

## Notice of Meeting

### Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Councillor Pickering (Chair), Councillor Welch (Vice-Chair),  
Councillors Barnard, C Eberle, Egglestone, M Forster, Haffegée,  
McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, C Thompson, Watts and Webb  
Victoria Hill, Parent Governor Representative

### Also Invited:

Councillor Megan Wright, Executive Member for Adult Services,  
Health and Housing  
Andrew Hunter, Executive Director: Place, Planning and  
Regeneration  
Carol Deans, Executive Director of Communications and  
Engagement, Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust  
Nigel Foster, Executive Director of Finance and Estates, Frimley  
Health NHS Foundation Trust



**Thursday 29 February 2024, 6.30 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.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
	To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute Members.	
2.	<b>Minutes of previous meeting</b>	5 - 8
	To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission held on 11 January 2024.	
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest and Party Whip</b>	
	<p>Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or affected interests and the nature of that interest, including the existence and nature of the party whip, 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>	

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4.	<b>Urgent Items of Business</b>	
	Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.	
5.	<b>Public Participation</b>	
	To receive submissions from members of the public which have been submitted in advance in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.	
6.	<b>Strategic Health Update - Frimley Park Hospital</b>	9 - 18
	Councillor Megan Wright, Executive Director for Adults Services, Health and Housing, Bracknell Forest Council and Andrew Hunter, Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration will provide an overview of strategic health partnership working in the Borough.  This will be followed by a presentation by Carol Deans, Director of Communications and Engagement at Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust and Nigel Foster, Executive Director of Finance and Estates at Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust about the relocation of Frimley Park Hospital.	
7.	<b>Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	19 - 26
	This report recommends the establishment of a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) between Bracknell Forest Council, Hampshire County Council and Surrey County Council to scrutinise the rebuild of Frimley Park Hospital.	
8.	<b>Council Plan Overview Report</b>	27 - 66
	Council Plan Overview Report (CPOR) covering the third quarter of 2023/24 is attached.  Members of the Commission are asked to submit technical or detailed questions in advance of the meeting.	
9.	<b>Thames Water Review Report</b>	67 - 86
	Members are asked to review the Thames Water Review Report and consider the recommendations in the covering report.	
10.	<b>Sexual Health Review Scope</b>	87 - 92
	Members are requested to agree the Sexual Health Review scope, to be undertaken by the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel.	
11.	<b>2023-2027 Overview and Scrutiny Work Plan</b>	93 - 116
	Members of the Commission are asked to agree reviews from the proposed list of topics which have been prioritised by members of the Panel. These will form the basis of the 2024-2027 Overview and Scrutiny work programme.	

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### **Date of next meeting**

The next Overview and Scrutiny Commission meeting is scheduled for 4 April 2024.

### **Forward plan and decisions taken**

Commission members are able to view upcoming decisions by looking at [Browse forward plans | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](#) and consider decisions taken since the last Commission meeting by using this link [What's newly published | Bracknell Forest Council \(bracknell-forest.gov.uk\)](#) and altering the date range.

Sound recording, photographing, filming and use of social media is permitted. Please contact Louise Connelly, 01344 353108, [kirsty.hunt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:kirsty.hunt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk), so that any special arrangements can be made.

Published: 21 February 2024

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION  
11 JANUARY 2024  
6.32 - 7.46 PM**



**Present:**

Councillors Pickering (Chair), Welch (Vice-Chair), C Eberle, M Forster, Haffeggee, McLean, C Thompson, Watts and Webb and Victoria Hill, Parent Governor Representative

**Present Virtually:**

Councillors Barnard, Egglestone and McKenzie-Boyle

**Also Present:**

Councillor Mary Temperton, Leader of the Council

Chief Executive, Susan Halliwell

Executive Director: Resources, Stuart McKellar

Executive Director: Delivery, Kevin Gibbs

Assistant Director: Democratic and Registration Services, Ann Moore

**Also Present Virtually:**

Executive Director: Place and Planning, Andrew Hunter

Executive Director: People, Grainne Siggins

**38. Minutes of previous meeting**

Previous minutes of the meeting of the Commission will be added to the agenda for 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

**39. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip**

There were no declarations of interest or indications that members would be participating while under the party whip.

**40. Urgent Items of Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

**41. Public Participation**

No submissions had been made by members of the public under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

**42. Budget Consultation**

The Leader of the Council - Councillor Mary Temperton, the Chief Executive - Susan Halliwell and the Executive Director: Resources - Stuart McKellar provided an overview of the draft capital and revenue budgets 2024/25. Details were also provided about the budget consultation this year which had included Councillors attending 'surgeries' to consult the public. 135 responses had been received so far. This was thought to be a much larger response than usual and face to face meetings with residents had also provided a good opportunity for Councillors to challenge misinformation, especially about a proposal to merge the library service with customer services, which was not planned. It was noted there had been a huge

investment in the library infrastructure over the past few years. Other ways of engaging residents with the budget consultation process in the future were discussed, including the use of personas. For example, a persona could be created for someone who was a library service user and questions and answers about 'how might changes to the library service affect me' could be posed and answered to help people relate to the budget.

Broad questions about the budget were raised including the amount of money raised from service charges within the Councils' discretion. Councillors were informed it was the intention of the Council to increase fees by 5% across the board although this would vary according to the market. An estimated income of an additional £2.1million was expected through fees and charges. Councillors queried the amount of funding the Council would receive from business rates and Mr McKellar explained about the complexity of the Business Rates Retention System. A loss of business rates from, primarily the Lexicon businesses, had resulted in a £4million deficit in the business rates for the current year. Also, central government would be introducing a different rates multiplier for small business rate payers, compared to standard business rate payers, which meant it was difficult to calculate the impact but the approximate £4million deficit, which was forecast in the collection budget this year, had impacted the overall budget for 2024/25. Mitigations were being considered including the use of reserve monies.

A number of questions were asked regarding the capital part of the budget including the maintenance of Council buildings in the borough. Councillors also asked a broad range of questions on the revenue part of the budget including investment in repairing potholes; cutting grass verges; changes to waste disposal; dimming of streetlights; changes to Forestcare service provision; the number of people using the mobile library and its impact environmentally, value for money in regard to leisure service contracts; investment in continuing professional development for staff and lessons learnt regarding the write off of unrecoverable rent arrears.

Following a discussion four recommendations were proposed by Councillor McLean be put forward to the Executive for consideration as part of the budget consultation exercise and were seconded by the Chair, Councillor Pickering.

**Recommendations:**

- 1) To reconsider dimming streetlights; not cutting grass verges as frequently and reducing the number of litter bins available around the borough.
- 2) To consider providing additional funding to maintain, and potentially increase, CCTV to deter fly tipping in the borough.
- 3) To make an agreement with Silva Homes to allow for a consistent approach to the cutting of grass verges throughout the borough.
- 4) To adopt a set of representative 'personas' to better explain to residents the impact of the proposals in future budget consultations.

It was noted Councillor Haffegge did not agree with all of the proposed recommendations. Therefore, this has been noted as a formal objection to recommendation 1.

It was noted the members of the Conservative Group would be submitting a separate response to the Council in relation to the draft budget.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Mary Temperton, committed to ensuring the Executive would give full consideration to the four recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

**RESOLVED** that the four recommendations be sent to the Executive to consider at its meeting on 23 January.

43. **Work Programme Update**

An update on the work programme was provided by each of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairs which included:

- The Chair of the Environment and Communities, Councillor Christoph Eberle, informed members of the Commission that all investigative work into the Thames Water review had been undertaken. Members of the Panel had agreed recommendations at a public meeting and the review report was being drafted and would be presented at the next meeting of the Commission.
- The Chair of the Health and Care Panel, Councillor Egglestone, informed members of the Commission that she had attended a meeting regarding the rebuilding of Frimley Park Hospital and a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be required between Bracknell Forest Council and other local authorities affected. Also, a meeting of the Panel had been scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> January to discuss a review into Sexual Health and the scope would be brought to the next Commission meeting for approval.
- The Chair of the Children, Skills and Growth Panel, Councillor Cath Thompson, informed members of the Commission she was meeting with the Executive Director: People next week to discuss potential review topics ahead of a Panel meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> January at which members of the Panel would identify their first review topic.

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## BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL

<b>Decision Committee:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Commission
<b>Date:</b>	29 February 2024
<b>Title:</b>	A new hospital to replace Frimley Park Hospital
<b>Report From:</b>	Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust

<b>Contact name:</b>	Carol Deans, Director of Communications and Engagement
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### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Commission on the recent public engagement undertaken by Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust and the Frimley Integrated Care System (known as NHS Frimley) on the development of criteria to evaluate a shortlist of possible sites for a new hospital.

### Recommendation(s)

2. Members are asked to note the need for a new site location for the replacement Frimley Park Hospital and the key findings in the new hospital public engagement report.

### Executive Summary

3. Frimley Park Hospital needs to be replaced by 2030 because it was built in the 1970s using Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), which makes up around 65 per cent of the current hospital.
4. Building on the current site is not a viable option. It would require a phased demolition and rebuild on an already congested site, causing significant disruption to our patients, staff, and hospital services, as well as being more expensive. Most importantly, however, it would be impossible to complete a phased build by the 2030 deadline.
5. We are actively looking at alternative locations for a replacement for Frimley Park Hospital.

6. The Trust developed draft site evaluation criteria and has sought the views of patients, staff, volunteers, local communities and other stakeholders on what is important about the site for the new hospital, and why.
7. The Trust opened this initial public engagement period on Thursday 24 November 2023 and closed it at midnight on Sunday 7 January 2024.
8. Recognising that the location and/or time of in-person events may not be convenient for everyone, particularly those who travel further to visit the hospital, virtual Q&A events were arranged. In addition, communications activities throughout the engagement period directed people towards an online survey to provide their views and feedback, which were also captured during in-person engagement events. A total of **3,399** online responses were received.
9. The majority of people responding to the online survey were members of the public (72%), followed by Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust staff (25%). There was a good cross section of demographics responding to the survey, broadly representative of the local area.
10. The Trust commissioned a local research agency to produce an independent report on the findings of the public engagement and to highlight key themes.
11. Information about how the feedback has been considered and next steps for the new hospital project will be summarised in a public document and published in the spring.
12. In recognition of FHFT's main catchment covering three local authority areas, it is for the local scrutiny committees to decide to form a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in line with The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 – regulation 23 (1) and 30(5).

## **Contextual information**

13. We are delighted that we have been included in the government's New Hospital Programme, which will see us build a new state-of-the-art replacement for Frimley Park Hospital by 2030.
14. Frimley Park Hospital needs to be replaced because it was built in the 1970s using Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC), which makes up around 65 per cent of the current hospital.
15. The Department of Health and Social Care requires the NHS to stop using hospital buildings constructed from RAAC by 2035 but has set a deadline of 2030 for the seven most affected hospitals, which includes Frimley Park.
16. This is an incredibly challenging timescale and we are progressing a number of workstreams at significant pace, working closely with our NHS partners, local

authorities, patients, communities and staff to ensure that the new hospital is ready by 2030.

### **A new site for the new hospital**

17. Our current hospital has around 7,000 RAAC planks, including in some of our most critical areas: operating theatres, the intensive care unit, wards, and corridors. These are constantly monitored and safety works undertaken to ensure that we maintain a safe environment.
18. Alongside our clinical teams and advisors, we considered whether attempting to build a new hospital on our current site was a viable option. However, it would require a phased demolition and rebuild on a site which is already congested, causing significant disruption to our patients, staff, and hospital services, as well as being more expensive. Most importantly, however, it would be impossible to complete a phased build by our deadline of 2030.
19. Due to the safety imperative to rebuild the hospital, we identified a 'preferred way forward' which is to have a new hospital on a new (yet to be identified) site that can deliver improved patient care and experience and meet the future health and care needs of the local and wider population.
20. In addition to the issues with our infrastructure, our current site does not meet the modern standards in hospital design. Moreover, we cannot provide the standard of care for our communities that we want to.
21. We know that we can improve these areas through a new development:
  - separating the flow of people through the building where possible: this will help patients and staff get where they need to be, as quickly and easily as possible
  - operating unplanned emergency services and planned services on the same site, but separately, which helps us to maintain capacity for planned care
  - significantly increasing the number of single rooms, which will meet modern hospital standards and improve privacy and dignity for our patients and take on board learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic around improved infection prevention and control
  - reducing infection prevention and control risks caused by our current high number of bedded bays which don't meet the modern requirements for bed spacing
  - consolidating our outpatient areas to make the best use of the space available to us, which will also minimise the amount of unnecessary walking around the site for our patients and staff

- locating all our planned surgery in the same place, making our services more efficient
- making sure appropriate clinical services are located next to each other to support the sharing of expertise and streamlining joint working to provide the highest quality clinical care, for example making sure vascular, cardiology and stroke services are adjacent to each other
- ensuring our offices and other supporting accommodation are located in the most appropriate space to support our clinical services
- improving all our environments for our patients, their visitors, and our staff and volunteers
- improving our digital infrastructure, including providing services virtually for those patients who do not need to attend an appointment in person
- improving energy efficiency and sustainability through supporting the ambition to deliver 'net zero carbon' for the replacement hospital
- create efficiencies in procurement and construction through use of modern methods of construction.

22. NHS capacity and demand modelling shows that the new hospital will need to have more beds and a footprint twice as large as the current hospital to accommodate more single rooms – developing a new hospital on a new site also allows for growth in the future and would enable us to improve integrated working by potentially enabling some of our partners to join us on the site.

## **Evaluating possible sites for the location of a new hospital**

23. The Trust undertook a period of public engagement on the development of the site evaluation criteria.
24. The aim of the engagement was to collect a wide range of views on how to best evaluate potential sites, whether the identified criteria required further refinement and if anything was missing from them.
25. Information about how the feedback has been considered and next steps for the project will be summarised and published in the spring.

## **Promoting the engagement period**

26. Throughout the engagement period, the Frimley Health and the NHS Frimley communications and engagement teams rolled out a thorough engagement plan to promote the engagement opportunities.
27. This included use of the full range of core networks and channels (such as press release, websites, social media, emails), as well as WhatsApp promotional messages and voice notes to community and faith leaders. Partner organisations and MPs were requested to promote the engagement through their channels, and information was emailed to Frimley Health's Foundation Trust membership. Collateral (flyers, posters and pull-up banners) was circulated within the local community - across Frimley Health site locations, community centres and local shops.
28. To ensure engagement activities reached as many people as possible, demographics that were less responsive to the survey were targeted with paid for social media adverts, and further engagement was undertaken with local community groups.

## **Engagement activities**

29. An online survey on the draft criteria was developed to ensure the Trust heard from as many patients, communities, and staff as possible.

This comprised 16 questions in total – with 10 specifically about the criteria, which itself included seven free text questions.

The survey, information, FAQs and an online exhibition were hosted on an online portal provided by the NHS Frimley. It was also available on the Trust's website and internal intranet.

30. Various public in-person and virtual listening events were held:
  - Two in-person engagement events were held (one during the afternoon and one in the evening). Participants were given the opportunity to find out more about the project and join facilitated breakout sessions with scribes to note down all discussions related to the criteria.
  - Two virtual events (one at lunchtime and one in the early evening) were held with a presentation followed by a Q&A with the new hospital project's senior responsible officer (SRO) and director of communications and engagement.
  - An in-person drop-in session was also held in an evening, providing a chance for the public to find out more about the plans and draft criteria and ask questions, or raise concerns, directly with the project team.

31. The Trust engaged with existing groups and forums and ran pop-up information stands in key community locations:

- The Trust attended existing groups and forums to provide relevant and accessible information for discussion and dissemination, and to ensure opportunities to engage with the work was provided in key meetings.
- Eight pop-up information stands were set-up in foyers across NHS sites and in community hotspots (such as shopping centres, garden centres and leisure centres) in Bracknell, Surrey and Hampshire, providing opportunities to discuss the project and promote the online survey. The Trust's communications and engagement team was supported by governors at some of these pop-ups.

32. Two all staff events were held by the Trust and the project team joining numerous existing internal meetings:

- Frimley Health staff were invited to attend in-person and virtual events to support the development and refinement of the criteria and to hear more about the project. This included the opportunity to vote online on various aspects to do with the criteria using 'Mentimeter', an online platform that allows for real-time feedback.
- The project team joined numerous existing internal meetings and events to discuss the new hospital and to encourage people to complete the online survey.

## **Responses and findings: online survey**

33. The Trust commissioned a local research agency to produce an independent report on the findings of the public engagement and to highlight key themes.

34. A total of **3,399** online responses were received between Friday 24 November 2023 and Monday 8 January 2024.

- The majority of people responding were members of the public (72%), followed by staff at Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust (25%).
- There was a good cross section of demographics responding to the survey, broadly representative of the local area.
- Two-fifths of respondents lived in North East Hampshire and Farnham (39%), with three in 10 living in Surrey Heath (31%). One in five respondents lived in Bracknell (19%) and 3% in Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM). The remaining respondents lived elsewhere (8%).

- These proportions closely reflect the population that Frimley Park served in 2023: Hampshire: 41%, Surrey: 37%, Bracknell Forest: 17%, RBWM: 4%
- The majority of respondents were white (94%). Recognising the importance of engaging all segments of the community, the Trust and NHS Frimley communications and engagement teams implemented targeted efforts to engage ethnic minorities. Proactive measures, such as reaching out to community and faith leaders via WhatsApp and engaging Chaplaincy teams, were employed. These leaders were asked for their support in sharing the online survey within their networks.
- In light of the feedback and recognising the imperative to further enhance equity in engagement, the Trust and NHS Frimley are dedicated to creating more opportunities for underserved communities to participate in the project. A set of guiding principles designed to guide the communication and engagement processes for equality, diversity and accessibility is currently in development. Comprehensive local population health data, encompassing factors such as ethnicity, gender, geography, deprivation, and health status, forms the basis of our data driven approach. This ensures that our engagement efforts are tailored to the unique needs of the diverse Frimley population.
- Future initiatives include inviting community and faith leaders to one-to-one briefings, fostering a deeper and more personal connection with these communities and working with well-established community groups and charities. This commitment underlines ongoing efforts to ensure that the voices of all members of our community are listened to and considered as part of the development of the new Frimley Park Hospital.

### **35. Site location – key findings include:**

Respondents from all areas said that access by car was the most important criteria when considering site location. This was followed by distance from the current site and access by public transport. One quarter said that all criteria listed were equally important. For NE Hants/Farnham, access by public transport (33%) was more important than distance from the current site (31%).

The main reasons given for saying each of the listed site location criteria were important centred mainly around accessibility. When asked what site location criteria was missing from the list provided, the main ones were about car parking – even though it was part of the criteria listed, respondents thought it was worth mentioning as its own separate entity.

### 36. **Planning and restrictions – key findings include:**

Half of respondents from all areas (47-51%) said that all the listed criteria were equally important when considering planning and restrictions around the new site. Of those providing a specific criterion, most from all areas said the expansion potential (35% - 45%).

The main reason why criteria was mentioned as most important regarding planning and restrictions concerned the thought of future proofing the new site given population demands.

Car parking was thought to be missing from the list of key criteria when considering planning and restrictions for the new site, followed by the availability of appropriate land.

### **Purchasing the site – key findings include:**

Two-thirds of respondents from all areas thought that all the site purchase criteria listed were equally important.

When asked for reasons why they had rated specific purchase criteria important, the main reason from all areas was to consider appropriate land.

## **Responses and findings: Engagement sessions**

37. A number of formal and informal engagement sessions were conducted with staff and stakeholders, members of the public and the local community. We have listed the key points and themes that arose from those sessions.

38. 562 people joined the all-staff engagement sessions, and 106 joined the public online and in-person sessions.

39. Key themes from the engagement with members of the public include:

- **Access to key highways:** Distance from the site for both ambulance access and the impact the surrounding area may have on journey times, therefore the distance from key highways to improve access and journey times is key.
- **Parking:** People want to see more investment in parking and car parking circuits; bus companies should be partnered with to improve park and ride if parking nearby is an issue.
- **Road infrastructure:** The road infrastructure needs to be considered to ensure that accessing the hospital does not cause excessive traffic for residents and the surrounding area.



- **Sustainability:** Consideration on the impact of pollution by the new hospital; this included pollution from increased traffic in the area, and increased noise/light pollution from more traffic in the area.
- **Building structure:** Questions on the height of the building; some were concerned that the hospital may be built too high and would like to see more clarity on the proposed plans.

#### 40. Key themes from the engagement with staff members include:

- **Sustainability:** Ensuring the new site will focus on being sustainable in terms of net zero and its transportation links and active travel.
- **Parking:** There should be a park and ride to reduce traffic, but adequate staff parking should also be reiterated as it should be available for all staff, not just a proportion.
- **Access:** multiple access points so that delivery trucks, ambulances, staff and patients are not utilising the same access point.

