	25
<p>Welfare Service Creation of Financial Inclusion Service The team currently delivering financial hardship advice and support are funded by one off grants and previously allocated hardship funds. It is currently unclear whether any such funding will be made available by the Government in 2024/25. A proposal has been made to provide £0.100m of funding next year from the Community Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) grant, which will enable a service to be maintained for a further 12 months, although at a reduced level than the current offer.</p>	0	100	0
<p>Special Education Needs (SEN) Team: Restructure This is a provisional estimate subject to an on-going Business Case which considers demand pressures and statutory timescales. It will also consider the need to make permanent a number of posts that are currently funded on a time limited, temporary basis.</p>	100	0	0
<p>Early Help Youth Service Review Provision of an educational youth programme for young people with mild to moderate SEND from year 9, in line with preparing for adulthood, to age 25, offering a series of life skills workshops alongside enrichment activities.</p>	0	32	0
<p>Home to School Transport / Fleet An initial estimate of likely costs of providing pupil transport requirements in accordance with the provisions of Council policy. The increasing numbers of SEND pupils, in particular, indicates a cost pressure.</p>	150	0	0
<p>Children's Social Care - Section 17 Payments. There has been an increase in demand and complexity of assessed need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their family settings.</p>	50	0	0

Description	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Children's Social Care - Preplacement support Additional staffing support to enable placements to be stable and safe and reduce risks of escalation to residential.	40	0	0
Children's Specialist Support Team - Direct Payments Budget. This is a growing client group with a 15% increase in demand for social care support from the team since June 2020. Direct payments are part of the offer that enables children with disabilities to remain at home.	35	0	0
Children's Social Care - Foster Panel. Increased number of foster panels, undertaken by independent assessors. It relates to improved practice so that all foster home reviews return to panel every three years.	17	0	0
Children's Social Care - Support to Mosaic Interface. Ongoing maintenance of the interface by The Access Group, enabling the business improvements associated with using the financial module.	8	0	0
Funding contribution from maintained schools For statutory education related services. Income to support statutory education related duties is automatically lost from schools that convert to an academy.	25	25	25
Historic commitments in the Schools block A range of defined services that support vulnerable young people are currently jointly funded by the Council and the grant funded Schools Budget. Funding is being reduced which increases the element met by the Council.	33	26	21
PEOPLE TOTAL	2,585	1,793	1,068

COUNCIL WIDE

Description	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Corporate Wide Items A saving was built into the 2023/24 budget relating to the review of essential car user allowances across the Council. The review never took resulting in a pressure in 2023/24. This saving is no longer achievable.	20	0	0
Corporate Contingency The Contingency has been increased from £2.75m to £3m to reflect the increases in financial risks to the budget. The appropriate level will be kept under review between now and February.	250	0	0
COUNCIL WIDE TOTAL	270	0	0

CENTRAL - CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Chief Executive's Office Termination of the Improvement and Efficiency Enterprise (iESE), Local Government Association Inform Plus and Localis subscriptions.	12	0	0
Policy & Performance Termination of In-Phase contract. ICT support may be required in developing a Microsoft based alternative solution during 2024/25.	0	0	18
Communications Reduce to one re-branded edition of a printed residents' magazine (currently known as Town & Country) per year, from two, and continue to increase resident engagement with digital news/ emails. Some impact on customers who do not engage with digital platforms. Focus on actions that mitigate the reduction to 1 hard copy edition.	10	0	0
Engagement and Equalities Stop consultation with residents through the satisfaction survey that is conducted every 3 years. Service teams will need to look for other ways to consult with residents on their opinions and satisfaction with services.	39	0	0
PA Support Review PA support council wide and requirements in the context of digital transformation and increased self-service. The figure assumes a 20% reduction in PA support based on changing requirements.	0	0	91
CENTRAL - CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE TOTAL	61	0	109

CENTRAL – RESOURCES

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<p>Audit Removal of the budget for contractors to undertake internal audits to offset the pressure on staffing costs relating to the creation of an in-house team.</p> <p>There will be no budget remaining to support delivery of internal audits by external contractors, although a pressure has been submitted to request temporary provision during the transition to a fully internal team.</p>	61	0	0
<p>Human Resources Restructure including the move of the Payroll team into HR to streamline operational arrangements and enable the deletion of a vacant post.</p>	73	0	0
<p>Organisational Development Reduction in centralised training budgets, remaining budgets will be managed to ensure service critical training is received.</p>	25	0	0
<p>Devolved Staffing Budget Increase of the managed vacancy factor (MVF). To achieve the increased MVF vacancies will need to be held for longer which may impact on service and support provide.</p>	39	0	0
<p>Finance Deletion of one vacant Apprentice post. There will still be five apprentice posts across the directorate.</p> <p>Workload will be spread amongst existing staff which may result in delays or a reduction in support to services. Could also impact on succession planning within the team.</p>	33	0	0
<p>Finance Reduction in various supplies and services budgets.</p>	10	0	0
<p>CENTRAL – RESOURCES TOTAL</p>	241	0	0

CENTRAL – PLACE, PLANNING & REGENERATION

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Transportation Planning Reduction in supplies and services budgets in line with prior years expenditure.	20	0	0
Traffic Signals Terminate the Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) system service payment to Reading Borough Council and establish local Bracknell Forest Council control.	10	15	0
Traffic Income budget to reflect a net administration fee for works of 15%	25	0	0
Transport Strategy Allocation of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure and Bus Service Improvement Plan grants received from the Department of Transport to support Bracknell Forest Council staff resourcing (as intended by the grant allocations). Future year grant allocations not yet known for 2025/26 or 2026/27.	150	TBC	TBC
Devolved Staffing Budget Increase of the managed vacancy factor (MVF), To achieve the increased MVF vacancies will need to be held for longer which may impact on service and support provide.	56	0	0
Concessionary Fares Revert to reimbursing operators for actual pass holder trips (not to pre-Covid levels). New supported bus contracts already include this change (i.e., reimbursement of actual pass holder trips) from 1st August 2023.	75	0	0
Building Control Remove the dangerous structures 24/7/365 standby rota. No saving but will reduce overall spend of Building Control which is outside of the Devolved Staffing Budget. Any dangerous structures in the borough will be inspected by the Council Mon-Fri 9am-5pm only. Residents will need to obtain their own advice and solutions to protect health, safety and welfare of the public should an incident occur out of hours. The responsibility to resolve dangers posed by dangerous structures rests with the owner of the structure, with enforcement powers resting with the Council under Sections 77 and 78 of the Building Act 1984 if necessary. In line with Building Regulations the service operates a full cost recovery model which incorporates corporate recharges. The service currently cannot generate sufficient income to cover its	0	0	0

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
costs and is therefore reporting a deficit. The proposed saving will reduce the overall costs working towards the required break-even position. The net budget must be zero, so this saving cannot result in an expenditure budget change without a reduction in income budget.			
<p>S278/38 fee income Increased use of the reserve for two years - can be revisited for future years.</p> <p>This reserve fund has been static at approximately £1.4m and whilst some long-term draw down is already built into existing savings trajectories there is scope to make further use of the balance.</p>	300	0	-300
<p>Commuted Sums Increased use of the reserve for two years.</p> <p>This reserve fund is approximately £0,800m and whilst some long-term draw down is already built into existing savings trajectories there is scope to make further use of the balance.</p>	50	0	-50
<p>Town Centre Reduction in various supplies and services budgets</p>	10	0	0
<p>Town centre Additional TV screen advertising income.</p>	13	0	0
<p>Street Lighting Apply a 10% dimming on current street lighting levels to save an estimated 134,014 kWh of energy per annum, contributing to a reduction in Carbon emissions across the borough.</p>	55	0	0
<p>Public Bus Subsidies Use Bus Service Improvement Plan grant funding to support bus services until the end of the contract period (Aug 2026).</p>	145	0	-95
<p>S278/38 fee income Benchmarking against other local authorities suggests that there is scope to increase the fee charge to 13% (from 10%) calculated against the value of the developer's highway works.</p>	13	0	0
CENTRAL – PLACE, PLANNING & REGENERATION TOTAL	922	15	-445

DELIVERY

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Office Accommodation Due to underspends in previous years, budgets will be reduced for the shredding contract (£0.005m), print room reprographics (£0.050m) and Courier vehicle charges (£0.008m)	63	0	0
Office Accommodation The purchase of a piece of equipment will enable a saving to be achieved by bringing in-house an element of the bulk printing contract.	5	0	0
Office Accommodation If the centralised stationery budget is removed in its entirety, thus discouraging unnecessary purchases, a saving of £0.022m can be achieved. In addition, if all meeting refreshments are stopped, a saving of £0.014m can be achieved.	36	0	0
Office Accommodation Restructure within the facilities team to reduce the team by 1.0 Full Time Equivalent. Options are currently being reviewed as the facilities team now support Binfield and Bucklers Park community hubs. An alternative option considered involves using vacant hours from members of staff having recently reduced their hours to offset this saving.	27	0	0
Leisure Additional management fee to be received from Everyone Active in relation to the Bracknell Leisure Centre refurbishment project and Coral Reef gift shop project.	125	0	0
Waste Collection A new truck is to be purchased to enable the garden waste collection service to be provided to all those who have expressed an interest and to maintain the service for those customers already signed up. This saving will increase the income target accordingly.	75	0	0
Grounds Maintenance/Street Cleansing Reduce weed killing from 3 sprays per annum to 2 (£0.030m) and reduce residential verge cuts (£0.046m) from every 2-3 weeks to every 4-6 weeks.	76	4	0
Grounds Maintenance/Street Cleansing Reduce the number of litter bins across the Borough (circa 450-500 reduction out of 900) to match need.	0	30	0
Grounds Maintenance/Street Cleansing Change the specification for the town centre cleansing operation. This will reduce staff from 4 to 2 and means cover will only be provided 5 days a week (Mon-Fri).	46	4	0

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Grounds Maintenance Reduction in the budget for the Landscape recovery fund.	15	0	0
Car Parking Introduce staff parking charges for all staff, including senior officers, at Time Square and Braccan Walk.	50	0	0
Car Parking A reduction in the level of maintenance carried out at the car parks can produce a saving of £0.010m.	10	0	0
Car Parking With the closure of High Street Car Park, some of the expenditure budgets will no longer be required. This will be dependent on the site being removed from the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) business rates valuation list. <i>This is partially offset by the pressure relating to the loss of income in relation to this site.</i>	123	0	0
Electoral and Registration Services An increase in the income target for marriages is suggested due to overachievement in previous years (£0.023m), a reduction in the refreshments budget for registration services (£0.001m), a review of staffing across the two areas to create shared posts to reduce staffing while maintaining resilience (£0.25m), and a reduction in supplies and services within Electoral Services due to underspends in previous year (£0.001m)	50	0	0
Members and Mayoralty Small reductions in budgets across various supplies and services due to underspends in the previous year (£0.005m) and a reduction in conference fees (£0.005m) within Member Services so that attendance will be at approved conferences only.	10	0	0
Committee Services/Scrutiny Increase the income target for School Admissions appeals due to overachievement in previous years and reduce the printing budget (£0.001m) and delete a vacant post within Committee/Scrutiny (£0.030m).	31	0	0
Legal Services Increases in the income targets for S106 legal fees (£0.015m) and School's SLA's (£0.003m) due to overachievement in previous years. In addition, reduce the seminar costs budget (£0.001m) due to underspends in previous years.	19	0	0
Libraries/Customer Services Review of the Libraries and Customer Services management structures. Phase one of the programme of developing community hub libraries will be merging the leadership teams of Customer Services and Libraries. The saving will be from the reduction of one Head of Service and closure of the Home library	113	88	0

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
service. Year 2 will be to reduce the number of supervisors from 6 to 4 (2FTE + 2 phones)			
DELIVERY TOTAL	874	126	0

PEOPLE

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<p>Adult Social Care - Promoting Independence Our new way of working (The Target Operating Model) has been developed with a focus on building independence for adults through early intervention and prevention to ensure people achieve their optimum level of independence. This is being achieved by providing effective information, advice and guidance, the use of equipment and Assistive Technology and rehabilitation / reablement. It will also look at supporting people within friendship groups and activities to improve outcomes.</p>	948	458	0
<p>Adult Social Care-Managing the Market Review of provider market unit costs with a view to achieving efficiencies and effectively managing cost.</p>	300	0	0
<p>Adult Social Care- Maximising external grants The service is supported by a range of grants The objective of this approach will facilitate timely discharge from hospital and maximising independence through a focus of returning home rather than entering residential or nursing care which is much more expensive. The objective will be achieved through focusing an increased level of Better Care Funding to support this process.</p>	500	0	0
<p>Housing Temporary Accommodation Rental income from additional units purchased through the Local Authority Housing Fund.</p>	85	85	131
<p>Children Looked After Practice continues to see the number of Children Looked After reducing. The average for the last 2 years has reduced to 114 placements compared to 121 over the last 4 years. Current data, which is high cost, volatile and subject to change at short notice, projects a net saving against accommodation and care provision, plus a range of related support services.</p>	390	0	0
<p>Public Law Outline Assessments (pre court process) Costs have reduced and this is expected to be permanent.</p>	24	0	0
<p>School Places, Property and Admissions Due to underspends in previous years, it is proposed to remove the budget for the fees for brought in-services.</p>	13	0	0
<p>Standards and Effectiveness Reduction in capacity can be managed as schools that convert to an academy are no longer supported.</p>	34	24	0
<p>PRC / Dismissal Cost Former teacher pension liabilities continue to reduce as a result of mortality rates with no new commitments being made.</p>	54	30	30

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Early Years Services Government reforms of the early years entitlements will result in significantly more income being received. This enables more grant to be applied to council funded expenditure where this is incurred to support providers. This will need to be reviewed for subsequent years once longer term government plans are confirmed.	253	-253	0
PEOPLE TOTAL	2,601	344	161

COUNCIL WIDE

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
<p>Levying Bodies The budget relating to Magistrates Courts Loan Charges has been underspent in previous years. This budget relates to the revenue cost of capital expenditure incurred while Magistrates Courts Committees were still the responsibility of Local Government. This responsibility ended in 2005.</p>	2	0	0
<p>Financial Adjustments Used for write-on/offers and annual adjustments to the bad debt provision for council wide debts. Spend has been quite volatile but the trend over the last few years suggests the budget can be reduced.</p>	9	0	0
<p>Car Mileage Claims The budgets relating to Car Mileage Claims have been underspent for several years. This saving will be allocated across directorates.</p>	180	0	0
<p>Business Change Programme - Neighbourhood Assets and Regeneration / Climate Change Significantly reduce operating costs and generate income by taking a strategic planned approach to analysing and rationalising our property estate. Ensure an efficient and suitable property portfolio that suits the requirements of service delivery and minimises underutilisation.</p> <p>Complementing and informing the Council's Borough-wide climate change and net zero activities, provide a clear focus on our internal work to drive at pace the Council's adaption to climate change and deliver reductions in our own carbon emissions and those from our supply chain and commissioned services.</p>	250	200	250
<p>Business Change Programme – Digital Efficiency Focus on delivering efficient, sustainable, innovative, digital-enabled customer focussed services. Simplify and rationalise systems and data storage to maximise efficiencies and deliver better value from data insight.</p>	250	300	450
<p>Business Change Programme – Workforce Retention and Recruitment Build a thriving, diverse and engaged workforce that drives our organisational effectiveness. Be known for attracting, nurturing and retaining exceptional talent. Through this, increase the number of permanent, core employees and enable reliance on agency workers to be reduced. This will mitigate current pressures / overspends on staffing budgets but not initially enable budget reductions.</p>	0	TBD	TBD

Description Impact	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000
Business Change Programme – Programme costs Alternative funding of programme sponsors, and part of the support service costs included in the flexible use of capital receipts strategy.	100	0	0
COUNCIL WIDE TOTAL	791	500	700

CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service: Town Centre Management

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	44	46

Are concessions available? Yes, Community groups and local charities pay a reduced cost - non refundable admin fee only (£50)

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%

All commercial activity in the town centre is going to be booked via our commercialisation contractor. There are no set fees as each proposal is considered on a case by case basis

CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Building Control

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	490	459

Are concessions available? There are some concessions for the disabled, which are detailed in the tables below.

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%

BUILDING REGULATIONS

Where FULL PLANS are submitted, the charges for Building Regulations are normally submitted in two stages; Stage One: (The Plan Charge) - on submission of the application; Stage Two: (The Inspection Charge) - Following the first site inspection, for which you will be invoiced. You must pay the first charge when depositing the application; the second charge is payable on demand from the Council after the first relevant site inspection has been carried out.

Where a BUILDING NOTICE is submitted instead of Full plans, the full charge is payable at the time of submission.

The charges for Building Regulation work are established at a level to cover the cost of the service so the applicant only pays for the service they need. Under the new Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010, there are two methods that Bracknell Building Control may use to establish the charge for building work. 1) Establishment of a standard charge or; 2) An individually determined charge.

Standard Charges:

The majority of domestic extensions and alteration work will generally attract a charge which falls within our 'Standard Charges' tables. Charges will not be payable for certain aspects of work, carried out for the benefit of disabled persons. The standard charges have been set on the basis that building work does not consist of, or include high risk or innovative construction which may require additional checking for compliance. Also, that the duration of the project from commencement to completion does not exceed 12 months. It is also assumed that the building work will be undertaken by a person or company who is competent to carry out the relevant design and building work. If not the work may incur supplementary charges.

If the charge for your building regulations work is not listed as a standard charge it will be individually determined.

Individually Determined Charges:

This method of determining the charge relates mainly to commercial projects or larger domestic schemes and includes all other work that is not listed in or 'Standard Charges' tables A to C. This includes:

- Building work in relation to more than one building.
- Building work consisting of a domestic extension where the floor area exceeds 60m².
- Applications subject to a reversion charge (work reverting form and approved inspector to the local authority).
- Building work consisting of alterations to a domestic property where the estimated cost of work exceeds £100,000.
- Building work consisting of a non-exempt domestic garage or carport with a floor area in excess of 60m².
- Non-domestic building work consisting of alterations, extension or new build where the cost of work exceeds £100,000.
- Work consisting of the erection or conversion of 5 or more dwellings or where the floor area of a dwelling exceeds 500m². For all new housing schemes please contact our office in the first instance for an individually determined quote.

If your building work is defined as requiring an individual determined charge, please contact us at 01344 354100 or email building.control@bracknell-forest.gov.uk with a description of the work and we will contact you to discuss a charge.

PROPOSAL**Domestic Plan Charge (Full Plans)**

Domestic extension not exceeding 10 sq. m floor area	250.00	208.33	275.00	229.17	10.0
Domestic extension exceeding 10 sq. m but not exceeding 40 sq. m floor area	312.00	260.00	344.00	286.67	10.3
Domestic extension exceeding 40 sq. m but not exceeding 60 sq. m floor area	555.00	462.50	611.00	509.17	10.1
Loft conversion - Any extension or alteration of a dwelling consisting of one or more rooms in a roof space providing the cost of the works is less than £38,000.	433.00	360.83	477.00	397.50	10.2
Attached/Detached garage or car port (or both) not exceeding 60 sq. m in floor area and to be used in common with an existing building and which is not an exempt building	148.00	123.33	163.00	135.83	10.1
Conversion of garage into habitable use (Cost of works not exceeding £10,000).	250.00	208.33	275.00	229.17	10.0
Window replacement (non competent persons scheme)	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0
Installation of domestic solar panels/wind turbines	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0
Re-wiring or new electrical installation of a dwelling	148.00	123.33	163.00	135.83	10.1
Any electrical work other than re-wiring of a dwelling	148.00	123.33	163.00	135.83	10.1
Renovation of a thermal element	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0

Domestic Inspection Charge (Full Plans)

Domestic extension not exceeding 10 sq. m floor area	432.00	360.00	476.00	396.67	10.2
Domestic extension exceeding 10 sq. m but not exceeding 40 sq. m floor area	491.00	409.17	541.00	450.83	10.2
Domestic extension exceeding 40 sq. m but not exceeding 60 sq. m floor area	546.00	455.00	601.00	500.83	10.1
Loft conversion - Any extension or alteration of a dwelling consisting of one or more rooms in a roof space providing the cost of the works is less than £38,000.	428.00	356.67	471.00	392.50	10.0
Attached/Detached garage or car port (or both) not exceeding 60 sq. m in floor area and to be used in common with an existing building and which is not an exempt building	411.00	342.50	453.00	377.50	10.2
Conversion of garage into habitable use (Cost of works not exceeding £10,000).	308.00	256.67	339.00	282.50	10.1
Re-wiring or new electrical installation of a dwelling	356.00	296.67	392.00	326.67	10.1
Any electrical work other than re-wiring of a dwelling	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0

Domestic Charge (Building Notice)

Domestic extension not exceeding 10 sq. m floor area	684.00	570.00	753.00	627.50	10.1
Domestic extension exceeding 10 sq. m but not exceeding 40 sq. m floor area	805.00	670.83	886.00	738.33	10.1
Domestic extension exceeding 40 sq. m but not exceeding 60 sq. m floor area	1,106.00	921.67	1,217.00	1,014.17	10.0
Loft conversion - Any extension or alteration of a dwelling consisting of one or more rooms in a roof space providing the cost of the works is less than £38,000.	862.00	718.33	949.00	790.83	10.1
Attached/Detached garage or car port (or both) not exceeding 60 sq. m in floor area and to be used in common with an existing building and which is not an exempt building	557.00	464.17	613.00	510.83	10.1
Conversion of garage into habitable use (Cost of works not exceeding £10,000).	557.00	464.17	613.00	510.83	10.1
Window replacement (non competent persons scheme)	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0
Installation of domestic solar panels/wind turbines	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0
Re-wiring or new electrical installation of a dwelling	499.00	415.83	549.00	457.50	10.0
Any electrical work other than re-wiring of a dwelling	404.00	336.67	445.00	370.83	10.1
Renovation of a thermal element	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Building Control

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	490	459

Are concessions available? There are some concessions for the disabled, which are detailed in the tables below.

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%

CHARGES FOR OTHER WORK**Plan Charge (Full Plans)****Table A** Where the estimated cost is (£)

0 - 2000	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0
2,001 - 5,000	372.00	310.00	410.00	341.67	10.2
5,001 - 10,000	435.00	362.50	479.00	399.17	10.1
10,001 - 20,000	602.00	501.67	663.00	552.50	10.1
20,001 - 30,000	234.00	195.00	258.00	215.00	10.3
30,001 - 40,000	280.00	233.33	308.00	256.67	10.0
40,001 - 50,000	323.00	269.17	356.00	296.67	10.2
50,001 - 60,000	374.00	311.67	412.00	343.33	10.2
60,001 - 70,000	424.00	353.33	467.00	389.17	10.1
70,001 - 80,000	471.00	392.50	519.00	432.50	10.2
80,001 - 90,000	503.00	419.17	554.00	461.67	10.1
90,001 - 100,000	566.00	471.67	623.00	519.17	10.1

Inspection Charge (Full Plans)**Table A** Where the estimated cost is (£)

0 - 2000	N/A		N/A		
2,001 - 5,000	N/A		N/A		
5,001 - 10,000	N/A		N/A		
10,001 - 20,000	N/A		N/A		
20,001 - 30,000	528.00	440.00	581.00	484.17	10.0
30,001 - 40,000	644.00	536.67	709.00	590.83	10.1
40,001 - 50,000	757.00	630.83	833.00	694.17	10.0
50,001 - 60,000	865.00	720.83	952.00	793.33	10.1
60,001 - 70,000	976.00	813.33	1,074.00	895.00	10.0
70,001 - 80,000	1,088.00	906.67	1,197.00	997.50	10.0
80,001 - 90,000	1,161.00	967.50	1,278.00	1,065.00	10.1
90,001 - 100,000	1,311.00	1,092.50	1,443.00	1,202.50	10.1

Building Notice Charge (Building Notice)**Table A** Where the estimated cost is (£)

0 - 2000	259.00	215.83	285.00	237.50	10.0
2,001 - 5,000	372.00	310.00	410.00	341.67	10.2
5,001 - 10,000	435.00	362.50	479.00	399.17	10.1
10,001 - 20,000	602.00	501.67	663.00	552.50	10.1
20,001 - 30,000	758.00	631.67	834.00	695.00	10.0
30,001 - 40,000	918.00	765.00	1,010.00	841.67	10.0
40,001 - 50,000	1,077.00	897.50	1,185.00	987.50	10.0
50,001 - 60,000	1,235.00	1,029.17	1,359.00	1,132.50	10.0
60,001 - 70,000	1,393.00	1,160.83	1,533.00	1,277.50	10.1
70,001 - 80,000	1,555.00	1,295.83	1,711.00	1,425.83	10.0
80,001 - 90,000	1,661.00	1,384.17	1,828.00	1,523.33	10.1
90,001 - 100,000	1,872.00	1,560.00	2,060.00	1,716.67	10.0

FULL PLAN APPLICATIONS - DWELLINGS UP TO 500M2 AND FLATS UP TO THREE STOREYS**Number of Dwellings (Plan Charge)**

1	580.00	483.33	638.00	531.67	10.0
2	646.00	538.33	711.00	592.50	10.1
3	709.00	590.83	780.00	650.00	10.0
4	773.00	644.17	851.00	709.17	10.1
5	841.00	700.83	926.00	771.67	10.1

Number of Dwellings (Inspection Charge)

1	584.00	486.67	643.00	535.83	10.1
2	904.00	753.33	995.00	829.17	10.1
3	1,130.00	941.67	1,243.00	1,035.83	10.0
4	1,353.00	1,127.50	1,489.00	1,240.83	10.1
5	1,576.00	1,313.33	1,734.00	1,445.00	10.0

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Building Control

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	490	459

Are concessions available? There are some concessions for the disabled, which are detailed in the tables below.

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
REGULARISATION CERTIFICATES					
Type of Work					
Domestic extension not exceeding 10 sq. m floor area		697.00		767.00	10.0
Domestic extension exceeding 10 sq. m but not exceeding 40 sq. m floor area		821.00		904.00	10.1
Domestic extension exceeding 40 sq. m but not exceeding 60 sq. m floor area		1,138.00		1,252.00	10.0
Loft conversion - Any extension or alteration of a dwelling consisting of one or more rooms in a roof space providing the cost of the works is less than £38,000.		886.00		975.00	10.0
Detached garage or car port (or both) not exceeding 60 sq. m in floor area and to be used in common with an existing building and which is not an exempt building		571.00		629.00	10.2
Conversion of garage into habitable use (Cost of the works not exceeding £10,000)		571.00		629.00	10.2
Window Replacement (Non competent persons scheme)		259.00		285.00	10.0
Installation of domestic solar panels/wind turbines		259.00		285.00	10.0
Re-wiring or new electrical installation of a dwelling		508.00		559.00	10.0
Any electrical work other than re-wiring of a dwelling		415.00		457.00	10.1
Renovation of a thermal element		268.00		295.00	10.1
Estimated Cost £					
0 - 2000		259.00		285.00	10.0
2,001 - 5,000		383.00		422.00	10.2
5,001 - 10,000		444.00		489.00	10.1
10,001 - 20,000		618.00		680.00	10.0
20,001 - 30,000		775.00		853.00	10.1
30,001 - 40,000		941.00		1,036.00	10.1
40,001 - 50,000		1,103.00		1,214.00	10.1
50,001 - 60,000		1,267.00		1,394.00	10.0
60,001 - 70,000		1,427.00		1,570.00	10.0
70,001 - 80,000		1,592.00		1,752.00	10.1
80,001 - 90,000		1,702.00		1,873.00	10.0
90,001 - 100,000		1,917.00		2,109.00	10.0
FULL PLAN APPLICATIONS - DWELLINGS UP TO 500M2 AND FLATS UP TO THREE STOREYS					
Number of Dwellings (Plan Charge)					
1		1,191.00		1,311.00	10.1
2		1,583.00		1,742.00	10.0
3		1,878.00		2,066.00	10.0
4		2,177.00		2,395.00	10.0
5		2,470.00		2,717.00	10.0
Building Regulations Questions for anyone undertaking a Property Search					
Building Regulations (1f)		4.00		5.00	25.0
Building Regulations (1g)		4.00		5.00	25.0
Building Regulations (1h)		4.00		5.00	25.0
Other Charges					
Hoarding / Scaffold Licences - Per Licence		237.00		261.00	10.1
Dealing with Demolition Notices		215.00		237.00	10.2
Officer Letter - Confirmation to Solicitor	62.00	52.00	69.00	57.50	11.3

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Local Land Charges

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	165	153

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%

LOCAL LAND CHARGES

Fees for Official Search of Register and Standard Enquiries

Personal search		Free		Free	0.0
Copy search		25.00		26.00	4.0
Requisition (LLC1)		31.00		33.00	6.5
Extra Parcel Fee on (LLC1)		6.00		6.00	0.0
Standard Enquiries CON2a	122.00	100.00	129.00	107.50	7.5

Additional

Additional Parcels and Garages	33.00	27.50	35.00	29.17	6.1
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Other

Optional Enquiries (each enquiry)	18.00	15.00	19.00	15.83	5.5
Added Enquiries (each enquiry)	32.00	26.67	34.00	28.33	6.2
Cancellation Administration Fee		45.00		48.00	6.7
Commons Registration Searches	18.00	15.00	19.00	15.83	5.5

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : **Monitoring Streetworks**

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	646	678

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Highway Licences and Consents					
Sample Inspection Fee		50.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Defect Inspection Fee		47.50		Set by Statute	0.0
Third Party Report Inspection Fee		N/A		N/A	
Skip Operators Licence annual fee		99.00		105.00	6.1
Skip Licence:					
application fee including one week occupation of the highway		25.00		27.00	8.0
per additional week or part there of		15.00		16.00	6.7
for those found without a licence		215.00		228.00	6.0
HIPPO Bags (placed on highway):					
application fee including one week occupation of the highway		25.00		27.00	8.0
per additional week or part there of		14.00		15.00	7.1
for those found without a licence		67.00		71.00	6.0
Commercial / Statutory Undertaker - Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (Non refundable application fee)		890.00		943.00	6.0
Commercial / Statutory Undertaker - Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (Advertising costs)		Rechargeable Advertising Cost +15% Admin Fee		Rechargeable Advertising Cost +15% Admin Fee	
Registered Charity - Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (Non refundable application fee)		5.00		5.00	0.0
Registered Charity - Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (Advertising costs)		Advertising Cost		Advertising Cost	
Community street event closure celebrating nationally important events (e.g. Royal Weddings, Births etc.) on minor non through roads. Traffic Regulation Order. (Non refundable application fee)		5.00		5.00	0.0
Community street event closure celebrating nationally important events (e.g. Royal Weddings, Births etc.) on minor non through roads. Traffic Regulation Order.		Advertising Cost		Advertising Cost	
Community street event closure celebrating nationally important events (e.g. Royal Weddings, Births etc.) on minor non through roads. Traffic Regulation Notice. (Non refundable application fee)		5.00		5.00	0.0
Community street event closure on minor non through roads. Traffic Regulation Notice.		211.00		224.00	6.2
Commercial / Statutory Undertaker - Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice (Non-refundable application fee)		890.00		950.00	6.7
Traffic Management Technical Advice (Officers time per hour - 1 hour minimum)		111.00		118.00	6.3
Temporary Deposit of Materials on Public Highway:					
Non-refundable application fee including one week occupation of the highway		54.00		57.00	5.6
per additional week or part there of		22.00		23.00	4.5
per necessary inspection		67.00		71.00	6.0
for those found without a licence		171.00		200.00	17.0
Inspection of Illegally Constructed Works / Retrospective Approval inspection and admin cost		538.00		570.00	5.9
Charge for turning off/on permanent traffic signals for set up of portable temporary traffic signals (per visit up to 1hr)					
Fee		490.00		520.00	6.1
per additional hour or part thereof		61.00		65.00	6.6
Charge for turning off/on permanent traffic signals for set up of portable temporary traffic signals (per visit) Out of Hours 16.30-08.00 Mon-Fri & All Day Sat, Sun & B/H'S					
Fee		735.00		780.00	6.1
Per additional hour or part thereof		121.00		130.00	7.4
Bus Stop Suspensions					
Application fee (minimum 7 days notice)		296.00		330.00	11.5
Application fee (minimum 3 days notice)		430.00		475.00	10.5
Application fee (≤ 2 days notice)		699.00		775.00	10.9
Parking suspension or dispensation					
Utilities, Contractors, Builders & Commercial Removals:					
Application fee (minimum 7 days notice)		296.00		314.00	6.1
Application fee (minimum 3 days notice)		416.00		441.00	6.0
Application fee (≤ 2 days notice)		538.00		570.00	5.9
Domestic Removals (per day)		67.00		71.00	6.0
Blood Transfusion Service, Health Screening		FREE		FREE	0.0
Application to place 'A' Board on the Public Highway					
per board per annum (including £25.00 non refundable application fee)		85.00		90.00	5.9
for those found without a licence		419.00		444.00	6.0

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : **Monitoring Streetworks**

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	646	678

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Street Café Licence under Business and Planning Act 2020		N/A		100.00	
Application for Street Café (Registered charity)					
Fee, plus charge based on number of chairs:		142.00		151.00	6.3
1-4 Chairs		96.00		102.00	6.3
5-10 Chairs		126.00		134.00	6.3
11+ Chairs		157.00		166.00	5.7
Application for Street Café					
Fee, plus charge based on number of chairs:		315.00		334.00	6.0
1-4 Chairs		241.00		255.00	5.8
5-10 Chairs		600.00		636.00	6.0
11+ Chairs		1,080.00		1,145.00	6.0
for those found without a licence		419.00		444.00	6.0
Renewal for Street Café					
Fee, plus charge based on number of chairs:		211.00		224.00	6.2
1-4 Chairs		156.00		165.00	5.8
5-10 Chairs		409.00		434.00	6.1
11+ Chairs		720.00		763.00	6.0
Application to place Automatic Traffic Counters (ATC's) on the highway.					
Application Fee (Non-refundable) plus		170.00		180.00	5.9
per site (as appropriate)		67.00		71.00	6.0
Fees for administering unlicensed ATC's.		577.00		612.00	6.1
Crane/Machinery/Structure on Public Highway Licence					
Fee plus		170.00		180.00	5.9
per necessary inspection		67.00		71.00	6.0
for those found without a licence		577.00		610.00	5.7
Street Works Licence Application Fee (Initial 200m)					
Fee plus		735.00		800.00	8.8
per additional 200 metres or part thereof		169.00		180.00	6.5
per inspection		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	0.0
Cash Bond for Street Work Licences					
< 1.5 metres depth					
<5m2		1,075.00		1,000.00	-7.0
5-10m2		1,600.00		1,500.00	-6.3
10-30m2		2,100.00		2,000.00	-4.8
>1.5 metres depth					
<5m2		1,600.00		1,500.00	-6.3
5-10m2		2,650.00		2,500.00	-5.7
10-30m2		3,700.00		3,500.00	-5.4
Planting/Cultivation of Public Highway					
Commercial fee or		256.00		271.00	5.9
Domestic fee plus		128.00		136.00	6.3
per necessary inspection		67.00		71.00	6.0
Road Occupation Licence with excavation					
Fee (non-refundable) plus		735.00		800.00	8.8
per necessary inspection		67.00		50.00	-25.4
Road Occupation without excavation					
Fee plus		262.00		280.00	6.9
per necessary inspection		67.00		71.00	6.0
Application to place Cables etc. over the Public Highway					
Fee plus		215.00		230.00	7.0
per necessary inspection		67.00		71.00	6.0
Cost per failed core sample (layer thickness test)			Actual cost + 15% Admin	Actual cost + 15% Admin	
Cost per failed core sample (Air Voids test)			Actual cost + 15% Admin	Actual cost + 15% Admin	
Traffic Management Costs			Actual cost + 15% Admin	Actual cost + 15% Admin	
Licence to place Temporary signs on the Highway (Per 6 months or part thereof)					
Fee plus		443.00		470.00	6.1
Per site (USRN)		67.00		71.00	6.0
Penalty for Temporary signs on the Highway without authorisation or Licence					
Plus, removal charge per sign		735.00		780.00	6.1
Authorisation for the installation of temporary Traffic Signals. Does not apply to Statutory undertakers as per HAUC advice note No. 2009/09 by virtue of section 65 NRSWA.		67.00		71.00	6.0
		262.00		278.00	6.1

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : **Monitoring Streetworks**

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	646	678

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Street Works Permit Scheme					
Main Roads					
Provisional Advance Authorisation (PAA)		105.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Major Activity [over 10 days] and all major works requiring a traffic regulation order.		240.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Major Activity [4 – 10 days]		130.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Major Activity [up to 3 days]		65.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Standard activity		130.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Minor Activity		65.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Immediate activity		60.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Permit Variation		45.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Minor Roads					
Provisional Advance Authorisation (PAA)		75.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Major Activity [over 10 days] and all major works requiring a traffic regulation order.		150.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Major Activity [4 – 10 days]		75.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Major Activity [up to 3 days]		45.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Standard activity		75.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Minor Activity		45.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Immediate activity		40.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Permit Variation		35.00		Set by Statute	0.0
Rechargeable Street Works					
Repair/Replacement	Actual cost + 15% Admin		Actual cost + 15% Admin		
Specialist Contracted Services	Actual cost + 15% Admin		Actual cost + 15% Admin		
Street Works / Permit Team project registration fees for s38 and s278 or in lieu of.					
Fee for schemes up to £25k value		700.00		750.00	7.1
Fee for schemes over £25k value.		1,600.00		1,700.00	6.3
Vetting of Traffic Signals designs linked to S278 & S38 schemes					
Fee (Up to £25k Signals, Controller & Installation Costs)		1,837.00		1,929.00	5.0
Fee (Over £25k Signals, Controller & Installation Costs)		3,062.00		3,215.00	5.0
Traffic Signal Factory Acceptance Test (FAT), Site Acceptance Test (SAT) and joint post commissioning monitoring linked to S278 & S38 schemes.					
Fee (Up to £25k Signals, Controller & Installation Costs)		735.00		772.00	5.0
Fee (Over £25k Signals, Controller & Installation Costs)		1,470.00		1,544.00	5.0

CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Highways

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	20	45

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Vehicle Access Crossings					
Construction of crossing		Actual cost + 15% Admin Fee		Actual cost + 15% Admin Fee	
Domestic Vehicle Access Application Fee (BFC Contractor)		48.00		50.00	4.2
Domestic Vehicle Access Inspection Fee - Per Occasion		67.00		70.00	4.5
Domestic Vehicle Access Application Fee (Private Contractor)		91.00		96.00	5.5
Domestic Vehicle Access Inspection Fee - Per Occasion		67.00		70.00	4.5
Property Developers or Commercial Vehicle Access					
Fee plus charge based on number of properties:		522.00		548.00	5.0
1 Property		317.00		333.00	5.0
2-5 Properties		568.00		596.00	4.9
6 + Properties		884.00		928.00	5.0
per inspection		67.00		70.00	4.5
Access Protection Markings	118.00	98.33	124.00	103.33	5.1
Ordinary Watercourse Consent					
Application fee per structure or per alteration to channel - minimum charge - Legislative	50.00	41.67	Set by Statute		

CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Development & Adoptions

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the cost of the services

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	456	492

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
HIGHWAY ENQUIRIES					
Standard rate per hour - minimum charge		74.00		78.00	5.4
Provision of a copy of Section 38 and/or Section 278 agreement	32.00	26.67	34.00	28.33	6.2
RECHARGEABLE WORKS					
All works and staff costs, including accident damage, to be recharged at actual cost plus 15% administration - minimum charge		Minimum - At Cost Plus 15%		Minimum - At Cost Plus 15%	
HIGHWAY ADOPTIONS					
Road Adoptions					
Minimum application fee (part of the overall Section 38/278 fees)		2,550.00		3,250.00	27.5
Surety deposit (minimum cash element of total surety value)		3,500.00		3,500.00	
Formal declarations (outside section 38)		1,230.00		1,290.00	4.9
Re-inspection rate per hour - minimum charge		106.00		110.00	3.8
SECTION 38 & SECTION 278					
Section 38/Section 278 fees					
Schemes up to £25,000 - minimum charge		2,550.00		3,250.00	
Schemes over £25,000		10% of value		13% of value	
Commutated sums in respect of additional highway maintenance costs					
The Council will require a payment for the commuted annual maintenance costs of new work carried out under agreements made under S278 and S38 of the 1980 Highways Act where the costs of maintenance are estimated to be higher than those of the Highway Authority's standard requirements for infrastructure and street furniture or where non standard items are provided within the extent of the highway. Arrangements for such payments are set out in the council's Streetscene Supplementary Planning Document - Commuted Sums. This document is reviewed periodically and any revision will reflect any sums agreed now or in the future through the fees and charges process. Set out below are rates for infrastructure and street furniture.					
Commutated sums - Payable before the issue of the Provisional Completion Certificate or before the issue of the Final Completion Certificate, depending on the S278/S38 agreement in place.					
Section 38					
Manhole per item <3m depth		3,441.00		3,613.00	5.0
New Tree per item		475.00		499.00	5.1
Existing Tree per item		411.00		432.00	5.1
Parking Bay		872.00		916.00	5.0
Swales <500mm m2		94.00		99.00	5.3
Permeable paving m2		150.00		158.00	5.3
Infiltration Trench Lin m		399.00		419.00	5.0
Ditches Lin m		450.00		473.00	5.1
Section 278					
Manhole per item <3m depth		3,441.00		3,613.00	5.0
Carriageway m2 SMA		150.00		158.00	5.3
Carriageway m2 HRA		150.00		158.00	5.3
Carriageway block paved m2		162.00		170.00	4.9
Footway m2		100.00		105.00	5.0
Footway block paved m2		112.00		118.00	5.4
Verge m2		25.00		26.00	4.0
Shrub inspection maintenance m2		63.00		66.00	4.8
Anti-Skid m2		124.00		130.00	4.8
Gully per item		660.00		693.00	5.0
Beaney Blocks lin m		399.00		419.00	5.0
New Tree per item		475.00		499.00	5.1
Existing Tree per item		411.00		432.00	5.1
Street light 12m column		2,319.00		2,435.00	5.0
Street light 10m		2,269.00		2,382.00	5.0
Street light 8m		2,119.00		2,225.00	5.0
Street light 6m		2,057.00		2,160.00	5.0
Street Light 5m		2,033.00		2,135.00	5.0
Parking Bay		872.00		916.00	5.0
Illuminated Bollard		1,122.00		1,178.00	5.0
Illuminated sign <600mm replace and maintain		936.00		983.00	5.0
Non Lit Sign <600 replace and maintain		262.00		275.00	5.0
Timber Bollard		586.00		615.00	4.9
Feeder pillar		250.00		263.00	5.2
Traffic Signal per head (pedestrian)		12,467.00		13,090.00	5.0
Traffic Signal per head (junction)		15,586.00		16,365.00	5.0
The above is not a comprehensive list of all the items for Commuted Sums and other items will be considered as part of the initial design discussions. Non-standard materials that relate to items on this list will also need to be discussed early on in the process.					
In respect of all S278/38 schemes the developer must pay an initial fee of at least £3,250 before we can undertake any assessment. On larger schemes, that require a greater level of assessment, the initial fee will be decided on a scheme by scheme basis but it will be greater than the minimum amount stated above. Once agreed and paid we will then undertake the assessment. Any final fees due will reflect the level of initial fees secured prior to scheme assessment.					
Structures - costs to be agreed for individual structures at an early stage. Any structure that is to be adopted or maintained by the Highway Authority will require Commuted Sums and this will need to be assessed and agreed at an early Stage. Structural design assessment and approval (AIP etc.) will require additional fees and will be on a case by case basis.					
Any non standard drainage and SuDs systems that are to be either adopted/maintained by the Highway Authority will need to be reviewed separately and discussed at an early stage and will require Commuted Sums.					
Additional rates would relate to S38 agreements where non-standard highway detail has been applied. These rates will follow those S278 agreed rates.					

CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Development & Adoptions

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the cost of the services

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	456	492

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
STREET NAMING & NUMBERING					
Property Name Change (Sole identity)		106.00		111.00	4.7
Addition of Property name (To numbered property)		49.00		51.00	4.1
Amendment to Postal Address		106.00		111.00	4.7
New Build - Individual Property		106.00		111.00	4.7
New Development Fixed Fee		198.00		208.00	5.1
Plus fee per Unit		29.00		30.00	3.4
Conversion of Property into Flats - Fee per Flat		55.00		58.00	5.5
Renumbering of a Development or Block of Flats - Fee per Unit/Flat		30.00		32.00	6.7
TRAFFIC SURVEY DATA					
Observed or modelled junction turning counts - per junction	691.00	575.83	726.00	605.00	5.1
Traffic count information from automatic counters	204.00	170.00	214.00	178.33	4.9
Select link information to show indicative origin-destination movements of traffic on a specific link - Per request. *Such data requests will also be subject to the hourly Senior Engineer modelling rate as shown below.	363.00	302.50	381.00	317.50	5.0
Other data requests will be assessed on their merits and charged at the discretion of the Council					
Bracknell Forest Multi-Modal Transport Model (BFMMTM) - Developers Charges					
Use of model for one month or each additional month exceeding six months	4,946.00	4,121.67	5,193.00	4,327.50	5.0
Use of model for first six months	24,399.00	20,332.50	25,619.00	21,349.17	5.0
In-house modelling including pro-rata licence fee. Senior Engineer - per hour	136.00	113.33	143.00	119.17	0.0
CONCESSIONARY FARES					
Replacement Pass		9.00		10.00	11.1
New annual Senior Citizen Railcard (with any increases made by SWT during the year to be passed on) by SWT during the year to be passed on)		19.00		20.00	5.3
Renewal of Disabled Person's Railcard		11.00		12.00	9.1

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Development Management

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,091	1,145

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Please note that 25% of statutory fees will be charged for invalid applications where relevant information is repeatedly not provided within a reasonable timescale.

