Notice of Meeting

Executive
Councillor Bettison OBE (Chairman),
Councillor Dr Barnard (Vice-Chairman),
Councillors D Birch, Brunel-Walker, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE,
Heydon and Turrell

Tuesday 20 October 2020, 5.00 - 6.00 pm
Online Only

Bracknell
Forest
Council

Agenda

Item	Description	Page
1.	**Apologies** **Reporting:** Hannah Stevenson	
2.	**Declarations of Interest**	
	Members are asked to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary or Affected Interests in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting. 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. 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. **Reporting:** Hannah Stevenson	
3.	**Minutes**	5 - 10
	To consider and approve the minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 22 September 2020. **Reporting:** ALL	
4.	**Urgent Items of Business**	
	Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent. **Reporting:** Hannah Stevenson	
5.	**East Berks Public Health Arrangements**	11 - 18
	To agree the new arrangements for the delivery of the Public Health Service in East Berkshire	

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	Reporting: Andrew Hunter	
6.	**Council's response to the Government's consultation on 'Planning for the future' White Paper (August 2020)**	19 - 44
	To seek the Executive's agreement to the Council's response to the Government's consultation on 'Planning for the future' White Paper (August 2020) **Reporting:** Max Baker	
7.	**Residents' Survey Results 2020**	45 - 118
	To brief the Executive on the Residents' Survey 2020 results and seek endorsement of the communications plan. **Reporting:** Samantha Wood	
8.	**Council Plan Overview Report**	119 - 144
	To inform the Executive of the performance of the council for Q1 2020/21 **Reporting:** John Ainsworth	
9.	**Exclusion of Public and Press**	
	To consider the following motion: That pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2012 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of items 10 & 11 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972: (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). *NB: No representations were received in response to the 28 day notice of a private meeting.* **Reporting:** Hannah Stevenson	
10.	**Joint Working with Health**	145 - 164
	To approve the Blueprint for Joint Working that sets the direction of travel for exploring joint working opportunities between BFC and East Berkshire CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group). **Reporting:** Thom Wilson	
11.	**Procurement of a Neutral Vendor for Agency Staff**	165 - 188
	To seek Executive approval to adopt a 'hybrid' approach of a neutral vendor	

| | for agency staff from 1 April 2021. | |
| | **Reporting:** Alison Beswick | |

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

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EXECUTIVE
22 SEPTEMBER 2020
5.00 - 5.35 PM

**Bracknell
Forest
Council**

Present:
Councillors Bettison OBE (Chairman), Dr Barnard (Vice-Chairman), D Birch, Brunel-Walker, Harrison, Mrs Hayes MBE, Heydon and Turrell

87. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

88. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Executive on 25 August 2020 together with the accompanying decision records be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

89. **Urgent Items of Business**

There were no urgent items of business.

Executive Decisions and Decision Records

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

90. **Prevent Strategy and Action Plan 2020/23**

RESOLVED that the Bracknell Forest Prevent Strategy and Action Plan 2020/23 be approved.

91. **Recovery and Renewal Principles**

RESOLVED that the Post-Covid Place Based Renewal Strategy principles set out in Appendix 1 of the Chief Executive's report be approved.

CHAIRMAN

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Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision

Work Programme Reference	I093883

1. **TITLE:** Prevent Strategy and Action Plan 2020/23

2. **SERVICE AREA:** People

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To approve the Prevent Strategy and Action Plan 2020/23 as Bracknell Forest's response to the Prevent Duty, in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

4. **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the Bracknell Forest Prevent Strategy and Action Plan 2020/23 be approved.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and its revisions place a duty on specified authorities to "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" in the exercise of their functions.

In addition to the Prevent Duty, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, (updated December 2019) introduced a new duty for local authorities to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Bracknell Forest's response to the above duties is the Prevent Strategy and Action Plan which draw together how it will work with partners to achieve these objectives.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

No alternative options have been considered for the following reasons:

• A strategy is necessary to publish the Council's identified priorities in this area of work as well as how it plans to tackle them.

• Prevention and support for those at risk of radicalisation is a multi-agency process which is best co-ordinated through an action plan.

9. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Executive Director: People

10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:**   None.

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
22 September 2020	29 September 2020

Bracknell Forest Council
Record of Decision

Work Programme Reference	I093740

1. **TITLE:**   Recovery and Renewal Principles

2. **SERVICE AREA:**   Place, Planning & Regeneration

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

Principles by which the Council will formulate its Recovery and renewal programme.

4   **IS KEY DECISION**   Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

That the Post-Covid Place Based Renewal Strategy principles set out in Appendix 1 of the Chief Executive's report be approved.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

To provide a clear place-based strategy to deal with the recovery and renewal of council services in response to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Council could seek to respond to issues on an ad-hoc basis, however it is considered important to have a place-based strategy against which decisions and actions can be assessed, to ensure a planned and considered approach to recovery and renewal.

9. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:**   Report of the Chief Executive

10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** None.

Date Decision Made	Final Day of Call-in Period
22 September 2020	29 September 2020

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To: EXECUTIVE
20 October 2020

Future Public Health arrangements for East Berkshire

Director Place Planning and Regeneration

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   To lay out the rationale for altering the current arrangements for public health across Eastern Berkshire (which covers Slough, RBWM and Bracknell Forest). To request support to proceed with developing a shared Director role, a hub team to support local public health teams in each of the above three Local Authorities.

2   Recommendation

2.1   That the Executive agree the new East Berkshire arrangements for Public Health delivery; and

2.2   The current Berkshire-wide Public Health arrangements are dissolved, and the new system put in place, including the appointment of a Joint Director of Public Health for East Berkshire and Frimley ICS

3   Reasons for Recommendation(S)

3.1   Since 2013 the Berkshire Public Health System has operated on a hub and spoke model with Public Health teams within in each of the six unitary authorities supported by a Shared Strategic Director of Public Health and a Shared Team hosted by Bracknell Forest Council.

3.2   The overall aim of the Berkshire Public Health System is to deliver the core public health duty for local authorities which is to take steps to improve the health of residents and decrease health inequalities. To meet the needs of our residents, this will require action, not only from the Council but also across our system of public services, on the wider determinants of health, health improvement, health protection and the design of health and care services.

3.3   National policy supports the importance of prevention of ill health – through the green paper for prevention and the NHS Long Term Plan. Locally the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategies support increased activity to promote good health and prevent ill health. Action to prevent and manage risks for ill health have become more urgent with the recognition that risks for heart disease and stroke increase the likelihood of harm from Covid.

3.4   Upper tier Local Authorities receive a per capita ring-fenced grant for public health of circa £38m across Berkshire. In the three authorities in the East of the county, this totals around 17m, around half to Slough and smaller grants to RBWM and Bracknell Forest. Each authority spends different proportions of its allocation on staffing local public health teams with varying contract values and investments in broader services and programmes for public health.

3.5 Berkshire Chief Executives collectively oversee the functioning of the public health system through the Public Health System Board. Increasingly, they have been concerned about the ability of the public health set up to deliver what they needed, to lead across organisations to improve health, prevent illness and decrease demand for health and care services.

3.6 In 2019 Berkshire Chief Executives requested a review. They considered the effectiveness of the current model, the changing context and opportunities for public health, current costs, and alternate models. They recommended dissolving the current arrangement and moving to two hub and spoke arrangements across East and West Berkshire aligning with the health arrangements in these two distinct areas.

3.7 As the recommendation was made the Covid-19 pandemic arrived and halted much of the progress in shifting to a new model. With increasing responsibility at a local level and the current Director of Public Health planning to move on early in the New Year, there is an urgency in progressing the new arrangements and appointing a Director of Public Health for the three Local Authorities in the East of Berkshire.

4 Alternative Options Considered

4.1 Current Public Health arrangements could be retained with a single Director of Public Health working across the whole of Berkshire. However this is not considered to align with the health arrangements across the geography and the ICS, which covers Eastern Berkshire. The Pandemic has also demonstrated the need for more focussed resources in the locality to deal with the ongoing outbreak management and future health needs that may arise as a result of the pandemic.

5 Supporting Information

5.1 Whilst other authorities share public health teams, Berkshire's is the only public health system in the country with 6 upper tier Authorities sharing one Director of Public Health. 30/152 LAs have shared arrangements the majority are between 2 LAs, one between 3. Our joint arrangements have lasted longer than most, with many councils across the country dissolving joint roles in recent years.

5.2 There are some strengths in our shared set up, particularly the local leadership of public health teams in each LA supported by a hub team. Improved health and reduced health inequalities cannot be delivered by public health teams alone and the most effective public health approaches work across council services to create 'places' where it is easy to be healthy and deliver services that prevent ill health and promote resilience. The hub and spoke set up reduces duplication and shares costs but allows for different local priorities across each council area to meet the needs of varied populations.

5.3 The Director role is particularly stretched across six LAs. The capacity of the role is reduced by the practicalities of travel across the county and the number of required boards and partnership meetings.

5.4 Recruitment to DPH roles is challenging and the current postholder plans to move on in the New Year. This provides a natural opportunity to change the role in Berkshire to make it more efficient and attractive.

5.5 Berkshire Authorities attract limited grant support for public health (circa 17m across the 3 LAs) and separate teams for each authority are unaffordable.

5.6 The Berkshire model was designed at a time when Public Health services were largely commissioned on a Berkshire wide footprint and CCGs were coterminous with Boroughs. This is no longer the case, with Public Health capacity spread across 2 quite different systems, Frimley Health & Care in the east of the County and Berkshire West ICP, part of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West ICS. These ICS/Ps offer real opportunities to further improve health and wellbeing which are not being maximised in the current set up.

5.7 As well as the public health teams in Berkshire, Frimley ICS works with Surrey and Hampshire County Councils for Surrey Heath and North East Hants & Farnham. There is a need to coordinate a shared public health input into Frimley to ensure all the teams contribute effectively and that Frimley receives coherent support.

5.8 Public Health Services (including Health visiting, School Nursing, NHS Health Checks; Healthy Lifestyles; Substance Misuse; Sexual Health) are commissioned on a mix of single county and multi borough partnerships, primarily divided between the East and the West of the County. Other services are commissioned on single borough footprints.

5.9 Under the Health and Social Care Act, Directors of Public Health are responsible for the local authority's contribution to Health Protection, including the LAs roles in planning for and responding to incidents that present a threat to the public's health such as coronavirus.

5.10 A key statutory role for LA public health is supporting NHS commissioners with the design and evaluation of health services to meet local need. Co-terminosity of any arrangement with NHS organisations is seen as a common sense requirement.

5.11 There was recognition that incorporating more public health thinking into LA and NHS services could improve demand management and inequalities as well as health and wellbeing outcomes for residents.

5.12 As well as the public health teams in Berkshire, Frimley ICS works with Surrey and Hampshire County Councils for Surrey Heath and North East Hants & Farnham. There is a need to coordinate a shared public health input into Frimley to ensure all the teams contribute effectively.

5.13 Taking into account the points made above, the Chief Executives concluded that;

a. Change was needed to enhance both the efficiency and impact of public health.

b. That a shared arrangement across the 3 local authorities in the East of Berkshire was preferable to individual public health teams.

c. To integrate the DPH role into the ICS,

d. To retain a hub and spoke model and include the DPH post as an integral part of the LAs and ICS.

The Proposal

5.14   The proposal is to dissolve the current arrangement between the six LAs and move to an arrangement between Slough Borough Council RBWM and Bracknell Forest Council and the Frimley ICS.

5.15   A shared Director of Public Health role for East Berkshire will lead the public health system, working closely with the local authorities and partners across the integrated care partnership. There will also be a hub team providing health intelligence, health protection and commissioning support to support public health teams in each local authority (see appendix 1).

5.16   The shared team commissioning function will sit within Bracknell Forest commissioning team with a view to LAs taking on the commissioning of particular services on behalf of the others as opportunities arise.

5.17   The opportunity we have by doing this together is to;

•   Improve the health of our population and reduce inequalities to improve outcomes for our residents and reduce demand for services.

•   Retain the local nature of public health, enabling local needs to be prioritised.

•   Improve the value from our investment in public health capacity – to make Public Health more visible, engaged, integrated and most importantly, effective, across the Local Authorities.

•   Enable more coherent support to the ICS, coordinating PH engagement across the ICS.

•   Improve value for money from Public Health contracts

Director of Public Health role

5.18   Bracknell Forest Council will lead the recruitment of this role, with full engagement from all parties. They will provide line management for the DPH but accountability will be to all 4 chief executives (the Authorities and the CCG) through a new DPH accountability Board. This body will sign off an annual work programme and undertake the Director's appraisal.

5.19   The role will have Director level influence in each Local Authority. The DPH will have a seat at the 'top table', access to the Chief Executives and lead Members and be party to resource and priority decisions for public health programmes, including those funded from the public health grant.

5.20   While the DPH may not line manage the local Public Health Consultants, they will provide professional supervision, influence their work programmes and participate in their appraisal.

Finance

5.21   It is recognised that this new model will increase the costs of provision of the public health hub compared to the Shared Team in the region of £65k per Local Authority alongside a £100k contribution from the Frimley Collaborative/ICS. This NHS contribution will part fund the DPH role, analytical and programme support. Final

costs are unlikely to exceed this sum but will not be known until the detailed structures are designed.

5.22   It is hoped that this arrangement will facilitate improved efficiency and effectiveness through joining up scarce resources such as health intelligence and through jointly commissioning services.

5.23   The additional costs will be met equally by the three Las, with a contribution from the CCG.

New Model Indicative Costs (excluding Track &Trace)

	Slough	RBWM	BFC	CCG
Shared Team	200k	200k	200k	100k

6   Consultation and Other Considerations

Borough Solicitor

6.1   The proposed arrangements, once approved will be captured in the form of a shared service agreement evidencing the rights and obligations of BFC as the host authority as well as those of the other partner authorities.

Director: Resources

6.2   The main financial implications are covered within the body of the report. The increased costs to the council will be met form the ring-fenced Public Health Grant

Consultation Responses

6.3   Consultation with Local authorities across Berkshire has been undertaken with all six Berkshire authorities minded to agree the new public health arrangements for East and West Berkshire.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.4   None arising from this report

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.5   None

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

Andrew Hunter, Director Place Planning and Regeneration
andrew.hunter@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Appendix 1

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                            Director: Public Health
                                      1

                                                        ICS Analysts
                                                       Huddle/Network

         PH Support Officer        LA Consultants in Public
                1                          Health


  PH Programme Manager      Snr PH Officer      Public Health Programme      Consultant in Public Health
  Strategy Support - Finance  (Commissiong)     Manager (Informatics)        Health Intel, Health
           1                      0.5                    1                    Protection, SH
                                                                                    1

         PH Clerk            PH Officer (Commissioning)    Snr Public Health Analyst
           0.4                        0.5                            1


                                                        Snr Public Health Officer
                                                            (Informatics)
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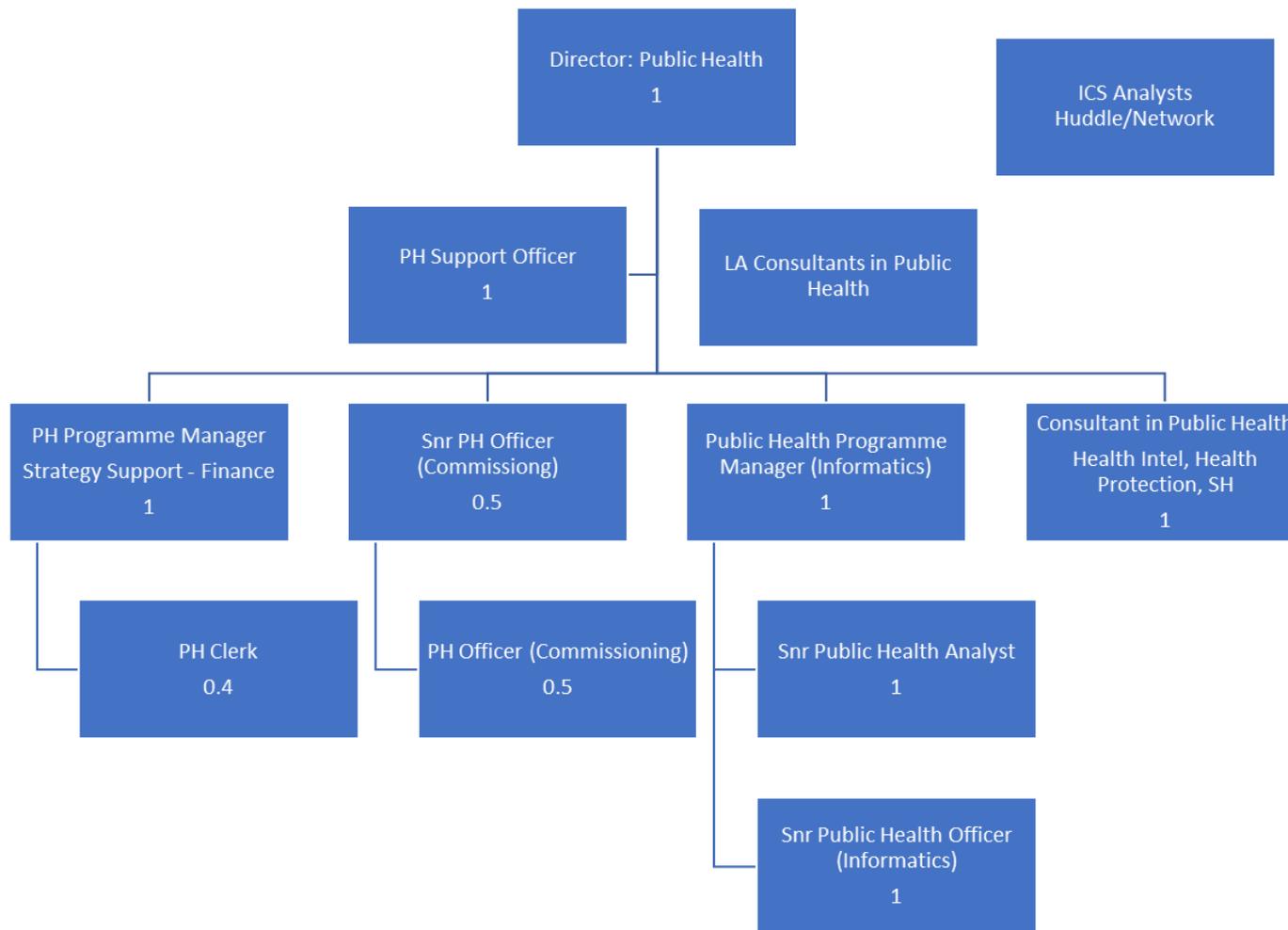
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TO: EXECUTIVE
    20 OCTOBER 2020

**RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION ON THE GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER
'PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE'**

Director of Place Planning and Regeneration

1   Purpose of Report

1.1   The Government published two significant consultations on planning matters on Thursday 6th August. The most far-reaching is the Planning White Paper 'Planning for the Future' which sets out plans to undertake a fundamental reform of the planning system. The purpose of this report is to seek the Executive's approval of a proposed response to the consultation on the White Paper. Responses are required to be submitted by Thursday 29th October.

1.2   The closing date for responses on the consultation on changes to the current planning system was Thursday 1st October. Due to the more technical nature of the consultation and the shorter timescale for responding, the Council's response was agreed by the Executive Member for Planning and Transport.

2   Recommendation

2.1   **It is recommended that the Executive agrees the content of Bracknell Forest Council's response to the Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future' as set out in Appendix A and Appendix B to this report.**

3 Reasons for Recommendation

3.1   It is considered necessary for the Council to respond to the consultation since it proposes fundamental changes to the planning system including such matters as:
- The content, format and process for Local Plans
- The centralisation of development management policies
- Changes to planning decision making

4 Alternative Options Considered

4.1   The alternative option is for the Council not to respond to the consultation. However, this would mean that the Council would lose the opportunity to influence significant changes to the planning system in England.

5   Supporting Information

Introduction
5.1   The white paper is clear that what it proposes is not to make changes to the current planning system for England, but to create an entirely new one.   The rationale for replacing the current system is the assertion that the current planning system is outdated and ineffective. The White Paper suggests that it is because of the planning system that we do not have nearly enough homes in the right places and that people cannot afford to move to where there are economic opportunities for them. No evidence is provided to support the assertion that it is the planning system, rather than

any other parts of the wider development process (including the development industry) that is responsible for any under-supply of housing.

5.2   The government's stated aim is to create a faster, simpler, and more predictable planning system. It is intended to place greater emphasis on quality of design and locally relevant building forms and styles. Another key strand of the proposals is to make planning more accessible through digital means, and thereby foster greater transparency and wider engagement in planning.

5.3   A key tenet of the proposals is to move away from the current discretionary approach to planning consent whereby planning applications are determined on a case-by-case basis. There would be a more rules-based system, whereby proposals that can demonstrate compliance with set standards and guidelines will automatically gain approval.

5.4   Another major element of the proposals is to make changes to the role, format and timescales for Local Plans and to change the way in which development-related infrastructure is funded. These are described in more detail below.

5.5   The proposals for this new system are based around three pillars: Planning for Development, Planning for Beautiful and Sustainable Places and Planning for Infrastructure and Connected Places.

Pillar One – Planning for Development

5.6   This sees the starting point for the new system being to establish a clear and predictable basis for the pattern and form of development in an area than that provided by the current system

Reduced Local Plans
5.7   The proposal is for new-style stripped back local plans, that should be capable of preparation within 30 months. Many planning policies will be set nationally with local plans focused on establishing three types of zone, and the specific codes and standards to be applied to developments within the zones. Plans should include "an interactive web-based map of the administrative area where data and policies are easily searchable", with colour-coded maps reflecting the zoning, key and accompanying text setting out "suitable development uses, as well as limitations on height and/or density as relevant" within the zones. There are three proposed Zones which would collectively cover the whole planning authority area, namely: growth, renewal and protection. The proposed zones are:

- **Growth** zones which will accommodate "substantial development" and benefit from outline planning permission. Developers will still need to secure reserved matters permission in accordance with locally drawn up design codes – but the principle of the scheme will already have been established
- **Renewal** zones which will be regarded as suitable for some development, through increased densities and infill development, and will benefit from a statutory "presumption in favour" of development. In these zones, schemes that accord with locally drawn-up design codes will benefit from a "fast-track for beauty" process for securing consent. This will mean that popular / replicable forms of development that comply with local codes to be quickly and easily approved.
- **Protected** zones will essentially continue with the existing planning process, with all existing Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and

similar such designations remaining in force. Areas of open countryside with no current specific wildlife or landscape protections can be designated as protected.

5.8   Development plans are to be digitised and more map-based to make them more accessible and easier for people to understand and engage with. The changes will require some changes in the skill sets for planning with greater emphasis on design, sustainability, public engagement and digital technology.

5.9   Instead of general policies for development, the document says local plans would be required to set out site and area-specific requirements for development, alongside locally produced design codes. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) would become the primary source of policies for development management rather than Local Plans.

5.10   It is proposed to set a statutory period for the preparation of plans which the government says would be 30 months under a new process.

Pillar 2 – Planning for Beautiful and Sustainable Places

5.11   This sets out a new 'fast-track for beauty' approach, whereby proposals for high-quality developments that reflect local character and preferences would benefit from 'automatic permission', which could be similar to the current prior approval process for certain forms of development. New development would be expected to create a net gain to an area's appearance.