### Next steps

41. Information about how the feedback has been considered and next steps for the new hospital project will be summarised in a public document and published in the spring.
42. The Trust and NHS Frimley will support the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, that is being proposed elsewhere on this meeting's agenda, to ensure it is able to begin scrutinising the new Frimley Park hospital processes and plans as soon as feasible.

### Conclusions

43. Potential sites are being identified based on the final evaluation criteria.
44. The Trust will continue to engage with the public, patients and staff to ensure its communities remain up-to-date with the latest news and updates on the new hospital project.
45. Recognising the Trust needs to move forward with plans to identify a preferred site swiftly, it will continue to engage with overview and scrutiny committees separately until the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been formed.

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**TO: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION**  
**29 February 2024**

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

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks to inform Commission members about the proposed establishment of a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC).

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That Commission members recommend to the Executive the establishment of Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, jointly with Hampshire County Council and Surrey County Council, to scrutinise the relocation of Frimley Park Hospital.**
- 2.2 **That Commission members approve the Draft Terms of Reference for the JHOSC.**
- 2.3 **That Commission members recommend the Executive appoint representatives to the JHOSC who are members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

#### **4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 None

#### **5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

5.1 The JHOSC will operate formally as a statutory committee. The purpose of the JHOSC and its proposed operating procedures are outlined in **Appendix A** 'Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Frimley Park) Draft Terms of Reference.'

5.2 The underpinning legislation regarding health scrutiny is set out in guidance published in 2019 which guides all of our scrutiny arrangements currently [Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils and combined authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/overview-and-scrutiny-statutory-guidance-for-councils-and-combined-authorities)

5.3 A new set of health scrutiny regulations will come into force at the end of January 2024. These will include statutory guidance for health scrutiny which is likely to be more general in scope although the details are yet to be released. It also allows for the Secretary of State the power to intervene on commissioning arrangements. Given the consultation process for Frimley Park Hospital has already begun it could be assumed it will be carried out under the old regulations, which gives more weight to health scrutiny than the new regulations are likely to do so. [BLOG: DHSC confirms new health scrutiny arrangements to start in January - Centre for Governance and Scrutiny \(cfgs.org.uk\)](https://www.cfgs.org.uk/news/blog/dhsc-confirms-new-health-scrutiny-arrangements-to-start-in-january)

5.4 In lieu of publication of statutory guidance being published by the Secretary of State in relation to new service configurations the Department of Health, Local Government Association and Centre for Public Scrutiny have published guidance which includes describing how Integrated Care Board, Integrated Care Partnerships and local authority Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) arrangements will work together and it is recommended we follow this guidance, particularly when entering into any Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC). [Health overview and scrutiny committee principles - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/health-overview-and-scrutiny-committee-principles)

5.5 Guidance on what constitutes a substantial variation to current service provision can be found in this document by NHS England. However, it should be noted there is no single, accepted definition of substantial service change, although it usually involves a change to the geographical location where services are delivered. [NHS England » Planning, assuring and delivering service change for patients](https://www.nhs.uk/planning-assuring-delivering-service-change-for-patients)

#### **6. Borough Solicitor's comments**

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

#### **7. Borough Treasurer's comments**

Any proposals would need to be delivered within existing budgets.

#### **8. Equalities Impact Assessment**

None.

**9. Strategic Risk Management Issues**

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

**10. Background Papers**

None.

**11. Contact for further information**

Kevin Gibbs, Statutory Scrutiny Officer  
[Kevin.gibbs@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.gibbs@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)  
01344 355621

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

### **Purpose**

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

### **Terms of Reference**

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

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

### **Governance**

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

### **Host authority**

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

### **Membership**

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

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

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



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

### **Chair & Vice Chair**

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

### **Task & Finish Groups**

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

### **Committee support**

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

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

### **Meetings**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Reporting**

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

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

## Executive response to Overview & Scrutiny Commission on Q2 CPOR

<b>Date of Overview and Scrutiny Commission</b> 30 November 2023	
<b>Recommendations to Executive</b>	<b>Additional Officer information</b>
<b>Having reviewed the CPOR, the Commission had no recommendations for the Executive arising from the review of this quarter.</b>	Not applicable as no recommendations made.
<b>Summary of key points of discussion</b>  A number of questions were asked, and comprehensive responses were given by the Chief Executive.  It was agreed a briefing note would be circulated to all Councillors following the meeting setting out the ambition for the London Road site in response to a question about the high-level application under strategic theme 'Protecting and enhancing our environment, action 5.02.03.	
<b>Executive Outcome</b> 23 January 2024	
<b>No further update as no recommendations made</b>	

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To: **The Executive**  
**19 March 2024**

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## **Council Plan Overview Report Chief Executive**

### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To inform the Executive of the performance of the council over the third quarter of the 2023/24 financial year (October - December 2023).

### **2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 **To note the performance of the council over the period from October to December 2023 highlighted in the Overview Report in Annex A, this includes any recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny in Annex B [to be added after O&SC on 29 February].**

### **3 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 To brief the Executive on the council's performance, highlighting key areas, so that appropriate action can be taken if needed.

### **4 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 None applicable.

### **5 Supporting Information**

- 5.1 The council's performance management framework requires the preparation of Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs) by each department. These QSRs provide an update of progress and performance against departmental Service Plans and are published on the intranet.
- 5.2 The QSRs have been combined into the Council Plan Overview Report (CPOR), which brings together the progress and performance of the council as a whole. The CPOR enables the Corporate Management Team and the Councillors to review performance, highlight any exceptions and note any remedial actions that may be necessary, either from under-performing or over-performing services, across the range of council activities.
- 5.3 The current CPOR report reflects the outgoing Council Plan (2019-2023). Reporting on the new plan will commence for Q1 (April – June) 2024.
- 5.4 The CPOR performance information will also be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny. This process enables all Members to be involved in performance management. Any recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission will be included within the report for the Executive to consider.
- 5.5 The CPOR for the third quarter (October-December 2023) is shown in Annex A.
- 5.6 Key achievements during quarter three have included:
- Adoption of the Council Plan and Business Change programme for 2024-2027 with unanimous cross-party support.
  - Children in Care service maintained an 'Outstanding' rating following a focused visit from Ofsted in November.

- The first submission of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Management Plan under the Safety Valve Programme was made.
- Several public consultations were open for residents to have their say on, including the local transport plan; housing allocation; local plan; economic strategy; sports & leisure; and the draft council budget.
- In response to the Climate Change Emergency Motion, a Joint Climate Action Board has been established, overseeing ten working groups. The inaugural meeting of the Board was held in October.
- Social Prescribers & Happiness Hub collaborated for World Mental Health Day & delivered a successful 'Stay Connected this Winter' programme.

5.7 There also continue to be challenges the council is working to resolve:

- The focus on managing costs within the original budget remains a priority. Work on the 2023/24 budget continues and actions have led to an improved position since Q2.
- In addition, significant financial pressures were identified through the safety valve programme. A Management Plan has been in development to submit in Q4.
- The complexity of cases across numerous service areas in adult and children's social care is increasing and putting pressure on teams. Service delivery reviews and streamlining are helping to provide required support.
- Despite some recruitment success in Q3, difficulties remain in recruiting to roles in social care, IT, building surveyors, and engineering. This is a focus of the new business change programme, to commence in the next financial year.

## **6 Advice Received from Statutory and Other Officers**

### Legal Advice

6.1 There are no specific legal implications relevant to this report.

### Financial Advice

6.2 There are no specific finance implications relevant to this report. Key budget information is included in section two.

### Other Consultation Responses

6.3 None specific

### Equalities Impact Assessment

6.4 This report does not require an equalities impact assessment as this is a management reporting tool.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.5 There are no specific strategic risk implications relevant to this report.

### Climate Change and Ecological Implications

6.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to have no impact on emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> or ecological considerations. The reasons the Council believes that this will have no impact are that this is a management reporting tool.

### Health & Wellbeing Considerations

6.7 There are no specific health and wellbeing implications relevant to this report.

### Background Papers

[All performance reports \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

QSR – Chief Executive Office – Quarter 3 2023-24

QSR – People Directorate – Quarter 3 2023-24  
QSR – Delivery Directorate – Quarter 3 2023-24  
QSR – Resources Directorate – Quarter 3 2023-24  
QSR – Place Planning & Regeneration Directorate – Quarter 3 2023-24

Contact for further information

Katie Flint, Chief Executive's Office - 01344 352217  
[Katie.flint@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Katie.flint@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Lisa Ratcliffe, Chief Executive's Office – 01344 351718  
[Lisa.ratcliffe@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.ratcliffe@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

**Annex A – Council Plan Overview Report**

*[Attached as a separate document]*

**Annex B – Overview and Scrutiny Commission review**

*[To be added after O&SC – 29 February]*

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# COUNCIL PLAN OVERVIEW REPORT

Q3 2023 - 24

October - December 2023






Council Plan 2019-2023

Chief Executive:  
Susan Halliwell

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## Key

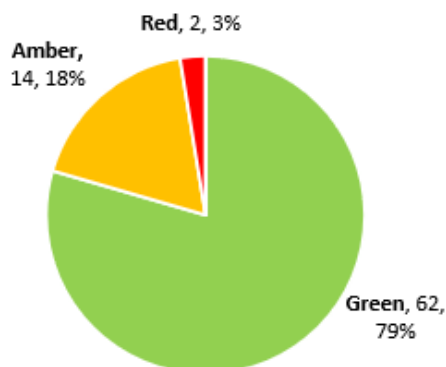
	Performance is very good
	Performance is causing concern
	Performance is weak
n/a	RAG rating not applicable
	Missing data
	Missing target

# Section 1: Chief Executive's Commentary

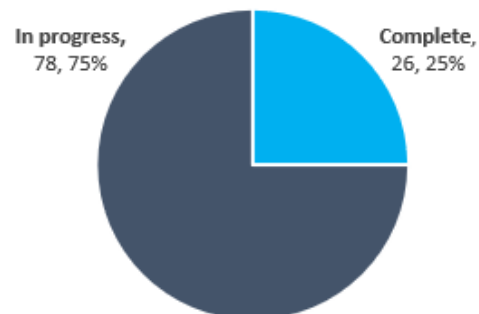
## Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out an overview of the council's performance for the third quarter of 2023/24 (October - December 2023). It reports on the progress of delivering the commitments set out in the current Council Plan (2019-2023). The purpose is to formally provide the Executive with a high-level summary of key achievements, and to highlight areas where performance was not matching targets or expectations, along with any remedial action that is being taken. It complements the detailed directorate Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs).
- 1.2 The current CPOR report reflects the outgoing Council Plan. Reporting on the new Council Plan, agreed by the meeting of full council in November, will commence for Q1 2024-2025 (April – June 2024) next summer.
- 1.3 This is the third quarterly report of the 2023/24 financial year and at the end of the third quarter there were 104 actions to be reported. Of these, 26 are now complete (25%). Of the 78 actions, in progress:
- 62 actions are green (75%)
  - 14 actions are amber (24%)
  - 2 actions are red (1%)

**Action status at Q3 2023/24**



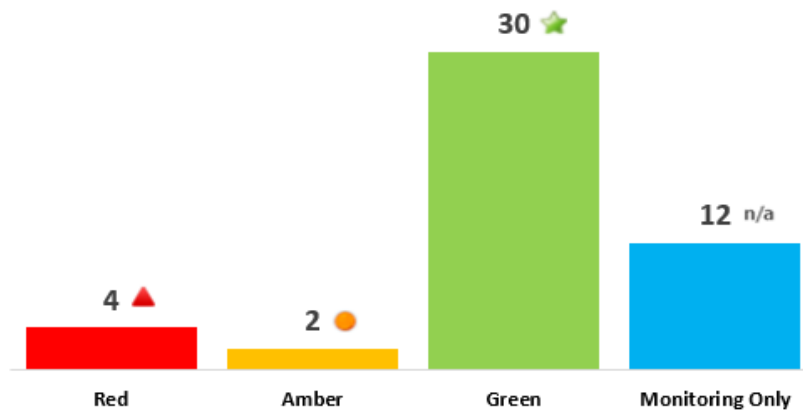
**Action progress at Q3 2023/24**



- 1.4 Section three of this report contains information on the performance indicators across the council for each of the strategic themes. Indicators have continued to be included in this quarter's CPOR, however as the majority of these were established at the start of the council plan period, in 2019, some are no longer particularly relevant to measuring the current priorities. For Q3, there were 48 indicators presented. The status for the key indicators in the Council Plan in the third quarter is:
- 30 are green (63%)
  - 2 are amber (4%)
  - 4 are red (8%)

12 indicators (25%) have no target set as they are for monitoring only, these provide intelligence about specific trends, but where a directional target may not be appropriate. There is one annual indicator under Education & Skills that became due and therefore is included in this Q3 report, that was not included in the Q2 report.

Indicators status at Q3 2023/24



1.5 The full suite of performance indicators is currently under review as part of the development of Service Plans to support the delivery of the 2024-27 Council Plan.

## Overview of Q3 and highlights



Council Plan and Business Change programme for 2024-2027 adopted by Council with unanimous cross-party support.



Ofsted 'Outstanding' rating maintained for Children in Care following focused visit in November.



Public consultations held on local transport plan, housing allocation, local plan, economic strategy, sports & leisure and draft council budget.



First submission of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Management Plan under Safety Valve Programme made.



Social Prescribers & Happiness Hub collaborated for World Mental Health Day & 'Stay Connected this Winter' programme.



Inaugural Joint Climate Action Board in October - response to the Climate Change Emergency Motion.



Successful programme of Christmas events at Lexicon, supported by free bus travel offer, increased visitors to town.



1,000 residents offered vouchers to help with cost of living as part of Household Support Fund and financial hardship plan.



The dementia forum relaunched, connecting people with dementia, carers and professionals.



Recently updated results from the Office for National Statistics show that the borough reports above average happiness in comparison to CIPFA nearest neighbours – improving significantly from 2021/22 to 2022/23.

## Challenges identified and being addressed



Continued budget challenges. However, actions have led to an improved position since Q2. The focus on managing costs within the original budget remains a priority.



Significant financial pressures were identified through the safety valve programme, a Management Plan has been in development to submit in Q4.



Increased complexity of cases across numerous service areas in adult and children's social care putting pressure on teams. Service delivery reviews and streamlining are helping to provide required support.



Despite some recruitment success in Q3, difficulties remain in recruiting to roles in social care, IT, building surveyors, and engineering. This is a focus of the new business change programme, to commence in the next financial year.



Adult Social Care are continuing to see a rise in costs of residential and nursing placements and increase in demand.



Pressures within the Reactive Highway Maintenance budget, mostly due to changing weather patterns and condition of infrastructure. Proposals to address this are included in the draft budget for 2024/25.



Cost-of-living contributing to increased service demand including welfare & housing. There is a focus on addressing the key issues identified in the Housing strategy 2023-2028.

## Section 2: Budget Position

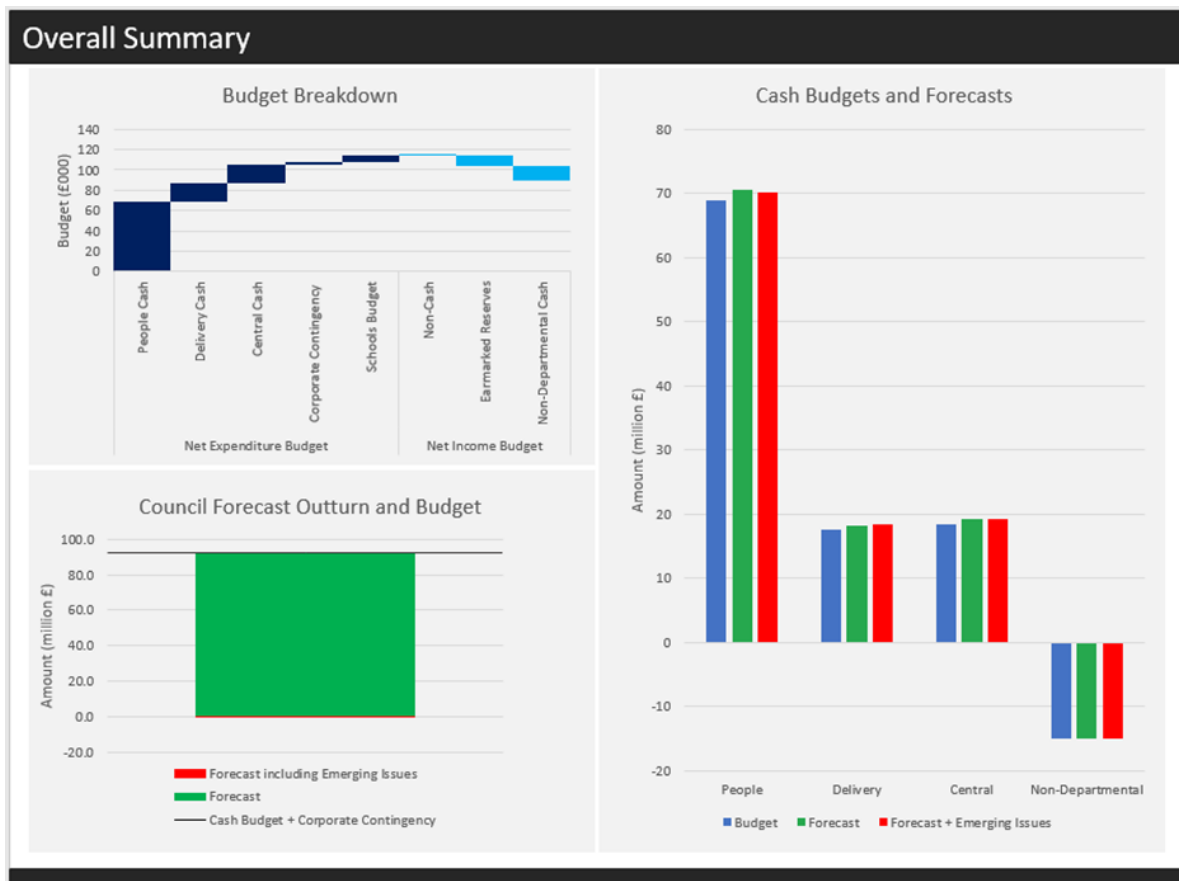
### Revenue budget monitoring

The monthly monitoring returns are set out in detail in each directorate's Quarterly Service Report (QSR). The information provided for the quarter three financial position is based on data presented to the Corporate Management Team in January 2024.

The returns provided by all directorates include a forecast variance plus any emerging issues. Across the council, variances have been identified indicating expenditure above the approved budget (£0.386m), after taking into account the balance on the Corporate Contingency (£2.662m). Once emerging issues are included, the overspend decreases to £0.254m.

This is a significant improvement on the position reported last quarter and includes the impact of the 2023/24 pay award. There are still, however, material risks that have been identified but not yet quantified that are likely to worsen the position in quarter four, so the spending controls introduced by the Corporate Management Team will continue until the end of the year.

Key information around directorate variances being reported follows.