Outline Application

1. The erection of dwellinghouses (other than development in category 6)

(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and-					
(a) Less than 0.5 hectares					
Charge per 0.1 hectares (or part thereof) of the site area		578.00		Set by Statute	
(b) More than 0.5 hectares but not more than 2.5 hectares (each 0.1 ha (or part) of site area)					
Charge per 0.1 hectares		624.00		Set by Statute	
(c) More than 2.5 hectares (£+£ each 0.1 ha (or part) of site area)					
Standard charge plus		15,433.00		Set by Statute	
Charge per 0.1 hectares in excess of 2.5 hectares		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		202,500.00		Set by Statute	
(2) Permission in principle, £503 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.		503.00		Set by Statute	
(3) In any other case					
(a) 9 dwellings or fewer (each dwelling)		578.00		Set by Statute	
(b) At least 10 dwellings but no more than 50 (each dwelling)		624.00		Set by Statute	
(c) More than 50 dwellings					
Standard charge		30,860.00		Set by Statute	
Each dwelling in excess of 50		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		405,000.00		Set by Statute	

2. The erection of buildings (other than buildings in categories 1, 3, 4, 5 or 7)

(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and-					
(a) site less than 1 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area;		578.00		Set by Statute	
(b) site at least 1 ha but not more than 2.5 ha - for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area;		624.00		Set by Statute	
(c) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares					
Standard charge		15,433.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 2.5 hectares		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		202,500.00		Set by Statute	
(2) Permission in principle, £503 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.		503.00		Set by Statute	
(3) In any other case					
(a) where no floor space is to be created by the development		293.00		Set by Statute	
(b) where gross floor area does not exceed 40 sqm		293.00		Set by Statute	
(c) where gross floor space is over 40 sqm but below 1000 sqm - each 75 sqm (or part)		578.00		Set by Statute	
(d) where gross floor space is over 1000 sqm but below 3750 sqm - each 75 sqm (or part)		624.00		Set by Statute	
(e) where gross floor space is over 3750 sqm					
Standard charge		30,680.00		Set by Statute	
each 75 sqm (or part thereof) in excess of 3750 sqm		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		405,000.00		Set by Statute	

3. The erection, on land used for the purposes of agriculture, or buildings used for agricultural purposes (other than buildings in category 4)

(1) Where the application is for outline planning permission and-					
(a) site less than 1 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area;		578.00		Set by Statute	
(b) site at least 1 ha but not more than 2.5 ha - for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area;		624.00		Set by Statute	
(c) the site area exceeds 2.5 hectares					
Standard charge		15,433.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 2.5 hectares		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		202,500.00		Set by Statute	
(2) Permission in principle, £503 for each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) of the site area.		503.00		Set by Statute	
(3) In any other case					
(a) where gross floor area does not exceed 465 sqm		120.00		Set by Statute	
(b) where gross floor space is over 465 sqm but below 540 sqm - each 75 sqm (or part)		578.00		Set by Statute	
(c) where gross floor space is over 540 sqm but below 1000 sqm - each 75 sqm (or part)					
Standard charge		578.00		Set by Statute	
each 75 sqm (or part thereof) in excess of 540 sqm		578.00		Set by Statute	
(d) where gross floor space is over 1000 sqm but below 4215 sqm - each 75 sqm (or part)					
Standard charge		624.00		Set by Statute	
each 75 sqm (or part thereof) in excess of 1000 sqm		624.00		Set by Statute	
(e) the gross floor area exceeds 4215 sqm					
Standard charge		30,860.00		Set by Statute	
each 75 sqm (or part thereof) in excess of 4215 sqm		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		405,000.00		Set by Statute	

Full and Reserved Matters Applications

4. The erection of glasshouses on land used for the purposes of agriculture

(1) Where gross floor space does not exceed 465 square metres		120.00		Set by Statute	
(2) Where gross floor space exceeds 465 sqm but is less than 1000 sqm		3,225.00		Set by Statute	
(3) Where gross floor space is 1000 square metres or more.		3,483.00		Set by Statute	

5. The erection, alteration or replacement of plant or machinery

(1) site less than 1 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area;		578.00		Set by Statute	
(2) site at least 1 ha but not more than 5 ha - for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area;		624.00		Set by Statute	
(3) the site area exceeds 5 hectares					
Standard charge		30,860.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 5 hectares		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		405,000.00		Set by Statute	

6. The enlargement, improvement or other alteration of existing dwellinghouses

(1) Where the application relates to a single dwellinghouse		258.00		Set by Statute	
(2) Where the application relates to two or more dwellinghouses		509.00		Set by Statute	

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Development Management

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,091	1,145

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
7. Carrying out operations (including the erection of a building) within the curtilage of an existing dwelling, for purposes ancillary to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, or the erection or construction of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure along a boundary of the curtilage of an existing dwelling.					
Fee		258.00		Set by Statute	
8. The construction of car parks, service roads and other means of access on land used for the purposes of a single undertaking, where the development is required for a purpose incidental to the existing use of the land.					
Fee		293.00		Set by Statute	
9. The carrying out of any operations connected with exploratory drilling for oil or natural gas.					
(1) Where the site area does not exceed 7.5 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of site area.		686.00		Set by Statute	
(2) Where the site area exceeds 7.5 hectares				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		51,395.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 5 hectares		204.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		405,000.00		Set by Statute	
10. The carrying out of any operations (other than operations coming within category 9) for the winning and working of oil or natural gas.					
(1) Where the site area does not exceed 15 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area.		347.00		Set by Statute	
(2) Where the site area exceeds 15 hectares				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		52,002.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares		204.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		105,300.00		Set by Statute	
11. The carrying out of any operations not coming within any of the above categories.					
(1) In the case of operations for the winning and working of minerals-				Set by Statute	
(a) where the site area does not exceed 15 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site;		316.00		Set by Statute	
(b) where the site area exceeds 15 hectares				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		47,161.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		105,300.00		Set by Statute	
(2) In any other case				Set by Statute	
For each 0.1 ha (or part thereof) of the site area		293.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		2,535.00		Set by Statute	
12. The change of use of a building to use as one or more separate dwellinghouses.					
(1) change of use is from a single dwelling to use as two or more single dwellings-				Set by Statute	
(a) where change is to use as fewer than 10 dwellings - for each additional dwelling		578.00		Set by Statute	
(b) where change is to use as at least 10 and up to 50 dwellings for each additional dwelling		624.00		Set by Statute	
(c) where the change of use is to use as more than 50 dwellinghouses				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		30,860.00		Set by Statute	
Each dwelling in excess of 50		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		405,000.00		Set by Statute	
(2) In all other cases--				Set by Statute	
(a) where the change of use is to use as fewer than 10 dwellings for each dwelling house		578.00		Set by Statute	
(b) where the change is to use as at least 10 but no more than 50 dwellings for each dwelling		624.00		Set by Statute	
(c) where the change of use is to use as more than 50 dwellinghouses				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		30,860.00		Set by Statute	
Each dwelling in excess of 50		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		405,000.00		Set by Statute	
13. The use of land (waste and minerals)					
(a) the disposal of refuse or waste materials.					
(1) Where the site area does not exceed 15 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area.		316.00		Set by Statute	
(2) where the site area exceeds 15 hectares				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		47,161.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		105,300.00		Set by Statute	
(b) the deposit of material remaining after minerals have been extracted from land					
(1) Where the site area does not exceed 15 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area.		316.00		Set by Statute	
(2) where the site area exceeds 15 hectares				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		47,161.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		105,300.00		Set by Statute	
(c) the storage of minerals in the open.					
(1) Where the site area does not exceed 15 ha for each 0.1 ha (or part) of the site area.		316.00		Set by Statute	
(2) where the site area exceeds 15 hectares				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		47,161.00		Set by Statute	
each 0.1 hectare (or part thereof) in excess of 15 hectares		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum		105,300.00		Set by Statute	
14. The making of a material change in use of a building or land (other than a material change of use in category 12 or 13(a), (b) or (c)).					
Fee		578.00		Set by Statute	
Lawful Development Certificate					
Existing use - in breach of a planning condition		Same as full planning fee		Set by Statute	
Existing use - lawful not to comply with a particular condition		293.00		Set by Statute	
Proposed use		Half the normal planning fee		Set by Statute	
Changes of Use					
Not more than 10 dwelling houses (per dwellinghouse)		578.00		Set by Statute	
At least 10 but not more than 50 dwellinghouses (per dwellinghouse)		624.00		Set by Statute	
More than 50 dwellings				Set by Statute	
Standard charge		30,860.00		Set by Statute	
Each additional dwelling house in excess of 50		186.00		Set by Statute	
Maximum fee		405,000.00		Set by Statute	

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Development Management

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,091	1,145

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Prior Approval of a building to use as one or more separate dwelling houses, or other cases					
Proposed larger home extension		120.00		Set by Statute	
Agricultural and forestry buildings and operations or demolition of buildings		120.00		Set by Statute	
Communications (Telecommunications code systems operators)		578.00		Set by Statute	
Change of Use of building and any land within its curtilage from Business (Use Class B1), Hotels (Use Class C1), Residential Institutions (Use Class C2), Secure Residential Institutions (Use Class C2A) or Assembly and Leisure (Use Class D2) to a State Funded or Registered Nursery.		120.00		Set by Statute	
Change of Use of a building and any land within its curtilage from an Agriculture Building to a State-Funded School or Registered Nursery.		120.00		Set by Statute	
Change of Use of a building and any land within its curtilage from an Agriculture Building to a flexible use within Shops (Use Class A1), Financial and Professional Services (Use Class A2), Restaurants and Cafes (Use Class A3), Business (Use Class B1), Storage or Distribution (Use Class B8), Hotels (Use Class C1), or Assembly or Leisure (Use Class D2).		120.00		Set by Statute	
Change of Use of a building and any land within its curtilage from offices (Use Class B1a) Use to Dwelling houses (Use Class C3)		120.00		Set by Statute	
Change of Use of a building and any land within its curtilage from an Agriculture Building to Dwelling houses (Use Class C3), - if it includes building operations in connection with the change of use		258.00		Set by Statute	
Change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from Light Industrial (Use Class B1c) to Dwelling houses (Use Class C3)		120.00		Set by Statute	
Change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from Amusement Arcades/Centres and Casinos (Sui Generis Uses) to Dwelling houses (Use Class A3)		120.00		Set by Statute	
Change of use of a building from Shops (Use Class A1) and Financial and Professional Services (Use Class A2), Betting Offices, Pay Day Loans Shops and Casinos (Sui Generis Uses) to Restaurants and Cafes (Use Class A3) - if it includes building operations in connection with the change of use		258.00		Set by Statute	
Change of Use from Shops (Class A1), Professional Financial Services (Class A2), Takeaways (Class A5), Betting offices, Pay Day Loan Shops or Launderette to Offices (Class B1a)		120.00		Set by Statute	
Development Consisting of the Erection or Construction of a Collection Facility within the Curtilage of a Shop		120.00		Set by Statute	
Temporary Use of Buildings or Land for the Purpose of Commercial Film-Making and the Associated Temporary Structures, Works, Plant or Machinery required in Connection with that Use		120.00		Set by Statute	
Installation, Alteration or Replacement of other Solar Photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the Roofs of Non-domestic Buildings, up to a Capacity of 1 Megawatt.		120.00		Set by Statute	
Erection, extension or alteration of a university building		120.00		Set by Statute	
Movable structure within the curtilage of a historic visitor attraction or listed pub/restaurant etc.		120.00		Set by Statute	
Erection, extension or alteration on a closed defence site by or on behalf of the Crown of a single living accommodation and/or non-residential buildings		120.00		Set by Statute	

CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Development Management

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,091	1,145

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Pre-application Advice					
Residential - all rates based on gross new units					
These fees are based on consideration of a single scheme. Advice on additional options will be charged at 10% of overall fee for each additional option.					
Householders					
Stage 1 In-Principle advice for Permitted Development Enquiries	65.00	54.17	65.00	54.17	0.0
Stage 1 In-Principle Pre-App without site visit - Planning officer and policy advice only	105.00	87.50	105.00	87.50	0.0
Full Standard Pre-App with site visit and all relevant consultees	162.00	135.00	162.00	135.00	0.0
Developers					
Residential Units					
Full Standard Pre-App with site visit and all relevant consultees					
1 unit	321.00	267.50	321.00	267.50	0.0
2-5 units	640.00	533.33	640.00	533.33	0.0
6-10 units	1,221.00	1,017.50	1,221.00	1,017.50	0.0
11-25 units	1,792.00	1,493.33	1,792.00	1,493.33	0.0
26-50 units	3,200.00	2,666.67	3,200.00	2,666.67	0.0
51+ units	7,169.00	5,974.17	7,169.00	5,974.17	0.0
Follow-up advice (for each additional round of consultation and advice following initial feedback or in respect of amended plans submitted within 12 weeks of issue for a formal pre-app response)					
1 unit	192.00	160.00	192.00	160.00	0.0
2-5 units	385.00	320.83	385.00	320.83	0.0
6-10 units	513.00	427.50	513.00	427.50	0.0
11-25 units	769.00	640.83	769.00	640.83	0.0
26-50 units	1,279.00	1,065.83	1,279.00	1,065.83	0.0
51+ units	1,921.00	1,600.83	1,921.00	1,600.83	0.0

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Development Management

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,091	1,145

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Commercial/Non-Residential Units					
Based on floorspace including change of use					
Full Standard Pre-App with site visit and all relevant consultees					
0-200 sq. metres	257.00	214.17	257.00	214.17	0.0
201-1000 sq. metres	576.00	480.00	576.00	480.00	0.0
1001-2000 sq. metres	833.00	694.17	833.00	694.17	0.0
2001-3000 sq. metres	1,216.00	1,013.33	1,216.00	1,013.33	0.0
3001-5000 sq. metres	1,794.00	1,495.00	1,794.00	1,495.00	0.0
5001-10000 sq. metres	3,198.00	2,665.00	3,198.00	2,665.00	0.0
10001+ sq. metres	7,164.00	5,970.00	7,164.00	5,970.00	0.0
Follow-up advice (for each additional round of consultation and advice following initial feedback or in respect of amended plans submitted within 12 weeks of issue for a formal pre-app response					
0-200 sq. metres	152.00	126.67	152.00	126.67	0.0
201-1000 sq. metres	321.00	267.50	321.00	267.50	0.0
1001-2000 sq. metres	436.00	363.33	436.00	363.33	0.0
2001-3000 sq. metres	512.00	426.67	512.00	426.67	0.0
3001-5000 sq. metres	769.00	640.83	769.00	640.83	0.0
5001-10000 sq. metres	1,280.00	1,066.67	1,280.00	1,066.67	0.0
10001+ sq. metres	1,918.00	1,598.33	1,918.00	1,598.33	0.0
Bespoke Service					
Please contact the planning service to discuss requirements and charges	POA	POA	POA	POA	

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Development Management

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,091	1,145

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Extras					
Consideration of additional plans (within 12 weeks of original application)					
Residential					
1 unit	105.00	87.50	105.00	87.50	0.0
2-5 units	204.00	170.00	204.00	170.00	0.0
6-10 units	384.00	320.00	384.00	320.00	0.0
11-25 units	576.00	480.00	576.00	480.00	0.0
26-50 units	769.00	640.83	769.00	640.83	0.0
51+ units	961.00	800.83	961.00	800.83	0.0
Commercial/Non-Residential					
201-1000 sq. metres	105.00	87.50	105.00	87.50	0.0
1001-2000 sq. metres	204.00	170.00	204.00	170.00	0.0
2001-3000 sq. metres	385.00	320.83	385.00	320.83	0.0
3001-5000 sq. metres	576.00	480.00	576.00	480.00	0.0
5001-10000 sq. metres	769.00	640.83	769.00	640.83	0.0
10001+ sq. metres	961.00	800.83	961.00	800.83	0.0
Additional charges					
Officer recharge rate per officer in attendance at a meeting:					
Meetings (per officer per hour)	145.00	120.83	145.00	120.83	0.0
Letter of confirmation of compliance with an enforcement notice	204.00	170.00	204.00	170.00	0.0
Non-Material amendments to a planning permission - Householder			Set by Statute	Set by Statute	0.0
Non-Material amendments to a planning permission - Non-Residential			Set by Statute	Set by Statute	0.0
Miscellaneous					
Change of use from a dwelling and change of use of land to garden	106.00	88.33	106.00	88.33	0.0
Non householder finding out use class, what type of amendment is required on an application e.g. non-material or material amendment	85.00	70.83	85.00	70.83	0.0
Letter of confirmation of compliance with enforcement notice	197.00	164.17	197.00	164.17	0.0
Local Plan Sites - Including sites being promoted to be included in the Local Plan					
Initial Meeting (up to an hour)	0.00		0.00		0.0
Follow-up Meetings - Per Office Hour	145.00	120.83	145.00	120.83	0.0
Other Charges					
Research Enquiries - Per Hour	145.00	120.83	145.00	120.83	0.0
Processing deed of variation to S106 Agreements	361.00	300.83	361.00	300.83	0.0
Hire of BFC rooms per day by appellants or any third parties during hearings / inquiries	280.00	233.33	280.00	233.33	0.0
Mixed Developments					
Where a development comprises a mix of commercial and residential development the fee payable is 75% of the sum of the fees payable in both categories.					
Advertising					
Relating to the business on the premises		165.00		Set by Statute	
Advance signs which are not situated on or visible from the site, directing the public to a business		165.00		Set by Statute	
Other advertisements		578.00		Set by Statute	
Approval/Variation/discharge of condition					
Application for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission		293.00		Set by Statute	
Request for confirmation that one or more planning conditions have been complied with. (Each Application)					
Householder		43.00		Set by Statute	
Non-householder		145.00		Set by Statute	

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Parks, Open Spaces & Countryside

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,483	1,309

Are concessions available? There are concessions for people under 16, students, people over 64 & the disabled which are detailed in the fees & charges below.

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
WESTMORLAND PARK					
Football Pitch (with changing rooms)*					
Senior Pitch	130.75	108.96	138.60	115.50	6.0
Senior Pitch for Junior Use	65.75	54.79	69.70	58.08	6.0
Junior Pitch	43.70	36.42	46.35	38.63	6.1
Annual Charge	7,440.90	6,200.75	7,887.40	6,572.83	6.0
Baseball Diamond with Changing Rooms*					
Adult	130.75	108.96	138.60	115.50	6.0
Junior Hire	65.75	54.79	69.70	58.08	6.0
Annual Charge	5,230.30	4,358.58	5,544.15	4,620.13	6.0
Baseball Diamond without Changing Rooms*					
Adult	82.60	68.83	87.60	73.00	6.1
Junior Hire	41.40	34.50	43.90	36.58	6.0
Annual Charge	4,023.00	3,352.50	4,264.40	3,553.67	6.0
PRIORY FIELD					
Football Pitch (without changing rooms)*					
Senior Pitch	82.60	68.83	87.60	73.00	6.1
Senior Pitch for Junior Use	41.40	34.50	43.90	36.58	6.0
Junior Pitch	27.60	23.00	29.30	24.42	6.2
Annual Charge	4,961.10	4,134.25	5,258.80	4,382.33	6.0
FARLEY WOOD					
Football Pitch (without changing rooms)*					
Senior Pitch	82.60	68.83	87.60	73.00	6.1
Senior Pitch for Junior Use	41.40	34.50	43.90	36.58	6.0
Junior Pitch	27.60	23.00	29.30	24.42	6.2
Annual Charge	4,282.35	3,568.63	4,539.30	3,782.75	6.0
*Clubs hiring the pitches for 10 or more consecutive bookings maybe exempt from VAT					
Tennis Association					
Family Membership	110.75	92.29	125.00	104.17	12.9
Adult Membership	55.40	46.17	62.50	52.08	12.8
Junior Membership	31.05	25.88	35.00	29.17	12.7
Tennis - Pay and Play					
Adult	6.70	5.58	7.50	6.25	11.9
Under 16/64+	5.55	4.63	6.20	5.17	11.7
Tennis Latika Farleywood					
Annual charge additional court booking**	3,630.95	3,025.79	3,848.85	3,207.38	6.0
Cabin Hire	1,419.70	1,183.08	1,504.90	1,254.08	6.0
Additional hourly rate	1.35	1.13	1.45	1.21	7.4
** A further £1,250 is invoiced for annual court bookings which is then forwarded to Farley Wood Community Association as a contribution towards the use of floodlights.					
Hall Hire (Large)					
Per Hour	17.35	14.46	18.40	15.33	6.1
Hall Hire (Small)					
Per Hour	13.30	11.08	14.10	11.75	6.0
Cricket Pitch with Changing room					
Adult	121.35	101.13	128.65	107.21	6.0
Junior	61.20	51.00	64.90	54.08	6.0
Cricket Pitch without Changing room					
Adult	76.65	63.88	81.25	67.71	6.0
Junior	38.50	32.08	40.85	34.04	6.1
Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) The Parks					
Hire Per Hour	29.80	24.83	31.60	26.33	6.0
Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) Jennetts Hill					
Hire Per Hour	29.80	24.83	31.60	26.33	6.0
PodPoint EV Charger					
per kwh	0.45	0.25	0.48	0.40	6.7
Lily Hill Park - Fire Circle					
Uniformed groups	31.50	26.25	34.00	28.33	7.9
Ranger / Officer led activity (Walks & Talks)					
Per Visit hourly rate (N.B.no charge applicable for audience development and community engagement activities which support site management)	35.35	29.46	37.50	31.25	6.1
Local Businesses / Commercial Groups	POA	POA	POA	POA	
With regard to the above charges for pitch and hall hire: discounting may be applied where considered necessary to support establishment and viability of local clubs and groups. This will only be applied for block bookings e.g. per season or per academic year use.					

**CENTRAL DIRECTORATES
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Parks, Open Spaces & Countryside

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,307	1,309

Are concessions available? There are concessions for people under 16, students, people over 64 & the disabled which are detailed in the fees & charges below.

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£	£	£	£	%
Rights of Way					
Deposit of Statement: Basic charge to process an application, add to register of deposits and posting notices on site	435.90	363.25	462.10	385.08	6.0
Additional parcel (e.g. land divided by public highway or multiple separate parcels) requiring further site notices	87.35	72.79	92.60	77.17	6.0
Subsequent declaration to renew Deposit (at up to 20 years intervals)	87.35	72.79	92.60	77.17	6.0
Subsequent declaration to renew Deposit (at up to 20 years intervals)	87.35	72.79	92.60	77.17	6.0
Temporary Traffic Regulation Order application. 5 day order.	193.50	161.25	205.15	170.96	6.0
Temporary Traffic Regulation Order application. 21 day order	193.50	161.25	205.15	170.96	6.0
Temporary Traffic Regulation Order up to 6 months. Admin fee, plus cost of 2 x public notices published in the local paper	924.95	770.80	980.45	817.04	6.0
Traffic Regulation Order (Permanent)	2,580.00	2,150.00	2,734.80	2,279.00	6.0
Public Path Order (fee if there are no objections, or objections are withdrawn)	1,973.70	1,644.75	2,092.15	1,743.46	6.0
Public Path Order (fee if there are objections and application has to be submitted to Sec of State)	2,631.60	2,193.00	2,789.50	2,324.58	6.0
THE LOOK OUT					
Admission					
Adult	9.05	7.54	10.60	8.83	17.1
Under 16 / Students / 64+ / Disabled	6.65	5.54	7.80	6.50	17.3
Saver Ticket	24.75	20.63	29.00	24.17	17.2
School Children	5.70	4.75	6.50	5.42	14.0
Under 4s Group Bookings	5.90	4.92	N/A		
45 minute visit special needs	3.95	3.29	5.00	4.17	26.6
Adult after 4pm	4.90	4.08	6.00	5.00	22.4
Under 16 / Students / 64+ / Disabled, after 4pm	3.30	2.75	4.00	3.33	21.2
Saver Ticket after 4pm	12.15	10.13	16.00	13.33	31.7
Parent & Toddler (Term time only)	8.00	6.67	10.95	9.13	36.9
Carers for disabled	Free	Free	Free	Free	0.0
Birthday Parties*					
Venue Hire (Per child)	8.95	7.46	14.95	12.46	67.0
Commercial Hire					
Whole Day	305.00	254.17	323.00	269.17	5.9
Half Day	155.00	129.17	164.00	136.67	5.8
Per Hour	73.00	60.83	77.00	64.17	5.5
Evening hire, per hour	99.00	82.50	N/A		
* Where not specifically identified and where applicable courses/retail/catering/birthday parties/commercial bookings are charged at market rates.					
FILMING OPPORTUNITIES					
Filming charges provide an estimated cost of service, full price is confirmed on application, as is required to reflect the bespoke nature of many of the filming requests and to strategically support the ongoing development of a new borough filming business in conjunction with the new Berkshire Film Office.					
Small production (up to 5 people)	180.00	150.00	190.00	158.33	5.6
Medium-larger productions (Between 6-29 people)*	480.00- 2,400.00	400.00- 2,000.00	510.00- 2,545.00	425.00- 2,120.83	6.3- 6.8
Major productions (30+ people)	POA		POA		
Student pieces	POA		POA		
News / Weather reporting	Free		Free		
Charities (Normally free, or may charge to recover council costs if these will be incurred)	POA		POA		
Fast turn-around fee	198.00	165.00	100.00	83.33	-49.5
Cancellation fee	66.00	55.00	N/A	N/A	
Extra requirements / other discretionary services such as: Site meetings / inspections, legal / licence fee, exclusivity of site fee, unit base / parking, assisting with filming on the public highway, providing access to parks / buildings, coning off areas, providing access to electricity, refuse collection, removal or addition of street furniture, street cleaning, turning off street lights, providing access to water or parking.	POA		POA		
Note: * Prices for applications are agreed by negotiation, in light of the size and nature of the production, using price benchmarking and industry feedback from partnership with Berkshire Film Office, to secure best value while maximising number of filming sales. Two prices listed reflect upper and lower ends of a scale.					

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service: Legal & Surveyors' Fees

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	243	255

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
Legal & Surveyors' Fees for Property Transactions					
New Lease		630		665	5.6
Licence to Assign		475		500	5.3
Contracted Out Lease - fee is dependant on complexity		280/465		295/490	5.4/5.4
License to Alter - fee is dependant upon complexity		280/465		295/490	5.4/5.4
Deed of Variation - fee is dependant on complexity		280/465		295/490	5.4/5.4
Sale of Garages & Freehold Reversions		390		410	5.1
Letter/Deed of Postponement		175		185	5.7
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard cases (uncontested)		595		625	5.0
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard cases (contested)*per hour		165		175	6.1
Transfer (or hourly rate as appropriate)		455		480	5.5
Section 106 Agreements		1615**		1615**	
S38/278 Highways Act Agreement - per hour		215		230	7.0

* With discretion for the Borough Solicitor to increase if time recorded costs exceed £565, at a rate of £185 per hour.

** With discretion for the Borough Solicitor to increase if time recorded costs exceed £1,615, at a rate of £185 per hour.

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service: Electoral Registration

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service

Income the proposed fees will generate:	2023/24 Budget £'000 4	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000 4
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Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT) £.p	Current Fee (Exc VAT) £.p	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT) £.p	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT) £.p	Increase %
Electoral Registration					
Register of Electors					
In data format, £20 plus £1.50 for each 1,000 entries (or remaining part of 1,000 entries)		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
In printed format, £10 plus £5 for each 1000 entries (or remaining part of 1,000 entries)		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Register of Overseas Electors					
In data format, £20 plus £1.50 for each 100 entries (or remaining part of 100 entries)		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
In printed format, £10 plus £5 for each 100 entries or (or remaining part of 100 entries)		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Marked copy of the Register of Electors					
In data format, £10 plus £1 per 1,000 entries or part thereof		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
In paper format, £10 plus £2 for each 1000 entries or part thereof		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service: Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Services

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service

Income the proposed fees will generate:	2023/24 Budget £'000 151	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000 159
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Are concessions available? No, but a variety of services provided at differing prices.

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT) £.p	Current Fee (Exc VAT) £.p	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT) £.p	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT) £.p	Increase %	2025/26 Proposed Fee (Inc VAT) £.p	2025/26 Proposed Fee (Exc VAT) £.p	Increase %
Marriage and Civil Partnership Ceremonies								
New Licence		2,440.00		2,623.00	7.5		2,754.00	5.0
Licence Renewal		2,091.00		2,248.00	7.5		2,360.00	5.0
Notice of Intent fee for marriage and civil partnership ceremonies at the Register Office - Mon-Fri		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Additional fee for evenings/weekend appointments	45.00	37.50	47.50	39.50	5.3			
Notice of Intent fee for marriage and civil partnership away from the Register Office (includes fee for entry in marriage notice book):								
- for a housebound person		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- for a detained person		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Attendance of Registrar for a marriage or civil partnership:								
- at a registered building		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- of a housebound person		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- of a detained person		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Attendance of Superintendent Registrar for a marriage or civil partnership:								
- of a housebound person		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- of a detained person		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Attendance of Superintendent Registrar and Registrar for a ceremony at approved premises								
- Monday-Thursday		525.00		565.00	7.6		595.00	5.3
- Friday-Saturday		640.00		690.00	7.8		725.00	5.1
- Sunday/Bank Holiday		695.00		750.00	7.9		785.00	4.7
Attendance of celebrant for a venue other than the Haversham Room								
- Monday-Thursday	270.00	225.00	290.00	241.67	7.4	305.00	254.17	5.2
- Friday-Saturday	380.00	316.67	410.00	341.67	7.9	430.00	358.33	4.9
- Sunday/Bank Holiday	430.00	358.33	465.00	387.50	8.1	485.00	404.17	4.3
Marriage, Civil Partnership and individual Citizenship Ceremonies in the Haversham Room (includes Superintendent Registrar's and Registrar's attendance)								
- Monday-Thursday	550.00	458.33	625.00	520.83	13.6	670.00	558.33	7.2
- Friday-Saturday	675.00	562.50	760.00	633.33	12.6	820.00	683.33	7.9
- Sunday/Bank Holiday	735.00	612.50	835.00	695.83	13.6	885.00	737.50	6.0
Other ceremonies in the Haversham Room (includes celebrant's attendance)								
- Monday-Thursday	330.00	275.00	355.00	295.83	7.6	373.00	310.83	5.1
- Friday-Saturday	435.00	362.50	465.00	387.50	6.9	490.00	408.33	5.4
- Sunday/Bank Holiday	485.00	404.17	520.00	433.33	7.2	550.00	458.33	5.8
Pre-ceremony chat appointments								
Daytime Monday - Friday	35.00		35.00					
Evening Monday - Friday	45.00		45.00					
Saturday	55.00		55.00					
Marriage or Civil Partnership, individual Citizenship Ceremonies in the Ceremony Room (Time Square) includes Superintendent Registrar's and Registrar's attendance		275.00		295.00	7.3		310.00	5.1
- Monday - Friday								
- Saturday	N/A	N/A		365.00			385.00	5.5
Other ceremonies in the Ceremony Room (Time Square) includes celebrant's attendance								
- Monday - Friday	160.00		170.00	170.00			170.00	
- Saturday			210.00	220.00			220.00	
Supplement for evening ceremonies (all venues)		100.00		110.00	10.0		115.00	4.5
Marriage or Civil Partnership Ceremony in the Register Office		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Attendance of Superintendent Registrar for a civil partnership conversion to a marriage at the Register office		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Attendance of Superintendent Registrar for a civil partnership conversion to a marriage at a registered building		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Application to convert a Civil Partnership to a marriage		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Attendance of Superintendent Registrar for a civil partnership conversion to a marriage:								
- of a housebound person		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- of a detained person		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- of a seriously ill person not expected to recover		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	

Note - Appointment fees will be taken at the time of booking

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service: Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages Services

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	151	159

Are concessions available? No, but a variety of services provided at differing prices.

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase	2025/26 Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	2025/26 Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%	£.p	£.p	%
Certificates and Citizenship Ceremonies								
Certificates								
Birth (short and long), death and marriages certificates(extracts or full):								
- at time of registration		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- after registration but in current register		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- after registration and after register closed		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Civil Partnership certificates (extract or full):								
- at time of registration		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
- at any other time		Set by Statute		Set by Statute			Set by Statute	
Commemorative Certificates	15.00	12.50	16.00	13.33	6.7	17.00	14.17	6.3

Note - Appointment fees will be taken at the time of booking

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service: Democratic Services

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		
Very few requests are made for agendas and the income budgets are below £1,000		

Are concessions available? Agendas are available online at no charge.

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%
Council Publications			
Agendas/Minutes, etc			
Council agenda – Charge per Annum (Based on 8 per Annum)	204.00	214.00	4.9
Executive Agenda – Charge per Annum (based on 11 per Annum)	304.00	319.00	4.9
Planning Committee (based on 12 per Annum)	304.00	319.00	4.9
Any other Committee or Sub Committee Agendas			
Charge per Annum (Based on 4 per annum)	146.00	153.00	4.8
Charge per single copy	40.00	42.00	5.0
Part extract (any Committee) including background papers - administration fee	13.00	14.00	7.7

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service: Customer Experience

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000 0	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000 0
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
Certificate					
Proof of Life/Pension Certificate	20.00	16.67	21.00	17.50	5.0

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Bracknell Leisure Centre, Coral Reef, Downshire Golf Complex

In the contract there are four pricing elements which are described as –

- **Protected Prices**
Red Diamond Sports Club, Activate GP Referral, Wellbeing & Leisure Team, Fit for Life, Foster Carers
- **Club Prices**
Bracknell & Wokingham Swimming Club, Bracknell Gymnastics Club, Bracknell Lifesaving Club, Bracknell Sub Aqua Club; Bracknell Athletics Club, Downshire Golf Club, Easthampstead Golf Club, Easthampstead Ladies Golf Club
- **Core Prices**
Predominately made up from the charges agreed by Council
- **Non Core Prices**
Everything else

Protected Prices

The Protected Prices can only vary if BFC agrees at its absolute discretion.

Club Prices

The supplier can increase these prices annually in line with inflation, subject to council approval.

The supplier can submit proposals together with supporting documentation and rationale to the Authority to change the Club Prices at the Facilities in excess of inflation but the Council is under no obligation to accept such proposals. The Council will consider the proposed changes to the Club Prices and shall either agree or reject the proposals. The Council's decision will be final.

Core Prices

The supplier can increase these prices annually in line with inflation, subject to council approval.

The supplier can submit proposals together with supporting documentation and rationale to the Authority to change the Core Prices at the Facilities in excess of inflation based on their assessment of market pricing. The Council will consider the proposed changes to the core prices and shall either agree or reject the proposals although changes to prices cannot unreasonably be withheld. The Council's decision will be final.

Non-Core Prices

The supplier can charge customers for activities not covered by the Protected Prices, the Club Prices and the Core Prices. These prices are not authorised by the Council but will be charged at market rates. Typically, these would include classes, new innovations and the like.

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Library Service

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	66	66

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase	
	£	£	£	£	%	
Overdue Charges Per Loan Period						
Adult Books, inc multimedia	Daily		0.70	0.60	-14.3	
	Max Per item		14.70	13.80	-6.1	
Childrens Books borrowed by adults	Daily		0.20	0.20	0.0	
	Max Per item		5.00	5.00	0.0	
Childrens Books borrowed by children	Daily		0.20	0.20	0.0	
	Max Per item		2.60	2.60	0.0	
Teenage Books borrowed by young people 13-17	Daily		0.20	0.20	0.0	
	Max Per item		5.00	5.00	0.0	
Spoken Word Cassettes/ CD's	Daily		0.70	0.50	-28.6	
	Max Per item		14.70	11.50	-21.8	
Music CD's	Daily		0.50	0.50	0.0	
	Max Per item		11.50	11.50	0.0	
DVD's	Daily		1.10	1.00	-9.1	
	Max Per item		15.40	14.00	-9.1	
Computer Games	Daily		1.10	1.00	-9.1	
	Max Per item		15.40	14.00	-9.1	
Loan Charges						
Childrens Spoken Word Cassettes & CD's - 3 weeks			Free	Free		
Adult Spoken Word 3 weeks			2.80	2.60	-7.1	
Music CD's, Computer Games, DVD's - New i.e. first 3 months			2.80	2.60	-7.1	
Music CD's, Computer Games, DVD's - Over 3 months to 2 years old			2.00	1.80	-10.0	
Music CD's, Computer Games, DVD's - Over 2 years old			2.00	0.80	-60.0	
Requests - Books/Periodical Articles - All per item						
All items held in BFC Libraries						
Requests for children's books			Free	Free		
Requests for all other books			1.00	0.90	-10.0	
Requests for all other books if a registered disabled person or those with a leisure			0.70	0.60	-14.3	
Subscription - unlimited requests	12 Months - (April-March)		23.00	23.00	0.0	
	6 months - (October - March)		16.00	16.00	0.0	
Requests to other Authorities and British Library (1st 10 items British Libraries)			6.00	6.00	0.0	
British Library Requests (Subsequent Books)			17.00	17.00	0.0	
British Library Requests (Subsequent Periodicals)			13.00	13.00	0.0	
British Library Urgent Service			POA	POA		
British Library Urgent Service (Student Concession)			23.00	23.00	0.0	
Internet Printing Fees						
Printing Mono	A4 Page	0.20	0.17	0.20	0.17	0.0
Printing Colour	A4 Page	0.50	0.42	0.50	0.42	0.0
Guest Internet Use	Half Hour	4.50	3.75	4.50	3.75	0.0
USB SticksCD Rom	Each	6.00	5.00	6.00	5.00	0.0
Scan and Print by customer	A4 Page	0.20	0.17	0.20	0.17	0.0
Scan and Print by staff	A4 Page	6.00	5.00	6.00	5.00	0.0
Scan and Print on Photo Paper	A4 Page	6.00	5.00	6.00	5.00	0.0
NEW - Print on Photo Paper	A4 Page	0.60	0.50	0.60	0.50	0.0
Photocopying Charges						
Black & White	A4 Page	0.20	0.17	0.20	0.17	0.0
Black & White	A3 Page	0.40	0.33	0.40	0.33	0.0
Colour	A4 Page	0.80	0.67	0.80	0.67	0.0
Colour	A3 Page	2.00	1.67	2.00	1.67	0.0
Other Charges						
Printing from microfilm reader	A4 Page	0.50	0.42	0.50	0.42	0.0
Facilities Hire at Libraries	Half day	55.00	45.83	55.00	45.83	0.0
Facilities Hire at Libraries	Full day	85.00	70.83	85.00	70.83	0.0
Loan of vocal scores	Multiples of 10 per week		POA		POA	
Facilities Hire at Libraries						
Hourly rate for block bookings		19.00	15.83	20.00	16.67	5.3

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Cemetery & Crematorium

Purpose of the Charge: To operate in a commercial market and to recover the costs of maintaining high quality facilities

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	2,568	2,696

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
CEMETERY					
For the interment of the body of:					
a person aged 18 years or over		1,350.00		1,350.00	0.0
re-open Grave aged 18 years or over		1,010.00		1,010.00	0.0
a child up aged 3 years 1 day to 17 years 364 days		164.00		164.00	0.0
a stillborn child, foetus or child under 3 years		98.00		98.00	0.0
For the interment of a cremation urn or casket:					
a person aged 18 years or over		340.00		340.00	0.0
a child up to 17 years 364 days		152.00		152.00	0.0
Exclusive rights of burial (deed for 75 years)					
For the exclusive right of burial of 75 years including the preparation of the Deed of Grant for an person 18 years or over		1,300.00		1,400.00	7.7
For the exclusive right of burial of 75 years including the preparation of the Deed of Grant for a Cremated Remains plot for 2 for persons over the age of 18				900.00	
For the exclusive right of burial for a period of 75 years for child's grave (coffins 4' long or under) under 18 years		591.00		620.00	4.9
For the exclusive right of burial for a period of 75 years for child's grave (coffins 4'1" to 5'4" max) under 18 years		737.00		775.00	5.2
The whole of the foregoing fees and charges will treble in the case of any person who, at the time of death, was not or no longer (after 12 months) a Bracknell Forest Borough Council Tax payer or inhabitant of the area administered by Bracknell Forest Borough Council. Elderly persons who have been moved into a care facility are subject to the same regulations with the exception of those in the care of Bracknell Forest Council and who have been moved into a care facility chosen by Bracknell Forest Council which is not within the Borough.					
Additional charge for casket shaped grave for a person 16 and over		400.00		420.00	5.0
Right to erect memorial		185.00		200.00	8.1
Additional inscription of each name		80.00		90.00	12.5
Temporary marker on Grave		32.00		32.00	0.0
Transfer of grant of exclusive right of burial		94.00		99.00	5.3
Exhumation of a stillborn child up to 3 years or of a child or person over 3 years or of cremated remains at 4 feet		POA		POA	
The charges for a funeral on a weekend is based on the standard charge for an adult and increased by 50% for a Saturday and 100% on a Sunday.					

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Cemetery & Crematorium

Purpose of the Charge: To operate in a commercial market and to recover the costs of maintaining high quality facilities

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	2,568	2,696

Are concessions available? Yes on some services

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
CREMATORIUM					
For the cremation of the body of:					
a person aged 17 years, 364 days or under		FOC		FOC	
a person aged 18 years or over					
45 Minute Chapel Time		955.00		1,045.00	9.4
Additional 45 minutes in chapel/service		525.00		550.00	4.8
Overrun Fee		300.00		325.00	8.3
a person aged 18 years or over 1000 - 1500 Saturday 45 min service		1,400.00		1,535.00	9.6
a person aged 18 years or over 1000 - 1500 Sunday 45 min service		1,845.00		2,025.00	9.8
a person aged 18 years or over 09:00 or 09:30 services only (Mon-Fri)				955.00	
Attended Cremation -15min chapel time only (No Service) Early Am/Late PM drop off only - cremated remains available for collection within 48 hours.		684.00		684.00	0.0
Body parts		277.00		295.00	6.5
Cremation fee includes Medical Referee fee, use of chapel (if required), provision of recorded music, use of organ (Braccan only - organist not included), disposal of cremated remains in the Gardens of Remembrance excluding weekends and Bank Holidays (see separate pricing below), provision of cardboard container for cremated remains and the cost of recovery for the cremators and mercury abatement (currently £65).					
The charge for a cremation on a weekend is based on the standard charge for an adult (less abatement) and increased by 50% for a Saturday and 100% on a Sunday.					
In the event of the body of child being cremated in the same coffin as the body of its parents, no fees shall be payable in respect of the burial of that child.					
Direct Cremation - no chapel time/service; early am/late pm drop off only; disposal of cremated remains in the Gardens of Remembrance excluding weekends and Bank Holidays (see separate pricing below), provision of cardboard container for cremated remains and the cost of recovery for the cremators and mercury abatement (currently £65).		320.00		370.00	15.6
Scattering of Cremated remains - Sat, Sun & Bank Hol			37.00	40.00	8.1

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Cemetery & Crematorium

Purpose of the Charge: To operate in a commercial market and to recover the costs of maintaining high quality facilities

	0.00	0.00
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	2,568	2,696

Are concessions available? Yes on some services

Use of Chapel only for memorial service includes use of organ (Braccan only - organist not included) and/or recorded music		525.00		550.00	4.8
For disposal of cremated remains when cremation has taken place elsewhere		188.00		188.00	0.0
Retention of cremated remains on temporary deposit per month after first month for a maximum of three months		75.00		80.00	6.7
Coffin to Catafalque(24hrs max)		65.00		70.00	7.7
Refrigeration Storage per coffin (per 24hr period)		25.00		30.00	20.0
Certified extract from the Register of Cremation		50.00		50.00	0.0
AUDIO-VISUAL OPTIONS					
Blu-Ray or Audio CD of live stream or Tribute, or both.	52.00	43.33	55.00	45.83	5.8
Each additional copy of above	42.00	35.00	42.00	35.00	0.0
Webcast audio visual recording of Service, Tribute or both - on USB, DVD	63.00	52.50	66.00	55.00	4.8
Each additional copy of above	42.00	35.00	42.00	35.00	0.0
Webcast - per 45 minutes (including 28 day watch again and downloadable)	86.00	71.67	86.00	71.67	0.0
Single Image (Halo Photo)	15.00	12.50	15.00	12.50	0.0
Basic Slideshow (up to 25 photos/no music)	49.00	40.83	52.00	43.33	6.1
Music Tribute (Professional Tribute) - up to 25 photos with music	85.00	70.83	89.00	74.17	4.7
Additional photos for basic slideshow or music tribute - up to 25 extra	24.00	20.00	26.00	21.67	8.3
Themed Tribute (up to 25 image slideshow professionally themed, edited and timed to chosen piece of music)	99.00	82.50	105.00	87.50	6.1
Tribute Download - a downloadable version of the Music or Themed Tribute			10.00	8.33	
Family supplied video - checking & loading to Obitus	24.00	20.00	26.00	21.67	8.3
Extra Work Charge - fee applied to any standard product for additional work outside the			26.00	21.67	
Webcast copy of Service, Tribute or both - on USB, DVD or Bluera y	84.00	70.00	88.00	73.33	4.8
Each additional copy of above	42.00	35.00	44.00	36.67	4.8
Under 18's AV package (Live and on-demand webcast of service with single (halo) image and basic slideshow	20.00	16.67	20.00	16.67	0.0
Bundle AV Package (single halo image, music slideshow, live and on-demand webcast, 1 x USB/DVD product)	169.00	153.33	178.00	148.33	5.3
Video Book (portable video of service/tribute or both set in an A5-sized electronic screen)	95.00	79.17	99.00	82.50	4.20
Memory Box (up to 25 printed photos in presentation box with USB / DVD of service/tribute)	130.00	108.33	135.00	112.50	3.80
MEMORIAL FEES					
Entries in The Book of Remembrance					
2 line entry	104.00	86.67	109.00	90.83	4.8
5 line entry	153.00	127.50	160.00	133.33	4.6
8 line entry	184.00	153.33	194.00	161.67	5.4
5 line entry with floral emblem	243.00	202.50	255.00	212.50	4.9
8 line entry with floral emblem	255.00	212.50	268.00	223.33	5.1
5 line entry with badge, bird, crest or shield	270.00	225.00	284.00	236.67	5.2
8 line entry with badge, bird, crest or shield	320.00	266.67	336.00	280.00	5.0
8 line entry with coat of arms	330.00	275.00	346.00	288.33	4.8
Copy of an entry from The Book of Remembrance in a folded remembrance card					
2 line entry	87.00	72.50	92.00	76.67	5.7
5 line entry	104.00	86.67	109.00	90.83	4.8
8 line entry	119.00	99.17	125.00	104.17	5.0
5 line entry with floral emblem	211.00	175.83	222.00	185.00	5.2
8 line entry with floral emblem	226.00	188.33	237.00	197.50	4.9
5 line entry with badge, bird, crest or shield	230.00	191.67	240.00	200.00	4.3
8 line entry with badge, bird, crest or shield	245.00	204.17	256.00	213.33	4.5
8 line entry with coat of arms	275.00	229.17	288.00	240.00	4.7
Memorial Leather Panel					
Prepare and display for a 10 year period	442.00	368.33	350.00	291.67	-20.8
Prepare and display for a 1 year period	250.00	208.33	150.00	125.00	-40.0
Annual Renewal	24.00	20.00	25.00	20.83	4.2
Replacement of memorial leather panel	230.00	191.67	125.00	104.17	-45.7
Babies' Garden of remembrance Plaque					
Babies Picture Book Plaque (10 years)	442.00	368.33	450.00	375.00	1.8
Babies Picture Book Plaque set up and Year 1 Lease	250.00	208.33	250.00	208.33	0.0
Annual Renewal	24.00	20.00	25.00	20.83	4.2
Roses					
Rose standard with plaque set up and 1st year lease	260.00	216.67	274.00	228.33	5.4
Renewal of standard rose annual lease	43.00	35.83	45.00	37.50	4.7
Standard Plaque (additional or replacement)	64.00	53.33	67.00	55.83	4.7
Classic Plaque (additional or replacement)	78.00	65.00	82.00	68.33	5.1
Cast Bronze Plaque	160.00	133.33	168.00	140.00	5.0
Memorial Garden Seats					
A commemorative bench with plaque for a 10 year period	1,550.00	1,291.67	1,594.00	1,328.33	2.8
A commemorative bench, plaque, set up and 1st year lease.	878.00	731.67	922.00	768.33	5.0
Annual renewal of commemorative bench	84.00	70.00	84.00	70.00	0.0
Cast bronze plaque	144.00	120.00	152.00	126.67	5.6
Cremated Remains Desk Tablet (with flower holder) Memdesk					
Prepare and display for a 10 year period incl 80 letters	1,089.00	907.50	1,146.00	955.00	5.2
Prepare and display for a 1 year period incl 80 letters	505.00	420.83	530.00	441.67	5.0
Annual renewal of lease	73.00	60.83	77.00	64.17	5.5
Second and final interment (including new tablet)	390.00	325.00	405.00	337.50	3.8

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Cemetery & Crematorium

Purpose of the Charge: To operate in a commercial market and to recover the costs of maintaining high quality facilities

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	2,568	2,696

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£,p	£,p	£,p	£,p	%
Bracken Heal Birdbath					
Plaque Row 1 (10 year lease)	435.00	362.50	459.00	382.50	5.5
Plaque Row 1 set up and year 1 lease	147.00	122.50	155.00	129.17	5.4
Plaque Row 2 (10 year lease)	451.00	375.83	475.00	395.83	5.3
Plaque Row 2 set up and year 1 lease	163.00	135.83	171.00	142.50	4.9
Plaque Row 3 (10 year lease)	466.00	388.33	491.00	409.17	5.4
Plaque Row 3 set up and year 1 lease	178.00	148.33	187.00	155.83	5.1
Annual lease on all Bracken Heal Plaques	36.00	30.00	38.00	31.67	5.6
Personal Plaque designs					
Small design	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Medium design	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Large design (unavailable on Birdbath Plaques)	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Birdbath Seat Plaque (designs unavailable)	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Photo Plaque (4x3) with initial order(Planter,Birdbath rows 2&3)	99.00	82.50	104.00	86.67	5.1
Photo Plaque (4x3) added to existing tablet(Planter,Birdbath rows 2&3)	119.00	99.17	125.00	104.17	5.0
Photo Plaque (7x5) with initial order (Sanctum only)	149.00	124.17	156.00	130.00	4.7
Photo Plaque (7x5) added to existing tablet (Sanctum only)	179.00	149.17	188.00	156.67	5.0
AILSA CRAIG					
Memorial Granite Rock 10 year lease	618.00	515.00	654.00	545.00	5.8
Memorial Granite Rock set up and year 1 lease	330.00	275.00	350.00	291.67	6.1
Annual renewal of lease	36.00	30.00	38.00	31.67	5.6
Personal Plaque designs	POA	POA	POA	POA	
COPSE STONE					
Memorial Granite Rock 10 year lease	583.00	485.83	614.00	511.67	5.3
Memorial Granite Rock set up and year 1 lease	295.00	245.83	310.00	258.33	5.1
Annual renewal of lease	36.00	30.00	38.00	31.67	5.6
Personal Plaque designs	POA	POA	POA	POA	
BLUEBELL WOOD - MUSHROOM					
Mushroom Disc - set up and 10 year lease	517.00	430.83	543.00	452.50	5.0
Mushroom Disc - set up and year 1 lease	269.00	224.17	278.00	231.67	3.3
Annual renewal of lease	31.00	25.83	33.00	27.50	6.5
Granite 2000 (Sundial plaque)					
Prepare and display a red/black pearl tablet with three lines on inscription for a ten year period	454.00	378.33	470.00	391.67	3.5
Prepare and display a red/black pearl tablet with three lines on inscription set up and year 1 lease	166.00	138.33	166.00	138.33	0.0
Annual renewal of lease	36.00	30.00	38.00	31.67	5.6
Hand Crafted designs	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Photo on Memorial	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Additional lines (max three - Black granite only)	39.00	32.50	39.00	32.50	0.0
Memorial Vase					
Prepare and display for 10 year period	683.00	569.17	483.00	402.50	-29.3
Prepare and display for 1 year	395.00	329.17	195.00	162.50	-50.6
Replacement plaque (including inscription)	315.00	262.50	150.00	125.00	-52.4
Annual renewal of lease	36.00	30.00	36.00	30.00	0.0
Sanctum 2000® Cremated Remains (with flower holder)					
Prepare and display for 10 year period, an inscribed table for two sets of remains including 80 letters of inscription	1,375.00	1,145.83	1,445.00	1,204.17	5.1
Prepare and display for 1 year period, an inscribed table for two sets of remains including 80 letters of inscription	775.00	645.83	814.00	678.33	5.0
Annual renewal of lease	75.00	62.50	79.00	65.83	5.3
Additional inscription per letter	3.00	2.50	3.00	2.50	0.0
Second & final interment (including 50 letter inscription)	390.00	325.00	410.00	341.67	5.1
Photo Plaque with initial order	144.00	120.00	152.00	126.67	5.6
Photo plaque added to existing tablet	175.00	145.83	184.00	153.33	5.1
Personal Plaque Designs					
Small design	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Medium design	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Large design	POA	POA	POA	POA	
MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS					
Other small miscellaneous items are available, with prices available on request	POA	POA	POA	POA	

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Waste Management

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	827	868

Are concessions available? Yes - Bulky Household and garden waste brown bin collection service - There is a 50% discount where the principal occupant is in receipt of an income related benefit.

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
SPECIAL REFUSE COLLECTION SERVICE OF BULKY ITEMS AND GARDEN WASTE					
Bulky household refuse (excluding DIY material) Up to 3 items.		51.00		54.00	5.9
Between 4 and 7 items (minimum charge 1 hour)		66.00		69.00	4.5
Annual Collection for Garden Waste Service - 240L Brown Bin		60.00		65.00	8.3
Annual Collection for Garden Waste Service - 140L Brown Bin		56.00		60.00	7.1
Garden waste sacks(to include collection)		1.20		1.30	8.3
MISCELLANEOUS					
Replacement of green or blue Wheeled bin - admin charge		35.00		37.00	5.7
Residents request to return and empty bin not presented for collection		32.00		34.00	6.3
Additional green wheeled bin hire charge, under certain circumstances - charge per annum		45.00		47.00	4.4
Brown Bin for Garden Waste(140L/240L) - one off purchase cost		42.00		44.00	4.8
Brown Bin for Garden Waste Repair		17.00		18.00	5.9
Internal food waste caddy (5 litre)		8.50		8.50	0.0

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : On/Off Street Parking

Purpose of the Charge: To maximise income to cover costs and to help fund public transport and road improvement projects.

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	3,433	3,378

Are concessions available? Yes

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
SEASON TICKETS- SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY					
Braccan Walk					
5 day monthly	110.00	91.67	120.00	100.00	9.1
5 day annual	1,100.00	916.67	1,200.00	1,000.00	9.1
7 day annual	1,300.00	1,083.33	1,420.00	1,183.33	9.2
7 day monthly	120.00	100.00	130.00	108.33	8.3
7 day annual season ticket for residential properties	1,000.00	833.33	1,075.00	895.83	7.5
Albert Road					
Per Hour	2.00	1.67	2.10	1.75	5.0
Mon-Sun inc - 10 hrs	7.10	5.92	7.50	6.25	5.6
7 day monthly renewal	80.00	66.67	85.00	70.83	6.3
Wick Hill					
Per Hour	2.00	1.67	2.10	1.75	5.0
Mon-Sun inc - 10 hrs	6.00	5.00	6.30	5.25	5.0
7 day monthly renewal	40.00	33.33	42.00	35.00	5.0
Car Park Spaces Behind Banks					
0-40 minutes	1.40	1.17	1.50	1.25	7.1
Overnight Mon-Sun 6pm until 6am	1.90	1.58	2.10	1.75	10.5
Off street bay suspension per week	50.00	41.67	55.00	45.83	10.0

DAILY CHARGES

All daily charges for the town centre car parks/parking inc Braccan Walk, High St., The Avenue car & Weather Way car parks are linked to the fees for the Avenue car park. The Avenue car park fees are set by the terms of the lease and all such fees are now to be determined annually in September by the Town Centre Regeneration Committee.