5.12   Design codes, which would be expected to be prepared locally, would be made more binding on planning decisions. A new body would be established to support the delivery of design codes across the country.

5.13   On mitigating and adapting to climate change the paper says that from 2025, new homes will be expected to produce 75-80 per cent lower CO_2 emissions compared to current levels. The homes should also be 'zero carbon ready', being able to become fully zero carbon over time as the electricity grid decarbonises, without the need for costly retrofitting.

Pillar 3 – Planning for Infrastructure and Connected Places

5.14   The paper proposes S106 payments being abolished (though S106 will still be able to be used to secure covenants on land but it unsure if relating commutted sums for future maintenance can still be achieved through s106 obligations). There will be a single new infrastructure levy payable on occupation and Councils may be able to borrow against future receipts to forward fund infrastructure. Affordable housing would be provided through the levy rather than S106 with levy payments able to be offset against on-site provision. The charge will be based on a proportion of the development value through nationally set rates. The proposals include retention of the neighbourhood share of the levy receipts, with up to 25% of funding being transferred to parish councils.

The paper proposes greater flexibility for local authorities in how they spend the levy income and says that it could be spent on improving services or reducing Council Tax.

6. The proposed council response

6.1   The proposed response to the 26 questions is attached at Appendix A to this report. Owing to the fundamental nature of the proposals in the white paper, and the relatively limited scope of the questions asked, it is also proposed to comment on the wider issues raised and highlight areas where significant detail is missing on how aspects of the proposals would work in practice. These further responses are attached at Appendix B and would form part of the Council's formal response along with the responses to the questions at Appendix A.

6.2   While it is recognised that there are some issues with the complexity of the current planning system there are some fundamental concerns with the government's proposals. Some of the key responses are summarised below:

- There is no evidence that the planning system is the cause of under-delivery of housing which appears to be one of the key drivers for the proposed changes.

- There is a lack of any effective proposals for effective strategic planning on cross-border matters to replace the Duty to Cooperate which is proposed to be scrapped.

- Lack of any clarity on how the proposed formula for housing need (which was part of a separate consultation) will be translated into a requirement that takes account of constraints.

- The resource implications of some of the proposed changes are a concern, particularly as they could result in reduced fee income.

- Concerns are raised about whether the proposed 30 month local plan process timescale is realistic and the resources needed if the adoption of such a plan includes outline consent for allocated sites.

- The changes to infrastructure funding would reduce the link between developments and the provision of mitigation directly linked to it. It would mean that Councils receive developer contributions later in the process which could cause delays in infrastructure provision or that Councils will need to forward fund infrastructure, potentially through borrowing. This greatly increases the risk on the Council to fund all infrastructure including projects where normally the developer would for example, provide a building such as a community centre even if building costs increase over time.

- In context in the last 5 years around £60 Million in s106 /CIL receipts have been received. Further in-kind works secured by s106 would push the value to at least £200 Million. To maintain this the levy would need to generate at least that amount for infrastructure not including Affordable Housing.

- Concerns are raised about the proposals for securing affordable housing including the lack of any specified mechanism for securing the specification of such housing and ensuring that it remains affordable in perpetuity.

- The paper lacks any reference to measures to enable development affecting special protection areas governed by separate legislation. This is important to Bracknell Forest where it is essential to mitigate the impacts of new housing on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

6.3 In conclusion, there are some proposed measures that are considered to be beneficial in terms of streamlining planning and it would also be helpful if relevant planning legislation could be updated and consolidated as much as possible. However, the planning system is very important and the outcomes it delivers have long-lasting effects on the environment and on people's quality of life. It is important therefore that changes should be based on sound evidence and a balance of views. It is recommended that the proposed responses at Appendices A and B to this report be submitted as this Council's response to the consultation.

Legal Advice

7.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is consulting on changes to planning policy and legislation and the consultation seeks views on each part of a package of proposals for reform of the planning system in England, to:
- streamline and modernise the planning process,
- improve outcomes on design and sustainability,
- reform developer contributions, and
- ensure more land is available for development where it is needed.
This consultation is open to everyone and the government is keen to hear from a wide range of interested parties from across the public and private sectors, as well as from the general public.

7.2 The Government is mindful of its responsibility to have regard to the potential impact of any proposal on the Public Sector Equality Duty and are seeking views on the duty as well as the potential impact of the package as a whole. This consultation document and process adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office last updated March 2018

Financial Advice

7.3 The proposed response from the Council to the Government's consultation highlights amongst many other challenges that financial contributions from developers towards the cost of assessing and supporting development in the Borough are likely to reduce significantly under the changes proposed. They would therefore reduce the Council's current ability to secure funding for affordable housing and to mitigate the wider impact of investment on local infrastructure, currently secured through s106 agreements.

Equalities Impact Assessment

7.4 This is not applicable as the report is concerned with formulating a response to a consultation from the Government.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

7.5 There are no specific risks identified in the Strategic Risk Register (2020) which affect this consultation response.

Background Papers
Government White Paper 'Planning for the Future'
https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future

Appendices
Appendix A: Proposed Bracknell Forest Council response to the White Paper 'Planning for the Future' Consultation Questions

Appendix B: Proposed responses on other matters

Contact for further information
Max Baker, Head of Planning - 01344 351902 Max.Baker@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Planning for the Future - Planning White Paper August 2020
Proposed Responses to Consultation Questions

1. What three words do you associate most with the planning system in England?
Response: No response – the question is overly simplistic.
2(a). Do you get involved with planning decisions in your local area?
Response: Yes – Bracknell Forest Council is the Local Planning Authority
2(b). If no, why not?
Response: N/A
3. Our proposals will make it much easier to access plans and contribute your views to planning decisions. How would you like to find out about plans and planning proposals in the future?
Response: The Council wishes to ensure that consultation is inclusive and reaches all sectors of the community. It should be remembered that some people have no or limited access to a computer or are not confident in using them. Equality duties require us to consider how information can be provided efficiently and effectively.
4. What are your top three priorities for planning in your local area? [
Response: Based on the Council Plan priorities: • Action on climate change • Reducing homelessness • Protecting and enhancing the environment
5. Do you agree that Local Plans should be simplified in line with our proposals?
Response: No Agree that there is a need to reform the current process in terms of the multiplicity of legislation that now applies (due to continual changes). However, there is no evidence provided that the proposed changes are an appropriate response to this or that the current system is not working effectively. An approach that is based on 3 zones is very simplistic and does not reflect the complexity of the geography and nature of an area or the complex factors that influence the development process. Furthermore, the timescales that are set out for the preparation of a local plan are not realistic, particularly where significant growth is being proposed and complex sites must be assessed. There also appears to be an over-emphasis on housing since there are only brief references to economic issues and no references to how minerals and waste is to be dealt with. Attention is drawn to the current NPPF (para 20) which lists a range of issues that should be dealt with in strategic local plan policies. Whilst there are clear benefits of having visual and map-based standardised formats based on

the latest digital technology, there must be the ability to address issues specific to the area. The measures suggested would need to be supported by the necessary resources both in terms of staff with appropriate technical expertise and investment in technology.

Whilst the document claims that there would be an emphasis on engagement at the plan-making stage, it would appear that stakeholders would have less opportunity to make their views known under the proposed system. In preparing our emerging plan, Bracknell Forest Council has given people the opportunity to have their say more than once at the Regulation 18 stage. Such consultations often result in local issues being drawn to the attention of the Council that need to be taken on board in proposed policies. The proposals suggest that people would only be able to comment on a draft plan at submission which seems too late in the process.
(Also see response to Question 12)

6. Do you agree with our proposals for streamlining the development management content of Local Plans, and setting out general development management policies nationally?

Response:
No

This approach may work for some issues where principles are already well established such as heritage ,and Green Belt (assuming these aspects get taken forward into a new NPPF). However, there are others which need a local (or sub-regional) approach such as policies for habitat areas such as the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.

It is unclear what the scope of issues to be covered in an updated NPPF will be – currently there is little guidance in national policy on development in the countryside in terms of assessing a planning proposal. It is not clear how matters such as landscape character, housing mix etc will be dealt with. These need to relate to local evidence. There must be an ability to set policies that respond to local issues and community needs.

The consultation is heavily focused on housing with little on how development proposals (including need) for other uses will be addressed such as retail and employment.

It is queried whether policies can be fully standardised to fit the whole of England. The approach may mean going back to the PPGs/PPS format which was dropped in the interest of streamlining the system. The approach of having nationally derived development management policies also takes away local powers and accountability and makes such policies more detached from the communities that will be affected by them.

7(a). Do you agree with our proposals to replace existing legal and policy tests for Local Plans with a consolidated test of "sustainable development", which would include consideration of environmental impact?

Response:
Not sure (not enough detail to form a definitive view).

The consultation lacks any detail of the definition of sustainable development, or how it would be tested, including how this will meet legal requirements.

Considering clauses from the White paper, proposal 16 in turn:

'Proposal 16: We intend to design a quicker, simpler framework for assessing environmental impacts and enhancement opportunities, that speeds up the process while protecting and enhancing the most valuable and important habitats and species in England.'

The proposal is focused on habitats and species, which is clearly an important consideration within sustainable development. Sustainable development is however far more wide reaching than this.

'Processes for environmental assessment and mitigation need to be quicker and speed up decision-making and the delivery of development projects.'
This would be a clear benefit of any reform.

'The environmental aspects of a plan or project should be considered early in the process, and to clear timescales.'
The key environmental aspect of the Bracknell Forest Local Plan (and the majority of other local plans) will be the housing requirement imposed nationally, over which planning authorities have no control. There is no information on how government would consider the environmental aspects of the housing requirement being imposed across the breadth of the country. It is not clear whether it would be directed to the most sustainable areas. No evidence is provided to support the sustainability of the housing requirement policy and it is unclear how this evidence would be updated as housing need changes.

'National and local level data, made available to authorities, communities and applicants in digital form, should make it easier to re-use and update information and reduce the need for site-specific surveys.'
- National and considerable amounts of local level data are already available to authorities, communities and applicants in digital form, albeit often sourced from different locations.
- If the proposal goes on to appraise development potential based on the use of this data (this is not clear in the White paper), there are often considerable flaws in the findings of SAs where the appraisal is based on analysis of mapping, with many issues missed, overlooked or incorrectly interpreted.
- It is not clear what data would be used, Many 'growth' and 'protected' areas are likely to be outside of the Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), Conservation Areas, Local Wildlife Sites, areas of significant flood risk and important areas of green space (and other such high level designations). There is concern as to whether such areas can be robustly assessed based on standard data sets to identify the most sustainable development locations. Whilst this can work for some aspects, others are less well suited to appraisal through the use of digital data (e.g. landscape character), and data is not complete/comprehensive/consistent for other topics. For example, failure to consider undesignated landscapes would fail to meet the aim of the White Paper to create 'beautiful' places.
- Local data is often missing or inconsistent. For example, groundwater flood risk is a key issue in Bracknell Forest, particularly where it coincides with surface water flood risk (this is a more significant issue than fluvial flood risk). BFC currently uses bespoke data to assess this issue – and it is not clear how this would be covered in the new system. Failure to include such locally specific considerations will result in sites being taken forward for development that are either not feasible, or which cannot deliver the extent of development envisaged - undermining the overall aims of the reform.
- Any new system should allow for local variations, based on locally important issues. For example, open space is important to Bracknell Forest's character and a key feature which residents value. It is not clear whether locally specific standards will be permitted and how areas will retain such significant and valued aspects of their character.

'Requirements for environmental assessment and mitigation need to be simpler to understand and consolidated in one place so far as possible, so that the same impacts and opportunities do not need to be considered twice.'
- Many housing developments do not require EIA and as such the issues are not considered twice within SA/SEA and then EIA.

- It is not clear how robust environmental assessment will be applied to such "fast-tracked" developments, particularly in relation to local and site-specific environmental considerations.
- The SA/SEA process (and current national policy) is already clear in its outcomes of the most and least sustainable sites. As such this element of the process could be simplified. Where good SA/SEAs provide benefits is the 'grey' areas where further assessment and balancing of issues must take place - this will typically be in the 'growth' and 'protected' areas under the new regime. Given the development pressure that the housing requirement creates, this will continue to be a key issue – it is essential that any simplified system is able to deal with this robustly, whilst taking account of local circumstances and recognising that across the south-east the more sustainably located, less constrained sites have in most cases already been developed.

'Any new system will need to ensure that we take advantage of opportunities for environmental improvements while also meeting our domestic and international obligations for environmental protection. This will be the subject of a separate and more detailed consultation in the autumn.'
- A simplified appraisal system (and the shorter timescales to develop local plans) increases the risk of not identifying opportunities for environmental improvements; and the reformed application process significantly increases the risk of not implementing these opportunities.
- Meeting domestic and international obligations is a key risk. Simplification of the process risks legal challenges, with associated significant additional costs and delays.

Further, the proposals should be clear that sustainable development and good design of beautiful places are separate issues. A site may be unsustainably located with significant constraints; however, it could still be designed well or designed poorly. The two issues do not necessarily go hand in hand.

7(b). How could strategic, cross-boundary issues be best planned for in the absence of a formal Duty to Cooperate?

Response:
It is agreed that the Duty to Cooperate has largely failed to deliver effective strategic planning and has delayed and added risks to local plan preparation.

There is a need for cohesion between spatial and infrastructure planning which would help to optimise the use of infrastructure funding, whether through local infrastructure funding or bids to government or the LEP.

As a minimum there is a need for sub-regional infrastructure frameworks setting out long term strategic transport and other infrastructure priorities. These would be used to shape spatial priorities in local plans and influence investment priorities for Government and other bodies (e.g. Environment Agency, Highways England Route Investment Strategies), as well as subnational transport bodies. Ideally, these would have a clear short, medium and long-term delivery programme, with funding managed on a shared and coordinated basis.
In some instances there may still be a role for shared evidence in areas with similar characteristics, or where constraints cross borough boundaries. However, this often depends on the individual authority finances, and whether Local Plan timetables align, which often prohibit joint working.

It is unclear if the requirement for duty to cooperate is removed, whether there would still be a need to produce statements of common ground on certain matters in advance of the local plan examination process.

8(a). Do you agree that a standard method for establishing housing requirements (that takes into account constraints) should be introduced?

Response:
No

The consultation paper refers to the need to ensure that enough land is released where affordability is worst and take account of constraints it also states that the standard method would be used to distribute the national housebuilding target of 300,000 new homes. It therefore seems to be driven by this factor. However, the Government has not produced evidence to demonstrate how 300,000 dwellings per annum is aligned with housing needs.

Although a national approach to the derivation of housing numbers is welcomed in terms of providing consistency in approach, the following concerns are expressed.
In terms of the changes to the standard methodology set out in "Changes to the Current Planning System ", this Council is concerned that there is a disproportionate emphasis on affordability. Furthermore, it is not clear how the output of this calculation will be reflected in the 'binding housing requirement'. This consultation refers to other factors being taken into account including constraints, brownfield land, an allowance for land required for other uses, and a buffer but does not make it clear how these are to be assessed/quantified. In areas that are under pressure for development, the uptake of brownfield sites is rapid and there are not pools of such sites waiting for allocation.

In terms of constraints, the following detailed points need to be addressed:

- How constraints will be set, and by whom.
- Whether there will be a national list of constraints, or whether authorities will be expected to do some kind of screening exercise to determine types of constraints which may for the basis of 'protected areas' in terms of the local plan process in terms of consistency.
- How the requirements will relate to the 'protected areas' referred to in the consultation- and whether there will be a nationally prescribed list of constraints which influence the binding housing number, or a case by case approach.
- Whether constraints which influence the 'binding' requirement will be able to be amended following any new local plan process which may identify/allocate further 'protected' areas which may further influence housing delivery.
- How the extent of constraints will be factored in.
- Whether requirements will be discounted based on the proportion of the authority area occupied by the constraints.
- Whether they will be weighted, or there will be a hierarchy of constraints. E.g. will Green Belt be considered a more significant constraint than conservation areas, flooding etc)?
- Whether consideration will be given to different types of constraints e.g policy versus physical such as Green Belt v contaminated land/landfill, or existing residential amenity.
- Whether constraints will focus on environment factors or also consider economic and social aspects (such as areas which already see high affordability, which may be 'constrained' will be seen as further compounding constraints to delivery of development).

It is also unclear what impact the changes to the housing requirement would have on existing provisions relating to Housing Delivery Test and Housing Land Supply (if the alternative set out on page 33 of the White Paper) are taken forward. This would need to be addressed through further transitional arrangements. This matter has also been raised in our response to the 'changes to the current planning system' consultation.

BFC would welcome the opportunity to comment further on these issues, once further details

are known.

**8(b). Do you agree that affordability and the extent of existing urban areas
are appropriate indicators of the quantity of development to be accommodated?**

Response:
No

Affordability will not be addressed by simply building more homes. The housing market is
complex and other factors beyond planning, such as the cost and availability of finance impact
on the housing market. Attention is drawn to the Letwin Review and findings on absorption
rates - the number of homes developers build at any one time on sites is limited to prevent a
glut driving down prices. There is no evidence to support the view that releasing additional land
will result in accelerated delivery or a significant reduction in the cost of new housing. Over the
last 10 years, housing completions in Bracknell Forest have increased significantly from 325
dwellings in 2009/10 to 1,731 in 2019/20. However, the affordability ratios suggest that housing
has become less affordable.

A two-stage affordability adjustment as proposed in 'Proposed changes to the planning
system' results in an over-emphasis on affordability and an unjustifiable uplift over and above
the household projections. The Berkshire (including South Bucks) SHMA (2016) dealt
with affordability in Bracknell Forest. Although it drew upon slightly different and earlier data,
the analysis shows that the uplift suggested by the proposed formula is excessive compared
with the figures specified in the SHMA.
Para 59 of the NPPF refers to bringing forward land where it is needed and the standard
methodology is aimed at establishing need. It is therefore difficult to understand the basis for
using a percentage of the housing stock. Such an approach simply reinforces the existing
pattern of development. If such an approach is to be used, the Government needs to ensure
that it is supported with an appropriate spatial approach to economic growth so that jobs are
provided where homes are being built.

**9(a). Do you agree that there should be automatic outline permission for areas for
substantial development (*Growth* areas) with faster routes for detailed consent?**

Response:
No
Whilst there may be scope for pursuing this option in a limited way, the current proposals do not
seem realistic, particularly for Authorities proposing significant growth. Large sites can be
affected by a multitude of constraints that may require expensive technical reports and
assessment to ensure that impacts can be mitigated. This takes time and resources that are
already stretched. There is concern about the practicality of dealing with such matters within
the suggested timetable for preparing a Local Plan. The granting of outline permission on
adoption of the plan would also result in developers having less flexibility in terms of a
development scheme. Some allocated sites are not developed until a few years after adoption
and there needs to be the ability for Developers to react to changed circumstances.

It is also unclear how the granting of outline consent at local plan stage aligns with other
existing requirements such as Environmental Impact Assessment.

Masterplans/ design codes may not be approved at the same time as the Local Plan and
subsequent applications in growth areas do not require assessment. It is not clear how issues
that require mitigation, management and enhancement would be addressed e.g. net biodiversity
gain.

There is a need for residential developments in Bracknell Forest (and 10 other neighbouring
local authorities) to meet the requirements of other statutory provisions in the consideration of

the development in respect to habitat sites (as defined in the NPPF). This process includes the completion of an Appropriate Assessment which requires mitigation to be secured at the point of decision (planning permission). A S106 legal agreement secures the mitigation measures and when it is signed, permission is granted. These measures can include the provision of land (called Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces, SANGs) and financial contributions. In order to meet the statutory requirements, the mitigation measures have to be put in place before the assessed harm occurs (which is the recreational activity of new occupants). This is non-negotiable and a prerequisite measure as established in case law. This means payments made on commencement of development to allow time for the contributions to be spent to allow occupations. Similarly, the SANGs need to be landscaped and provided prior to any occupation.

If there is no mechanism to secure in-kind on-site mitigation and to make timely payments then it would be impossible to grant any PIPs or planning permissions. Therefore, there must be a mechanism to secure the provisions to allow a PIP to be granted. S106 can do this. Conditions are not suitable because they cannot secure financial amounts or terms to transfer land for future management purposes.

It is also unclear what will be granted by the local plan in terms of outline consent – currently allocating a site already establishes the principle. It is not clear whether a Local Plan will also be expected to grant means of access (which often form part of current outline permission). It is unclear how any conditions would be set in a local plan in terms of requirements for submission of further details to be agreed, and how this would relate to any follow-on reserved matters or 'faster consent routes'.

This proposal also has major resource and financial implications for planning authorities. Site promoters will gain outline permission through the plan instead of the current pre-application and outline application process for which there are fees payable. There is no reference to this within the Planning White Paper.

(Also see response to Question 12 in relation to plan timescales).

There is concern about the area covered by a design code. If it is for a whole zone then this will not deliver the placemaking agenda, nor the "building better building beautiful" agenda. If it is site specific then this could be a step forward in delivering places with identity. The latter would be preferred, but it may not speed up the process in the way the government envisages. The level of detail required in a code is also key. Greater clarity is needed on zoning and how design codes fit into the zoning process. In addition, design codes need to be enforceable.

9(b). Do you agree with our proposals above for the consent arrangements for *Renewal* and *Protected* areas?
Response: Not sure – it will depend on the details of these consent arrangements and what can be considered (not enough detail to form a definitive view on the basis of published information) For renewal areas the suggestion appears to be effectively an automatic consent with prior approval; a fast track application or an LDO/NDO, apparently reducing the amount of 'planning judgment' applied to decision making. The White Paper indicates that this fast track approach will not lead to reductions in quality/design however, for this to be the case, significant additional work needs to be undertaken as part of the preparation of the LP/design code. This may not be feasible within the proposed timeframe for LP production. There is uncertainty about protected areas such as Conservation Areas where they are surrounded by a Renewal Area. There seems to be a potential conflict with development being

automatically permitted within the Renewal Area and its potential impact on the protected area and more details are required on this.

Greater detail is needed about protected areas (e.g. countryside) which are not subject to specific landscape designations such as AONB and Green Belt and whether this system would provide them with equal protection.
Automatic consents would conflict with existing legislation relating to habitat sites.

9(c). Do you think there is a case for allowing new settlements to be brought forward under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime?

Response:
No
Decisions on such significant issues should be determined locally and as part of comprehensive Local Plans.

10. Do you agree with our proposals to make decision-making faster and more certain?

Response:
Not sure (not enough detail to form a definitive view on the basis of published information)

It is not certain that the system will be less complicated with additional layers of types of consent. There is a major concern that there will no ability to agree an extension of time for determination of planning applications. The government has failed to recognize that many developers seek extensions of time in order for issues with their applications to be addressed or additional information provided. The suggestion that LPAs will be penalised by having to refund fees if decisions are not made within the statutory time is likely to be similarly counter-productive. Likely to result in an increase in refusals and appeals reducing certainty, quality and speed of decisions and therefore runs contrary to the aims of the proposed changes to the planning system.

Also depending on the LPA's scheme of delegation/Committee cycle where there is often a 4 week cycle, planning applications will need to be scheduled to be considered by the Planning Committee potentially at 4 weeks and 1 day post validation if they are to be determined within the statutory time period, giving limited time for consultees to respond/third party representations and potentially resulting in abortive work in preparing Committee reports.