## Summary – Assistant Director Level

	Original Cash Budget (£'000)	Virements & Budget C/Fwds (£'000)	Current Approved Cash Budget (£'000)	Variance (£'000)		Variance + Emerging issues (£'000)	
				Last Month	This Month	Last Month	This Month
Director: Place, Planning & Regeneration	8,626	1,096	9,722	774	784	893	903
Director: Resources	6,515	71	6,586	22	2	22	2
Chief Executive's Office	1,952	88	2,040	-5	5	10	14
<b>CENTRAL</b>	<b>17,093</b>	<b>1,255</b>	<b>18,348</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>791</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>919</b>
Executive Director of Delivery	230	-4	226	0	0	0	0
Assistant Director: Customer Services & ICT	12,308	-3,401	8,907	-68	-68	-68	-68
Assistant Director: Property Services	-4,774	60	-4,714	185	185	195	195
Borough Solicitor	699	8	707	35	105	85	105
Head of Democratic & Registration Services	1,976	94	2,070	0	-28	0	-28
Assistant Director: Contract Services	10,245	162	10,407	461	419	606	564
<b>DELIVERY</b>	<b>20,684</b>	<b>-3,081</b>	<b>17,603</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>768</b>
Executive Director of People	1,681	11	1,692	128	129	128	129
Education and Learning	2,542	3,431	5,973	476	756	731	756
Children's Social Care	19,927	80	20,007	569	531	569	531
Contribution to Costs from Schools Budget	-468	0	-468	-7	-7	-7	-7
Commissioning	2,957	-91	2,866	14	36	14	36
Adult Social Care	20,818	184	21,002	421	203	698	-130
Mental Health & Out of Hours	13,097	35	13,132	-84	-84	-84	-166
Early Help & Communities	4,783	-122	4,661	218	199	218	199
<b>PEOPLE</b>	<b>65,337</b>	<b>3,528</b>	<b>68,865</b>	<b>1,735</b>	<b>1,763</b>	<b>2,267</b>	<b>1,348</b>



## Summary – Assistant Director Level

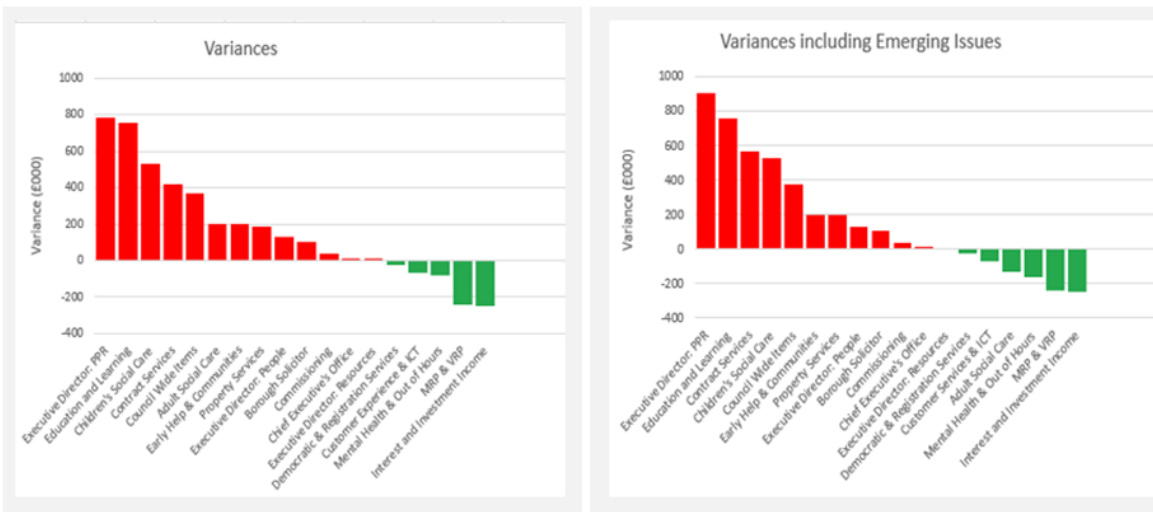
	Original Cash Budget (£'000)	Virements & Budget C/Fwds (£'000)	Current Approved Cash Budget (£'000)	Variance (£'000)		Variance + Emerging issues (£'000)	
				Last Month	This Month	Last Month	This Month
Interest and Investment Income	1,804	130	1,934	-250	-250	-250	-250
Minimum & Voluntary Revenue Provisions	2,465	61	2,526	-240	-240	-240	-240
Council Wide Items	70	-450	-380	371	371	371	371
New Homes Bonus Grant	-786	0	-786	0	0	0	0
Services Grant	-681	0	-681	0	0	0	0
Business Rates Income Growth & Grants	-10,561	0	-10,561	0	0	0	0
Transfers (to)/from DSG Adjustment Account	-7,166	0	-7,166	0	0	0	0
Other	140	0	140	0	0	0	0
<b>NON-DEPARTMENTAL</b>	<b>-14,715</b>	<b>-259</b>	<b>-14,974</b>	<b>-119</b>	<b>-119</b>	<b>-119</b>	<b>-119</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>88,399</b>	<b>1,443</b>	<b>89,842</b>	<b>3,020</b>	<b>3,048</b>	<b>3,891</b>	<b>2,916</b>

<b>CORPORATE CONTINGENCY</b>	<b>2,750</b>	<b>-28</b>	<b>2,722</b>	<b>-2,662</b>	<b>-2,662</b>	<b>-2,662</b>	<b>-2,662</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>91,149</b>	<b>1,415</b>	<b>92,564</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>254</b>

<b>EARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b>-8,482</b>	<b>-1,415</b>	<b>-9,897</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>82,667</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>82,667</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>254</b>

<b>NON-CASH BUDGETS</b>	<b>-546</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-546</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>SCHOOL BUDGET</b>	<b>7,166</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,166</b>				
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>89,287</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89,287</b>				

## Cash Budget Summary



## Cash Budget Summary – New Variances and Emerging Issues

The variances reported by directorates indicate expenditure above the approved budget (£0.386m), after taking into account the balance on the Corporate Contingency (£2.662m). Once Emerging Issues are included the potential overspend reduces to £0.254m. This is a deterioration of £0.028m on reported variances and an improvement of £0.975m including Emerging Issues since last month.

### CENTRAL

#### Significant Variances

##### Resources

- The previously reported under recovery of income from Academies for HR services has been reduced from £0.030m to £0.010m (-£0.020m).

#### Significant Emerging Issues

- Nothing significant to report.

### DELIVERY

#### Significant Variances

- The previously reported Emerging Issue relating to legal support for SEN services has been transferred to a reported variance and increased in line with forecast spend to the end of the financial year (£0.070m). The overall overspend relating to these additional legal costs is now £0.120m.
- Previous years' surpluses on the Emergency Planning Shared Service have been held as a contingency for any possible big incidents that may occur. It has been agreed that this contingency can be released in 2023/24, and as such a one-off underspend can be reported (-£0.035m).
- The income budget has been exceeded within Registration Services (-£0.025m).

#### Significant Emerging issues

- The Emerging Issue relating to SEN legal costs has now been moved to a reported variance (-£0.050m).
- Everyone Active have made a substantial claim relating to utility costs for 2022/23, quoting a utilities indemnity included in Schedule 6 clause 4 of the contract. Work is underway internally to check our legal position regarding this claim. Once the position has been confirmed the potential cost can be identified.

## PEOPLE

### Significant Variances

- Education and Learning - The most significant budget variance relates to the £0.255m forecast overspending on Home to School Transport (£0.255m). This has previously been reported as an Emerging Issue but is now considered a confirmed variance.
- Childrens Social Care – An increase in Childcare Solicitor costs (£0.116m), primarily due to a single high-cost case which is being reviewed, partly offset by a reduction in spending on a range of other services providing support to families (-£0.030m), unaccompanied asylum seekers children (UASC) grant income exceeding costs (-£0.020m) and an increase in the underspend on the DSB due to vacancies (-£0.063m).
- Adult Social Care - A reduction in the overspend primarily relating to a favourable movement in care costs (-£0.175m), due to several factors including additional CHC funding and a reduction in the cost of care packages, and a reduction in staffing costs (-£0.042m).

### Significant Emerging issues

- Education and Learning - The overspend on Home to School Transport has been moved to a reported variance (-£0.255m)
- Adult Social Care - The potential loss of CHC funding has been reduced to £0.129m (-£0.356m) and no additional loss of s117 discharge funding is anticipated for the rest of the year (-£0.145m).
- Adult Social Care - The court ruling on a high-cost placement has now been received and the impact reported in directorate variances (-£0.095m).
- Mental Health and Out of Hours - CHC funding to be received for a disputed case but clarification is still required on exactly what Health is paying for (-£0.082m).

## NON-DEPARTMENTAL

A national business rates revaluation took effect in 2023/24. To compensate for any impact on Business Rates income a revaluation adjustment was applied to the Business Rates Baseline as part of the financial settlement which in turn impacted on the tariff payable by the Council to Central Government in 2023/24 and the levy rate used for any growth.

This adjustment was based on provisional data which has now been updated in the 2024/25 provisional settlement. The settlement also identified a one-off adjustment, based on the difference between the provisional and final data, which will need to be reflected in the 2023/24 accounts.

The adjustment reduces the tariff payable to Central Government, which sits outside the normal budget monitoring process, by £1.255m. It is proposed that an equivalent amount is transferred into the Business Rates Revaluation Reserve to help meet the expected large Collection Fund deficit at the end of the current year, due primarily to successful appeals by Lexicon businesses. The impact on the outturn position will therefore be cost neutral.

### Other Significant Variances / Emerging Issues

- Nothing to report.

## CONTINGENCY

### Significant Variances / Emerging Issues

- No new variances to report

## Section 3: Strategic Themes

### Value for money

Action	31/12/2023				
	Stage	Percentage Complete	Due Date	Status	Current Update
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.01.02 Spending is within the approved budget for this year	In Progress	58%	31/03/2024	▲	The variances reported by directorates indicate expenditure above the approved budget (£0.358m), after taking into account the balance on the Corporate Contingency (£2.662m). Once Emerging Issues are included the potential overspend increases to £1.229m. This is an improvement of £0.310m on reported variances and £0.701m including Emerging Issues since last month. The figures include the impact of the 2023/24 pay award. Corrective action continues to ensure a balanced position by the end of the year.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.01.05 Facilitate the successful delivery of existing business change projects	Completed	100%	31/03/2024	★	Projects successfully delivered and closure reports approved at the end of November. As planned a few projects have been transitioned to be delivered within the People Directorate where there remains work to be completed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.01.07 Ensure Business Change Savings are validated and achieved	In Progress	75%	31/03/2024	▲	The savings linked to Business Change included in the 2023/24 budget were Adult Social Care - outcome focused reviews (£0.450m), a £0.050m saving relating to the Look Out and a £0.050m saving relating to the letting of space at Time Square. Th outcome focused reviews have now been completed with £0.412m of savings having been achieved - £0.028m short of the target. The latter two savings will not be achieved as the Look Out is not achieving its income targets and the NHS no longer plan to rent accommodation within Time Square.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.01.09 Develop a new corporate business change programme.	In Progress	80%	31/03/2024	★	The new business change programme was approved alongside the Council Plan by council at the end of November. The programme is an internal enabler of the delivery of the Council Plan, ensuring that the council is fit for the future. The portfolio includes programmes for Efficiency and Digitisation, Workforce Retention and Recruitment, Neighbourhood Regeneration and Assets, Corporate Improvement and a Climate Change Enabling project.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.02 Identify and engage low income households	In Progress	95%	31/03/2024	★	Action taken by the Welfare Team in Qtr 3, resulted in over £20,000 of additional benefits and discounts, being obtained for residents. LIFT campaigns for Attendance Allowance were also undertaken - due to the lag in assessments of that benefit, results expected in Qtr 4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.03 Review Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy	In Progress	75%	31/12/2023	★	The project for retention and recruitment are being incorporated into the workforce strategy for a fuller refresh for April 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.06 Deploy Recruitment and Retention Strategy	In Progress	60%	31/03/2024	★	The Business Change project on Retention and Recruitment has been established with priority areas identified. The work plan is being developed but will include an anticipated reduction in the spend on agency workers across the Council.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.16 Deliver the action plan of the Customer Experience Strategy	In Progress	50%	31/03/2024	★	Following the successful launch of automated web assistants on the waste and recycling pages of the Bracknell Forest Council web site, the programme of work to extend this capability to other web pages has resulted in the web assistant now being available to support on-line Council Tax enquiries. In addition, facilitated web chat, via Customer Services, continues to be available on many of the web pages. An automated visitor management system to support the check-in arrangements for those visitors with pre-arranged meetings at Time Square is expected to 'go-live' during the next quarter. A module to assist Customer Services in managing customer emails is also expected to 'go-live' during the next quarter. The module is part of the Netcall Liberty suite of products and will help to manage emails in a more systematic and productive way.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.17 Deliver the Digital and ICT Strategy	In Progress	76%	31/12/2024	★	Windows Hello and Multi-Factor Authorisation roll out is over 60% complete with expectation of full project closure by end of March 2024, enhancing and improving our security position. Work has started on adoption of additional labelling for data within Microsoft with a view of starting to adopt Data Loss Prevention in Q1 of 2024/25 financial period.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.18 Implement adult social care Client Financial Management system for deputyship	Completed	100%	31/08/2023	★	The module went live in August 23. Staff are now working on inputting the client data and will then focus on adopting the financial reconciliation process as part of business as usual.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.20 Progress the implementation of Adult Social Care online financial assessment	In Progress	98%	31/03/2024	★	An initial review is under way now that the customer portal is live. During the final quarter we will be looking to align the customer portal and the online financial assessment portal. The delivery of the financial assessment tool is essentially complete, however due to the final steps required to align the two portals, the final completion date has been extended to March 2024 from December 2023.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.02.21 Implement adult social care Customer Portal for online referral and initial needs assessment	Completed	100%	31/12/2023	★	The Adult Social Care Customer Portal went live on 10 October 2023, and referrals have started to come through directly into the social care system. The next stage will be to plan the implementation of self-assessment and other processes to promote self service (e.g. Safeguarding, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards/DoLs, etc)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.03.01 Appraisal of Asset Management Plan	In Progress	75%	31/03/2024	★	Plan is in final draft and awaiting any comments before sign off at Asset management board in January
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.03.03 Review of Council's Commercial Property Assets	In Progress	85%	31/03/2024	★	The council's commercial and investment properties continue to perform well and the number of vacant units remains less than 3%.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.03.05 Redevelop Commercial Centre	In Progress	80%	31/03/2024	★	The first phase of the works completed and handed back to the Council. Phase 2 works to create the new carpark and demolition the remaining buildings on site commenced as programmed and are scheduled to be completed at the end of May 2024
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1.04.05 To develop and work on the council's Asset Management Plan	In Progress	75%	31/03/2024	★	The Draft Council Asset Management Plan has been approved by the Asset Management Board and currently under review by the Executive Member.

Quarterly Indicators	31/12/2023			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
> L051 % of council tax collected	54.9%	81.1%	84.0%	★
> L053 % of Business Rates collected in year	73.8%	94.5%	87.5%	★
L257 Number of complaints received	127	124		n/a
> L261 Level of staff sickness absence	1.50	2.27		n/a
L391 % of vacant posts temporarily filled with agency staff	30%	31%	30%	★
L392 % of agency workers council wide	10%	8%	5%	●
L395 Number of self-service transactions processed via customer account	22,479	26,164	21,250	★
L418 Customer visits to Time Square	8,404	7,494		n/a

*There are no annual indicators under Value for Money due to be reported at Q3.*

## Economic resilience

Action	31/12/2023				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.01.01 Progress to adoption of the Local Plan targeted for 2023	In Progress	31/03/2024	88%	★	Consultation on the Main Modifications is expected to commence in late October and run for 6 weeks to early/mid December. Adoption anticipated Spring 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.01.02 Develop a Supplementary Planning Document in relation to Affordable Housing supply	In Progress	31/03/2024	20%	●	Aim to recommence work on this in January 2024 and to take an initial draft to Executive in June 2024. Following that there will need to be a formal consultation process prior to presenting a final draft for adoption to Executive. As a result the completion date is estimated to be 30 September 2024 extended from 31 March 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.02.02 Work on development of The Deck and the sustained viability of Town Centre	In Progress	31/03/2024	30%	●	Development of The Deck (former Bentalls site) continues to be on hold due to market conditions. Options for temporary use of the land are being devised jointly by the landowner and the council.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.02.03 Develop an Arts, Heritage and Culture Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2024	85%	●	Further changes are required following review of the final draft, including consultation with younger citizens. This has now been handed back to the council by the supplier where the strategy will be completed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.02.04 Complete the initial work to develop a new Central library for the borough	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	✘	The new Central Library is on hold, pending progress on the Deck Project. As the objective was to create an initial scheme in estimate, and this has been done, this action has now been marked complete.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.02.05 Develop Masterplans for the Southern and Eastern Gateway sites in Bracknell Town Centre	In Progress	31/03/2024	50%	●	The Masterplans are now in draft form and will be presented to the executive for approval to consult in March
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.02.06 Review Joint Venture Business Plan	In Progress	31/03/2024	25%	★	The Joint Venture Business Plan is on forward plan for March 2024 Executive. This will be a new three year plan for JV delivery.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.02.07 Ensure necessary approvals are in place to deliver the Coopers Hill and Market Street sites	In Progress	31/03/2024	85%	★	Coopers Hill site continues to be delivered to cost and schedule. Market Street site enabling works are completed. Legal contracts are at an advanced stage for affordable housing. Programme delivery milestones are on track.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.02.08 Complete options appraisal for future of High Street Car Park site	Completed	31/12/2023	100%	✘	An initial outline options appraisal has now been completed for the future development of the site. There are number of factors that will need to be considered if additional town parking to support future housing development before the final proposal for the site is agreed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.03.01 Develop a strategy for governor recruitment through the governance reference group	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	For this quarter, ending 31 December 2023, there are currently 67 governor vacancies; a 16% vacancy rate including all maintained schools and academies in BFC who purchase the Governor Services Service Level Agreements (SLA) - 35 schools in total. Governor Services ran a webinar with Governors for Schools in October, which was advertised widely via social media, Town & Country, Involve, Bracknell Forest for Business and the Education & Learning newsletter. 33 people booked to attend and 15 actually attended. We are also advertising vacancies to our residents in the Winter edition of Town & Country with a quarter page advert.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.04.02 Deliver the work programme set out by the Economic Skills and Development Partnership	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	The Economic Skills and Development Partnership (ESDP) work programme continues to support the delivery of key projects and the development of a new Economic Strategy (2024-2034). The opportunity to reshape the role of the ESDP to align with the strategy is being progressed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.04.03 Provide support for Local Economy	In Progress	31/03/2024	80%	★	With the adoption of the Economic Strategy (2024-2034) and the action plan, (anticipated January 2024) the council's support for the local economy will be targeted to achieve four key themes and the Council Plan objectives for a Thriving and Connected Economy.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.04.05 Prepare and publish a borough-wide Economic Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2024	90%	★	The Strategy has now been subject to public consultation and it is planned for the Council to adopt the strategy at its Executive meeting in February.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.05.05 Commission a feasibility analysis for the Business Improvement District	In Progress	31/03/2024	50%		The Bracknell Business Improvement District (BID) is leading this initiative with support from the council. Tenders have been sought for two studies and is expected to commence in January 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.05.07 Support the Bracknell Improvement District	In Progress	31/03/2024	90%		Billing complete and further reminder notices sent at request of BIDS board.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.06.02 Establish a pilot for a retail pop-up scheme	Completed	30/09/2023	100%		Craft COOP successfully established and launched
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.06.03 Fund the further development of Thames Valley Berkshire Growth Hub	Completed	30/09/2023	100%		UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocation used to deliver start-up and high-growth programme.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.07.05 Highway improvements for sustainable travel	Completed	30/09/2023	100%		Further meetings have been held with Active Travel England who have been invited to Bracknell to walk and cycle round various sites and discuss future provision through the Active Travel Fund. Discussions will also be held with a wider group to share best practice ideas for promoting walking and cycling as we begin preparing for our new Local Transport Plan.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.07.06 Implement Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan	In Progress	31/03/2024	50%		The latest Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan (HIAMP) was adopted in 2022. The principles of the plan have been integrated into the planned capital maintenance work programmes delivered by the Highways & Transport Division. Annual government grant funding for highway maintenance has been static for some years and so the impact of inflation and past under-investment is creating a challenge for local authorities in delivering their HIAMPs effectively. The draft Council budget for 2024/25 includes additional funding for HIAMP actions.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.07.07 Secure grants for transport and infrastructure	In Progress	31/03/2024	50%		Government grants for Integrated Transport and Highway Maintenance have been fully allocated across the Highways and Transport work programme for 2023/24. Further grants have been provisionally allocated (subject to bid submissions) for Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure, the Bus Service Improvement Plan and Active Travel initiatives.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.08.02 Infrastructure Funding Statement	Completed	31/03/2024	100%		The annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) has been completed for 2022/23 and was published on the public website before 31 December 2023, in line with regulation. Data gathering for the IFS for 2023/24 is ongoing, and the final report will be published before 31 December 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2.08.03 Completion of S106 planning agreements	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%		Thirteen Section 106 agreements have been completed during this period, this is slightly above average.

Quarterly Indicators	31/12/2023			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
L241 Income from CIL receipts	£936,663	£641,888		n/a
L268 % of working age people who are unemployed	3.3%	2.0%		n/a
L269 % of working age population in employment	80.9%	84.2%		n/a
L271 % of borough covered by superfast broadband	98.0	98.4	99.0	
L284 Number of homes given planning permission	9	126		n/a
> L286 % of planning appeals dismissed	100%	50%	66%	
> L356 % of major planning applications determined within timescales	89%	89%	85%	
> L357 % of minor planning applications determined within timescales	96%	91%	90%	
> L358 % of other planning applications determined within timescales	85%	98%	90%	
L442 Vacancies on school governing boards	20%	16%	18%	

Additional narrative for L286 - Three of six planning appeals were successfully dismissed this quarter (50%). For the year to date, 71% of planning appeals have been dismissed - 12 of 17 received in total - and this is above target. The current year-to-date position is also favourable compared to the position same time last year when more appeals were raised where in Q3 2022/23 60% of planning appeals had been dismissed.

There are no annual indicators under Economic Resilience due to be reported at Q3.