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : On / Off Street Parking

Purpose of the Charge: To maximise income to cover costs and to help fund public transport and road improvement projects.

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	3,433	3,378

Are concessions available? Yes

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
LEISURE PREMISES					
Coral Reef Car Park (Monday to Friday 7am to 10.30pm, Saturday and Sunday 8am to 9pm)					
No charge for first 10 minutes					
0-5 hrs	5.00	4.17	5.30	4.42	6.0
All day charge	7.20	6.00	7.60	6.33	5.6
The Look Out Discovery Centre Car Park (April to September 7am to 8.30pm, October to March 7am to 6pm)					
No charge for first 10 minutes					
0-4 hrs	3.40	2.83	3.60	3.00	5.9
All day charge	6.80	5.67	7.20	6.00	5.9
Annual off-peak permit					
Resident of Bracknell Forest	70.00	58.33	74.00	61.67	5.7
Non resident of Bracknell Forest	150.00	125.00	159.00	132.50	6.0
RESIDENTS PARKING					
resident and business 1st Permit	25.00	20.83	30.00	25.00	20.0
resident and business 2nd Permit	40.00	33.33	45.00	37.50	12.5
resident and business 3rd Permit	60.00	50.00	65.00	54.17	8.3
resident and business 4th Permit	80.00	66.67	85.00	70.83	6.3
resident and business 5th Permit	100.00	83.33	105.00	87.50	5.0
resident and business 4 hour reusable permit	25.00	20.83	30.00	25.00	20.0
visitor virtual scratchcards initial 10 x 4hr single use	3.00	2.50	5.00	4.17	66.7
visitor virtual scratchcards initial 10 x 24hr single use	8.00	6.67	10.00	8.33	25.0
Visitor scratch cards - 50 x 4 hour	15.00	12.50	20.00	16.67	33.3
Visitor scratch cards - 50 x 24 hour	40.00	33.33	45.00	37.50	12.5
Tradesperson or Service Provider	60.00	50.00	65.00	54.17	8.3
Healthcare	25.00	20.83	30.00	25.00	20.0
Landlord - 10 x 4 hour scratch card	10.00	8.33	15.00	12.50	50.0
Landlord - 10 x 24 hour scratch card	20.00	16.67	25.00	20.83	25.0
Replacement Visitor Permit - where original is surrendered	5.00	4.17	5.00	4.17	0.0
Replacement Visitor Permit - where original is not surrendered	25.00	20.83	25.00	20.83	0.0
OTHER PARKING CHARGES					
Penalty Charge Notices (Off Street)					
Charge		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Charge if paid within 14 days		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Penalty Charge Notices (On-Street)					
Charge		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Charge if paid within 14 days		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? Yes

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
DOG CONTROL					
Return of Stray Dog					
Prescribed fee					
Vet fees		At cost		At cost	-
Fixed penalty notice - failure to chip dog		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	-
Stray Dogs - Not taken to kennel		80.00		85.00	6.3
Stray Dogs - Taken to kennel		80.00		85.00	
Fee - cost recovery at hourly rate		At cost		At cost	
Plus overnight kennel fees		At Cost		At Cost	
Miscellaneous stray dog activities e.g. relocating, microchipping etc.					
Fee		64.00		68.25	6.6
Plus recovery of costs		At Cost		At Cost	-
Dog Fouling fixed penalty charge		75.00		75.00	0.0
50% reduction if in receipt of some benefits, proof required					
ABANDONED VEHICLES					
Removal (prescribed fee) less than 3.5 tonnes		150.00		150.00	-
Daily storage (prescribed fee) less than 3.5 tonnes		20.00		20.00	-
Enforcement disposal costs (prescribed fee) less than 3.5 tonnes		75.00		75.00	-
Fixed Penalty Notice reduced to £120 if paid within 7 days		200.00		200.00	-
Enforcement invoice costs		77.00		77.00	-
CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENVIRONMENT ACT					
FIXED PENALTY NOTICES					
Repairing Vehicles on Road		60.00		60.00	0.0
Graffiti and fly-posting		50.00		50.00	0.0
Street litter notices and litter clearing notices - reduced to £60 if paid within 7		60.00		60.00	0.0
Unauthorised distribution of literature on designated land		50.00		50.00	0.0
Failure to produce a waste transfer note		180.00		180.00	0.0
Domestic waste Waste receptacles		60.00		60.00	0.0
Industrial and commercial waste receptacle offences		100.00		100.00	0.0
Failure to produce a waste carrier documentation - reduced to £180 if paid within 7		180.00		180.00	0.0
Offence of Dropping Litter		50.00		50.00	0.0
Offence of Littering from vehicles		50.00		50.00	0.0
Alarm noise: failure to nominate key-holder or to notify local authority of key-holder's details		50.00		50.00	0.0
Nuisance parking		60.00		60.00	0.0
Abandoning a vehicle		120.00		120.00	0.0
Noise exceeding permitted level - domestic premises		100.00		100.00	0.0
Noise exceeding permitted level - licensed premises		500.00		500.00	0.0
Unauthorised Deposit of Waste (Fixed Penalties) Regulations 2016					
FIXED PENALTY NOTICES					
MISCELLANEOUS					
Production of Statement of Facts (Discretionary) - an hourly rate of £127 for up to 2 hours work and thereafter a charge of £68.25.		127.00		127.00	0.0
Immigration reports for Home Office		435.00		464.00	6.7
Certificate for surrender of unsound food (per hour) plus disposal costs		64.00		68.25	6.6
Special Treatments: Single Payment					
Premises		N/A		N/A	-
Person		N/A		N/A	-
Skin Piercing Registrations					
Individuals (4hrs)		256.00		273.00	6.6
Premises (5hrs)		320.00		341.00	6.6
Joint Application (7hrs)		448.00		478.00	6.7
Pre-application advice per hour		64.00		68.25	6.6
Commerical Food Export					
Certificate - minimum		64.00		68.25	6.6
General Business Advice (Non-Primary Authority) pr hour, first 30 minutes free		64.00		68.25	6.6
Resident Request for Advice per hour		64.00		68.25	6.6
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme rescore - New - agreed Dec 2019		128.00		136.50	6.6

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT - All fees and charges set by statute law					
The following fees and charges are in respect of Prescribed Processes . Please contact Environment for information in respect of fees and charges where an operator is applying for, or holds multiple authorisations for the carrying on of a crushing and/or screening process by means of mobile plant.					
Environmental Permitting (E&W) Regulations 2016					
Application Fee					
Standard Process		1,650.00		1,650.00	0.0
Additional fee for operating without a permit		1,188.00		1,188.00	0.0
Service Stations (PVI and PVII)		257.00		257.00	0.0
Service Station (PVR 1)		155.00		155.00	0.0
Dry Cleaners		155.00		155.00	0.0
Vehicle Refinishers		362.00		362.00	0.0
Mobile Screening and Crushing Plant		1,650.00		1,650.00	0.0
For the third to seventh applications		985.00		985.00	0.0
For the eighth and subsequent applications		498.00		498.00	0.0
Substantial Changes (Sections 10 and 11 of the Act)					
Standard Process		1,050.00		1,050.00	0.0
Standad process where substantial change results in a new PPC activity		1,650.00		1,650.00	0.0
Reduced Activites		102.00		102.00	0.0
Annual Subsistence Charge					
Standard Process LOW		772.00		772.00	0.0
Standard Process MEDIUM		1,161.00		1,161.00	0.0
Standard Process HIGH		1,747.00		1,747.00	0.0
Service Stations LOW		113.00		113.00	0.0
Service Stations MEDIUM		226.00		226.00	0.0
Service Stations HIGH		341.00		341.00	0.0
VR's and other reduced fees LOW		228.00		228.00	0.0
VR's and other reduced fees MEDIUM		365.00		365.00	0.0
VR's and other reduced fees HIGH		548.00		548.00	0.0
Dry Cleaners/PVR1 LOW		79.00		79.00	0.0
Dry Cleaners/PVR1 MEDIUM		158.00		158.00	0.0
Dry Cleaners/PVR1 HIGH		237.00		237.00	0.0
Mobile Screening and Crushing Plant LOW		626.00		626.00	0.0
Mobile Screening and Crushing Plant MEDIUM		1,034.00		1,034.00	0.0
Mobile Screening and Crushing Plant HIGH		1,506.00		1,506.00	0.0
For the second permit LOW		646.00		646.00	0.0
For the second permit MEDIUM		1,034.00		1,034.00	0.0
For the second permit HIGH		1,506.00		1,506.00	0.0
For the third to seventh permit LOW		385.00		385.00	0.0
For the third to seventh permit MEDIUM		617.00		617.00	0.0
For the third to seventh permit HIGH		924.00		924.00	0.0
For the eighth and subsequent applications LOW		198.00		198.00	0.0
For the eighth and subsequent applications MEDIUM		316.00		316.00	0.0
For the eighth and subsequent applications HIGH		473.00		473.00	0.0
Late payment charge (when invoice issued and not paid within 8 weeks)		52.00		52.00	0.0
Transfer and Surrender					
Transfer		169.00		169.00	0.0
Partial Transfer		497.00		497.00	0.0
Surrender		0.00		0.00	0.0
Transfer Reduced Fees		0.00		0.00	0.0
Partial Transfer Reduced Fees		47.00		47.00	0.0
PRIVATE WATER SUPPLIES					
Risk Assessment - per hour		64.00		68.25	6.6
Sampling					
Per hour of officer time		64.00		68.25	6.6
Laboratory analysis		at cost		at cost	
Pool samples	76.80	64.00		68.25	6.6
Investigation					
Fee		128.00		136.50	6.6
Laboratory analysis		At cost		At cost	
Analysis of Single Dwelling Supplies Hourly rate (£68.25) plus laboratory costs				POA	
Analysis - Regulation 10 Hourly rate (£68.25) plus laboratory costs		32.00		POA	
Analysis of Group A Parameters - Hourly rate (£68.25) plus laboratory costs				POA	
Analysis of Group B Parameters - Hourly rate (£68.25) plus laboratory costs				POA	

**DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 £'000	Proposed £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT ACTION					
New Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) - Assisted Application		1,280.00		1,365.00	6.6
Renewal of HMO Houses in Multiple Occupation		865.00		922.00	6.6
Request for additional information by letter (per hour)		64.00		68.25	
Inspection of Housing Premises for Immigration purpose (Class A - Fee Discretionary)		435.00		464.00	6.7
Enforcement Notices served under Housing Act 2004 per hour		64.00		68.25	6.6
Civil Penalties Housing Offences		Up to £30,000		Up to £30,000	
HIGH HEDGE ENQUIRIES					
Anti-Social Behaviour Act High Hedges Fee (Class A Fee Discretionary)		1,310.00		1,399.00	6.8
OTHER FEES FOR INFORMATION					
Environmental Enquiries by Individuals, Non Commercial - minimum		128.00		136.50	6.6
Commercial and Government minimum		128.00		136.50	6.6
Civil Actions minimum		128.00		136.50	6.6
Safety Certificate and Administration minimum		128.00		136.50	6.6
Pre-application Advice per hour		64.00		68.25	6.6
RESIDENT AND BUSINESS ADVICE					
Charges per hour with the first 30 minutes free:					
General business Advice (non-primary authority)		64.00		68.25	6.6
Request for Advice		64.00		68.25	6.6
Prevention of Damage by Pests					
Pest Site survey (Hourly rate as part of cost recovery where WID only)		64.00		64.00	0.0
Rat treatment (Hourly rate as part of cost recovery where WID only)		64.00		64.00	0.0
Any other Pest treatment (Hourly rate as part of cost recovery where WID only)		64.00		64.00	0.0

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the cost of processing applications and monitoring compliance with conditions

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
WEIGHTS AND MEASURES					
All tests to be charged at the prevailing hourly rate. All hourly charges are charged in quarter hour units per officer with a minimum charge of half an hour When calculating the charges they will be influenced by whether one of more officers are required to The charge will apply in all instances where an officer's attendance is required unless specified The charge will apply in any circumstances when Trading Standards staff attend premises at an The charge will also apply to travelling time beyond the Bracknell Forest border, when any work is Where specialist third party equipment is required to complete the test (and not provided by the Where instruments incorporate remote display or printing facilities a second officer may be required to All charges are subject to VAT unless otherwise specified. VAT must be charged on all verification work except where the equipment is submitted under the Measuring Instruments (EEC Requirements Regulations 1988					
Hourly rate of Charge					
The hourly rate of charge is based on the average cost of supplying an officer, including the provision of technical and administrative support staff and relevant overheads. The charge is based on the number of officers required and is based on the time involved and is not restricted to the time taken for the individual test.					
Certificate of errors					
Fee for provision of certificate containing results of errors found on testing.					
Out of hours working (subject to staff being available)					
A premium of 100% will be added to the fee as appropriate for all work carried out at the request of					
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the cost of processing applications and monitoring compliance with conditions

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
Explosives Licences - Set by Statute Law					
Licence to store explosives where, by virtue of regulation 27 of, and Schedule 5 to, the 2014 Regulations, a minimum separation distance of greater than 0 metres is prescribed					
1 year		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
2 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
3 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
4 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
5 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Renewal of licence to store explosives where a minimum separation distance of greater than 0 metres is prescribed					
1 year		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
2 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
3 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
4 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
5 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Licence to store explosives where no minimum separation distance or a 0 metres minimum separation distance prescribed					
1 year		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
2 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
3 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
4 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
5 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Renewal of licence to store explosives where no minimum separation distance or 0 metres separation distance prescribed					
1 year		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
2 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
3 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
4 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
5 years		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
New Licence for explosives below 250kgs Net Explosive Content (NEC)					
1 year		111.00		113.00	1.8
2 years		144.00		147.00	2.1
3 years		177.00		181.00	2.3
4 years		211.00		215.00	1.9
5 years		243.00		248.00	2.1
Renewal of licence for explosives below 250kgs Net Explosive Content (NEC)					
1 year		55.00		56.00	1.8
2 years		88.00		90.00	2.3
3 years		123.00		125.00	1.6
4 years		155.00		158.00	1.9
5 years		189.00		193.00	2.1
New Licence for explosives above 250kgs up to maximum 2000kgs Net Explosive Content (NEC)					
1 year		189.00		193.00	2.1
2 years		248.00		253.00	2.0
3 years		311.00		317.00	1.9
4 years		382.00		390.00	2.1
5 years		432.00		441.00	2.1
Renewal of Licence for explosives above 250kgs up to maximum 2000kgs Net Explosive Content					
1 year		88.00		90.00	2.3
2 years		150.00		153.00	2.0
3 years		211.00		215.00	1.9
4 years		272.00		277.00	1.8
5 years		333.00		340.00	2.1
Licence variation					
Varying the name of licensee or address of site					
Any other kind of variation		37.00		38.00	2.7
Transfer of Licence					
Replacement of licence if lost		37.00		38.00	2.7
Full year registration for fireworks		500.00		500.00	0.0

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the cost of processing applications and monitoring compliance with conditions

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
Petroleum Licences - per year of licence - Set by Statute Law					
Not exceeding 2,500 litres		45.00		46.00	2.2
Not exceeding 50,000 litres		61.00		62.00	1.6
Exceeding 50,000 litres		128.00		131.00	2.3
Transfer of Licence		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Miscellaneous					
Administrative charge for provision of a certificate containing results of errors found on testing		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Minimum charge for the attendance of an authorised officer (i.e. excluding verifications carried out at		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Primary Authority					
Primary Authority Work Hourly chargeable rate		64.00		68.25	6.6
Annual charge - previous year usage up to 10 hours officer time		576.00		614.25	6.6
Annual charge - previous year usage up to 20 hours officer time		1,158.00		1,228.50	6.1
Anything likely to be in excess of 20 hours		POA		POA	
Support with Confidence					
Application fee					
1-5 Employees	76.80	64.00	81.90	68.25	6.6
6-20 Employees	156.00	130.00	163.80	136.50	5.0
21+ Employees	392.40	327.00	418.80	349.00	6.7
Disbursements are charged at cost. Employees 6-21+ reduced fee to £50 if registered with confidence.					
Buy with Confidence					
Application Fee					
1-5 Employees	163.20	145.00	174.00	145.00	0.0
6-20 Employees	218.40	200.00	240.00	200.00	0.0
21+ Employees	271.20	250.00	300.00	250.00	0.0
50+ Employees				POA	
Annual Fee					
1-5 Employees	326.40	272.00	324.00	270.00	-0.7
6-20 Employees	489.60	408.00	486.00	405.00	-0.7
21+ Employees	654.00	545.00	648.00	540.00	-0.9
50+	POA	POA	POA	POA	
Legacy members					
1-5 Employees	163.20	136.00	163.20	136.00	0.0
6-20 Employees	247.20	206.00	247.20	206.00	0.0
21+ Employees	328.80	274.00	328.80	274.00	0.0

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the cost of processing applications and monitoring compliance with conditions

	Budget £'000	2024/25 £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee £.p	Current Fee £.p	Proposed Fee £.p	Proposed Fee £.p	Increase %
LICENSING ACT 2003					
The fees for all Licensing Act 2003 permissions are statutory fees set by central government					
Fees for new and variation applications for premises licences and club premises certificates are based on the rateable value of the premises and					
Premises Licences - one-off fee set by statute based upon rateable value (RV) of premises (Class B - Statutory Fee)					
Rateable value band					
A		100.00		100.00	0.00
B		190.00		190.00	0.00
C		315.00		315.00	0.00
D		450.00		450.00	0.00
E		635.00		635.00	0.00
Pre-application Advice per hour, minimum 1 hour.		64.00		68.25	6.60
The fees for new or variation applications for premises licences where (a) the premises are in Band D or Band E; and (b) the premises are used exclusively or primarily for the supply of					
Rateable value band					
D		900.00		900.00	0.0
E		1,905.00		1,905.00	0.0
Also, new or variation applications for premises licences and club premises where capacity will exceed 5000, are subject to an additional fee					
Number of people in attendance at any one time					
5,000 - 9,999		1,000.00		1,000.00	0.0
10,000 - 14,999		2,000.00		2,000.00	0.0
15,000 - 19,999		4,000.00		4,000.00	0.0
20,000 - 29,999		8,000.00		8,000.00	0.0
30,000 - 39,999		16,000.00		16,000.00	0.0
40,000 - 49,999		24,000.00		24,000.00	0.0
50,000 - 59,999		32,000.00		32,000.00	0.0
60,000 - 69,999		40,000.00		40,000.00	0.0
70,000 - 79,999		48,000.00		48,000.00	0.0
80,000 - 89,999		56,000.00		56,000.00	0.0
90,000 and over		64,000.00		64,000.00	0.0
Premises licences sought for community centres and some schools that permit regulated entertainment but which do not permit the supply of alcohol and/or the provision of late night refreshment will not incur a fee					
ANNUAL FEES					
Where premises licences and club premises certificates are issued, the holder shall pay an annual fee as set out below:					
Rateable value band					
A		70.00		70.00	0.0
B		180.00		180.00	0.0
C		295.00		295.00	0.0
D		320.00		320.00	0.0
E		350.00		350.00	0.0
Where (a) the premises are in Band D or in Band E; and (b) the premises are used exclusively or primarily for the supply of alcohol on those premises, the holder of the licence/certificate shall pay an annual fee as set out below:					
Rateable value band					
D		640.00		640.00	0.0
E		1,050.00		1,050.00	0.0
Also where the capacity of the premises exceeds 5,000, the holder of the licence/certificate shall pay an additional fee as set out below:					
Number of people in attendance at any one time					
5,000 - 9,999		500.00		500.00	0.0
10,000 - 14,999		1,000.00		1,000.00	0.0
15,000 - 19,999		2,000.00		2,000.00	0.0
20,000 - 29,999		4,000.00		4,000.00	0.0
30,000 - 39,999		8,000.00		8,000.00	0.0
40,000 - 49,999		12,000.00		12,000.00	0.0
50,000 - 59,999		16,000.00		16,000.00	0.0
60,000 - 69,999		20,000.00		20,000.00	0.0
70,000 - 79,999		24,000.00		24,000.00	0.0
80,000 - 89,999		28,000.00		28,000.00	0.0
90,000 and over		32,000.00		32,000.00	0.0

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the cost of processing applications and monitoring compliance with conditions

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
OTHER FEES					
There are other occasions that fees and charges must be paid to the Licensing Authority, as set out below:					
Section 25 - Theft, loss, etc. of premises licence or summary		Set by Statute		Set by Statute	
Section 29 - Application for a provisional statement where premises being built, etc.		315.00		315.00	0.0
Section 33 - Notification of change of name or address		10.50		10.50	0.0
Section 37 - Application to vary licence to specify individual as premises supervisor		23.00		23.00	0.0
Section 42 - Application for transfer of premises licence		23.00		23.00	0.0
Section 47 - Interim authority notice following death etc. of licence holder		30.00		30.00	0.0
Section 79 - Theft, loss etc. of certificate or summary		10.50		10.50	0.0
Section 82 - Notification of change of name or alteration of rules of club		23.00		23.00	0.0
Section 83(1) or (2) - Change of relevant registered address of club		23.00		23.00	0.0
Section 100 - Temporary event notice		21.00		21.00	0.0
Section 110 - Theft, loss etc. of temporary event notice		10.50		10.50	0.0
Section 117 - Application for a grant or renewal of personal licence		37.00		37.00	0.0
Section 126 - Theft, loss etc. of personal licence		10.50		10.50	0.0
Section 127 - Duty to notify change of name or address		23.00		23.00	0.0
Application to disapply mandatory DPS Condition		23.00		23.00	0.0
Minor Variation		89.00		89.00	0.0
Section 178 - Right of freeholder etc. to be notified of licensing matters		21.00		21.00	0.0
Pre application advice - hourly charge		64.00		68.25	6.6

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the cost of processing applications and monitoring compliance with conditions

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
OTHER PREMISES LICENSING					
Sex Establishment: Annual Licence					
Premises Application		Min £3,100 to max £5,150 64.00		Min £3,100 to max £5,150 68.25	6.6
Pre-application advice per hour					
Dangerous Wild Animal: Annual Licence					
Premises - Initial (excludes vets fee)		512.00		546.00	6.6
Premises - Renewal (excludes vets fee)		320.00		341.25	6.6
Riding Establishment: (excluding vet fee - recharged separately)* Inspections are carried out annually, regardless of the star rating or length of licence, by a vet and officer.					
Main inspection fee , plus fee per horse - New		384.00		409.50	6.6
Main inspection fee , plus fee per horse - Renewal		352.00		375.00	6.5
Fee per horse, for the first 10 horses		16.00		17.00	6.3
Fee per horse, for the next 11-50 horses		11.00		12.00	9.1
Fee per horse, for every horse 51 and over		9.00		9.50	5.6
Animal Boarding Establishment: combined (dogs and cats)					
Animal Boarding Establishment: combined (dogs and cats) - New		448.00		477.75	6.6
Animal Boarding Establishment: combined (dogs and cats) - Renewal		416.00		444.00	6.7
Animal Boarding Establishment: single species (dogs or cats)					
Animal Boarding Establishment: single species (dogs or cats) - New		384.00		409.50	6.6
Animal Boarding Establishment: single species (dogs or cats) - Renewal		352.00		375.00	6.5
Home Boarder					
Home Boarder: Franchisee arrangers licence (excludes inspection fee per host) - New		128.00		136.50	6.6
Home Boarder: Franchisee arrangers licence (excludes inspection fee per host) - Renewal		96.00		102.00	6.3
Home Boarder: Assessment of hobby host as part of franchisee licence - New		128.00		136.50	6.6
Home Boarder: Assessment of hobby host as part of franchisee licence - Renewal		128.00		136.50	6.6
Home Boarder - New (mid term fee removed)		256.00		409.50	60.0
Home Boarder - Renewal (mid term fee removed)		224.00		375.00	67.4
Dog Breeding Establishment (excluding vet fee)					
Dog Breeding Establishment (excluding vet fee) - New		448.00		477.75	6.6
Dog Breeding Establishment (excluding vet fee) - Renewal		416.00		444.00	6.7
Dog Breeding Establishment (in domestic dwelling)					
Dog Breeding Establishment (in domestic dwelling) - New		384.00		409.50	6.6
Dog Breeding Establishment (in domestic dwelling) - Renewal		352.00		375.00	6.5
Pet Vending / Sale of pets					
Pet Vending / Sale of pets - New		384.00		409.50	6.6
Pet Vending / Sale of pets - Renewal		352.00		375.00	6.5
Animal for Exhibition					
Animal for Exhibition - New		448.00		477.75	6.6
Animal for Exhibition - Renewal		416.00		444.00	6.7
Dog Day Care (as defined under)					
Dog Day Care - new		448.00		477.75	6.6
Dog Day Care - Renewal		416.00		444.00	6.7
Other Animal Welfare Act Fees					
Additional mid licence visit		128.00		136.50	6.6
Variation to the licence fee (including one visit)		192.00		204.75	6.6
Replacement licence fee (lost or stolen paperwork, change of name)		32.00		34.00	6.3
Re-evaluation of star rating (inclusive of one visit)		128.00		136.50	6.6
Transfer due to death of licensee		32.00		34.00	6.3
Zoo: Annual Licence (up to 6 years)					
New/Renewal		2,240.00		2,388.75	6.6
Hairdresser: Single Payment					
Premises		32.00		34.00	6.3
Street Trading Consents					
Daily		64.00		68.25	
Week (minimum charge)		156.00		171.00	9.6
1 month		262.00		273.00	4.2
3 months		699.00		751.00	7.4
6 months		875.00		938.00	7.2
Annual		1,487.00		1,587.00	6.7
6 months max trading 2 events per week including Fri ,Sat, or Sun 40% reduction		699.00		751.00	7.4
6 months max trading 2 events per week Monday to Thursday 60% reduction		525.00		563.00	7.2
Street Trading Consent variation fee		96.00		102.00	6.3
Ice Cream van 6 months (per van)		781.00		833.00	6.7
Ice cream van (per van) 1 month		202.00		216.00	6.9
Refund for Street Traders if application withdrawn		50% of application fee		50% of application fee	

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the cost of processing applications and monitoring compliance with conditions

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
Scrap Metal Dealers: Three Year Licence					
Site Licence New		512.00		546.00	6.6
Site Licence Renewal		480.00		512.00	6.7
Mobile Collector New		256.00		273.00	6.6
Mobile Collector Renewal		224.00		239.00	6.7
Variation of licence		256.00		273.00	6.6
Change of site manager		64.00		68.25	6.6
Copy Licence		16.00		17.00	6.3
Change of name		32.00		34.00	6.3
Pre-application advice		64.00		68.25	6.6
HACKNEY CARRIAGES					
Hackney Carriages Vehicle: Annual Fee					
Licensing (annual fee)		288.00		307.00	6.6
Renewal		256.00		273.00	
Private Hire Vehicle: Annual Fee					
Licensing (annual fee)		288.00		307.00	6.6
Renewal		256.00		273.00	6.6
Home to School (annual fee)		160.00		171.00	6.9
Vehicle with dispensation (new)		288.00		307.00	6.6
Vehicle with dispensation (renewal)		256.00		273.00	6.6
Temporary Vehicle Licence (up to 3 months only)		256.00		273.00	6.6
Private Hire Operators - NEW					
Per vehicle calculation of 3.5 hours (at £68.25 hourly rate) plus an hour per year (years 2-5) for first vehicle, plus 15					
1 vehicle		480.00		512.00	6.7
2 vehicles		560.00		597.00	6.6
3 vehicles		640.00		682.00	6.6
4 vehicles		720.00		720.00	0.0
5 vehicles		800.00		853.00	6.6
6 vehicles		880.00		938.00	6.6
7 vehicles		960.00		1,024.00	6.7
8 vehicles		1040.00		1,109.00	6.6
9 vehicles		1120.00		1,194.00	6.6
10 vehicles		1200.00		1,280.00	6.7
11 vehicles		1286.00		1,365.00	6.1
12 vehicles		1360.00		1,450.00	6.6
13 vehicles		1440.00		1,536.00	6.7
14 vehicles		1520.00		1,621.00	6.6
15 vehicles		1600.00		1,706.00	6.6
16 vehicles		1680.00		1,792.00	6.7
17 vehicles		1760.00		1,877.00	6.6
18 vehicles		1840.00		1,962.00	6.6
19 vehicles		1920.00		2,048.00	6.7
20 vehicles		2000.00		2,133.00	6.7
20+ vehicles		2000.00		2,133.00	6.7
Private Hire Operators - RENEWAL					
Per vehicle calculation of 1.5 hours (at £64 hourly rate) plus an hour per year (years 2-5) for first vehicle, plus 15					
1 vehicle		£352.00		375.00	6.5
2 vehicles		£432.00		461.00	6.7
3 vehicles		£512.00		546.00	6.6
4 vehicles		£592.00		631.00	6.6
5 vehicles		£672.00		717.00	6.7
6 vehicles		£752.00		802.00	6.6
7 vehicles		£832.00		887.00	6.6
8 vehicles		£912.00		973.00	6.7
9 vehicles		£992.00		1,058.00	6.7
10 vehicles		£1,072.00		1,143.00	6.6
11 vehicles		£1,152.00		1,229.00	6.7
12 vehicles		£1,232.00		1,314.00	6.7
13 vehicles		£1,312.00		1,399.00	6.6
14 vehicles		£1,392.00		1,484.00	6.6
15 vehicles		£1,472.00		1,570.00	6.7
16 vehicles		£1,552.00		1,655.00	6.6
17 vehicles		£1,632.00		1,740.00	6.6
18 vehicles		£1,712.00		1,826.00	6.7
19 vehicles		£1,792.00		1,911.00	6.6
20 vehicles		£1,872.00		1,996.00	6.6
20+ vehicles		£1,872.00		1,996.00	6.6
Variation to Operators Licence - to include reissue of licence with additional vehicle registration added		£64.00		68.25	6.6
Driver Licences					
New 3 years					
Renewal		296.00		316.00	6.8
Home to school renewal only		225.00		240.00	6.7
Home to school 3 years		225.00		240.00	6.7
Conversion of driver licence to another type		96.00		102.00	6.3
Other Charges					
Transfer of vehicle to new owner		64.00		68.25	6.6
Variation to PHO Licence		64.00		68.25	6.6
Change of vehicle		80.00		85.00	6.3
Knowledge Test		80.00		85.00	6.3
Missed Appointments		32.00		34.00	6.3
First Aid Training for drivers		POA		POA	-
DBS Check		70.00		POA	-
Replacement licence		32.00		34.00	6.3
Advertising on Hackney Carriages (Initial)		63.00		68.25	8.3
Advertising on Hackney Carriages (Renewal)		32.00		34.00	6.3
Replacement badge (+ Badge Cost)		32.00		34.00	6.3
Replacement vehicle licence plate (+ Plate Cost)		32.00		34.00	6.3
Replacement backing plate		26.00		POA	-
Medical exemption from carrying assistance dog		32.00		34.00	6.3
Change of address PH & HC		11.50		17.00	47.8
Refund processing fee		32.00		34.00	6.3
Change of vehicle registration (+ sticker and licence cost)		32.00		34.00	6.3
Age test of vehicle		64.00		68.25	6.6
Pre-application advice per hour, minimum 1 hour		64.00		68.25	6.6

DELIVERY DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES

Service : Regulatory Services

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the cost of processing applications and monitoring compliance with conditions

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:		

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
GAMBLING ACT 2005 - All fees and charges for gambling are set by statute law					
Casino (regional)					
New Application		15,000.00		15,000.00	0.0
Provisional Statement		15,000.00		15,000.00	0.0
Application with Provisional Statement		8,000.00		8,000.00	0.0
Variation		7,500.00		7,500.00	0.0
Transfer/Reinstatement		6,500.00		6,500.00	0.0
Annual Fee		15,000.00		15,000.00	0.0
Casino (large)					
New Application		10,000.00		10,000.00	0.0
Provisional Statement		10,000.00		10,000.00	0.0
Application with Provisional Statement		5,000.00		5,000.00	0.0
Variation		5,000.00		5,000.00	0.0
Transfer/Reinstatement		2,150.00		2,150.00	0.0
Annual Fee		10,000.00		10,000.00	0.0
Casino (small)					
New Application		8,000.00		8,000.00	0.0
Provisional Statement		8,000.00		8,000.00	0.0
Application with Provisional Statement		3,000.00		3,000.00	0.0
Variation		4,000.00		4,000.00	0.0
Transfer/Reinstatement		1,800.00		1,800.00	0.0
Annual Fee		5,000.00		5,000.00	0.0
Bingo Club					
New Application		3,500.00		3,500.00	0.0
Provisional Statement		3,500.00		3,500.00	0.0
Application with Provisional Statement		1,200.00		1,200.00	0.0
Variation		1,750.00		1,750.00	0.0
Transfer/Reinstatement		1,200.00		1,200.00	0.0
Annual Fee		1,000.00		1,000.00	0.0
Betting (Other)					
New Application		3,000.00		3,000.00	0.0
Provisional Statement		3,000.00		3,000.00	0.0
Application with Provisional Statement		1,200.00		1,200.00	0.0
Variation		1,500.00		1,500.00	0.0
Transfer/Reinstatement		1,200.00		1,200.00	0.0
Annual Fee		600.00		600.00	0.0
Tracks					
New Application		2,500.00		2,500.00	0.0
Provisional Statement		2,500.00		2,500.00	0.0
Application with Provisional Statement		950.00		950.00	0.0
Variation		1,250.00		1,250.00	0.0
Transfer/Reinstatement		950.00		950.00	0.0
Annual Fee		1,000.00		1,000.00	0.0
Family Entertainment Centres					
New Application		2,000.00		2,000.00	0.0
Provisional Statement		2,000.00		2,000.00	0.0
Application with Provisional Statement		950.00		950.00	0.0
Variation		1,000.00		1,000.00	0.0
Transfer/Reinstatement		950.00		950.00	0.0
Annual Fee		750.00		750.00	0.0
Adult Gaming Centre					
New Application		2,000.00		2,000.00	0.0
Provisional Statement		2,000.00		2,000.00	0.0
Application with Provisional Statement		1,200.00		1,200.00	0.0
Variation		1,000.00		1,000.00	0.0
Transfer/Reinstatement		1,200.00		1,200.00	0.0
Annual Fee		1,000.00		1,000.00	0.0
* Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit					
Application (existing holder)		100.00		100.00	0.0
New application		150.00		150.00	0.0
Pre-application advice per hour		64.00		64.00	0.0
Annual Fee		50.00		50.00	0.0
First annual fee (payable within 30 days of permit takes place)		50.00		50.00	0.0
Variation		100.00		100.00	0.0
Transfer		25.00		25.00	0.0
Copy Permit		25.00		25.00	0.0
Change Name		25.00		25.00	0.0
Notification of 2 or less gaming machines		50.00		50.00	0.0
** Club Gaming/Permit/Club Machine Permit					
New		200.00		200.00	0.0
Existing Holder		100.00		100.00	0.0
Annual Fee		50.00		50.00	0.0
Renewal		200.00		200.00	0.0
Variation		100.00		100.00	0.0
Change of Name		25.00		25.00	0.0
Transfer		25.00		25.00	0.0
Copy Permit		15.00		15.00	0.0
Registration of non-commercial lottery					
Initial Fee		40.00		40.00	0.0
Annual Fee		20.00		20.00	0.0
All Licences					
Notification of change		50.00		50.00	0.0
Copy licence		25.00		25.00	0.0
Pre-application advice per hour		64.00		64.00	0.0
* Where the applicant for a LPGMP is the holder of a s.34 permit issued under the Gaming Act 1968, the fee for a new permit shall be £100.					
** Where the applicant for a club gaming or club machine permit is the holder of a Club Premises Certificate under s.72 of the Licensing Act 2003, or an existing Part II or Part III					
CARAVAN SITES					
New licence		480.00		512.00	6.7
New licence per pitch		17.00		18.00	5.9
Transfer of licence		192.00		205.00	6.8
Alteration of conditions		64.00		68.25	6.6
Annual inspection fee per pitch		15.00		16.00	6.7
Enforcement action - per hour		64.00		68.25	6.6
Deposit, vary or delete site rules		128.00		136.50	6.6
MOBILE HOMES REGULATIONS 2020					
Application Fee Fit and Proper Test (applications taking more than two hours will be charged at hourly rate)				136.5	
Annual Check Fee (Fit and Proper Test) per hour				68.25	
Where the authority has to assist with appointing a site manager the costs will be specified in the agreement between the parties.					

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Community and Continuing Education

Purpose of the Charge: To fully fund the costs of the service not financed by external grant

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	10	11

Are concessions available? Yes. Reductions for those on Universal Credit and other benefits meeting requirements set by Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT) Minimum	Increase
	£.p	£p	%

Adult and Community Learning Plan

Course Fees (per hour)			
Community Learning	6.00 - 13.50	6.00 - 14.00	3.00
Community Learning aimed at Family Hubs	4.00 - 5.00	4.25 - 5.25	5.00
Community Learning for well-being in identified community Learners ineligible for grant funding	2.00 - 4.00	2.00 - 4.25 cost	3.10
Other Courses are fully funded from external grant			

Course fees are agreed on an academic year basis once external funding is confirmed .

Flexibility is required in order for charges to be made dependant on the programme, qualification and costs. Concessions are available to those learners meeting set criteria such as the unemployed.

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Community and Continuing Education

Purpose of the Charge: To fully fund the costs of the service not financed by external grant

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	398	418

Are concessions available? Yes to charities and associated learning agenda organisations as well as internal BFC usage

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Bracknell Open Learning Centre Room Hire and Refreshments

Room Hire per Hour			
Classroom / meeting room Bracknell Forest Council	18.50	19.50	5.40
Classroom / meeting room - Charities and Associated	18.50	19.50	5.40
Classroom / meeting room Other external users	24.00	25.00	4.20
IT Suite / Hall Bracknell Forest Council (specific requirement to use IT or Hall)	22.50	23.50	4.40
IT Suite / Hall - Charities and Associated Learning Agenda (specific requirement to use IT or Hall)	22.50	23.50	4.40
IT Suite / Hall Other external users (specific request for IT suite or Hall)	30.00	31.50	5.00
Insurance	7% room hire	7% room hire	
Refreshments			
Tea & Coffee up to 15 delegates per half day	11.00	12.00	9.10
Tea & Coffee 16 to 30 delegates per half day	20.50	22.00	7.30
Tea & Coffee 31 to 60 delegates per half day	40.00	42.00	5.00
Tea & Coffee for 61 to 90 delegates per half day	57.00	60.00	5.30
Tea & Coffee for 91 delegates and above per half day	70.00	73.50	5.00
Lunches	Cost + 10%	Cost + 10%	
Juice per head (as part of lunch order)		0.50	
External users:			
Photocopying per copy Black and White A4	0.35	0.40	14.30
Photocopying per copy Colour A4	1.00	1.05	5.00
Photocopying per copy Black and White A3	0.55	0.60	9.10
Photocopying per copy Colour A3	2.25	2.40	6.70
(Community Learning charged at cost; other BFC, Charities & Associated Learning Agenda Organisations charged at cost +10%)			

Fees and charges may need to be reviewed as the market develops post-pandemic.

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Education and Learning

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	50	53

Are concessions available? Yes, fees to Local Authority schools are lower than those charged to external customers

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Professional Development Courses

Course Fees and Timings			
Internal and Other LA Schools *			
Full Day (09.15 - 15.45)	169.00	178.00	5.30
Half Day (09.15 - 12.15) or (13.00 - 16.00)	94.00	99.00	5.30
Twilight (16.15 - 17.30)	45.00	49.00	8.90
Independent Schools			
Full Day (09.15 - 15.45)	335.00	352.00	5.10
Half Day (09.15 - 12.15) or (13.00 - 16.00)	184.00	194.00	5.40
Twilight (16.15 - 17.30)	84.00	89.00	6.00

Course fees will be increased to take account of any specific additional costs incurred. Charges to academy schools are as internal schools plus 10%. Please note that specific courses are delivered free of charge to those schools who buy into the Standards & Effectiveness SLA.

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Education and Learning

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	68	71

Are concessions available? Yes, internal fees are lower than those charged to external customers see below

Additional Services which fall outside the Standards & Effectiveness SLA	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Consultancy Rates

Chargeable Activities			
Services offered include Curriculum Reviews, Data Analysis, On- site Training and Specialist Advice.			
All fees include normal preparation time but exclude travel and materials and must be agreed with Head of Service / Assistant Director.			
BFC Schools and Academies			
Daily rate	560.00	590.00	5.40
Half Day	350.00	370.00	5.70
Hourly rate	120.00	130.00	8.30
Twilight session	250.00	270.00	8.00
Evening Session	345.00	370.00	7.20
Non BFC Schools, Independent Schools and Academies			
Daily rate	685.00	720.00	5.10
Half Day	410.00	435.00	6.10
Hourly rate	175.00	185.00	5.70
Twilight session	345.00	365.00	5.80
Evening Session	460.00	485.00	5.40
Headteacher Performance Management Model A	595.00	625.00	5.00
Headteacher Performance Management Model B	405.00	430.00	6.20
Assessment Service Annual Charge	150.00	160.00	6.70
Moderation 1 form entry	385.00	405.00	5.20
Moderation 2 form entry	495.00	520.00	5.10
Moderation 3 form entry	605.00	640.00	5.80

Fees for extended work with schools and other agencies will be negotiated and agreed in advance with the Chief Officer. Charges are set at the level required to cover direct costs and contribute to overall running costs.

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Education Transport

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service where there is spare capacity on an existing route. The farepayer scheme is to allow those not eligible for transport, especially Post 16 to access seats that are available on existing routes.

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	0	0

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Home to School Transport

Farepayer fees per term on existing routes: We do not charge for lost passes, the parent/carer is expected to approach the bus company for a replacement pass. We work on a six term year as this will reduce the amount we may have to refund and allows parents to put in place a payment plan if not a one off payment in September. Termly charge will be for six terms £137.50 (13.75).	26.00	27.50	5.80
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**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Annexe D

Service : Larchwood

Purpose of the Charge: To cover the costs of the service when used by other Local Authorities

	0.00	0.00
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	43	45

Are concessions available? Yes, free service for Bracknell children

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Residential short break care

Overnight			
Per Night	534.95	561.70	5.00
Day-care			
Standard	21.90	23.00	5.00
Additional 1:1 staffing	18.25	19.20	5.20
Additional 2:1 staffing	36.25	38.10	5.10
Day-care - New Clients			
Standard	27.95	29.35	5.00
Additional 1:1 staffing	22.55	23.70	5.10
Additional 2:1 staffing	44.90	47.15	5.00

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Children Looked After

Purpose of the Charge: To cover the costs of foster care charges when BFC foster carers are used by other Local Authorities

	0.00	0.00
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	30	32

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Foster care charges

Charge per week	Minimum	299.00	313.95	5.00
	Maximum	715.65	751.45	5.00
Fees are increased in line with allowance inflation figure				
Additional amount: Emergency placement		57.70	60.60	5.00
Additional amount: Long term placement		115.25	121.05	5.00
Additional amounts agreed through negotiation with Berkshire Local Authorities.				

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Youth Justice

Purpose of the Charge: To charge for Training provided by Bracknell Youth Justice Service

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	2	2

Are concessions available? No

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Training Fees

Supply training to external organisations	per day	364.00	383.00	5.20
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Service : Children's Specialist Support Services

Purpose of the Charge: To charge for Training provided by Makesafe Service

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	22	23

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Income generation from bid writing and training fees

Supply training to external organisations	per day	780.00	819.00	5.00
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**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Youth Service

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	14	15

Are concessions available? No charge to complimentary BF internal users, with not for profit groups charged at lower rates than external customers.

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Braccan Walk: Hire Fees

Youth & Community Groups - not for profit basis				
Hall	per hour	16.15	17.00	5.30
Yellow Room	per hour	12.90	13.55	5.00
Green Room	per hour	7.30	7.70	5.50
Private & Commercial				
Hall	per hour	26.90	28.25	5.00
Yellow Room	per hour	16.15	17.00	5.30
Green Room	per hour	9.70	10.20	5.20

The opening of the new Braccan Walk town centre youth service has necessitated a review of charging and the amount of income to be generated. This will need to be kept under review as the new facility develops.

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Family Hubs

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	24	25

Are concessions available? Yes. Family Hubs are able to incentivise registration and engagement of families with the use of promotional offers which may be less than the fees detailed below.

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Sessional Fees

Sessional Fees	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%
BFC families - per child	1.65	1.75	6.10
Families from outside BFC - per child	2.15	2.30	7.00
Journey to Parenthood (fixed price for 6 sessions)	32.25	33.90	5.10

These charges would only apply to those sessions where additional costs are incurred, for example (but not limited to) family play sessions. In some circumstances a reduced or waiver may be applied, there may be a charge for families from outside BFC. The charging basis has been revised to amount per child.

Family Hubs are able to incentivise registration and engagement of families with the use of promotional offers which may be less than the fees detailed above. This is subject to budget limitations and management approval.

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Family Hubs

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
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Are concessions available? Yes. Groups directly supporting the delivery of Family Hub services may not be charged. BFC internal users will not be charged.

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Room Hire Fees

Rowans Family Hub			
Private group/ Statutory Agencies			
Hall	16.90	17.75	5.0
Creative Room	14.15	14.90	5.3
Owl Room	11.45	12.05	5.2
Meeting Room	8.70	9.15	5.2
Kitchen (if used for cooking)	14.15	14.90	5.3
Voluntary/non profit making Group			
Hall	12.90	13.55	5.0
Creative Room	10.00	10.50	5.0
Owl Room	7.30	7.70	5.5
Meeting Room	4.55	4.80	5.5
Kitchen (if used for cooking)	10.00	10.50	5.0
Willows Children's Centre			
Private group/ Statutory Agencies			
Hall & kitchen	16.90	17.75	5.0
Voluntary/non profit making Group			
Hall & kitchen	12.90	13.55	5.0

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Family Hubs

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service.

	2023/24 Budget £'000	Proposed 2024/25 Budget £'000
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Are concessions available? Yes. Groups directly supporting the delivery of Family Hub services may not be charged. BFC internal users will not be charged.

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Room Hire

Oaks Family Hub:			
Private group/ Statutory Agencies			
Green Room	12.90	13.55	5.0
Yellow Room and Kitchen	16.90	17.75	5.0
Family room	19.80	20.80	5.1
Voluntary/non profit making Group			
Green Room	8.70	9.15	5.2
Yellow Room and Kitchen	12.90	13.55	5.0
Family room	15.60	16.40	5.1
Alders Family Hub			
Private group/ Statutory Agencies			
Family Room	14.15	14.90	5.3
Meeting Room 1	10.00	10.50	5.0
Meeting Room 2	8.70	9.15	5.2
Voluntary/non profit making Group			
Family Room	10.00	10.50	5.0
Meeting Room 1	7.30	7.70	5.5
Meeting Room 2	4.55	4.80	5.5

Groups directly supporting the delivery of Family Hub services may not be charged. BFC internal users will not be charged.

In addition, rental income is generated from a site sharing agreement with the Health Service for accommodation used in Family Hubs.

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Unauthorised non-school attendance

Purpose of the Charge: Statutory requirement.

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	25	26

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Fine

Parental fine:			
Penalty for each parent if fine paid within 21 days	60.00	60.00	0.0
Penalty for each parent if fine not paid within 21 days	15.20	15.20	0.0

The statutory framework allows for parents to be a fined for unauthorised non-pupil attendance. Fees are set by the government and may be subject to change

**PEOPLE DIRECTORATE
2024/25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Free entitlement to early years childcare

Purpose of the Charge: To Contribute to the costs of the service.

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	0	0

All concessions are included in the fee structure detailed below

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%

Additional support charge

Charge per hour	17.00	17.00	0.0
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A charge may be incurred, capped at £51 in the following circumstances:

- a provider missing the submission deadline for a funding claim
- a submission contains substantial omissions
- a submission contains substantial errors,
- a provider does not renew their agreement and requests to re-register within the same academic year

**PEOPLE DEPARTMENT
2024-25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service : Adult Residential and Nursing Care - Contributions from people supported

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of accommodation

	2023-24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	2,860	3,003

Are concessions available? Yes - The actual contribution will be assessed in accordance with the Care Act Guidance issued by the Department of Health (DoH).

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%
Residential and Nursing Care This includes permanent, respite and short term care. Where people are in accommodation funded by the Council, the maximum contribution they will be asked to make is the cost of the accommodation, but this will be subject to a financial assessment under DH charging guidance and so the actual contribution may be lower. Fee increases will depend on each person's financial circumstances but for most people will be linked to the increase in pensions and benefits they receive.	Various	Various	5% (Estimate)
Deferred Payments Interest payable The Council will adhere to the maximum interest rate which is set twice-yearly (1 Jan - 30 Jun, 1 Jul - 31 Dec) by the Department of Health.			
Deferred Payment Arrangement Fee	1,107.00	1,162.00	5.0%
Deferred Payment Annual administration fee	372.00	391.00	5.0%
Arrangement of self funder social care			
Arrangement Fee	372.00	391.00	5.0%
Annual Administration Fee	246.00	258.00	5.0%
Provider Failure Making arrangements for people who fund their own care, or people funded by Other Local Authorities, in the event of their current provider going out of business.	324.00	340.00	5.0%

Service : Adult non residential services - Contributions from people supported

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of support

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	2,314	2,430

Are concessions available? Yes - The actual contribution will be assessed in accordance with the Council's Charging Policy issued which complies with national guidance issued by the DoH under the Care Act.