It would also act as a disincentive for LPAs to seek design improvements which conflicts with the 'build beautiful' ethos.

The standardisation of technical supporting information (highway impacts, flooding) seems positive however there is a concern that use of design codes is too formulaic and could stifle innovation or prevent development from responding to the unique character of the area.

Whilst refund of application fee on Committee overturns allowed on appeal might initially look attractive, some decisions are finely balanced and this seems:
a) to shackle local democracy (consistent with the White Paper's move away from 'localism' to more 'top-down' approach) and
b) to penalise the LPA through loss of fees in instances where Members take an alternative view.

11. Do you agree with our proposals for accessible, web-based Local Plans?

Response:
Not sure (not enough detail to form a definitive view on the basis of published information)

Whilst it would create opportunities to make local plans more comparable, it may restrict access

to stakeholders lacking the required systems or who find them difficult to use. The technology would need to have been developed and tested comprehensively before any obligation to use it is put in place.

Other parts of the consultation refer to the need for written statements e.g. design guides /codes, parameters etc. It is not clear how these would fit into the visual map-based element.

12. Do you agree with our proposals for a 30 month statutory timescale for the production of Local Plans?

Response:
No

Stage 2 – 12 months seems an unduly short and overly ambitious timescale to prepare a plan to the level which is required to, in effect provide outline approval on a number of sites. What is meant by 'outline' in relation to a new local plan process is unclear in terms of how this equates to the current outline application process.

Within Bracknell Forest, taking account of the time between receipt of a pre-application to approval of an outline permission in some cases has taken up to 30 months on large complex sites (though across 4 large sites, this process has averaged about 18-19 months), and that is with the benefit of an associated site allocation policy. Prior to pre-app there would also have been extensive work undertaken by the site promotions team.

It is unclear whether the Stage 2 process also requires the equivalent of current Regulation 18 preparation stage in terms of engagement – which adds to the process in terms of time (preparation of documents for consultation, undertaking the consultation, and processing /taking account of responses).

Councils' decision-making processes also need to be factored into the overall timescales. Under current 'Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012', local authorities are required to give 28 days' notice of every key decision which is to be taken. Given associated lead-in times for internal review process etc, documents can be required to be finalised 6-8 weeks in advance of a programmed decision being taken, which would add further difficulty to completion of Stage 2 within 12 months.

It is also unclear whether there would still be a requirement for Statements of Community Involvement, and for plan preparation to be in accordance with adopted SCIs. For example in Bracknell Forest, the SCI sets out avoiding consultations during school holiday periods – which can impact on overall timescales in terms of avoiding summer holiday period.

13(a). Do you agree that Neighbourhood Plans should be retained in the reformed planning system?

Response: Not sure (not enough detail to form a definitive view on the basis of published information).

With national development management policies and allocations through the local plan process plus design guides and codes it is difficult to see what usefully remains for a neighbourhood plan.
In our experience, local communities often choose to engage in neighbourhood planning to ensure that decisions taken in their local area reflect their desire to protect what they love about where they live, and ensure that borough or national policies do not result in development which is out-of-keeping. It is difficult to see how standardising the planning system to a quantitative data-driven model could engage local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans in the first

place, particularly when the proposals refer only to "preferences about the form and appearance of development".

Since neighbourhood planning is optional, it is unclear whether, if there is no appetite to produce design guides and codes, responsibility would fall to the LPA to produce one instead. Similarly it is not clear whether, if a LPA has adopted design guides and codes, a Neighbourhood Plan would supersede them where there are conflicts since it is a DPD. It is also unclear what the situation would be in an area where the local community at referendum did not support making the Neighbourhood Plan. A key element of the new planning system is that applications that are in accordance with standards are approved without delay, so the development industry is reliant on design guides and codes being in place in growth/ renewal areas.

A significant consideration is the cost of getting a Neighbourhood Plan through examination and referendum; this would be an expensive way of ensuring areas have design standards. This is particularly the case in areas with many parishes or large residential populations where the cost of the referendum can be extremely expensive (current grant funding levels do not come close to covering the cost – estimates for ONE of our parishes is for the referendum alone to cost in the region of £100k). It is not clear whether, if a qualifying body wishes to update their standards, the LPA would be expected to repeatedly cover the cost of examination and referendums. This is a particular concern if this process is to be extended and adapted for use in very small areas, including street level. The time and cost could be disproportionate to the benefits gained.

Further clarity is needed on what happens if a Neighbourhood Plan wishes to allocate land for development but it is not in a growth zone identified by the LPA, or conversely, they wish to protect areas in renewal zones. No detail has been set out for how conflicts between national, local and neighbourhood planning will be resolved.
Although the aspiration is for standards to be set through design codes, the proposals do not set out the scope of what the standards are. Accordingly it is difficult to conclude whether or not neighbourhood planning should be retained in the new planning system.

13(b). How can the neighbourhood planning process be developed to meet our objectives, such as in the use of digital tools and reflecting community preferences about design?
Response: Neighbourhood plans often taken several years to produce. Whilst it is admirable to want to utilise digital tools to produce Neighbourood Plans, like Local Plans, the lack of common agreed data standards will be a barrier to their production. They currently often rely on the robust and credible evidence base produced for a Local Plan; with this information no longer available to them, there would be increased onus on the qualifying body to produce/ commission necessary studies to justify their policy approaches in order to meet the basic conditions. Whilst design is a policy area many Neighbourhood Plans look at, it is by no means the only topic. With Local Plans not including development management policies, it is likely the scope of neighbourhood planning would increase rather than 'their content becoming more focused', which will have associated time and cost implications. Neighbourhood planning has been promoted as a means by which local communities can have a real say in how their area is shaped and developed. Use of the term 'preference' is more akin to other processes such as Village Design Statements or non-statutory documents. If design is the primary reason for retaining neighbourhood planning, it would be prudent to look at other options to achieve this aim, which would be quicker and easier to update, albeit without the weight of a DPD.

The reforms state that the aspiration is for Neighbourhood Plans to be "written in a machine-readable format". Whilst some qualifying bodies may have the in-house skills or funding to pay external consultants, many will not be in a position to embrace digital technology to this extent. Furthermore, as volunteers they may feel that this is too onerous and simply produce the Neighbourhood Plan as they see fit, which could put LPAs in a difficult situation of either having to retrofit a Neighbourhood Plan to digitisation requirements (with associated time and cost implications, and potentially against the wishes of the community) or be in a situation where a made Neighbourhood Plan is simply not fit for purpose. Whilst amended Neighbourhood Planning Regulations could assist to some extent, this could reduce community engagement in the process, counter to the Government's aspiration.

The fundamental issue for an increased role for neighbourhood planning remains that it is a voluntary process, and as such, ownership of how they are developed and the level of technology used, will lie with the volunteers.

14. Do you agree there should be a stronger emphasis on the build out of developments? And if so, what further measures would you support?

Response: Yes
There are hundreds of thousands of unimplemented planning permissions across the country. If the government is serious about increasing the delivery of housing then this is an area that should be urgently addressed. Measures outside of the planning system are likely to be required such as imposing some form of tax on permissioned sites.

15. What do you think about the design of new development that has happened recently in your area?

Response:
A lot of development has been undertaken in the borough, mostly by volume housebuilders who are building much the same houses all over the country. They have a product that they feel is tried and tested e.g. the Redrow Heritage range, that financially they do not want to alter. This is not building better or building beautiful. We can work on placemaking by creating a setting within a streetscene for that product. But this is not creating places that fully respond to context and define the character of specific parts Bracknell Forest. Design codes could be a way of requiring volume house builders to create unique developments with clear identities. However, this will only work if developers are required to follow codes, and if codes include the level of detail that is needed to produce change and a requirement to look to contemporary designs where there is no clear existing character or vernacular within an area or site. There is always a concern in relation to pastiche and replication, rather than innovative high-quality design responses from the volume housebuilders.

16. Sustainability is at the heart of our proposals. What is your priority for sustainability in your area?

Response:
The Council Plan identifies the need to reduce our impact on climate change and sets out strategic themes around the three pillars of sustainability, including economic resilience, protecting and enhancing our environment, communities, care and education. The economic, social and environmental objectives of the NPPF are carried forward within planning policy, with the following key issues identified in the Borough:
- Climate change
- Air quality (impact on human health & biodiversity)
- Risk of flooding (including surface water & groundwater)
- Water quality
- Retaining high standards of open space
- Fragmentation of habitats

- Nature conservation (including international sites)
- Provision of housing, including for an ageing population
- Affordability of housing
- High levels of car dependence
- Pressure on the transport infrastructure
- Regeneration of the town centre
- Balance of the economy

17. Do you agree with our proposals for improving the production and use of design guides and codes?

Response: Not sure (not enough detail to form a definitive view on the basis of published information).

The White Paper states that government will publish a National Model Design Code to accompany the National Design Guide. It will be useful to see what is included in this, which it is presumed will be a framework document for future design codes coming forward for an area. The impression is given on page 46 that this could also extend to guiding street design and parking solutions which is useful. There is also reference to a revised Manual for Streets which would be welcomed.

Design codes work well and provide clear guidance for a developer on a site. However, to be successful they need to have a high level of detail and be enforceable.

Clarity is required on how enforceable design codes would be within this new strategy and on whether codes would be site specific for every site allocated in the plan, or cover a wide zoned area.

If design codes are to work, and achieve beautiful places, then they need to be site specific and have a high level of detail, including items such as appropriate fenestration, roof tiles, porch details etc.. This would enhance a planning authority's placemaking abilities and therefore should be welcomed. It is important for LPAs to produce design codes.

Proposal 11 is positive regarding some of the issues above. But the text leaves the door open for developers to produce design codes. If this was the case, clear guidance should be produced to ensure that codes are developed in partnership with planning authorities and will need planning authority sign off.

Care is needed in relation to community involvement. There is a tendency for communities to resist new contemporary design and architecture and to want traditional (as they see it) designs that are often a pastiche.

18. Do you agree that we should establish a new body to support design coding and building better places, and that each authority should have a chief officer for design and place-making?

Response: Not sure (not enough detail to form a definitive view on the basis of published information).

A central government arms-length body would be needed to support the new way of working with a design-led approach. However, it would have to be well resourced in terms of officers and designers and it would need to have regional/area offices. We have experience of how over stretched Homes England are currently.

The Council considers that there is also a need for this new government body to put areas of excellence in touch with others, to share how they work and achieve excellence with other LPAs around the country. Sharing information across boundaries and regions is vital to moving forward on the building better building beautiful agenda.

It should also be noted that this is not just a planning agenda. Highway, drainage, lighting engineers etc. all have to be engaged in relation to a new way of working. Volume housebuilders also need to have design and placemaking expertise engaged to work from within, to promote the agenda from Board level downwards.

Requiring a new designated Chief Officer for design and placemaking at each LPA would cause resource issues at a time when fee income would potentially be reducing. There is also some doubt abut whether there is adequate expertise at the appropriate level available to fill such posts if they were created.

19. Do you agree with our proposal to consider how design might be given greater emphasis in the strategic objectives for Homes England?

Response: Yes

They require greater resources to work with LPAs to raise design quality, particularly on large strategic sites.

20. Do you agree with our proposals for implementing a fast-track for beauty?

Response: Not sure (not enough detail to form a definitive view on the basis of published information).

If a design code is in place, then developers should follow it and submit plans accordingly. If they are not in accordance with a design code then proposals should be refused. It is unclear how this "fast track" implementation changes anything. Currently, if proposals come forward that are in accordance with a design code, this already leads to progression through the existing system quicker. However, housebuilders must comply with codes. Production of a code is not simply ticking a box, it is a commitment to build as set out in the code. If developers don't follow the codes (as happens all too frequently) then the process is slowed. Simply having a code in place should not automatically fast track an application. There will still need to be a detailed assessment process to ensure that codes are actually being implemented. However, having codes in place as a general rule is a good thing and should speed things up.

There is concern around design "guides" and whether such guidance will be enforceable. Legislation is necessary to give planning authorities the ability to enforce and refuse applications in cases where this new way of working is not followed effectively.

21. When new development happens in your area, what is your priority for what comes with it?

Response:

The Council has many infrastructure priorities which include avoidance and mitigation measures for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, open space, recreation, affordable housing, sustainable transport, drainage, highways, community facilities and education provision. Emerging issues such as air quality impacts may also require mitigation. Together these support growth in the Borough and provide the necessary and relevant provision for the residents and visitors to Bracknell Forest.

In the first instance it is necessary to replace/mitigate any impact on infrastructure caused directly by the development.
Following this we look to implement local and national policies to mitigate the impact of development. This Council's policies do not prioritise one form of infrastructure over another. However, we do have stronger policies and justification for some infrastructure over others particularly where there are statutory requirements

While there is an urgent need for affordable housing there are nationally imposed constraints that can reduce the Council's ability to secure it such as the vacant buildings credit and viability assessments, the removal of grant and the reluctance of some developers to provide social housing.

It has been difficult to plan for health infrastructure partly due to reorganisations within health providers and the lack of firm guarantees at the time allocations or application s are made.

Furthermore, the borough is heavily constrained by habitat sites (as defined in the NPPF) which require mitigation to be secured as an absolute pre-requisite to the grant of permission. This has provided protection for the habitats sites and provided new biodiversity benefits but has also resulted in major positive implications for local residents where many large new open spaces (SANGs) have been provided for their recreational benefits including their long-term funded management.

22(a). Should the Government replace the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 planning obligations with a new consolidated Infrastructure Levy, which is charged as a fixed proportion of development value above a set threshold?

Response: No

If a blanket tariff is introduced it is likely that ot would be set at the lowest viable rate which is likely to have serious implications for the funding available, particularly for affordable housing. Any such rate must be locally determined taking account of market situations. Using Gross Development Value to set the new levy could generate further complications unless it is locally tested for viability and there is no negotiation that could cause further delay.
There also needs to be a mechanism in place to secure land, in-kind works, buildings, ongoing management and maintenance, commuted maintenance sums and the terms for provision of Affordable Housing and other infrastructure. The new levy would only replace financial contributions and there is not sufficient account taken of the numerous other functions of a S106.. The S106 does this effectively. It is claimed that delays are due to negotiations but no evidence is provided to substantiate the assertion. In fact matters causing delays often include numerous interested parties, complex land ownership situations, title problems, insufficient guidelines surrounding the form and capabilities of a S106 and poor support and guidance on the application of viability outcomes.

If S106 of the TCPA is rescinded there will need to be an alternative contractual tool which secures non-financial elements. The key advantage of securing requirements by s106 agreement is that provisions within them can be enforced upon successors in title where relevant.
Any alternative tool will need to act in a similar format, leading to the questioning of whether the government truly believe there is reason to remove the use of S106 agreements. Should the replacement system have as many 'teething problems' as CIL then we could be in a similar situation for quite some time.
A simple tariff route replacing s106 and CIL has been mooted before and not acted upon because of issues such as the risk that income for infrastructure could reduce to the point at which developments become unsustainable and therefore unable to be approved which could stifle growth

The proposals create significant risks for both LPAs and for developers. If the funding that can be secured for infrastructure is not known until the development value is clear that will require decision makers to determine applications without any certainty of whether its impacts can be effectively mitigated. This goes to the heart of sustainability and to the acceptability of development to local communities. In the case of Bracknell Forest nearly £60 million has been

received from developer contributions in the last 5 years. This has been vital to enable the delivery of houses and growth in our Borough. This does not include in-kind provision of affordable housing, schools, open space, transport infrastructure etc. that have also been provided. Proposing that the LPA receives funding later in the process is likely to lead to delays in the provision of essential infrastructure. The suggestion that Councils should borrow against potential future tariff income to forward fund infrastructure is unacceptable given the financial position many local authorities now find themselves in and the risk that developments may not go ahead. There is a further risk to the planning authority in forward borrowing against development funding, if the developer then slowed down development or went bust, the authority would be borrowing and paying interest for a longer period of time.

Residents of this Borough have reluctantly accepted high levels of housing growth. In the many public consultations held on planning documents the often repeated message is that the houses are needed but only if the infrastructure is provided. Removal of S106 obligations will result make it impossible to demonstrate with any certainty what infrastructure will be provided, how and when. Collection a new levy at occupation will further delay the delivery of infrastructure, this is a large frustration of many residents. The infrastructure needs to be delivered earlier in the development process. It cannot be assumed that local council's will be willing, or have the in house resources, knowledge or experience to deliver infrastructure. Essentially the delay is being passed from the developers to local residents who will become further disillusioned with the planning system.

There are also questions about how the valuation of development will be determined and any disagreements resolved in order to agree the charge for a particular development.

22(b). Should the Infrastructure Levy rates be set nationally at a single rate, set nationally at an area-specific rate, or set locally?

Response: Locally.

In order to ensure that rates are set that reflect local market conditions it is important that they are set locally. A nationally set rate would need to be set at a low rate that would harm the ability of Councils in more prosperous areas of the country to deliver essential infrastructure where existing infrastructure is already very stretched.
Any new levy must consider administrative boundaries, impacts on smaller developers, different classes of development. The government should ensure that any draft legislation is thoroughly thought through and trialled in different parts of the country before coming into effect nationwide.

22(c). Should the Infrastructure Levy aim to capture the same amount of value overall, or more value, to support greater investment in infrastructure, affordable housing and local communities?

Response: More value

Any Infrastructure levy needs to take into account that few local authorities have sufficient funds to upgrade and improve existing infrastructure as well as deliver new infrastructure. The aim should be to fund the delivery and ongoing maintenance of sufficient infrastructure to enable the impacts of new development to be properly mitigated for the benefit of existing and new local residents. The existing infrastructure funding available is not sufficient to meet all needs and this is built into the current system through the need to demonstrate a funding gap in order to justify the introduction of CIL.
The government regularly emphasises its intention to maximise investment in infrastructure, whether this comes through an Infrastructure Levy alone or combined with further funding sources, investment in infrastructure will need to increase.

22(d). Should we allow local authorities to borrow against the Infrastructure Levy, to support infrastructure delivery in their area?

Response: Not sure (not enough detail to form a definitive view on the basis of published information and there are significant risks involved for the LPA)

Councils already have the ability to borrow, Bracknell Forest has had to do this to fund the delivery of a secondary school. However, if there was specific guidance and support which enabled transparent borrowing against the levy this would assist with the delay between the impact of the development and the receipt of the levy (assuming that it's paid on occupation). However, there is a significant risk to the Council in borrowing against future tariff receipts that may or may not materialize and the size of which is likely to be unknown.

23. Do you agree that the scope of the reformed Infrastructure Levy should capture changes of use through permitted development rights?

Response: Yes,

The same principle applies that those who benefit from the grant of permission whether through an application or via exercising PD rights, should contribute to the mitigation of its impacts. Currently Councils and by extension, Council tax payers are effectively subsiding such developments in terms of their infrastructure needs.
 In particular it would help ensure that housing provided under PD rights would make a proper contribution to local affordable housing needs. It should be noted that this authority strongly believes that some permitted development rights to ensure that changes such as office to residential are properly considered. This is not just to ensure any impacts on infrastructure are mitigated but also to ensure that they are in locations that are suitable for residential development. The ability to create new homes at the back of a trading estate remote from any facilities without the need for planning permission clearly runs counter to the government's stated aims around place-making.

24(a). Do you agree that we should aim to secure at least the same amount of affordable housing under the Infrastructure Levy, and as much on-site affordable provision, as at present?

Response: Yes

Although more focus should be placed on tenure, type, size and quality as well as meeting specific local housing needs. It is not as simple as making a comparison between numbers.
It is also important that legislation ensures that affordable housing remains as such in perpetuity, this is particularly important as this is normally secured via S106 at present.

24(b). Should affordable housing be secured as in-kind payment towards the Infrastructure Levy, or as a 'right to purchase' at discounted rates for local authorities?

Response:

It should be delivered in kind on site where possible, developers are experienced and equipped to deliver homes, and economies of scale dictate that this is a more efficient way of delivering homes. In–kind payments may be welcomed by stock-owning authorities or those who build themselves or have close working relationships with Registered Providers (RPs) who build. However, contributions are often not akin to what the developer could provide on the ground for the same monetary amount.

Section 106 has been successful at securing large sums and numbers of affordable homes from developers - to put into perspective how important Section 106 is to affordable housing delivery, last year in Bracknell Forest 49% of all affordable homes were delivered

through Section 106. The White Paper does seek to retain positive features of Section 106 including a high priority for affordable housing, preference for on-site delivery, and (albeit reduced) flexibility in the system to account for local priorities, such as tenure mix. However, whilst the White Paper provides some assurances about prioritising affordable housing, there are concerns as to whether the overall level of this (possibly nationally determined) new levy will match current Planning contributions achieved through CIL and S106. The cake can only be cut so many ways and there will be increased demand on the levy.

Where the provision of Affordable Housing (AH) is to be included within the levy (akin to a contribution towards off-site delivery of AH) then the levy needs to account for the local land costs as well as the build costs and 'on-costs' associated with delivery AH. Not purely the build costs. Many local Authorities are no longer equipped in terms of human or physical resources to build their own affordable homes and so it is not as simple as handing over the money and responsibility.

If it is the government's intention that developers can offset the difference between the market price and sale price of AH to an RP against the liability of the levy, there need to be minimum prices placed on the sale of AH. This would ensure that larger developers are not selling to their 'own' RPs at a rock bottom price to secure higher reductions in levy liabilities. Many developers now have RPs under their umbrella companies.

24(c). If an in-kind delivery approach is taken, should we mitigate against local authority overpayment risk?

Response: Yes

This could be a cap on the discount that can be applied per AH delivered (or other in-kind delivery of infrastructure).

Any approach also needs to mitigate the lack of funding for infrastructure further down the priority list due to the statutory obligations of the Local authority to provide housing, maintain highways and drainage and provide education. Transport, Social, Green and blue Infrastructure work together to provide a good place to live. The Government is placing a large emphasis on delivery of beautiful places, this does not come about from residential architecture alone.

24(d). If an in-kind delivery approach is taken, are there additional steps that would need to be taken to support affordable housing quality?

Response: Yes

Affordable housing should be built with high levels of sustainability, durability and quality in mind. It is not good enough to build mass levels of housing, they need to withstand the test of time. Maintenance and management costs can be minimised by effective design. It is very easy for these points to be overlooked.

Quality housing will serve generations and sustainable housing will reduce living costs for the most 'squeezed' in society. Bracknell would support the requirement to construct Affordable Housing to a recognised standard (not a new one, we don't need further delays!)

25. Should local authorities have fewer restrictions over how they spend the Infrastructure Levy?

Response: Yes

If the proposed levy is intended to replace much of what was previously provided via S106 then this additional scope should be reflected in greater flexibility. However, while the potential attraction of allowing receipts to be used to provide normal council services or reduce Council is

recognised, there is a risk that such an extent of flexibility could undermine the provision of infrastructure needed to achieve sustainable development.

25(a). If yes, should an affordable housing 'ring-fence' be developed?

Response: Yes

In order to protect and enhance the supply of affordable housing it is important that any increased flexibility around spending the Infrastructure Levy is coupled with a safeguard which ring-fences a quantum of the levy for this purpose.

26. Do you have any views on the potential impact of the proposals raised in this consultation on people with protected characteristics as defined in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010?