## Education and skills

Action	31/12/2023				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.01.02 Schools estate is maintained to a good standard	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	✔	Schools Projects are 100% complete with all snags complete.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.02.02 Support for schools with standards and effectiveness partners	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	Standards and Effectiveness Partners (STEPs) provided the full support package for the 24 schools who purchase the Standards and Effectiveness SLA. A detailed evaluation of an aspect of the school's curriculum was undertaken in each school, alongside support for target setting, an evaluation of outcomes, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's improvement planning. Evaluation of the work of the STEP's at the end of the term has been very positive, with school leaders reporting that they have valued the support and challenge. One of the four schools of concern is no longer subject to the Standards Monitoring Board process as a result of the positive progress made, however one further primary school has now been issued with a declaration of concern, meaning the total number of LA category 3 schools remains at 4. The three remaining schools have been provided with additional support from the STEP's, and are all making good progress.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.02.03 Promote best practice in schools	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	The final formal stage of the SEND peer review programme has been delivered in this quarter, with schools sharing their actions plans and considering effective implementation. 24 schools completed the process and attended all of the training sessions. Evaluations were very positive, and all schools have shared the key strengths emerging from their reviews, in order to facilitate the sharing of best practice across the LA. Headteacher Briefings in during this quarter have included extended presentations showcasing best practice in English and mathematics, through the exploration of current DfE guidance and Ofsted reviews. The Teacher Reading Group has entered it's second year, and continues to be a highly effective forum for sharing best practice in promoting reading for pleasure. All subject leader network meetings have taken place this term, and have included the sharing of current research articles and best practice case studies, including specialist inputs from nationally recognised specialists. Governor training has been delivered by the standards team focusing on best practice in provision for pupils with SEND, for Pupil Premium pupils, and in relation to the effective use of assessment information.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.02.04 Retain good School Ofsted ratings	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	The proportion of schools judged to be good or better continues to be 97%. Inspection reports for Binfield Primary School and St Margaret Clitherow were published during this quarter. Both schools retained their previous judgements of 'good'. Ascot Heath Primary School was also inspected, and the report will be published early in the new year.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.03.01 Establish an education sub-group of the ESDP	Completed	30/09/2023	100%	✔	Economic Skills & Development Partnership (ESDP) sub group has met to progress key projects including Skills & Training Hub as part of UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.04.03 Undertake a comprehensive review of all youth services	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	✔	The youth review is complete and recommendations are being considered by Department Management Team. The youth strategy will be going to consultation imminently.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.04.04 Review Youth Justice Services	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	✔	This is now complete fully, signed off and been subject to a HMI inspection.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.05.01 Continue to increase the number of apprenticeship roles throughout the council	In Progress	31/03/2024	80%	★	The apprenticeship numbers are increasing with 49 currently in place which cover 23 roles throughout the Council and schools.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.05.02 Effectively use the apprenticeship levy	In Progress	31/03/2024	70%	★	The current number of staff working through apprenticeships in the Council is 49. The team are working through other opportunities to consider other opportunities can be explored to further support the retention and recruitment work.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.05.09 Support school leaders to recruit and effectively manage their workforce	In Progress	31/03/2024	60%	★	The programme to support schools to recruit newly qualified teachers for September has begun. This takes the form of attendance at recruitment fairs and headteacher recruitment panels - this has provided 9 candidates who can be appointed to vacant posts for the next academic year.



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.06.01 Support the efficacy of early years professionals	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	<p>Many schools have requested in school Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) training last term, with areas such as interactions, planning and developing high quality learning environments being most popular. Sessions typically last an hour and a half and running them in school, rather than as a course, allows for the content and discussion to be bespoke to school's individual needs. The network meeting in October was well attended and delegates looked at assessment, data analysis and toolkits to support needs identification of SEN learners. The majority of Reception classes in Bracknell are seeking additional information about how to support SEN as an increase in children with higher level needs has meant schools have had to modify their provision to ensure children thrive with a variety of needs. Schools are consistently exhibiting a positive response, demonstrating a readiness to learn and adapt their practices to cater to the diverse needs of all their learners. This will be an on-going area for continued professional development (CPD) support for schools this year. EYFS strategic lead partners have held two open days in their schools, offering an opportunity for schools to visit, and share in discussion about best practice. These sessions are always well attended, and feedback demonstrates this is a valued experience for schools.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.07.01 Support care leavers to access education, training or employment	In Progress	31/03/2024	60%	★	<p>There are currently just over 50% of Care Leavers (19-21) who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), but 21% are currently assessed as unfit for work by the DWP or are parents of young children with very limited support networks. Of the remaining 30%, there are a number of our Care Leavers signed off from work by GPs due to struggling with mental health and other circumstances. The Leaving Care Service and DWP are supporting our Care Leavers to be able to access education, training and employment, whilst Elevate are able to support those Care Leavers who are fit for work. Support to become EET is provided as an additional service through the Elevate in partnership with the Leaving Care Service including, a monthly newsletter, weekly Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) appointments at Braccan Walk every Thursday and the Look Ahead sites every Tuesday. The John Lewis Partnership are also providing support to care leavers - including the Work Ready programmes; sessions for drop-ins and tours as well as work experience for their Warehouse and other work experience opportunities. The JLP are also exploring apprenticeship opportunities for care experienced young people. Additionally, NEET programme sessions through The Storyy Group are in place to support whilst undertaking procurement. Other support in relation to providing Maths and English tuition and employability sessions is also being considered. Just over 50% of our Care Leavers are NEET, but 21% are currently assessed as unfit for work by the DWP or are parents of young children with very limited support networks. Of the remaining 30%(ish), there are a number signed off from work by GPs due to struggling with mental health, etc. However, this is the cohort for whom we can hopefully do something to support their return to education or employment. Therefore, 30% is a more realistic target than 25% in the current circumstances, and once reached we can re-focus efforts to reduce further, between Elevate, Leaving Care and DWP.</p>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.08.01 Establish a culture of high expectations for all children	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	<p>The Autumn term has been an inclusion focused term for the Standards and Effectiveness Team. Both the SENDCo Forum and the Pupil Premium Grant (PPG) Network meetings had an inclusion focus. Thinking about the impact of low income, the exclusion that it can bring and the importance of being with and learning with their peers, unlocking the positive holistic impact that it has.</p> <p>Training has been provided this term on developing an effective and strategic relationship between the SENDCo and SEN Governor to continue to raise standards for your people with SEND. Ensuring governors have a clear understanding of their role, aligned to their core functions and the SEND Code of Practice, Childrens and Families Act and the Equalities Act. Very positive feedback has been received to date in relation to this course, its effectiveness in covering the aims, as well as the range and depth of information, and data provided. Standards and Effectiveness have this term taken lead roles in elements of the Written Statement of Action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the delivery of the SEND Preparation for Adulthood Roadshow.</li> <li>• Taking a leading role in the soft launch of the graduated approach; identifying settings and developing the training, briefing and drop-in sessions ready for the start of the spring term. To date, seven of the nine settings have positively responded to taking part in the soft launch of the graduated approach and attending the briefing session on the 8 January.</li> </ul> <p>The Standards and Effectiveness team have also continued to lead and deliver the SEND Review Programme. The 3 November saw the last of the engagement days, focusing on the implementation of the SEND Action Plans developed by schools. To date 15 or the 24 schools have provided their SEND Action plans, of which 14 have also provided details of their strengths that were identified as part of the SEND Peer Review process. Current themes identified across the schools action plans include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality First Teaching</li> <li>• Interventions and Strategies</li> <li>• Parent and carers</li> <li>• SEND specific staff CPD</li> <li>• Tracking and monitoring</li> <li>• Teaching Assistants</li> <li>• Subject and Phase leader development</li> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Process and systems</li> <li>• Curriculum</li> </ul> <p>The schools identified strengths will be used to develop a directory of strong practice, that schools can use as part of the community of practice. Evaluations completed after the final engagement day, indicate that the programme has had a positive impact. 92% of respondents reported that they had found the SEND Review Process valuable or extremely valuable, and that 100% of respondents felt it had helped them to identify clear strengths and next steps. The Standards team, this term as part of their school visits have discussed the SEND Review and their action plans with them, ensuring that they are at the heart of school development planning. Several schools have made positive comments in relation to the programme, including, <i>'The process of the self-evaluation and the peer visit has raised the profile of SEND and put a spotlight on areas of SEND for staff. It has opened up conversations and opportunities to involve others and for them to reflect on their own practice in terms of supporting SEND and Inclusion in our school.'</i></p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.08.02 Support transition to next stage of learning	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	●	<p>To support transition from Year 6 to 7, a questionnaire was sent to all secondary schools this term, for completion by Year 7. To date, 136 pupils have completed the questionnaire, representing a number of primary schools. The results indicate that most pupils visited the secondary school before they started and felt prepared prior to beginning secondary education. Of the three core subjects, pupils felt less prepared for maths, based on their primary education, with 70% feeling prepared, compared to 76% in writing and 80% in reading. More responses will be required before any wider conclusions can be drawn. More remains to be done to build on the work of last year's working party.</p> <p>Also aiming to support transition at key points is the implementation of the LA Early Intervention Team, to provide specialised assistance for pupils with SEND.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.08.04 Deliver the agreed actions within the Written Statement of Action (WSOA)	In Progress	31/12/2023	77%	●	<p>Delivery of the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) continues, with 81 of the 113 actions now complete. The fourth monitoring meeting with the DfE and NHS England took place in mid-December and formal feedback is yet to be received. Whilst leadership within the council's SEND services remains stable, significant capacity has been diverted to developing our Safety Valve plans over the last quarter, which has impacted on the pace of delivery for the WSOA</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.08.05 Complete review of Home to School Transport Services	Completed	30/09/2023	100%	✔	<p>Review completed, as reported at end of Q1.</p>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.08.06 Co-produce a strategy for all social work services	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%		The first draft of the strategy has been reviewed extensively by the Designated Social Care Officer (DSCO) and the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) and is now ready for production. We are on target to meet the revised deadline of 31/03/24.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3.08.07 Co-produce a SEND strategy.	Completed	30/09/2023	100%		The SEND strategy 2023-2026 has now been completed and published as part of our Local Offer. It was co-produced with parents and our partners, including schools, health colleagues and social care.

Quarterly Indicators	31/12/2023			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
L196 Number of school children engaged with science through a visit to The Look Out Discovery Centre	52	41	50	★
L205 % of EHCPs issued within 20 week statutory timeframe	42%	46%	50%	★
L206 Number of new EHCPs issued	71	79		n/a
L394 % of staff that have undertaken apprenticeship training	3.6%	4.0%		★
L402 % of care leavers aged 19-21 years who are NEET	51%	43%	30%	▲
L403 % of care leavers aged 19-21 years who are in touch with LA	95%	95%	89%	★
> L139 % of all schools rated good or better	97%	97%	95%	★
> L139 % of maintained primary schools rated good or better	100%	100%	100%	★
> L139 % of maintained secondary schools rated good or better	50%	50%	100%	▲
> L139 % of academy primary schools rated good or better	100%	100%	100%	★
> L139 % of academy secondary schools rated good or better	100%	100%	100%	★

Additional narrative for L402 - At the end of December 2023 there were 26 care leavers who were NEET 19-21-year-olds, 14 of whom are NEET due to illness or disability and 3 are NEET due to Pregnancy/Parenting. Consequently, 9 (35%) are NEET and in a position to access education, employment, or training. This represents a significant reduction since September 2023 when 18 care leavers aged 19-21-year-olds were able to access education, employment or training (EET).

Additional narrative for L139 – ‘Maintained secondary schools’ there are two maintained secondary schools in the borough, which means if one school does not meet the good or outstanding target, this significantly skews the data for this measure. College Hall was inspected in July 2023 and judged to be inadequate. At the most recent Rapid Response Board Meeting for College Hall, the board agreed unanimously that sufficient progress is being made towards agreed priorities.

Annual Indicators	31/12/2023			
	Last Year	This Year	Current Target	RAG
L370 Progress gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers at KS4	-0.9%	-0.8%	-0.5%	★

## Caring for you and your family

Action	31/12/2023				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.01 Increase participation in sports, leisure and cultural activities	In Progress	31/03/2024	80%	★	Performance remains within the agreed client requirements. An end of year assessment of the demographics of participation will determine any new steps. This will accord to the new strategy and the direction that the new administration takes.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.02 Implement and monitor the key actions set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2024	98%	★	An oversight group with membership from all delivery partners is now in place. The Health & Wellbeing delivery plan update is a standing item on the Health & Wellbeing Board, a dashboard and project update is presented to the board every quarter.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.04 Deliver the financial hardship action plan	In Progress	31/03/2024	90%	★	The Financial Hardship Action Plan was reviewed and updated ahead of Winter 2023, to ensure the content is aligned with the current priorities and resources. Several changes were made to focus and enhance activity related to signposting.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.05 Deliver the pilot first phase of "Thriving Communities" programme	In Progress	31/03/2024	30%	●	Programme delivery paused. Recruitment to the two programme posts was put on hold until Q4 due to organisational change.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.06 Develop a Children and Young People (CYP) Plan	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	✔	CYP Plan is now complete. An action plan has been adopted by the CYP Partnership Board and agreed by leads for each priority action. This will now become routine business of the Board as highlight reports updates on strategic actions will be provided in each meeting from November onwards. A performance dashboard will track progress of key indicators of success.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.01.07 Develop People Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2024	70%	●	Work continues to develop a People strategy which aligns with the new council plan. An engagement session has been carried out with Heads of Service this quarter to support the development of priorities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.03.01 Develop the annual integrated health and care plan for Bracknell Forest.	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	✔	The Health & Care plan has now been drafted and will be presented for consideration at the Bracknell Forest Place Committee during October 2023. This follows collaboration between council officers and colleagues from the Integrated Care Board.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.06.03 Facilitate the delivery of new Community Hub in Warfield	In Progress	31/03/2024	60%	★	Good progress in confirming project deliverables with all stakeholders in Q3. Further design and funding strategy work in partnership with Warfield Parish Council in Q4.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.06.04 Facilitate new Bucklers Park Community Hub	In Progress	31/03/2024	85%	★	Negotiations on the lease and preparatory activity for opening the hub progressing well with Age Concern Bracknell Forest.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.06.05 Finalising management arrangements for Binfield Community Hub	In Progress	31/03/2024	85%	★	Lease negotiations completed. Lease signing and preparations for opening to take place in Spring
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.06.13 Support the set-up of new community facilities and services	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	●	Due to feedback from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the business case for Bridgewell has been invalidated, requiring the People Directorate to identify a new use / set of requirements for the facility. This has delayed the progression of any procurement activity, with a procurement now anticipated to commence in mid-2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.07.01 Family hub services expansion and development of multi-disciplinary teams	Completed	31/12/2023	100%	✔	Groups are being established for this work to progress at the next EH partnership meeting in February 2023. Further public consultation will take place before 31.03 regarding the youth strategy. Partnership is ongoing with Public Health and Targeted Youth Support's Sexual Health Offer regarding workforce development (Brooks has now been delivered and C Card Training is in progress) Supporting Families Development Lead in post and progressing discussions with a wide range of agencies. FSA post has been recruited to and is in induction period. Newsletter is a priority to be progressed. Mind of my own feedback app for children and young people has now been embedded across Early Help.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.10.03 Relaunch social prescribing and primary prevention programmes	Completed	30/09/2023	100%	✔	The social prescribing model is now fully operational. The shift from GP to other settings making referrals is complete.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.11.02 Schools service level agreement for PE	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	The autumn term has included a broad spectrum of opportunities available to Bracknell Forest young people. In total this term there has been 14 different events where we have had 2,506 young people attending these external opportunities. Out of those 2,506 young people, 476 have been children with SEND from both mainstream and special schools. This attendance data has come from a total of 29 primary schools and 7 secondary schools engaging with the offer which only leaves 2 primary schools who have not. This is another strong start to the academic year and demonstrates that the offer is in line with schools' motivation to participate.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.11.03 Develop a Sports and Leisure strategy for the borough.	In Progress	31/03/2024	60%	★	Strategic Leisure are making good progress with the strategy. They have undertaken a borough survey, multiple engagement sessions with key stakeholders and a strategy workshop with Members. The strategy is still on track to be completed by 31st March 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.11.04 Develop a programme for the replacement of the Bracknell Leisure Centre and assets	In Progress	31/03/2024	0%	★	Any replacement programme will come from the development of the sports and leisure strategy work which is currently on track for completion by the 31st March 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.12.02 Delivery capital improvements for open spaces	In Progress	31/03/2024	60%	★	Various projects progressed or completed as planned.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.12.03 Promoting Active Travel	Completed	30/09/2023	100%	★	'Dr Bike' events, where people can get their cycles checked over by trained mechanics and have basic improvements made, were held in both July and September for staff in BID organisations in the Southern and Western business areas. Two further Dr Bikes were held in September for residents in the Forest Park and Winkfield/North Ascot areas when close to 30 cycles were seen. Also at these events the expansion of the Eco Rewards scheme to include walking and cycling routes on the approaches to Martins Heron rail station was promoted. The events were very popular with all who attended and generated lots of positive social media posts. Council officers attended six of the Summer of Fun events coordinated by the parish and town councils to promote walking and cycling, and representatives from Eco Rewards also attended. Officers spoke to many residents, handing out cycle maps and giving advice and support to allow more people to make active choices. At several of the events partners from Avanti set up cycle obstacle courses for children to practise their skill. 'Cycle September', a month-long challenge to encourage people to ride as much as possible and log their rides to win prizes and help their employers top leader-boards, was widely promoted. Seventeen local workplaces took part in the challenge and over 1,800 cycle trips were recorded – a 20% increase on the same event last year. New pedestrian crossing facilities outside Owlsmoor Primary and Edgbarrow Secondary Schools were installed over the summer holidays. These facilities will provide safe crossing points and encourage more walking journeys to school. Officers are preparing a bid to secure £78,000 of Active Travel England funding to build two further crossings on the approaches to Brakenhale secondary school and King's Academy Binfield.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.13.01 Coordinate and lead on the work of the Bracknell Forest Civilian Military Partnership	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	Work continues to re-establish the Bracknell Forest Civilian Military Partnership (CMP). A meeting was held at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst with the Station Staff Officer, Commandant and BFC Armed Forces Champion and Engagement Team to identify priority area of focus, review terms of reference and membership (24 Nov).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.13.03 Support the delivery of a Berkshire Civilian Military Partnership	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	Following the outcome of the local elections, the Royal County of Berkshire Civilian Military Partnership met on 5 October 2023 to update its membership, elect a new chair and vice chair and agree the group's terms of reference. Ideas for the implementation of each item on the Partnership Action Plan were also discussed and a commitment to an annual event to raise awareness.

Monthly Indicators	31/12/2023			
	Last Month	This Month	Current Target	RAG
> L346 Average caseload for Family Safeguarding Model	16	15	16	★
> L385 Rate per 10k of children on Child Protection Plans	45.3	46.4	43.0	n/a
> L386 Rate per 10k of Children Looked After	52.5	54.3	50.0	n/a

Quarterly Indicators	31/12/2023			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
L003 Number of visits to leisure facilities managed by Everyone Active	378,717	278,767	325,000	●
L005 Number of visits by customers under the active communities or health and well-being programme	1,297	3,393	625	★
L404 Number of children and young people visits to leisure facilities managed by Everyone Active	141,647	85,254	92,500	★
L405 Number of older people visits to leisure facilities managed by Everyone Active	23,263	18,396	20,750	▲
L412 Number per 100,000 of first-time entrants to criminal justice system	29.8	67.1		n/a
L414 % of children who achieve a BMI Z-score reduction	0%	0%	0%	★
L415 % of smokers who have quit at 4 weeks in the quarter (co-verified)	52%	44%	30%	★
L416 % of smokers who have quit at 4 weeks in the year to date (co-verified)	66%	58%	30%	★
L436 Number of visits by customers with a disability to leisure facilities managed Everyone Active	1,297	3,128	875	★
L446 Impact of Social Prescribing as a primary prevention programme on reducing loneliness	60	50	30	★

Additional narrative for L405 - This period has lower attendance across the sites which is in line with the Oct - Dec seasonal trend and matches previous years. Particularly poor weather during December meant that Downshire was adversely affected with rain closing the course on several occasions.