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%
Non Residential Support This includes direct payments, homecare, day care and other support in the community. Where people are supported by the Council, the maximum contribution they will be asked to make is the cost of the support, but this will be subject to a financial assessment under the Council's Charging Policy and so the actual contribution may be lower. Fee increases will depend on each person's financial circumstances but for most people will be linked to the increase in pensions and benefits they receive.	Various	Various	5% (Estimate)

**PEOPLE DEPARTMENT
2024-25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Annexe D

Service : Council provided residential and day care

Purpose of the Charge: To recover the costs of the service

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	28	29

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%
Waymead			
Respite Charge per night	264.63	277.86	5.0%
Day Care			
Waymead Day Services			
Per hour	20.76	21.80	5.0%
Bracknell Day Centre			
Full day	124.42	130.64	5.0%
Half day	62.21	65.32	5.0%
Transport (per day - Wokingham only)	24.77	26.01	5.0%

Service : Blue Badge Scheme

Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the cost of the service

	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget
	£'000	£'000
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1	1

Are concessions available? No

Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	%
Blue Badge - Issues and Duplicate Badges	10.00	10.00	0.0%

**PEOPLE DEPARTMENT
2024-25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service: Forestcare						
Purpose of the Charge: To recover the costs of the service						
		2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget			
		£'000	£'000			
Income the proposed fees will generate:		1,285	1,349			
Are concessions available? No						
Description		Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
		£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
Lifeline Rental and Monitoring						
- BFBC	Per week	5.42	4.52	5.70	4.75	5.0%
- Others	Per week	5.77	4.81	6.06	5.05	5.0%
GSM Lifeline		9.31	7.76	9.78	8.15	5.0%
Extra/Lost Pendants						
- Flat Charge		82.72	68.93	86.86	72.38	5.0%
- Lost ivi Pendants		115.46	96.22	121.24	101.03	5.0%
- Rental of additional pendant	Per week	1.43	1.19	1.50	1.25	5.0%
Sensors						
Smoke	Per week	2.59	2.16	2.72	2.27	5.0%
Carbon Monoxide	Per week	3.91	3.26	4.10	3.42	5.0%
Flood	Per week	3.29	2.74	3.46	2.88	5.0%
Temperature Extreme / Heat	Per week	2.59	2.16	2.72	2.27	5.0%
Door Exit	Per week	1.43	1.19	1.50	1.25	5.0%
Universal	Per week	1.43	1.19	1.43	1.19	5.0%
PIR / Fast PIR	Per week	1.43	1.19	1.43	1.19	5.0%
Medication Dispenser	Per week	5.77	4.81	6.06	5.05	5.0%
Epilepsy sensor kit	Per week	14.44	12.03	15.16	12.63	5.0%
Chair & bed sensor kit	Per week	7.24	6.03	7.60	6.33	5.0%
Falls pendant	Per week	2.90	2.42	3.05	2.54	5.0%
Bogus Caller	Per week	1.43	1.19	1.43	1.19	5.0%
Minuet watch	Per week	2.90	2.42	3.05	2.54	5.0%
Arm/ Disarm Zoning Trigger	Per week	1.43	1.19	1.43	1.19	5.0%
Jellybean Switch	Per week	2.90	2.42	3.05	2.54	5.0%
Natural Gas Detector	Per week	5.03	4.19	5.28	4.40	5.0%
Wrist Worn Epilepsy Pendant	Per week	62.08	51.73	65.18	54.32	5.0%
Responder service for lifeline customers						
- up to 12 visits per year	Per week	12.55	10.46	13.18	10.98	5.0%
- up to 24 visits per year		21.67	18.06	22.75	18.96	5.0%
- extra visits (excluding bank holidays)		44.74	37.28	46.97	39.14	5.0%
- extra visits (including bank holidays)		67.10	55.92	70.46	58.72	5.0%
Responder service for commercial customers						
- up to 6 visits per year	Per week	9.10	7.58	9.55	7.96	5.0%
- per additional visit		64.97	54.14	68.22	56.85	5.0%
Key Safes						
Keysafe Supply and Fit	Supply only	79.39	66.16	83.36	69.47	5.0%
	Supply + fit	86.62	72.18	90.95	75.79	5.0%
	Moving keysafe	64.97	54.14	68.22	56.85	5.0%
Monitoring of security diallers	Per week	15.10	12.58	15.85	13.21	5.0%
Monitoring of two security diallers	Per week	22.09	18.41	23.20	19.33	5.0%
Lone Workers						
GPS Lone Worker - BFC	Per person per year	287.24	239.37	301.61	251.34	5.0%
GPS Lone Worker - External	Per person per year	396.94	330.78	416.78	347.32	5.0%
Hourly charge for adhoc work		64.97	54.14	68.22	56.85	5.0%
Extension lead		9.50	11.86	11.40	12.45	5.0%
Care calls						
- 1 care call per day	Per week	11.53	9.61	12.11	10.09	5.0%
- 2 care calls per day	Per week	21.67	18.06	22.75	18.96	5.0%
- 3 care calls per day	Per week	28.87	24.06	30.31	25.26	5.0%
- 3 care calls per day + 1 customer	Per week	43.31	36.09	45.47	37.89	5.0%
Pocket Pal						
GPS Device - customer renting device (includes SIM and monitoring)	Weekly	9.36	7.80	9.83	8.19	5.0%

**PEOPLE DEPARTMENT
2024-25 PROPOSED FEES & CHARGES**

Service: Homelessness					
Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service					
	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget			
	£'000	£'000			
Income the proposed fees will generate:	1,267	1,267			
Are concessions available? No					
Description	Current Fee (Inc VAT)	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Inc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase
	£.p	£.p	£.p	£.p	%
Homelessness					
Bed and Breakfast					
- Current Tenancies	Per week	150.00		150.00	0.0%
10a Portman					
- Rent	Per week	155.10		155.10	0.0%
- Service Charge	Per week	19.05		19.05	0.0%
- Household	Per week	9.64		9.64	0.0%
- Fuel*	Per week	6.07		6.07	0.0%
- Water*	Per week	2.90		2.90	0.0%
Tenterden Lodge					
- Rent	Per week	165.44		165.44	0.0%
- Service Charge	Per week	12.89		12.89	0.0%
- Fuel*	Per week	3.32		3.32	0.0%
-Water*	Per week	2.90		2.90	0.0%
Council owned properties: Reading					
- 1 bed	Per week	201.63		201.63	0.0%
- 2 bed	Per week	232.76		232.76	0.0%
- 3 bed	Per week	255.32		255.32	0.0%
- 4 bed	Per week	341.22		341.22	0.0%
Council owned properties: Blackwater Valley					
- 1 bed	Per week	190.91		190.91	0.0%
- 2 bed	Per week	223.11		223.11	0.0%
- 3 bed	Per week	215.19		215.19	0.0%
- 4 bed	Per week	341.22		341.22	0.0%
Council owned properties: East Thames Valley					
- 1 bed	Per week	201.63		201.63	0.0%
- 2 bed	Per week	244.57		244.57	0.0%
- 3 bed	Per week	276.79		276.79	0.0%
- 4 bed	Per week	384.16		384.16	0.0%
* These charges will be uplifted in line with fee increases from utility companies					
Small Landsales - Administration Fee					
Flat Charge	239.84	185.93	246.00	195.23	5.0%
Passport and Driving Licence Checking Service					
For landlords	27.37	21.22	28.10	22.28	5.0%
For employers	27.37	21.22	28.10	22.28	5.0%

Service : Housing					
Purpose of the Charge: To contribute to the costs of the service					
	2023/24 Budget	Proposed 2024/25 Budget			
	£'000	£'000			
Income the proposed fees will generate:	125	125			
Are concessions available? No					
Description	Current Fee (Exc VAT)	Proposed Fee (Exc VAT)	Increase		
	£.p	£.p	%		
Rents - Learning Disability Accommodation					
151 Holbeck	Per week per bedroom	99.75	99.75		0.0%
9 Portman Close	Per week per bedroom	99.75	99.75		0.0%
Service Charges					
151 Holbeck, 9 Portman	Per week per bedroom	14.05	14.05		0.0%
Easthampstead Mobile Home Park					
Water Charge*		-	-		0.0%
Site Rent	Per week	49.70	49.70		0.0%
* These charges will be uplifted in line with fee increases from utility companies					
** Rents have not been uplifted due to a wider rents review					

TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT

- 1.1 The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to “have regard to” the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council’s capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- 1.2 The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Surplus monies are invested in low-risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council’s low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.
- 1.3 The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council’s capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need of the Council, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans, or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. On occasion, when it is prudent and economic, any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives.
- 1.4 The contribution the treasury management function makes to the authority is critical, as the balance of debt and investment operations ensure liquidity or the ability to meet spending commitments as they fall due, either on day-to-day revenue or for larger capital projects. The treasury operations will see a balance of the interest costs of debt and the investment income arising from cash deposits affecting the available budget. Since cash balances generally result from reserves and balances, it is paramount to ensure adequate security of the sums invested, as a loss of principal will in effect result in a loss to the General Fund Balance.
- 1.5 CIPFA defines treasury management as:

“The management of the local authority’s borrowing, investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”

Capital Strategy

- 1.6 The CIPFA 2021 Prudential and Treasury Management Codes require all local authorities to prepare a Capital Strategy report which will provide the following: -
- a high-level long-term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services
 - an overview of how the associated risk is managed
 - the implications for future financial sustainability
- 1.7 The aim of the strategy is to ensure that all the Authority’s elected members fully understand the overall long-term policy objectives and resulting Capital Strategy requirements, governance procedures and risk appetite.
- 1.8 The Council published its Capital Strategy in 2019. It has been reviewed by officers and will be updated for 2024/25 to be reviewed by Governance and Audit Committee before being published. If any non-treasury investment sustains a loss

during the final accounts and audit process, the strategy and revenue implications will be reported through the same procedure as the capital strategy.

Treasury Management reporting

- 1.9 The Authority is currently required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main treasury reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals.
- a. **Prudential and treasury indicators and treasury strategy** (this report) - The first, and most important report is forward looking and covers: -
 - the capital plans, (including prudential indicators)
 - a minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy, (how residual capital expenditure is charged to revenue over time)
 - the Treasury Management Strategy, (how the investments and borrowings are to be organised), including treasury indicators; and
 - an Annual Investment Strategy, (the parameters on how investments are to be managed)
 - b. **A mid-year treasury management report** – This is primarily a progress report and will update members on the capital position, amending prudential indicators as necessary, and whether any policies require revision. In addition, this Authority will receive quarterly update reports.
 - c. **An annual treasury report** – This is a backward-looking review document and provides details of a selection of actual prudential and treasury indicators and actual treasury operations compared to the estimates within the strategy.
- 1.10 The above reports are required to be adequately scrutinised before being recommended to the Council. This role is undertaken by the Governance and Audit Committee.
- 1.11 CIPFA published the revised Codes on 20th December 2021 and stated that revisions need to be included in the reporting framework from the 2023/24 financial year. This Authority, therefore, has to have regard to these Codes of Practice when it prepares the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy, and also related reports during the financial year, which are taken to Full Council for approval.
- 1.12 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25 covers two main areas which meet the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, DLUHC Investment Guidance, DLUHC MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Prudential Code and the CIPFA Treasury Management Code:

Capital issues

- the capital expenditure plans and the associated prudential indicators;
- the minimum revenue provision (MRP) policy.

Treasury management issues

- the current treasury position;
- treasury indicators which limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
- prospects for interest rates;
- the borrowing strategy;

- policy on borrowing in advance of need;
- debt rescheduling;
- the investment strategy;
- creditworthiness policy; and
- the policy on use of external service providers.

1.13 The CIPFA Treasury Management Code requires the responsible officer to ensure that members with responsibility for treasury management receive adequate training in treasury management. This especially applies to members responsible for scrutiny.

1.14 Furthermore, pages 47 and 48 of the Code state that they expect “all organisations to have a formal and comprehensive knowledge and skills or training policy for the effective acquisition and retention of treasury management knowledge and skills for those responsible for management, delivery, governance and decision making.

The Capital Prudential Indicators 2024/25 – 2026/27

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to adopt the CIPFA Prudential Code and produce prudential indicators. Each indicator either summarises the expected capital activity or introduces limits upon that activity and reflects the outcome of the Council's underlying capital appraisal systems. Within this overall prudential framework there is an impact on the Council's treasury management activity – as it will directly impact on borrowing or investment activity and as such the Treasury Management Strategy for 2024/25 to 2026/27 complements these indicators.

The Council's capital expenditure plans are the key driver of treasury management activity. The output of the capital expenditure plans is reflected in the prudential indicators, which are designed to assist members' overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

The Capital Expenditure Plans

The Council's capital expenditure plans are summarised below, and this forms the first of the prudential indicators. A certain level of capital expenditure is grant supported by the Government; any decisions by the Council to spend above this level will be considered unsupported capital expenditure. This capital expenditure needs to have regard to:

- Service objectives (e.g. strategic planning);
- Stewardship of assets (e.g. asset management planning);
- Value for money (e.g. option appraisal);
- Prudence and sustainability (e.g. implications for external borrowing and whole life costing);
- Affordability (e.g. implications for the council tax);
- Practicality (e.g. the achievability of the forward plan).

The revenue consequences of capital expenditure, particularly the unsupported capital expenditure, will need to be paid for from the Council's own resources. This capital expenditure can be paid for immediately (by applying capital resources such as capital receipts, capital grants, or revenue resources), but if these resources are insufficient any residual capital expenditure will add to the Council's borrowing need.

The key risks to the plans are that the level of Government support has been estimated and is therefore maybe subject to change. Similarly some estimates for other sources of funding, such as capital receipts, may also be subject to change over this timescale. For instance anticipated asset sales may be postponed due to external factors such as the impact of the wider economy.

The Council is asked to approve the summary capital expenditure projections below.

Capital Expenditure	2024/25 Estimate £000	2025/26 Estimate £000	2026/27 Estimate £000
Capital Expenditure	12,882	9,867	6,850
Commercial Activities	0	0	0
Financed by:			
Capital receipts	5,200	2,200	2,000
Capital grants & Contributions	4,554	4,675	3,230
Net financing need	3,128	2,992	1,620

The Council's Borrowing Need (the Capital Financing Requirement)

The second prudential indicator is the Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The CFR is simply the total outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources. It is essentially a measure of the Council's underlying borrowing need. The capital expenditure above which has not immediately been paid for will increase the CFR. Due to the nature of some of the capital expenditure identified above (ie grant), an element will be immediately impaired or will not qualify as capital expenditure for CFR purposes. As such the net financing figure above may differ from that used in the CFR calculation. The CFR does not increase indefinitely, as the minimum revenue provision (MRP) is a statutory annual revenue charge which broadly reduces the indebtedness in line with each assets life, and so charges the economic consumption of capital assets as they are used.

The Council is asked to approve the CFR projections below:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
	Estimate £m	Estimate £m	Estimate £m	Estimate £m
Capital Financing Requirement				
CFR – services	145.469	155.529	163.491	164.097
CFR - Commercial activities/ non-financial investments	84.055	82.984	81.887	80.765
Total CFR	229.524	238.513	245.378	244.862
Movement in CFR	9.452	8.989	6.865	-0.516
Movement in CFR represented by				
Net financing need for the year (above)	6.659	5.505	3.257	-4.325
Less MRP and other financing movements	2.793	3.484	3.608	3.808
Movement in CFR	9.452	8.989	6.865	-0.516

The net financing need for the year includes expenditure related to budgets approved in prior years in addition to the new capital expenditure approved in 2024/25.

Regulations have been issued which require full Council to approve an MRP Statement in advance of each year. The Council is recommended to approve the MRP Statement attached in Annex E(ii)

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement

Under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, where the Authority has financed capital expenditure by borrowing it is required to make a provision each year through a revenue charge (MRP).

The Authority is required to calculate a prudent provision of MRP which ensures that the outstanding debt liability is repaid over a period that is reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits. The MRP Guidance (2018) gives four ready-made options for calculating MRP, but the Authority can use any other reasonable basis that it can justify as prudent.

The MRP policy statement requires full council approval (or closest equivalent level) in advance of each financial year. As such the Council is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement

- For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 or which in the future will be Supported Capital Expenditure, the MRP policy will be:

Based on CFR – MRP will be based on the CFR. This option provides for an approximate 4% reduction in the borrowing need (CFR) each year.

- From 1 April 2008 for all unsupported borrowing (including PFI and finance leases but excluding CPIS expenditure) the MRP policy will be:

Asset life method - MRP will be based on the annuity basis, in accordance with the regulations. Repayments included in annual PFI, or finance leases are applied as MRP.

There will be a presumption that capital receipts will be allocated to the appropriate assets in relation to the constraints of the medium-term financial strategy.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2024/25 will not be subject to an MRP charge until 2025/26, or in the year after the asset becomes operational.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT

The Treasury Management service is an important part of the overall financial management of the Council's affairs. The prudential indicators in Annex E(i) consider the affordability and impact of capital expenditure decisions and set out the Council's overall capital framework. The Treasury Management service considers the effective funding of these decisions. Together they form part of the process which ensures the Council meets its balanced budget requirement under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

The Council's treasury activities are strictly regulated by statutory requirements and a professional code of practice - 2011 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code"). This Council has adopted the revised Code.

As a result of adopting the Code the Council also adopted a Treasury Policy Statement. This adoption is the requirement of one of the prudential indicators.

The Code of Practice requires an annual strategy to be reported to Council outlining the expected treasury activity for the forthcoming 3 years. A key requirement of this report is to explain both the risks, and the management of the risks, associated with the treasury service. A further treasury report is produced after the year-end to report on actual activity for the year, and a new requirement of the revision of the Code of Practice is that there is a mid-year monitoring report.

This strategy covers:

- The Council's debt and investment projections;
- The Council's estimates and limits on future debt levels;
- The expected movement in interest rates;
- The Council's borrowing and investment strategies;
- Treasury performance indicators;
- Specific limits on treasury activities;

Debt and Investment Projections 2024/25 – 2026/27

The borrowing requirement comprises the expected movement in the CFR and any maturing debt which will need to be re-financed.

	2024/25 Estimated	2025/26 Estimated	2026/27 Estimated
External Debt			
Debt at 31 March	£100m	£110m	£100m
Investments			
Investments at 31 March	£15m	£15m	£15m

Current Portfolio

The overall treasury management portfolio as at 31 March 2023 and for the position as at 31st October 2023 are shown below for both borrowing and investments

	Actual	Actual	Current	Current
	31/03/23	31/03/23	31/10/23	31/10/23
Treasury Investments	£000	%	£000	%
Money Market Funds	15,775	100	10,450	100
External Borrowing	£000	%	£000	%
Local Authorities	0	0	15,000	0
PWLB	80,000	100	80,000	100
Net Treasury Borrowing	64,225		84,550	

Limits to Borrowing Activity

Within the prudential indicators there are a number of key indicators to ensure the Council operates its activities within well defined limits. For the first of these the Council needs to ensure that its total borrowing net of any investments, does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the CFR in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional CFR for 2024/25 and the following two financial years. This allows some flexibility for limited early borrowing for future years but ensures that borrowing is not undertaken for revenue purposes.

The Executive Director:Resources reports that the Council has complied with this prudential indicator in the current year and does not envisage difficulties for the future. This view takes into account current commitments, existing plans, and the proposals in this budget report.

The Authorised Limit for External Debt

A further key prudential indicator represents a control on the overall level of borrowing. This represents a limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term.

The Council is asked to approve the following Authorised Limit:

Authorised limit	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate	2026/27 Estimate
Borrowing	£240m	£240m	£250m
Other long term liabilities	£20m	£20m	£20m
Total	£260m	£260m	£270m

Operational Boundary for External Debt

The Authority is also recommended to approve the Operational Boundary for external debt for the same period. The proposed Operational Boundary is based on the same estimates as the Authorised Limit but reflects directly the estimate of the most likely but not worst case scenario, without the additional headroom included within the Authorised Limit to allow for unusual cash movements.

Operational Boundary	2024/25 Estimate	2024/25 Estimate	2025/26 Estimate
Borrowing	£230m	£230m	£240m
Other long term liabilities	£20m	£20m	£20m
Total	£250m	£250m	£260m

Borrowing in advance of need.

The Executive Director:Resources may do this under delegated power where, for instance, a sharp rise in interest rates is expected, and so borrowing early at fixed interest rates will be economically beneficial or meet budgetary constraints. Whilst the Executive Director:Resources will adopt a cautious approach to any such borrowing, where there is a clear business case for doing so borrowing may be undertaken to fund the approved capital programme or to fund future debt maturities. Risks associated with any advance borrowing activity will be subject to appraisal in advance and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism.

Expected Movement in Interest Rates

The Council's treasury advisor, Link Asset Services has provided the following forecast:

Date	BANK RATE	5yr PWLB	10yr PWLB	25yr PWLB	50yr PWLB
Dec-23	5.25	5.00	5.10	5.50	5.30
Mar-24	5.25	4.90	5.00	5.30	5.10
Jun-24	5.25	4.70	4.80	5.10	4.90
Sep-24	5.00	4.40	4.70	4.90	4.70
Dec-24	4.50	4.20	4.40	4.70	4.50
Mar-25	4.00	4.00	4.20	4.50	4.30
Jun-25	3.50	3.80	4.00	4.30	4.10
Sep-25	3.25	3.70	3.80	4.20	4.00

Whilst the Council is in no longer debt-free the level of internal resources has enabled the Council to avoid any new external borrowing since 2018. However this position is no longer sustainable and additional external borrowing will be required in 2024/25 onwards.

The prolonged period of low global interest rates changed markedly from April 2022 onwards, with central banks around the world increasing rates. The first half of 2023/24 saw interest rates rise by a further 100bps, taking the Bank Rate from 4.25% to 5.25% and possibly the peak in the tightening cycle. Short- and Medium-term gilts remain elevated as inflation continually surprised on the upside. Whilst CPI Inflation has fallen from 8.7% in April to 4.7% in October, its lowest rate since February 2022, it is still significantly above the Bank of England target rate of 2.5%. Further, a cooling in labour market conditions has not led to any easing of wage growth, which is still rising at over 7%.

The registering of 0% GDP for Q3 suggests that underlying growth has lost momentum since earlier in the year. Some of the weakness in July was due to there being almost twice as many working days lost to strikes in July (281,000) than in June (160,000). But with output falling in 10 out of the 17 sectors, there is an air of underlying weakness.

As the growing drag from higher interest rates intensifies over the next six months, we think the economy will continue to lose momentum and soon fall into a mild recession. Strong labour demand, fast wage growth and government support have all supported household incomes over the past year. And with CPI inflation past its peak and expected to decline further, the economy has got through the cost-of-living crisis without recession. But even though the worst of the falls in real household disposable incomes are behind us, the phasing out of financial support packages provided by the government during the energy crisis means real incomes are unlikely to grow strongly. Higher interest rates will soon bite harder too. We expect the Bank of England to keep interest rates at the probable peak of 5.25% until the second half of 2024. Mortgage rates are likely to stay above 5.0% for around a year.

In its latest monetary policy meeting on 06 November, the Bank of England left interest rates unchanged at 5.25%. The vote to keep rates on hold was a split vote, 6-3. It is clear that some members of the MPC are still concerned about the stickiness of inflation.

In terms of current market view, pricing suggests that rates will be on hold for some months to come, with easing in the latter half of the financial year.

Investment and borrowing rates

- **Investment returns** are expected to remain stable in 2024/25. As noted above whilst CPI has started to retreat, prices are still increasing and wage inflation continues to act on the market. Whilst further rate hikes are unlikely the focus is on how long the Bank of England will retain rates at their current level.
- **Borrowing interest rates** fell to historically very low rates as a result of the COVID crisis and the quantitative easing operations of the Bank of England however the economic conditions highlighted above reflect a different path in borrowing rates is now in place. The policy of avoiding new borrowing by running down spare cash balances has served local authorities well over the last few years however current rates are significantly higher than the rates achieved by the Council in the borrowing undertaken between 2017 and 2019.

Borrowing Strategy 2024/25

The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the capital borrowing need (the Capital Financing Requirement), has not been fully funded with loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure. This strategy was prudent when investment returns are low, however the ability to maintain this strategy is challenging as reserves and balances are depleted as part of the Council's budget strategy.

Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will be adopted with the 2024/25 treasury operations. The Executive Director:Resources will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:

- if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in long and short term rates then any long term borrowings will be postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing will be considered.
- if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short term rates than that currently forecast, perhaps arising from an increase in world economic activity or a further spikes in inflation risks, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised.

The current and short-term economic conditions place considerable challenges on the Council's treasury activities. There is a re-financing need in 2024/25 of PWLB loans taken out in 2017 at rates considerably higher than the original rate. However, with the projection above that interest rates should begin to fall in the second half of the financial year, short-term maturities may be favoured to optimise the Councils long-term borrowing costs. Any decisions will be reported to the Executive at the next available opportunity.

The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.

Debt rescheduling

In this period of uncertainty and historically wild swings in gilt prices over such a short period of time, there may be potential opportunities to generate savings by switching from long-term debt to short-term debt. However, these savings will need to be considered in the light of the current treasury position and the size of the cost of debt repayment (premiums incurred).

The reasons for any rescheduling to take place will include:

- the generation of cash savings and / or discounted cash flow savings;
- helping to fulfil the treasury strategy;
- enhance the balance of the portfolio (amend the maturity profile and/or the balance of volatility).

All rescheduling will be reported to the Executive, at the earliest meeting following its action.

Investment Strategy 2024/25 – 2026/27

Investment Policy

The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and CIPFA have extended the meaning of ‘investments’ to include both financial and non-financial investments. This report deals solely with treasury (financial) investments, (as managed by the treasury management team). Non-financial investments, essentially the purchase of income yielding assets and service investments, are covered in the Capital Strategy

The Authority’s investment policy has regard to the following: -

- DLUHC’s Guidance on Local Government Investments (“the Guidance”)
- CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes 2021 (“the Code”)
- CIPFA Treasury Management Guidance Notes 2021

The Council’s investment priorities will be security first, portfolio liquidity second and then yield, (return).

The above guidance from the DLUHC and CIPFA places a high priority on the management of risk. This Authority has adopted a prudent approach to managing risk and defines its risk appetite by the following means: -

1. Minimum acceptable **credit criteria** are applied in order to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties. This also enables diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The key ratings used to monitor counterparties are the short term and long-term ratings.
2. Other information: ratings will not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution; it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector on both a micro and macro basis and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To achieve this consideration the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as “credit default swaps” and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings.
3. Other information sources used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the banking sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties.
4. This authority has defined the list of types of investment instruments that the treasury management team are authorised to use. There are two lists in appendix under the categories of ‘specified’ and ‘non-specified’ investments.
 - **Specified investments** are those with a high level of credit quality and subject to a maturity limit of one year.
 - **Non-specified investments** are those with less high credit quality, may be for periods in excess of one year, and/or are more complex instruments which require greater consideration by members and officers before being authorised for use.

5. Lending and transaction limits, (amounts and maturity), for each counterparty will be set through applying the matrix table shown under the Council's creditworthiness policy
6. This authority has engaged external consultants, (see paragraph 1.5), to provide expert advice on how to optimise an appropriate balance of security, liquidity and yield, given the risk appetite of this authority in the context of the expected level of cash balances and need for liquidity throughout the year.
7. All investments will be denominated in sterling.

Creditworthiness policy

This Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by Link Asset Services. This service employs a sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moody's and Standard and Poor's. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with the following overlays:

- credit watches and credit outlooks from credit rating agencies;
- CDS spreads to give early warning of likely changes in credit ratings;
- sovereign ratings to select counterparties from only the most creditworthy countries.

This modelling approach combines credit ratings, credit watches and credit outlooks in a weighted scoring system which is then combined with an overlay of CDS spreads for which the end product is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the suggested duration for investments. The Council will therefore use counterparties within the following maturities .

Dark pink	5 years for Enhanced money market funds (EMMFs) with a credit score of 1.25
Light pink	5 years for Enhanced money market funds (EMMFs) with a credit score of 1.5
Blue	1 year (only applies to nationalised or semi nationalised UK Banks)
Orange	1 year
Red	6 months
Green	100 days
No colour	not to be used

Y	Pi1	Pi2	P	B	O	R	G	N/C
1	1.25	1.5	2	3	4	5	6	7
Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 5yrs	Up to 2yrs	Up to 1yr	Up to 1yr	Up to 6mths	Up to 100days	No Colour

	Colour (and long term rating where applicable)	Money and/or % Limit	Time Limit
Banks	orange	£7m	1 yr
Banks – part nationalised	blue	£7m	1 yr
Banks	red	£7m	6 months
Banks	green	£7m	100 days
Banks	No colour	£0m	0 days
Debt Management Account Deposit Facility	AAA	£10m	6 months
Local authorities	n/a	£7m	1 yr
Money Market Funds (CNAV, LVNAV & VNAV)	AAA	£10m	liquid
Enhanced money market funds with a credit score of 1.25	Dark pink / AAA	£10m	liquid
Enhanced money market funds with a credit score of 1.5	Light pink / AAA	£10m	liquid

The creditworthiness service uses a wider array of information than just primary ratings and by using a risk weighted scoring system, does not give undue influence to just one agency's ratings.

Typically the minimum credit ratings criteria the Council use will be a short term rating (Fitch or equivalents) of short term rating F1, long term rating A-, viability rating of A-, and a support rating of 1 There may be occasions when the counterparty ratings from one rating agency are marginally lower than these ratings but may still be used. In these instances consideration will be given to the whole range of ratings available, or other topical market information, to support their use.

All credit ratings will be monitored in real time. The Council is alerted to changes to ratings of all three agencies through its use of our creditworthiness service.

- if a downgrade results in the counterparty / investment scheme no longer meeting the Council's minimum criteria, its further use as a new investment will be withdrawn immediately.
- in addition to the use of credit ratings the Council will be advised of information in movements in credit default swap spreads against the iTraxx benchmark and other market data on a weekly basis. Extreme market movements may result in downgrade of an institution or removal from the Council's lending list.

Sole reliance will not be placed on the use of this external service. In addition this Council will also use market data and market information, information on government support for banks and the credit ratings of that supporting government

In the normal course of the council's cash flow operations it is expected that both Specified and Non-specified investments will be utilised for the control of liquidity as both categories allow for short term investments.

The use of longer term instruments (greater than one year from inception to repayment) will fall in the Non-specified investment category. These instruments will only be used where the Council's liquidity requirements are safeguarded however the current investment limits for 2024/25 restrain all investments to less than 1 year. Any amendment to this strategy will require the credit-criteria to be amended to include a long-term rating. This will be addressed through the formal approval by Council of a revised Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy.

Country and Sector Considerations

Due care will be taken to consider the country, group and sector exposure of the Council's investments. The current investment strategy limits all investments to UK Banks, Building Societies and Local Authorities, in addition to Sterling denominated AAA Money Market Funds.

Economic Investment Considerations

Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates. The criteria for choosing counterparties set out above provides a sound approach to investment in "normal" market circumstances. Whilst Members are asked to approve this base criteria above, under the exceptional current market conditions the Executive Director:Resources may temporarily restrict further investment activity to those counterparties considered of higher credit quality than the minimum criteria set out for approval. These restrictions will remain in place until the banking system returns to "normal" conditions. Similarly the time periods for investments will be restricted.

Examples of these restrictions would be the greater use of the Debt Management Deposit Account Facility (a Government body which accepts local authority deposits), Money Market Funds, and strongly rated institutions. The credit criteria have been amended to reflect these facilities.

Treasury Management Limits on Activity

There are four further treasury activity limits, which were previously prudential indicators. The purpose of these are to contain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby managing risk and reducing the impact of an adverse movement in interest rates. However if these are set to be too restrictive they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs/improve performance. The indicators are:

Upper limits on variable interest rate exposure – This identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates based upon the debt position net of investments

Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure – Similar to the previous indicator this covers a maximum limit on fixed interest rates.

Maturity structures of borrowing – These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, and are required for upper and lower limits.

Total principal funds invested for greater than 364 days – These limits are set with regard to the Council’s liquidity requirements and are based on the availability of funds after each year-end. The Council is asked to approve the limits:

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
Interest rate Exposures			
	Upper	Upper	Upper
Limits on fixed interest rates based on net debt	£260m	£270m	£270m
Limits on variable interest rates based on net debt	£260m	£270m	£270m
Maturity Structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2017/18			
	Lower	Upper	
Under 12 months	0%	100%	
12 months to 2 years	0%	100%	
2 years to 5 years	0%	100%	
5 years to 10 years	0%	100%	
10 years and above	0%	100%	
Maximum principal sums invested > 364 days			
Principal sums invested > 364 days	£m 0	£m 0	£m 0

Performance Indicators

The Code of Practice on Treasury Management requires the Council to set performance indicators to assess the adequacy of the treasury function over the year. These are distinct historic indicators, as opposed to the prudential indicators, which are predominantly forward looking. For 2024/25 the relevant benchmark will relate only to investments and will be the Sterling Overnight Index Average (SONIA). The results of these indicators will be reported in the Treasury Annual Report.

Treasury Management Advisers

The Council uses Link Asset Services as its treasury management consultants. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decision remains with the organisation at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers.

It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subject to regular review.

Member and Officer Training

The increased Member consideration of treasury management matters and the need to ensure officers dealing with treasury management are trained and kept up to date requires a suitable training process for Members and officers. Following the nomination of the Governance and Audit Committee to examine and assess the effectiveness of the Treasury Management Strategy and Policies, initial training was provided and additional training has been undertaken as necessary. Officer training is carried out in accordance with best practice and outlined in TMP 10 Training and Qualifications to ensure that all staff involved in the Treasury Management function are fully equipped to undertake the duties and responsibilities allocated to them.

SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS

All investments listed below must be sterling-denominated.

Investment	Share/ Loan Capital?	Repayable/ Redeemable within 12 months?	Security / Minimum Credit Rating **	Circumstance of use	Maximum period
Debt Management Agency Deposit Facility* (DMADF) * this facility is at present available for investments up to 6 months	No	Yes	Govt-backed	In-house	364 Days
Term deposits with the UK government or with Local Authority (including Parish Councils) in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland with maturities up to 364 Days	No	Yes	High security although LAs not credit rated.	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	364 Days
Term deposits with credit-rated deposit takers (banks and building societies), including callable deposits, with maturities up to 364 Days	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	364 Days
Certificates of Deposit issued by credit-rated deposit takers (banks and building societies) : up to 364 Days. <i>Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	364 Days
Gilts : up to 364 Days	No	Yes	Govt-backed	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	364 Days

Investment	Share/ Loan Capital?	Repayable/ Redeemable within 12 months?	Security / Minimum Credit Rating **	Circumstance of use	Maximum period
Money Market Funds CNAV, LVNAV, and VNAV <i>These funds do not have any maturity date</i>	No	Yes	<i>AAA Rating by Fitch, Moodys or S&P</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	The period of investment may not be determined at the outset but would be subject to cash flow and liquidity requirements
Forward deals with credit rated banks and building societies < 1 year (i.e. negotiated deal period plus period of deposit)	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them. Tracking of all forward deals to be undertaken and recorded.	1 year in aggregate
Commercial paper <i>[short-term obligations (generally with a maximum life of 9 months) which are issued by banks, corporations and other issuers]</i> <i>Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	9 months
Treasury bills <i>[Government debt security with a maturity less than one year and issued through a competitive bidding process at a discount to par value] Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	No	Yes	Govt-backed	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	1 year

NON-SPECIFIED INVESTMENTS

All investments listed below must be sterling-denominated.

<u>Investment</u>	<u>(A) Why use it?</u> <u>(B) Associated risks?</u>	<u>Share/</u> <u>Loan</u> <u>Capital?</u>	<u>Repayable/</u> <u>Redeemable</u> <u>within 12</u> <u>months?</u>	<u>Security /</u> <u>Minimum credit</u> <u>rating **</u>	<u>Circumstance of</u> <u>use</u>	<u>Maximum</u> <u>maturity of</u> <u>investment</u>
Deposits with Authority's Banker where credit rating has dropped below minimum criteria	Where the Council's bank no longer meets the high credit rating criteria set out in the Investment Strategy the Council has little alternative but to continue using them, and in some instances it may be necessary to place deposits with them, these deposits should be of a very short duration thus limiting the Council to daylight exposure only (i.e. flow of funds in and out during the day, or overnight exposure).	No	Yes	n/a	In-House	364 Days
Term deposits with credit rated deposit takers (banks and building societies) with maturities greater than 1 year	(A) (i) Certainty of rate of return over period invested. (ii) No movement in capital value of deposit despite changes in interest rate environment. (B) (i) Illiquid : as a general rule, cannot be traded or repaid prior to maturity. (ii) Return will be lower if interest rates rise after making the investment. (iii) Credit risk : potential for greater deterioration in credit quality over longer period	No	No	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	5 Years
Certificates of Deposit with credit rated deposit takers (banks and building societies) with maturities greater than 1 year <i>Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	(A) (i) Although in theory tradable, are relatively illiquid. (B) (i) 'Market or interest rate risk' : Yield subject to movement during life of CD which could negatively impact on price of the CD.	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	5 years

<u>Investment</u>	<u>(A) Why use it?</u> <u>(B) Associated risks?</u>	<u>Share/ Loan Capital?</u>	<u>Repayable/ Redeemable within 12 months?</u>	<u>Security / Minimum Credit Rating?</u>	<u>Circumstance of use</u>	<u>Maximum maturity of investment</u>
Callable deposits with credit rated deposit takers (banks and building societies) with maturities greater than 1 year	(A) (i) Enhanced income ~ Potentially higher return than using a term deposit with similar maturity. (B) (i) Illiquid – only borrower has the right to pay back deposit; the lender does not have a similar call. (ii) period over which investment will actually be held is not known at the outset. (iii) Interest rate risk : borrower will not pay back deposit if interest rates rise after deposit is made.	No	No	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	<i>5 years</i>
UK government gilts with maturities in excess of 1 year <i>Custodial arrangement required prior to purchase</i>	(A) (i) Excellent credit quality. (ii) Very Liquid. (iii) If held to maturity, known yield (rate of return) per annum ~ aids forward planning. (iv) If traded, potential for capital gain through appreciation in value (i.e. sold before maturity) (v) No currency risk (B) (i) 'Market or interest rate risk' : Yield subject to movement during life of sovereign bond which could negatively impact on price of the bond i.e. potential for capital loss.	No	Yes	Govt backed	To be used by external fund managers only subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	<i>10 years including but also including the 10 year benchmark gilt</i>

<u>Investment</u>	<u>(A) Why use it?</u> <u>(B) Associated risks?</u>	<u>Share/</u> <u>Loan</u> <u>Capital?</u>	<u>Repayable/</u> <u>Redeemable</u> <u>within 12</u> <u>months?</u>	<u>Security /</u> <u>Minimum credit</u> <u>rating **</u>	<u>Circumstance of</u> <u>use</u>	<u>Maximum</u> <u>maturity of</u> <u>investment</u>
Forward deposits with credit rated banks and building societies for periods > 1 year (i.e. negotiated deal period plus period of deposit)	(A) (i) Known rate of return over period the monies are invested ~ aids forward planning. (B) (i) Credit risk is over the whole period, not just when monies are actually invested. (ii) Cannot renege on making the investment if credit rating falls or interest rates rise in the interim period.	No	No	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them. Tracking of all forward deals to be undertaken and recorded.	<i>5 years</i>
Deposits with unrated deposit takers (banks and building societies) but with unconditional financial guarantee from HMG or credit-rated parent institution : any maturity	(A) Credit standing of parent will determine ultimate extent of credit risk	No	Yes	<i>As per list of approved Counterparties</i>	In-house and by external fund managers subject to the guidelines and parameters agreed with them	<i>1 year</i>

Summary Virements between Directorates

Directorate	Reorganisation £'000	S106 Bus Contracts £'000	Other S106 £'000	Other Earmarked Reserves £'000	Council Wide £'000	Total £'000
Central	0	155	579	384	114	1,232
Delivery	-3,137	0	0	261	-139	-3,015
People	3,137	0	0	0	284	3,421
Non Departmental / Council Wide	0	0	0	0	-259	-259
Earmarked Reserves	0	-155	-579	-645	0	-1,379
TOTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0

CENTRAL

Virements between Directorates

Total	Explanation
£'000	
	<u>Other Earmarked Reserves</u>
338	Transfers from the Revenue Grants Unapplied Reserve to fund engineering posts as agreed in the 2018/19 savings proposals (£0.185m), to help meet the Highways annual maintenance budget (£0.144m) and to support project costs (0.009m).
46	Revenue Grants Unapplied Reserve - Use of Commuted Sums to meet the costs of additional drainage inspections delivered by the contractor.
	<u>S106 Bus Contracts</u>
155	Section 106 Agreements allows for bus services to be provided within the Borough. The contract has been re-let for this service with effect from April this year, resulting in an annual cost of £0.155m. A transfer is therefore required for this sum.
	<u>Other S106</u>
141	A number of posts (3 FTE) are to be met from Section 106 SPA Mitigation monies. A 0.5 FTE post in Parks and a full time post in Planning Policy to enable the production of, co-ordination and monitoring of the Suitable Alternative Non Green Spaces (SANGS) plans together with the co-ordination of access management measures. Plus 1.5 Ranger posts to maintain and manage the areas that have been designated SANGS, which are required to be maintained at a higher standard than general open areas. An additional transfer of £0.004m is also required to fund the annual running costs of a vehicle required for the maintenance of the enhanced SANG's.
378	Section 106 SPA funding to help deliver the Planning and Parks & Countryside services as agreed during the respective business change programmes.
50	Works are to be commissioned for the new Bucklers Park hub which will be funded from the £0.150m of S106 as agreed by the Executive Member. The revenue element is £0.050m.
10	As part of the 2021/22 budget is was agreed to draw down of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) maintenance funds to replace an existing borough maintenance budget for Lily Hill Park.
	<u>Council Wide items</u>
114	Annual adjustment to pension deficit contribution budgets.
1,232	Total Virements

DELIVERY

Virements between Directorates

Total	Explanation
£'000	
<u>Other Earmarked Reserves</u>	
77	An allocation from the Structural Changes Reserve to finance a redundancy payment in the Digital Services Team.
184	Part of the Waste PFI contract includes an excess profit share arrangement. This is a cumulative arrangement, when excess profit is made, this is shared with the relevant LA's and held in a reserve, however if a loss is made, this is repaid from the reserve. For 21/22 and 22/23 losses have been made (£0.125m for 2021/22 and £0.059m for 2022/23).
<u>Reorganisation</u>	
52	The responsibility for Sandhurst Nursery and 7 Portman Close have transferred to Property Services from Children's Services.
72	Transfer of the Energy Sustainability Officer post and associated budgets from People to Delivery.
-3,261	Transfer of the Fleet and Home to School Transport services from Delivery to People.
<u>Council Wide items</u>	
52	Annual adjustment to pension deficit contribution budgets.
-191	Binfield Health & Community Centre - rental income budget to cover MRP and Interest charges
-2,824	Total Virements

PEOPLE

Virements between Directorates

Total	Explanation
£'000	
	<u>Reorganisation</u>
-52	The responsibility for Sandhurst Nursery and 7 Portman Close have transferred to Property Services from Children's Services.
-72	Transfer of the Energy Sustainability Officer post and associated budgets from People to Delivery.
3,261	Transfer of the Fleet and Home to School Transport services from Delivery to People.
	<u>Council Wide items</u>
284	Annual adjustment to pension deficit contribution budgets.
3,421	Total Virements

Directorate Virements over £50,000

Debit	Credit	Explanation
£'000	£'000	
		Central
		Realignment of Public Health budgets to better reflect anticipated expenditure of grant based on current year programme
23,690		Miscellaneous Public Health Services
45,750		NHS Health Check Programme
470		Health Protection
3,160		National Measurement Programme
4,080		Public Health Advice
22,690		Physical Activity
32,740		SUBSTANCE MISUSE
	-71,800	Smoking & Tobacco
	-9,500	Children 5-19 Public Health Programmes
	-51,280	Sexual Health Services
		Chief Executives Office DSB re-aligned to reflect request to report at service level
143,480		Policy and Performance
65,970		Community Engagement
	-605,350	Chief Executive
395,900		Communications
		Salary allocations have been amended to reflect actual service provision within the department, the net effect of these changes is nil.
71,250		Finance
	-71,250	Insurance
		Transport Strategy are in receipt of a grant which can be used to support staffing costs. In order to reduce the pressure reported by Reactive Maintenance the amount £0.110m received from commuted sums reserves will be transferred from supporting the DSB to supporting reactive maintenance budgets and be replaced by the EV grant
	-110,000	Transport Strategy
110,000		Reactive Maintenance
919,180	-919,180	Total
		Delivery
		The saving related to the letting out of Time Square was loaded incorrectly to Property Services.
50,000		Property Services
	-50,000	Office Accommodation
		Realignment of Contracted Services budget lines to reflect the split of the invoices from the contractor.
75,280		Street Cleansing
	-75,280	Environmental Services
		The Democratic & Registration Services Managed Vacancy Factor (MVF) budget was loaded incorrectly to Member & Mayoral Services.
68,120		Member & Mayoral Services
	-68,120	Dem & Reg MVF
		Realignment of Devolved Staffing Budget following a recent restructure and subsequent move of the Operations Unit to People.
85,310		Construction & Maintenance
	-85,310	Operations Unit
278,710	-278,710	Total

Directorate Virements over £50,000

Debit	Credit	Explanation
£'000	£'000	
		<u>People</u>
		Responsibility for line management of the Children's Service Principal Social Worker has changed.
73	-73	Children's Social Care Commissioning
542	-542	The council's successful bid for Delivering Better Value in SEND grant will result in £0.542m of grant income that was not included in the original budget. This will balance to nil by being used to finance the costs of the proposed workstreams.
615	-615	Total
		<u>Schools Budget</u>
		Dedicated Schools Grant funding to the council has been recalculated to reflect payments made directly by the Education Skills and Funding Agency to academies and other adjustments in accordance with updated recalculations.
	-46,196	Funds Delegated to Schools
	-750	De-delegated Budgets
45		Other School Services
	-171	INMSS & Colleges
147		EY Free Entitlements
46,925		Dedicated Schools Grant
429	-429	New income will be received in respect of the Teachers' Additional Pay grant, which has been provided to help fund schools for the additional costs arising from the September 2023 Teachers' Pay Settlement.
649	-649	As part of DfE funding reforms relating to the free entitlement to early years education and childcare, DfE has allocated £0.648m to the Council through a specific grant to finance additional payments to providers. There is a net nil effect on the budget.
		A virement has also been proposed to reflect anticipated spending requirements as follows:
	-82	NMSS & Colleges
82		Education out of School
48,277	-48,277	Total

CALCULATION OF COUNCIL TAX BASE – 2024/25

Summary

- 1.1 The Council is required to consider and approve the calculation of the Council Tax Base which has to be calculated in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, and in the circumstances provided for in subsequent regulations, for the financial year 2024/25 **it is recommended that, no new locally defined discounts are created in 2024/25 and no change is made to the local Council Tax Support Scheme**. Specifically, this means that:
- 1.2.1 The Council Tax discount granted in for properties which are nobody's sole or main residence (commonly referred to as "second homes") will remain at 0%.
- 1.2.2 The Council Tax discount granted in 2024/25 for properties that are empty and substantially unfurnished will remain at 0%.
- 1.2.3 The Council Tax discount granted in 2024/25 for properties requiring or undergoing major repair or structural alterations will remain at 0%.
- 1.2.4 The amount of Council Tax payable for long-term empty dwellings which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a continuous period of at least 2 years will continue to attract a 100% premium.
- 1.2.5 The Council Tax Support Scheme will remain as an income based assessment with 8 bands.
- 1.2.6 7 bands will be based on weekly net income:
- Band 1: 75% discount for households earning up to £80 or in receipt of a passported benefit
 - Band 2: 70% discount for households earning £80.01 - £140.00
 - Band 3: 60% discount for households earning £140.01 - £200.00
 - Band 4: 50% discount for households earning £200.01 - £260.00
 - Band 5: 40% discount for households earning £260.01 - £320.00
 - Band 6: 30% discount for households earning £320.01 - £380.00
 - Band 7: 20% discount for households earning £380.01 - £440.00
- 1.2.7 Where a claimant would normally be assessed as being in Income bands 1-7 but the claimant falls into a vulnerable group, the claimant will fall into the eighth protected band and receive 80% discount. A vulnerable group is defined as where either the applicant or in the case of a couple their partner count as disabled or long term sick and their incomes trigger an award of Disability Premium, Enhanced Disability Premium or Severe Disability Premium
- 1.3 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012, **the amount calculated as the Bracknell Forest Council Tax Base for 2024/25**

shall be **49,694**, with the relevant sum for each town and parish council area being as follows, compared with the 2023/24 calculation;

	Tax Base 2023/24	Tax Base 2024/25
Binfield	4,636	4,799
Bracknell	20,614	20,968
Crowthorne	3,242	3,429
Sandhurst	7,986	7,999
Warfield	5,349	5,538
Winkfield	6,929	6,961
	<hr/> 48,756	<hr/> 49,694 <hr/>

Background

- 2.1 The Council is required under the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 2012 to classify all dwellings in the Borough into the appropriate category of Bands A to H, according to their valuation. It must then apply the stated percentages to calculate the “relevant amount”, i.e. the number of Band D equivalent properties for 2023/24 for each valuation band. The Band D percentages to calculate the number of Band D equivalent properties is listed below:-

Band A	66.6%
Band B	77.7%
Band C	88.8%
Band D	100.0%
Band E	122.2%
Band F	144.4%
Band G	166.6%
Band H	200.0%

- 2.2 Regulation 3 of these regulations then requires the Council to multiply the “relevant amount” by the assumed collection rate, to ascertain the Council Tax Base for the year. The collection rate makes allowance for both new properties and general losses such as additional discounts and exemptions.
- 2.3 There are currently 17 different circumstances where residents are not counted for Council Tax purposes, including certain full time students, the severely mentally impaired, patients in homes and carers. Where there is only one other adult resident in the property, apart from the person who is not counted, a 25% discount will apply. Where all the adult residents are not counted, the discount is 50%.
- 2.4 There are also 21 different reasons for granting complete exemption to taxpayers, including those occupied only by full time students or those left empty by persons living elsewhere to receive care.
- 2.5 The Local Government Act 2003 provides that billing authorities have the power to grant locally defined discounts. Examples provided by the Government where a local discount

may be created include as a result of local events such as flooding or natural disasters, or because of an outbreak of the foot and mouth disease.