Response:
Nationally set development management policies could make it more difficult for LPAs to adopt policies to meet the needs of particular equalities groups in their areas that could vary across the country. The move to increase the use of digital technology in engaging communities in planning could help involve younger people who currently are generally poorly represented in consultation responses. There will be a need to ensure that those without access to necessary technology are not disadvantaged.

Planning for the Future - Planning White Paper August 2020
Proposed representations on Other Matters

In addition to the responses to the 26 questions set out within the White Paper (at Appendix A) the Council also submits the following points as part of its response to the consultation.

Measures that are supported

Making planning more transparent and accessible are laudable aims that are supported.
Making better use of digital technology to make planning more accessible, and back-office systems more robust are also supported
The recognition that significant resources would be required to implement changes of the scale proposed is welcomed, though there are concerns that the resources required to adopt a plan that includes outline consent for allocated 'growth' zones may not be fully appreciated
Use of digital technology for public engagement on planning that could encourage wider participation, particularly among younger people is supported.

Concerns not Covered by the White Paper Questions

The rationale for the changes is not evidenced and is based on the widely discredited assertion that planning is the main cause of under-delivery of housing. No reference is made, for example, to the hundreds of thousands of homes that have planning permission but have not been implemented. If the government wants to significantly improve delivery it should be taking a better-evidenced and more objective approach across the industry as a whole.
There is a significant concern that the new processes, in removing many of the democratic processes, would limit local involvement in planning decisions.
Zonal planning systems have been in place for many years in various other countries but these are generally more refined than the proposed 3 zone approach. There is again little evidence of any research on the effectiveness of these systems and how a simplified system such as that proposed could work in complex urban environments.
There will be significant resource implications for the level of information and analysis required to be able to grant outline consent for all growth area allocations in a Local Plan that should be addressed if this part of the proposals is to work in practice. Particularly if this is to be completed within the timescales envisaged. The proposals specifically rule out local fee setting and even propose regulation of discretionary fee levels which will limit planning authorities' ability to resource the new system effectively. Mention is made of the use of a small proportion of development contributions income to fund overall planning activity but this income is variable and there is an expectation that such income should be used to fund much-needed infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of development.
There are inherent contradictions between the white paper proposals around locally agreed design codes and principles and the changes to permitted development rights which allow significant changes to buildings that, cumulatively, are likely to significantly erode local character.
The emphasis on building appearance as a measure of design quality over other equally important factors affecting quality of life such as the disposition of land uses, public spaces and access to facilities.
The paper has a very strong emphasis on planning for housing over other forms

of development. This is a weakness given the importance of other land uses in creating viable and sustainable communities.
The emphasis on speed of decision making is understandable but, while unnecessary delays should be avoided, it is important to recognise that the outcomes of planning decisions are likely to last for decades and in some cases centuries and for this reason it is important to get them right.
The paper lacks any convincing proposals for effective strategic planning which is likely to be even more important with the proposed removal of the duty to co-operate. It also lacks any kind of national spatial strategy providing only largely formula-derived housing figures for planning authority areas and nationally applicable policies. This appears to be an abdication of the government's responsibilities to plan effectively and in a joined-up way for the nation's future by linking planning to other economic and environmental strategies.
There is an inherent contradiction between the stated desire to promote localism and the proposal to centralise the setting of housing targets and many development plan policies.
The proposals for the use of design codes and a 'pattern book' approach could stifle innovation and reduce variety in building styles which is a key characteristic of many English neighbourhoods where architectural styles have evolved over time.
The failure of the White Paper to recognise the inherent complexity of development, particularly in urban areas.

Areas of Uncertainty

It is not clear how the final housing number for an area taking account of constraints would be derived by government. This is a fundamental matter that should be subject to further consultation.
Clarity is required on how affordable housing provided in lieu of infrastructure levy would be specified and secured without a S106 agreement.
How local authorities could manage the risks associated with borrowing to forward-fund infrastructure. This is a particular issue as there is no certainty over whether or when development will come forward, and what sums will be due if and when it does, due to the proposals to set the actual amount later in the process and for it to be subject to market conditions.
Most new housing in this Borough requires mitigation of its impacts on a large Special Protection Area in order to satisfy the Habitat Regulations. This is currently secured via S106 and is provided in the form of additional public open space made available prior to first occupation. It Is not clear how this essential mitigation could be delivered with certainty and in advance of occupation without a S106. It could not be provided through the proposed new infrastructure levy mechanism.
The paper points out that in low value areas developments may fall below the value threshold at which the infrastructure levy would be charged but says nothing about how in such areas infrastructure necessary to mitigate the impacts of development will be funded. This is particularly pertinent given the statement in the paper that it should be clear to existing and new residents what new infrastructure will accompany development.

TO: EXECUTIVE
20TH OCTOBER 2020

RESIDENTS' COVID-19 IMPACT SURVEY 2020
Chief Executive

1   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To brief the Executive on the Covid-19 Impact Survey 2020 results and seek endorsement of the communications plan.

2   RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1   Note the Covid-19 Impact Survey 2020 results report at Annex A

2.2   Endorse the communications plan at Annex B

2.3   That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission are asked to review the survey and identify actions that need to be taken to prepare the Council for the second wave of Covid-19.

3   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1   To provide the Executive with the results of the Covid-19 Impact Survey 2020 which took place in late July; to ensure that these are communicated effectively and that the council considers residents' views in recovery planning.

4   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1   Not applicable

5   SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

5.1   The council has produced a Community Impact Assessment to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted on the borough's communities and residents' behaviours. The residents' survey results will inform an updated version of the Community Impact Assessment as well as recovery and renewal strategy and decision making through understanding what may need to be sustained or done differently. The aims of the survey were:

- To obtain the views of residents on the impact of COVID -19 to them, their family and the community including the social, economic and environmental impact;

- To provide insight into the support the borough will need to recover from the community impact of COVID -19; and

- To identify opportunities and behaviour change to sustain through recovery as well as how to respond to adverse impacts.

Survey Methodology

5.3   The survey was a sample-based telephone survey which profiled a representative sample of 1,826 respondents across the borough including 100 interviews per ward to enable ward level analysis. This ensures the response rates and findings are representative of the views of residents of the local area, the delivery is cost-effective and provides robust data. A sample size of 1,826 means the sample error or accuracy of the survey results is +/- 2.4% at a 95% confidence level.

5.4   The survey was carried out by the council's consultation contractor Public Perspectives Ltd. Calls were made by their contact centre and interviewers objectively guided respondents through the survey and provided clarification if required. Survey data was inputted and analysed by Public Perspectives.

5.5   The survey questions were developed and informed by several other surveys on Covid-19 impact undertaken by the LGA and other councils with input from the Executive, council officers and Public Perspectives.

5.6   Public Perspectives set demographic quotas based on the ONS 2019 mid-year population estimates (published April 2020) and the ethnicity data is in line with Bracknell Forest Council school census data from January 2020. This achieved a representative sample by age, gender, ethnicity and location. They use advanced telephone contact lists, including demographic information and mobile phone details. This allowed them to target any groups, including ethnic minorities and younger adults as these groups can sometimes be under-represented especially in telephone surveys.

Key Findings

5.7   The full results report from Public Perspectives is attached at Appendix A and includes a copy of the survey questions.

Each relevant question has been analysed against a set of key demographic and variables to identify any relevant patterns, trends, similarities or differences by different types of respondents. The variables include:

•   Gender
•   Age
•   Ethnicity
•   Disability
•   Location
•   Housing type

A summary of the key findings is included below including any significant differences between demographic groups. A separate report with data tables per ward will be circulated to ward members in due course.

5.8   The council

Questions were asked relating to perceptions about the council and its support to the local community during the pandemic.

•   A fifth of residents have contacted the council since the pandemic began, with residents aged 55+ more likely to do so than other residents.

- 40% of residents who contacted the council wanted to request a service and the majority have high satisfaction levels with the contact.
- 73% of residents who contacted the council during the pandemic rated contact as good or excellent.

- More than half of residents (56%) are satisfied with the way Bracknell Forest Council is supporting the local community during the pandemic. This is broadly similar to the Local Government Association's national result.

The data showed some demographic differences in terms of contact with the council. Those with caring responsibilities, disabled residents and those in social housing are more likely to contact the council. Residents with disabilities along with BAME (Black and Minority Ethnic Groups) residents are more likely to request a service when contacting the council. Data also showed residents ages 55 and above are more likely to have contacted the council since the pandemic began.

5.9   Community and Volunteering

In this section residents were asked if and how they volunteered in the local community during the pandemic. Questions also covered reasons for volunteering and their intentions around continuing to volunteer.

- The majority of residents (80%) have not volunteered in the community during the pandemic
- Of those that did volunteer 70% wanted to do good for others in the community.
- 83% of residents that had volunteered were intending to keep volunteering in the community.
- 14% stating they are not intending to carry on volunteering.

Of the 20% who did volunteer during the pandemic, middle aged residents tended to volunteer more (24% of 35-54 year olds) compared with 19% of 18-34 year olds and 17% of residents aged 55 or over.

Disabled residents stated they were more likely to keep volunteering compared to residents in general. Younger (18-34) residents were less likely to carry on volunteering.

5.10   Digital activity

Residents were asked questions about access to the internet and various devices as well as frequency of online activities and confidence in accessing services online.

- 96% of residents have access to the internet at home with 91% having access to a smart phone.
- 96% of residents have used the internet and half of them have used it more often since the lockdown began.
- The majority of residents said they communicated using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime, accessed services on-

line, such as shopping, ordering takeaway or online banking and engaged on social media.
- Confidence in accessing services online is related to age with younger residents more confident (99% of residents aged 18-34 are confident compared with 75% of residents aged 55 and over).

The data showed that residents who may be more vulnerable residents are less likely to have access to digital technology. Residents in social housing, disabled residents and those with caring responsibilities are less likely to have access to digital devices with residents aged 55 and above less likely to have a smart phone. The same applied to residents from BAME background and older residents. Frequency of online activities and confidence accessing information online was also lower among these groups.

5.11   Environment

In this section residents were asked about travel and the environment as a result of the pandemic.

- 75% of residents believe that Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly and that this is an opportunity for Bracknell Forest to accelerate its plans to become Carbon Neutral by 2050.
- Most residents have made changes to reduce their carbon footprint during the pandemic.
- Just over 40% of residents said they drive less and 24% said they walk or cycle more with younger residents are more likely than older residents to walk or cycle more.

Differences in demographic groups shows older residents (35-54, 55 and above) are less likely to agree that Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly with approximately 70% agreeing compared to 87% of those aged 18-34. BAME residents are more likely to use public transport than white residents – 22% compared to 10%. Residents with disabilities are less likely to walk or cycle with 52% compared to 71% of residents without a disability.

5.12   Employment and the economy

This section included questions relating to employment status, current working arrangement, support from the UK Government and likelihood to do activities as lockdown is eased.

- 40% of residents are still employed on the same terms and conditions, with an additional 12% furloughed at the time of the survey.
- 46% of residents who are in employment or education are now working from home with 37% going into a place of work.
- The majority of residents have not accessed or received support from the UK Government since the pandemic began.
- The majority of residents (86%) are likely to visit local shops and visit parks, open spaces or play areas as lockdown is eased with 63% likely to visit the Lexicon.
- 17% of residents said they are likely to use public transport with 75% not likely.

The results in this section show the pandemic has negatively affected those in lower paid jobs or with caring responsibilities. Residents looking after others for more than 25 hours per week are more likely to remain unemployed (40% compared to 8% of residents overall) and are also less likely to have received support.

Residents in social housing are less likely to say they are working from home with only 18% declaring this compared to 46% of residents. BAME residents (42%) are slightly more likely to say they are going into a place of work than White British/Irish residents (36%) and residents without a disability (38%) are also slightly more likely to say they are going into a place of work than disabled residents (31%).

With regard to seeking support BAME residents are less likely to have accessed or received support (78%) compared to 70% of residents overall. Results also showed younger residents (18-34) were more likely to have been furloughed (27%).

5.13   Life, health and wellbeing

This section also included questions about the frequency of doing activities since the lockdown began, health and care support during the pandemic and confidence in accessing health and care services that are not Covid-19 related.

- 83% of residents believe the pandemic had a positive impact on their appreciation of the local wildlife and environment
- 70% felt the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.
- 68% felt the pandemic had a positive impact on their caring responsibilities.
- However there are notable negative impacts on work, finances, education and also physical and mental wellbeing. The most significant being that 58% felt the pandemic had a negative impact on their or their children's education with 42% citing a negative impact on their work.
- Most residents (59%) spend more time in nature and visiting open spaces since lockdown in March and 48% tried a new form of exercise or exercised more.
- 48% reported the pandemic had a positive impact on their physical health (although 22% cited a negative impact), 36% of residents said the pandemic had a positive impact on their mental health with 25% citing a negative impact.
- Since lockdown 48% of residents have tried a new form of exercise or exercised more with 34% stating they are eating more or more unhealthily (with 21% doing this less).
- Regarding drinking alcohol similar proportions cite they are drinking more (24%) as those that are drinking less (22%).
- The same applied to smoking with similar proportions smoking more (6%) compared to smoking less (8%).
- Overall, 64% of residents said their health and care needs have been supported during the pandemic and 82% of residents were confident about accessing health and care services that are not Covid-19 related.

- The majority of residents (91%) are aware of Test and Trace system and will comply with it and 4% are aware but will not comply.

Demographic differences showed that those more negatively affected tended to be residents with disabilities, caring responsibilities or from lower socio economic groups.

For residents in social housing the pandemic had a less positive impact on their physical health than residents overall with only 27% citing this compared to 48% of residents. The same was true for residents with disabilities with only 23% stating a positive impact compared to 48% of residents.

Disabled residents were less likely to have spent more time in nature and visiting open spaces. They were also less confident accessing non Covid 19 related health and care services.

These groups of residents were also more likely to mention they needed support due to their experience of Covid-19.

With regard to Covid-19 Test and Trace system it was notable that only 84% of residents in social housing would comply compared with 91% of residents generally.

5.14   Recovery

Questions regarding the future recovery of the borough and the council's priorities to help the borough recover.

- 67% of residents had concerns over moving out of lockdown.
- 20% mentioned fear of a second spike, people not following social distancing/hygiene measures and moving too quickly out of lockdown.
- Just over a fifth of residents (21%) said supporting vulnerable residents to recover should be the council's top priority
- (21%) also said helping the local economy and businesses to recover with the same amount also mentioning prioritising health protection and promotion.
- Communicating government guidelines was mentioned as a council priority by 17% of residents.

Residents with caring responsibilities were more likely to fear coming out of lockdown too quickly (68%) compared with residents overall (20%). Residents with disabilities were more concerned about access to medical support compared to residents without disabilities. (13% compared to 2%).

5.15   Conclusions

These results highlight positive perceptions of the council during the pandemic and suggest that there is an increase in volunteering and community engagement.   The increase in digital use and high levels of confidence, suggest opportunities for increased digital engagement and service delivery. It should be noted that confidence is lowest amongst older residents who may also be some of the most vulnerable.

In terms of recovery, results highlight that residents want the council to support the local economy to recover, while supporting vulnerable people to recover, keeping residents safe and promoting and enforcing public health messages and guidelines. Supporting more vulnerable residents to recover reflects the work being done as part of the council's community response to the pandemic.

However the responses also highlight the negative impact of the pandemic on more vulnerable residents. Certain population groups including those living in social housing, disabled, older residents, those living in social housing and more deprived areas of the borough have been more adversely impacted and may require more support than others to recover from the experience of the pandemic.

These findings provide an insight into the priorities set in the council plan, the coronavirus renewal approach and the financial principles. The results suggest that reaching some of these goals may be accelerated, for example the results of this survey support the council plan priority to invest in digital technology as most residents reported confidence in using the online services. Where there is less confidence using digital channels, this survey provides awareness for which groups may need further support.

Renewal priorities such as increasing the work with community and voluntary sector groups is also supported by these findings as many of those who started volunteering during the pandemic intend to continue this. Both the renewal principles and the council plan emphasise the need for taking action against climate change. The results align with these objectives and show that three quarters of residents believe now is a good chance to be more environmentally friendly; many have already actively made changes to reduce their carbon footprint.

However, the results also highlight where reaching some of the council's priorities may now be more challenging. Some residents have experienced negative impacts on their mental health (25%) and physical health (22%) which will make it more difficult to achieve several of the objectives in the 'caring for you and your family' council plan theme. Although this also emphasises the priority of the need and aligns with the renewal approach principles.

Residents top priorities for the borough's recovery also aligned with three of the key areas of focus for current recovery and renewal work to: support vulnerable residents' recovery; help the local economy and businesses recovery; and prioritise health protection and promotion. This indicates general support for the actions the council is currently taking.

However, the Overview and Scrutiny Commission could be asked to review the survey and identify actions that need to be taken now to prepare the Council for the second wave of Covid-19.

6   Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

6.1   There is not a statutory requirement to undertake this survey, although it reflects good practice to engage with the community in this way. The Local Authority has discretion to utilise what it assesses to be the best tool to produce the most cost effective, representative sample of the views of the community that it serves.

Financial Advice

6.2   A one-off sum of £20k has been included in the 2020/21 budget for the cost of the normal triennial residents' survey, which will be used to meet the costs of the survey.

6.3   Other Consultation Responses
N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.4   Telephone survey methodologies enable a more representative cross section of the community to respond to the survey. The survey results report includes equalities analysis.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.5   The review of best consultation practices undertaken in 2014 is still robust as the revised methodology provides best value for the Council's resources when compared to replicating the previous large-scale postal survey.

Background Papers

Appendix A – Bracknell Forest Council: Covid-19 Residents' Survey Report: August 2020

Appendix B - Communications Plan - Residents' Covid-19 Impact Survey Results

Appendix B

Communications Plan - Residents' Covid-19 Impact Survey Results

Date	Action	Target audience	Further information
Oct 2020	PR	Residents	Highlights of results to local media
	Holding statements	Residents	To offer explanations of results – (if required)
	Social media mentions	Residents	Highlights of results

	Departmental Management Teams	Managers	To review the results and use to inform renewal planning.
	Democracy snapshot	Members	Results
Nov 2020	Intranet/Forest Views	Staff	Highlight of results
	Town & Country Extra	Residents	Highlights
	Overview and Scrutiny Commission	Members	To review results
Dec 2020	Town & Country	Residents	Highlights of results
Spring 2021	Town & Country	Residents	Further report of results if necessary

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Bracknell Forest Council:
Covid-19 Residents' Survey

Report: August 2020

Bracknell
Forest
Council

Research
Evaluation
Community Engagement
Strategy Development

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Contents

Bracknell Forest Council:
Covid-19 Residents' Survey 2020

Executive Summary

Introduction and background to the research

1. Bracknell Forest Council commissioned a survey of local residents about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on residents and their experience of it, to help inform council and local planning and priorities to support recovery.

Aims of the research

2. The survey covers the following key issues:

   - Perceptions about the council and its support to the local community
   - Volunteering
   - Internet use during lockdown
   - The environmental and travel behaviour change
   - Impact of the pandemic on work, employment and the economy
   - Impact of the pandemic on health and wellbeing
   - Priorities to support the recovery of individuals and the local area

Approach to the research

3. The research was conducted via a telephone survey of 1,826 residents living in Bracknell Forest (at least 100 in each of the 18 wards in the Local Authority area). The survey took place between the 14th July and 31st July 2020.

4. A questionnaire was developed in conjunction with the Council to capture information to answer the aims and objectives of the research (see appendix 1). The questionnaire was tested with a small number of residents prior to its full implementation.

5. Quotas were set based on the latest population data available to help ensure that the survey sample was demographically representative of the local population. Quotas were set by gender, age, ethnicity and location.

6. Interviews were conducted at different times of the day and different days of the week, including evenings and weekends to ensure that working age residents were interviewed. Only one person per household was interviewed.

7. With 1,826 respondents, the survey provides for robust data. At this number of respondents, the sample error or accuracy of the survey results is +/- 2.4% at a 95% confidence level.[1] This means that we can be 95% confident that the "real" result for any

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[1] Sampling error exists because even when surveying as robustly as has been the case with this survey, only a proportion of the population has been interviewed. Sampling error, therefore, is the measure of accuracy between the survey results and those that would have been obtained if all residents in the area had been surveyed i.e. a census conducted.

given question would be within 2.4 percentage points of those stated within the survey findings. This provides for robust data when analysed at a headline level and when different questions are cross-referenced against each other. It also allows for reliable comparison over time and nationally.

Key findings

8.   The key findings about **the council, community and digital access** are:

   - **Contacting the Council:** 73% of residents who contacted the Council during the pandemic rated contact as good or excellent.

   - **Satisfaction with the Council's support to the local community:** 56% of residents are satisfied with the way Bracknell Forest Council is supporting the local community during the pandemic (this is broadly similar to the Local Government Association's national result).

   - **Volunteered or helped in community during the pandemic:** 20% of residents volunteered or helped in the community during the pandemic, 93% of whom were not volunteering prior to the pandemic. 83% of these intend to continue volunteering in the future.

   - **Accessing services online:** 51% of residents said they used the internet in general more during the pandemic. 88% of residents said they are confident to access services online, with younger residents (99% of those aged 18-34) more confident than older residents.

These results highlight positive perceptions of the council during the pandemic. They suggest that there is an increase in volunteering and community sentiment, which could provide a positive foundation to build on in the future. The increase in digital use, and high levels of confidence, suggest opportunities for increased digital engagement and service delivery. However, it should be noted that confidence is lowest amongst older residents and only 5% of all residents said they contacted the Council more on-line during the pandemic and 72% of all residents said they do not engage with the Council on-line in general.