*Note: L414 - The children and young people's weight management service has been commissioned by Public Health. However there is no data available yet on the % of children who have achieved a BMI z-score reduction. The service has focused on working with schools to deliver nutrition workshops with children. They have also attended a number of outreach events to raise awareness of the service and share healthy eating advice with families.*

*Data for L415 & L416 is provided by an external agency, after the CPOR report is published. Therefore, data for Q3 reflects the latest available data (Q2).*

*There are no annual indicators under Caring for Your Family due to be reported at Q3.*

## Protecting and enhancing our environment

Action	31/12/2023				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.01.05 To work with the Town and Parish Councils to effectively manage the land assets	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	✔	Any further transfers will be at the request of Parish Councils.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.01.07 Establish management partnership arrangements with The Land Trust	In Progress	31/03/2024	85%	★	Successful ongoing partnership arrangements, including the progression of arrangements for the community growing area and supporting preparations for opening of community hub.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.02.01 Green development of our waste collection services	In Progress	31/03/2024	70%	★	1,220 flats had food waste collections by the end of quarter 3. All of the borough's flats have now been assessed for their suitability against the agreed criteria for food waste collections.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.02.02 Educate, enable and encourage residents to maximise their recycling	In Progress	31/03/2024	90%	★	The annual collection calendar was delivered in October to all houses in the borough, this includes information on what can be recycled. In the run up to Christmas, festive related social media posts are used to provide information on recycling commonly produced waste over Christmas and New Year.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.02.03 Implement the Strong's Heath / London Road facilities in line with Climate Change Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2024	41%	★	Work continues to develop the scheme with external consultants. The team continues to work with the Planning team via the pre-application process.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.03.01 Implement parking bay schemes	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	✔	The 2023/24 programme has planning approval and is due to be constructed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.05.02 Progress phase two Transformation enhancements of The Look Out	In Progress	03/03/2024	30%	★	Work to progress landlord discussions continued as fully as possible, including arrangements for landlord site visit.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.06.01 Climate Change Action Plan and Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	Joint Climate Action Board - has launched and first meeting has taken place. 10 working groups have been established and these have been reviewed and assurance given that we are on schedule,
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.06.07 Improve energy efficiency for low income households	In Progress	31/03/2024	59%	●	The launch of phase two of the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) across all Berkshire Local Authorities was once again delayed during Q3 owing to contractual agreements not being in place between nominated delivery agents. Promotion of this scheme (to support low income families living in homes heated by non-gas means) will commence in Q4. The actual delivery of retrofit works is scheduled to extend until March 2025. The Climate Change and Sustainable Living team spent time during Q3 contacting residents who had previously expressed an interest in potentially benefiting from Warm, Safe and Well (Public Health) funding to improve the energy efficiency of homes in which at least one dweller is classed as being vulnerable to the impacts of the cold. The exercise was designed to identify the number of people who met the eligibility criteria and were still interested in the scheme, to better allocate remaining funds. The team, together with colleagues from Public Health will discuss next steps during Q4. The process for identifying potential suitable homes to benefit from either Energy Company Obligation (ECO) or Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS) funding has continued to prove difficult for many Local Authorities including Bracknell Forest. The Climate Change team will continue to explore potential avenues to support these funding routes during Q4.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.06.08 Identify suitable alternative low carbon highway construction materials	Completed	30/09/2023	100%	★	The 2023 summer carriageway re-surfacing programme will use warm mix surfacing materials (as opposed to hot) which reduces the carbon footprint. Joint work with our highways contractor Ringway is underway to identify further low carbon materials which can be practically included within routine work highway programmes from 2024/25 onwards. A recent joint workshop has set out a series of related tasks to support this work.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.06.09 Implement the "Greening our energy" asset management programme	In Progress	31/03/2024	95%	★	At the end of December all eight projects to reduce energy costs and reduce the Council CO2 emissions will be complete apart from minor snagging works which will be actioned by the end of January 2024.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.06.10 Review procurement approaches to climate change, social value and alternative funding routes	In Progress	29/03/2024	30%	●	Member consultation has commenced and the local target methodology selected. The Bracknell Forest Social Value Matrix is currently being designed and community consultation prepared
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.07.04 Install Electric Vehicle chargepoints	Completed	31/03/2024	100%	★	The new electric vehicle (EV) chargers at Great Hollands Square are now fully operational and running with six 22kw fast chargepoints and two 75kw rapid chargepoints. The number of charging sessions across the 32 new chargepoints within the borough is continuing to rise. Further opportunities to install EV chargepoints within council-owned car parks and facilities are being identified for delivery through government funding schemes.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 5.07.06 Reduce staff car usage and promote green travel initiatives	In Progress	31/03/2024	10%	●	The project to review car usage is being explored and a project established for April

*There are no annual indicators under Protecting and Enhancing our Environment due to be reported at Q3.*

## Communities

Action	31/12/2023				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.01.01 Undertake health check and action plan for retail centres	In Progress	31/03/2024	40%	★	The preparation of health checks and actions plans will be undertaken in Q4 2023/24 supported by the Economic Strategy (2024-2034) action plan.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.02.01 Support for Community Associations	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	Ongoing advice and guidance is provided to the community centres and support provided to community associations with governance, finance issues, lease renewals and recruitment of volunteers. The Engagement Team continues to liaise with Property Services and other service areas to resolve specific community centre issues. Regular on-going site visits are undertaken with Community Associations Network meetings held quarterly.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.02.03 Develop the offer in Libraries to support the Adults and Children's agendas	In Progress	31/03/2024	85%	★	The Library Service is working in partnership with Children's Services to support the Dolly Parton Imagination Library scheme for children from low income families. We are also working with the Financial Hardship team to offer support to low income families by offering free basic skills and IT tuition in partnership with the Good Things Foundation, by offering free tablets for loan. The Library Service is also now a designated National Databank, offering free data sim cards to eligible clients who are unable to pay for data access or mobile phone calls.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.03.06 Develop harm in the community strategy	In Progress	31/03/2024	70%	★	We have undertaken a MAPE (Multi Agency Practice Evaluation) which will feed into the strategy.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.03.07 Review and publicly consult on the 2023 Community Safety Partnership priorities	In Progress	31/03/2024	50%	★	A full strategic needs assessment has begun on all crime and disorder and is being undertaken by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. It is due to be completed in February 2024 at which point, widespread consultation will take place on proposed CSP priorities for 2024-2027.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.03.09 Develop a Serious Violence and Exploitation Strategy and Delivery Plan	In Progress	31/03/2024	50%	★	The Bracknell Forest Serious Violence Strategy has been completed and has been endorsed by the Executive. A full Action Plan is now being developed which is due by 31 March 2024. A separate all-age exploitation strategy author is currently being commissioned to deliver a fully co-produced strategy and action plan.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.04.01 Support the development of South Hill Park Trust's Arts and Culture offer.	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	The Council continues to be a strong partner. Participation of BFC Officers with the board has provided the council with assurance that grant is meeting council objectives. The council as landlord has continue to develop the site and is looking to improve the heating in the building to reduce costs and Co2 emissions.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.07.01 To provide property support for the initial phases of development of Opladen Way	In Progress	31/03/2024	50%	★	Property have been working with the council's Housing team and the Design team to complete the detailed design documentation and specification to commence the second stage of the tender process in early January 2024. Project currently on programme and the cost for the development will be known at the end of February once bidders have submitted their tender submission.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.07.03 Make arrangements to secure the closure of Downshire Homes Ltd	In Progress	31/03/2024	90%	★	Work is progressing towards February 2024 solvent liquidation of Downshire Homes Ltd and transfer of properties to Bracknell Forest Council.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.09.02 Develop new allocations policy	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	A proposed policy has been approved by Executive and is currently out for consultation ending at the end of Jan 2024
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.10.04 Increase community groups supporting the half marathon	Completed	30/06/2023	100%	✱	The May event went ahead as planned with a number of community groups providing support to the race around the course. The event was very successful although a lessons learnt meeting has already taken place to identify improvements for next year.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.10.07 Cultural events in Bracknell Town Centre	Completed	30/09/2023	100%	✱	The Bracknell Community Day event was staged in Bond Square in July along with a programme of summer events successfully delivered including a South Hill Park collaboration 'Yellow Brick Road' in August with more than 1,800+ and the annual Summer Proms in August.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.10.08 Support community engagement with and integration of displaced people who arrive in borough	In Progress	31/03/2024	90%	★	The service are continuing to work to ensure that they are providing support to all displaced people arriving into the borough. Actions in the SEND written statement of action regarding SEN support Migration children are on target for completion and information on the local offer is now available in various languages. There is good work going on to ensure robust partnerships for Migration families as they integrate into BF.



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 7.019 Support maintenance of high levels of cohesion and the integration of our diverse communities.	In Progress	31/03/2024	75%	★	The Community Cohesion and Engagement Partnership has continued to meet quarterly and considered a range of community issues and the Hate Crime Action Plan. Work has started in planning the 2024 community day and Pride event with a focus on co-producing the events jointly with communities, Voluntary Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) groups and local businesses. The Engagement Team continues to support and build relationships with a range of local community groups both through formal meetings and on-going engagement to inform and support the council's activities in understanding and supporting local communities. The team also continues to support service teams in engaging with local communities.
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Quarterly Indicators	31/12/2023			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
L185 Overall crime	2,077	2,016		n/a
L406 Number of visits to libraries	169,892	253,348	55,000	★
L421 Number of community events held in libraries	885	1,267	350	★
L422 Number of educational events held in libraries	174	245	100	★
L425 % of homelessness preventions	57%	60%	58%	★

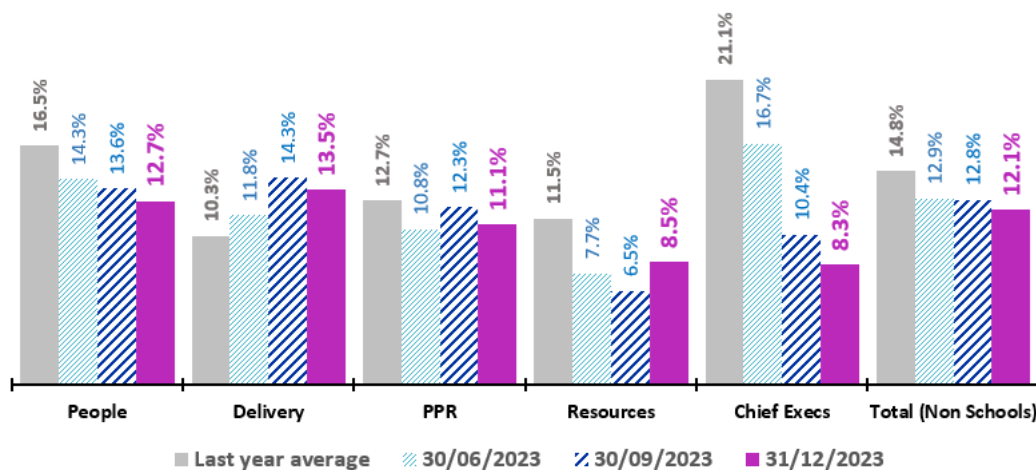
*There are no annual indicators under Communities due to be reported at Q3.*

## Section 4: Corporate Health

### Summary of People Data

#### Staff Voluntary Turnover

**Staff voluntary turnover - by directorate**  
Last year vs. Q1, Q2 & Q3 results



Comparator data	%
Total voluntary turnover for BFC, 2022/23:	14.5
Average voluntary turnover rate UK public sector 2021:	8.8
Average Local Government England voluntary turnover 2020:	10

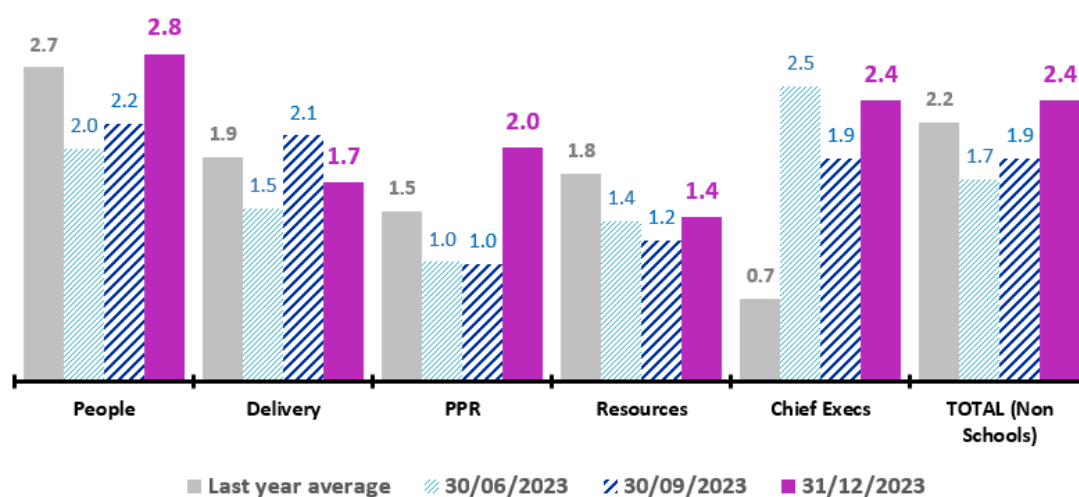
(Source: XpertHR Labour Turnover Rates 2022 and LGA Workforce Survey 2021)

Local benchmarks (latest available data)	%
Wokingham Borough	12.9
West Berkshire	14.8
Windsor & Maidenhead	12.5

## Staff Sickness

Department	Q3 2023/24 Days per employee	2022/23 Actual Average days per employee	2023/24 Estimated Annual average days per employee
People	2.8	10.65	9.20
Delivery	1.7	7.64	7.03
PPR	2.0	5.3	5.27
Resources	1.4	6.97	5.22
Chief Executive's Office	2.4	2.49	9.11
<b>Total staff sickness excl. maintained schools</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>8.61</b>	<b>7.93</b>

**Sickness absence - Days per employee by directorate**  
Last year average vs. Q1, Q2 & Q3 results



Comparator data	All employees, average days sickness absence per employee
Bracknell Forest Council (excl. Schools) 2022/23	8.61
Public Sector employers 2021	6.4

(Source: ONS Sickness absence in the UK labour market)

Local benchmarks (latest available data)	Days per employee per annum
Wokingham Borough	17.4
West Berkshire	9.9

## People

Absence has increased sharply since Q2 with the number of days lost going up by 31%. This is particularly due to rises in the days lost due to stress/anxiety/depression<sup>1</sup> and cold/cough/flu. The days lost due to stress/anxiety/depression has risen by 42%, but the number of instances has remained steady. For cold/cough/flu absences, the number of days lost has increased by approximately three quarters (75%) since Q2. An increase in this kind of sickness is expected in the winter months.

The number of staff in the directorate recording sickness absence has also increased, 36% had sickness absence in Q3, compared to 28% last quarter. However, this is in line with the same time last year when the result was 37%.

Long-term sickness equates to over half (55%) of the total absence this quarter which is very similar to last quarter. There were 29 members of staff off long-term during the quarter, 12 of whom have now returned to work.

## Delivery

There has been a decrease in the number of days lost in Q3, compared to last quarter - the number of days lost has decreased by approximately 19%.

The number of staff in the directorate recording sickness absence has remained consistent. Just over a third (34%) had sickness absence in Q3 compared to 31% last quarter and 34% at the same time last year.

The instances of cold/cough/flu this quarter compared to last quarter went up by over 150%, a rise which is expected during the winter months. However, the number of days lost and instances are very similar to this time last year.

Just over a third of the sickness (36%) taken this quarter related to long-term sickness, but this is lower than Q2. There were less than five\* members of staff off long-term during the quarter, two of these have now returned to work.

## Place, Planning and Regeneration

Absence has more than doubled since Q2 in Place, Planning & Regeneration. There have been significant rises particularly in Building Control & Land Charges and Parks & Countryside:

- Within Building Control & Land Charges this is mainly due to less than five\* members of staff on long-term sickness within the quarter
- Parks & Countryside have also had a significant increase in the number of instances of sickness in Q3 - however over two thirds (68%) of these were just one day or less. Just under half (43%) of the absences in Parks & Countryside were due to cold/cough/flu compared to 18% last quarter, which is to be expected during the winter months.

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<sup>1</sup> Support is in place to support staff experiencing stress in the workplace or at home. Across Bracknell Forest Council use of the counselling service has increased, with 14 new referrals in Q3 vs. 8 in Q2. There was also a 24% increase in views of self-help support pages in Q3. The full range of resources and network of internal wellbeing champions was promoted as part of 'Stress awareness week' (from 30 October) which may have contributed to the increase seen this quarter.

Overall, the number of staff in the directorate who recorded sickness absence has also increased - 28% of staff in Q3, compared to 21% last quarter.

Just over half of all sickness (53%) recorded relates to long term sickness this quarter, which is higher than last quarter. Seven members of staff were off long-term in Q3, three of these had returned by the end of the period.

### **Resources**

Absence has increased slightly since Q2 - the number of days lost to sickness has increased by approximately 15%.

The number of staff in the directorate recording sickness absence has also increased, 30% had sickness absence in Q3 compared to 19% last quarter. However, this is in line with absence recorded the same time last year – 32% of staff had an absence within Q3 2022/23.

Of all sickness absences this quarter, 4 in 10 were for one day or less and, as expected at this time of year, there has been an increase in the number of staff absence due to illnesses such as cold/cough/flu. There has also been a rise in the number of days lost to Covid-19 recorded this quarter.

Long-term sickness equates to approximately 38% of the absence this quarter, which is significantly lower than last month, showing that the increase is in short term absences. There were less than five\* members of staff on long-term sickness, one of whom has returned to work.

### **Chief Executive's Office**

Absence has increased since Q2 - the number of days lost to sickness has increased by approximately 27%.

The number of staff in the directorate recording sickness absence has also increased, 40% had sickness absence in Q3 compared to just 13% last quarter and 21% at the same time last year.

Of all sickness absences this quarter, half were for one day or less. Just under half of the absences were for illnesses such as cold/cough/flu, which is to be expected during the winter months. There has also been a rise in the number of days lost to Covid-19 recorded this quarter.

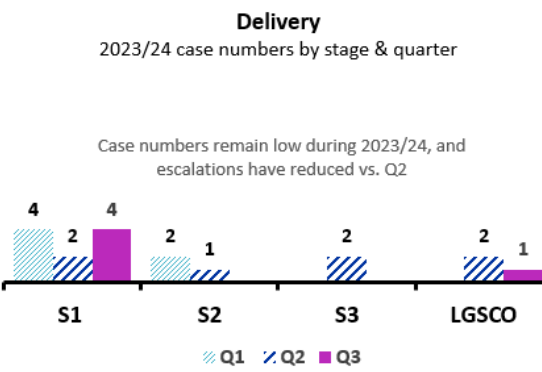
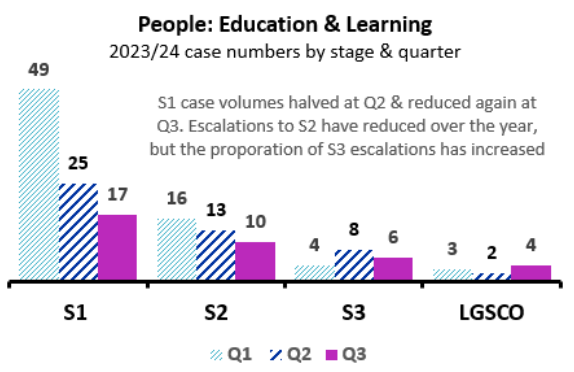
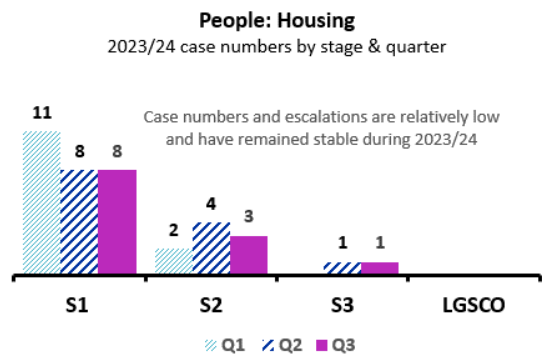
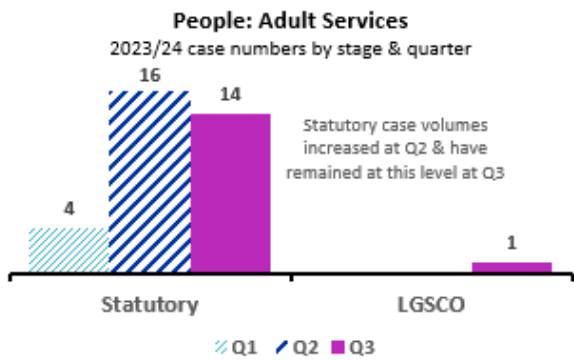
Around half of the sickness (48%) taken this quarter related to long-term sickness. There were less than five\* members of staff off long-term during the quarter, who have now returned to work.

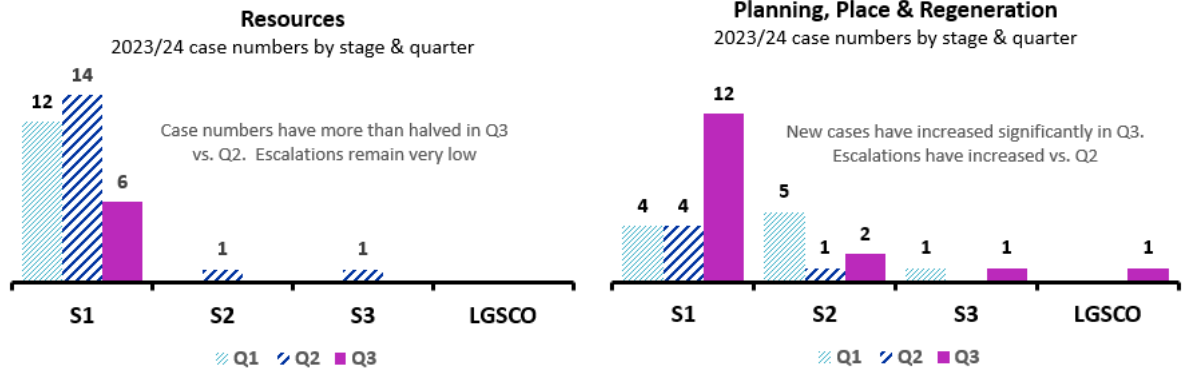
*\*Suppressed due to small number*

## Summary of Complaints

Key:

<b>SS1</b> – Statutory stage one	<b>SS2</b> – Statutory stage two	<b>SS3</b> – Statutory Stage three
<b>S1</b> – Stage one	<b>S2</b> – Stage two	<b>S3</b> – Stage three
<b>LGSCO</b> - Local Government Ombudsman and Social Care Ombudsman		
<b>DVH</b> - Discrimination, harassment or victimisation complaints		





**Chief Executive's Office**  
2023/24 case numbers by stage & quarter

The CXO has received only one case to date during the year - this has been escalated



Note: The Chief Executive's Office is not normally included within the complaints reporting due to the minimal frequency of complaints received, however data is included for due to a complaint being received in Q2, and subsequently escalated.