- 2.6 The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished the national Council Tax Benefit Scheme from 31 March 2013, replacing the national scheme with a localised Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The Council Tax Reduction Scheme forms part of a billing authority's Council Tax base.
- 2.7 That working age households who apply for Local Council Tax Benefit will only be awarded backdated Local Council Tax Benefit for a maximum of three months from date of application if there was good cause as to why they did not make an earlier application.
- 2.8 For 2024/25 the cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme has been apportioned between the minor precepting authorities based upon the amounts of Council Tax Reduction expected to be granted in 2024/25. The reductions in Band D equivalents are as follows:-

Binfield	116.1
Bracknell	1747.9
Crowthorne	84.3
Sandhurst	255.7
Warfield	148.3
Winkfield	196.7
Total	<u>2549.0</u>

- 2.9 The Council Tax Base calculation for the following financial year includes the actual Council Tax Base as at 30 November plus an allowance for expected new properties joining the list during the 16 months ahead. Information gathered from various sources indicates that the following allowances should be made for new properties becoming occupied during the period to 31 March 2025, equating to full year band "D" equivalents:-

Binfield	111.9
Bracknell	472.0
Crowthorne	158.1
Sandhurst	4.2
Warfield	204.1
Winkfield	37.6
Total	<u>987.9</u>


- 2.10 An allowance of 0.45% has been provided for losses due to additional discounts and exemptions, empty properties (voids), valuation appeals, absconds and bankruptcies. This is a value judgement based on past experience of Council Tax collection together with management information, which shows a gradual increase in the number of properties occupied by a single person and the number of households falling into arrears.

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: 1 December 2023	Directorate: Resources	Section: HR/OD	
1. Activity to be assessed	Implementing Car Parking Charges from 1 April 2024		
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Paul Young		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Paul Young, Alison Beswick		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	As 1.		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	The implementation of parking charges, after a long period where employees benefited from free car parking, supports the council's climate change aspirations whilst at the same time providing a low-cost car parking option for staff who use their personal vehicle to attend the workplace.		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact?	What evidence do you have to support this?
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	N	No, employees with a declared disability will be given access to park at the TS car park and pay the same rate as all others parking in TS.	5.03% of employees have declared a disability. All employees with a declared disability who have requested parking at TS have been authorised to do so. Whilst the parking charge at TS is higher at £10 for those staff on senior salaries than it is at Braccan Walk (£5) it is considered that the cost is still minimal so unlikely to have a significant impact on those staff with a declared disability.
9. Racial equality	N	No, the implementation of parking charges applies based on where employees park irrespective of their race/ethnicity.	The car parking charges are being applied based on the location of the car park and which pay structure staff are employed under. As such, there will be no detrimental impact on any member of staff with a protected characteristic.
10. Gender equality	N	No, the implementation of parking charges applies based on where employees park irrespective of their gender.	As 9. Above.

11. Sexual orientation equality		N	No, the implementation of parking charges applies based on where employees park irrespective of their sexual orientation.	As 9 above.
12. Gender re-assignment		N	No, the implementation of parking charges applies based on where employees park irrespective of whether there are undergoing gender reassignment.	As 9 above.
13. Age equality		N	No, the implementation of parking charges applies based on where employees park irrespective of their age.	As 9 above.
14. Religion and belief equality		N	No, the implementation of parking charges applies based on where employees park irrespective of their religion/belief.	As 9 above.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality		N	No, the implementation of parking charges applies based on where employees park.	As 9 above. However, it should be noted that is an employee requests parking at TS due to mobility issues related to pregnancy they would likely be granted temporary access to the TS car park and thus pay the additional rate. As outlined in 8. Above this is not considered a significant impact on these staff members.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality		N	No, the implementation of parking charges applies based on where employees park irrespective of their marital status.	As 9 above.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	<p>None anticipated. The implementation of a nominal payment for car parking is to support the Council's climate change aspirations not to generate significant income and the pricing structure reflects this.</p> <p>Whilst there is a higher charge for those staff who park in TS they can opt to park at Braccan Walk and pay a lower rate should they choose to do so. However, is should be noted that the charge for parking at TS is considered nominal in itself and it is not considered will have a significant financial impact on staff eligible to park there.</p>			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	None identified.			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the	None anticipated.			

difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?		No	The implementation of parking charges is based on parking location and applied equally to all members of staff, except those on senior salaries.
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	None identified.		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?		N	As there is no adverse impact expected a full EQiA is not required.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Respond to requests for parking at TS in relation to mobility/disability issues in a clear and consistent way, engaging with occupational health for to support the request as required.	On-going	Manager	Minimal number of complaints received.
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	All business areas with employees who park in TS or Braccan Walk.		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	As 8-23		

<p>26. Assistant director's signature.</p>	<p> Signature Date: 1/12/23</p>
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Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: 21/11/23	Directorate: Chief Executive's Office		Section: Communications and Marketing
1. Activity to be assessed	<p>Reduction of Bracknell Forest Council's residents' magazine (currently called Town & Country) from twice a year to once a year. It is proposed to send this out in printed format in the spring annually from 2024 to all households, with a digital copy available on the council's website.</p> <p>This would mean that the autumn/ winter edition is stopped. The magazine is currently delivered to around 50,000 households in spring and autumn/ winter. It is also available via an accessible PDF via the council's website.</p> <p>The reduction has been proposed as part of the council's budget setting process for 2024/25. It will save the council around £10,000 per annum in delivery and print costs.</p> <p>It also has environmental benefits – reducing the number of printed copies will reduce the council's carbon footprint. This is a main priority for the council as it moves towards net zero and outlined in the 2023-27 Council Plan.</p> <p>The council also produces a frequent digital residents' magazine called Town & Country Extra (currently produced weekly), which is free to sign up to and available to all residents. This reduction will not impact that publication.</p>		
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Alayna Razzell		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Michelle Palmer, Harjit Hunjan.		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	<p>The council's magazine gives an overview of important and/ or strategic messaging. It provides information on calls to action/ warning and informing activities/ actions, and sign posting to further information.</p> <p>Reducing the number of editions will not substantially change the type of information in the magazine.</p>		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	It is for all households but is especially important for those who are digitally excluded or do not engage with the council via other mediums.		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both?	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g. equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of

			If the impact is neutral, please give a reason.	evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y		Potentially it could impact on these groups if they rely on getting messages related to their protected characteristic/ services available to them and do not engage on other platforms.	There is an on-going programme of regular engagement with individual VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) groups, through specific engagement events and via partnership forums to inform residents e.g., the Council's Disability Access Advisory Forum. Information is also shared with town and parish councils for distribution through their networks.
9. Racial equality		N	No disproportionate impact anticipated	
10. Gender equality		N	No disproportionate impact anticipated	
11. Sexual orientation equality		N	No disproportionate impact anticipated	
12. Gender re-assignment		N	No disproportionate impact anticipated	
13. Age equality	Y		Generally, older people are less likely to gain council information and signposting via online channels. Reducing the printed copy to once a year reduces their access to council information via one of their most preferred mediums.	33% of the borough's population are over 65+ age (census 2021) Town & Country residents' surveys have previously shown that the magazine is read most widely by people in older age brackets. Likewise, the council's social media survey showed that people in older age brackets were less likely to use that as a source of information. There is an on-going programme of regular engagement and information sharing with individual VCS groups representing, advocating for and providing services to older people. Responses to BFC COVID -19 Residents' Survey (April 2021) indicated that 94% of residents used the internet; 98% of residents aged 18-34 are confident compared with 76% of residents aged 55 and over to access services online.
14. Religion and belief equality		N	No disproportionate impact anticipated	

<p>15. Pregnancy and maternity equality</p>		<p>N</p>	<p>No disproportionate impact anticipated</p>	
<p>16. Marriage and civil partnership equality</p>		<p>N</p>	<p>No disproportionate impact anticipated</p>	
<p>17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.</p>	<p>It could potentially impact on people on lower incomes if they are unable to access the internet as it reduces their access to information which will then be mostly available online. Cutting their access in half. Research suggests that there are few people in the borough within this category, but it cannot be ruled out completely. Free internet access is available through Bracknell Forest Council libraries.</p>			
<p>18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?</p>	<p>N/A</p>			
<p>19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?</p>	<p>Residents aged 55 and above are less likely to use the internet in general and access services online There are very few households without internet access or an electronic device in Bracknell Forest (no areas in highest three deciles of Multiple Deprivation Index 2021). So, barriers are more likely to be around digital skill and confidence. There is training available via libraries, the Open Learning Centre and the VCFS to support older people with digital inclusion to learn how to use computers and the internet and increase their confidence. Bracknell Forest library members can use the computers free of charge for at least 1 hour a day.</p>			
<p>20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?</p>		<p>N</p>		
<p>21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?</p>	<p>N/A</p>			
<p>22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?</p>		<p>N</p>	<p>While this reduces access to information for some groups, it does not stop access as the magazine will still be published once a year. There is also information available in other printed formats like newspapers/ leaflets/ posters for certain services and projects.</p>	

23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Continue to focus on digital inclusion activities and projects working with service teams and the voluntary, community and faith sector.	Ongoing	Assistant Director CXO/Head of Community Engagement	Embed in digitalisation programme
Promote and further increase engagement and sign up to digital news from the council by residents.	April 2024 and ongoing.	Head of Communications	10% increase annually
Ensure that the annual hard copy edition of the council's magazine signposts to places with free internet access, digital inclusion training/activities and promotes sign up to digital news from the council.	April 2024 and ongoing.	Head of Communications	
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Communications and marketing business plan, CXO service plan		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	Free internet access and digital inclusion training in libraries and through adult learning at the Open Learning Centre. Funding provided to community groups to delivery training in digital skills.		
26. Assistant Director/Director signature.	A Thomas		28.11.2023

Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: 16/11/23	Directorate: Delivery	Section: Environmental Services	
1. Activity to be assessed	Changes to service provision on street cleansing and grounds maintenance		
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Damian James		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Claire Pike and Damian James		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Changes to the street cleansing and grounds maintenance provision across the borough including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced weed spraying on the highway from 3 sprays per annum to 2 sprays • Realignment of litter bins, this will reduce the number of litter bins across the borough by approximately half – the current number of bins is just over 900. • Amend the town centre cleansing routine to reduce the team size to 2 operatives (from 4) • Change to residential verge cutting frequency to 4-6 weekly from 2-3 weekly 		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	Borough wide		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no	<p>Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.</p>	<p>What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data</p>
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.		N	<p>Neutral – highway access for all and visibility will still be maintained, this includes footways, cycleways and roads. Litter bins will be provided in areas of high need; shopping areas, parks and town centre.</p> <p>Highway safety will be unchanged. Litter bin frequency will be reduced meaning residents may need to travel further to find a litter bin or take their litter home. The availability of litter bins will be maintained in high flow areas.</p>
9. Racial equality		N	Neutral – as above

10. Gender equality		N	Neutral – as above	
11. Sexual orientation equality		N	Neutral – as above	
12. Gender re-assignment		N	Neutral – as above	
13. Age equality	Y		Older residents may have to travel further to find a litter bin	There will be less frequent placement of litter bins across the Borough. The availability of litter bins will be maintained in high flow areas.
14. Religion and belief equality		N	Neutral – as above	
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y		Pregnant residents may have to travel further to find a litter bin.	There will be less frequent placement of litter bins across the Borough. The availability of litter bins will be maintained in high flow areas.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality		N	Neutral – as above	
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	None			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	NA			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	The reduction of litter bins may mean that some individuals who may be less able might have to travel further to find a litter bin.			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?		N		

21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	NA		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?		N	Residents may need to travel further to find a public bin; there will remain approximately 450 bins across the borough.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	These proposals will be in the consultation for the 24/25 budget		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?			
26. Assistant Director/Director signature.	Signature: D.W.James		Date: 16 th November 2023

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To: **EXECUTIVE**
12 December 2023

WINKFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2022-2037 – MAKING THE PLAN
Executive Director: Place, Planning & Regeneration

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the agreement from the Executive to:
- i. formally make the Neighbourhood Development Plan, keeping it in legal force as part of the Development Plan, to be used in the determination of planning applications relating to land in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Area; and
 - ii. the form, content and publication of the associated Decision Statement.
- 1.2 The Winkfield Neighbourhood Development Plan (“the Neighbourhood Plan”) came into legal force as part of the statutory Bracknell Forest Development Plan (“the Development Plan”) when the results of the community referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan were published. The majority of those who voted were in favour of Bracknell Forest Council (“the Council”) using the Neighbourhood Plan to help decide planning applications in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Area. As the Council is satisfied that formally ‘making’ the Neighbourhood Plan (keeping it in legal force) would not breach, or otherwise be incompatible with, any EU or human rights obligations and there has been no legal challenge related to the referendum, the Council is required to formally make the Neighbourhood Plan within 8 weeks of the referendum.

2 Recommendation

2.1 **That the Executive agrees:**

- (1) the formal “making” (keeping in legal force) of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Development Plan to continue to form part of the statutory Bracknell Forest Development Plan pursuant to Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended); and**
- (2) the form, content and publication of the Decision Statement (set out in Appendix A) pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).**

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Council in its capacity as the Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty, as set out in Section 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) (“PCPA”), to make a neighbourhood development plan if more than half of those voting at a referendum have voted in favour of making the neighbourhood development plan. This must be done within 8 weeks of the referendum (as prescribed by Regulation 18A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (“the Regulations”). Regulation 19 requires the Council to then publish a statement setting out the decision and details of where and when the

decision statement may be inspected. This must be done as soon as possible after deciding to make the neighbourhood development plan.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 If the Council considers that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan would breach, or otherwise be incompatible with any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended)), it would not have a duty to make the Neighbourhood Plan, as set out in Section 38A(6) of the PCPA. In which case the Neighbourhood Plan would cease to form part of the Development Plan, as set out in Section 38(3B) of the PCPA.
- 4.2 The independent Examiner who reviewed the Neighbourhood Plan considered that, subject to modifications, it met the basic conditions and statutory requirements, including the basic condition that the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with EU obligations and Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended)). The Council concurred with the Examiner's conclusions as set out in the published 'Post Examination Decision Statement.' Therefore, it would be in breach of the Council's statutory responsibilities in respect of Neighbourhood Planning under Section 38A(4) of the PCPA to refuse to make the Neighbourhood Plan. It would also expose the Council to legal challenge and attendant costs.

5 Supporting Information

Process

- 5.1 Winkfield Parish Council is the qualifying body for the purposes of neighbourhood planning in Winkfield. The Neighbourhood Plan area was originally designated in December 2015 and was amended on 14 July 2023. During the Examination, minor changes were made to the boundary of Winkfield Parish, which took effect from 2 March 2023. Subsequently, in May 2023, Winkfield Parish Council applied to the Council to amend the designated Neighbourhood Area to remove three small areas of land which now fall within an adjoining parish. Following agreement by the Executive Member for Planning and Transport on 14 July 2023, the amended area was designated by the Council as the Winkfield Neighbourhood Area.
- 5.2 Winkfield Parish Council submitted its Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documentation to the Council on 22 July 2022. The Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration confirmed on 4 August 2022 that it complied with the statutory requirements as set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) ("the TCPA") and Regulation 15 of the Regulations. Following agreement by the Executive Member for Planning and Transport on 2 September 2022, the Neighbourhood Plan was published for consultation from 20 October to 2 December 2022 and an Examiner was appointed. The Council provided a formal consultation response and the Plan was submitted for independent examination following agreement by the Executive Member for Planning and Transport on 24 November 2022.
- 5.3 With the consent of Winkfield Parish Council, the Council appointed Mr Andrew Ashcroft to undertake the independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Council submitted the Plan, along with representations received during the consultation period and other supporting documentation to the Examiner following the close of consultation.

- 5.4 The Examiner's report was issued on 24 July 2023 and has been published on the Council's website. The report recommended that, subject to a series of modifications, the Plan met the basic conditions set out in legislation and should proceed to local referendum. It also recommended that the area for the referendum should be limited to the amended designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- 5.5 The Council considered each of the recommendations made in the Examiner's report and the reasons for them. It decided what action to take in response to each recommendation (as required by paragraph 12(2) of Schedule 4B of the TCPA and Regulation 18 (1)(c) of the Regulations). These considerations were set out in the Post Examination Decision Statement. The Executive Member for Planning and Transport approved the form and content of the Post Examination Decision Statement together with its publication, and the submission of the modified Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan to a local community referendum in his decision on 15 September 2023. The Post Examination Decision Statement was subsequently published on the Council's website and made available to view at Ascot Heath, Whitegrove and Bracknell Libraries, Time Square and Winkfield Parish Council's offices.

Referendum arrangements

- 5.6 As required by paragraph 14(2) of Schedule 4B of the TCPA, the Council duly made arrangements to hold a referendum on the making of the Neighbourhood Plan on Thursday 23 November 2023.
- 5.7 In accordance with paragraph 12(5) of Schedule 4B of the TCPA, the referendum was held on the Neighbourhood Plan which incorporated the agreed modifications set out in the schedule of the Post Examination Decision Statement.
- 5.8 A person was entitled to vote in the referendum if on the prescribed date of the referendum a) the person was entitled to vote in an election of any councillors of a relevant council any of whose area was in the referendum area, and b) the person's qualifying address for the election was in the referendum area.
- 5.9 The referendum area was the amended designated Winkfield Neighbourhood Area. A separate business referendum was not held since the Winkfield Parish Neighbourhood Area was not designated as a business area.

Referendum and result

- 5.10 The referendum was held on Thursday 23 November 2023 between 7am and 10pm. The following question was asked to those entitled to vote in the referendum: "Do you want Bracknell Forest Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Winkfield Parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"
- 5.11 At the referendum a total of 1,245 votes were cast. Of these:
- the number of votes in favour of a 'yes' was 1,097.
 - the number of votes in favour of a 'no' was 142.
 - 6 votes were rejected.
 - the turnout was 10.6 per cent. The official result sheet is set out in Appendix C.

Making of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.12 More than half of those in the Neighbourhood Plan area who voted were in favour of the Council making the Neighbourhood Plan. As set out in Section 38(3A) of the PCPA, the above result means that the Neighbourhood Plan came into legal force as

part of the Development Plan with immediate effect. In this situation, the Council in its role as the Local Planning Authority is under a legal duty to 'make' the neighbourhood development plan (keeping it in legal force), apart from when narrow circumstances apply as outlined in paragraph 4.1 of this report. If made, the neighbourhood development plan continues to form part of the Development Plan and to be used in the determination of planning applications in the designated neighbourhood area.

- 5.13 As outlined in paragraph 4.2 of this report, the Council is satisfied that 'making' the Neighbourhood Plan (keeping it in legal force) would not breach, or otherwise be incompatible with any EU or human rights obligations, and therefore in its capacity as the Local Planning Authority, has a legal duty to 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan. This must be done as soon as reasonably practicable after the referendum is held and in any event, within 8 weeks of the referendum (in accordance with Section 38A(4) of the PCPA). This decision must be taken by the Executive.
- 5.14 Regulation 19(a) of the Regulations and Section 38A(9) of the PCPA require the Council to publish a statement setting out the decision, the reasons for making that decision and the details of where and when the decision statement may be inspected. This Decision Statement is appended to this report (Appendix A) and sets out that the Council does not consider that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights. An initial Equalities Impact Screening Assessment is provided in Appendix B. This indicates that the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to prejudice any particular section of the community.
- 5.15 Regulation 19(b) and Section 38A(10) of the PCPA additionally require the Council to send a copy of the Decision Statement to the qualifying body (Winkfield Parish Council) and any person who asked to be notified of the decision at the Regulation 16 stage.
- 5.16 If the Executive agrees the form and content of the Decision Statement set out in Appendix A, the Decision Statement will be published by the Council on its website, sent to Winkfield Parish Council and hard copies will be made available at Ascot Heath, Whitegrove and Bracknell Libraries, Time Square and at Winkfield Parish Council's offices.
- 5.17 Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made, Regulation 20(a) of the Regulations requires the Council to publish the Neighbourhood Plan and details of where and when the Neighbourhood Plan may be inspected. The Regulations prescribe that it must be on the Council's website and advertised so that it is brought to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Area.
- 5.18 Regulation 20(b) requires the Council to notify any person who asked to be notified of the making of the Neighbourhood Plan that it has been made and where and when it may be inspected at the Regulation 16 stage.

Implementation of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.19 If Executive agrees that the Neighbourhood Plan is made, the Neighbourhood Plan will continue to have full weight and be used, along with other adopted plans that together form the Bracknell Forest Development Plan, in the determination of planning applications relating to land in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Area.

- 5.20 The Neighbourhood Plan will be made on 20 December 2023 (assuming that this decision is not called in) and this will be the date of the Decision Statement set out in Appendix A.
- 5.21 Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will alter the amount of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts that are payable to Winkfield Parish Council. Winkfield Parish Council currently receives a neighbourhood funding element of CIL receipts of 15%.
- 5.22 Winkfield Parish Council will receive 25% of CIL payments received once the Neighbourhood Plan is made as set out in Regulation 59A of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) ("CIL Regulations"). Regulation 59D of the CIL Regulations specifies that the neighbourhood portion of levy receipts must be paid every six months, at the end of October and the end of April unless otherwise agreed.
- 5.23 The neighbourhood funding portion of the levy can be spent on a wider range of things than the rest of the levy, provided that it meets the requirement to 'support the development of the area' (in accordance with Regulation 59C of the CIL Regulations). The wider definition means that the neighbourhood funding portion can be spent on things other than infrastructure, such as affordable housing to address the demands that development places on the area.

Resource implications

- 5.24 As indicated above, this Council, as the local planning authority, has a statutory duty to provide advice and assistance and to carry out certain parts of the neighbourhood planning process, including holding and arranging the referendum. The work of supporting the preparation of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan has been resourced from within existing planning budgets supplemented by grant money from the Government. As stated in paras. 5.21 and 5.22, the CIL receipts received by Winkfield Parish Council will increase from 15% to 25%.
- 5.25 The work of supporting the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has been carried out predominantly by staff within Place, Planning and Regeneration, assisted by other Services, for example, Electoral Services and Legal.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 The recommendation seeks the approval of the Executive to the 'making' of the Neighbourhood Plan –so that it can continue to form part of the Development Plan, pursuant to Section 38A(4) of the PCPA, TCPA and the Decision Statement (set out in Appendix A) to be published pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Regulations.
- 6.2 Consideration has been given to the nature of and the appropriate level at which neighbourhood planning decisions can be made, whilst ensuring the process is fair and transparent.
- 6.3 The Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions as confirmed by the Examiner's report and "Post Examination Decision Statement" referenced at paragraph 4.2 of the report. To date, the Neighbourhood Plan is considered to have satisfactorily completed the necessary legal and procedural steps, as required by the PCPA, TCPA and Regulations.

- 6.4 A neighbourhood development plan comes into legal force with immediate effect if more than half of those voting at a referendum have voted in favour of the neighbourhood development plan. This referendum was held on the 23 November 2023.
- 6.5 Section 38A(4) of the PCPA requires the Council to “make” a neighbourhood development plan (formally decide that it will continue to be in legal force) as soon as reasonably practicable if approved at referendum and, in any event, within 8 weeks of the referendum. The Council is not subject to this if the making of the neighbourhood development plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended)), in which case the neighbourhood development plan would cease to form part of the Development Plan.
- 6.6 Paragraph 5.11 of the report confirms that a positive referendum result was achieved and that at least (50% + 1) of voters were in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan. The report also confirms that the Council is satisfied that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan would not breach, nor would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended)), see paragraph 5.13.
- 6.7 Governance arrangements for the discharge of decisions in relation to facilitating the neighbourhood planning process were approved by the Leader in September 2015 and updated in February 2016. The decision to make a neighbourhood development plan, by bringing it into legal force, is made by the Executive.

Financial Advice

- 6.8 The Council has a statutory duty to facilitate and administer the neighbourhood planning process. Any costs incurred have to be funded. Grant funding has been accessed on completion of earlier stages of the neighbourhood planning process.
- 6.9 So far, the work of supporting the preparation of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan has been carried out predominantly by staff within Place, Planning and Regeneration. However other Services have been involved in dispensing the Council’s statutory responsibilities. In addition, the Examiner has had to be paid. To date the work has been resourced from within existing budgets and these costs should be met within existing budgets.
- 6.10 There are additional financial implications of making the Neighbourhood Plan. The CIL receipts that Winkfield Parish Council receives will increase from 15% to 25%.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.11 An Equalities Impact Assessment screening (see Appendix B) has been undertaken and has found that the policies in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to prejudice any particular section of the community.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.12 There are no strategic risk management issues arising from this report.

Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.13 Some of the planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan include measures that have the potential to reduce emissions, such as protecting community facilities (Policy W6)

and employment (Policy W7) which reduce the need for residents to travel to meet day-to-day needs. Policy W12 encourages the use of more sustainable forms of transport such as cycling and walking. In addition, Policy W8 protects wildlife corridors and supports sustainable drainage, and natural flood management, which will help mitigate the impacts of climate change and provide and protect habitats.

Health and Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.14 Policy measures aimed at protecting community facilities (Policy W6) and encouraging active uses have the potential to encourage the use of more sustainable forms of transport such as cycling and walking which have health benefits (Policy W12). In addition, Policy W11 includes measures to protect local green spaces for the local community, which assist psychological wellbeing and encourage physical activity.

Background Papers

- The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
- The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended)
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
- The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)
- National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
- National Planning Practice Guidance:
<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/neighbourhood-planning/> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy#spending-the-levy>
- Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan, designated Neighbourhood Area, Examiner's report, Post Examination Decision Statement, and Consultation information www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/winkfield-plan
- Bracknell Forest Council decision relating to the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission consultation response: <https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=105842&PlanId=2455&RPID=55533422>
- Bracknell Forest Council decision relating to the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan publication and appointment of examiner: <https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=107876&PlanId=2500&RPID=57554509>
- Bracknell Forest Council decision relating to the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan consultation response and submission to examiner: <https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=109949&Opt=0>
- Bracknell Forest Council decision relating to minor amendments to Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan Designated Neighbourhood Area: <https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=3537>
- Bracknell Forest Council decision relating to Decision Statement and Referendum: <https://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=115790&PlanId=2643&RPID=65339135>

Appendices

- Appendix A: Regulation 19 Decision Statement on the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan
Appendix B: Equalities Impact Assessment Screening
Appendix C: Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan Referendum – Declaration of Results

Contact for further information

Andrew Hunter (Executive Director: Place, Planning & Regeneration)

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Appendix A

Bracknell Forest Council Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2037



Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended)

DECISION STATEMENT MAKING THE WINKFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

This document is the Decision Statement required to be prepared under Section 38A(9) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) (“the 2004 Act”) and Regulation 19(a) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) (“the Regulations”). It sets out the Council’s considerations and formal decision to make the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan following the successful local referendum held on 23 November 2023.

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following the successful local referendum held on 23 November 2023, the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan came into legal force as part of the statutory Development Plan for Bracknell Forest with immediate effect.
- 1.2 On 12 December 2023, Bracknell Forest Council resolved to formally make the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan under Section 38A(4) of the 2004 Act. The Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan therefore continues to form part of the statutory Development Plan for Bracknell Forest.
- 1.3 In accordance with Regulation 19 of the Regulations, this Decision Statement can be viewed on the Council’s website: www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/winkfield-plan. A copy has also been sent to:
 - The qualifying body Winkfield Parish Council
 - The persons who asked to be notified of the decision.
- 1.4 In accordance with Regulation 20 of the Regulations, the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed on the Council’s website: www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/winkfield-plan, and any person who asked to be notified of the making of the Neighbourhood Plan and where and when it may be inspected at the Regulation 16 stage has been notified.
- 1.5 In accordance with Regulations 19 and 20 hard copies of this Decision Statement and the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan can be inspected during opening hours at:
 - Bracknell Forest Council's Offices, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD
 - Winkfield Parish Council, Council Offices, Fernbank Road, North Ascot, SL5 8JW
 - Ascot Heath Library, Fernbank Road, North Ascot, SL5 8LA
 - Bracknell Library, The Avenue, Bracknell, RG12 1BH
 - Whitegrove Library, County Lane, Newell Green, RG42 3JP

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan relates to the amended area that was designated by the Council as a Neighbourhood Area on 14 July 2023.
- 2.2 The Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan was examined by Mr. Andrew Ashcroft. The Council received the Examiner's report on 24 July 2023. The report concluded that subject to making the modifications recommended by the Examiner, the Plan met the basic conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum. The Examiner also recommended that the referendum area was based on the amended Neighbourhood Area that was designated by the Council on 14 July 2023.
- 2.3 The Post Examination Decision Statement (a report that outlines all the Examiner's modifications and confirms the Council's consideration and decision on them) and the decision to submit the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan to a referendum were both agreed by the Executive Member for Planning and Transport on 15 September 2023. The Post Examination Decision Statement was published by the Council on its website and hard copies were made available at the locations listed in paragraph 1.5.
- 2.4 On 23 November 2023, the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan successfully passed referendum with over half of those who voted casting ballots in favour of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan being used to help determine planning applications in the Winkfield Parish Neighbourhood Area. The Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan came into legal force as part of the statutory Bracknell Forest Development Plan with immediate effect.
- 2.5 On 12 December 2023, the Council resolved that the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan (incorporating modifications set out in the Post Examination Decision Statement), be formally made and continue to form part of the statutory Development Plan for Bracknell Forest. It will sit alongside the other adopted Local Plans that together form the Development Plan.
- 2.6 Bracknell Forest Council is continuing to advance the Bracknell Forest Local Plan which will set the strategic context within which the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan will sit.

3.0 DECISION AND REASONS

- 3.1 Section 38A(4)(a) of the 2004 Act requires the Council to make the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the referendum have voted in favour of the Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area. The Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan was endorsed by more than the required threshold in the referendum on 23 November 2023.
- 3.2 Section 38A(6) of the 2004 Act states that the Local Planning Authority is not subject to the duty if it considers that the making of the Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended)). In the report to Executive on 12 December 2023, the Council appended an Initial Equalities Impact Screening Assessment which concluded that that the policies in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan were not considered to prejudice any particular section of the community. The Council issued a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Determination, which confirmed to Winkfield Parish Council that a SEA and a HRA were required. A SEA and HRA were subsequently

published alongside the Pre-Submission and Submission Plan. The Examiner also concluded in his July 2023 report that the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998 (as amended)) and EU obligations. The Council therefore does not consider that the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan (incorporating modifications set out in the Post Examination Decision Statement) is in breach of the relevant legislation.

- 3.3 The Council considers that the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions (set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)), its promotion process was compliant with legal and procedural requirements, it does not breach the legislation (set out in Section 38A(6) of the 2004 Act) and confirms that more than half of those who voted in the referendum on 23 November 2023, voted in favour of making the Plan.
- 3.4 As a result of the Executive resolution on 12 December 2023, Bracknell Forest Council has made the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan, keeping it in legal force in accordance with Section 38A (4) of the 2004 Act. The Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory Development Plan for Bracknell Forest and can be used in decision making on planning applications in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Area. Consequently, decisions on whether or not to grant planning permission in Winkfield Parish will need to be made in accordance with the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Andrew Hunter, Executive Director of Place, Planning and Regeneration – 01344 351907
Email: Andrew.Hunter@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Date: 20 December 2023

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Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening: 7 November 2023	Directorate: Place, Planning and Regeneration	Section: Planning
1. Activity to be assessed	Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan (incorporating modifications)	
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Sarah Slade, Senior Planner	
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Sue Scott Development Plan Team Manager	
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	<p>Winkfield Parish Council has written a Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) for its neighbourhood area with the involvement and help of the local community.</p> <p>The Plan sets out objectives for the future of the area and contains planning policies to guide the development and use of land in Winkfield neighbourhood area.</p> <p>The Plan has been subject to two formal public consultations (under Regulation 14 and Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended)) and has been examined by an Independent Examiner. The Examiner recommended that, subject to the modifications recommended in his report, the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan met all the necessary legal requirements and could proceed to referendum.</p> <p>The Council considered the recommendations in the Examiner's report (and the reasons for them) and published a 'Post Examination Decision Statement' on 27 September 2023. The Council also agreed to submit the Plan to referendum.</p> <p>A local community referendum was held in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Area on 23 November 2023. At this referendum more than half of those who voted did so in favour of making the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan, bringing it into force with immediate effect.</p> <p>The Council is required to choose whether to 'make' the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan (whether to keep it in legal force). If made, the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan will continue to form part of the statutory Bracknell Forest Development Plan and be used in the determination of planning applications relating to land in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Area.</p>	
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	The Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan aims to create benefits for everyone who lives, works, or spends leisure time in Winkfield. The planning policies will be used when determining planning applications relating to land within the neighbourhood area. The Plan will be used by applicants and Council Officers to shape new development in the Winkfield neighbourhood area. Neighbourhood Planning is an initiative that was brought in by the government to help empower local communities.	

Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no		Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? t If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies within the plan that make provision for specific groups of people.
9. Racial equality	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies within the plan that make provisions for specific groups of people.
10. Gender equality	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies within the plan that make provisions for specific groups of people.

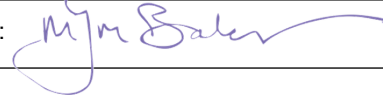
11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies within the plan that make provisions for specific groups of people.
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies within the plan that make provisions for specific groups of people.
13. Age equality	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies within the plan that make provisions for specific groups of people.
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies

				within the plan that make provisions for specific groups of people.
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies within the plan that make provisions for specific groups of people.
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	Neutral impact (see third column).	The policies within the Plan relate to the protection and enhancement of the character of 'character areas' within the neighbourhood area, protection and enhancement of the environment (including biodiversity and Local Green Spaces), support for meeting housing needs (including affordable housing) support of employment uses and community facilities. These policies should have a positive impact on all who live and work within the neighbourhood area, equally. There are no policies within the plan that make provisions for specific groups of people.
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	<p>Overall the Plan aims to improve the social wellbeing, environment and economic prospects of the area The Plan seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide sustainable patterns of growth through Policy W1. • improve the built environment and protect the character of areas through design Policies W2 and W3. • address local housing needs in terms of the mix of dwellings sizes and support for affordable housing (including rural exception sites in Policies W4 and W5. • support the provision of new or expansion of community facilities through Policy W6. • protect provision of employment within the neighbourhood area through Policy W7. • protect the environment in terms of biodiversity and to provide additional habitat resources for wildlife through Policy W8. • protect the local gap between Winkfield Row North and South through Policy W9. • protect green spaces for the community through Policy W11. <p>The Plan therefore should result in a positive impact on the community. In addition, this is a Plan that has been prepared and written by the local community, not Bracknell Forest Council, and as such it reflects local community issues/views and aspirations.</p>			

18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A		
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	No negative impacts have been identified in respect of any of the groups listed in 8 – 16 above.		
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	No
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	The Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan will continue to form part of the statutory Development Plan for Bracknell Forest once 'made'. Information will need to be gathered on the success or otherwise of implementing policies. Winkfield Parish Council may monitor the Plan and determine when a review is necessary.		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	Full assessment not required as no potentially negative impacts have been identified, and the Plan has been produced by and for the local community in Winkfield. Furthermore, the electorate of the Winkfield Plan Neighbourhood Area voted in favour of the Plan at the community referendum.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
'Make' the Plan (bring it into legal force) so that it can continue be used when determining planning applications	20 December 2023	Executive	Executive agree to bring the Plan into legal force (in accordance with Regulation 19).
Monitor the effectiveness or otherwise of planning policies in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan.	Ongoing following making the Plan	Winkfield Parish council	As decisions on planning applications are made using policies in the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan (both delegated, committee and appeals), an understanding of the effectiveness of the policies will be gained.
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Planning		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	Winkfield Parish Council undertook consultation to inform the preparation of the Plan prior to submitting the Plan to the Council. Bracknell Forest Council undertook a statutory 6-week public consultation on the submission version of the Winkfield Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan was subject to a local community referendum to ensure the process was democratic.		

26. Assistant Director/Director signature.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. J. Baker", written over the "Signature:" label.

Date: 08/11/2023

Bracknell Forest Council

Referendum on the adoption of the Winkfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Declaration of result

I, Susan Halliwell, being the Counting Officer at the referendum held on Thursday 23 November 2023, do hereby give notice that the result of the votes cast is as follows:

Votes cast in favour of a 'Yes'	1097
Votes cast in favour of a 'No'	142

The number of ballot papers rejected was as follows:	
a) Does not bear the official mark	
b) Voting for more than one answer	
c) Marked in a way by which the voter can be identified	1
d) Unmarked or void for uncertainty	5
Total rejected ballot papers	6

Electorate: 11,701	Ballot papers issued: 1245	Turnout: 11%
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I do hereby declare that those voting have voted in favour of Bracknell Forest Council using the neighbourhood plan for Winkfield Parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.

Susan Halliwell
Counting Officer
Thursday 23 November 2023

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To: **Executive**
12/12/2023

APPROVAL OF THE PERSONAL BUDGETS POLICY 2023 **Executive Director of People**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the revised Personal Budgets Policy.
- 1.2 Providing a Personal Budget where requested is a duty the council must meet as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2015.
- 1.2 The revisions to the policy include:-

Section 1 (Introduction)

- Updating link in Section 1 to BFC SEND Strategy.
- Amendment from Clinical Commissioning Group to Integrated Care Board.

Section 2 (What is a personal budget?)

- Clarification provided that should parents/carers wish to use some of their own resources to further support the outcomes identified in their child's care plan, this would be for support/services in addition to the funding identified to cover the provision in section F of the EHCP.

Section 4 (What can be included in a personal budget:

- Direction that personal budgets should be considered and reviewed at each annual review.
- Direction that transition to adulthood should be a component for consideration, at every annual review, and should include contributions from education, health, children's and adult social care.
- Updating links to BFC Education Travel Policy and associated advice.
- Clarification that a personal health budget can potentially be spent on a broader range of care and support than would be routinely commissioned by the NHS if it is agreed by the ICB as being appropriate to meet an individual's assessed needs
- Updating link to Frimley ICB's approach to personal health budgets.

Section 12 (Appeal process):

- Updating details provided regarding grounds for appeal and the appropriate commissioner to contact.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 Executive to approve the revised Personal Budgets Policy including the revisions outlined in section 1.2 above.
- 2.2 Revised Personal Budgets Policy to be published and implemented December 2023.

3 Reasons for Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice January 2015:

Local authorities must provide information on Personal Budgets as part of the Local Offer. This should include a policy on Personal Budgets that sets out a description of the services across education, health and social care that currently lend themselves to the use of Personal Budgets, how that funding will be made available, and clear and simple statements of eligibility criteria and the decision-making processes.

- 3.2 Personal Budgets are optional for the child's parent or the young person but local authorities are under a duty to prepare a budget when requested. Local authorities must provide information about organisations that may be able to provide advice and assistance to help parents and young people to make informed decisions about Personal Budgets.
- 3.3 The child's parent or the young person has a right to request a Personal Budget, when the local authority has completed an EHC needs assessment and confirmed that it will prepare an EHC Plan. They may also request a Personal Budget during a statutory review of an existing EHC Plan.
- 3.4 Personal Budgets should reflect the holistic nature of an EHC Plan and can include funding for special educational, health and social care provision. They should be designed to secure the provision and outcomes specified in the EHC Plan.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 As this is a legal requirement alternative options have not been considered.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 A personal budget is an amount of money or resources dedicated to a child, young person or their family/carer in order to deliver the identified outcomes for a child or young person set out in their support plan(s). Personal budgets work best when they are co-produced with children, their families/carers and all partners. The application of this policy is part of the work that supports the vision set out in Bracknell Forest Council's SEND Strategy that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) achieve their full potential at all ages and stages of their childhood and into adulthood.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 Pursuant to Section 49 of The Children and Families Act 2014, young people and parents of children who have an EHC Plan or where the local authority is securing the preparation of an ECH Plan, have the right to request a Personal Budget.

Schedule 2, paragraph 19 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 sets out the requirement to include how to request an EHC needs assessment and the availability of Personal Budgets in the council's local offer.

The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014 and the National Health Service (Direct Payments) Regulations 2013 (as amended) set out the legal framework for direct payments within a Personal Budget.

Schedule 1 of the Care and Support (Direct Payments) Regulations 2014 set out a list of people who may not receive direct payments.

The revised policy addresses the relevant legal issues.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 The Executive Director: Resources is satisfied that it is unlikely that any significant financial implications will arise from this report due to the relative low number of Personal Budgets currently requested and the value for money approach adopted in funding allocations that will be no higher than the cost of direct council provision.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 The Personal Budgets Policy has been revised incorporating feedback from:

- Bracknell Parent Carer Forum
- Assistant Borough Solicitor
- Head Of Learning Disabilities and Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Adult Social Care
- Head of SEND and Specialist Support Services, Education & Learning
- Operational Service Hub Manager
- Finance Hub Manager
- Head of Transformation, Children & Young People, Frimley Integrated Care Board

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 The Personal Budgets Policy aims to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children/young people and their parents/carers in receipt of services, taking into account all factors of ethnicity, gender, religion, language, culture and disability.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 None identified.

Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.6 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 approval of this Policy will not result in any additional travel.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 The Personal Budgets Policy in its entirety sets out how identified health, social care and educational needs can be met via a personal budget where requested, thus positively impacting on the health and wellbeing of children/young people with disabilities and their families/carers.

Background Papers

Personal Budgets Policy **[annex 1]**

Contact for further information:

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Head of Service, Specialist Family Safeguarding
01344 353112
Lou.Richer@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

To: **The Executive**
12 December 2023

Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy Executive Director of People

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To endorse the Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy 2024-2027 and governance arrangements for implementation of the strategy.

2 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy 2024-2027 be endorsed.
- 2.2 That a more detailed Action Plan be compiled which will be subject to review and approval by the Executive Director together with the portfolio holder Cllr Iskandar Jefferies.

3 Reasons for Recommendation(S)

- 3.1 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 is required to be prepared, publicised and implemented:

'In order to prepare and implement a strategy for exercising their functions to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area, the partnership must collectively develop a strategy which should outline the multi-agency response that the partnership will take to address the drivers identified in the strategic needs assessment'.¹

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 No alternative options have been considered for the following reasons:
- The Duty is laid down in law
 - This first Serious Violence Strategy for Bracknell Forest is a commitment to work effectively across organisational and professional boundaries to deliver a truly multi-agency approach. It is vital that relevant services work together, share information and target interventions effectively.
 - Serious violence reduction and prevention is a multi-agency process which is best co-ordinated through a strategy
 - Serious violence has a devastating impact on lives of victims and families, instils fear within communities and is extremely costly to society.

¹ [Serious Violence Duty - Statutory Guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/114222/serious_violence_duty_statutory_guidance.pdf)

5 Supporting Information

Background to the Strategy

- 5.1 In April 2018, the government published its [Serious Violence Strategy](#) in response to increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide across England. Action in the strategy is focused on [4 main themes](#):
- tackling county lines and misuse of drugs
 - early intervention and prevention
 - supporting communities and local partnerships
 - law enforcement and the criminal justice response
- 5.2 The strategy has a call to action to partners from across different sectors to come together in a multi-agency public health approach to tackling and preventing serious violence at a local level.
- 5.3 To help local areas implement a whole system multi-agency approach, the government introduced a range of initiatives including a new [legal duty](#) to support a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence.
- 5.4 The [World Health Organization \(WHO\) 4-step public health approach to reducing violence](#) aims to improve health and safety for people by addressing the risk factors that increase the likelihood that someone will become a victim or a perpetrator of violence. The 4 steps (with the Bracknell Forest response shown in bold) are:
- Surveillance: define the problem through collecting information and data about violence. **(A Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment for Bracknell Forest has been completed).**
 - Identify risk and protective factors: use research to look at the causes of violence, what's linked to it, risk factors for violence and where interventions could be effective. **(These are included in the Serious Violence Strategy).**
 - Develop and evaluate interventions: to find out what works in preventing violence by designing, implementing and evaluating interventions. **(The Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit is leading on this work for all areas in the Thames Valley).**
 - Implement effective interventions: also monitor the effects of these interventions on risk factors and evaluate their impact and cost-effectiveness. **(Bracknell Forest Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a member of the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit and has access to evaluations undertaken. The Serious Violence Strategy also sets out a recommended local approach to responding to and preventing serious violence. There are other local interventions which are suggested under the Strategy's Recommendations).**

Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations of the Strategy can be found on pages 25-32 of the attached Strategy.

Next Steps

1. The Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategic Sub-Group of the CSP will now work within the recommendations contained in the Strategy to develop an action plan which will be the framework for partners to deliver against local ambitions.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 The legal issues are addressed within the report.

Part 2 of the Police, Crime and Sentencing Act 2022 sets out the duties of specified authorities for a local government area to collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence. Section 8(3) of the Act states the specified authorities must:

- (a) identify the kinds of serious violence that occur in the area,
- (b) identify the causes of serious violence in the area, so far as it is possible to do so, and
- (c) prepare and implement a strategy for exercising their functions to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area.

In preparation of the strategy there should be relevant consultation; and once a strategy has been prepared it must be published and kept under review.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 There are no financial implications.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 The CSP and its Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategic Sub-Group have been consulted and are in support of the content and recommendations contained in the Strategy. The Strategy also captures views from the community on serious violence and these can be found in the chapter 'Peoples' Voices'.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 Attached

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 By completing a Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy, Bracknell Forest Council is complying with the duties placed upon it by law.

In addition, without an understanding of our local profile of serious violence as well as a co-ordinated and collaborative approach set out through objective setting and a work plan to monitor progress, prevention and response is reduced.

Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have little or no impact on emissions of CO₂ as meetings will be held on a virtual platform. In the event any in-person meetings occur, we will be taking steps to reduce waste by encouraging members and partners to use public/active travel to get to the venue, minimise printing by promoting the use of digital copies and encouraging the use of sustainable and re-useable refreshment resources.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 The health and wellbeing considerations of serious violence are best summarised as below:

‘Serious violence is a major cause of ill health and poor wellbeing²’.

‘Interventions, especially those in early childhood, not only prevent individuals developing a propensity for violence but also improve educational outcomes, employment prospects and long-term health outcomes. Tackling violence and its root causes can improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities and have wider positive implications for the economy and society³’.

‘From a public health perspective preventing children and young people from becoming perpetrators or victims of violence is a key consideration to avoid escalating levels of harm to both children and wider society⁴’.

Background Papers

Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy Appendix 1

Equalities Impact Assessment Appendix 2

Contact for further information

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01344 352286

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² [Preventing serious violence: summary - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

³ [A whole-system multi-agency approach to serious violence prevention \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁴ [A whole-system multi-agency approach to serious violence prevention \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Bracknell Forest

Serious Violence Strategy

2024 – 2027

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Foreword

Serious violence has a devastating impact on the lives of victims and families, it instils fear within communities and is extremely costly to society. While Bracknell Forest has low levels of serious violence, we need to explore and investigate the risk factors which increase the likelihood of someone becoming an offender or victim and to work in partnership to reduce this risk. As such, prevention needs to be central to our approach.

This first Serious Violence Strategy for Bracknell Forest is a commitment to work effectively across organisational and professional boundaries to deliver a truly multi-agency approach. It is vital that relevant services work together, share information and target interventions effectively.

Through existing partnership structures, we will collaborate and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence within our local communities, all informed by evidence and the voices of people in the community with lived experience.

Serious violence affects us all in one way or another. This could be due to being a victim, an offender, knowing a victim or witnessing the increasing reports of violent incidents through the media.

As a Community Safety Partnership, we will not be complacent on this issue. We have always prioritised serious violence. However, we are now going one step further with an ambitious strategy to keep Bracknell Forest's serious violence levels low.

It is our intention that this strategy will serve to complement and enhance the current activity and the results achieved, whilst supporting professional developments by securing the resources and focus they require to make a positive and effective impact for the residents and communities all the people and communities they serve.

Councillor Iskandar (Kandy) Jefferies

Executive Member: Culture, Delivery and Public Protection

Context

In April 2018, the government published its [Serious Violence Strategy](#) in response to increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide across England. Action in the strategy is focused on [4 main themes](#):

- tackling county lines and misuse of drugs
- early intervention and prevention
- supporting communities and local partnerships
- law enforcement and the criminal justice response

The strategy has a call to action to partners from across different sectors to come together in a multi-agency public health approach to tackling and preventing serious violence at a local level.

To help local areas implement a whole system multi-agency approach, the government introduced a range of initiatives including a new [legal duty](#) to support a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence.

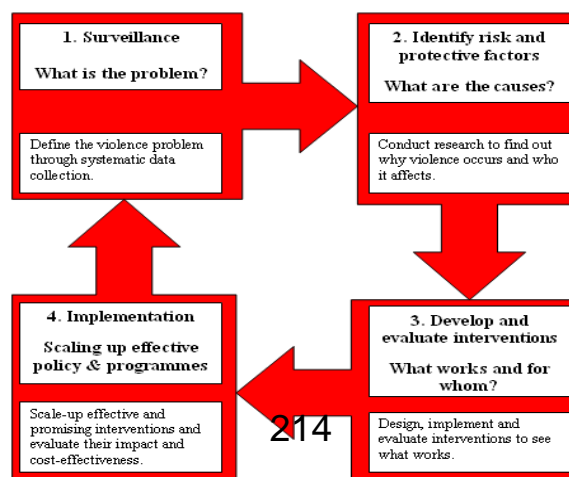
The government's view is that serious violence is a public health issue. This is because living without fear of violence is a fundamental right for health and wellbeing. It is also a public health issue because violence is a major cause of ill health and poor wellbeing and is strongly related to inequalities. The poorest fifth of people have hospital admission rates for violence 5 times higher than those of the most affluent fifth. It affects individuals and communities and is a drain on health services, the criminal justice system, and the wider economy.

Interventions to prevent violence, especially those in early childhood, prevent people developing a propensity for violence. They are usually holistic in nature, meaning that they also improve educational outcomes, employment prospects and long-term health outcomes. Therefore, addressing the issue of violence and its root causes can improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities and have wider positive implications for the economy and society.

The [World Health Organization \(WHO\) 4-step public health approach to reducing violence](#) aims to improve health and safety for people by addressing the risk factors that increase the likelihood that someone will become a victim or a perpetrator of violence.

The 4 steps are:

1. Surveillance: define the problem through collecting information and data about violence.
2. Identify risk and protective factors: use research to look at the causes of violence, what's linked to it, risk factors for violence and where interventions could be effective.
3. Develop and evaluate interventions: to find out what works in preventing violence by designing, implementing and evaluating interventions.
4. Implement effective interventions: also monitor the effects of these interventions on risk factors and evaluate their impact and cost-effectiveness.



Governance and Accountability

The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) will have overall responsibility for compliance with the Serious Violence Duty which includes this Strategy. The Duty requires it to be reviewed at least annually.

The Serious Violence and Exploitation (SVE) Strategic Sub-Group of the CSP will develop and monitor progress with the recommendations in the Strategy. The main mechanism for the delivery of the Strategy will be an action plan comprising SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely) objectives detailing both prevention and response themes. It will be progressed by CSP stakeholders in line with existing services, programmes, arrangements, and resources.