Figure 1: Council, community and digital access

Bar chart showing the following values:
- Contact with Council rating as good or excellent: 73%
- Satisfaction with Council's support to the community: 56%
- Intend to continue volunteering: 83%
- Volunteered or helped in community during pandemic: 20%
- Used internet more generally: 51%
- Confidence accessing services online: 88%
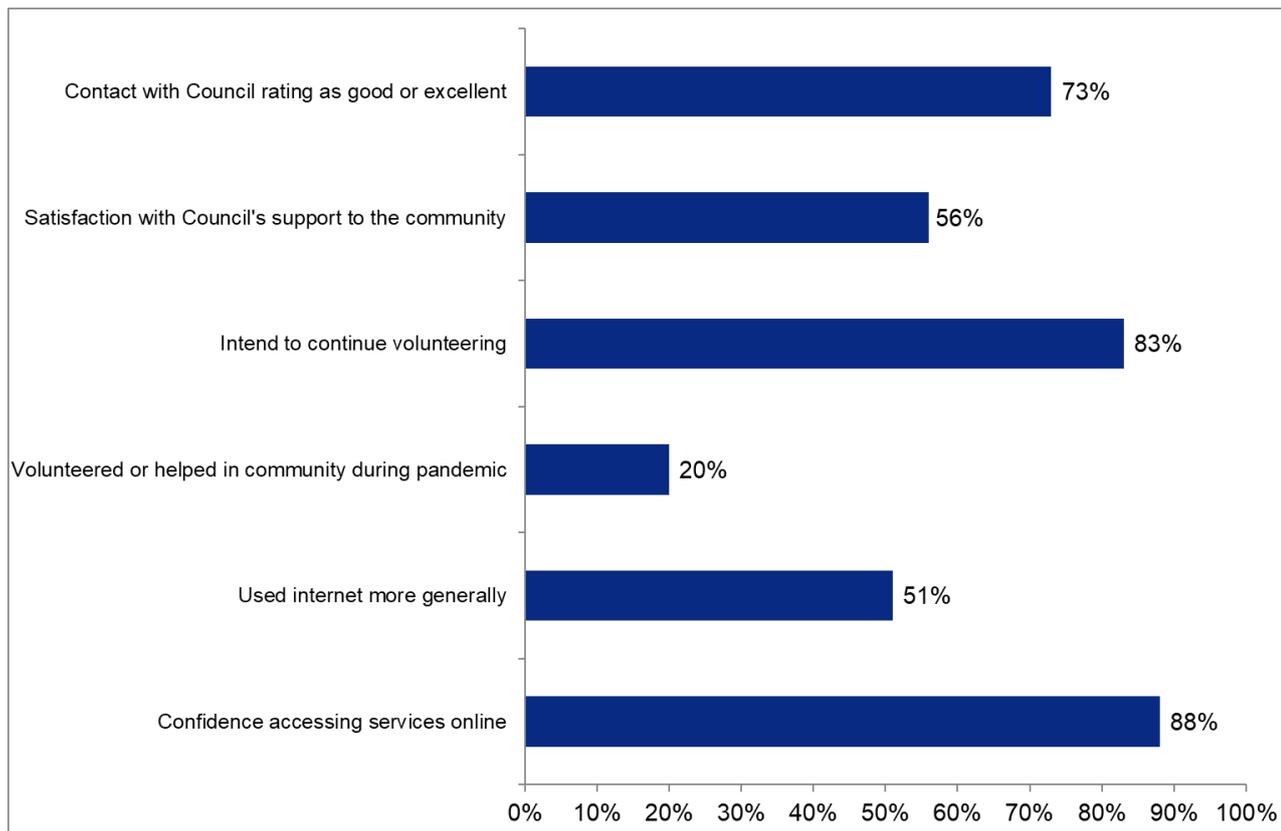
9. The views of residents about **travel and the environment** in the future, due to Covid-19 are as follows:

- 75% of residents said they agree that **Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly** and 73% agreed that **this is an opportunity for Bracknell Forest to accelerate its plans to become Carbon Neutral by 2050**.

- 67% agreed that **they are more likely to walk or cycle** and 62% agreed **they are more likely to use local parks and open spaces**.

- 26% agreed **they are less likely to drive**, while 53% disagreed. However, it is worth noting that 41% of residents have already been driving less as a result of the pandemic.

- Just 13% said **they are more likely to use public transport**, whereas 66% disagreed.

Figure 2: The views of residents about travel and the environment in the future

Legend: Don't know | Strongly disagree | Tend to disagree | Neither agree nor disagree | Tend to agree | Strongly agree

Statement	Don't know	Strongly disagree	Tend to disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to agree	Strongly agree
Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly (1823)	3%	6%	7%	9%	31%	44%
This is an opportunity for Bracknell Forest to accelerate its plans to become Carbon Neutral by 2050 (1799)	7%	4%	4%	13%	33%	40%
I am more likely to walk or cycle (1826)	2%	7%	8%	16%	32%	35%
I am more likely to use local parks and open spaces (1814)	2%	9%	11%	15%	26%	36%
I am less likely to drive (1814)	5%	33%	20%	16%	13%	13%
I am more likely to use public transport (1827)	3%	42%	24%	18%	9%	4%

Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each statement.

Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about travel and the environment in the future, due to your experience of Covid-19?

These results highlight how the pandemic presents an opportunity to promote and embed climate friendly behaviour amongst residents, local businesses and other local organisations.

10. Regarding **employment and the economy**:

- **Two-fifths of residents are still employed on the same terms and conditions**. 8% said they are furloughed receiving 80% of their salary and a further 4% said they are furloughed receiving their full salary. Additionally, 8% said they are self-employed and their business has been affected, 2% said they have lost their job, 2% said their hours or pay have been reduced and 1% said they are concerned that their job is at risk.

- Around **half of residents who are in employment or education are now working from home** and around two-fifths are going into a place of work.

- Overall, **70% of residents have not accessed or received any support from the UK Government**. 17% said they have been or are furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and 3% have signed up to Universal Credit.

11. The likelihood of **doing activities as lockdown is eased** is as follows:

- Overall, 86% of residents said they are likely to **visit local shops** as lockdown is eased. 82% of residents said they are likely to **visit parks, open spaces or play areas** and 63% said they are likely to **visit the Lexicon, Bracknell**. 50% said they are likely to **go to their workplace**.

- 48% said they are likely to **visit local pubs, restaurants, cinemas or theatres** and only 17% said they are likely to **use public transport** (75% not likely).

Figure 3: Doing activities as lockdown is eased
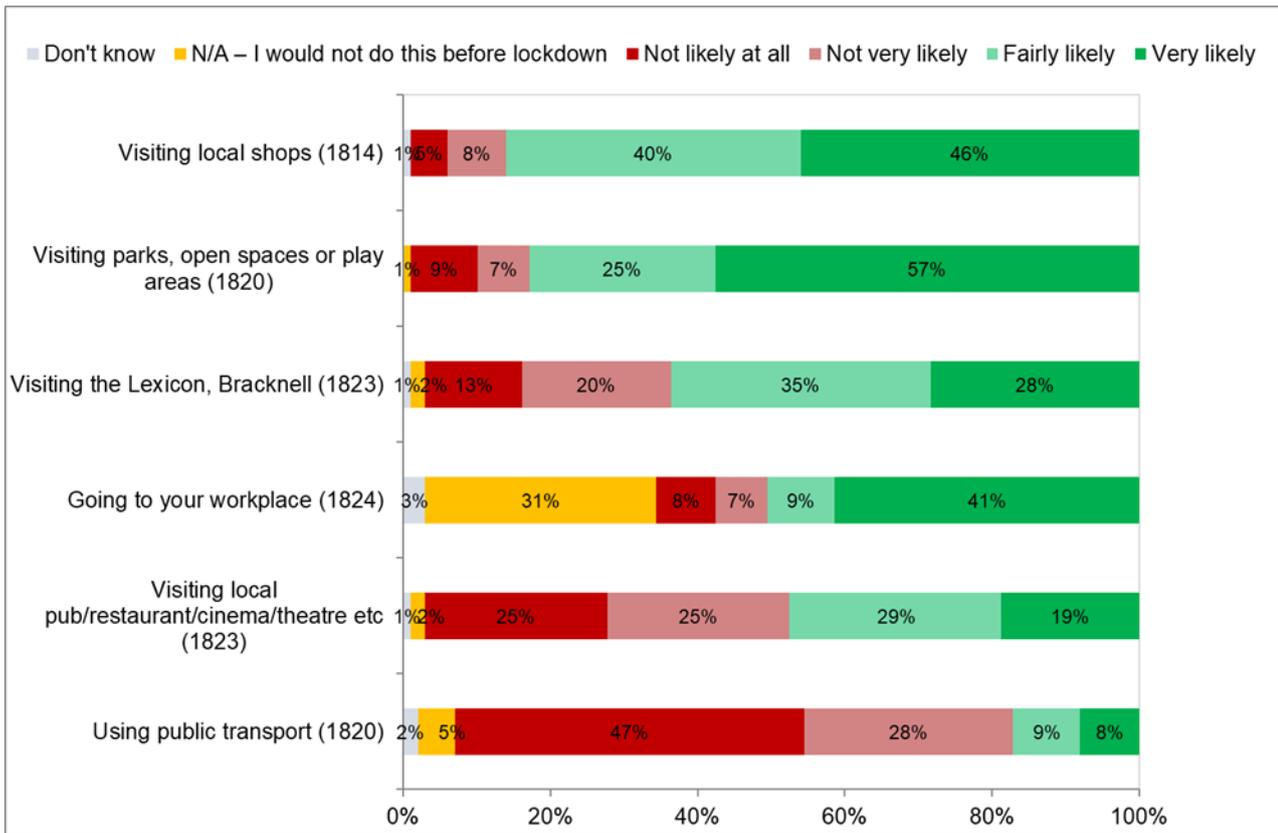
Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each statement.

Question: As lockdown is eased, how likely, if at all, are you to do each of these activities that are now permitted?

These results highlight the economic challenges of the pandemic, with notable proportions of residents on furlough or with reduced employment opportunities. However, there are positive sentiments around doing activities and supporting local businesses, albeit with notable proportions of residents less confident about getting out and about.

12. The impact of the pandemic on aspects of residents' **life, health and wellbeing** is as follows:

- Overall, 83% of residents said that the pandemic had a **positive impact on their appreciation of the local wildlife and environment**. 70% mentioned the pandemic had a **positive impact on their feeling that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together** and 68% said it had a **positive impact on their caring responsibilities.**

- 52% of residents said that the pandemic had a **positive impact on their feeling of belonging to the local community** and 50% said it had a **positive impact on their relationship with people in their household.**

- 48% said it had a positive impact on their **physical health** (although 22% cited a negative impact), 36% of residents said the pandemic had a positive impact on their **mental health** (25% negative) and 25% said it had a positive impact on their **access to paid or unpaid care** (17% negative).

- 24% said the pandemic had a positive impact on their **financial situation** and 29% said it had a negative impact.

- 23% believed the pandemic had a positive **impact on their work**, whereas 42% said it had a negative impact.

- 21% said the pandemic had a positive impact on their **employment status** and 24% said it had a negative impact.

- Only 13% believed the pandemic had a positive impact on their or their **children's education (e.g. school/college/university),** while 58% said it had a negative impact.

Figure 4: Impact of the pandemic on aspects of life, health and wellbeing
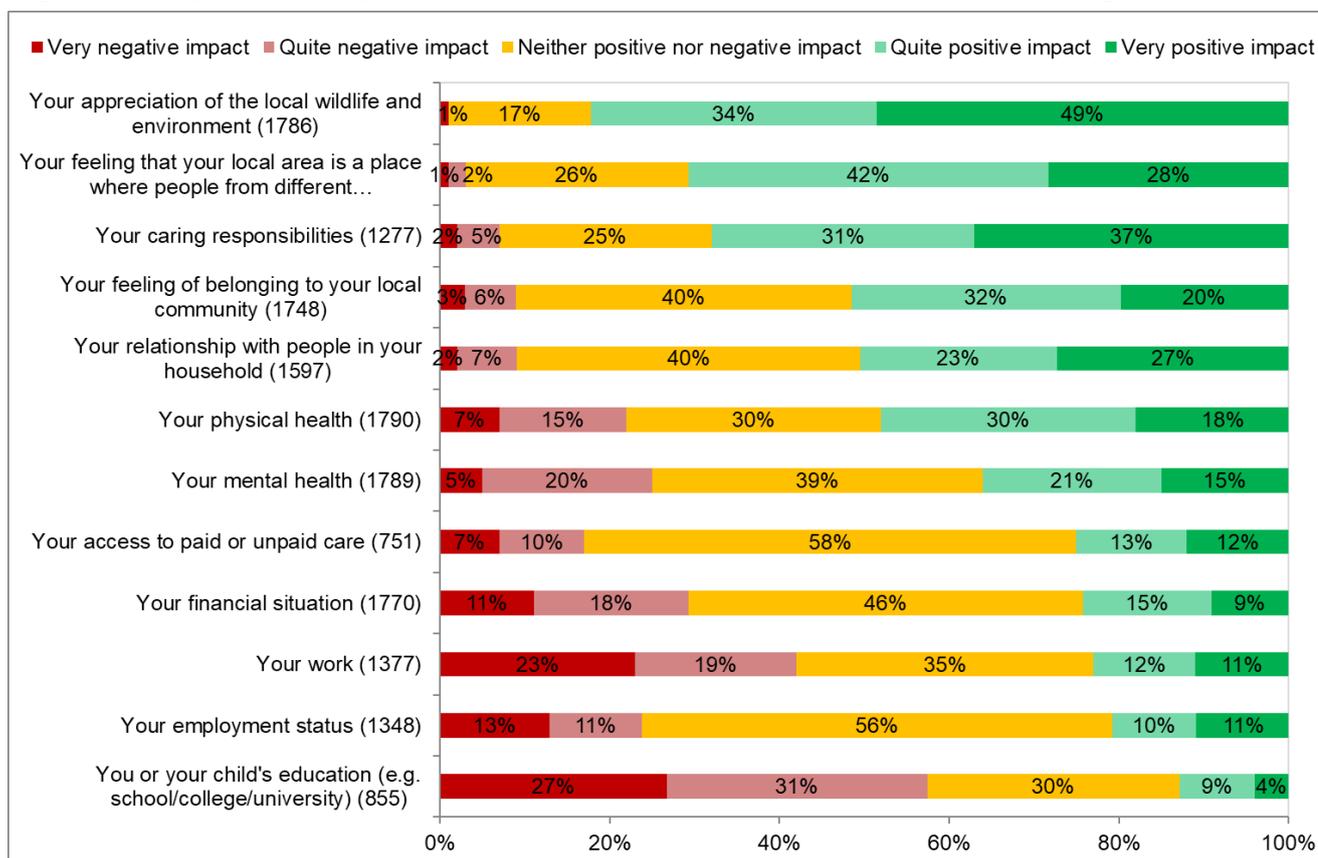
Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each statement (excludes don't know responses).

Question: How much, if at all, has the pandemic had a positive or negative impact on each of the following aspects of your life, health and wellbeing?

13. Residents provided views about accessing healthcare and the support they need to recover from the experience of the pandemic:

- Around six-in-ten residents spent **more time in nature**, visiting open spaces since lockdown began on 23rd of March and about half of residents tried a **new form of exercise or exercised more**, while **smoking and drinking** levels remained about the same.

- Two-thirds of residents feel that their **health and care needs** have been supported overall during the pandemic, with those aged 18-34 more likely to say so (and by extension older residents less likely to say so).

- The majority of residents are **confident accessing health and care services that are not Covid-19 related**, although disabled residents are less confident.

- Two-fifths of residents said they had **avoided going to the GP / hospital** because they did not want to overburden them and a third said they have had a pre-existing (non-GP/hospital) medical appointment postponed because of Covid-19, for example a dentist or optician appointment (older and disabled residents are more likely to have had an appointment postponed).

- The majority of residents **do not need any help or support** due to their experience of Covid-19, although carers, disabled people and residents living in social housing are more likely to want support (mainly healthcare/medical related).

- The majority of residents said they are **aware of the new national Covid-19 Test and Trace system and will comply with it** (residents in social housing are a little less likely to be aware or comply).

These results highlight the impact of the pandemic on health and wellbeing and that certain population groups may require more support than others to recover from the experience of the pandemic.

14. Regarding the **future and priorities for recovery:**

- Two thirds of residents had concerns moving out of lockdown, with fear of coming out of lockdown too quickly, risk of local lockdown, lack of adherence of social distancing/hygiene measures and the risk of a 2nd spike being mentioned the most.

- One-fifth of residents said **helping the local economy and businesses to recover should be the Council's top priority** over the next few months to help the borough's recovery (21%), a similar proportion mentioned **supporting the most vulnerable to recover** (21%) and the same proportion mentioned **health protection and promotion** (21%).

- Additionally, about 10-15% mentioned in 'other' comments that the **priority should be getting schools re-opened and children back to school.**

Figure 5: Priorities for recovery

Priority	%
Helping the local economy and businesses to recover	21%
Supporting the most vulnerable / most affected people to recover	21%
Health protection and promotion	21%
Communicating government guidelines	17%
Supporting people to take care of their own/their families health and wellbeing (including mental health)	13%
Focusing on reopening facilities and services	12%
Debt and money management help for those affected financially	9%
Helping people to sustain their housing or find affordable housing	7%
Being more environmentally friendly/carbon neutral	6%
Sound financial management of the council	5%
Don't know	22%

Question: Over the next few months, what do you think the Council's top priorities should be to help the borough's recovery from the pandemic? Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

These results highlight that residents want the Council to support the local economy to recover, while simultaneously supporting the most vulnerable/most affected people to recover, keeping people safe, and promoting and enforcing public health messages and guidelines.

15. **Throughout the survey there are often differences by different demographic groups.** In some instances these highlight that disadvantaged or vulnerable groups, such as disabled people, older people, people from ethnic minority backgrounds and people living in social housing, have been more significantly affected by the pandemic and are in greater need of support. **This highlights the importance of a targeted approach to services and support to help protect residents and the local area and promote recovery from the pandemic.**

Bracknell Forest Council: Covid-19 Residents' Survey 2020

Main Report

Section 1: Introduction

Introduction and background to the research

1.1.   Bracknell Forest Council commissioned a survey of local residents about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on residents and their experience of it, to help inform council and local planning and priorities to support recovery.

Aims of the research

1.2.   The survey covers the following key issues:

- Perceptions about the council and its support to the local community
- Volunteering
- Internet use during lockdown
- The environmental and travel behaviour change
- Impact of the pandemic on work, employment and the economy
- Impact of the pandemic on health and wellbeing
- Priorities to support the recovery of individuals and the local area

Approach to the research

1.3.   The research was conducted via a telephone survey of 1,826 residents living in Bracknell Forest (at least 100 in each of the 18 wards in the Local Authority area). The survey took place over between the 14th July and 31st July 2020.

1.4.   A questionnaire was developed in conjunction with the Council to capture information to answer the aims and objectives of the research (see appendix 1). Several of the questions are drawn from surveys conducted by other local authorities. The questionnaire was tested with a small number of residents prior to its full implementation.

1.5.   Quotas were set based on the latest population data available to help ensure that the survey sample was demographically representative of the local population. Quotas were set by gender, age, ethnicity and location.

1.6.   Interviews were conducted at different times of the day and different days of the week including evenings and weekends to ensure that working age residents were interviewed. Only one person per household was interviewed.

1.7.   With 1,826 respondents, the survey provides for robust data. At this number of respondents, the sample error or accuracy of the survey results is +/- 2.4% at a 95% confidence level.[2] This means that we can be 95% confident that the "real" result for any

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[2] Sampling error exists because even when surveying as robustly as has been the case with this survey, only a proportion of the population has been interviewed. Sampling error, therefore, is the measure of accuracy between the survey results and those that would have been obtained if all residents in the area had been surveyed i.e. a census conducted.

given question would be within 2.4 percentage points of those stated within the survey findings. This provides for robust data when analysed at a headline level and when different questions are cross-referenced against each other. It also allows for reliable comparison over time and nationally.

1.8. The following table shows the demographic profile of respondents to the survey:

Demographic	Percentage of interviews
Gender	
Male	50%
Female	50%
Age	
18-34	27%
35-54	39%
55-70	22%
Over 70	12%
Ethnicity	
White British-Irish	78%
Non-white British-Irish	22%

Note: All quotas were achieved within 1% points of their target and the results 're-weighted' to be fully in line with the latest local population demographics (these were derived from the ONS mid-year population estimates 2019 and for ethnicity based on the latest school census data – this may slightly over-estimate the size of non-white British-Irish in the adult population, but it was considered important to ensure good representation of minority ethnic groups).

Reporting

1.9. The main report summarises the key findings from the research. Each relevant question has been analysed against a set of key demographic and conceptual variables to identify any relevant patterns, trends, similarities or differences by different types of respondents. Commentary is only provided where significant or meaningful findings are identified. The variables include:

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Location
- Housing type

1.10. The report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 2: The council
- Section 3: Volunteering
- Section 4: Digital activity
- Section 5: Environment
- Section 6: Employment and the economy
- Section 7: Life, health and wellbeing
- Section 8: Recovery

Section 2: The Council

Key issues/findings

- A fifth of residents contacted the Council since the pandemic began, with residents aged 55+ more likely to do so than other residents.
- Two fifths of residents who contacted the Council wanted to request a service and the majority have high satisfaction levels with the contact.
- Above half of residents are satisfied with the way Bracknell Forest Council is supporting the local community during the pandemic.

Introduction

2.1.   This section presents findings about perceptions of the Council performance during the pandemic, including:

- Incidence of contacting the Council.
- Details of contacting the Council, including reasons and satisfaction with the contact.
- Satisfaction with the Council's support.

Contacting the Council

A fifth of residents contacted the Council since the pandemic began, with residents aged 55+ more likely to do so than other residents

2.2.   Overall, 20% of residents said they contacted the Council at least once since the pandemic began.

2.3.   Residents aged 55 and above are more likely than other residents to have contacted the Council, 25% did so since the pandemic began, compared with 15% of residents aged under 18-34 and 19% of residents aged 35-54.

Figure 2.1: The proportion of residents that have contacted the Council since the pandemic began
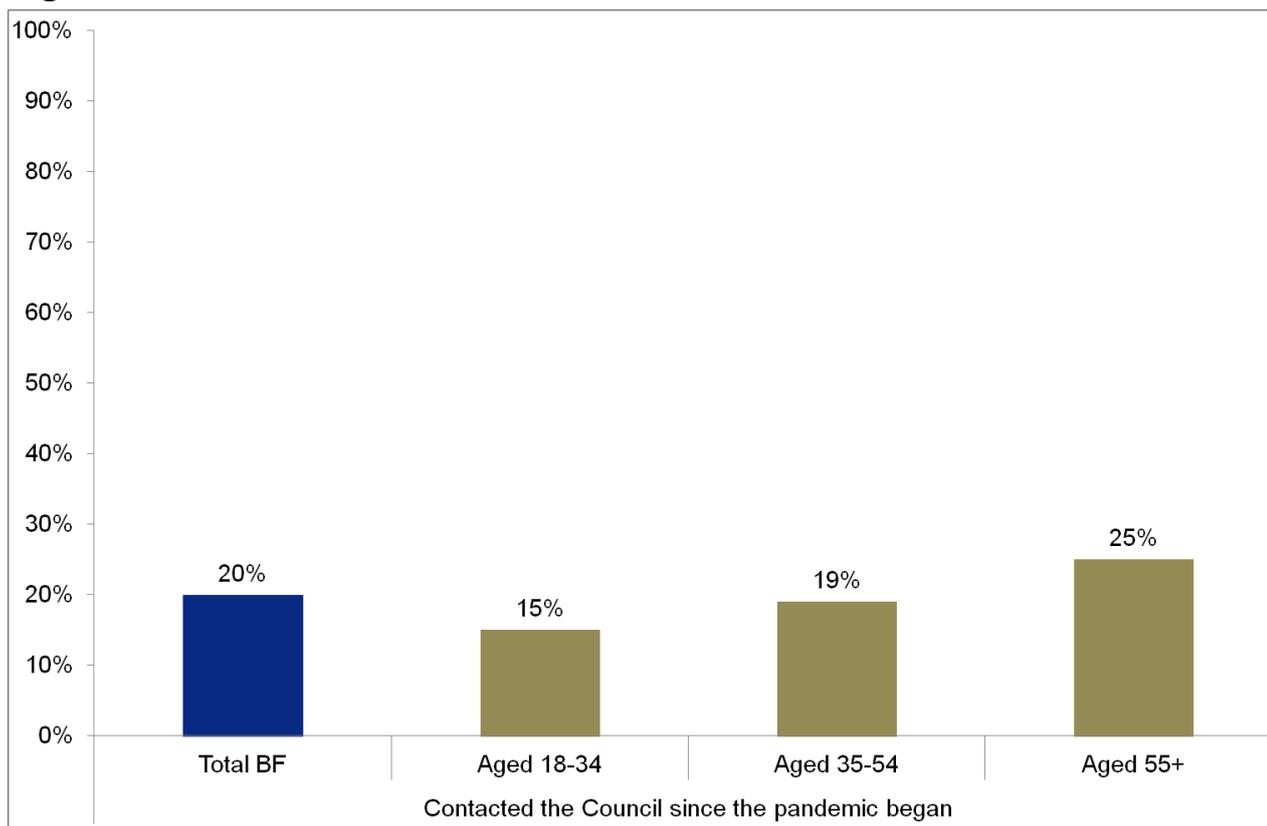
Number of respondents: 1824.