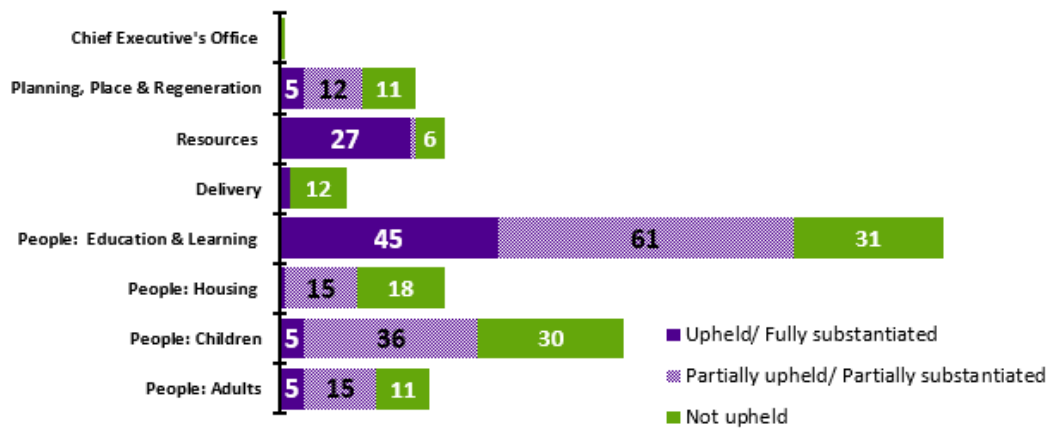
### Learning from complaints

The process to report on volumes and themes of learning point and actions is being reviewed and developed.

There were 58 upheld or partially upheld complaints this quarter. The highest proportion of these were in education and learning (23), with 13 in children's social care and 11 in adult social care.

The most common themes of these complaints were related to decisions and outcomes, communication, and presentation and perception of workers. Learning points and actions include improving access to professional reports for education health and care needs assessments (noting that some reports are commissioned by health), improved communication during hospital visits and improved guidance regarding savings for children looked after.

**Final outcome by area - all stages: Year to date at end of Q3 2023/24**



Year to date, Resources appear to have upheld/partially upheld the highest proportion of complaints (82%). The average across the council is 66%. This is due to reporting high uphold rates in Q1 and Q2. The introduction of new tracking in Q3 has led to changes in recorded outcomes which more accurately reflect the true position.

By comparison, Delivery have not upheld two thirds (86%) of their cases - the council average is around a third (34%).

### Strategic Risks and Audits

The Strategic Risk Register was reviewed at the Strategic Risk Management Group (SRMG) on 7 December 2023 when it was agreed that an additional risk should be added on Safety Valve.

The outcome of audits is included in the Head of Audit and Risk Management's Interim Report to the [Governance Audit Committee on 24 January 2024](#) which can be found on the council's public website.



## Section 5: Community Health

There are several indicators available to benchmark council performance on by using [LG Inform](#). In particular, it can be useful to compare performance with CIPFA neighbours which represent a group of authorities with similar characteristics. Therefore, this comparison is used along with the English authority average.

The purpose of including the community health data is to provide wider context for assessing the performance of delivering the Council Plan priorities and to further support decision making and planning. The needs and patterns within the community will affect the delivery of council services and achievement of the priorities. It also may suggest where new areas of focus are needed. The specific items below are pilot indicators included to show the range of possible areas that can be reported.

**Key:** ● Bracknell Forest Council ■ Mean for Bracknell Forest CIPFA nearest neighbours



Bracknell Forest (Quantiles of All English unitary authorities) - latest data at 23 January 2024	
<a href="#">Average happiness rating 2022/23 Mean</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>Scores have significantly increased (improved) since the 2021/22 data. Residents in Bracknell Forest now report above average happiness</p>
<a href="#">Average life satisfaction rating 2022/23 Mean</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>Scores have significantly increased (improved) since the 2021/22 data. Residents in Bracknell Forest now report above average life satisfaction.</p>
<a href="#">% of pupils meeting the expected standard at KS2 in reading, writing and maths 2022/23 (academic)</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>No significant changes</p>
<a href="#">Second or subsequent child protection plans (%) 2022/23</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>The rate of second or subsequent child protection plans has significantly increased since 2021/22 data.</p>
<a href="#">% 19 to 21 year old care leavers in education, employment or training 2022/23</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>No significant changes</p>
<a href="#">% of population aged 16-65 on Universal Credit Dec 2023</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>No significant changes</p>
<a href="#">Employment rate (%) 2023 Q3 (12 months ending)</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>Employment rate has increased (improved) since 2023 Q1 data, Bracknell Forest is now above average.</p>
<a href="#">Rate of births of new enterprises 2022 Enterprises per 10,000 people</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>No significant change, though the average business births for CIPFA neighbours has reduced.</p>
<a href="#">% Ultrafast broadband availability 2023</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>Slight improvement since previous 2023 data.</p>
<a href="#">Total recorded offences (excluding fraud) (per 1,000 population) 2023 Q2 (12 months ending) Crimes per 1000 people</a> *updated since CPOR Q2	<p>No significant changes</p>

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To: **Overview and Scrutiny Commission**  
**29 February 2024**

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## **Overview and Scrutiny Review of Thames Water** **Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

### **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To present the Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel's report to the Commission following the Panel's review into Thames Water, and to agree the recommendations.
- 1.2 To provide the advice of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer (SSO) to inform the Commission's decision whether to endorse the Panel's recommendations to the Executive.

### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 **That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission considers whether to endorse the Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel's recommendations to the Executive, as set out in the Panel report (attached as Appendix A) and paragraph 5.5 of this report, taking into account the comments of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer and Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration.**

### **3 Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 It is the role of the SSO to advise the Council on any issues or concerns that may arise about the operation of the scrutiny function and the SSO may on occasion be required to make a determination about what the law says and how this should be applied to any particular situation. In carrying out this statutory role, there is a need to have a nuanced and meaningful understanding of the scrutiny function in order to accurately make judgments about its operation when disagreements or other issues arise.
- 3.2 The SSO is responsible for ensuring that the scrutiny function is adequately resourced and that service departments and partners are contributing sufficiently to reviews to ensure that they are effective.
- 3.3 The SSO is also responsible for providing advice to the Commission on whether the recommendations within review reports are robust, taking account of resource, legal, climate change, equalities, health and wellbeing and strategic risk implications.

### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 The Commission could decide:
  - to endorse the recommendations to the Executive (and others) as set out in the Panel's report
  - to endorse the recommendations in part
  - to ask for further work to be undertaken before the report is submitted to the Executive recognising that this would delay the Panel's next piece of work

- to note the Panel report and not make any recommendations to the Executive (or others)

## **5 Supporting Information from the Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission commissioned the Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel to carry out a review into Thames Water following a recommendation at a Council meeting on 12 July 2023.
- 5.2 The Panel was supported by Esther Prangle, Governance and Scrutiny Officer who supported the Panel to draw up the scope of the review and prepare an evidence pack of relevant information; to facilitate a number of Panel sessions to interview a range of contributors; to draw out findings from the Panel's investigation, and to prepare a review report. This involved in the region of 200 hours of scrutiny officer time and 5 hours 45 minutes of Panel meetings.
- 5.4 In summary it is the Statutory Scrutiny Officer's view that this review activity had adequate resources. The majority of review activity took place between August 2023 and February 2024.
- 5.5 The Panel's recommendations on 29 February 2024 are set out below. The reasons for making these recommendations are set out in the Panel report. These recommendations are:
- 1. A cross Berkshire water and sewage partnership should be formed**  
This partnership should consolidate the interactions between relevant stakeholders, including Thames Water, improving communication and in turn leading to better outcomes for the affected communities with regard to operation of the water sewage system and transparent communication with residents. This should be initiated through the Berkshire Leaders forum and supported by the Berkshire Officers Group.
  - 2. To nominate a BFC Officer as touchpoint for local water quality issues**  
The Officer will serve as interface to all local stakeholders, including charities, community groups, the parishes and towns, and residents.
  - 3. To review planning procedures ensuring load on sewage treatment works is minimised.**  
To follow Oxfordshire's approach to working with Thames Water, reviewing local planning regulations to minimise impact of new developments on existing capacity.
  - 4. To make aggregated information on current water quality accessible to residents and other stakeholders.**  
To bring together open-source data relating to water quality. For the Council to host this aggregated data observatory on the Borough's website. For the website to display current water quality of major watercourses.
  - 5. That the Executive should lobby the Secretary of State for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs to review and strengthen the criteria for the Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan (2023). They should urge the adoption of a criterion that aims for the complete elimination of untreated sewage discharge.**  
While such a review is considered the Executive requests a fully costed and timed program from Thames Water to achieve DEFRA's 2050 target to discharge above an average of 10 rainfall events per year for sewage works in Bracknell Forest.

- 5.6 However, it is the view of the Corporate Management Team that the report be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission with a covering report which would include the concerns of officers regarding some elements of the above recommendations. These concerns related largely to the scope of the Council's responsibilities with regard to water quality and the costs associated with undertaking some of these actions. Refinement of the recommendations in order to allay these concerns are set out below by the Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration. It is recommended the Commission adopt the refined recommendations instead.

## **6 Commentary from Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chair, Councillor Christoph Eberle**

- 6.1 Our residents and borough services expect that local waterways and lakes are clean and safe to use. Sewage discharges are the major factor affecting water quality.
- 6.2 According to the latest published data from 2022 the Bracknell sewage treatment works however spilled 42 times, for a total of 463.5 hours. Similar spillage is expected to have occurred in 2023, and the growing number of named storms leads to increased load on the already highly utilised sewer infrastructure. As an example the recent storm Henk triggered discharges for more than 24 hours both into the Cut and the river Blackwater, clearly demonstrating a significant lack of capacity.
- 6.3 Climate change is expected to lead to further increase of strong rainfalls with the continuous growth of Bracknell Forest leading to growing demand on an already overloaded system, and to further deteriorating quality of our natural environment.
- 6.4 We owe our residents to push for improving this clearly unacceptable situation, recognising there are no simple answers to the complex regulatory and ownership situation surrounding utilities. This panel has evaluated evidence to derive recommendations aiming at making Bracknell a better place to live.

## **7 Executive Director for Place, Planning and Regeneration**

- 7.1 The review has been helpful in highlighting the responsibilities of the Water Companies and the Environment Agency. It has also helped outline the limitations of the current sewerage system and the improvements to capacity which are planned across the Borough over the next few years.
- 7.2 However, there are concerns regarding the scope of the Council's responsibilities with regard to water quality and the costs associated with undertaking some of these actions. It is therefore suggested to the Commission that the recommendations be amended as follows.

### **1. Investigate the creation of a cross Berkshire water and sewage partnership should be formed**

This partnership should consolidate the interactions between relevant stakeholders, including Thames Water, improving communication and in turn leading to better outcomes for the affected communities with regard to operation of the water sewage system and transparent communication with residents. This should be initiated through a report to the Berkshire Leaders Group.

**2. To create a ‘report it function’ on the Council’s website to capture local water quality issues**

This will act as a mechanism to record local water quality matters to be shared with the Water Company, The Environment Agency, Ofwat and local stakeholders.

**3. To review planning procedures ensuring capacity of sewage treatment works is considered.**

To investigate Oxfordshire’s approach to working with Thames Water, reviewing local planning procedures to manage impact of new developments on existing capacity.

**4. To make information on current water quality accessible to residents and other stakeholders.**

To provide links to open-source data relating to water quality on the Borough’s website.

## **8 Consultation and Other Considerations**

### Legal Advice

- 8.1 As highlighted above, the recommendations contained in the attached **Annex A** require a specific legal framework which are outside the local authority’s remit. However, this is dealt with by the reframing of the recommendations in point 7 of this report.

### Financial Advice

- 8.2 There will be financial implications arising from some of the recommendations contained in **Annex A** including:
- Recommendation 2 has been estimated to incur the following costs - £10k (1 day per week grade E). This is an additional role as water quality is a function for the Water Company and providers not the local authority.
  - There may be financial implications arising from recommendation 4, these costs would need to be confirmed following further understanding of requirements. If any extrapolation, data cleansing or manipulating of data is required this will result in cost in officer time. However, if the requirement is to point to existing data sources via a link on the Bracknell Forest website then there would be no cost implication.

### Equalities Impact Assessment

- 8.5 The review scope, activities and recommendations were all considered in the initial equalities screening attached at **Appendix B**.

### Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 8.6 There are no specific strategic risk management issues arising from the recommendations in this report.

### Climate Change Implications

- 8.7 The recommendations in Section 2 and 5 above are expected to have some climate change implications.

### Health & Wellbeing Considerations

- 8.8 The Council is committed to actively protecting and enhancing the borough's environment to keep it clean and green through improving the health of waterways. This supports Bracknell Forest being one of the healthiest places to live. Residents will therefore experience better health, both physical and mental.

### Background Papers

None

### Contact for further information

Kevin Gibbs, Statutory Scrutiny Officer - 01344 355621

[kevin.gibbs@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.gibbs@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

Esther Prangle, Governance & Scrutiny Officer - 01344 352326

[esther.prangle@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:esther.prangle@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)

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## Overview and Scrutiny Panel Report

REVIEW TITLE	O&S PANEL	DATE
Thames Water	Environment and Communities	February 2024

Our residents and borough services expect that local waterways and lakes are clean and safe to use. Sewage discharges are the major factor affecting water quality.

According to the latest published data from 2022 the Bracknell sewage treatment works however spilled 42 times, for a total of 463.5 hours. Similar spillage is expected to have occurred in 2023, and the growing number of named storms leads to increased load on the already highly utilised sewer infrastructure. As an example, the recent storm Henk triggered discharges for more than 24 hours both into the Cut and the river Blackwater, clearly demonstrating a significant lack of capacity.



Climate change is expected to lead to further increase of strong rainfalls with the continuous growth of Bracknell Forest leading to growing demand on an already overloaded system, and to further deteriorating quality of our natural environment.

We owe our residents to push for improving this clearly unacceptable situation, recognising there are no simple answers to the complex regulatory and ownership situation surrounding utilities. This panel has evaluated evidence to derive recommendations aiming at making Bracknell Forest a better place to live.

**Councillor Christoph Eberle,**  
**Chair: Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

### Recommendations



**1. A cross Berkshire water and sewage partnership should be formed**

This partnership should consolidate the interactions between relevant stakeholders, including Thames Water, improving communication and in turn leading to better outcomes for the affected communities with regard to operation of the water sewage system and transparent communication with residents. This should be initiated through the Berkshire Leaders forum and supported by the Berkshire Officers Group.

**2. To nominate a BFC Officer as touchpoint for local water quality issues**

The Officer will serve as interface to all local stakeholders, including charities, community groups, the parishes and towns, and residents. Where financial constraints prevent nomination of a dedicated officer alternative delivery approaches can be considered.

**3. To review planning procedures ensuring load on sewage treatment works is minimised.**

To follow Oxfordshire's approach to working with Thames Water, reviewing local planning regulations to minimise impact of new developments on existing capacity.

**4. To make aggregated information on current water quality accessible to residents and other stakeholders.**

To bring together open-source data relating to water quality. For the Council to host this aggregated data on the Borough's website. For the website to display current water quality of major watercourses.

**5. That the Executive should lobby the Secretary of State for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs to review and strengthen the criteria for the Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan (2023). They should urge the adoption of a criterion that aims for the complete elimination of untreated sewage discharge.**

While such a review is considered the Executive requests a fully costed and timed program from Thames Water to achieve DEFRA's 2050 target to discharge above an average of 10 rainfall events per year for sewage works in Bracknell Forest.

## Background information and key findings

On August 16th 2023 the Communities and Environment panel of the Overview & Scrutiny commission discussed the recommendation agreed at Council on 12 July 2023. It was agreed to undertake a scrutiny review on Thames Water with a revised scope compared to the full text of the Council motion. The objectives of this panel were to address the following key questions:

- Which options are available to Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) to effect changes resulting in reduced frequency and impact of Thames Water operational sewage discharges?
- What collaboration opportunities with other affected local authorities exist?

While evaluating the scope of the review, it became clear that there are many interfaces between stakeholders. Therefore, a staged workplan was adopted for the review. This first stage of the review was intended to:

- Identify the interfaces between BFC, the Parish Councils, and residents with Thames Water and other agencies
- Reach out and identify local and regional stakeholders to start/ engage with any cross-borough forum(s) for coordination with Thames Water
- Establish an overview over the regulatory framework in which BFC and other stakeholders operate regarding Thames Water

The second stage of the review has gathered evidence to support the development of recommendations.

The third stage of the review has not been started due to time constraints. It is intended to:

- Develop recommendations for a continual cross borough framework dealing with Thames Water to minimise sewage discharges
- Develop recommendations linked to sewage management for BFC to ensure information available from Thames Water is considered in management of public spaces as well as planning, including the development of local plans or local neighbourhood plans
- Consider the impact of climate change on the waste water system and identify requirements to ensure resilience

The panel found that:

1. The water industry is regulated by the Environment Agency (EA) which is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Service providers such as Thames Water (TW) are regulated through environmental permits.
2. The water sector is further subject to economic regulation by the Water Services Regulation Authority (Ofwat) who ensure that water companies properly carry out their statutory functions and are in the financial situation to do so.
3. The only tentative regulatory link between the water industry and Bracknell Forest Council is through local plans, where Thames Water are consultees.
4. Thames Water and the Environment Agency further engage with charities such as Thames 21 through a partnership programme.
5. While there is a fair amount of information in the public domain it is disparate and unconsolidated.
6. Thames Water is undertaking significant and fully funded improvements of sewage treatment works (STW) in the BFC area. These are expected to reduce discharge events to an average of 24 discharges per overflow per year, in line with Thames Water's 2025 commitment. Zero discharges remain a government target with no specific allocated timescale or funding.
7. The volume of discharge per event and the released contaminants per event are not specifically recorded.
8. While this panel has not been tasked to investigate local sewage spillage, the situation in January 2024 has been very problematic, with overflowing sewage pipes and discharge/spillage events in multiple areas of our Borough.
9. None of the six river water bodies in the BFC area has reached good ecological status.
10. BFC has currently no statutory duty to monitor water quality, however this is a key concern to our residents.

### Good Practice



The panel acknowledges that Thames Water operates within its regulatory framework, and that regulators such as the Environment Agency maintain regulatory oversight according to their brief.. The frequent pollution stems from regulatory inadequacies, not their enforcement. To prompt regulatory change, the panel suggests increased transparency and a consistent recording of discharge events.

### Review findings



The review found no evidence for oversight roles and/or control BFC has with regard to water quality and sewage issues. In consequence there are no direct ways for BFC to improve the local situation for our residents. Only a change of the regulatory framework and a tightening of corresponding legislation and, in consequence, licensing conditions for Thames Water will lead to removal of the threat of sewage pollution to our waterways.

The Panel's five recommendations aim to put Bracknell Forest Council into a position where it can collect and escalate concerns regarding water and sewage management to Ofwat, the Environment Agency, Thames Water, and other stakeholders as an entity. To achieve a reduction in the frequency and impact of Thames Water's operational sewage discharges, it is the panel's view that this can be best accomplished through a collaborative process with other stakeholders, within the current regulatory framework.

Over the course of the last year the panel has interviewed witnesses on 22 November 2023 and 13 December 2023. Minutes of the public meetings have been published and are available under the links presented below:

Minutes November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023: [Minutes details on public web site](#)  
Minutes December 13<sup>th</sup> 2023: [Minutes details on public web site](#)

The following sections contain key findings of the stakeholder interviews.



Thames 21 is a charity established two decades ago, emphasising ecosystem restoration through a collaborative approach.

With partners they have pioneered the development and delivery of nature-based solutions to improve the quality of water which included constructed wetlands. It was explained that these could be described as large sustainable drainage systems in public spaces, capable of treating pollution from the drainage area including sewage and road run off pollution. Communities are involved and have an input in these which provided a community hub in addition to improvement of the green spaces.