The CSP is overseen by the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Commission which sits as the public Crime and Disorder Committee each year to scrutinise progress against CSP priorities, including serious violence. The CSP also aims to reach out to those with lived experience of serious violence to help shape and steer its approach in the form of consultation, co-design and/or co-production.

The aim of the SVE Strategic Group is to set strategic vision and priorities and to oversee operational groups which are working to prevent and reduce Serious Violence and Exploitation of people of all ages in Bracknell Forest.

The membership of the group comprises representatives from:

BFC Youth Justice
BFC Adult Safeguarding
BFC Exploitation Prevention
BFC Drug and Alcohol Team
BFC Early Help
BFC Community Safety
BFC Housing
BFC Children’s Social Care
BFC Education
Thames Valley Police
Involve (voluntary and community sector)
Integrated Care Board (ICB)
National Probation Service
Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit

Gathering and analysing data will be conducted by the Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Analysis and Insight Team, one role of which is part-funded by Bracknell Forest Council.

The OPCC oversees compliance with the delivery of the Serious Violence Duty, ensures funding is received by the Home Office and is allocated following collaboration with partnerships, including the CSPs, across the Thames Valley.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Risk Factors

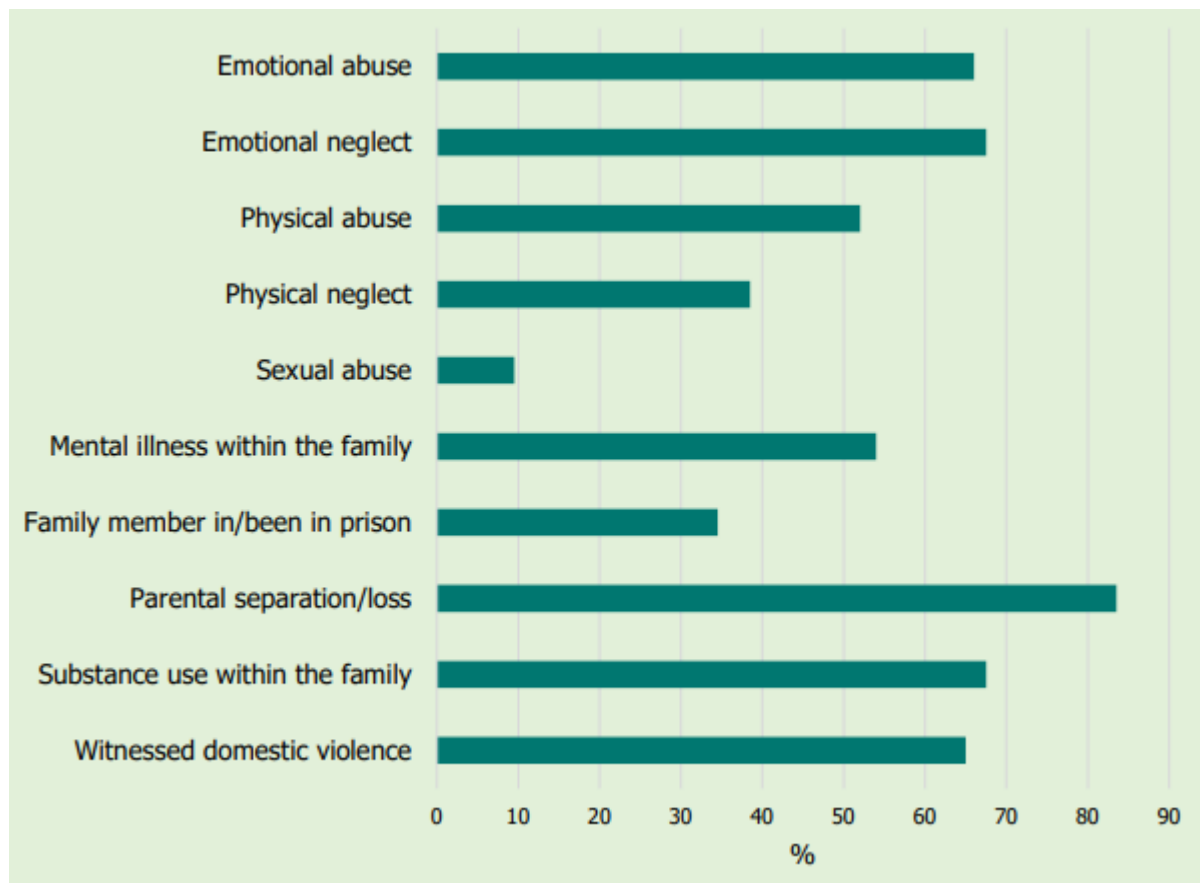
The World Health Organisation's (WHO's) public health approach to violence seeks to identify the common risk factors driving violence and the protective factors preventing violence. It encourages identification of these factors and implementing interventions across all levels: individual, relationship, community and societal, at the same time.

Young People

Much research has taken place on risk factors as a determinant for criminal behaviour and there have also been developments over time as additional research has taken place. Research undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation in 2021, based on 200 people in Manchester, considered adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), serious youth violence, trauma-informed practice, and youth participation¹.

The study found that the ACEs that featured the most in the justice-involved children in the study were:

- Parental separation/loss
- Substance use within the family
- Emotional neglect and abuse
- Witnessing domestic abuse



While not one of the ACEs on the assessment tool used, a number of the workers interviewed felt that poverty and deprivation played a key roles in some of the children's offending behaviour. The relationship between ACE's and socio-economic deprivation has also been noted in other recent research. Growing up in poverty can lead to children feeling rejected by society, and this rejection can elicit feelings of shame and humiliation, which in turn elicit feelings of anger. Anger can then manifest itself as violence. This is looked at further under Summary of Place.

¹ [Academic Insights 2021/13: Serious youth violence and its relationship with adverse childhood experiences \(justiceinspectorates.gov.uk\)](https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/academic-insights/2021/13-serious-youth-violence-and-its-relationship-with-adverse-childhood-experiences/)

A summary of key findings from the same research related specifically to the relationship between serious youth violence and ACEs and is as follows:

- Not everyone who experiences ACEs has a negative outcome. However, ACEs have been found to be strongly associated with a range of 'problematic behaviours' including aggression, violence, and criminal behaviour.
- In line with other research, all of the youth justice workers that were interviewed felt that ACEs have a detrimental impact on the thought processes and emotional wellbeing of the children they work with
- An individual child struggling to handle their emotions might respond to various social interactions or situations that they find themselves in in an angry or aggressive way because they can't recognise what it is that they're feeling.
- This increased tendency to respond to situations through anger and/or aggression appeared to be exacerbated by the domestic violence that many of the children had witnessed and/or experienced as victims.
- Neurodevelopmental research has shown that ACEs can result in children being on constant alert for danger and quick to react to threats via the fight, flight, freeze survival responses, even when there are no threats present.
- A number of workers felt that the need to feel safe was directly linked to children carrying knives or other weapons.
- The workers also talked of ACEs resulting in children seeking out opportunities, or behaving in particular ways, that gained them praise and/or acceptance from their peers. Not only because this might have been largely absent in their home lives, but also as a direct response to the negative feelings and emotions that ACEs can engender.
- Research on belongingness has shown that those who are socially deprived are more easily 'pressured to commit violent acts ... to be accepted by and to demonstrate commitment to the group'.

Older People

When considering risk and protective factors across all ages, most of the research pertains to youths or adolescents up to the age of 25 years with little research focused on older age groups. The 'Victims of Serious Violence in England and Wales, 2011-2017', however, sets out some influential factors for older age groups. It is recognised that some of the risk and protective factors for young people could also be relevant into adulthood:

Age

Those over the age of 25 years are more likely to present at A&E, double that of those aged 11–17 years. This could, however, be due to a higher level of injury caused by serious violence in the older age range. Older people are also more likely to report incidents of serious violence to the Police and view acts such as pushing and shoving very differently to those of the younger age.

Ethnicity

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) found that those of mixed ethnicity had an elevated risk of being a victim of crime overall, but the findings were not conclusive in this regard.

Socio-Economic and Crime-Related Deprivation

Risk of being involved in serious violence is linked to the level of deprivation experienced by the older age groups. If there are high levels of crime in the area where they live, there is an increased risk in becoming

involved in serious violence. The more economic pressure experienced by the adult, the higher the risk of serious violence occurring, especially in relation to domestic abuse.

Place

This is also a factor in this context, in that the more public the space, the more potential witnesses so the less likelihood of serious violence being committed, but in the home, there are very few if no witnesses. The home is also a place where there are more potential weapons to hand increasing the risk again of more serious violence occurring.

Referring back to the research under Young People above, key recommendations were as follows:

1. Quantifying ACEs as a measure of risk should be replaced with high-quality trauma-informed policy and practice to identify the ACEs experienced and the impact on individual children. This knowledge and understanding should then be used to co-develop with children, personalised approaches to address their involvement in serious youth violence.
2. Deliver training around implementing trauma-informed practice in a therapeutic way across the youth justice system including the courts, police and other partners. This training should be provided by qualified professionals and will help embed an awareness of ACEs and trauma-informed practice throughout the justice system and ensure consistency for children at all stages of the involvement in justice.
3. Clinical support around trauma should be readily available to those children who may need it. It should be delivered by qualified professionals based within youth justice services.
4. Children should receive trauma-informed intervention/s at the point of the adverse experience/s. Schools, children's services, and health services should be adequately funded and equipped to embed trauma-informed practice into their services and organisations. If offered at an earlier stage in a child's life, this could potentially reduce the number of children presenting to youth justice services for serious youth violence.

Summary of Place²

The below summary of Bracknell Forest includes a focus on some risk factors where there is evidence of a link between them and serious violence offending or victimisation.

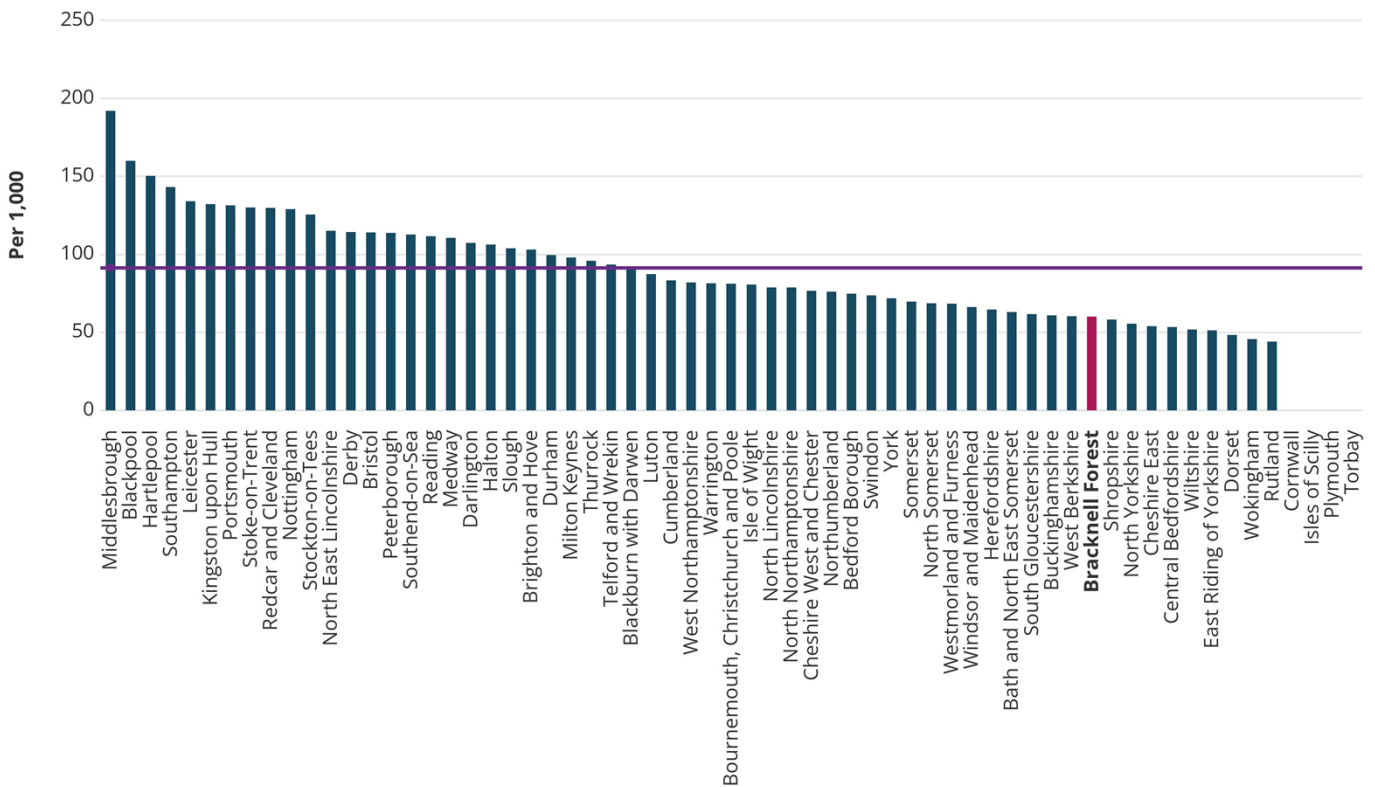
General

Bracknell Forest Local Authority area is determined as the geographic boundary within which this strategy applies.

Bracknell Forest has an overall population of approximately 124,608 which has increased by 10% in the last 10 years.

Crime

On 1 October 2023, total police-recorded offences per 1,000 population placed Bracknell Forest 10th lowest out of the 57 unitary authorities in England, significantly lower than the average. This is shown below:



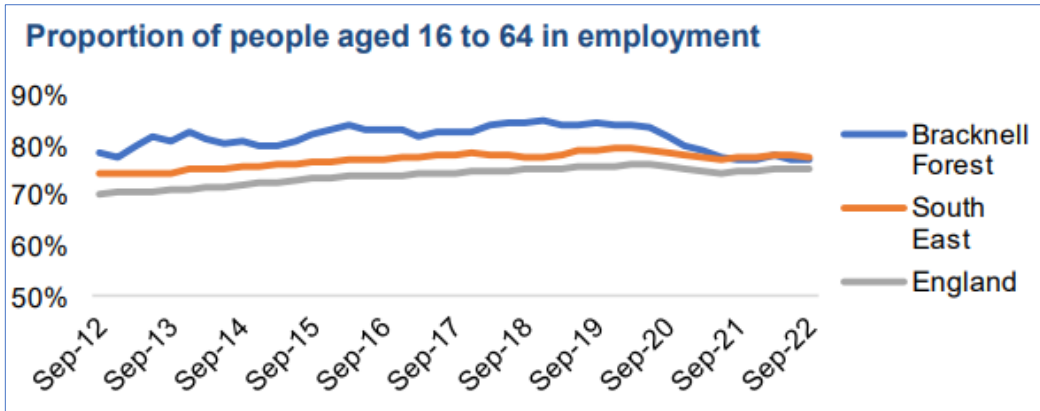
- Total recorded offences (excluding fraud) (per 1,000 population) 2023 Q1 (12 months ending)
- Mean for All English unitary authorities: Total recorded offences (excluding fraud) (per 1,000 population) 2023 Q1 (12 months ending)
- Bracknell Forest (Lead area)

² [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

Employment

Socio-economic factors (the differences between groups of people because of financial reasons³) have been evidenced as being a risk factor for serious violence. Research in 2021 of London boroughs showed that all 10 of the boroughs with the highest rates of victims of serious violence had higher rates of child poverty than the London average⁴.

From October 2021 to September 2022, 77% of Bracknell Forest’s working age population were in employment. The proportion of people aged 16-64 in employment were higher than England figures and similar to those in the South-East:



Over the same time period, 20% of the population were also economically inactive i.e., not in employment or seeking work. The main reasons for this in Bracknell Forest were being a student or retired:

	Bracknell Forest	South East	England
Total	20%	20%	21%
Student	34%	27%	27%
Looking after family/ home	18%	20%	20%
Long-term sick	14%	20%	24%
Other	34%	33%	29%

5

Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers

Research shows that children with care and support needs are vulnerable to perpetration and victimisation of serious violence, often linked to their earlier experiences of trauma, abuse and neglect.⁶

In addition, more than half (51%) of adults who were abused as children experienced domestic abuse in later life.⁷

146 children in Bracknell Forest were in care on 31 March 2021. This was a rate of 51 per 10,000 population and is increasing.⁸

As of August 2023, there were:

- 156 children in the care of the Council (CLA). Of the 156, 38% were aged 16-17 and 37% were aged 10-15.
- 134 children were assessed to be at risk of significant harm.

³ [SOCIOECONOMIC | English meaning - Cambridge Dictionary](#)

⁴ [Mayor reveals driving factors behind violence affecting young people | London City Hall](#)

⁵ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

⁶ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

⁷ [People who were abused as children are more likely to be abused as an adult - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

⁸ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

- 83 were care leavers

Children going missing from home or school is a behaviour that has significance as it could indicate that they are being exploited to supply drugs in other areas or carry out sexual acts.

The number of CLA going missing reduced to 24 in 2022/23. However, the number of missing incidents increased by 34% in this time. There were no missing episodes with a known link to serious violence or child exploitation (sexual or criminal). CLA most often went missing from semi-independent placements with the second highest missing location from residential placements.⁹

Mental Health

While there is no evidenced link between mental health and likelihood to perpetrate serious violence, research does show the impact of serious violence on mental health.

In Bracknell Forest, mental health problems affect around one in four people in any given year. They range from common problems, such as depression and anxiety, to rarer and more severe disorders such as psychosis. 13% of Bracknell Forest's population aged 16 and over are estimated to have a common mental disorder, compared to national (17%) and regional (15%) prevalence rates.

The suicide rate is higher in males in Bracknell Forest whereas self-harm is higher in young females. Overall, the most recent rates of hospital admissions for self-harm in Bracknell in 2020/21 was:

- 292 aged 10-14 years
- 968 aged 15-19 years
- 234 aged 20-24 years

Of all suicides in Bracknell Forest in 2019/21, 82% were male.¹⁰

While the rates of suicides and emergency admissions for intentional self-harm are lower than those of the South-East and England, the rate of hospital admissions because of self-harm for females aged 15-19 is higher than for the South-East and England.

It is noted that an East Berkshire Suicide Prevention Strategic Group has been established to address rates of suicides and the Bracknell Forest Self-harm Workforce Project has also been running with a task and finish group taking forward recommendations.

There are no known links between the causation of the above-described self-harm or suicide levels in Bracknell Forest to serious violence. However, it is important to note that the extent of domestic abuse-related suicide is only now beginning to emerge because of the work of domestic abuse campaigners¹¹. A Home Office and police study of the first year of the pandemic, April 2020-March 2021, detailed 38 domestic abuse-related suicides, a likely underestimate as only those with a reported history of abuse to police were included. The following year, the study was repeated and found that domestic abuse-related suicides had increased by 23 compared to the previous year.

Bracknell Forest is conducting its first Domestic Suicide Review (DSR) this year. New national guidance is also awaited with the aim of holding a launch event across the Thames Valley. The Bracknell Forest Domestic Abuse Executive which is a statutory sub-group of the CSP will lead on this work.

Disabilities

There is a correlation between disability and being a victim of serious crime:

- In the year ending March 2019, disabled women were more than twice as likely to have experienced domestic abuse (17.3%) than non-disabled women (7.0%).
- In the three years ending March 2018, 3.7% of disabled adults aged 16 to 59 years experienced any sexual assault (including attempts), compared with 1.9% of non-disabled adults.

⁹ BFC, 2023

¹⁰ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2021\(3\).pdf](#)

¹¹ [Suicide by domestic violence: call to count the hidden toll of women's lives | Domestic violence | The Guardian](#)

- In the three years ending March 2018, disabled women were almost twice as likely to have experienced any sexual assault in the last year (5.7%) than non-disabled women (3.0%).¹²

In Bracknell Forest, the percentage of the population with a long-term health condition or disability in 2021 was 16,703 which was lower than the South-East and England. 0.3% of Bracknell Forest’s population in 2019/20 had a learning disability. This equates to approximately 374 people across all ages.¹³

Drug and Alcohol Misuse

Links between drug and alcohol use and serious violence are well-evidenced. In 2014, a large-scale research project was undertaken across 9 different countries which found that 48 percent of homicide offenders had alcohol in their systems at the time of their offence while 37 percent were intoxicated. Though not every country provides crime statistics linked to substance use, those countries that do highlight how often drug and alcohol use is linked to violent crimes.¹⁴

Bracknell Forest has low numbers in treatment for both drugs and alcohol when compared to the South-East and England:¹⁵

Adults – 2021/22

	Bracknell Forest	South-East	England
Opiate	108	14,897	140,558
Non-Opiate	83	3,254	29,582
Alcohol only	143	10,447	84,697
Non-Opiate and alcohol	79	4,264	34,378
Total	413	32,862	289,215

Young People – 2021/22

	Bracknell Forest	National
Numbers in treatment	12	12,583

Drug Dealing

The overall demand for drugs continues to increase within the UK¹⁶ and with increasing demand comes increasing dealing or selling. Growth in drug supply has also driven an increase in county drug lines (CDLs) which are often violent and exploitative, with children and other vulnerable people being coerced into becoming ‘runners’ to transport drugs and money around the country.¹⁷

Crest, a research organisation, whose insights are used by government, have undertaken research into the role of drug markets as a driver of serious violence. The data shows a correlation between the growing availability of harmful drugs and the rise in serious violence, including a notable increase in the number of drug-related homicides. At the same time, the profile of those involved has changed: those convicted of class A drugs supply are getting younger¹⁸.

Bracknell Forest has local and out of area drug lines operating within it and multi-partner disruption and eradication is an ongoing priority.

In 2022, the government released a 10-year drugs plan called ‘From Harm to Hope’ which has 3 strategic priorities:

1. Break drug supply chains
2. Deliver a world-class treatment and recovery system
3. Achieve a generational shift in demand for drugs

¹² [Disability and crime, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

¹³ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

¹⁴ [How Are Substance Abuse and Violence Related? | Psychology Today United Kingdom](#)

¹⁵ [NDTMS - Home](#)

¹⁶ [National Strategic Assessment \(NSA\) Campaign 2023 - Drugs - National Crime Agency](#)

¹⁷ [From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁸ [Understanding what is driving serious violence: drugs \(crestadvisory.com\)](#)

To bring together partners to tackle these issues locally, all areas must put in place a Combatting Drugs Partnership. Bracknell Forest is included in the East Berkshire Combatting Drugs Board and a local delivery partnership is in the process of being developed as a sub-group of the CSP.

Therefore, the work of this Strategy will take place in conjunction with the work of the Board which is measured against:

- reducing drug use
- reducing drug related crime
- reducing drug related deaths and harm
- reducing drug supply
- increasing engagement in treatment
- improving recovery outcomes

Youth Justice

The Youth Justice Board publish a Serious Violence Tool which presents data to assist local areas to understand the nature of proven serious youth violence and to benchmark incidents against similar 'statistical neighbours'.

Headlines from the Bracknell Forest Youth Justice Board Serious Violence Toolkit are as follows:

- In the year ending March 2023, there were 4 serious violence offences committed by 4 different children from Bracknell Forest
- In the year ending March 2023, the rate of serious violence per 10,000 children aged 10-17 was 3.1 for Bracknell Forest
- In the year ending March 2023, serious violence offences by children comprised 7% of all youth offences for Bracknell Forest
- The volume of serious youth violence in Bracknell Forest remains consistently low:

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Serious youth violence offences	3	3	0	4
Number of individual children involved	3	3	0	4

Exploitation

The national picture on exploitation by drug lines continues to develop. There are recorded cases of:

- children as young as 12 years old being exploited or moved by gangs to courier drugs out of their local area; 15-16 years is the most common age range.
- both males and females being exploited.
- the use of social media to make initial contact with children and young people.

Exploiters are known to target vulnerable children and adults who may have the following vulnerabilities:

- prior experience of neglect, physical and/or sexual abuse
- lack of a safe/stable home environment
- social isolation or social difficulties
- economic vulnerability
- homelessness or insecure accommodation status
- connections with other people involved in gangs
- having a physical or learning disability
- having mental health or substance misuse issues
- being in care (particularly those in residential care and those with interrupted care histories)

- being excluded from mainstream education, in particular attending a Pupil Referral Unit¹⁹

In Bracknell Forest, evidence from missing children data in 2022/23 showed that the post-covid trend of a decreasing correlation between missing episodes and exploitation in Bracknell Forest continues. Missing episodes recorded as being linked to ‘suspected sexual exploitation’ decreased by 84% (13 down to 2).

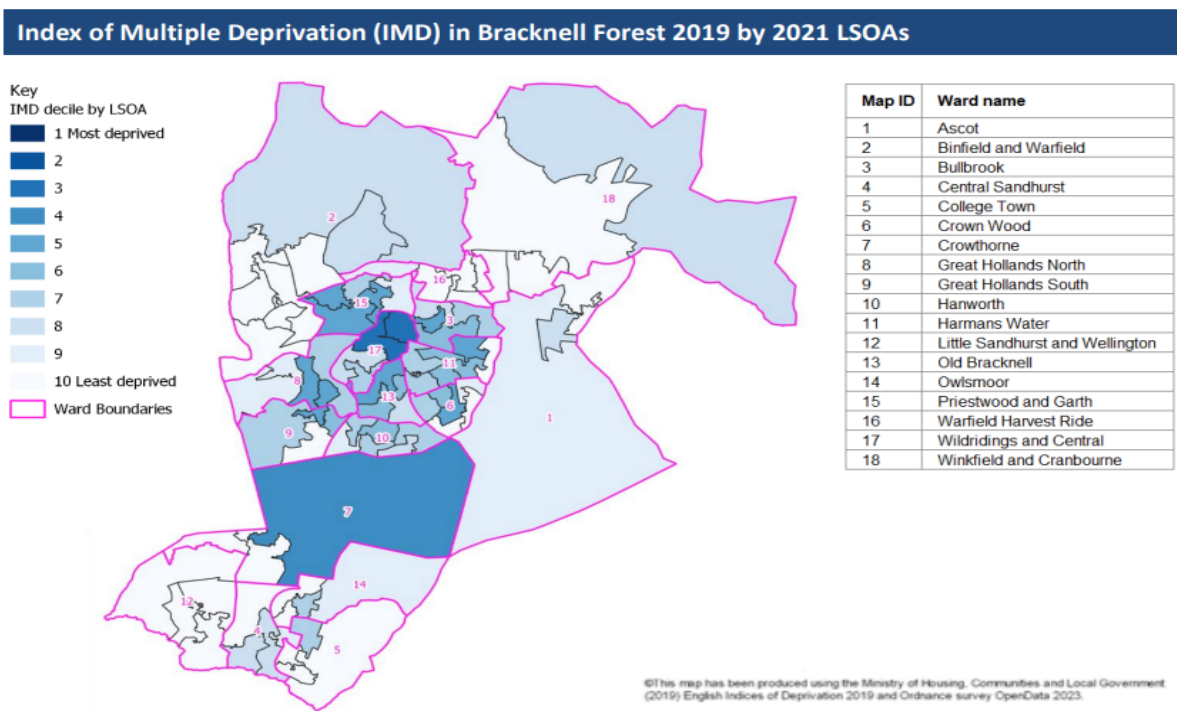
CDL activity in Bracknell Forest involving children has reduced significantly over the past five years and, more broadly, criminal gangs are aware that the use of vulnerable children involved with services and periods of missing can bring attention to their activities. Together, this indicates that missing episodes may no longer be as strong an indicator of grooming/exploitation (i.e., exploitation may be happening without missing episodes).

BFC has an Exploitation Prevention Team which works to prevent exploitation in children and safeguard them from risk.

Deprivation

Deprivation includes a wide range of factors including income, employment, health, education, housing, services, and crime. A recent 2019 study into the causes of violent crime in London found that the proportion of children under 20 living in poverty was the main factor correlated with levels of youth violent crime in London Boroughs.²⁰

Bracknell Forest is in the least deprived 10% of local authorities in England and more than a third of the neighbourhoods are also in the 10% least deprived nationally. Although none of the neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived areas in England, there are areas of higher deprivation within Wildridings and Central, Crowthorne and Great Hollands North. There is a 2.3-year difference in life expectancy between girls born in the least deprived and most deprived areas of Bracknell Forest and 6.1 difference in boys. The gap in healthy life expectancy is greater at 7.8 years for girls and 10 years in boy.²¹



10.7% (2,700) of Bracknell Forest’s children aged under 16 lived in relative low-income families in 2020/21. This is lower than the South-East and England.²²

¹⁹ [Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/criminal-exploitation-of-children-and-vulnerable-adults-county-lines)

²⁰ [Poverty is the Main ‘Cause’ of Youth Violent Crime in London.....](#)

²¹ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023](#) 224

²² [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

Homelessness

Due to the inherently chaotic nature of many homeless people's lives, they are more likely than most to be victims (and perpetrators) of crime²³.

In 2021/22, 599 households in Bracknell Forest were identified as eligible for support (prevention or relief duty) under the Homeless Reduction Act. This is a rate of 11.8 per 1,000 households which is higher than the South-East but the same as England.²⁴

The Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment that was undertaken highlighted 38 suspects that did not have a location associated to them, with 23 of those showing as being out of the Thames Valley. The remaining 15 were checked with only 1 having no address information. The Local Police Area confirmed that there are no current links with serious violence perpetration and homelessness in Bracknell Forest.

School Exclusions

There is convincing evidence linking deprivation and vulnerability to knife crime, alongside links between school exclusion and knife crime and serious violence.²⁵ Barnardo's, a children's charity, states that excluded schoolchildren are at serious risk of becoming involved in knife crime and are also at risk of being groomed and exploited by criminal gangs.

Permanent exclusion rates from schools in Bracknell Forest in 2021/22 were 12th lowest out of the 13 local authorities in the Thames Valley and 5th lowest out of 15 for suspensions. Suspensions and exclusions are overseen by BFC's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and Inclusion Team and the Education Welfare Service.

²³ [Homelessness and Violence \(svru.co.uk\)](https://svru.co.uk)

²⁴ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2022\(3\).pdf](#)

²⁵ [Youth violence – RCPCH – State of Child Health](#)

Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA)

Definitions

This strategy is informed by the SNA which reviewed Police data from January 2018 to end of December 2022 and was completed by the Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Analysis and Insight Team. In a joint effort between Thames Valley's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) and the OPCC in consultation with Community Safety Partnerships across the Thames Valley, a working definition of serious violence was agreed as follows:

“Serious Violence includes specific types of recorded crime, such as homicide, grievous bodily harm, incidents that involve a knife, and areas of criminality where serious violence or its threat is inherent, such as in county lines drug dealing.”

To further develop this definition and define what should be included in the monitoring and analysis of serious violence, 2 groups were formed:

Group 1

Crime in this category forms the core measurement of serious violence in Thames Valley. These are recorded offences that the CSP aims to have a direct impact on and see reductions. These will be monitored for performance and submission to the Home Office under the Serious Violence Duty.

- All homicide
- All grievous bodily harm (GBH)
- All knife crime (as collected for Home Office Annual Data Requirement 160)
- Inclusive of all ages, location types (public/private) and domestic flags

Group 2

There was widespread agreement that Sexual Offences should not be discounted in what we deem to be important, regardless of whether it was the original intention of the Home Office Strategy into serious violence or not. Therefore, Group 2 crimes are recorded offences which contribute to the threat, inhere and understanding of Group 1 offences. Group 2 offences would be analysed to understand the relationship between crime type, the people involved (offenders and victims) and the context of the incident (where and when it took place). Analysis may result in future inclusion into Group 1 (if there is an internal or externally triggered review of the serious violence definition). These would not be included in Home Office reporting but would be monitored for partnership sharing. These crimes can increase because of improved awareness, reporting, recording, trust, and other external factors. It is, therefore, not always appropriate to assume that Reduction = Good

- All Actual Bodily Harm (excluding 'other' Violence with Injury) (ABH)
- All Drug Supply/Trafficking (excluding 'possession' alone)
- All Sexual Assault (excluding sexual activity and 'other' Sexual Offences)
- All Rape

Findings

Group 1 Analysis²⁶:

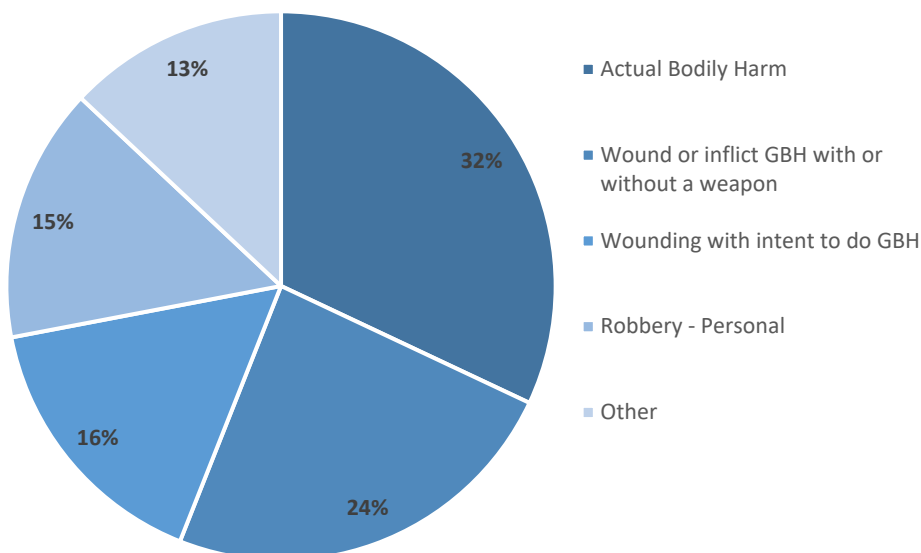
In 2022, Bracknell Forest was ranked 7th highest in this group of offences out of the 13 local authorities in the Thames Valley,²⁷ two places higher in rank than 2021. Group 1 serious violence in Bracknell Forest has a downward trend, based on Police data from 2018-2022. However, it is noted that knife crime for 2022 is on an upward trend when compared with 2021. Group 1 serious violence had 33 repeat offenders.

²⁶ Excludes occurrences reported more than 365 days after the date of the incident.

²⁷ Rank is based on number of occurrences per 1,000 of population.

In Group 1, 57.4% of crimes were classified as knife crime, with 42.3% GBH, and 0.3% homicide. It is noted that 24% of all crimes were flagged as having a domestic abuse flag, all of which were either knife crime or GBH. On review of the person data related to domestic abuse, 1 young person under the age of 18 has been included as a victim in 1 occurrence. There are 4 victims that are repeat victims and none of the recorded repeat victims are under the age of 18. The highest level of crime recorded was classified under ABH 32%, and the second highest crime recorded being wound or inflict GBH with or without a weapon 24%. Wounding with intent to do GBH constituted 16% and robbery personal accounted for 15% of offences. Other crime classifications make up the final 13% of the Group 1 data.

Offences by Category



GBH Summary:

- 2022 had the lowest total number of GBH reports in a year for the last 5 years in Bracknell Forest.
- 28% of occurrences were recorded to have taken place on a Saturday, 37% in the early hours of the morning (midnight-02:59) and 26% between 19:00 and midnight. Most GBH is recorded to have occurred between 19:00 and 01:59 with 58% of reported GBH in Group 1 serious violence.
- 88% of suspects for GBH are recorded as male.
- 29% of recorded suspects for GBH are males aged 18-24.
- 13% of recorded suspects for GB are under 18.
- 18-21 is the peak age band for both male and female suspects and victims of GBH.
- 28% of GBH victims were recorded as female.
- 77% of recorded suspects for GBH offences are reported to be from Bracknell Forest.
- 40% have their offender/victim relationship unknown, 20% are an acquaintance, and 19% strangers.

Knife Crime Summary:

- 23:00 pm and 16:00 are the most common times of recorded offences with Fridays and Mondays being the most common days of the week.
- 81% of recorded suspects for recorded knife crime are male.
- 22% of recorded suspects for knife crimes are males under the age of 18, with the high point being in the age band 15-17.
- 18–27-year-olds account for 27% of recorded suspects.
- The 18-21 age group is the high point for female suspects.

- Younger suspects (under 18) are more likely to commit ABH and robbery offences whereas suspects aged 18 and over 74% are suspects of ABH occurrences.
- 80% of recorded suspects are reported to be from Bracknell Forest.
- 21% of victims are under 18.
- There are a greater proportion of female victims (30%) than there are female offenders (18%) in knife crime.
- 'Acquaintance' and 'Stranger' are the most common recorded relationship groups.

Group 2 Summary:

- Over the last 5 years, Bracknell has been ranked mid-table for rate of Group 2 serious violence occurrences per 1,000 of population, with a rank of 6th out of the 13 local authority areas for 2022.
- Group 2 occurrences are on an upward trend over the time period.
- Excluding Broadmoor data, multiple hotspots were identified in central Bracknell.
- ABH accounts for 77% with sexual assault 10%, rape 7% and drug supply 6%. ABH and sexual assault have increased whereas rape and drug supply have both decreased.
- Saturday was the most reported day of the week with most reported times being 15:00 and 16:00 and 23:00.
- Most reported age of victim and suspect was 11-17.
- 79% of suspects were male and 58% of victims were female.
- Acquaintance and Stranger are the next most common relationship groups after 'Blank'.

Other Data:

- The rates of hospital admissions for violence in Bracknell Forest are lower than those reported in the South-East and England. There were 100 admissions from 2018/19 to 2020/21.
- Street Safe is a service on the Police.uk website that allows people to report safety concerns in public spaces anonymously. From 8th August 2022 – 9th August 2023, 14 separate reports were made, the highest of which was 'Other Forms of Harassment', 'Signs of Drug and Alcohol Use' and 'Absence of CCTV'. The reports were made by 7 males and 7 females.

Peoples' Voices

As much as data can provide evidence, and a level of understanding to prevalence of violent behaviour, the voices of those at risk is crucial to a fuller understanding. It is noted that, while feedback from young people has been captured on becoming involved in serious violence and feedback from adults on being victims of serious violence, there is no implication that young people are offenders and that adults are victims.

Young People

Violence in the Thames Valley: Young people's perspectives on what causes and prevents it (January 2023)

A qualitative study was conducted on violence in the Thames Valley area²⁸ which involved 50 young people aged 11-18 years and 25 youth practitioners. There were three key lines of enquiry:

1. What might cause a young person to get involved in violent behaviour?
2. What might prevent a young person getting involved in violent behaviour?
3. What role do places play in keeping young people away from violent behaviour?

A summary of insights is set out below:

1. 'What might cause a young person to get involved in violent behaviour?'

Four main insights were identified:

A sense of belonging, the need to be understood and to be someone. The research suggests that if young people feel excluded, unwelcome, misunderstood, and isolated from various environments or contexts such as home, school, public spaces, and have very few constructive activities, there is a risk of getting involved in negative behaviours including searching out criminal groups/gangs where they gain a sense of belonging.

Fear. This was observed to be a key factor, especially amongst those who were known to carry knives or act violently. The fear of violence shapes the way young people behave, even when the level of fear felt wasn't always directly proportionate to the level of violence, they had personally experienced.

"I never feel safe, there's always something. Even when walking the dog, I've always got to look behind me. It's a natural instinct to look behind you 24/7" (Young person - Bracknell)

To obtain money. This was also shown to be a motivating factor to either earn money for them and their families, if they were living in deprivation, or wanting to show status. The attraction to earn large sums of money fast, as opposed to low-paid, low-skilled employment is a key factor, a risk of which, may be involvement in violent behaviour, even when that is not the young person's intention. Some young people in this situation will sometimes show strong yet unharnessed entrepreneurial talents.

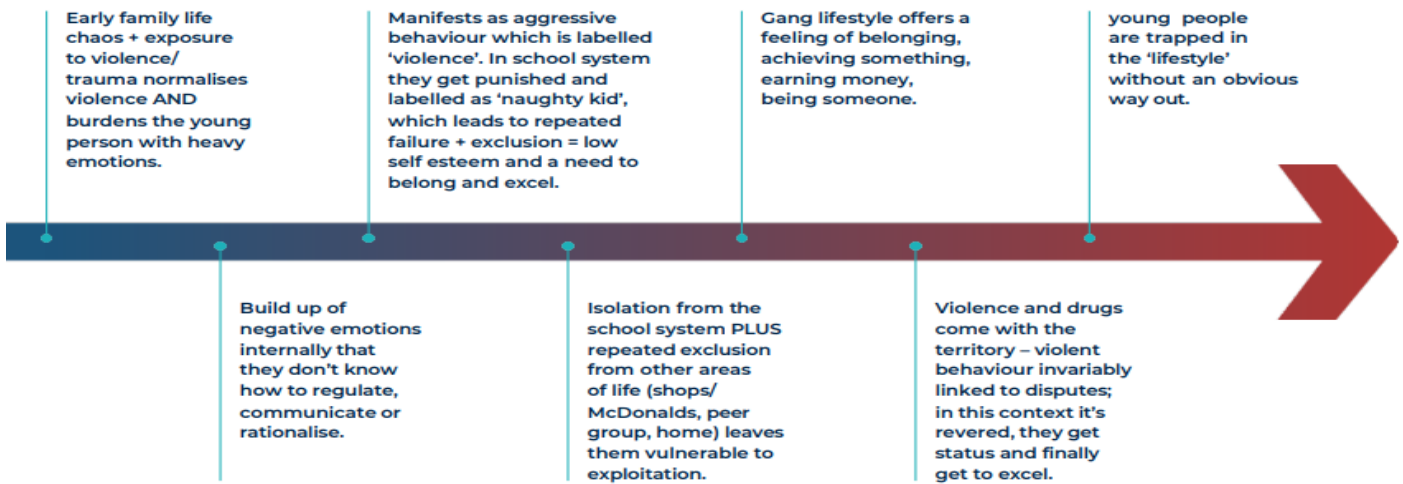
"If your parents can't afford to put food on your table that's a struggle no one wants to feel that. I don't want to see my mum crying cos she can't feed me. So that's going to make me go and do something, it's not cos I'm a bad person. Your intentions are good but bad things come with it. These people are coming from low-income houses, they're trying to make their life a bit easier. Their mentality is to go to the street and make some fast money not knowing the consequences come with violence – knives and all that." (Young person – Milton Keynes)

Selling and taking drugs. From the young people's perspective, selling and taking drugs go hand in hand with violence, quoting it as it is something that 'comes with the territory'.

"Even if were not smoking those drugs they're still brought up by those people, kids get taught to carry knives, drugs, they're brought up like that" (Young Person - Bracknell)

From the practitioner points of view, drugs were not seen as being central to serious violence, rather a consequence of the bigger picture linked to a young person's background, instability, boredom, and the need to earn money.

Overall, young people and practitioners have similar views on the reasoning and causes of violent behaviour with practitioners taking a broader socio-ecological view. There appears to be a sequencing of events that can lead to the potential for violent behaviour as depicted in the diagram below.²⁹



2. 'What might prevent a young person getting involved in violent behaviour?'

Four main insights were identified:

A physical space that they feel they belong to. A common theme is having a space where a young person feels safe and accepted, a place where they can be themselves, a place where they feel they won't come to any harm or be removed from. For many young people who have less stable home lives, the importance of access to a safe space becomes ever more important, as does having someone they trust, who makes them feel heard, understood, supported, and listened to.

Someone they can trust who understands both them and their circumstances. This relates to being able to access an understanding adult, who young people can talk safely to about their lifestyle and ask questions of without judgment.

A chance to learn and achieve something. Many of the young people expressed desires to have access to opportunities to learn and develop skills in a fun, non-school, non-judgmental environment. They reasoned that they needed an alternative to the allure of the 'easy' money they can earn 'on road'. Many young people who were not excelling at school also stated the need to engage in something that they were good at and which they could channel their energies into. This would boost their sense of self-value and self-esteem.

Prevention starts with staying calm. With regards to staying calm, young people showed a level of understanding that violent behaviour was often linked to poor communication skills and limited ability to self-regulate. Young people spoken to appeared to strongly want to find an alternative way of dealing with emotions and a better way of communicating.

"For someone like me – The times I've been violent have never been to do with beef shit or road shit, it's more that I've had a meltdown or breakdown, something where you're really scrambled, you don't know what's going on or what you're doing" (Young Person - Didcot)

"There are other ways of communicating, you might hate that one person but that doesn't mean you have to do something bad to them. It's communication – there are other ways out of an argument." (Young Person - Bracknell)

²⁹ [New research with young people on their experiences and perceptions of violence - Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit \(tvvru.co.uk\)](http://www.tvvru.co.uk)

3. 'What role do places play in keeping young people away from violent behaviour?'

Young people responded that they liked a friendly and safe environment, with something to do, a place to go and hang out with friends. A place where they didn't feel judged and have opportunities to learn and try new things. A place where they felt heard and understood.

BFC Youth Review Consultation – July 2023

Further evidence and views have been collected through a Youth Review Survey which included questions on serious violence.

There were 64 respondents to the survey consisting of 38 young people's practitioners, 10 parent/carers, 9 young people³⁰, 5 elected members and 2 members of the public.

A summary of findings is as follows:

1. **Have you been a victim of serious violence as described?**

None declared themselves victims of serious violence.

2. **If so, did you know how to report it?**

Of the 12 responses, 1 knew how to report it.

3. **Who did you report it to?**

Of the 6 responses, 1 reported to police 1 to a teacher, 1 to social care and 3 to 'other'.

4. **Did you know that you can report serious violence without having to give your name or by speaking to anyone?**

Of the 33 that reported, 20 knew that confidential reporting was possible.

5. **Have you seen serious violence as described where you live/go to school/work/in parks?**

Of the 38 responses, 8 said that they had, 27 said no and 3 weren't sure.

6. **Have you heard of places where there is sometimes serious violence where you feel it's risky to go to? If so, can you tell us where?**

18 people responded highlighting mainly parks and underpasses.

(Parks at night/Town Centre/Some parks in the community/Birch Hill and South Hill Park/Underpasses around Bracknell Forest/Underpass down London Road on the way to the College/Lots of underpass issues in Bracknell Forest/Underpasses in Great Hollands/Morgan Rec (Crowthorne)/Great Hollands shops/Harmanswater/Harmanswater and Great Hollands/Subways/Peel Centre in the evening/Inner cities/Underpasses in Bracknell Forest at night/It can happen anywhere/Slough)

7. **Why do people get involved in serious violence?**

28 responses were received. Themes comprised Money, Fear, Parenting, Boredom, Belonging, Mental Health, Neurodiversity.

Actual answers included:

Toxic social media/Lack of positive role-models/Lack of positive parenting with firm and secure boundaries/Lack of access to education/Low self-worth/Financial incentives/Mental health difficulties/Boredom/Gang-related revenge/Drugs and County Lines/Domestic Violence/relationships of control and dominance/Because some people are just terrible/Pent-up frustration at lack of opportunities/Ego/status/Peer approval/Criminal exploitation/Gangs/Fear/Cultural expectation/Own experience of it (repeating behaviour)/Not knowing how to escape it/Music that encourages it/Poverty/Trauma/Breakdown of school place/Lack of trained staff in school to deal with trauma/behaviour/neurodiversity/Feeling of control and power/Sense of belonging/Safer to be part of a gang

8. What can be done to stop people getting involved in serious violence?

31 responses were received. Themes included: Awareness, Activities, Safe Space, Trusted Adults.

Actual answers included:

Education in schools about serious violence/Opportunities within the community/Engaged parents/Funding for youth work, education and mental health support/Better presence of police/community workers/youth workers in the community/Youth outreach/Early intervention and prevention/Education incorporating practical skills (as opposed to academic)/More trained staff in schools/Building positive relationships/Positive role models/Offering safe places with support 7 days per week/Supported employment)

Considering both surveys, there is a clear correlation and consistency between the results.

Older People

There is limited evidence of voices from adults on serious violence. As Group 1 includes serious violence with a domestic abuse flag, we have included a link to the victim/survivor voice feedback which was collected in 2021 and which contributed to the Safe Accommodation Strategy.

What victims want and need

To feel safe and to have fast, effective, action	Victims need the council to find and secure safe accommodation as quickly as possible, usually local and furnished, with help to address an inability to pay a first months' rental or deposit or lack of references, and a dedicated point of contact to support them.
A single point of contact	Victims need to feel that approaching the council is as safe as approaching the police or a refuge, for help and support in finding a safe home and to have a single point of contact who can 'hand-hold' them through the process and signpost appropriately; victims shouldn't have to tell their story again and again
Acknowledgement and building trust	All victims want to feel heard and acknowledged, especially if they do not 'fit' the perceived type, e.g., male victims, LGBT+ victims, elderly victims, those with learning difficulties or physical disabilities or mental health issues.
Front-line staff to be trained in domestic abuse	Victims approaching the council or other organisations would like staff to be aware of and understand all of the different forms of domestic abuse, as well as domestic violence.
Suitable/appropriate accommodation	When considering placing in accommodation, need to consider location, cost of private rent and bills, or cost of refuge, furnishings, safety features and risks of remaining in the home. Victims would like more options to stay locally, including furnished accommodation.
A holistic approach to support	Victims want a 'holistic approach' to support that considers a wide variety of needs, including an early offer of counselling/therapy, specialist support tailored to specific groups, financial help if no furniture, clothes, money, and more access to programmes –

	Choices, BRAVE, DART
Better signposting	Victims want improved online information that covers all cohort types and effective signposting to local VCS organisations, commissioned services and inhouse services.

The above have been built into the Safe Accommodation Strategy priorities which are monitored by the Domestic Abuse Executive of the CSP. To avoid duplication, they are not discussed further in this strategy.

Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)

The Thames Valley VRU was established in 2019, funded by the Home Office to deliver upon the government's Serious Violence Strategy. It is one of 20 VRUs set up across England and Wales whose core function is to provide leadership and strategic co-ordination of the local response to serious violence.

It is a partnership body which brings together representation from policing, local authority community safety, children's services and social care, prisons and probation, education, youth offending and the voluntary and community sector.

The vision of the Thames Valley VRU is to reduce serious violence in our communities, especially where it affects young people in public places.

Together with its partners, the VRU has agreed the following underpinning principles:

- We will embed public health approaches to tackling serious violence and its root causes
- We will be data-led and use evidence-based practices and interventions, with a commitment to sharing our learning
- We will embed trauma-informed practices and approaches

A summary of key projects which are available to Bracknell Forest are as follows:

Thames Valley Together (TVT)

The Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) is currently developing TVT which is a cloud-based environment where specified authorities in the Thames Valley region can share relevant information to facilitate a public health approach. This approach identifies the causes of serious violence and develops targeted products designed to tackle them. A key characteristic of a public health approach is its population-level coverage. This means that a project or intervention aims to encompass and address the entire population, rather than targeting only specific groups. In the TVT context, population-level coverage is defined as including everyone who comes to the attention of a TVT partner e.g., police, local authority, health service, fire service, due to the indication of a serious violence risk factor(s). This approach recognises that focusing solely on people already associated with serious violence would be insufficient for effective intervention and prevention. By adopting a population-level strategy, the goal is to increase the chances of early identification and support, acknowledging that addressing underlying risk factors before people become victims or offenders is crucial in reducing serious violence.