Question: Have you contacted the council since the pandemic began?

2.4.   In most cases, the low incidence of contact with the Council is consistent across different demographic groups. However, there are some demographic differences to note:

*   **White British or Irish residents are more likely to contact the Council:** For example, 22% of White British or Irish residents contacted the Council compared with 12% of Non-White British or Irish residents.

*   **Residents who spend 50 hours or more a week looking after or helping family members, friends, neighbours or others are more likely than other residents to contact the Council:** For example, 42% of residents who spend 50 hours or more caring for others contacted the Council, compared with 20% overall.

*   **Disabled residents are more likely than other residents to contact the Council:** For example, 38% of disabled residents contacted the Council compared with 17% of non-disabled residents.

- **Residents in social housing are more likely to contact the Council:** For example, 35% of residents in social housing contacted the Council compared with 20% overall.

Reasons and satisfaction with the Council contact

Two fifths of residents who contacted the Council wanted to request a service and the majority have high satisfaction levels with the contact

2.5.   40% of residents that have contacted the Council said they wanted to request a service and 27% wanted to request information.

2.6.   There are high levels of satisfaction with contacting the Council, including 36% giving an "excellent" rating and 37% a "good" rating. 14% of residents who contacted the Council rated the contact as at least poor.

Figure 2.2: Contacting the Council
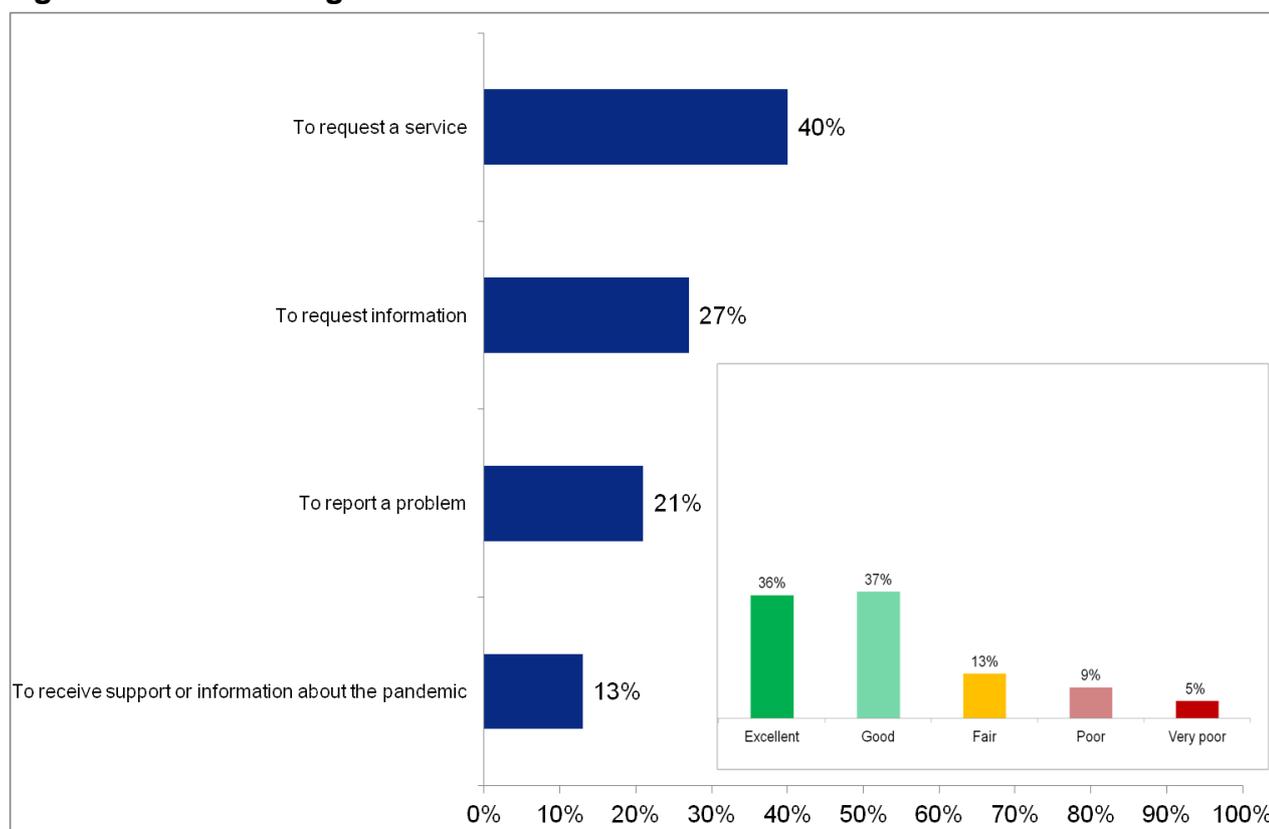
Number of respondents: 328 for reason of contact (as question only asked to those who contacted the Council) / 364 for rating contact with the Council (only asked to those who contacted the Council).

Questions: What was your reason for contacting the council? / How would you rate your contact with the council?

2.7.   In most cases, contact rating and reasons of contact are consistent across different demographic groups. However, there are a few demographic differences to note:

- **Men are more likely to request a service and less likely to report a problem:** For example, 52% of men contacted the Council to request a service compared with 29% of women who contacted the Council.

- **Residents aged 18-34 are more likely to request information and less likely to report a problem:** For example, 55% of residents aged 18-34 contacted the Council to request information compared with 23% of residents aged 35-54 and 13% of those aged 55 and above.

- **Non-White British or Irish residents are more likely to request a service:** For example, 49% of Non-White British or Irish residents contacted the Council to request a service compared with 38% of White British or Irish residents who contacted the Council.

- **Disabled residents are more likely to request a service:** For example, 49% of disabled residents contacted the Council to request a service compared with 40% of residents overall.

- **Parents or guardians of a dependent child are more likely than other residents to request information:** For example, 36% of residents who are parents or guardians contacted the Council to request information, compared with 27% overall.

Satisfaction with the Council's support to the local community

Above half of residents are satisfied with the way Bracknell Forest Council is supporting the local community during the pandemic

2.8.   Overall, 56% of residents are at least fairly satisfied with the way Bracknell Forest Council is supporting the local community during the pandemic. Only 3% of residents are at least fairly dissatisfied with the way the Council is supporting the local community.

2.9.   These results are similar to the Local Government Association's representative national survey of 912 people (June 2020), with 20% very satisfied, 39% fairly satisfied, 32% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 5% fairly dissatisfied and 3% very dissatisfied.

Figure 2.3: Satisfaction with Council's support
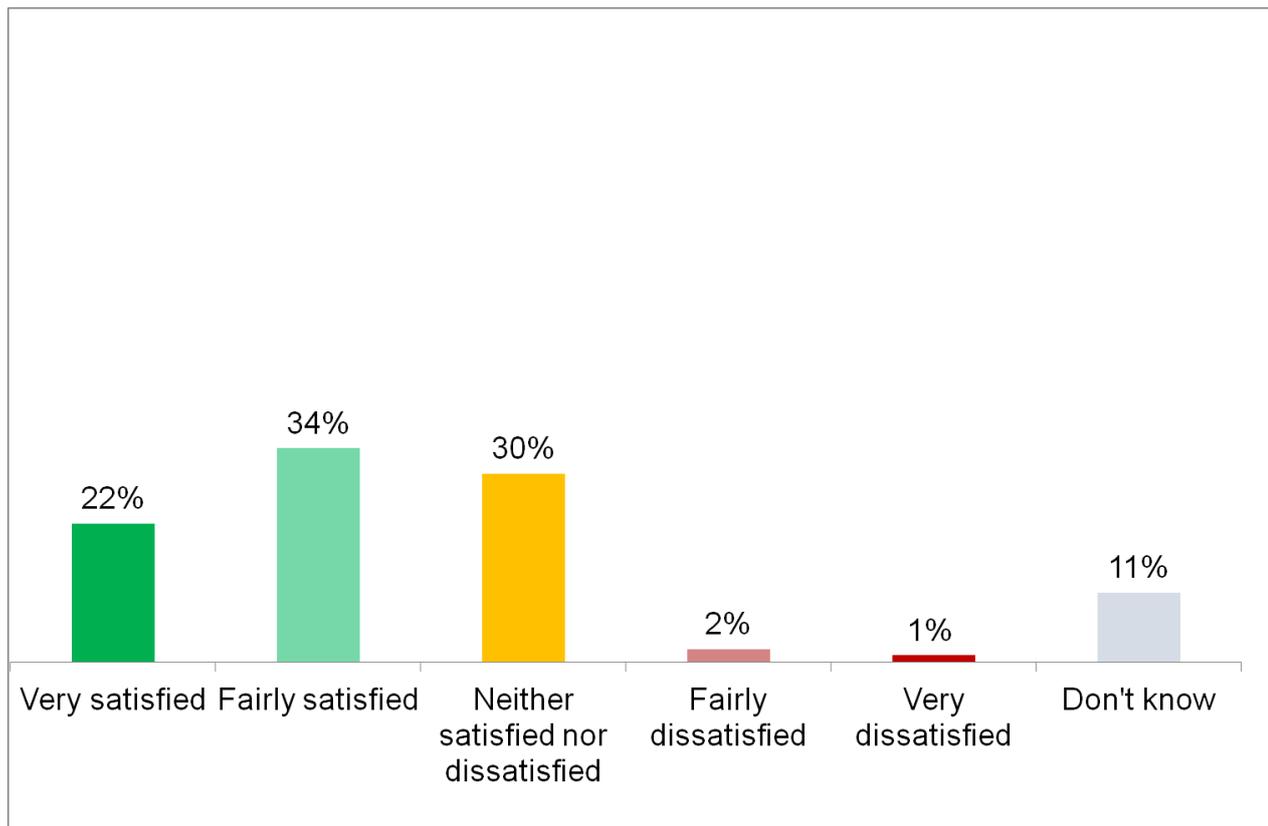
Number of respondents: 1826.

Question: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council is supporting your local community during the coronavirus pandemic?

2.10.   In most cases, satisfaction with the Council support is consistent across different demographic groups. However, there are a couple of demographic differences to note:

- **Disabled residents are less likely to be neutral about the way the Council is supporting the community than non-disabled residents:** For example, 18% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, compared with 31% of non-disabled residents.

- **Residents in social housing are less likely than other residents to be neutral about the way the Council is supporting the community:** For example, 18% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the Council support, compared with 30% overall.

Section 3: Community

Key issues/findings

- The majority of residents have not volunteered in the community during the pandemic.
- Above two-thirds of residents who volunteered in the community wanted to do good for others and the community, with residents aged 18-34 more likely to say so.
- The majority of residents who volunteered intend to keep volunteering in the local community, with those aged 18-34 less likely to do so.

Introduction

3.1. This section presents findings about volunteering and community during the pandemic, including:

- Ways of volunteering in the local community.
- Reasons for volunteering in the local community.
- Intention to keep volunteering.

Ways of volunteering in the community during the pandemic

The majority of residents have not volunteered in the community during the pandemic

3.2.   Overall, 80% of residents did not mention any form of volunteering. 9% mentioned getting to know or supporting a neighbour.

Figure 3.1: Ways of volunteering in the community during the pandemic
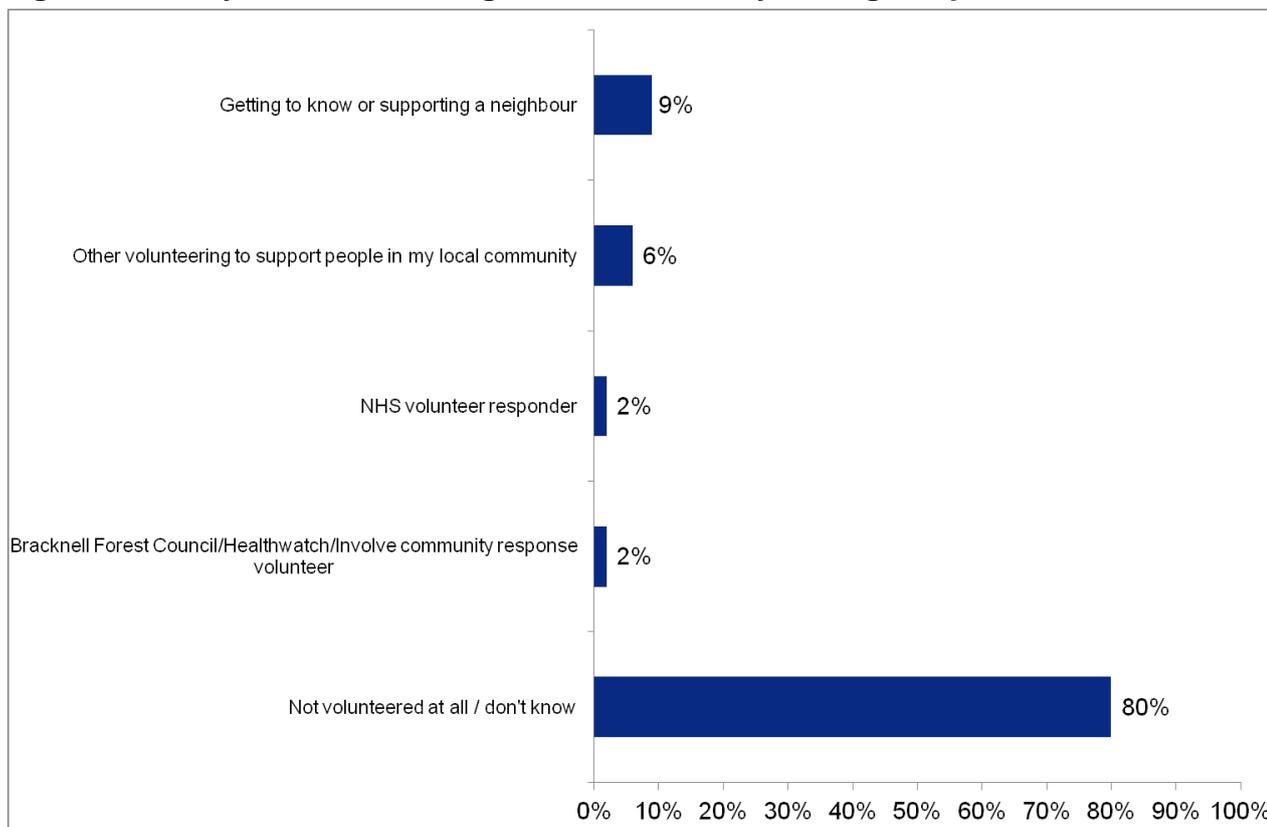
Number of respondents: 1821.

Question: How, if at all, have you volunteered to help in your local community during the pandemic?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

3.3.   The findings are broadly consistent across demographic groups except for the following differences:

- **Younger residents are less likely to mention getting to know or supporting a neighbour:** For example, 2% of residents aged 18 to 34 said they got to know or supported a neighbour compared to 9% of residents overall.

- **Middle aged residents are slightly more likely to volunteer than other age groups:** 24% of 35-54 year olds volunteered, compared with 19% of 18-34 year olds and 17% of residents aged 55 or over (perhaps because they are more able/less at risk than older residents and more community minded than younger residents).

- **Disabled residents are slightly less likely to volunteer than non-disabled residents:** 15% of disabled residents volunteered compared to 22% of non-disabled residents.

- **Residents that rent accommodation from a private landlord are less likely to volunteer in the local community than other residents:** For example, 10% of residents who rent accommodation from a private landlord have volunteered compared with 20% of residents overall.

Reasons for volunteering in the community

Above two-thirds of residents who volunteered in the community wanted to do good for others and the community, with residents aged 18-34 more likely to say so

3.4. 70% of residents that volunteered in the community said they wanted to do good for others and the community.

3.5. Residents aged 18-34 are more likely than other residents to say that they wanted to do good for others and the community, 78% did so, compared with 71% of residents aged 35-54 and 63% of residents aged 55 and above.

3.6. Non-White British or Irish residents are more likely to say they wanted to do good for others and the community (83%).

3.7. Disabled residents are more likely to say they wanted to do good for others and the community (86%).

3.8. Parents or guardians are less likely to say they had the extra time to commit to volunteering, 4% said so, compared with 18% of other residents.

Figure 3.2: Reasons for volunteering in the community
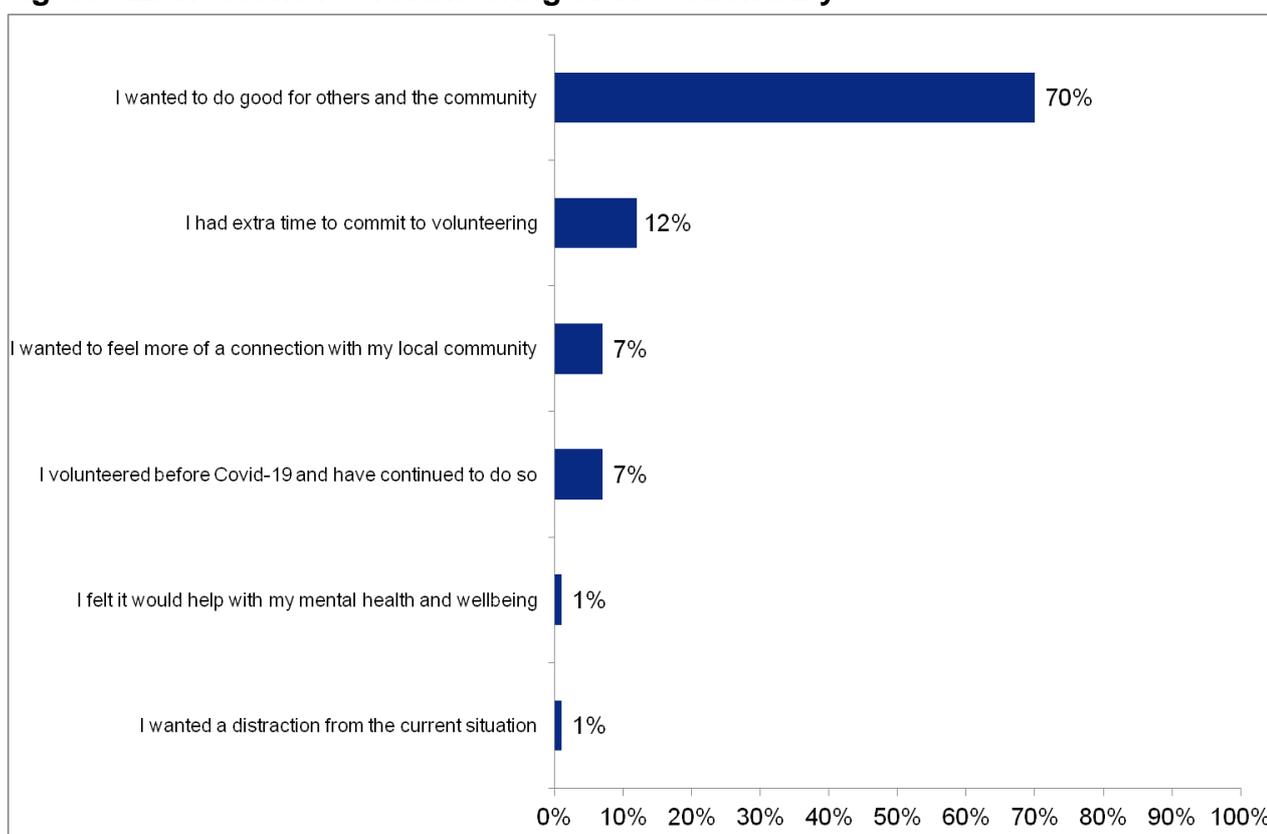
Number of respondents: 332 (only asked to those who volunteered).

Question: What were your reasons for choosing to volunteer in your local community during Covid-19?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

75

Intention to keep volunteering

The majority of residents who volunteered intend to keep volunteering in the local community, with those aged 18-34 less likely to do so

3.9.   Overall, 83% of residents that volunteered were intending to keep volunteering in the community, with 14% not intending to keep volunteering.

3.10.   Residents aged 18-34 were less likely to say that they were intending to keep volunteering, 74% said so.

3.11.   Non-White British or Irish residents were less likely to intend to keep volunteering, 74% said they were intending to keep volunteering.

3.12.   Disabled residents were more likely to say they were intending to keep volunteering - 97% said they were intending to keep volunteering.

Figure 3.3: Intention to keep volunteering
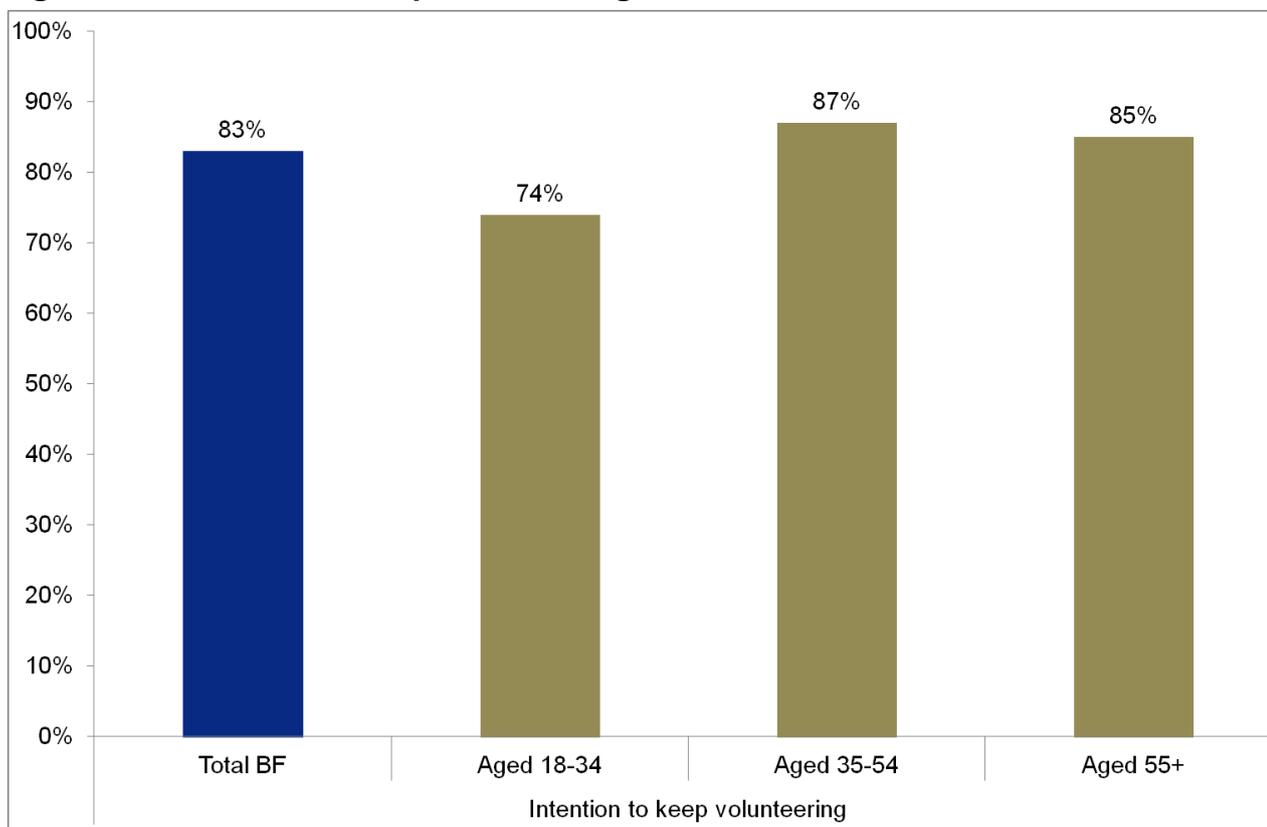
Number of respondents: 372 (only residents who volunteered).