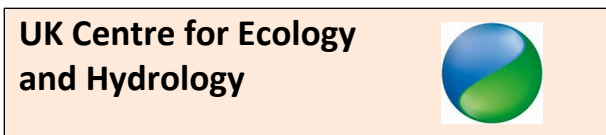
The development of a road runoff solution pollution tool was noted by the Panel. This tool is currently covering London but will be expanding to the Bracknell Forest Council area. This tool identified pollution pathways into the river and guides and prioritises where and how nature-based solutions can be used to tackle road runoff pollution.

Catchment planning was noted as an important way of working, specifically developing collaborative action across communities, authorities and non-government organisations (NGO's) to drive implementation.

The catchment partnership had set up a working group for the Bracknell Town area, which included the involvement of some Bracknell Town Councillors, Borough Rangers and local community groups. This has led to local projects in the area that included the outfall safari in 2022 and work on a successful bid for community action for the Cut, which focused on volunteer led days to restore a section of the watercourse that runs through Garth Meadows.



*Thames 21 should be brought into the cross-borough water and sewage partnership (recommendation 1) and provide information to the designated water quality officer (recommendation 2). Tools developed by Thames 21 should be incorporated into the water quality aggregation tool (recommendation 4)*



Between 2013-2016 the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology was involved in a Research Council funded project which monitored river flow and water quality of the Cut in Bracknell, this data was made public. They set up models that simulated the hydrology of river flows and water quality which would be capable of looking at the impacts of different management interventions. It was confirmed that the main focus of the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology was at a national level and they would be applying for European coordinated funding programmes with a focus on green infrastructure which was relevant for Bracknell Forest. There was also confirmation that as an

organisation the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology would be working with Thames Water to enhance understanding of pollution issues.

*UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology should be brought into the cross-borough water and sewage partnership (recommendation 1) and provide information to the designated water quality officer (recommendation 2).*

### **Update from a previous visit to Bracknell Sewage treatment works**

In response to [sewage spills at Thames Water Sewage works in May 2023](#), a group of Councillors visited the site, finding it fully automated with minimal staff. Regular water samples were taken to ensure the organic filtration process was working to a satisfactory level. This filtration system could be affected by chemicals. Stormwater was managed in holding tanks and slowly released into the system when the flow was reduced. It was noted that there was one tank out of action which would need investment to be operational again.

During the visit the Thames Water representative confirmed that the sewage works could handle a population of 250,000. It was however pointed out that issues were arising from heavy rains and surface water that entered the system which resulted in discharges into the water course and environmental damage. .



*Data from the Sewage Treatment Works should be incorporated into the water quality aggregation tool (recommendation 4)*

**Thames Water**



In the witness session, TW provided a visual map of the Sewage Treatment Works (STW) in Bracknell Forest with sizes of each and established the principles of STW operation. For sewage intake in excess of 70 litres per second, storage tanks are utilised. When the capacity of those is exceeded mechanically but not biologically treated sewage is released into the water courses, in compliance with the operational rules. It became apparent that discharge of partially treated sewage is not an accident but part of the normal operation of the sewage plants.

The surface outfall water programme was discussed. This addressed the issue of foul water entering the surface water system. The outfall safaris identified polluted outfalls in partnership with community groups. Thames Water's Environmental Protection Team would then undertake strategic long-term tracing upstream from each outfall to identify the pollution source. Property owners would then be asked to rectify the issue or in some cases enforcement from local authorities would be necessary.

A reporting tool emphasised the importance of timely problem reporting, was highlighted to the panel. The interactive storm discharge map, which identified when untreated sewage had been discharged from a STW, was shown and it was explained that this highlighted to customers the unacceptable nature of releasing untreated sewage. Investment taking place at each of the STW was presented with works due for completion across the sites ranging from 2024 at Ascot, 2025 at Sandhurst and 2026 at Aldershot, Camberley and Bracknell. Further improvements to Sandhurst would be scheduled for the next asset planning period of 2025-2030.

TW confirmed that the improvements presented fall under the current business plan and are therefore not affected by the current financial troubles. It was acknowledged they could be delayed. Beyond the current business plan was the draft plan for the next five years, 2025-2030, that was with the regulators who would respond and then a final plan would be produced.

In further discussion with TW it became apparent that the improvements are intended to reduce the sewage release events in number but are not capable of reducing them to zero, or close to zero. While TW acknowledged the aim to ultimately achieve zero releases it remained unclear how this is to be attained as providing more storage is apparently not the answer due to operational constraints.

The witness session also confirmed that TW have very limited control to who connects to their sewage system as there is a “right to connect”.



*Thames Water should be brought into the cross -borough water and sewage partnership (recommendation 1) and provide information to the designated water quality officer (recommendation 2). BFC should seek exchange of information on local planning with Thames Water to ensure adequacy of waste water provisions in the context of local plans (recommendation 3). Tools developed by Thames Water should be incorporated into the water quality aggregation tool (recommendation 4). It was found that even a best-case scenario would still lead to discharge of untreated sewage under the DEFRA Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan (2023), the Executive should attempt to change this (recommendation 5)*

**Environment Agency**



The [Environment Agency](#)'s Area Environment Manager discussed their role in protecting the environment and regulating Thames Water.

The role of protecting and improving the environment was shaped by key plans which included the Government's integrated plan for clean and plentiful water, published in 2023, and the Thames and river basin management plan. Both set out the current status of the water environment and priority actions going forward.

Ecological health of rivers was currently not good enough to reach the Government's 25-year plan target of 75% of water bodies reaching good ecological status. Pressures were diverse and complex and integrated action, with catchment-based partnerships, would be key for all relevant organisations.

None of the six river water bodies in the Bracknell Forest area had reached good ecological status. Key pressures were continuous and intermittent water pollution, physical habitat modification and urbanisation.

Regulation of water and sewage companies focussed on ensuring water companies delivered the environmental responsibilities and covered three primary areas:

- Assessment and reporting of water companies' environmental performance. This covered key aspects resulting in a one (poor) to four (leading company) star rating. Thames Water received two stars on the 2022 assessment which indicated they required significant improvement on environmental performance. Concerns were the number of pollution incidents and delay to environmental improvement schemes.
- Provides guidance on assessment of plans to protect and improve the environment. This included advice to Government on a range of water companies' plans.
- Determination of environmental permits and associated compliance of enforcement.

The Thames Water plan for the period 2025-2030 was recently submitted to OFWAT and set out plans to improve the environment which were critical to deliver key environmental improvements by 2030. Plans also included implementation of the storm overflow discharge reduction plan. These plans were being reviewed by the Environment Agency to assess if relevant environmental obligations were included and would be concluded by December 2024.

A range of enforcement activity was undertaken against Thames Water including successful prosecution of seventeen Thames Water sites with fines totalling more than 37 million pounds. Live investigations were ongoing at a local and national level including criminal investigation into potential breaches of environmental permit conditions at over two thousand STW by all water companies. Indicates serious and widespread non-compliance of permit conditions.

There was ongoing investigation of storm overflow discharges. Event duration monitoring would be required by all storm overflows by the end of December 2024.

The ecological status of rivers in the Bracknell Forest area is not acceptable. Issues are complex with no simple or quick solutions. Considerable planning and investigation would be required to resolve the issues. Ecological challenges in Bracknell Forest demand a comprehensive, integrated approach.



*The Environment Agency should be brought into the cross-borough water and sewage partnership (recommendation 1) and provide information to the designated water quality officer (recommendation 2). Tools developed by the Environment Agency should be incorporated into the water quality aggregation tool (recommendation 4). It was found that even a best-case scenario would still lead to discharge of untreated sewage under the DEFRA Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan (2023), the Executive should attempt to change this (recommendation 5)*

## Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue



[Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue](#) reported to the panel that water rescue training can no longer take place in rivers or County Locks due to the contamination and sickness caused by being in this water. They are now forced to rent out clean water sites such as Lee Valley or Cardiff to undertake training. This affects all stations across Berkshire.

If they have attended incidents involving open water sources equipment cleanliness and hygiene was an issue. All equipment would need to be thoroughly cleaned and decontaminated resulting in that appliance being out of action until completed. This would therefore block availability for any other call outs until cleaning was completed.



*Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue will benefit from up-to-date information on water quality resulting from the implementation of recommendation 4.*

## Summary

The panel highlights inefficiencies in the water industry's regulation, emphasising the lack of local council powers to hold it accountable. Inadequate communication between Thames Water and local councils, including Bracknell Forest (BFC), leads to delayed responses to residents' issues. The panel suggests local coordination and initiative to enhance data collection and analysis, improving communication with the water industry and regulator. They recommend a review of local plans to limit sewage treatment works' load and advocate for strict enforcement to identify and address uncontrolled pollution. The panel finds the discharge of untreated sewage into waterways unacceptable and urges a review of DEFRA's Storm Overflows Discharge Reduction Plan, demanding tightened criteria. Additionally, they call for a fully costed program from Thames Water to meet DEFRA's 2050 target for sewage works in Bracknell Forest.

## Financial considerations

There will be financial implications arising from some of the recommendations.

Recommendation 2 has been estimated to incur the following costs - £10k (1 day per week grade E). This is an additional role as water quality is a function for the Water Company and providers not the local authority.

There may be financial implications arising from recommendation 4, these costs would need to be confirmed following further understanding of requirements. If any extrapolation, data cleansing or manipulating of data is required this will result in cost in officer time. If the requirement is to point to existing data sources via a link on the Bracknell Forest website then there would be no cost implication.

## Review Panel

<b>Councillor Brown</b>	<b>Councillor Haffegée</b>
<b>Councillor Cochrane</b>	<b>Councillor Hayes</b>
<b>Councillor C. Eberle (Chair)</b>	<b>Councillor McKenzie-Boyle</b>
<b>Councillor Ejaz</b>	<b>Councillor O'Regan</b>
<b>Councillor M. Forster (Vice chair)</b>	<b>Councillor Watts</b>

## Contributors to the review

<b>Andrew Hunter</b>	Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration, Bracknell Forest Council
<b>Councillor Tony Virgo</b>	Councillor Winkfield & Warfield East
<b>John Bryden</b>	Head of Improving Rivers, Thames 21
<b>Sarah Thornley</b>	Catchment Partnership Development Officer, Thames 21
<b>Dr Michael Hutchins</b>	UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology
<b>Richard Aylard</b>	Sustainability Director, Thames Water
<b>Nikki Hines</b>	Social Housing manager, Thames Water




<b>Dave Willis</b>	Area Environment Manager, Environment Agency, Thames Area
<b>Charlotte Dell</b>	Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue
<b>Esther Prangley</b>	Governance and Scrutiny Officer, Bracknell Forest Council

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## Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

<b>Date of Screening:</b>	<b>Directorate: Delivery</b>	<b>Section: Overview &amp; Scrutiny</b>	
<b>1. Activity to be assessed</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Panel for Environment and Communities review into Thames Water. This review will consult with witnesses from not-for-profit organisations representing the community - Thames 21 and the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. Thames Water. The Environment Agency. Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue.		
<b>2. What is the activity?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
<b>3. Is it a new or existing activity?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing		
<b>4. Officer responsible for the screening</b>	Esther Prangle, Governance & Scrutiny Officer		
<b>5. Who are the members of the screening team?</b>	Esther Prangle, Cllr C Eberle and Cllr M Forster		
<b>6. What is the purpose of the activity?</b>	The purpose of this activity is to look at what options were available to Bracknell Forest Council to effect changes that would reduce the frequency and impact of operational sewage discharges in the Borough		
<b>7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?</b>	All Residents		
<b>Protected Characteristics</b>	<b>Please tick yes or no</b>	<b>Is there an impact?</b> 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.	<b>What evidence do you have to support this?</b> 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
<b>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.</b>	N	No impact identified	The recommendations will not impact disability equality but should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local waterways and the surrounding environment.
<b>9. Racial equality</b>	N	No impact identified	The recommendations should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local waterways and the surrounding environment.
<b>10. Gender equality</b>	N	No impact identified	The recommendations should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local waterways and the surrounding environment.

<b>11. Sexual orientation equality</b>		N	No impact identified	The recommendations should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local waterways and the surrounding environment.
<b>12. Gender re-assignment</b>		N	No impact identified	The recommendations should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local surrounding waterways and the environment.
<b>13. Age equality</b>		N	No impact identified	The recommendations should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local waterways and the surrounding environment.
<b>14. Religion and belief equality</b>		N	No impact identified	The recommendations should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local waterways and the surrounding environment.
<b>15. Pregnancy and maternity equality</b>		N	No impact identified	The recommendations should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local waterways and the surrounding environment.
<b>16. Marriage and civil partnership equality</b>		N	No impact identified	The recommendations should have an overall positive impact on all groups by improving the quality of local waterways and the surrounding environment.
<b>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.</b>	None			
<b>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?</b>	N/A			
<b>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?</b>	No			
<b>20. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?</b>		N		

21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Minutes of meetings and information that formed the evidence pack are available on the BFC website.		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?		N	
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
See recommendation contained in the report		Cllr Eberle	Recommendations are endorsed by the O&S Commission and agreed by the Executive.
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Overview & Scrutiny Commission work plan		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	See recommendations contained in the report		
26. Assistant director's signature.	Signature:  Date: 26.01.24		

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<b>Sexual Health Education, Skills and Growth Overview &amp; Scrutiny Panel</b>	
<p><b>Reason for review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To test if sexual health service provision was sufficient to meet the needs of young people in the borough, with a particular focus on how people access services.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Objectives/scope</b></p> <p>The review will look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the impact, if any, of the current provision of dedicated specialist sexual health services for residents.</li> <li>Understand how specialist contraceptive service providers, and their partner organisations, work together to promote and improve services and assess their impact.</li> <li>Identify reasons why residents, especially those aged under 25, may have issues accessing urgent contraceptive appointments.</li> <li>Identify the reasons for the low detection rate of chlamydia in Bracknell compared to other local authorities.</li> <li>To assess whether the local STI testing approach is appropriately targeted to identify populations with higher rates of STIs.</li> </ul> <p>The review Panel will do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carrying out a desk top analysis of public health data, for example information from Public Health Hub Berkshire East, the Joint Needs Strategic Assessment and NHS Digital data available online,</li> <li>Visiting services which serve Bracknell Forest residents,</li> <li>Interviewing service commissioners and operational delivery managers,</li> <li>Interviewing comparator local authorities with better detection rates for chlamydia</li> <li>Talking to residents to capture their views,</li> <li>Interviewing Bracknell Forest Youth Services as part of the delivery mechanism,</li> <li>Working with the Bracknell Forest Youth Champions,</li> <li>Reviewing PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) teaching in the boroughs' schools,</li> <li>Review any complaints to Bracknell Forest Council related to sexual health service provision.</li> </ul> <p>At the conclusion of this work the Panel will produce a report highlighting its findings and propose recommendations to the Executive about how sexual health services could improve and highlight good practice.</p>	
<p><b>Delivery methods:</b> Desk top analysis; evidence gathering sessions, visits and surveys.</p>	
<p><b>Council theme:</b> Engaged and healthy communities</p>	<p><b>Council team:</b> Public Health</p>
<p><b>Review due:</b> 23 May 2024</p>	<p><b>Proposed by:</b> Cllr Caroline Egglestone, Chair Health and Care Panel</p>

**Equalities Impact Assessment**

The Council has a duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to tackling discrimination of persons that share the characteristics protected under Section 4 of the Act; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not.

**Financial and legal implications**

There are potentially legal and financial implications of any recommendations arising from this review which will be fully addressed in the review report.

**Climate Change and ecological implications**

There are no climate change or ecological implications arising from this review.



## Initial Equalities Screening Record Form

<b>Date of Screening:</b>	<b>Directorate: Delivery</b>	<b>Section: Overview and Scrutiny</b>	
<b>1. Activity to be assessed</b>	Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel Review of Sexual Health		
<b>2. What is the activity?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change		
<b>3. Is it a new or existing activity?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing		
<b>4. Officer responsible for the screening</b>	Esther Prangle, Overview and Scrutiny Officer		
<b>5. Who are the members of the screening team?</b>	Cllr Egglestone (Panel Chair), Cllr Welch (Panel Vice-Chair)		
<b>6. What is the purpose of the activity?</b>	To understand the provision and impact of sexual health care services for residents, specifically those aged 15-25.		
<b>7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?</b>	Residents aged 15-25		
<b>Protected Characteristics</b>	<b>Please tick yes or no</b>	<b>Is there an impact?</b> 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.	<b>What evidence do you have to support this?</b> 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
<b>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.</b>	Y	Positive for physical health for those aged 15-25. There may also be a wider positive impact that is not identified at this stage.	The review and recommendations should benefit physical and mental health of 15-25 year olds by ensuring fair and appropriate access to sexual health services and education around sexual health is available.
<b>9. Racial equality</b>	N	No impact identified at this stage.	The review focus is on those aged 15-25. The review recommendations may have an impact on other age groups with this protected characteristic which is not identified at this stage.
<b>10. Gender equality</b>	N	No impact identified at this stage.	The review focus is on those aged 15-25. The review recommendations may have an impact on other age groups with this protected characteristic which is not identified at this stage.

<b>11. Sexual orientation equality</b>		N	No impact identified at this stage.	The review focus is on those aged 15-25. The review recommendations may have an impact on other age groups with this protected characteristic which is not identified at this stage.
<b>12. Gender re-assignment</b>		N	No impact identified at this stage.	The review focus is on those aged 15-25. The review recommendations may have an impact on other age groups with this protected characteristic which is not identified at this stage.
<b>13. Age equality</b>	Y		Positive impact on those aged 15-25.	The focus of the review is on those age 15-25 and it is anticipated that the outcome of the review and recommendations will benefit this age group by ensuring fair and appropriate access to sexual health services is available. The review and recommendations may have an impact on other age groups which is not identified at this stage.
<b>14. Religion and belief equality</b>		N	No impact identified at this stage.	The review focus is on those aged 15-25. The review recommendations may have an impact on other age groups with this protected characteristic which is not identified at this stage.
<b>15. Pregnancy and maternity equality</b>		N	No impact identified at this stage.	The review focus is on those aged 15-25. The review recommendations may have an impact on other age groups with this protected characteristic which is not identified at this stage.
<b>16. Marriage and civil partnership equality</b>		N	No impact identified at this stage.	The review focus is on those aged 15-25. The review recommendations may have an impact on other age groups with this protected characteristic which is not identified at this stage.
<b>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.</b>	Increased awareness and knowledge of sexual health provision within the community should have positive impacts for all including those on low incomes.			
<b>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?</b>	N/A			
<b>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</b>	No			

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?		N	
21. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	Review meetings, visits, data gathered and information within the evidence pack will better understand the impact. This will be available on the BFC website.		
22. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?		N	
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.			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Milestone/Success Criteria</b>
This will be seen in the report recommendations when complete.	May 2024	Cllr Egglestone	Endorsement of the recommendations by the O&S Commission and agreed by the Executive.
24. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Overview and Scrutiny Commission work plan		
25. Please list the current actions undertaken to advance equality or examples of good practice identified as part of the screening?	These will be seen in the recommendations in the report.		
26. Assistant Director/Director signature.	Signature: <i>Ann Moore</i>		Date: 9 February 2024

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**TO: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION**  
**29 February 2024**

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**Development of Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-2027**  
**(Statutory Scrutiny Officer)**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report seeks agreement for inclusion and scheduling of topics in the Commission's work programme for 2024-27.

**2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **That topics be agreed from the proposed list of topics which have been prioritised by members of the Panel as set out in paragraph 5.4; and**
- 2.2 **That the draft schedule be agreed.**

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Commission and its Panels have previously developed a work programme to respond and support the Council's strategic plans in order to focus on what matters for Bracknell Forest and carry out its five broad functions:
- Holding the Council's Executive and its statutory partners to account in the public interest.
  - Supporting the development of effective policies and initiatives which have a beneficial impact on the community through policy review and development.
  - Contributing to continuous improvement in services through performance monitoring.
  - Having a positive impact on the work and outcomes of external agencies and providers of public services.
  - Aiding Councillors in engaging with their communities and playing their role of community representatives and leaders.

**4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The Commission and its Panels could decide not to develop a work programme which could lead to unfocused activity and make planning support for the Commission and its Panels challenging.

**5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 5.1 During 2019-2023 the Overview and Scrutiny team supported a total of 12 scrutiny reviews. A well-developed work programme was key to progressing this number of reviews as officers were able to ensure officer availability. Due to the significant change in administration following the local election in 2023 a training programme

took up a significant amount of time to assist Councillors in their new roles. There was also a change in the team supporting overview and scrutiny and the Council Plan was being developed, which all impacted on the ability of the team and Councillors to carry out Panel reviews. However, it should be noted the Environment and Communities O&S Panel has undertaken a review into Thames Water during this period. The following parameters for the 2024-2027 work programme are suggested:

- Budget scrutiny to be included in each Panel's programme
- All Panel reviews to be concluded by the beginning of January 2027 to enable recommendations to be referred to the Executive as required before the run up to the election
- All Panel reviews since 2019 to be reviewed to evaluate their impact, assess whether recommendations were implemented and follow up investigations as appropriate

5.2 Panel reviews will continue to be varied in methodology, including one day reviews, workshops, public consultation, collaborating with other local authorities or partners, as well as the longer research based approach.