TVT is also seen as the means by which partnerships can meet their obligations for whole-system data sharing approaches which identify and address the risk and protective factors which drive violence, as required by the Serious Violence Duty.

It is noted that Bracknell Forest Council's participation in TVT is in development.

Operation Paramount³¹

The Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit and Thames Valley Police have begun a new process to identify children of a parent who is sent to prison, allowing a prompt offer of support for the whole family by the charity [Children Heard and Seen](#).

By analysing data from the prison service, Operation Paramount has created a new means of recognising those families who may need additional support, helping to tackle risk factors of young people being drawn into future crime or experiencing other problems.

³¹ [Operation Paramount: Innovative scheme offers rapid support to children with a parent in prison - Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit \(tvvru.co.uk\)](#)

First piloted in October 2021, Operation Paramount is live in Oxfordshire, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire and West Berkshire and the VRU are exploring roll out across the whole Thames Valley region by the end of 2023/24.

Hospital Navigator Scheme³²

The Thames Valley are seeing a trend with an increase of patients presenting at Emergency Departments (ED) or walk-in centres due to incidents of serious violence. The main factors for this are violence within the under 25's demographic or domestic abuse-related violence.

When in hospital, there is a reachable moment when the patient can be reflective and open to intervention. A volunteer in a dedicated Navigator role would ask for consent to refer the patient onto a third sector organisation who can provide the specialist support. This moment could help divert the patient back out into the community on a different pathway.

Hospital Navigators are available to victims of serious violence who present at the Royal Berkshire Hospital in Reading and Wexham Park Hospital in Slough.

Custody Coaches

This intervention comprises mentoring of 18–24-year-olds in custody for non-domestic violence offences with the possibility to expand to 25+ years old in the future. This programme would be available across the Thames Valley if the trial is successful.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Conclusions have been drawn from the above chapters and set out below together with next steps. As tackling serious violence involves 2 themes of responding to current serious violence and as well as preventing serious violence in the future, conclusions and recommendations are separated below:

Theme 1: Response		
Conclusion 1	<p>Group 1 (Homicide, GBH and Knife Crime)</p> <p>There is a downward trend over the 5 years in Bracknell Forest.</p> <p>Bracknell Forest was 7th highest out of the 13 local authorities in the Thames Valley in 2022. This was 2 places higher than 2021 and 1 place higher than 2020. This was based on occurrences per 1,000 population.</p> <p>Bracknell Forest has the lowest count when compared with its near neighbours in the Thames Valley in 2022 but is ranked 4th highest out of 7 per 1,000 population (West Berkshire/Windsor & Maidenhead/Milton Keynes/Wokingham/Reading/Buckinghamshire).</p> <p>57% were knife crime.</p> <p>24% had a domestic abuse flag and were all knife crime or GBH.</p> <p>The most frequent location is Broadmoor Hospital and then Central Bracknell in the vicinity of the train station, bus station and the Market Inn.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Please refer to GBH and knife crime next steps below.</p>
Conclusion 2	<p>GBH</p> <p>2022 had the lowest total number of GBH reports for the last 5 years.</p> <p>28% were on a Saturday.</p> <p>58% occurred between 19:00 and 01:59.</p> <p>88% of suspects were male.</p> <p>28% of victims were female.</p> <p>29% of recorded suspects were males aged 18-24.</p> <p>13% of recorded suspects for GBH are under 18.</p> <p>18-21 is the peak age band for both male and female suspects and victims.</p> <p>77% of suspects were from Bracknell Forest.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>With specific reference to occurrences on Saturday nights between 19:00 and 02:00 with male suspects who are under 18 and aged 18-21 who are Unknown:</p> <p>Undertake further analysis to better understand these offences so that appropriate interventions can be identified</p> <p>Understand repeat locations more fully and respond accordingly</p> <p>Identify repeat perpetrators and repeat victims and ensure that they are referred into the appropriate operational groups</p>

	40% of suspects were unknown, 20% were an acquaintance, and 19% strangers.	
Conclusion 3	<p>Knife Crime</p> <p>This is on a downward trend over the 5 years.</p> <p>When looking at the last 2 complete calendar years (2021 and 2022), there is an upward trend</p> <p>23:00 and 16:00 are the most common times.</p> <p>Fridays and Mondays are the most common days.</p> <p>81% of suspects were male.</p> <p>22% of suspects were males under the age of 18, with the high point being in the age band 15-17 (23 suspects)</p> <p>18–27-year-olds accounted for 27% of suspects.</p> <p>The 18-21 age group in female suspects reports highest.</p> <p>Younger suspects (under 18) are more likely to commit ABH and robbery offences whereas suspects aged 18 and over, 74% are suspects of ABH occurrences.</p> <p>80% of suspects were from Bracknell Forest.</p> <p>Victims are under 18, 21% of the time.</p> <p>There are a greater proportion of female victims (30%) than there are female offenders (18%).</p> <p>‘Acquaintance’ and ‘Stranger’ were the most common relationship groups (after ‘blank’)</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>With specific reference to occurrences on Mondays and Fridays at 16:00 and 23:00 with male suspects who are under 18 and aged 18-27 who are Acquaintances or Strangers:</p> <p>Undertake further analysis to better understand these offences so that appropriate interventions can be identified</p> <p>Understand repeat locations more fully and respond accordingly</p> <p>Identify repeat perpetrators and repeat victims and ensure that they are referred into the appropriate operational groups as appropriate</p>
Conclusion 4	<p>Group 2 (ABH, Drug Supply and Trafficking, Sexual Assault and Rape)</p> <p>There is an upward trend over the 5 years in Bracknell Forest.</p> <p>Bracknell Forest is ranked at 6th highest out of 13 local authority areas for 2022. This was 2 places higher than 2021 and the same for 2020. This was based on occurrences per 1,000 population.</p> <p>Bracknell Forest has the 2nd lowest count when compared with its near neighbours in the Thames Valley in 2022 but is ranked 3rd highest out of 7 per 1,000 population (West Berkshire/Windsor & Maidenhead/Milton Keynes/Wokingham/Reading/Buckinghamshire).</p> <p>77% were ABH.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>With specific reference to ABH occurrences on Saturdays at 15:00-16:00 and 23:00 with male suspects who are under 18 who are Acquaintances or Strangers:</p> <p>Undertake further analysis to better understand these offences so that appropriate interventions can be identified</p> <p>Understand repeat locations more fully and respond accordingly</p> <p>Identify repeat perpetrators and repeat victims and ensure that they are referred into the</p>

	<p>ABH and sexual assault have increased whereas rape and drug supply have both decreased.</p> <p>The most frequent location is Broadmoor Hospital and then Central Bracknell, Old Bracknell Ward, and Great Hollands.</p> <p>Saturday was the most reported day of the week with most reported times being 15:00 – 16:00 and 23:00.</p> <p>Most reported age of victim and suspect was 11-17.</p> <p>79% of suspects were male and 58% of victims were female.</p> <p>Acquaintance and Stranger are the next most common relationship groups after 'Blank'.</p>	<p>appropriate operational groups as appropriate</p>
Conclusion 5	<p>Hospital Admissions</p> <p>The Thames Valley is seeing a trend with an increase of patients presenting at Emergency Departments (ED) or walk-in centres due to incidents of serious violence. This is mainly due to violence within the under 25's demographic or domestic abuse related violence.</p> <p>The rates of hospital admissions for violence in Bracknell were lower than those reported in the South-East and England. There were 100 admissions from 2018/19 to 2020/21.</p> <p>A Hospital Navigator Scheme is in place at Royal Berkshire Hospital and Wexham Park Hospital where some victims of Bracknell Forest may present.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Work with the OPCC to obtain hospital serious violence data for Bracknell Forest to better understand who is presenting as well as the context so that a response is evidence-based.</p> <p>Link in with the hospital navigator scheme at Royal Berkshire Hospital to understand who is presenting as well as the context so that a response is evidence-based.</p>
Conclusion 6	<p>Street Safety³³</p> <p>There were 14 reports to police.uk in the year from 8 August 2022 to 9 August 2023 by an equal number of males and females (7 each). The main reason was 'Other Forms of Harassment', 'Signs of Drug and Alcohol Use' and 'Absence of CCTV'.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Raise awareness of this pathway to reporting with residents.</p> <p>Obtain this data routinely.</p> <p>Identify locations.</p> <p>Conduct visual audits of repeat locations and identify remedies.</p> <p>Share public awareness on how to stay safe in a public place.</p> <p>Refer complaints of drug/alcohol littering to BFC.</p>

³³ Street Safe is a service on the Police.uk website that allows people to report safety concerns in public spaces anonymously.

Theme 2: Prevention		
Conclusion 1	<p>ACE Research</p> <p>Trauma-informed practice training delivered by qualified professionals to agencies beyond youth justice</p> <p>Child support should be provided at the point of trauma. (This needs to be considered alongside the results of the SNA which showed that 24% of Group 1 serious violence had a domestic abuse flag).</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Investigate funding options.</p> <p>Undertake a scoping exercise of professionals to receive potential training.</p> <p>Research an appropriate provider.</p> <p>Undertake an exercise to explore provision of support to children who witness domestic abuse.</p>
Conclusion 2	<p>Mental Health</p> <p>13% of Bracknell Forest's population aged 16 and over are estimated to have a common mental disorder, compared to national (17%) and regional (15%) prevalence rates.</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Ensure that Domestic Suicide Reviews (DSRs) are routinely identified and considered where there is a suspected or known link to serious violence which is domestic-related. This work will be led by the Domestic Abuse Executive sub-group of the CSP.</p>
Conclusion 3	<p>Disabilities</p> <p>The percentage of the population with a long-term health condition or disability in 2021 was 16,703 which was lower than the South-East and England. 0.3% of Bracknell Forest's population in 2019/20 had a learning disability. This equates to approximately 374 people across all ages.³⁴</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Raise awareness of reporting routes and support available for people with long-term health issues and disabilities as well as their support networks.</p>
Conclusion 4	<p>Deprivation</p> <p>Bracknell Forest is in the least deprived 10% of local authorities in England and more than a third of the neighbourhoods are also in the 10% least deprived nationally. Although none of the neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived areas in England, there are areas of higher deprivation within Wildridings and Central, Crowthorne and Great Hollands North.</p> <p>10.7% (2,700) of Bracknell Forest's children aged under 16 lived in relative low-income families in 2020/21. This is lower than the South-East and England.³⁵</p>	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Develop a counter-narrative for young people so that they are less likely to turn to dangerous and harmful behaviours to earn money. Community and school support, particularly in the locations identified, as well as activities and opportunities should be explored as part of this.</p>

³⁴ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

³⁵ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

Conclusion 5	Peoples' Voices	Next Steps
	<p>Younger people commit serious violence because of money, belonging, fear, parenting, mental health and neurodiversity.</p> <p>Having a safe physical space, having trusted people to talk to, developing their communication skills to resolve conflict, awareness of serious violence and having opportunities to learn and achieve were the main ways to prevent them committing serious violence.</p> <p>The above feedback ties in with known Risk and Protective Factors.</p> <p>Locations that were of concern were parks and underpasses.</p>	<p>Recognise and identify risk and protective factors in young people and promote preventative approaches that mitigate against violence.</p> <p>Work with the community to identify alternative pathways to employment, including training and apprenticeships.</p> <p>Ensure that all agencies working with children and young people are aware of all available opportunities by creating an online resource of community assets that can be shared.</p> <p>Continue the multi-agency operational group which specifically addresses ASB in Parks and Open Spaces due to ASB being a risk factor to serious violence offending.</p> <p>Use the findings of the evaluation of the Safer Street project that ran in Bracknell Forest which comprised youth outreach, diversionary activities and creation of safe spaces for young people to gather safely to explore what young people are saying they would find most useful and enjoyable.</p>

Recommendations

The conclusions and next steps above demonstrate that there are clear areas which need focus and development. These have been separated into 2 distinct themes: 'Response' and 'Prevention'. While both themes are linked, the Response theme focuses on current serious violence whereas the Prevention theme considers what we can put in place now to prevent future serious violence. The recommendations depicted below also fit with the WHO 4 step public health approach to reducing violence, referred to under Context.

Theme 1: Response

	Category	Action	Lead/Group
1.1	Locations	Identify and problem-solve repeat locations of serious violence from Police data as well as the Streetsafe Reporting Tool	Partnership Problem-Solving Groups Anti-Social Behaviour in Parks and Open Spaces Group
1.2	People	Support and manage people who are identified as being most at risk of being victims or perpetrators of serious violence	Missing and Child Exploitation (MACE) Group Serious Adult Violence and Exploitation Group

Theme 2: Prevention

	Category	Action	Lead/Group
2.1	Information and Intelligence	Undertake additional analysis to better understand the offences that occurred on most common days, at most common times with most prevalent age groups and genders as highlighted under Conclusions 2, 3 and 4.	Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (TV OPCC) Analyst
		Improve data collection in police-reported Bracknell Forest offences so that there are fewer blank fields, and that victims and suspects are better understood.	Thames Valley Police
		Obtain hospital serious violence data for Bracknell Forest residents who present with injuries	Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
		Obtain hospital serious violence data for Bracknell Forest residents who are supported by hospital navigators at Royal Berkshire Hospital	Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System (ICS).
		Explore participation in the Thames Valley VRU's Thames Valley Together programme	Bracknell Forest Council

2.2	Awareness, Learning and Support	<p><u>Professionals</u></p> <p>Explore trauma-informed practice training for professionals.</p> <p>Develop an online resource of community and organisational support that is available to victims and perpetrators of serious violence as well as professionals.</p> <p><u>Victims and Perpetrators</u></p> <p>Undertake an exercise to explore provision of support to children as victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Use the findings of the Safer Streets 4 evaluation to understand feedback from young people on youth support, facilities and activities that they would find most useful and enjoyable.</p> <p>Conduct regular publicity campaigns that are accessible to all residents to share support, reporting pathways, how to report unsafe locations through the Streetsafe Reporting Tool and where to get additional help.</p> <p>Explore interventions in schools, particularly those with pupils who live in highest areas of deprivation to support them to choose alternative pathways to employment, including training and apprenticeships as well as other routes that are not likely to cause them to turn to dangerous and harmful behaviours to earn money.</p> <p>Explore and share interventions and support with young people that address the reasons that were provided in the consultation on why people commit serious violence (money, fear, parenting, mental health, neurodiversity)</p> <p>Explore provision of safe spaces where young people can meet where there are trusted adults and where they can take part in activities that help with self-esteem and skill development.</p> <p>Explore community-level factors such as social networks, social capital and empowerment that can offer a protective alternative to serious violence and provide a sense of belonging.</p>	<p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p> <p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Executive Group</p> <p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p> <p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p> <p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p> <p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p> <p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p> <p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p>
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Note: The above recommendations are underpinned by the below:

- 1 Serious Violence perpetration, victimisation and support links in with a number of related programmes of work in Bracknell Forest which will to complement each other. These are:

Bracknell Forest Youth Justice
Bracknell Forest Domestic Abuse
East Berkshire Combatting Drugs Board
East Berkshire Suicide Prevention
- 2 The voices of residents, particularly those with lived experience, will continue to be involved in steering the work of this Strategy.
- 3 Bracknell Forest should consider adopting and embedding positively evaluated programmes and interventions developed by the TV VRU where possible.

Action Plan

Theme 1: Response

	Category	Action	Progress Indicator	Lead	Deadline
1.1	Locations	Identify and problem-solve repeat locations of serious violence from Police data as well as the Streetsafe Reporting Tool by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertaking additional analysis to identify serious violence hotspots - Refer into the Partnership Problem-Solving Group or Anti-Social Behaviour in Parks and Open Spaces Group 	Completed analysis showing hotspot detail Number of locations referred into the problem-solving groups and resolved	Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Analyst Partnership Problem-Solving Groups Anti-Social Behaviour in Parks and Open Spaces Group	31 July 2024
1.2	People	Support and manage people who are identified as repeat offenders and/or victims of serious violence by: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertaking additional analysis to identify repeat victims and repeat perpetrators at risk of serious violence - Refer into the MACE Group if under 18 and SAVE Group if over 18 	Completed analysis showing repeats offenders and/or victim detail Number of people referred into the multi-agency safeguarding/management groups	Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Analyst Missing and Child Exploitation (MACE) Group Serious Adult Violence and Exploitation (SAVE) Group	31 July 2024

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Theme 2: Prevention

	Category	Action	Progress Indicator	Lead	Deadline
2.1	Information and Intelligence	Undertake additional analysis to better understand the offences that occurred on most common days, at most common times with most prevalent age groups and genders as highlighted under Conclusions 2, 3 and 4.	A clear summary of the data that indicates who, where and when most of the serious violence incidents occurred over the data period. This data would then, where appropriate, feed into	Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Analyst	1 July 2024
		Improve data collection in police-reported Bracknell Forest offences so that there are fewer blank fields, and that victims and suspects are better understood.	A reduction in blank fields recorded in police data, especially in the 'ethnicity' and 'relationship' fields.	Thames Valley Police	1 April 2024
		Obtain hospital serious violence data for Bracknell Forest residents who present with injuries	Comprehensive detailed data of hospital admissions of Bracknell Forest residents for	Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC)	1 July 2024

			serious violence to enable trends to be identified and responses designed.		
		Obtain hospital serious violence data for Bracknell Forest residents who are supported by hospital navigators at Royal Berkshire Hospital	Comprehensive detailed data of hospital admissions of Bracknell Forest residents for serious violence to enable trends to be identified and responses designed.	Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System (ICS)	1 March 2024
		Explore participation in the Thames Valley VRU's Thames Valley Together programme by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that the information sharing is compliant with data sharing legislation - Agreeing to the Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)'s Information-Sharing Agreement 	Bracknell Forest is a participating organisation in Thames Valley Together.	Bracknell Forest Council	1 April 2024
2.2	Awareness, Learning and Support 245	<u>Professionals</u> Explore trauma-informed practice training for professionals so that trauma symptoms and behavioural problems among trauma survivors are decreased, and empathy and a sense of safety is increased.	Number of professionals trained in trauma-informed practice.	Serious Violence and Exploitation Group Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit (VRU)	1 April 2024
		Develop an online resource of community and organisational support that is available to victims and perpetrators of serious violence as well as professionals.	A comprehensive directory of support and interventions available for victims, perpetrators and professionals that can be shared for self or agency referral.	Serious Violence and Exploitation Group	1 June 2024
		<u>Victims and Perpetrators</u> Undertake an exercise to explore provision of support to children as victims of domestic abuse. This needs to consider all-age appropriate support which considers children with protected characteristics.	An accessible pathway for therapeutic support is available for all children who witness domestic abuse including those who have a protected characteristic.	Domestic Abuse Executive Group	1 April 2024
		Use the findings of the Safer Streets 4 evaluation to understand feedback from young people on youth support, facilities and activities that they would find most useful and enjoyable.	Regular feedback and views from young people in our community to help steer our approach to serious violence prevention and response.	Serious Violence and Exploitation Group	Ongoing

<p>Conduct regular publicity campaigns that are accessible to all residents to share support, reporting pathways, how to report unsafe locations through the Streetsafe Reporting Tool and where to get additional help.</p>	<p>Increased public awareness on how the community can contribute to safeguarding those who are vulnerable to serious violence victimisation and exploitation and report any concerns that they become aware of.</p>	<p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group DA Executive Group</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Explore interventions in schools, particularly those with pupils who live in highest areas of deprivation to support them to choose alternative pathways to employment, including training and apprenticeships as well as other routes that are not likely to cause them to turn to dangerous and harmful behaviours to earn money.</p>	<p>Identified interventions and schools to receive an appropriate intervention. A delivered program with positive evaluations.</p>	<p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p>	<p>1 October 2024</p>
<p>Explore and share interventions and support with young people that address the reasons that were provided in the consultation on why people commit serious violence (money, fear, parenting, mental health, neurodiversity)</p>	<p>A collection of opportunities that young people can access which support them to explore alternative pathways away from serious violence.</p>	<p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p>	<p>1 October 2024</p>
<p>Explore provision of safe spaces where young people can meet where there are trusted adults and where they can take part in activities that help with self-esteem and skill development.</p>	<p>A collection of safe spaces that are available for young people to access with supportive adults and where positive activities are on offer.</p>	<p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p>	<p>1 October 2024</p>
<p>Explore community-level factors such as social networks, social capital and empowerment that can offer a protective alternative to serious violence and provide a sense of belonging.</p>	<p>A collection of networks, community guardianship and peer support that is available for young people who may be at risk of becoming involved in serious violence.</p>	<p>Serious Violence and Exploitation Group</p>	<p>1 October 2024</p>

Definitions and Glossary

Actual Bodily Harm (ABH): Bodily harm has its ordinary meaning and includes any hurt calculated to interfere with the health or comfort of the victim: such hurt need not be permanent but must be more than transient and trifling.

Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH): The words "grievous bodily harm" bear their ordinary meaning of "really serious" harm.³⁶

Knife Crime: Knife crime data includes occurrences where a knife was used or there was a knife present and it was being threatened to be used for example (Thames Valley OPCC).

ACEs – Adverse Childhood Experiences

BFC – Bracknell Forest Council

CDL – County Drug Line

CREST – Children at Risk of Exploitation Safeguarding Task Group

CSP – Community Safety Partnership

DA – Domestic Abuse

ICB - Integrated Care Board

ICS – Integrated Care System

JSNA – Joint Strategic Assessment

MACE – Missing and Child Exploitation

OPCC – Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

SMART - Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely

TV – Thames Valley

TVP – Thames Valley Police

TV OPCC – Thames Valley Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

PCC – Police and Crime Commissioner

SVE – Serious Violence and Exploitation

VRU – Violence Reduction Unit

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Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening:	Directorate: People	Section: Community Safety: Early Help and Communities
1. Activity to be assessed	Serious Violence Strategy	
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Alison O'Meara	
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Alison O'Meara and the Community Safety Partnership who will have responsibility for the Strategy	
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	<p>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 is required to be prepared, publicised and implemented:</p> <p>'In order to prepare and implement a strategy for exercising their functions to prevent and reduce serious violence in the area, the partnership must collectively develop a strategy which should outline the multi-agency response that the partnership will take to address the drivers identified in the strategic needs assessment'.</p> <p>This first Serious Violence Strategy for Bracknell Forest is a commitment to work effectively across organisational and professional boundaries to deliver a truly multi-agency approach. It is vital that relevant services work together, share information and target interventions effectively.</p>	
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	<p>Victims of serious violence</p> <p>Perpetrators of serious violence</p> <p>Wider community</p> <p>Children who experience Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) which research shows can lead to a risk that they will become involved in violence.</p>	

Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no		Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	What evidence do you have to support this? E.g., equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact.	<p>According to the World Bank and WHO, 15% of the world’s population has a disability and these individuals are frequently reported to be at increased risk of violence. Adults and children with disabilities are at a higher risk of violence than non-disabled adults and children, and those with mental illnesses could be particularly vulnerable.¹</p> <p>Research by Victim Support (VS) reveals that people with a limiting disability or illness are almost three and a half times more likely to suffer serious violence.²</p>
9. Racial equality	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact.	<p>Risk factors are understood to be variables which can usefully predict an increased likelihood of violent crime, drug use, gang involvement, property offences and antisocial behaviour. The extensive body of data and analysis suggests very little if any relationship between ethnic category and involvement in these categories of crime.³</p> <p>In contrast to the Serious Violence Strategy, where the evidence of a relationship between ethnicity and violence was at best mixed, the Home Office report of 2019 found no association between ethnicity and serious violence related behaviours (for example, carrying of weapons)⁴</p> <p>‘Men from Mixed ethnic backgrounds (21%) were more likely to be victims of crime than men from any other</p>

¹ [Disability and violence | Source \(asksources.info\)](#)

² [VS research finds people with disability at increased risk of violence - Victim Support](#)

³ [Understanding ethnic disparities in involvement in crime – a limited scope rapid evidence review, by Professor Clifford Stott et al - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

⁴ [Understanding ethnic disparities in involvement in crime – a limited scope rapid evidence review, by Professor Clifford Stott et al - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

				ethnic group for the 3 years from April 2017 to March 2020'. ⁵
10. Gender equality	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact.	Women are considerably more likely to experience repeated and severe forms of abuse, including sexual violence. They are also more likely to have experienced sustained physical, psychological, or emotional abuse, or violence which results in injury or death. ⁶
11. Sexual orientation equality	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact	Two-thirds (64%) of LGBTQ+ people had experienced anti-LGBTQ+ violence or abuse. Of these, 9 in 10 (92%) had experienced verbal abuse, 3 in 10 (29%) had experienced physical violence and 2 in 10 (17%) had experienced sexual violence. ⁷
12. Gender re-assignment	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact	Recorded hate crimes against transgender people in England and Wales rose 11% to 4,732 offences in the last year, according to Home Office figures. ⁸
13. Age equality	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact	In the UK, young people aged 20-24 are more than three times as likely than those aged 10-14 to suffer injury by sharp object. ⁹
14. Religion and belief equality	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact	Religious hate crimes fell by five per cent (to 6,822 offences), down from a peak of 7,203 in the previous year. This was the first fall in religious hate crimes since year ending March 2013. ¹⁰
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact	Pregnancy may increase the risk of violence ¹¹

⁵ [Victims of crime - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/ethnicity-facts-figures)

⁶ [Domestic abuse is a gendered crime - Women's Aid \(womensaid.org.uk\)](https://www.womensaid.org.uk)

⁷ [LGBTQ+ facts and figures | Stonewall](#)

⁸ [Trans hate crime rises 11% in past year in England and Wales - BBC News](#)

⁹ [Youth violence – RCPCH – State of Child Health](#)

¹⁰ [Hate crime, England and Wales, 2019 to 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

¹¹ [Domestic violence and pregnancy | The BMJ](#)

				Pregnancy can be a trigger for domestic abuse, and existing abuse may get worse during pregnancy or after giving birth. ¹²
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	<u>Y</u>	N	Positive impact	Single adults were more likely to have experienced sexual assault in the last year than those who were married, widowed, separated, divorced or cohabiting ¹³ .
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	<p><u>Impact of those who are most deprived:</u></p> <p>A recent 2019 study into the causes of violent crime in London found that the proportion of children under 20 living in poverty was the main factor correlated with levels of youth violent crime in London Boroughs.¹⁴</p> <p>The new figures show that three-quarters of the boroughs in London with the highest levels of violent offending are also in the top 10 most deprived, while the same boroughs also have higher proportions of children under 20 living in poverty than the London average.¹⁵</p> <p>Bracknell Forest is in the least deprived 10% of local authorities in England and more than a third of the neighbourhoods are also in the 10% least deprived nationally. Although none of the neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived areas in England, there are areas of higher deprivation within Wildridings and Central, Crowthorne and Great Hollands North.¹⁶</p>			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	The impact of the strategy is beneficial for all of the equality groups above.			

¹² [Domestic abuse in pregnancy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

¹³ [Sexual offences victim characteristics, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](http://ons.gov.uk)

¹⁴ [Poverty is the Main 'Cause' of Youth Violent Crime in London.....](#)

¹⁵ [Revealed: full links between poverty and violent crime in London | London City Hall](#)

¹⁶ [Bracknell-Forest-People-and-Place-Summary-February-2023 \(3\).pdf](#)

20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N	See above.	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	The local profile of serious violence will develop as more partner data is included into the strategic needs assessment which is required as part of the Duty. Resident feedback which will also be repeated will help the CSP understand the impact of the work plan.			
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N	This strategy will not have a negative impact on any people with protected characteristics.	
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data?				
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria	
As we monitor progress against delivering the Strategy, any emerging impacts will be considered, and we will take appropriate action to mitigate any negative impacts.	Ongoing – bi-monthly monitoring	BF Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategic Sub-Group of the Community Safety Partnership	As identified.	
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Statutory Partnership: Community Safety Partnership Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategic Sub-Group			
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	To identify emerging equality issues, the following are identified as important to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of SNA incorporating a wider set of partner data • Review of resident feedback on what would help reduce serious violence involvement • Linking in with the East Berkshire Combatting Drugs Partnership and Strategy • Quarterly review of serious violence action plan 			
26. Assistant Director/Director signature.	Signature:		Date:	

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To: **Executive**
12 December 2023

Community Support: Winter Update
Assistant Director: Chief Executive's Office/Deputy Director: Public Health

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To set out the recent and upcoming support available to the community related to financial hardship and the continued recovery from the pandemic including addressing population health outcomes and inequalities. This includes the extended support over the forthcoming winter period and future activity during 2024.
- 1.2 To agree the spend of the ring-fenced time limited community outbreak management fund (COMF) to support local communities that have had the greatest negative impact from COVID 19 pandemic.
- 1.3 To recommend changes to the council's financial hardship action plan to respond to current cost-of-living pressures that have emerged since inception of the plan.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 To endorse the updated financial hardship action plan (appendix A).
- 2.2 To agree the COMF spending plan (appendix B).

3 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 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. Support throughout this period has been facilitated in large part by one off government grant funding and the development of a financial hardship action plan. Since 2022, there has been a consistent period of high inflation on items such as domestic fuel and food. This emphasises a need to review the plan content for continued relevance, particularly ensuring the priorities are appropriate for the upcoming winter period.
- 3.2 More broadly, there also continues to be a lasting impact from the pandemic on health and wellbeing for communities across the borough. Local research was conducted exploring the impact of COVID during 2023, which has supported the identification of key areas of focus. The council seeks to identify opportunities to support community development and resilience. Specific funding has been identified from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) to support programmes that address these challenges these are set out in appendix B.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 The review of community support process has considered a range of issues related to the pandemic and the cost-of-living. As part of the process of developing these recommendations, some issues were out of the scope of the action plan or grant funding conditions as this is a ring-fenced time limited grant provided by the Office of Health Improvement and Disparities OHID. Some elements of health and hardship are also outside of the influence of the council and are therefore not recommended for inclusion in the updated hardship action plan or COMF funded activities in appendix C.

5 Supporting Information

Community support over the last 12 months

- 5.1 During the first 12 months of the financial hardship plan, there has been significant progress made in the support available to residents. Appendix C provides an overview of some of the recent highlights. This activity has partly been enabled through the Household Support Fund, provided by the DWP to local authorities. This funding was extended until April 2024 meaning the council has been able to distribute over £900,000 of financial support since the start of the action plan. The funding has largely been used towards the provision of vouchers in the school holidays for families receiving free school meals. Support worth over £225,000 was given to Bracknell Forest pupils in the 2023 Summer holidays. Alongside this, the council supported an additional 1,627 households with grants and referrals for essential living costs during the 2022-2023 financial year. A further £105,000 to date has been provided to local charities to further extend their support to low-income families. The DWP has not yet confirmed any further funding post-April 2024.
- 5.2 Expansion of the welfare team (funded by one-off, temporary funding) enabled the council to proactively seek to improve the incomes of households. Utilising LIFT data software, households have been identified and contacted who may not be receiving welfare payments that they are eligible for. One campaign contacted 191 pension age households, through which, £113,879 in additional income was unlocked for these households. Other campaigns have resulted in improved uptake of benefits such as council tax support, and free TV licences. These initiatives focus on building resilience in our communities, and assisting residents to remain independent, preventing the need for more direct council support.
- 5.3 To date, 18 of the 45 actions in the action plan have been completed, with a further 21 in progress/ongoing and due to be completed by the end of the plan period. These actions have resulted in a greater level of support and resilience in the borough through activities such as the development of a comprehensive website for cost-of-living support. Wider benefits include the development of Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector forum to encourage greater levels of joint working. Of the actions not yet started, these are primarily linked to the employment theme, this work has been more challenging than original anticipated partly linked to the dependence on partnerships such as with the DWP and the limited direct influence the council has in this area.

Community research on impact of COVID 19 on population health

- 5.4 Research was conducted in February and March including a telephone survey of over 1,800 Bracknell Forest residents, 60 in depth interviews and 7 focus groups. These focused on exploring the longer-term impacts of COVID. Key findings from this research:
- Whilst the pandemic was a largely negative experience for many respondents and impacts remain, it is now over-shadowed by current issues such as energy prices (cited by 70% as an issue), cost of living and food prices (both cited by 63% as an issue) and inflation (cited by 51% as an issue). In comparison, the pandemic was cited by 21% as an on-going issue.
 - Negative impacts tend to outweigh positive for children and young people. Specifically, for 0–4-year-olds, social skills, relationships and speech and language development were notably negatively impacted. Among older children and young people, mental health, educational development, and isolation showed a negative impact.
 - Financial situation: Respondents with a disability were more likely than other respondents to report a negative financial impact.
 - Social isolation: On average, 1 in 4 respondents felt social isolation and loneliness. 39% of 18–24-year-olds were more likely to have felt isolated or lonely, reporting that the pandemic had a very negative/negative/quite negative impact. This was the highest proportion across all age groups.
- 5.5 These findings evidence the needs of the local community and will inform the support to be provided to them, during the winter period and throughout 2024. Specifically, a series of actions have been identified as set out in appendix B to address these key challenges and to provide additional support to residents in Bracknell Forest.

Winter 2023 support

- 5.6 Additional hardship support is in place for residents over the Winter period. This includes through community led support and services across the council. Amendments to the current Financial Hardship plan aim to recognise and coordinate this support. The review of the plan has enabled the identification of priorities and emerging issues, particularly over this coming winter period.
- 5.7 It was found that fuel and food poverty continue to be a challenge. The number of people experiencing financial hardship has not risen significantly but the depth of financial challenge has become greater. Research from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has shown that projected impacts from the current rises in the cost of living could still be felt until 2027. Debt and the affordability of credit also remains a major issue. Domestic abuse and mental health issues were also identified as issues not currently addressed within the plan. Some minority ethnic communities also remain unaware of the available help for issues of financial hardship in the borough.
- 5.8 These findings and the subsequent recommended changes are contained in the amended plan in appendix A. This version has removed 29 completed or (now) business as usual actions and incorporated findings from the review process. The changes aim to give the plan greater relevance and effectiveness in supporting emerging priorities raised by the review process whilst also considering future

responses. Specifically, actions within the plan have been amended to meet the following identified gaps:

- Explore how financial hardship support can be better connected to those experiencing mental health challenges.
- Expand the signposting of local support to those who have experienced domestic abuse.
- Increase signposting activity throughout the winter period, including by extending the messaging and engagement with seldom-heard communities to ensure financial support is known to them.

- 5.9 Amendments to the plan will cover the winter 2023-24 period and will strengthen the offer to communities across a period that sees increased household expenditure. Increased signposting for seldom heard communities will provide additional support to groups at heightened risk of experiencing hardship. Funding for residents through the Household Support Fund will also continue with direct financial support to be provided for low-income households not qualifying for the government's £900 cost-of-living payment. There will also be enhanced support for the voluntary and community sector via the community winter hardship grant. Continued joint work is in place to promote a winter wellness campaign.
- 5.10 Given the current financial and resourcing challenges, it is also recommended that prioritisation should be made to focus on themes where the council can have the greatest influence. Therefore, more actions are related to the themes of signposting and essential living costs, rather than areas such as employment support. However, the council will continue to work with partners such as the Job Centre to ensure local support is available across all areas.

Next steps during 2024

- 5.11 The current Financial Hardship Action Plan ends on 31 March 2024. At present, there is no confirmed government funding beyond this period to extend the action plan or continue the extent of hardship support. Most of the activity up to this point has been funded by one-off, temporary funding. Therefore, there will be a transition from the action plan to business as usual, bringing services back to the form and level of pre-COVID support, led by the Welfare team.
- 5.12 Beyond the offer of additional grant funding, the core support of the Local Welfare Scheme offers emergency hardship support for households in need. The statutory function of the Welfare team is the administration of Housing Benefit, Council tax support and Discretionary Housing Payments and it is not required to provide any support with financial hardship outside the scope of those benefits and discounts.
- 5.13 However, a wide range of support for the local community has been developed to maximise the £795,000 of remaining Covid Outbreak Management Fund (COMF). This aims to deliver an extended period of support into 2024, recognising the continued impact of coronavirus, including on health outcomes, health inequalities, the economy and individual financial pressures due to the impact of COVID19. A summary of the activity to take place is included in appendix B and includes funding towards the provision of a financial inclusion and welfare advice service, mental health initiatives for young people and enhancing the warm, well, and safe programme to help those with existing long term health conditions with improving energy efficiency of their house and have a holistic health check to include nutritional and falls risk assessment.

- 5.14 One further area that could be explored beyond April 2024 is a one-off payment towards the council tax bills of low-income households (those receiving council tax support). This could help mitigate the impact of possible rises in council tax for the most financially vulnerable households. In the last three years, similar support has been in place, though this had been supported as part of national schemes. No such scheme has been announced yet for 2024/25. Most recently, for the current financial year, the government has funded £25 support for council tax, the council funded an additional £25 for low-income pension households and £75 for low income working age households. This was to a total cost of approximately £254,000 across 5,900 households. Specific additional funding would need to be agreed to provide this.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 There are no legal issues arising from this report that requires specific legal comments.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 Awaiting to see if the DWP Household Support Grant is extended past March 2024. Funding to date, has been temporary grant funding received from the government following the pandemic. Sufficient unspent COMF grant is held within reserves to fund the activity included in appendix C. Spend must be monitored and incurred in accordance with the grant conditions to enable the Council to submit the required returns and statement of assurance to UKHSA. The monitoring will also ensure that any unused funds are identified and re-applied in accordance with the grant conditions.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 Several groups have been part of the review and update of the action plan. This includes the officer financial hardship group and the members welfare advisory panel. Their feedback has been included as part the plan contained in appendix A.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 An equality impact screening was completed as part of the original plan development. This screening has been reviewed to include the current recommendations made. This concluded that there remain no groups adversely impacted by the recommendations. The plan seeks to reduce the inequality experienced by those facing financial hardship, and the groups most likely to be affected. Specifically, the updated plan seeks to enhance actions related to awareness and signposting for seldom heard communities and ethnic minority groups.

The findings of the Covid Impact survey found that geographic and other inequalities existed in impact of covid pandemic on the health and wellbeing of the local population. Gender, age, ethnicity, and disabilities were associated with some of these inequalities. The plan includes projects that aims to target these population groups.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 There are no strategic risk management issues identified as part of these recommendation.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to slightly increase emissions of CO2. Whilst this will not be a direct impact, reducing financial hardship is likely to increase economic activity, this in turn may generate more CO2 emissions through activity such as travel to work, purchasing essential items etc. However, it is considered vital that all households can meet their basic living costs, such as food and heating. Some of this may be offset by improving the energy efficiency of households that meet the criteria for support through the warm, well and safe programme.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 The projects in appendix C aim to improve the health and wellbeing of those that are likely to have suffered the most from the COVID 19 pandemic. It is likely to reduce health inequalities that have widened due to the pandemic. There is a direct link between financial hardship and health and wellbeing. These recommendations seek to reduce hardship and therefore this is anticipated to have a positive impact on residents' health and wellbeing.

Background Papers

[Current action plan](#)

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Appendix A – Updated financial hardship action plan: Winter 2023

[Attached as a separate document]

Appendix B – 2024 projects to mitigate impact of COVID19, supporting communities.

Area of spend		Amount	Led by
Public mental health	CYP mental health (Self harm, eating difficulties and low-level emotional health – mapping the risk and prevalence within Bracknell Forest)	£80,000	Public Health, P, P & R
	Digital offer -peer support, early identification, and appropriate support for CYP with symptoms below the CAMHS threshold. (Jointly with Frimley ICB) 40K core funding, 56K 11-17 year and 56K for 18–25-year-olds (Exact figure is likely to be less if commissioned across E Berkshire jointly) Year 1 from COMF, Year 2 onwards on a sliding scale (reduction in numbers) from Public Health Reserve	£152,000	Public Health, P, P & R and Frimley ICB
	Adult mental health recovery college (Steppingstones) targeted groups enhancements	£40,000	Public Health, P, P & R
Welfare advice	Additional Financial Inclusion Officers to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (Early Help and Communities) 2.5 welfare officers for a year	£100,000	Head of Welfare, People
Inequalities	Accommodation to house rough sleepers this winter to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.	£60,000	Head of Housing, People
Mitigation of Covid Impact- health deterioration in people with long term conditions	Improving Housing for those with long term health conditions-building on the Warm well and safe programme	£95,000	Head of Climate Change and Sustainable Living, Delivery
Social isolation	Establishing a buddy network targeted at groups identified from the COVID Survey 1 year (2 and 3 year from Public Health Reserve.	£50,000	Public Health, P, P & R
	Establishing local neighbourhood Friendship Tables initially in neighbourhoods identified with higher negative impacts (costs of facilitator and starter kits) Year 1. Year 2 and 3 facilitator and replacement kits (30K per annum from Public Health Reserve)	£40,000	Public Health, P, P & R
Support for Long Covid	Work with primary care to offer post treatment recovery based on the health and wellbeing sessions for people with long terms conditions currently run by Everyone Active (Sports Centre)	£25,000	Public Health, P, P & R
Communications Recovery and control	Recovery – uptake of health checks, know your numbers	£12,000	Public Health, P, P & R
COVID/Pandemic Prevention and Control	Resilience stock of PPE and LFD test kits (current stock expiring) and storage	£77,000	Public Health, P, P & R
	Hand hygiene training in Primary schools, Special schools, Secondary Schools, Colleges, Pupil referral unit, Care homes, Family Hubs/Larchwood, Assisted Living, PH Team & other teams	£40,000	Public Health, P, P & R
Covid Inquiry	Contingency for COVID-19 Inquiry work	25,000	AD Strategic Projects
	Total plan	£796,000	

Council achievements in first 100 days of new administration – financial hardship

Following the election in May, the council's new administration made a commitment to increase targeted cost of living support to residents experiencing financial difficulties. Some of the successful projects included the following:



Hosting a Help for Households event in Princess Square with 15 partners sharing help for cost-of-living.



23 households were identified to be eligible for a council tax reduction, saving **£34,554** in total.

3 households were identified to be eligible for council tax exemption, saving **£10,447** in total.



£7,110 was awarded to **24 qualifying households** through the Local Welfare Scheme.

Discretionary Housing Payments were granted to two households, generating **£1,876** for them.



Meeting with local headteachers to explore financial challenges their pupils are experiencing and signposted materials and support available for parents.



299 households contacted so they can receive their council tax energy rebate directly as not eligible to pay council tax.



Cost-of-living drop-in session was held in Great Hollands and more venues are being looked into.



Website updated with new support and information.



Promotional materials provided to community hubs and libraries.



Reach Out
Supporting you with the cost-of-living



Bracknell Forest Financial Hardship Action Plan

September 2022-March 2024

Version 1.3

BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL

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Version 1.3 - Changes as part of the October 2023 update are highlighted in the green sections and throughout the action plan.

Bracknell Forest Council's Vision

“For all residents to be financially stable, independent, and engaged with the local community and economy, through reducing the impact and extent of financial hardship.”

Bracknell Forest Council is taking a proactive approach to tackling financial hardship in the borough. Financial hardship can have a considerable impact on a person's life. Even experiencing short-term but acute financial pressures can have long term impacts, both at an individual and a community level. Unfortunately, financial hardship is often a cycle that is difficult to break, manifesting in many ways throughout life and often being passed on to future generations. This action plan aims to break this cycle.

Our aim is for the community to be as financially resilient as possible, this will help residents engage with the local economy, taking part in leisure and shopping activities and contributing through employment and volunteering opportunities. This financial hardship action plan aims to encourage and support this resilience for residents in the community.

We know that tackling financial hardship will take time and there is no quick or short-term fix and therefore it is necessary to take a longer-term approach which can be sustained over time. Our action plan will outline the commitment to help alleviate financial hardship in the borough and how we will devise services to have the greatest impact.

What is financial hardship?

Bracknell Forest is broadly an affluent area, and this can partly mask the extent of the local challenges around hardship. Due to the affluence, there can be an underlying sense of comparative poverty where individuals cannot afford what their neighbours can. This is in addition to national standardised definitions of poverty. It is also becoming more apparent that even previously affluent households are facing higher financial pressures. Thus, we have focused this work to address financial hardship more broadly than the definition of poverty. This allows us to capture the most acute needs of poverty as well as recognising many residents may not meet the traditional definition of poverty but are experiencing financial hardship.

There is no nationwide definition of financial hardship therefore we have combined several aspects of poverty and hardship into a single definition to guide our approach. Bracknell Forest Council has defined financial hardship as:

“When an individual or household cannot meet the basic daily costs such as food, utility bills and housing costs, which consequently, affects their health and wellbeing. Financial hardship does not reflect any lack of capability, quality of relationships or motivation. Financial hardship can include long term poverty or a short-term change in circumstances.”

Why do we need an action plan?

October 2023 Update:

There continues to be evidence of financial hardship locally and nationally. Continued high levels of inflation have made the costs of basic household items prohibitively expensive for low-income households. With the winter approaching, recent insights have been reviewed in the context of this plan.

Driven by high levels of price inflation, forecasts from the Bank of England indicate that inflation will not fall to pre-2021 rates until 2024 at the earliest. Rapid increases in food and energy prices have reduced disposable income by 4.3% in the 2022-23 financial year with 94% of adults reporting a rise in their cost of living when compared with a year ago. It is expected that the impact of price rises will mean that in real terms, wages will not return to their pre-2021 levels until 2027.

At present, the government has committed to support households with a range of financial measures such as the Household Support Fund and cost-of-living payments to those in receipt of qualifying benefits. This funding has been welcomed however it does not reach everyone who needs support and it does not provide a holistic way of tackling hardship. This funding is also not yet confirmed to continue beyond April 2024. It remains important that there is a localised, targeted offer of support to prevent escalation of financial hardship and the wider impacts on health and wellbeing.

The impact of financial hardship on wider socio-economic factors have been well documented for many years. Current rises in the cost-of-living have accelerated many of these negative outcomes, such as widening health inequalities. The office for national statistics (ONS, 2022) identified five groups most likely to experience issues with food and energy bills due to the cost-of-living crisis:

- People suffering with symptoms of depression
- People who are economically inactive
- People living in the most deprived areas
- Younger persons - aged between 16 and 25
- People with disabilities

Rises in fuel prices have meant that households in Bracknell Forest are much more likely to be facing issues with meeting fuel costs than that of food costs. The ONS data shows that monthly average direct debits for gas and electricity have grown from £108 in 2020 to £193 in 2023.

There has been significant focus on the cost of living in recent months. The government has invested in a number of funds such as the Household Support Fund and Energy Rebate schemes to provide financial support to households. This has been vital during the period of crisis however the short-term nature of the support that does not provide sustainable solutions for the growing financial challenges faced by individuals and the community.

The council recognises the need to further support residents beyond the statutory requirements and recent government schemes. This prompted a financial hardship needs analysis to be completed. The findings from the analysis, as well as conversations with stakeholders and partners in the community, identified the necessity to have a structured approach towards financial hardship in the borough.

Financial hardship has a direct impact on residents in terms of not just their financial wellbeing, but also wider societal factors such as physical and mental health or crime and disorder. The need analysis completed in March 2022 identified that individuals experiencing financial hardship are more likely to suffer with poor health and vice versa.

Bracknell Forest is in the least deprived 15% of all Local Authorities and is ranked 35 out of 317 authorities when looking at the overall Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). However, there is substantial variation in levels of deprivation between wards in the borough.

1.5% of people are “income-deprived” in least deprived areas compared to 14.7% in most deprived. Generally, it is wards in Bracknell town centre where financial hardship is the highest.



Local data has also identified low-income households based on council held information; this demonstrates the scale of the challenge locally. The Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) identified in March 2022, 5,527 low-income households with 3,077 children. This is approximately 10% of all households in the borough. Of these households:



2,003 were pension age and not in work.



2,117 were working age households and not in work.



1,407 were working age households in work

The needs analysis also outlined some key statistics for low-income residents in the borough. At the time the needs analysis was completed:

- 9.6% of Bracknell Forest households struggled with food insecurity
- 9.4% of households within the borough claimed council tax support
- 15.8% of the adult population in Bracknell Forest found meeting monthly bills a heavy burden and were regularly in arrears with bills
- 4.7% of households were living in fuel poverty in the borough.

Children that are born into poverty are more likely to suffer from chronic diseases, such as asthma as well as diet-related problems such as tooth decay, malnutrition, obesity, and diabetes. A study by the child poverty action group also showed that low-income children are four times more likely to develop a mental health problem by the age of 11. There is also a long-term link to poorer career and skills outcomes. Additionally, in January 2021, poor mental health rates in individuals who were unemployed were 43% compared with a rate of 27% for employed individuals.

Bracknell Forest has relatively low levels of crime and is ranked 30th out of 317 local authorities for crime. However, Bracknell Forest's most deprived wards Priestwood and Garth, Wildridings and Central, and Old Bracknell score significantly higher on levels of crime than all other wards indicating a link between hardship and crime.

In addition to the individual quality of living benefits, having an action plan will enable households to be more financially stable and be in a stronger position to contribute back to the economy. This has become even more important considering the cost-of-living challenges.

Early Intervention and Prevention

Financial hardship can manifest in lots of ways for individuals, for some this will mean they need additional support from the council in the form of council tax reductions, or welfare support, it can also escalate into homelessness, social care needs or more complex health challenges. All of this means additional demand on council services, which, given the increasing cost of living, is not sustainable long term.

The additional demand on the council presents considerable financial challenges within the organisation and increases in costly interventions when support is received too late. Therefore, the financial hardship action plan contains both immediate interventions to reduce the direct consequences of financial hardship but also more proactive, preventative interventions. This is in part achieved through working more closely with the voluntary, community and faith sector. The financial hardship action plan aims to support all residents maximise their income. It also looks to work with local employers to improve skills and opportunities for residents.

Whilst this is an essential focus in the current climate, the councils overarching approach aims to reduce the longer term need for intervention around hardship. The ambition remains to create and support communities to be self-sufficient and for residents to be financially independent.

October 2023 Update:

The Household Support Fund, provided by the DWP to local authorities, was extended until April 2024 enabling further support during the plan period. The current Household Support Fund has been distributed within Bracknell Forest via several routes, such as an enhanced application based local welfare scheme, cost-of-living vouchers, and grants to the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector.