Question: Do you intend to keep volunteering in your local community?

Section 4: Digital activity

Key issues/findings

- Almost all residents have access to internet at home, 91% have access to a smart phone, 82% have access to a laptop and 71% have access to an iPad or tablet. Women are less likely to have access to a home computer and older residents are less likely to have access to a smart phone.

- Almost all residents have used the internet and half of them have used it more often since the lockdown began. The majority of residents said they communicated using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime, accessed services on-line, such as shopping, ordering takeaway or online banking and engaged on social media. However, the majority of residents have not contacted the Council online.

- The majority of residents are confident on-line, although older residents are less confident.

Introduction

4.1. This section presents findings about doing activities on-line, including during the pandemic, including:

- Access to internet and devices.
- Frequency of online activities.
- Confidence in accessing services online.

Access to internet and devices

Almost all residents have access to internet at home, 91% have access to a smart phone, 82% have access to a laptop and 71% have access to an iPad or tablet. Women are less likely to have access to a home computer and older residents are less likely to have access to a smart phone.

4.2. Overall, 96% of residents have access to internet at home, 91% have access to a smart phone and 82% have access to a laptop.

4.3. 71% of residents have access to an iPad or a tablet.

4.4. 63% have access to a home computer.

Figure 4.1: Access to internet and devices
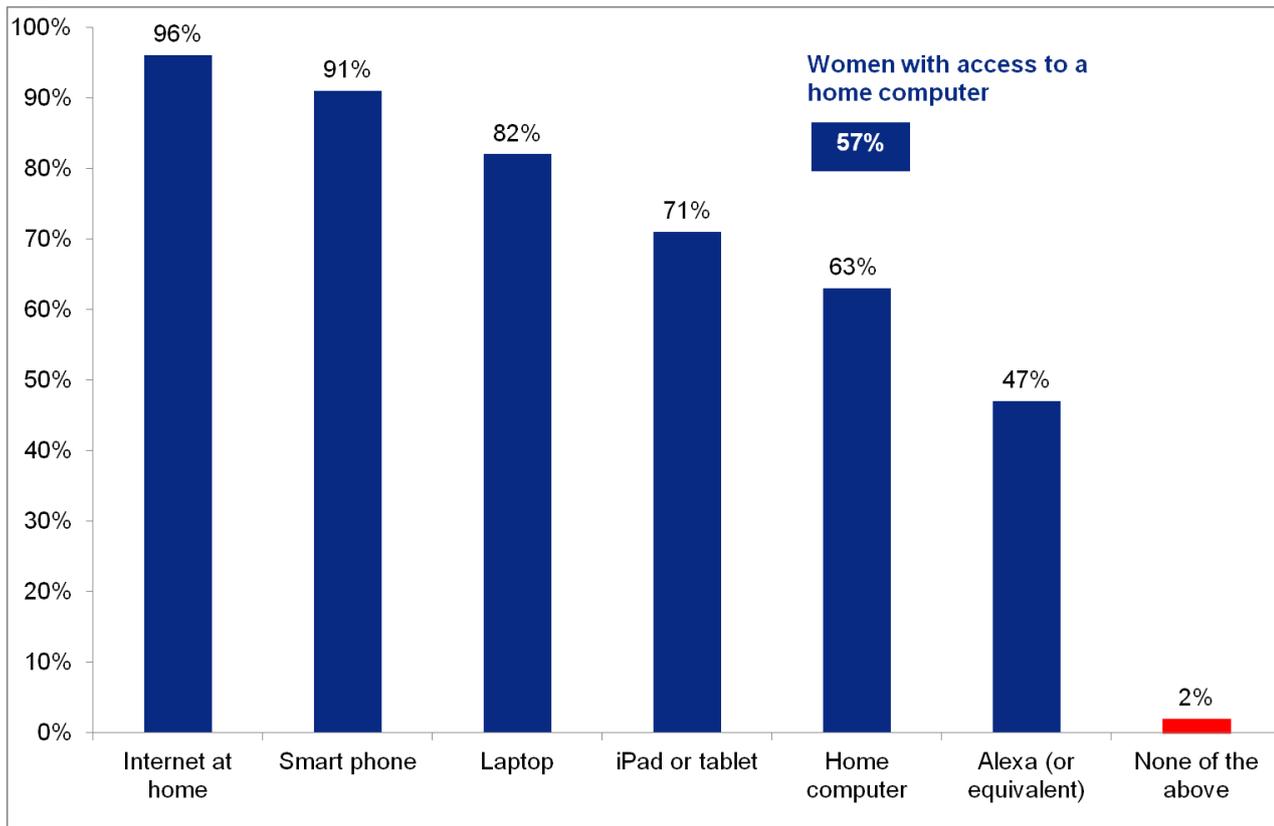
Number of respondents: 1826.

Question: Which of the following do you have access to?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

4.5. The following demographic groups are **less likely** to have access to the mentioned devices:

- **Women:** 57% have access to a home computer compared with 68% of men.

- **Residents aged 55 and above:** 78% have access to a smart phone compared with 98% and 97% of residents aged 18-34 and 35-54, respectively.

- **Non-White British or Irish residents:** 36% have access to Alexa or equivalent compared with 50% of White British or Irish residents.

- **Residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35 or more hours a week:** 19% and 36% of residents who provide care for 35-49 hours and 50 or more hours a week respectively have access to Alexa or equivalent compared with 47% overall.

- **Disabled residents:** 49% have access to an iPad or a tablet compared with 75% of non-disabled residents.
- **Residents in social housing:** 42% have access to a home computer compared with 63% of residents overall.
- **Residents who are not parents or guardians:** 38% have access to Alexa or equivalent compared with 60% of parents or guardians.

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Frequency of online activities

Almost all residents have used the internet and half of them have used it more often since the lockdown began. The majority of residents said they communicated using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime, accessed services on-line, such as shopping, ordering takeaway or online banking and engaged on social media. However, the majority of residents have not contacted the Council online.

4.6. Overall, 96% of residents used the internet; 51% have used it more often since the lockdown began and 45% continued using it with the same frequency.

4.7. 88% of residents communicated using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime; 58% have done this more often since the lockdown began and 21% continued doing this with the same frequency.

4.8. 86% of residents accessed services on-line, such as shopping, ordering takeaway or online banking and 78% engaged on social media.

4.9. Men were less likely to use the internet more often since the lockdown began, 43% have said so.

4.10. Residents aged 55 and above are less likely to engage on social media, 56% have engaged on social media.

4.11. Non-White British or Irish residents are less likely to use Alexa or equivalent voice activated device, 28% have done so.

4.12. Residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week are more likely to contact the Council online, 79% have done so.

4.13. Disabled residents are less likely to communicate using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime, 70% have done so.

4.14. Residents in social housing were less likely to communicate using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime more often since the lockdown began, only 37% have done so.

4.15. Parents or guardians are more likely to use Alexa or equivalent, 55% have done so.

4.16. Residents who are not confident in accessing services on-line were less likely to say they have communicated using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime more often since the lockdown began, only 7% of those who are not confident at all said they communicated using digital technology more often, compared with 69% and 54% of those who are very confident and quite confident, respectively.

Figure 4.2: Frequency of online activities since the lockdown began

Legend: ■ Done the first time ■ Doing about the same ■ Doing more often ■ Do not do activity **Do activity**

Activity	Done the first time	Doing about the same	Doing more often	Do not do activity	Do activity
Used the internet in general (1826)		45%	51%	4%	96%
Communicated using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime etc (1821)	9%	21%	58%	12%	88%
Accessed services on-line, such as shopping, ordering takeaway, general shopping online or on-line banking (1824)	2%	43%	40%	14%	86%
Engaged on social media (1826)	1%	48%	29%	22%	78%
Used Alexa (or equivalent voice activated device) (1792)	1%	30%	10%	59%	41%
Contacted the council online (including via social media) (1822)	4%	19%	5%	72%	28%

Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each question.

Question: Which of the following activities have you done for the first time or done more often since the lockdown began on 23 March?

Confidence in accessing services online

The majority of residents are confident on-line, although older residents are less confident

4.17. 88% of residents are at least quite confident accessing services online, with 57% very confident.

4.18. Perhaps not surprisingly, confidence to access services online is related to age, with younger residents more confident than older residents. For example, 99% of residents aged 18-34 are confident compared with 75% of residents aged 55 and over.

4.19. Similarly, 67% of retired residents are confident. This is also related to age.

4.20. Confidence accessing services online is lower among residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 50 or more hours a week. 69% said they were confident.

4.21. 73% of disabled residents are confident, compared with 90% of non-disabled residents.

4.22. 68% of residents in social housing said they were confident to access services online.

Figure 4.3: Level of confidence in accessing services online
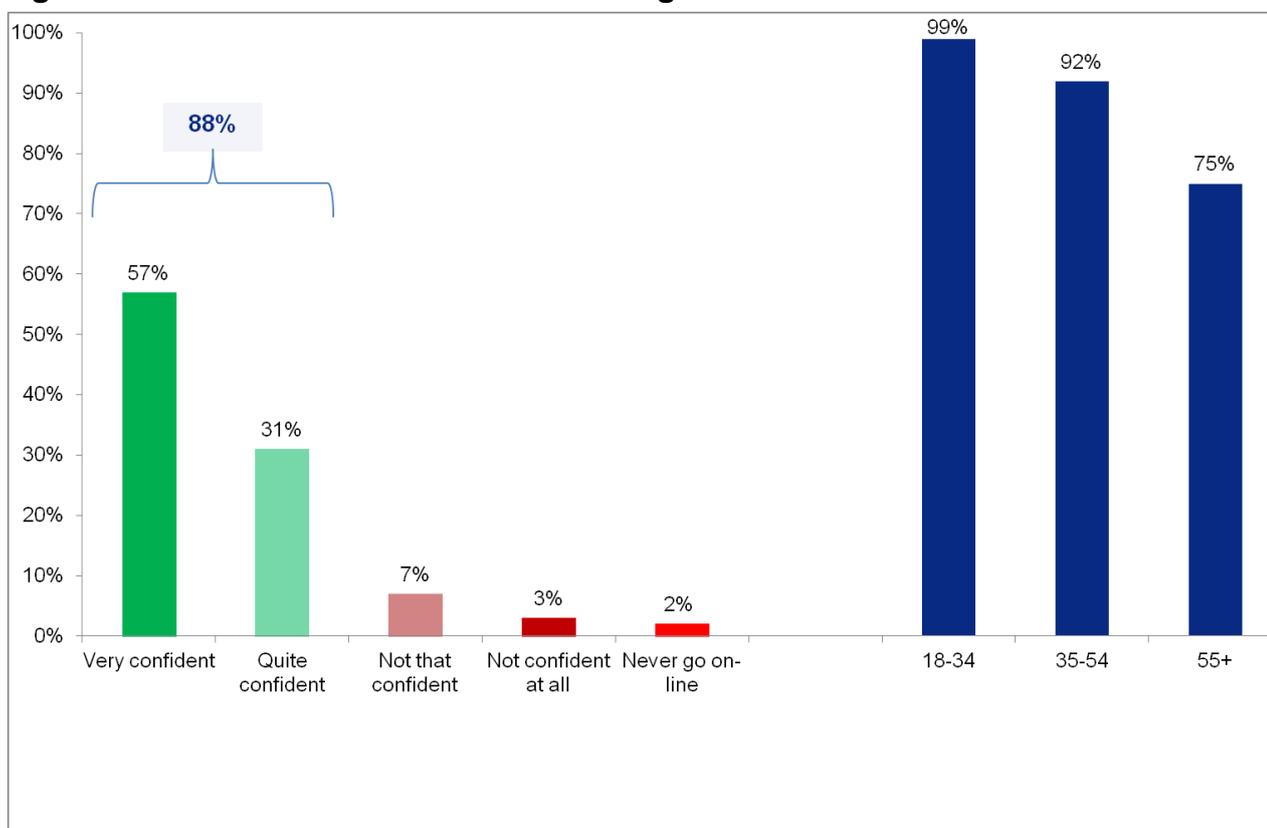
Number of respondents: 1827.

Question: How confident or not are you in accessing services on-line?

Section 5: Environment

Key issues/findings

- The majority of residents believe that Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly and that this is an opportunity for Bracknell Forest to accelerate its plans to become Carbon Neutral by 2050.
- Most residents have made changes to reduce their carbon footprint during the pandemic.
- Above two-fifths of residents who have made changes to reduce their carbon footprint during the pandemic will maintain driving less.

Introduction

5.1.   This section presents findings about travel and the environment, as a result of the pandemic.

Travel and the environment in the future

The majority of residents believe that Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly and that this is an opportunity for Bracknell Forest to accelerate its plans to become Carbon Neutral by 2050

5.2.   75% of residents said they agree that Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly and 73% agreed that this is an opportunity for Bracknell Forest to accelerate its plans to become Carbon Neutral by 2050.

5.3.   67% agreed that they are more likely to walk or cycle and 62% agreed they are more likely to use local parks and open spaces.

5.4.   26% agreed they are less likely to drive, while 53% disagreed. However, it is worth noting that 41% of residents have already been driving less as shown in the following subsection.

5.5.   Just 13% said they are more likely to use public transport, whereas 66% disagreed.

Figure 5.1: The views of residents about travel and the environment in the future
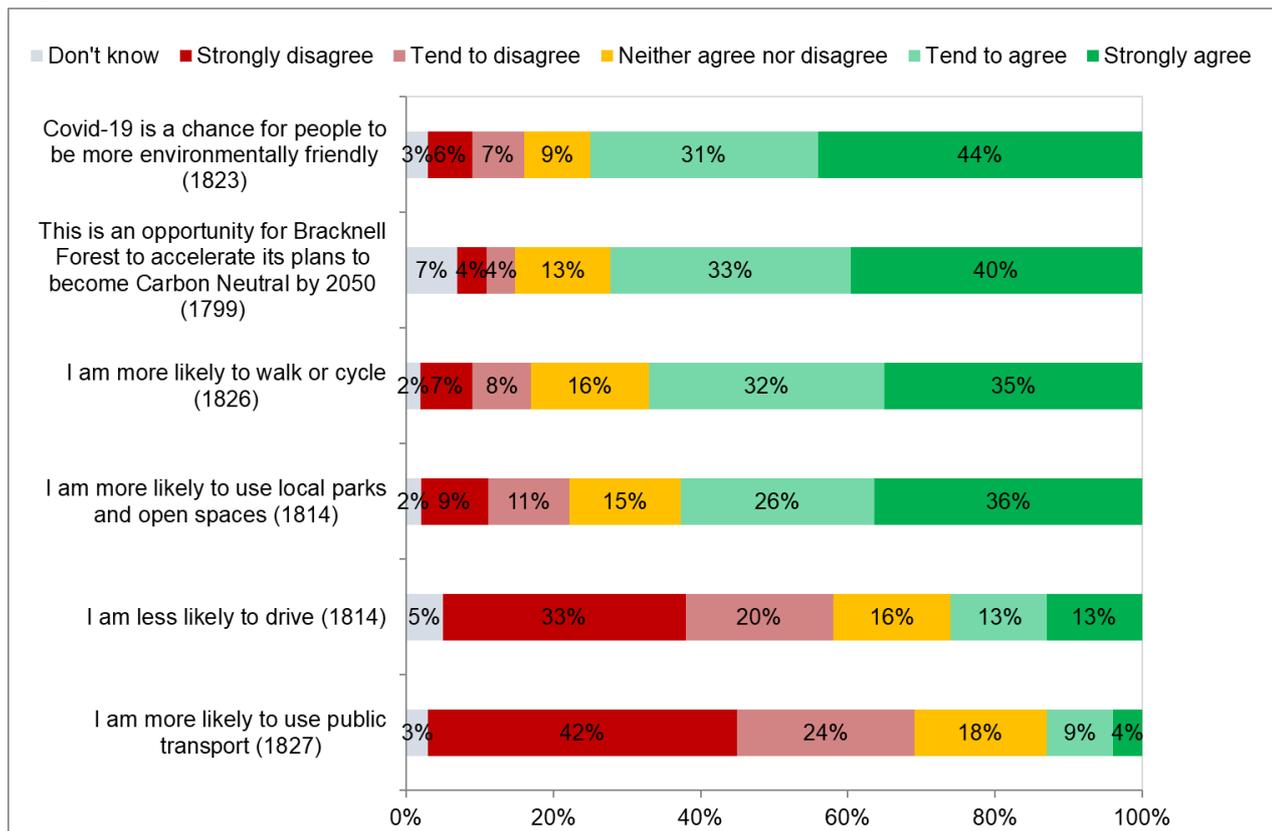
Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each statement. Question: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about travel and the environment in the future, due to your experience of Covid-19?

5.6. The following demographic groups are less likely to agree with the mentioned statements:

- **Men:** 62% are more likely to walk or cycle compared with 72% of women.
- **Residents aged 35 and above:** 70% of residents aged 35-54 and 73% of those aged 55 and above are likely to agree that Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly compared with 87% of residents aged 18-34.
- **White British or Irish residents:** 10% are more likely to use public transport compared with 22% of Non-White British or Irish residents.
- **Disabled residents:** 52% are more likely to walk or cycle compared with 71% of non-disabled residents.

Changes made to reduce carbon footprint

Most residents have made changes to reduce their carbon footprint during the pandemic

5.7. Two-fifths of residents said they drive less (41%) and a quarter said they walk or cycle more (24%). 28% said they have not made any changes to reduce their carbon footprint.

5.8. Younger residents are more likely than older residents to walk or cycle more. For example, 37% of residents aged 18-34 walk or cycle more compared with 13% of residents aged 55 and over.

5.9. 49% of residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week said they have not made any changes to reduce their carbon footprint, compared with 28% of residents overall.

5.10. 12% of disabled residents walk or cycle more, compared with 26% of non-disabled residents.

5.11. 29% of residents in social housing and 25% of those who rent from a private landlord said they drive less.

Figure 5.2: Changes made to reduce carbon footprint
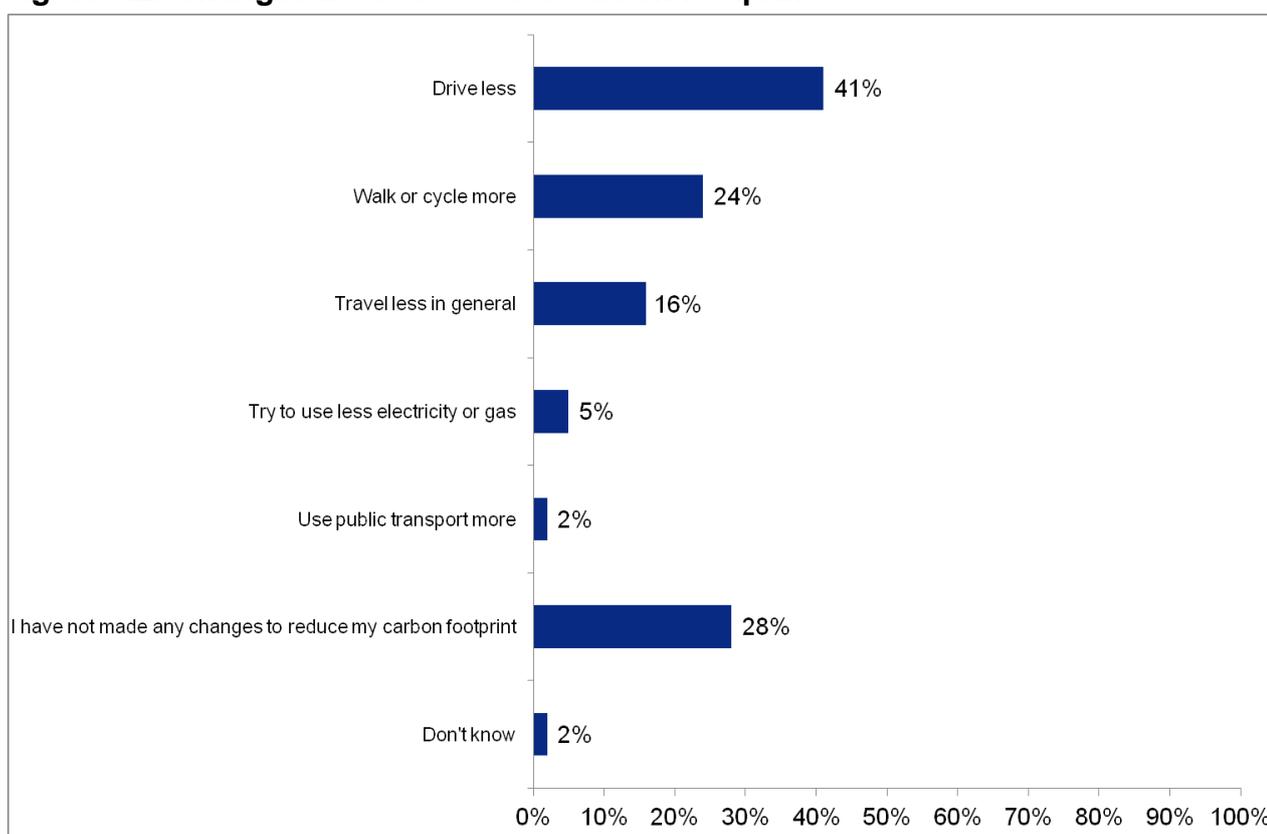
Number of respondents: 1824.

Question: What, if any, changes have you made to reduce your carbon footprint during the pandemic?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

Continuing with changes made to reduce carbon footprint

Above two-fifths of residents who have made changes to reduce their carbon footprint during the pandemic will maintain driving less

5.12.   Above two-fifths of residents who have made changes to reduce their carbon footprint said they will continue to drive less (45%) and two-fifths said they will continue to walk or cycle more (39%). 15% said they will continue to travel less in general.