5.3 Members are asked to bear in mind the principal power of a scrutiny committee **is to influence** the policies and decisions made by the council and other organisations involved in delivering public services. The scrutiny committee **gathers evidence** on issues affecting local people and makes recommendations based on its findings. Scrutiny can investigate any issue which affects the local area or the area's inhabitants. However, effective scrutiny work relies on **scrutiny's 'soft' influencing power**, as it has no formal power to compel anyone to make changes. Therefore, it is important to think about not only scrutiny's legal powers but also **about how to build a positive working relationship** with those who are the subject of scrutiny's recommendations. This ensures a much higher chance of scrutiny's recommendations being implemented.

5.4 In order to put together the work programme Panel members and relevant Executive Directors were asked to propose topics for inclusion on the programme which are set out further below and need to be considered against the Council's priorities.

5.5 The three Council priorities are:



#### **Engaged and healthy communities**

Our role is to help create opportunities where people can succeed, be happy and feel safe.

[Explore our community priorities](#)



#### **Thriving and connected economy**

The local economy includes many different aspects, such as businesses, jobs, skills, accommodation, and services.

[Explore our economic priorities](#)


























#### **Green and sustainable environment**

Our environment includes everything around us, our parks, our cycleways and our road networks.

[Explore our environmental priorities](#)

5.6 Suggested Panel review topics are set out below:

Topic	Panel	Strategic theme	Approx length of time to carry out review
<b>Transition</b> – how do the Council, and partners, plan for transition from Children’s to Adult’s Services in order to personalise plans and ensure timely sharing of information?	ES&G		Long - 6 month review
<b>Recruitment and Retention</b> – what are the barriers to recruiting and retaining Council staff with the required skillset and how can they be overcome?	ES&G		Long - 6 month review
<b>Looked After Children (LAC)</b> – how does the Council enhance the aspirations of children in care?	ES&G		Short – one month review
<b>Skills gap</b> – is there a skills gap in the borough and, if so, what can be done to address it?	ES&G		Medium-3 month review
<b>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)</b> – how are the Council, and its partners, holding each other to account to address issues identified in the SEND Action Plan and Safety Value Programme?	ES&G		Continuous
<b>Sexual health</b> – how is the delivery of sexual health information/services to young people in the borough being delivered and does it meet their needs?	H&C		Medium- 3 month review
<b>Mobile Library Service</b> – what options are available to deliver the service given funding will cease in April 2025?	ES&G		Short – one month review
<b>Dentistry</b> – what powers does the Council have to make a difference to availability of dentists in the borough?	H&C		Short – one month review
<b>Sufficiency and availability of adult social care marketplace</b> – what is the availability of domestic care providers in the borough, and can they provide the care required by residents?	H&C	 	Long – 6 month review
<b>Adult safeguarding</b> – what assurance mechanisms are in place to safeguard adults in the borough and are they sufficient?	H&C		Medium – 3 month review
<b>Third sector provision</b> (voluntary sector commissioning) – do we have the correct model for commissioning third sector provision in the borough in order to achieve value for money?	H&C		Medium – 3 month review
<b>Brant’s Bridge</b> – what is the availability of ‘urgent’ care services for residents in the borough and is it sufficient?	H&C		Short – one month review
<b>Planning and health</b> – how do planning decisions take into account the impact on the health needs of residents?	H&C	 	Medium – 3 month review

Topic cont'd	Panel responsible	Strategic theme	Approx length of time to carry out review
<b>JHOSC (Joint Health Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee)</b> – how will the new Frimley Park Hospital meet the needs of Bracknell Forest residents?	H&C		Continuous
<b>Housing</b> – empty properties/quality of social housing stock – how many empty properties are there in Bracknell and what is the quality of that stock? Or, is social housing fit for purpose?	E&C	  	Long – 6 month review
<b>Cars idling outside schools</b> – what is the impact on health qualities and the environment of people 'idling their cars' outside schools?	E&C	 	Short – one month review
<b>Parking</b> – residential and/or public – is there sufficient parking in the borough and how does it fit with the Council's climate change agenda?	E&C		Long – 6 month review
<b>Waste</b> – does the waste and recycling system meet the needs of residents and how does it fit with the Council's climate change agenda?	E&C		Medium – 3 month review

- 5.7 In addition, it is important the Overview and Scrutiny Commission reviews the work conducted by the previous administration which has not been reviewed already. Space needs to be left to review the implementation of recommendations resulting from newly commissioned reviews, as well as space for urgent issues that arise.
- 5.8 At the start of this municipal year the following reviews were yet to be reviewed to ensure the recommendations had been carried out. It is important to note the Executive did not accept the recommendations of one review, the 'Isolation and Loneliness' review so this is not on the list as it is not anticipated they were implemented. A review of the recommendations from the 'Care Leavers Review', 'Blue Badges Review' have already been conducted.
- 5.9 2019-2023 Panel review recommendations to be reviewed:

Review name	Panel responsible	Date completed
Community Infrastructure Levy	Education, Skills and Growth	October 2021
Integrated Enforcement	Environment and Communities	September 2022
Enforcement Strategy	Environment and Communities	October 2023
Mental Health (adults)	Health and Care	March 2022



SEND	Education, Skills and Growth	November 2022
Apprenticeships	Education, Skills and Growth	March 2021
Burial Choices	Environment and Communities	February 2021
Child Criminal Exploitation	Education, Skills and Growth	October 2023
Registered Social Landlords	Environment and Communities	March 2021
Food waste in flats	Environment and Communities	August 2021

#### 6. Borough Solicitor's comments

Part 2 of the Council's Constitution states that the Commission is required to 'Develop a four-year strategic work programme aligned to the Council Plan following input from scrutiny members, the Executive, Corporate Management Team, partners and the public, ensuring that it is flexible enough to accommodate urgent short-term issues.' A four-year work programme will provide the legal basis for carrying out scrutiny reviews.

#### 7. Borough Treasurer's comments

Any proposals would need to be delivered within existing budgets.

#### 8. Equalities Impact Assessment

None.

#### 9. Strategic Risk Management Issues

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme should be set against the Council's strategic objectives in order to effectively deliver the five key priorities of Overview and Scrutiny.

#### 10. Background Papers

None.

#### 11. Contact for further information

Kevin Gibbs, Statutory Scrutiny Officer  
[Kevin.gibbs@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.gibbs@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)  
 01344 355621

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# **Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme (2023-27)**

**29 February 2024**



# Overview and Scrutiny

## What is good governance?

Good governance is achieved by having efficient and effective decision-making processes and systems. The use of appropriate policy and accountability frameworks enable councils to focus on strategic rather than operational issues.



# Overview and Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny has established a structure that allows activity to better align with the themes of the Council Plan. The function has established and delivered against a work programme that supports the council objectives. The Commission has carried out research and made recommendations to support the Council's climate change targets and has scrutinised the budget and monitored the performance of all Council departments through the Council Plan Overview Report. ([Annual Governance Statement 2020/21](#))



# Overview and Scrutiny - Powers

## Powers of scrutiny

The principal power of a scrutiny committee **is to influence** the policies and decisions made by the council and other organisations involved in delivering public services. The scrutiny committee **gathers evidence** on issues affecting local people and makes recommendations based on its findings.



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Scrutiny can investigate any issue which affects the local area or the area's inhabitants. However, effective scrutiny work relies on **scrutiny's 'soft' influencing power**, as it has no formal power to compel anyone to make changes. Therefore, it is important to think about not only scrutiny's legal powers but also **about how to build a positive working relationship** with those who are the subject of scrutiny's recommendations. This ensures a much higher chance of scrutiny's recommendations being implemented.



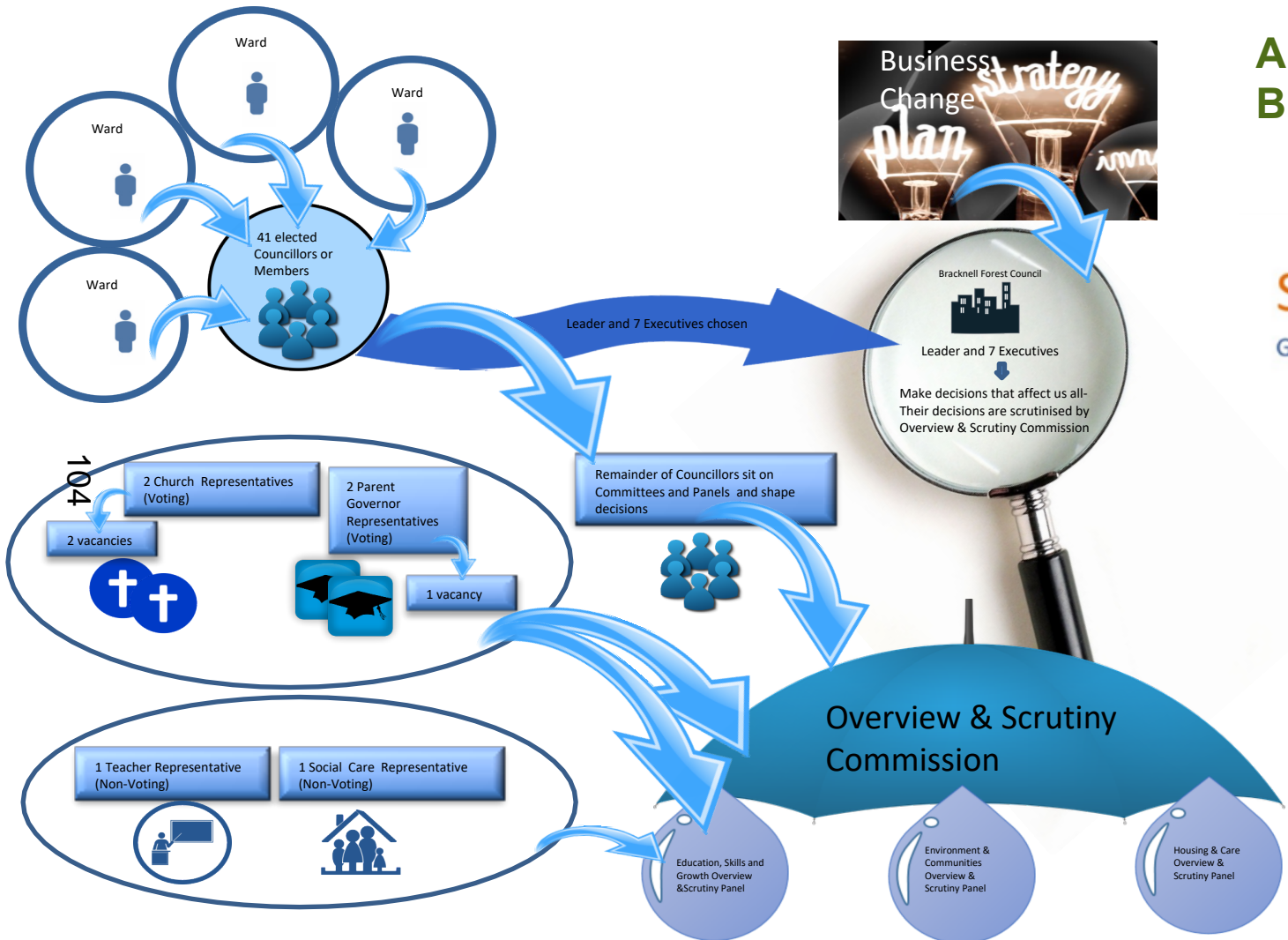
# Overview and Scrutiny - Powers

## Council's Constitution -The Overview and Scrutiny Commission shall:

- (i) **Develop a four-year strategic work programme aligned to the Council Plan** following input from scrutiny members, the Executive, Corporate Management Team, partners and the public, ensuring that it is flexible enough to accommodate urgent short-term issues.
- 103 (ii) Co-ordinate the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Panels to make the best use of available resources which will include allocating topics to Panels and agreeing the scope of activity.
- (iii) Commission Panels to undertake deep dive reviews and support focussed policy development, chaired by the relevant chairman or vice-chairman. Their size and duration will be dependent on the activity.
- (iv) Receive findings and recommendations from Panel chairmen in respect of their Panel's scrutiny activity, for consideration and referral to the Executive or other decision-maker as appropriate.
- (v) Prioritise scrutiny activity to ensure that the overview and scrutiny function concentrates on the delivery of work of genuine value and relevant to the work of the Council.



# Arrangements In Bracknell Forest





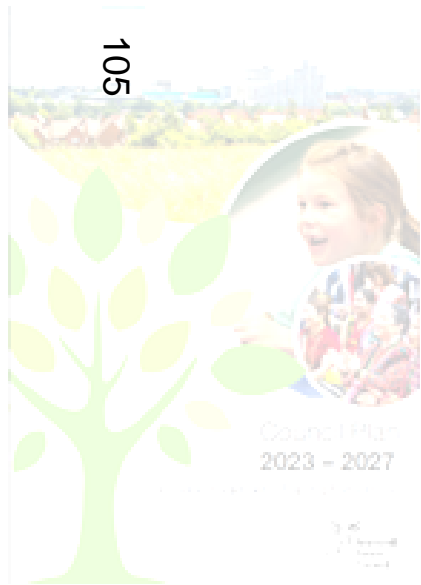
# Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

## Plan for year one

The Council plan has now been agreed by Full Council (29 Nov 2023) - Panel scopes must link in with the plan's themes of :



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### Growing together, shaping tomorrow



**Borough priorities:**

**Engaged and healthy communities**

**Thriving and connected economy**

**Green and sustainable environment**

### Ambitious, resilient and sustainable organisation

Value • Residents • Climate • Quality • Partnership • Workforce



# Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

## Plan for year two – four

Schedule for 2024/25 **9 meetings of the Commission** to:

- Council Plan Overview Report (CPOR) – Review the council's data performance report, ask questions of the **Executive Member** or the Executive Director. Chief witness is Chief Executive (Susan Halliwell)
- (sitting as) O&S Commission
  - [Crime and Disorder committee](#)– Community Safety/Police Superintendent / Executive Member (Councillor Iskandar Jefferies)
  - Strategic Health Panel
  - Public Health (Health in all policy)
  - Fire Service/Ambulance Service review panel



# Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

## Plan for year two – four

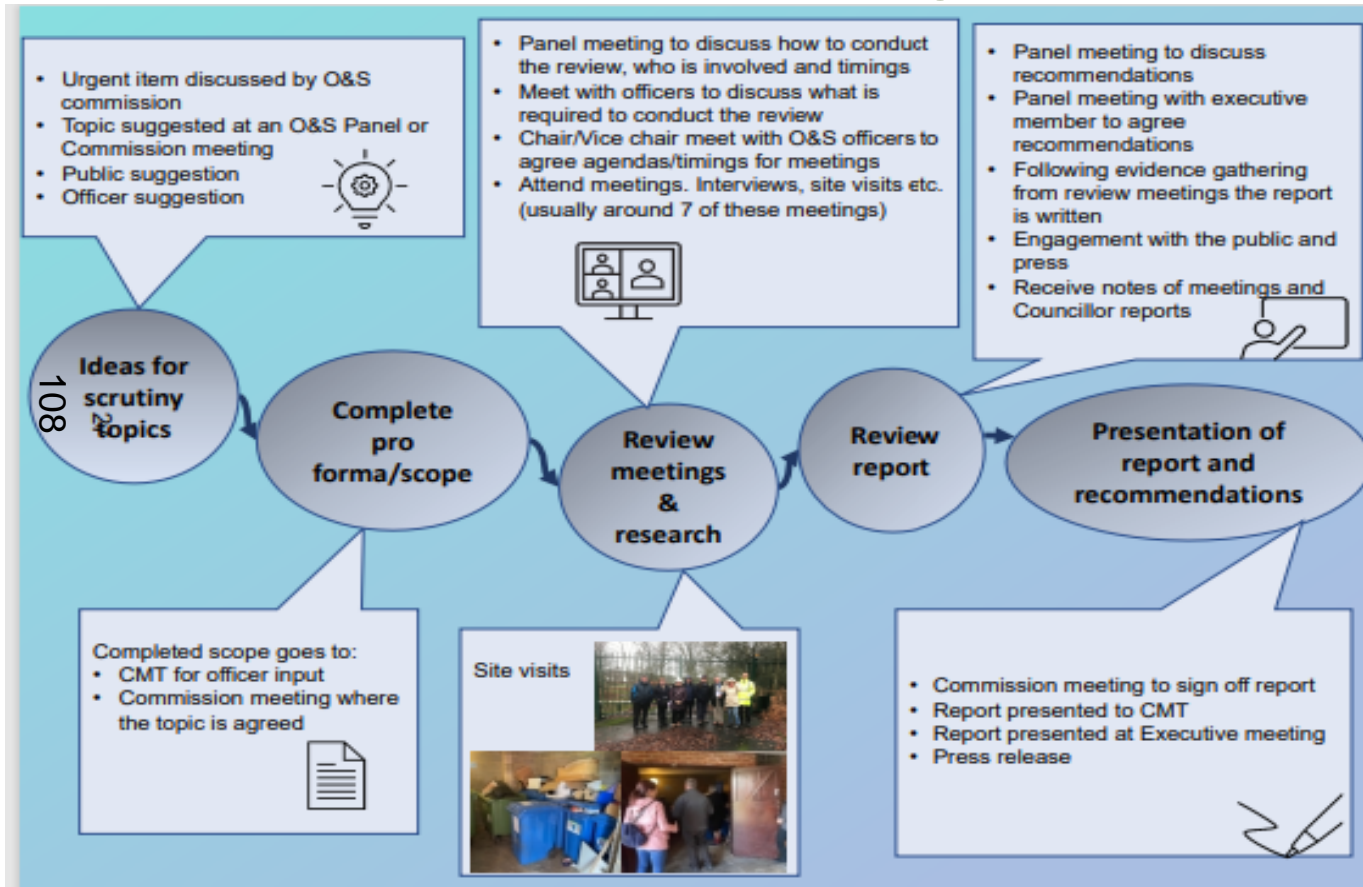
Schedule for 2024/25 **9 meetings of the Commission** to:

- Panel Chair reports – update reports and reviews
- Budget preparations and formal consultation
- Clear Panel reports for presentation to the Executive

Each meeting's agenda will be themed to ensure that a maximum of 2 substantive items are presented, plus oral reports from Panel Chairs



# Overview and Scrutiny – Review Process



# Work Programme

## Resourcing Principles

- O&S Commission Members asked that the number of reviews is reduced so only two panels are conducting a review at any one time, due to pressure on Councillors' availability
- Each review requires significant preparation and activity before panel activity / review meetings commence for example collating evidence packs and setting up witness attendance
- Delays to conclusion of reviews will impact on commencement of a panel's own review and potentially another panel's review
- The Commission will need to carefully consider these impacts when agreeing the work programme and future amendments



# Work Programme

## Current Interdependencies

**Education, Skills and Growth:** the Panel has identified its first review topic as Transition from Children's to Adult's Services.

Panel members were conscious of the need to keep the Safety Valve Programme and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Action Plan under review, and it was agreed at a Panel meeting on 25 January that the Panel Chair would receive quarterly updates on these and report back at O&S Commission meetings so that all members were kept updated.



# Work Programme

## Current Interdependencies

**Environment and Communities:** the Thames Water review report has been finalised and on the agenda. Future review topics to be agreed by the O&S Commission and then scoped.

**Health and Wellbeing:** The panel has identified its first review topic as Sexual Health and the scope is on the agenda. Due to the rebuild of Frimley Park Hospital a JHOSC (Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee) will be required and representatives from Bracknell Forest Council appointed.



# Current Work Programme

Review due to start:	Education, Skills and Growth	Environment and Communities	Health and Care
23-24 Q4 (Jan-March)		Review no 1 -Thames Water	Review no 1 - Sexual Health
24-25 Q1 (April-June) 1 1 2	Review old reviews		Review no 1 - Sexual Health
24-25 Q2 (July-Sept)		Review old reviews	
24-25 Q3 Oct-Dec	Review no 1- Transition		Review old reviews
24-25 Q4 (Jan-March)	Review no 1- Transition	Review no 2	





# Current Work Programme

Review due to start:	Education, Skills and Growth	Environment and Communities	Health and Care
25-26 Q1 (April-June)		Review no 2	Review no 2
25-26 Q2 (July-Sept)	Review no 2		Review no 2
25-26 Q3 (Oct-Dec)	Review no 2		Review no 2
25-26 Q4 (Jan-March)		Review no 3	



# Current Work Programme

Review due to start:	Education, Skills and Growth	Environment and Communities	Health and Care
26-27 Q1 (April-June)	Review no 3	Review no 3	
26-27 Q2 (July-Sept)	Review no 3		Review no 3
26-27 Q3 (Oct-Dec)			Review no 3
26-27 Q4 (Jan-March)	Review old reviews	Review old reviews	Review old reviews



# **Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme (2023-27)**

**29 February 2024**



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