This has meant that the council has been able to distribute over £900,000 since the start of the action plan. The funding has largely been used towards the provision of supermarket vouchers in the school holidays for families receiving free school meals. Support worth over £225,000 was given to Bracknell Forest pupils in the 2023 Summer holidays. Alongside this, the council supported an additional 1,627 households with grants and referrals during the 2022-2023 financial year. Over £100,000 has been provided to local voluntary and community groups to further extend their support to low-income households. There is no further funding confirmed by the DWP for the 2024/25 period.

Support for low-income families in the school holidays has also continued through the holiday activities and food programme, funded by the Department for Education. Funding was agreed for a three-year period from 2022/23. This is co-ordinated by Bracknell Forest Council and provided over 5,000 free sessions to children in 27 locations across the borough during the 2023 summer holidays. This also included a significant proportion of children and young people with additional needs.

Expansion of the welfare team has enabled the council to proactively seek to improve the incomes of households. Utilising LIFT data software, households were identified and contacted if they were not receiving welfare payments that they are eligible for. One campaign contacted 191 pension age households, where £113,879 in additional income was unlocked for these households. Other campaigns have resulted in improved uptake of benefits such as council tax support, and free TV licences.

To date, 18 of the 45 actions in the action plan have been completed, a further 21 are in progress. These actions have produced a greater level of support and resilience in the borough through actions such as the development of a comprehensive website for cost-of-living support. Wider benefits include the development of Voluntary, community and Faith Sector forum to encourage greater levels of joint working.

In June 2023, Executive also agreed a series of actions to extend and enhance the local support for residents experiencing financial hardship to be delivered within the first 100 days following the local elections. These measures included hosting a cost-of-living event in Bracknell town centre and a targeted campaign to improve council tax support for those in arrears. This produced savings over £45,000 for Bracknell Forest households in council tax exemptions and reductions.

In parallel to the financial hardship action plan being developed, work has been underway across the council and the voluntary, community and faith sector to support residents with the immediate impacts of financial hardship.

A cross directorate officers' group was created in 2020 to lead on, and champion, work that would ensure a joined-up approach across the borough between the council, partner agencies and local charities. This aimed to ensure the best possible support is available to residents who either are currently experiencing or may face longer-term financial crisis. This group also

coordinated the development work to distribute internal welfare funding and government grants such as the Winter Grant Scheme, Covid Local Support Grant, and Household Support Fund.

A Councillor welfare steering group was also set up as a cross party group to focus on financial hardship challenges. In particular, they have advised on the distribution of the internal COVID recovery funding dedicated to local welfare support. Their role has also included overseeing the distribution of government hardship funds.

The internal welfare funding agreed as part of the COVID recovery package in March 2021 has allowed the council to increase the proactive approach to hardship and advance the way the council can address hardship. Resource was secured on an operational and strategic level as well as the purchase of software to support the council identify low-income households and target support to them accordingly. The software allows the council to run cohort specific campaigns and support residents at an individual level with income maximisation. Training has been carried out for frontline workers across the council and VCS to help identify households living in fuel poverty and provide advice and support to drive down energy bills and claim support where eligible.

The Local Welfare Scheme was launched to replace two previous policies which were out of keeping with the needs of residents. The Local Welfare Scheme has supported households with emergency payments towards energy bills, food support or essential white goods. Over £45,000 has been awarded since April 2021, providing very direct support to more than 220 households in exceptional hardship.

Over £1.5 million of funding has been received from Department for Work and Pensions as part of the pandemic recovery and cost of living support. This has been distributed directly to vulnerable low-income households in Bracknell Forest since December 2020. Part of this funding has enabled the distribution of supermarket vouchers to 2,600 Free School Meal eligible pupils each holiday period. There have also been wider grants distributed by the council to low-income households as part of the energy rebate funding.

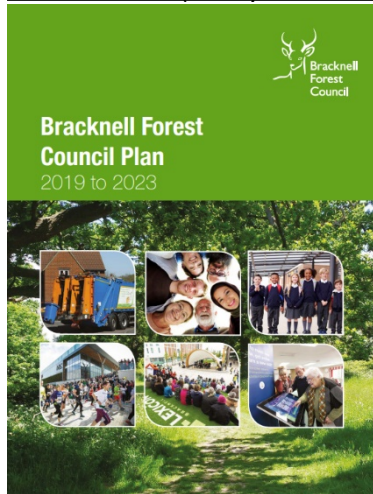
Support for families during school holidays has been expanded through the Holiday Activities and Food programme for children aged 5-16 in low-income households. In the 2021, school summer holidays, 11 holiday clubs offered activities across 14 sites including sports activities, cooking activities, arts and crafts and much more. 690 children attended including a number of children with additional needs. Since Summer 2021, the number of providers and activities increased to 19 providers across 19 sites for the 2022 summer holidays.

One Council

There are already a number of workstreams in place throughout the council and working with partners, looking to reduce the impacts of hardship and support individuals to be more financially stable and independent. Work is underway in relation to the Levelling Up agenda and UK Shared Prosperity Fund, partnership working with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), and recovery from the pandemic. Therefore, a core aim of this action plan is to join these workstreams into a single coherent approach. This aims to maximise the currently available resources, avoiding duplication and sharing the skills and experience of different groups in the community.

There are many workstreams and strategies across Bracknell Forest Council that link with the financial hardship work. This includes several detailed below.

Council Plan (new plan under development)



The Council Plan sets out the key objectives and strategic direction for 2019 to 2023. The plan is structured around six themes that all directorates contribute to. In particular, the overarching themes of creating value for money, economic resilience, caring for you and your family and communities, all relate to elements of the financial hardship agenda.

Within the 2022-23 service plans, there are some specific actions related to reducing financial hardship:

- 1.2.02 - Maximise the use of data to identify low-income households and engage with them to increase their household income and financial independence.
- 4.1.04 - Establish a cross-council approach and action plan to support residents in financial hardship to move to a more sustainable long-term position, improving their health and wellbeing outcomes.

Health and Well-being strategy



The Health and Wellbeing Strategy includes a focus on the wider determinants of health by considering the broader influences on health and wellbeing. Financial stability, including meaningful employment is a key wider determinant of health and can positively influence physical and mental health and wellbeing. Conversely, economic hardship can have a negative impact on health and particularly mental health. Employment and financial loss are cited in the strategy as a key wider determinant of health that was particularly impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Public Health tackling inequalities is a cross cutting theme of the strategy. This means that actions will focus on those at risk of experiencing the poorest health and takes a wider view of health and wellbeing beyond lifestyle and individual factors.

Housing strategy



The 'cost of living' crisis is recognised as a key issue in the housing strategy due to its potential impact in pushing low-income households into financial hardship and homelessness. "Meeting the challenge of a 'cost of living' crisis" is identified as a priority for action within the overall objective of preventing and reducing homelessness. This includes the commitment to continue to offer Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) to provide short-term help to households in receipt of benefits. The strategy also sets out the action to identify households at risk of financial hardship using datasets and software such as LIFT (Low Income Family Tracker) and targeting assistance to help avert homelessness.

The strategy identifies the need to provide joined-up working within the council and the voluntary and community sector to provide wider support to households. These links will allow the housing team to help people access assistance such as the Household Support Fund to help buy essential household items that help make a tenancy more sustainable.

DWP Partnership agreement



The DWP and the council recognise the significant challenges that Covid-19 has created. The national picture of declining job numbers in previously prevalent sectors, coupled with an increase in the number of people seeking welfare support, is evident in Bracknell Forest. Alongside these challenges run the issues of accessibility to services for those most in need as well as uncertainty in employment, training and education options for young people.

The DWP and the council are working together to achieve a joint ambition for Bracknell Forest with more collaborative projects to recover the economy and reduce further unemployment across the town. Employers are key to generating a range of pathways to sustainable jobs, growing our local economy to provide more high-value and well-paid jobs for our residents and drive growth in key sectors.

Climate Change Strategy



The 'cost of living' crisis and climate change are closely linked. Cost of living is recognised as a key issue in the climate change strategy due to the intersectional nature and cross cutting themes; efficient energy at home, food waste, and sustainable travel. The current climate change strategy aims to address the impact of climate change on our local communities by implementing action to minimise the impact on our residents. In terms of financial hardship, this includes; local production of renewable energy and domestic eco-heating initiatives to reduce the overall cost to residents, greening our waste projects to encourage recycling and reusing, and promotion of active travel initiatives such as walking and cycling as this is a low-cost form of transport.

Equalities



The pandemic and the 'cost of living' crisis have had a disproportionately negative impact and been more severe for some groups than others and helped to entrench some existing inequalities, while widening others. Working with our partners, the council has an integral role both in advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good community relations, and also seeking to eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment and helping to reduce inequality. This means focusing our resources on people and areas with the greatest need as well as early help and prevention so that struggling or vulnerable people can maximise their opportunities to become independent.

Levelling Up and UKSPF



The UKSPF is a central pillar of the Levelling Up agenda, broadly replacing previous EU structural funding. The primary goal is to build pride in place and increase life chances across the UK. There is a pre-determined allocation to each local authority based upon defined indices of deprivation, economic activity, and health indicators.

The fund should boost productivity, enhance pay and living standards by growing the private sector, spread opportunities and improve public services. The fund also aims to restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, empowering local leaders and communities. An Investment Plan for the core funding and for the Multiply initiative will be delivered between 2022 and 2024.

Partnerships Approach

Meaningful and successful programmes of work are also ongoing within the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) in Bracknell Forest who are supporting residents with their own initiatives and services. This action plan looks to improve partnership working across the borough to ensure this valuable expertise and experience, and the limited resources, are put to the best use to deliver the greatest outcomes. A financial hardship forum has been established with the voluntary, community and faith sector in Bracknell Forest to further connect organisations and enable improved partnership working. The community led forum will have representation from the council to feedback on the action plan as well as contribute to wider work with partners.

Monitoring and review

The action plan will be regularly monitored through an established Officers Action Plan Delivery Group. The group will meet regularly to discuss the progress of the actions as well as identifying any risks that may arise. The group will also monitor the outcomes of each action. The desired outcomes are identified within the action plan and supported by a technical annex. Performance indicators will also be used for actions with pre-existing datasets to measure success.

The delivery group will update the Members Welfare Steering Group and CMT at regular intervals on the progress and any changes to the plan. Periodic updates will also be shared with the VCFS Financial Hardship Forum.

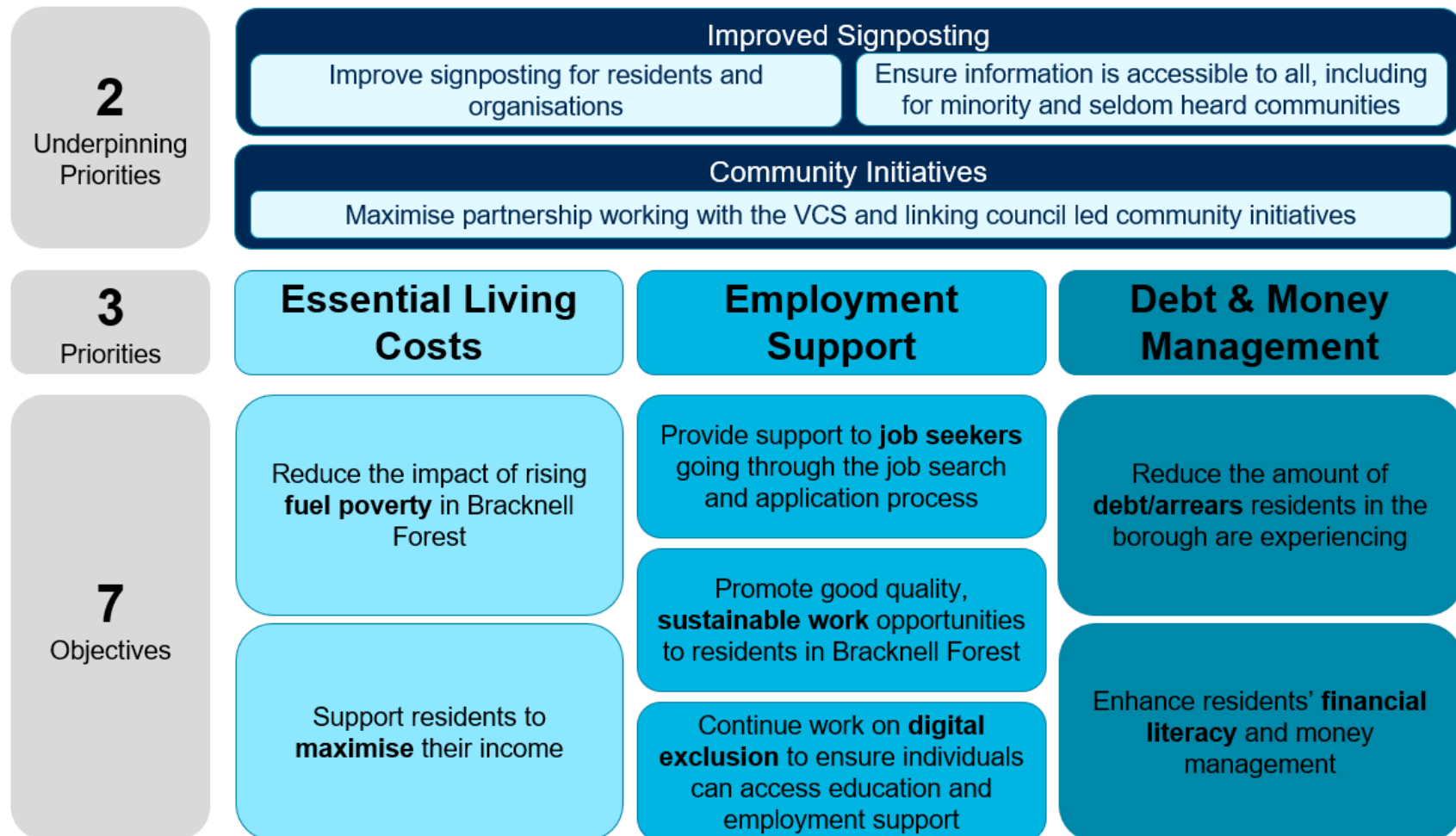
A report will be presented to CMT and the Members Welfare Steering Group at the 12-month point, reviewing the progress of actions and detailing successes and further opportunities. Subsequently, this will help with reviewing future actions needed. A full review of the action plan delivery will be completed in May 2024.

The purpose of this action plan is to make a meaningful difference to Bracknell Forest households and to seek to ease the pressures faced by those in hardship. A successful action plan will result in residents having more opportunities for stable employment, fewer households needing emergency welfare and financial support, improvements in physical and mental health and overall, a decrease in households experiencing hardship.

Action Plan

The priorities have been identified using the key findings from the financial hardship needs analysis as well as feedback from frontline staff and partners. This is set within the context of the national and global economic challenges, driving increases in costs.

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Priority one: Signposting and accessing support

Residents need to know where they can go to access support as well as what support is available to them. Without this, many residents will continue to struggle, and local support will not be fully utilised. There are already several support services for local residents, but partners reported that there is insufficient signposting for hardship support in the borough both for residents and front-line organisations. Therefore, residents are missing out on support they may be entitled to. Signposting is an overarching priority throughout the action plan and unlocks the full potential of the wider objectives in each section.

Significantly more local information is now available related to financial hardship support. However, there remains further opportunity to ensure that all low-income residents are aware of where to find this information, particularly target cohorts such as specific ethnic minority groups, and those who have experience domestic violence and/or mental health challenges.

Priority One: Signposting and accessing support

Ref	Actions	Timescales	Lead Officer	Outcomes	Supporting strategies/workstreams	October 2023 Update
Objective One: Improve signposting for residents and organisations						
1.1.3	Update and refresh the directory of local support to include financial support services for those who are unable to access online information.	January 2024	Financial Hardship Project Officer	Provide to 100% of front-line services within the council. Distribute copies to 10+ sites across Bracknell Forest		Refreshed for Winter 2023
1.1.4	Host community-based drop-in sessions for residents to speak to subject experts in housing/welfare/council tax.	April 2024	Senior Debt & Money Advisor	Deliver at least 4 sessions in community settings, with at least 2 sessions focused upon Universal Credit transition. Provide help to at least 20 residents across all sessions.	Housing Strategy	Retained and Updated

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Objective Two: Ensure information is accessible to all, including for minority and seldom heard communities						
1.2.1	Provide support and training to local libraries, community centres, religious settings, and schools staff to educate on support that is available.	April 2024	Financial Hardship Project Officer	Provide hard copies of winter support to 15+ community settings across the borough.		Retained and updated
1.2.2	Improve access to signposting information for ethnic minority groups in the borough.	April 2024	Head of Community Engagement and Equalities	Include representation from the interfaith forum on the VCFS financial hardship forum. Provide presentations to at least 3 organisations working with minority ethnic communities	Equality Scheme	Retained and updated
1.2.3	Improve access to signposting information for people with disabilities in the borough.	April 2024	Financial Hardship Project Officer	Connect with local groups and provide information/support to a minimum of ten representatives.	Equality Scheme	Retained and updated
1.2.4	Improve access to signposting for residents experiencing domestic abuse.	April 2024	Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead	Provide a presentation to council's domestic abuse professionals to highlight financial support. Provide a hard copy of updated winter support to Berkshire Women's Aid.	Domestic Abuse strategy	New
1.2.5	Develop and improve signposting between wellbeing projects, and financial hardship support.	April 2024	Financial Hardship Project Officer	Provide links between winter wellness and cost of living webpages.	Health and Wellbeing Strategy	New

				Connect with social prescribers and the recovery college to provide signposting information to distribute at sessions.		
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Priority two: Promoting Community Initiatives

There is sometimes a stigma associated with financial hardship and getting help from the local council or VCFS, which can cause social exclusion and prolonged hardship amongst residents. Longer term sustainability also relies on a community led approach, to make the most of the specialist groups already set up. Therefore, it is important to work closely with local communities to build community champions and enhance the options for residents to help each other. By strengthening communities, it is hoped to reduce the social exclusion felt by individuals and stigma associated with asking for help. It should also assist with early intervention and individuals seeking support before they find themselves in crisis and needing to access council services.

There has been progress in connecting the council's support with local voluntary and community organisations. There has also been more joint working across the voluntary, community and faith sector which continues to evolve over time. Following the distribution of over £100,000 of funding to local groups to support low-income households, the council will continue to work with these organisations and more widely to develop a comprehensive package of support.

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Priority Two: Promoting Community Initiatives						
Ref	Actions	Timescales	Lead Officers	Outcomes	Supporting strategies/workstreams	Oct 23 Update
Objective One: Maximise partnership working with the VCFS and linking council led community initiatives						
2.1.3	Integrate financial hardship work into council and VCFS community initiatives	April 2024	Financial Hardship Project Officer	Council representation at 100% of VCFS hardship forum sessions.		Retained as ongoing
2.1.4	Monitor, support and develop links between VCFS recipients of Household Support Fund Grants	April 2024	Financial Hardship Project Officer	Monitoring information returned every quarter for all grant recipients. Every recipient of funding to receive at least one site visit. Monitoring report to be provided to Members Welfare Advisory Panel.		New

Priority three: Essential Living Costs

The global consequences of the Coronavirus pandemic and war in Ukraine, have triggered a drastic increase in inflation which continues to affect many households across the nation and in Bracknell Forest. Sustained high inflation across 2022 has significantly reduced the disposable income of the poorest households. Food and energy bills have seen significant increases across this period. Energy bills account for a greater proportion of household income now, and residents are having to make difficult choices about spending their limited resources, including choosing between heating and eating. Both a warm home and a healthy diet is essential for physical and mental health. A cold home can lead to poor health conditions particularly in the elderly. Maximising residents' income will not only reduce the impacts felt from financial hardship but will act to support positive physical and mental health.

Inflation has remained high in 2023 across food and fuel costs. There have been continued government financial support schemes during the current financial year to support those most affected, however it remains unconfirmed if these will continue beyond April 2024. There have been several successful data led campaigns to help households access national support that they are eligible for, there is opportunity to expand these further.

Priority Three: Essential living costs

Ref	Actions	Timescales	Lead Officer	Outcomes	Supporting strategies/ workstreams	Oct 23 Update
Objective One: Reduce the impact of rising fuel poverty in Bracknell Forest						
3.1.1	Provide training for frontline staff within the council, VCFS and councillors.	October 2022	Financial Hardship Project Officer	Minimum of 25 front line staff and 10 councillors to attend training. Minimum 80% of attendees find training helpful.		Retained - Further training Oct/Nov 2023

3.1.4	Use the incoming Household Support Fund grant to fund initiatives to directly reduce energy costs or offset the increasing cost of living.	March 2023	Head of Welfare	100% of funding spent. At least 4,000 low-income households receive a payment.	DWP Grant Funding	Retained – further HSF support to be provided winter 2023
Objective Two: Support residents to maximise their income						
3.2.2	Targeted campaign to residents living in relative poverty who are at risk and in crisis to support them claim all eligible benefits.	April 2024	Head of Welfare	Increased contact to those ‘at risk’ or ‘in crisis’ and living in relative poverty		Currently underway
3.2.6	Increase overall income for pensioners who cannot maximise their income through work.	April 2024	Head of Welfare	Identify and contact increased number of eligible residents.		Additional campaigns scheduled

Priority four: Employment Support

Employment is often seen as the gateway out of hardship however this is not always the case. The needs analysis indicated there are many households in the borough that are in work both full and part time but still experiencing hardship. Support aims to include those seeking employment but also those seeking a more stable and sustainable employment opportunity.

Achieving progress in supporting residents into employment requires a range of partners and expertise, some of the actions have been difficult to progress. However, over the last 12 months, the council’s partnership with the DWP has continued to strengthen. The council will continue to work with partners to encourage residents into work.

Priority Four: Employment Support						
Ref	Actions	Timescales	Leads	Outcomes	Supporting strategies/ workstreams	Oct 23 Update
Objective One: Promote good quality, sustainable work opportunities to residents in Bracknell Forest.						
4.1.3	Continue and build upon partnership working arrangements between BFC and DWP.	December 2023	Head of Economic Development & Regeneration / DWP	Quarterly meetings between DWP/BFC and relevant stakeholders.	DWP Partnership Agreement	Retained

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4.1.7	Improve messaging and awareness of available childcare support for residents, to unlock increased employment opportunities.	April 2024	Early Year Business and Family Information Manager	Family Information Officers to attend sessions at local job clubs/other VCFS organisations a minimum of once a month. Community engagement team to distribute childcare information to a minimum of three hard-to-reach communities.		Retained
Objective Two: Provide support to job seekers going through the job search and application process						
Objective Three: Continue work on digital exclusion to ensure individuals can access education and employment support.						
4.3.2	Promote the use of computers in locations across the borough including Time Square and libraries as well as the libraries tablet loan scheme.	April 2024	Financial Hardship Project Officer	Article in December's edition of Town and Country extra. Article in parish magazines. Increased uptake of tablets loaned.	Digital inclusion project Council Plan 1.2	Retained

Priority five: Financial Literacy

The needs analysis identified that many residents in the borough have low levels of financial knowledge and have difficulty managing their money. Often those living in hardship face the poverty premium where they are having to pay more for services. For example, individuals may need payday loans with high interest rates as they can't access low interest rate loans through the bank, or they are having to pay bills on top up meters rather than the cheaper option of a monthly direct debit. Additionally, those with poor money management are more likely to experience debt which can be difficult to resolve and can contribute to mental health problems. Educating residents around managing money and budgeting aims to help ease some of the pressures they are facing.

Recent research continues to highlight the expanding risk of debt and use of unsustainable lenders. Therefore, it continues to be important to highlight the opportunities for safe credit, and pathways out of debt. Ensuring that information related to debt and money management reaches residents will also be a focus in the signposting theme.

Priority Five: Money management and Debt

Ref	Actions	Timescales	Leads	Outcomes	Supporting strategies/ workstreams	Oct 23 Update
Objective One: Enhance residents' financial literacy and money management						
5.1.1	Use Multiply funding to deliver courses on numeracy and managing money.	April 2024	Community and Continuing Education Manager	Courses hosted in 22/23 financial year.	Multiply / UKSPF	Retained
Objective Two: Reduce the amount of debt/arrears residents in the borough are experiencing.						
5.2.3	Promote awareness of the risks with loan sharks, pay day loans and high-cost credit as well	April 2024	Public Protection Partnership	Social Media campaign to heighten awareness of loan sharks.	Community safety	Retained & amended to reflect wider audience for engagement

	as the risks of buy now pay later.			Make one presentation to VCFS financial hardship forum to raise awareness of issues and referral pathways.		
5.2.5	Review the referral pathways for debt advice through Citizens Advice.	April 2024	Senior Debt & Money Advisor	Increase in referrals between organisations.		Retained

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To: The Executive
12 December 2023

Bracknell Forest Council's Involvement in the Department for Education's Safety Valve Intervention Programme

Chief Executive / Executive Director: People / Executive Director: Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To recommend to the Executive an initial Safety Valve proposal to be submitted to the Department for Education by 15 December 2023. Subject to the Executive's endorsement, the Council will subsequently need to submit a final proposal by 12 January 2024, that will be presented for consideration by Full Council at its meeting on 10 January 2024.

2 Recommendations

That the Executive:

- 2.1 Approves the Council's initial Safety Valve proposal detailed in confidential Annex B *[TO FOLLOW]* for submission to the Department for Education by 15 December;
- 2.2 Delegates authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to amend the initial proposal if necessary in response to feedback from the Department for Education prior to a final Safety Valve proposal being presented to the Council meeting on 10 January 2024.

3 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Council was invited by the Department for Education (DfE) to participate in its Safety Valve Intervention Programme 2023/24 in July (the invitation letter to the Chief Executive is attached as Annex A). The Safety Valve programme aims to agree a package of reforms to local education systems for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) through which the systems will become financially sustainable within the level of grant provided by the Department for Education, while improving the experiences of children and young people. Bracknell Forest is one of five authorities invited to participate in the programme this year, due to its large and rising deficit.
- 3.2 Participation in the programme can secure access to additional capital funding for new local provision and a material financial contribution from the DfE towards the accumulated Dedicated School Grant (DSG) deficit, should proposals for reform submitted by the Council be accepted. A significant financial commitment is also required from the Council, both to secure delivery of the proposed programme of activity and to write off the remainder of the accumulated deficit not funded by the DfE. At the time of this report's publication, discussions are continuing between Council officers and the DfE's Safety Valve team on these details, which will be distributed for Councillors' consideration in confidential Annex B in advance of the Executive's meeting.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1** The Council could choose not to participate in the Safety Valve programme. This is not recommended since it would mean that responsibility for funding the DSG deficit would rest entirely with Bracknell Forest Council, with no financial contribution available from the DfE. In addition, the Council would be less likely to receive additional capital funding to support local provision, since priority is given to applications from Safety Valve authorities. While some local authorities with Education responsibilities have not yet participated in the Safety Valve programme, all will face a significant financial challenge if they are in a deficit position when the temporary override enabling deficits to be carried forward is removed, which will inevitably happen at some point. Should an authority face a situation where its total reserves are insufficient to cover the accumulated deficit at that point, the authority would be forced into declaring a section 114 notice, since it would at that point be unable to fund its known liabilities. Bracknell Forest is not currently in this position, but its rapidly rising DSG deficit that is expected to reach a minimum of £45m even with significant mitigations identified and implemented risks triggering that situation in the next few years.

5 Supporting Information

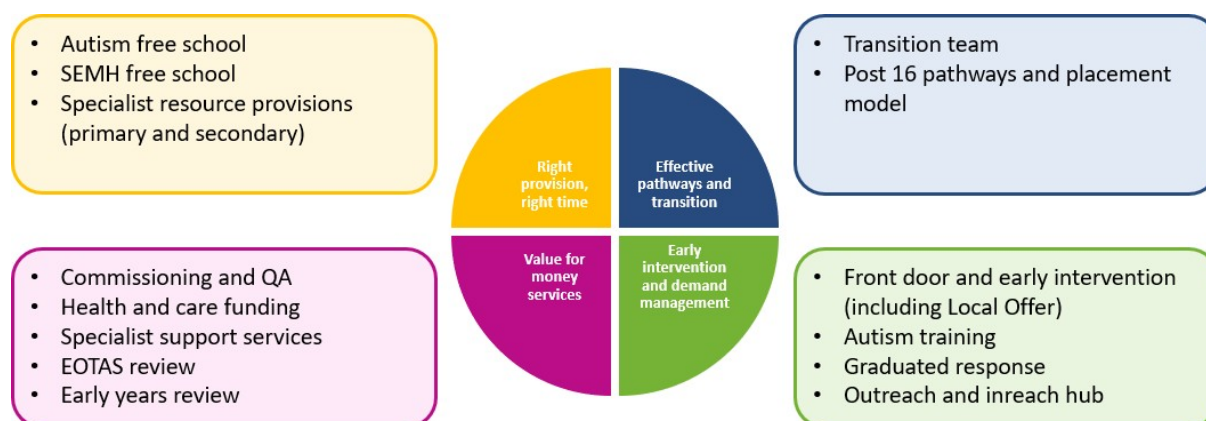
- 5.1** The DfE recognised in 2019 that significant cost increases in SEND services were being experienced in many local areas, taking spending above funding provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant. At the end of 2018/19, around half of all education authorities were experiencing DSG overspends, totalling at that time around £250m. Through a consultation issued in October 2019, the Government proposed changes to accounting arrangements to ensure that “DSG deficits should not be covered from general funds but that over time they should be recovered from DSG income”. At the time, the Government’s belief was that additional funding it had announced would help local authorities bring their DSG accounts into balance in a fairly short period.
- 5.2** Following the consultation, revisions were made to the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, introducing a requirement for the 2020/21 to 2022/23 financial years that any school budget deficits that arose during that period should be charged “to an account established ... solely for the purpose of recognising deficits in respect of school budgets”. Essentially, the regulations overrode general accounting practice by directing that a “negative reserve”, the Dedicated Schools Grant Adjustment Account, be created in councils’ accounts. Further regulations have recently extended this arrangement to the end of the 2025/26 financial year.
- 5.3** With this highly unusual approach not offering a long-term resolution to DSG deficits, the DfE introduced its Safety Valve Intervention Programme in 2020. A total of 34 local authorities experiencing the highest deficits in their Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budgets have participated in the programme to date and signed Safety Valve agreements with the DfE. In order to qualify for an agreement, it is necessary to:
- a) Demonstrate how the current deficit will be controlled and an in-year balance achieved as quickly as possible (the expectation is normally within 5 years);

- b) Explain what financial support is required from the DfE to eliminate the historic deficit and implement the proposals (the DfE will not fund all of the costs and will expect the local authority to be clear how it will fund its share)

5.4 The forecast cumulative deficit for Bracknell Forest to 31 March 2024 is currently £24.1m, including an estimated in-year deficit of around £8.7m, and is predicted to rise to at least £45m over the coming years even with mitigations implemented to bring spending back in line with resources. This situation is primarily caused by a large growth in pupils with Education Health Care plans (EHCPs), that has been faced across the country, with the local implication of placing significant reliance on expensive provision outside the Borough, since the Council's highly-regarded Kennel Lane Special School has been at full capacity for many years. While a number of specialist resource provisions (SRPs) have been created in local schools, they are insufficient to cope with the scale and complexity of need being experienced.

5.5 It has therefore been recognised that a key element of the Council's strategy to address the needs of local pupils and young people will be to create more local capacity. Its bid for a new school for pupils with autism was approved by the DfE earlier in 2023. The school is to be built by the DfE and, although a site has been identified and approved, the Council has not yet had confirmation of the expected construction dates. It has made a proposal to take responsibility for construction itself to enable certainty around the timescale when it will open, which we understand is being considered.

5.6 Council officers have engaged with local school leaders, both Headteachers and Chairs of Governors and the Bracknell Forest Parent Carer Forum, to agree further areas of focus to ensure that overall SEND system best meets the needs of pupils and schools and identify areas where current expenditure is not felt to demonstrate value for money. This has led to a programme of activity as summarised in the pictorial below.



5.7 These workstreams are expected to lead to securing better local facilities to improve outcomes for pupils while at the same time collectively reducing costs over time. New, local facilities will inevitably take some time to be developed and a carefully planned approach will need to be taken to their opening. In the meantime, there will continue to be a reliance on other, generally more expensive school places in other local authority areas, including independent schools. The impact of the proposals and their expected financial benefit will therefore take time to be felt.

5.8 For that reason, the Council has proposed an option to secure additional funding for SEND provision by transferring resources from other parts of the Dedicated Schools

Grant, including funding for Central (Council) Services and the main Schools funding block. This is currently the subject of consultation with schools, which will run until 8 December. The results of the consultation with schools will be known by the time of the Executive's meeting but will need to be considered by the Schools Forum, which is the body of representative Headteachers responsible for recommending how the Dedicated Schools Grant is spent, at its meeting on 13 December.

- 5.9 The "Block Transfer" proposal recommended by the Council had regard to initial feedback from a number of primary and secondary Headteachers and includes a capped maximum 0.5% top slice of potential 2024/25 individual school budget allocations (£0.40m), reductions in discretionary budgets to fund in-year pupil growth (£0.28m) and a lower contribution from the DSG towards the Council's costs of providing central support services to schools (£0.26m). The last of these transfers adds a pressure to the Council's general fund budget and options are being looked at to mitigate this. The significance of the block transfer proposal, that was clearly signposted in the Safety Valve invitation letter from the DfE, is that it secures additional funding for SEND budgets from 2024/25 while the initiatives outlined under paragraph 5.6 are implemented to reduce costs over time.
- 5.10 At the time of this report's publication, Council officers have identified a potential route to reaching a balanced in-year DSG position by 2029/30 through implementation of the activities outlined in this report. This is slightly beyond the DfE's expectation of a five-year plan. Discussions on this are continuing in an effort to reach a position likely to be acceptable to the DfE prior to the required submission of an initial Safety Valve proposal by 15 December.
- 5.11 As indicated in paragraph 3.2, the latest position will be set out for the Executive's consideration in a supplementary Annex B in advance of the meeting.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty upon the Council to secure sufficient schools to provide primary and secondary education in its area and it should have particular regard to securing special education provision. Following the enactment of The Children and Families Act 2014, the Council retains responsibility for commissioning services for children and young people with SEN or a disability. It is required to keep the provision for children and young people with SEN or disabilities under review, including its sufficiency (Section 315 of the Education Act 1996), and to promote wellbeing and improve quality, working in conjunction with parents, young people and providers. This Act and its associated guidance is clear that, when considering any re-organisation of provision, it must be clear how it is satisfied that the proposed alternative arrangements will lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with SEN or a disability. A final agreement for funding will be entered into in due course with the DfE. The Council's legal team will advise on the terms prior to its execution.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 The Executive Director: Resources in his capacity as the Council's s151 officer has been closely involved in the preparation of the proposals outlined in this report that will be submitted to the DfE for consideration, subject to the Executive's approval. The Council's involvement in the Safety Valve programme will inevitably have material financial implications for Bracknell Forest. These will include funding activities to reduce current SEND expenditure that will require investment to ensure

they are successfully delivered, identifying savings in general fund services to absorb the release of grant funding for SEND services and setting aside resources to cover the Council's identified share of the accumulated DSG deficit. The scale of these financial consequences is still being assessed through on-going discussions with the DfE's Safety Valve team but will need to be clarified and reported to this meeting of the Executive.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 School Leaders have been involved in reviewing options for inclusion in the Council's Safety Valve proposals.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 A full EQIA will be completed for the Council's proposed Safety Valve proposals and submitted to the Executive alongside Annex B. An EQIA for the proposed Block Transfer / Top Slice that is subject to consultation with schools has been completed.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 The level of the deficit on the Dedicated Schools Grant due to rising costs in recent years of SEND services represents the most serious financial threat the Council faces. Participation in the Safety Valve programme provides the impetus to address this through the identification of mitigations that both reduce costs and maintain a focus on educational outcomes, while offering the opportunity to secure both revenue and capital grant funding from the DfE that is not available to authorities outside Safety Valve.

Climate Change and Ecological Impacts

- 6.6 There are no immediate implications, however the creation of additional provision within the Bracknell Forest boundary will reduce CO₂ emissions through reducing the need for home to school transport to educational facilities in neighbouring boroughs and beyond.

Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 6.7 The Council's recently approved SEND strategy includes a focus on providing additional school places within Bracknell Forest, that would significantly reduce travelling time for children who require specialist places whose needs cannot currently be met within the Borough. In most instances this will have a positive impact on the health and well-being of those pupils.

Background Papers

Bracknell Forest Council's invitation from DfE to participate in the Safety Valve Intervention Programme – Annex A

Contact for further information

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To: THE EXECUTIVE
Date: 12 December 2023

Building Maintenance and Repair Service Contract Executive Director: Delivery

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to commence with the procurement process, to appoint a single organisation to provide 24 hour Building Maintenance and Reactive Repairs Services across the portfolio of buildings in Bracknell.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. That the Executive approves the Strategic Procurement Plan set out in Appendix A to tender the services for a single organisation to provide 24 hour Building Maintenance and Reactive Repairs Services for the Councils corporate stock and buy back schools.

3. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

3.1. Contract Standing Orders

The value of this agreement will exceed the relevant PCR threshold. The Contract Standing Orders explain that a contract of such value is required to go to a formal tendering process to ensure value for money and compliance with current legislation. This is to ensure a fair and non-discriminatory competitive process, and equal treatment of all potential suppliers and contractors.

- 3.2. It is a requirement of the contract standing orders that the executive approve any strategic procurement plan with a value more than £1m. This decision seeks approval for the procurement process.

4. Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1. Framework options were explored however, none were a suitable match.
- 4.2. Partnerships with neighbouring authorities were considered, however, it was found that the closest authorities had different methods of operation or used DLO's (direct labour organisations) making them unsuitable. An Inter Authority Agreement would also need to be put in place which could take a year to complete.

5. Supporting Information

5.1. Current arrangement

The current contract for Building Maintenance and Reactive Repair Services contract has been in place since 3rd February 2020, which has been successfully carried out.

KPI's have been met, which are set out within the contract and achieved good customer feedback.

The contract was based on a fixed price for the 3 years with an option to extend for a further 2 year from 2023 until 2nd February 2025.

On the 9th February 2023, the Council granted an extension to the current contractor for 1 further year, which expires on 2nd February 2024, however there is an option to extend for a further year. Based on the current provider KPI's and performance the Council would extend the contact for a further year and therefore the contract would expire on 1 February 2025.

5.2. The Portfolio

The portfolio includes Schools (that purchase a schools Service Level Agreement), Libraries, Youth & Community Centres, Children & Adult Services premises, Housing Properties, and all other buildings owned and managed by Bracknell Forest Council. There are 591 locations throughout Bracknell.

5.3. Timescales

Milestone	Approximate Date
Publish adverts in Contracts Finder and Southeast Business Portal	January 2024
Deadline for returning Selection Questionnaires	Early March 2024
Issue Invitation to Tender to shortlisted suppliers	May 2024
Receive Response from Tenderers	July 2024
Contract Award/Preferred Bidder	Late September 2024
End of standstill period	Early October 2024
Mobilisation Period from	November / December 2024
Contract Start Date	1 st February 2025

The contract will operate for a maximum of 10 years (5+3+2) years. This is initially set for 5 years, depending on KPI performance a further 3+2 years can be awarded after the 5th year.

5.4. Financial Analysis

As set out in the Strategic Procurement Plan.

5.5. Contract Award

The award of contract will be via a report to the Executive Director of Delivery and the Executive Member for Finance and Business Change in Late September 2024.

This will be a Key Decision.

6. Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

6.1. Shown in Appendix A.

Financial Advice

6.2. Shown in Appendix A

Procurement Advice

6.3. Shown in Appendix A

6.4. Other Consultation Responses

Strategic Procurement Group

7. Equalities

7.1. Equalities Impact Assessment

Attached as Appendix B

7.2. Equalities Monitoring

On-going equalities monitoring will form part of regular contract management.

8. Strategic Risk Management Issues

Issue	Risk	Comment
Capital Cost Risk	Medium	Costs for servicing and repairs are likely to significantly increased during the currency of the contract, these costs have been factored in the overall forecast cost breakdown under item 5.4.1.
Procurement Risk	Low	The contract will be procured through a Contracts Finder and Southeast Business Portal's and one supplier will be appointed through formal process.
Programme Risk	Low	BFC already has an agreement in place with the incumbent provider and this could be extended if there is a delay in procuring a new supplier.

9. Background Papers

Appendix A – Strategic Procurement Plan (confidential)

Appendix B – Initial Equalities Screening Record

Contact for further information

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By virtue of
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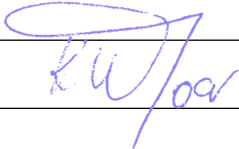
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Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening:	Directorate: Delivery	Section: Property	
1. Activity to be assessed	Procurement of Measured Term Contractor		
2. What is the activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input type="checkbox"/> New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing		
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Alex Bennett		
5. Who are the members of the screening team?	Alex Bennett & Julian Munday		
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	Please briefly describe its aims, objectives and main activities as relevant. Term Service Contractor to provide building maintenance and repair to the Bracknell Forest Council property portfolio. The contract will also have provision for the addition of project works where appropriate.		
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	ALL		
Protected Characteristics	Please tick yes or no		Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.
			What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc Please add a narrative to justify your claims around impacts and describe the analysis and interpretation of evidence to support your conclusion as this will inform members decision making, include consultation results/satisfaction information/equality monitoring data
8. Disability Equality – this can include physical, mental health, learning or sensory disabilities and includes conditions such as dementia as well as hearing or sight impairment.	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.
9. Racial equality	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.
10. Gender equality	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.

11. Sexual orientation equality	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.	
12. Gender re-assignment	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.	
13. Age equality	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.	
14. Religion and belief equality	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.	
15. Pregnancy and maternity equality	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.	
16. Marriage and civil partnership equality	Y	N	No impact as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.	
17. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders, armed forces communities) and on promoting good community relations.	N/A			
18. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A			
19. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	N/A			
20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	<u>N</u>		

21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	N/A		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	<u>N</u>	Not required as the procurement of the contract is open to all contractors within the UK.
23. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Throughout the duration of this agreement the supplier shall and in addition shall ensure that its sub-contractors shall discharge their obligations under this agreement with their responsibilities under the provision of the Equalities Act 2010. Sex Discrimination Act 1995 and Codes of Practice Issued by the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equalities and the Disability Rights Commission and shall in addition discharge its obligations under this Agreement and provide the Goods or Services in a manner consistent with the Contracting Authority's Equal and Diverse Policy Statement.	Duration of contract	Contract Administrator and Contract Manager.	Accepted for extension of contract
NA	NA	NA	NA
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	An action plan is not required but the evaluation team will ensure all requirements are made clear in the Specification of the Invitation to Tender documents, so the successful contractor will already have been made aware of any obligations.		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	NA		
26. Assistant director's signature.	Signature: 		Date: 18/09/23

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To: **Executive**
12 December 2023

Procurement of Neutral Agency Vendor/Specialist Providers of Agency Staff

Executive Director: Resources

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The Council's contract to engage agency staff through its current neutral vendor contract with Matrix expires on 31 March 2025. Agreement is needed at this time on the approach to securing a suitable arrangement to put in place from 1 April 2025, subject to procurement.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 For Executive to approve the re-procurement of a neutral vendor contract to provide the Council with agency staff in accordance with the strategic procurement plan attached as Appendix A to this report.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Council spends in excess of £7M a year on agency staff, of which on-contract spend through Matrix currently accounts for between 65 and 70% of the total spend. Whilst generally successful, the contract with Matrix (and any neutral vendor) will have gaps in their ability to provide all the Council's agency worker needs due to the specialist nature of some roles.

It is recommended that procurement is split into three Lots to address the current issues with recruiting specialist social care and education roles under a neutral agency vendor arrangement. It is intended that this approach will reduce the overall costs to the council through more on-contract spending and higher levels of fulfilment thus improving compliance and governance around agency worker recruitment.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 Procure software but manage the service internally. This is a significant change, though it has been done elsewhere.
- 4.2 Collaboration with neighbouring authorities to create greater economies of scale, but this would require neighbouring authorities to be undertaking procurement at the same time as Bracknell.
- 4.3 Re-procurement of a single neutral agency vendor for all agency worker recruitment, which is our current arrangement.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 Our current neutral agency vendor provider is through Matrix SCM Limited (Matrix) who are contracted to supply both temporary and permanent staff. This contract terminates on 31 March 2025. Matrix should be recruiting managers' first choice for recruiting all temporary/agency workers. Matrix are an umbrella organisation which provides agency staff from a bank of agencies who sign up to the agreed terms and conditions, they do not supply staff directly. It can be evidenced that there are occasions when recruiting managers go directly to agencies outside the Matrix

contract agency workers either as a first choice or when Matrix have not been able to fill their vacancies. Where identified, these agencies can be approached to see if they will come under the Matrix umbrella of terms and conditions, but this is often resisted as the terms are not as favourable to them as Bracknell sourcing staff directly with them.

5.2 Engagement with Managers & Key Stakeholders

Bracknell Forest managers have been engaged through a survey to all managers and focus groups to gather their views on using the current Matrix service. From this engagement summarised in points 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 below are the strengths, weaknesses and manager requirements from future agency worker providers.

5.2.1 *Strengths of current service*

The engagement survey to all managers showed that:

- 80% of respondents were aware of the internal process for engaging agency workers.
- 73.5% of respondents used Matrix for the agency recruitment.
- 82% considered the quality of service provided by Matrix to be either Average or Above Average

From the survey and focus groups the key strengths of the current service provided by Matrix have been identified as:

- Matrix provides a single point of contact for agency staff; with 24/7 availability of the service and a streamlined ordering process enabling vacancies to be sent to multiple agencies through a single process.
- All pre-employment checks are through the supplying agencies, with all the information easily accessible which saves time with the internal pre-employment check process.
- All agencies that are signed up to Matrix have been checked to ensure that they meet minimum requirements in terms of safeguarding, insurance and legislation.
- The system is automated with email reminders, etc which is considered to be useful and timesheets are easy to sign off.
- The pre-employment checks being completed in advance saves recruiting managers time and they find reassuring.

5.2.2 *Weaknesses of current service*

- Inability to fulfil specialist roles e.g. Principal Procurement Officers, some Social Care Roles, SEND Officers and Education Psychologists, IT specialists in technical architecture, lawyers, mental health practitioners.
- Agency workers can only be extended for 12 weeks (84 days) at a time. Whilst this is perceived as an issue by recruiting managers there is an advantage to the Council as it provides an awareness of the length of time an agency worker has been in post.

- Recruiting managers have experienced difficulties with amending elements of a post once it has been set up such as changes to salary and timesheet approvers.
- CVs being sent across for the same recruiting manager multiple times.
- The lack of understanding of the roles at Bracknell with some agencies supplying CVs of applicants without appearing to fully understand the requirements of the role. High volumes of CVs, which are in excess of the cap of applications has also been an issue.
- Response time to queries raised is too long, resulting in recruiting managers and the resourcing team who are supporting them having to chase for responses.
- Managers report that they do not find the system easy to use at the interview stage with difficulties reported with identifying contact details to arrange interviews and, in some instances, losing suitable applicants due to the delay in arranging interviews.

These areas for improvement will be addressed as part of the specification to tenders and the tender evaluation process.

5.2.3 **Requirements from Agency Worker Providers**

- Recruiting managers have requested clearer pricing from a future provider to better understand costs and added fees as well as implications of the Agency Worker Regulations (AWR). This will be addressed through the procurement process and the specification.
- Extending the search pool outside Matrix to provide a better pool of applicants especially for those posts which are evidenced as hard to fill through the exiting neutral agency vendor provision. This has been addressed by splitting the procurement into three Lots.
- Management of agencies to monitor performance levels against contract, to ensure compliance with Council policy requirements, and to ensure the optimal supply chain to meet Council needs.

5.2.4 **Finance Requirements**

- Invoices that are easy to understand.
- It would be useful to have a better understanding of salaries, hourly rates.
- Checks against the weekly invoice submitted from Matrix against reports that are generated from the system.

5.3 Off Contract spend has increased since the Matrix contract commenced in April 2021 and the manager survey showed that 50% of respondents have used agencies outside of the contract with Matrix. To gain a better understanding of why this is happening recruiting managers have been consulted on the use of off-contract agencies, with the following outcomes:

- Recruiting managers are reporting that by going directly to a local agency they can have face to face meetings with the agency provider to explain expectations and built rapport which results in a good quality of applicants submitted.
- The increase in specialist agencies makes agency recruitment easier as one agency can meet the agency worker need for a specific department.

However, despite many managers taking this approach there are also disadvantages they have been identified from this approach, which are:

- This approach is more time consuming as discussions need to be held with agencies and contract set up.
- Cost implications and difficulties with setting up billing and monitoring spend.

5.4 We pay Matrix for each temporary contractor engaged and the fee is calculated at .12p an hour. For the period 2022/23 Matrix's total fee was £28,374.

5.5 The table below shows contract spend with Matrix for the past 4 years:

Financial Year	Matrix Spend
2019-20	£4,525,409
2020-21	£3,869,866
2021-22	£3,659,006
2021/22	£5,060,624

5.7 The table below shows the percentage of agency spend 'on contract' with Matrix for the past two years.

Due to the nature of Off-contract agency spending, it has been difficult to obtain accurate figures, but efforts have been made to address this issue.

Financial Year	Percentage Spend On-Contract
2021-22	64%
2022-23	69%

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

6.1 Legal Advice

The contract will be procured in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

6.2 Financial Advice

The annual cost of the contract is dependent on the overall usage of agency staff and should be met from unspent staffing budgets arising from posts being vacant and managed as a whole as part of the Departmental Devolved Staffing Budget.

Whilst this procurement is not expected to deliver savings it should reduce the pressures currently being experienced on staffing budgets ensuring compliance with Financial Regulations which state staffing budgets should not be overspent.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 Key stakeholders, including Finance, Unions and the end users have been engaged with and their views are reflected in 5.4.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 An EIA and summary DPIA accompany the report. The summary DPIA has been submitted to the DPO and it is expected that a full DPIA will be required.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 The provision of a neutral agency vendor should ensure that:
- Pre-employment checks are undertaken and in place for all staff submitted via agencies. Where agency workers are working with vulnerable children or adults this will include a DBS check at the required level.
 - The approach to engaging agency workers is aligned with the Council's strategy for the retention and recruitment of permanent staff.
 - Mechanisms are available to ensure that agency worker rates can be negotiated, rather than just accepted.
 - A quick response is provided to recruitment requests.

Background Papers

Appendix A: Strategic Procurement Plan

Appendix B: EIA : [EIA - MSP 2023.docx](#)

Appendix C: DPIA: [DPIA Full - Alison with ICT.docx](#)

Contact for further information

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