Figure 5.3: Continuing with changes made to reduce carbon footprint
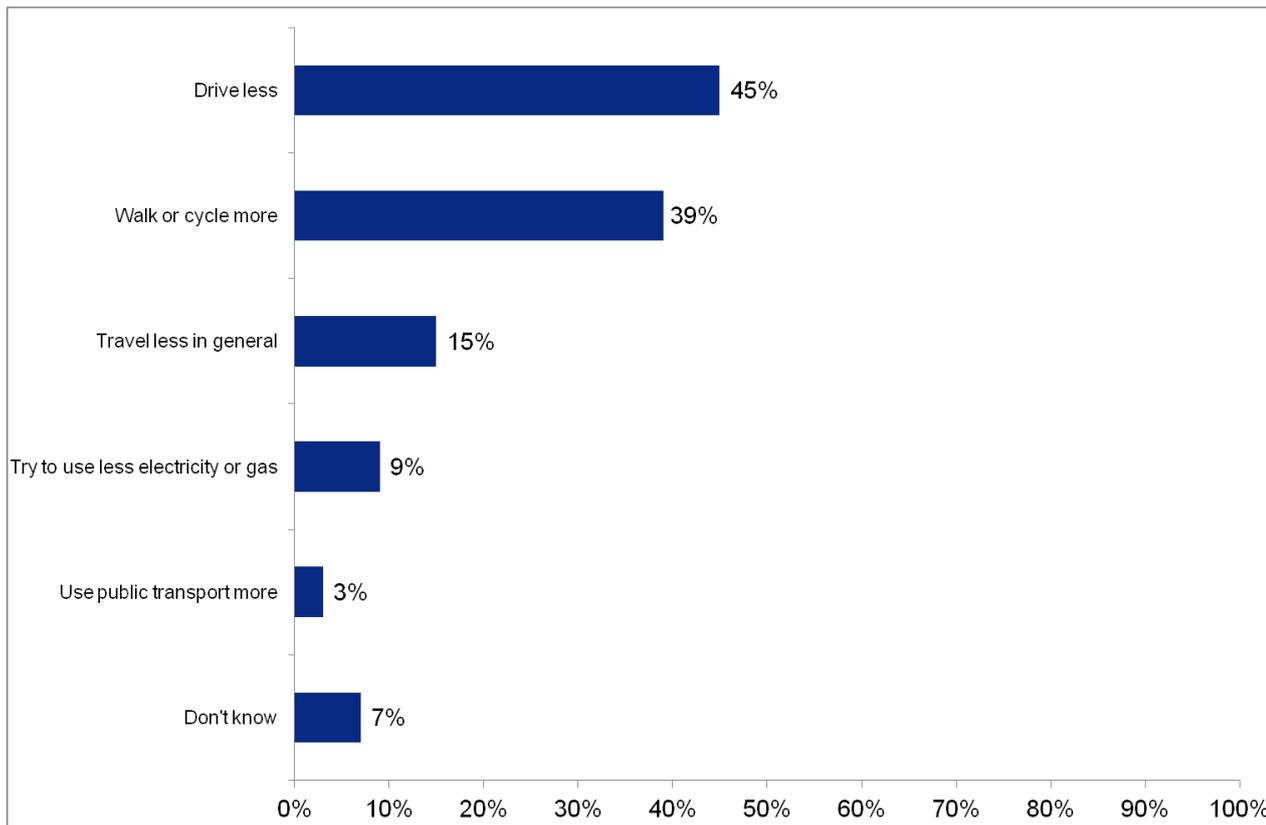
Number of respondents: 1080 (excludes those that have not made any changes to reduce their carbon footprint).

Question: Of the change(s) you mentioned, which ones will you continue with?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

Section 6: Employment and the economy

Key issues/findings

- Two-fifths of residents are still employed on the same terms and conditions, with an additional 12% furloughed at the time of the survey.
- Around half of residents who are in employment or education are now working from home and around two-fifths are going into a place of work.
- The majority of residents have not accessed or received support from the UK Government since the pandemic began, with Non-White British or Irish residents less likely to have accessed or received support.
- The majority of residents are likely to visit local shops and visit parks, open spaces or play areas as lockdown is eased.

Introduction

6.1.   This section presents findings about employment and the economy, including:

- Employment status.
- Current working arrangement.
- Support from the UK Government.
- Likelihood to do activities as lockdown is eased.

Employment status as a result of the pandemic

Two-fifths of residents are still employed on the same terms and conditions, with an additional 12% furloughed at the time of the survey

6.2.　Overall, 42% of residents are still employed on the same terms and conditions.

6.3.　8% said they are furloughed receiving 80% of their salary and a further 4% said they are furloughed receiving their full salary.

6.4.　Additionally, 8% said they're self-employed and their business has been affected, 2% said they have lost their job, 2% said their hours or pay have been reduced and 1% said they are concerned that their job is at risk.

6.5.　16% said they were retired.

Figure 6.1: Employment status as a result of the pandemic
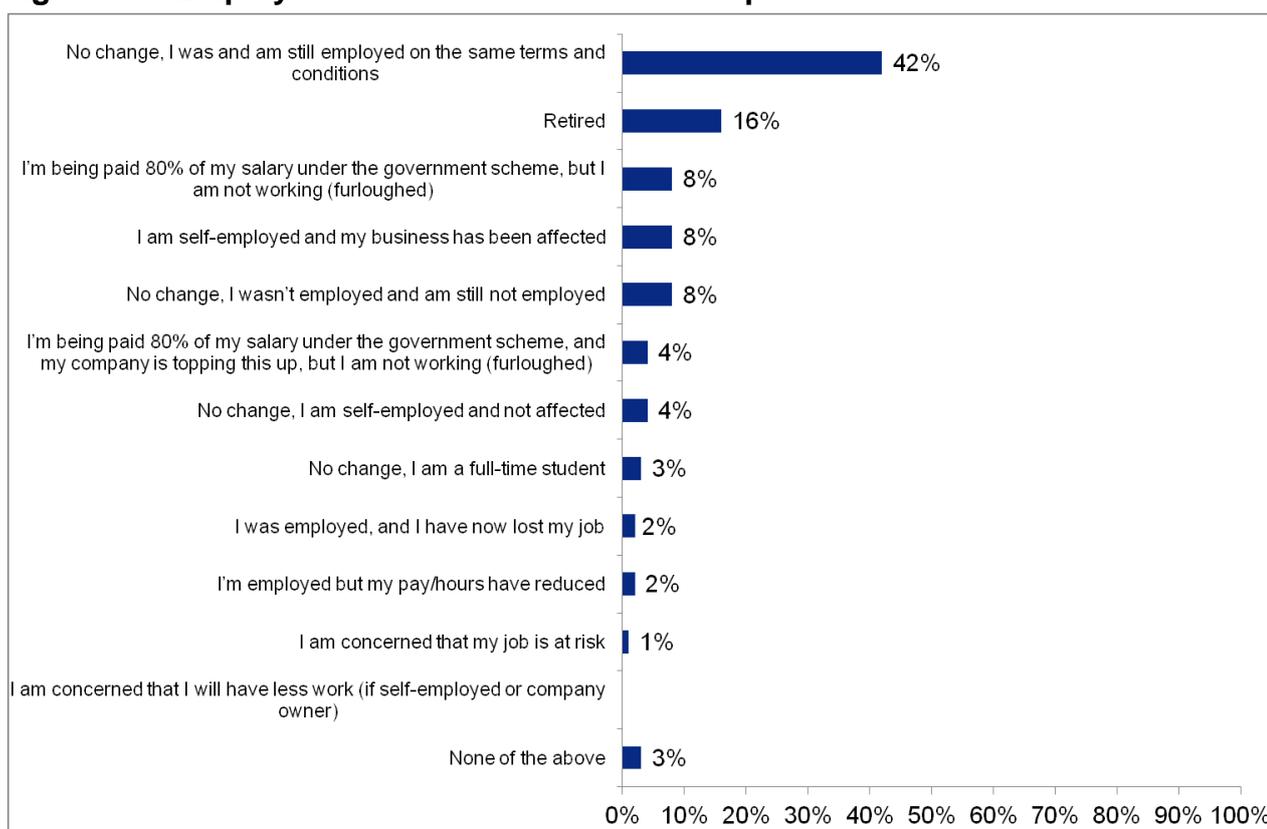
Number of respondents: 1826.

Question: What is your employment status as a result of the pandemic?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

6.6.　The findings are consistent across demographic groups except for the following differences:

- **Residents that look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week are more likely to remain unemployed:** For example, 40% of residents that look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week said they were not and are still not employed compared to 8% of residents overall.

Current working arrangement

Around half of residents who are in employment or education are now working from home and around two-fifths are going into a place of work

6.7.   46% of residents that are in employment or education said they are now working from home and 37% said they are going into a place of work, for example, either because they cannot or do not want to work from home.

6.8.   Men (41%) are slightly more likely than women (34%) to say they are going into a place of work.

6.9.   Non-White British/Irish residents (42%) are slightly more likely to say they are going into a place of work than White British/Irish residents (36%).

6.10. Non-disabled residents (38%) are also slightly more likely to say they are going into a place of work than disabled residents (31%).

6.11. Residents in social housing are less likely to say they are now working from home (18%), and more likely to be going into a place of work (51%).

6.12. Parents or guardians of a dependent child are more likely to say they are now working from home, 51% said so, compared with 41% of other residents.

Figure 6.2: Current working arrangement
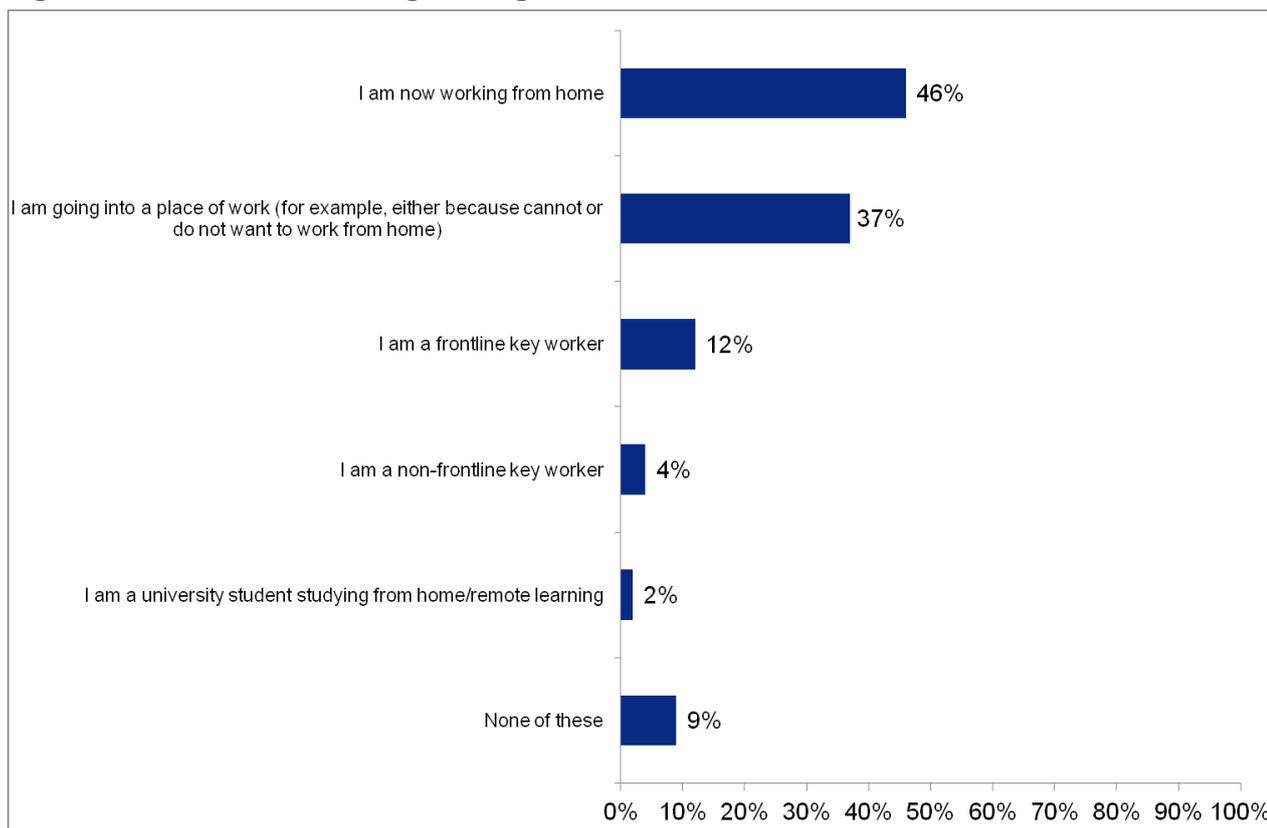
Number of respondents: 1061 (only asked to those who are in employment or education).

Question: What is your current working arrangement?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

Support from the UK Government since the pandemic began

The majority of residents have not accessed or received support from the UK Government since the pandemic began, with Non-White British or Irish residents less likely to have accessed or received support

6.13. Overall, 70% of residents have not accessed or received any support from the UK Government. 17% said they have been or are furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and 3% have signed up to Universal Credit.

6.14. Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say they have been or are furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, 27% said so.

6.15. Non-White British or Irish residents were less likely to have accessed or received support, 78% said they have not accessed or received support.

6.16. Residents who support family members, friends, neighbours or others for 50 hours or more a week were less likely to have accessed or received support, 21% said they have accessed or received support.

Figure 6.3: Access to support from the UK Government since the pandemic began
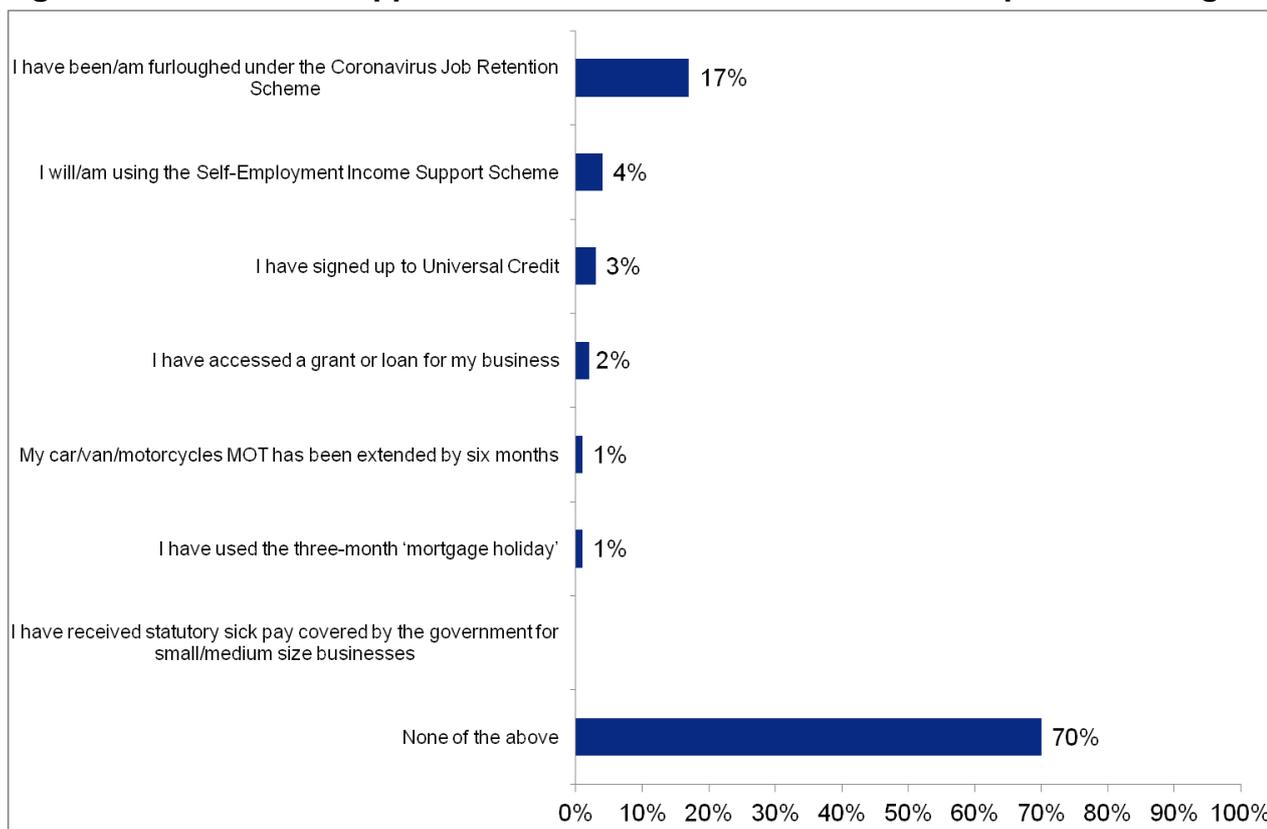
Number of respondents: 1802.

Question: Since the pandemic began, what, if any, support from the UK Government have you accessed or received (this may include support through your local council or your employer)?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

Likelihood to do activities as lockdown is eased

The majority of residents are likely to visit local shops and visit parks, open spaces or play areas as lockdown is eased

6.17. Overall, 86% of residents said they are likely to visit local shops as lockdown is eased. 82% of residents said they are likely to visit parks, open spaces or play areas and 63% said they are likely to visit the Lexicon, Bracknell. 50% said they are likely to go to their workplace.

6.18. 48% said they are likely to visit local pubs, restaurants, cinemas or theatres.

6.19. Only 17% said they are likely to use public transport (75% not likely).

Figure 6.4: Doing activities as lockdown is eased
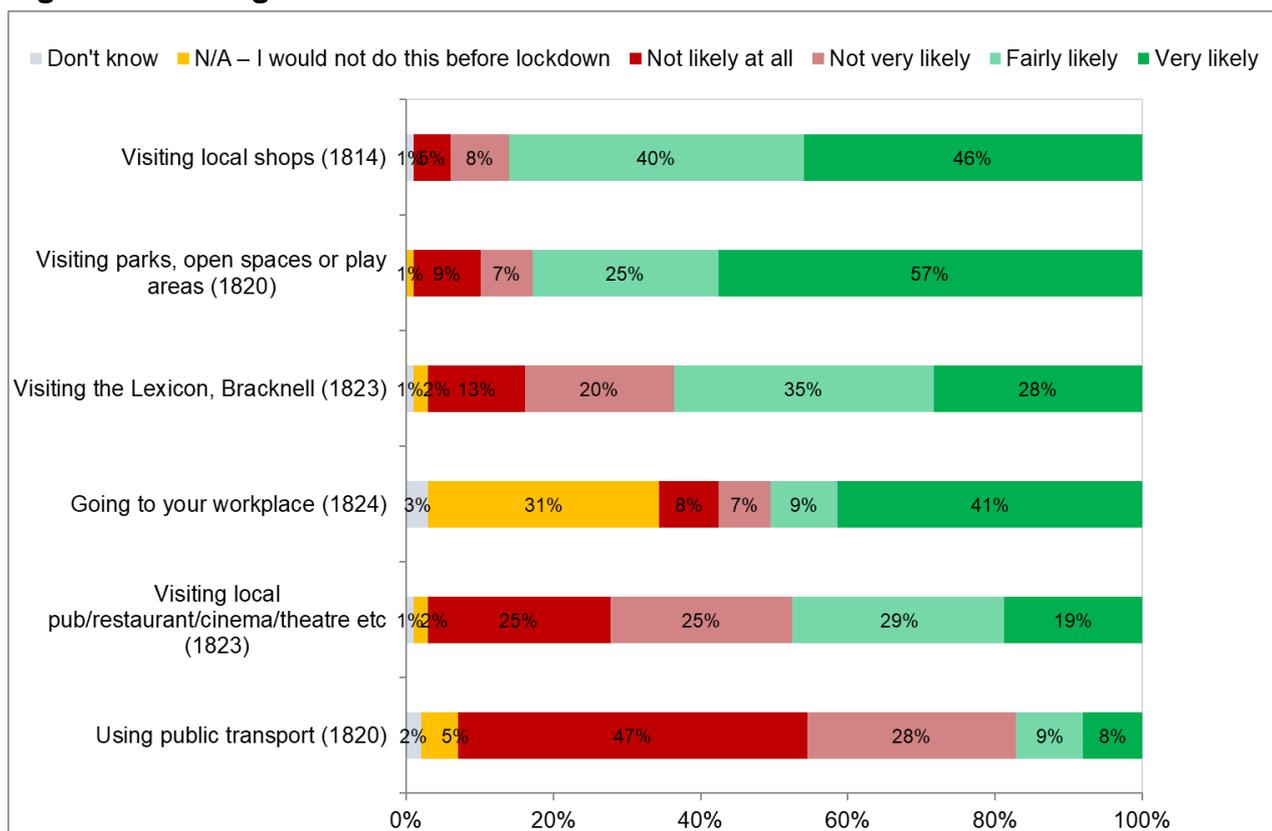
Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each statement.

Question: As lockdown is eased, how likely, if at all, are you to do each of these activities that are now permitted?

6.19. The following are demographic differences to note:

- Men are more likely to use public transport. 22% are likely to do so.
- Residents aged 55 and above are less likely to go to a workplace. 33% are likely to go to their workplace.
- Non-White British or Irish residents are more likely to visit the Lexicon, Bracknell. 74% are likely to do so.
- Full-time students are more likely to visit local pubs, restaurants, cinemas or theatres. 83% are likely to do so.
- Residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week are less likely to go to a workplace. 0% mentioned this.

- Disabled residents are less likely to visit the Lexicon, Bracknell and local pubs, restaurants, cinemas or theatres. 43% and 26% are likely to visit the Lexicon and local pubs/restaurants/cinemas/theatres, respectively.
- Parents or guardians of a dependent child are less likely to use public transport. 10% said they are likely to do so.

Section 7: Life, health and wellbeing

Key issues/findings

- The majority of residents believe the pandemic had a positive impact on their appreciation of the local wildlife and environment, their feeling that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together and on their caring responsibilities, although there are notable negative impacts on work, finances, education and also physical and mental wellbeing.

- Around six-in-ten residents spent more time in nature, visiting open spaces since lockdown began on 23rd of March and about half of residents tried a new form of exercise or exercised more, while smoking and drinking levels remained about the same.

- Two-thirds of residents feel that their health and care needs have been supported overall during the pandemic, with those aged 18-34 more likely to say so (and by extension older residents less likely to say so).

- The majority of residents are confident accessing health and care services that are not Covid-19 related, although disabled residents are less confident.

- Two-fifths of residents said they had avoided going to the GP / hospital because they did not want to overburden them and a third said they have had a pre-existing (non-GP/hospital) medical appointment postponed because of Covid-19, for example a dentist or optician appointment (older and disabled residents are more likely to have had an appointment postponed).

- The majority of residents do not need any help or support due to their experience of Covid-19.

- The majority of residents said they are aware of the new national Covid-19 Test and Trace system and will comply with it.

Introduction

7.1. This section presents findings about residents' life, health and wellbeing, and the pandemic, including:

- Impact of the pandemic on aspects of life, health and wellbeing.
- Frequency of doing activities since the lockdown began.
- Health and care support during the pandemic.
- Confidence in accessing health and care services that are not Covid-19 related.
- Health and medical experiences.
- Needed support.
- Awareness of and compliance with the new national Covid-19 Test and Trace system.

Impact of the pandemic on aspects of life, health and wellbeing

The majority of residents believe the pandemic had a positive impact on their appreciation of the local wildlife and environment, their feeling that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together and on their caring responsibilities, although there are notable negative impacts on work, finances, education and also physical and mental wellbeing

7.2. Overall, 83% of residents said that the pandemic had a positive impact on their appreciation of the local wildlife and environment. 70% mentioned the pandemic had a positive impact on their feeling that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together and 68% said it had a positive impact on their caring responsibilities.

7.3. 52% of residents said that the pandemic had a positive impact on their feeling of belonging to the local community and 50% said it had a positive impact on their relationship with people in their household.

7.4. 48% said it had a positive impact on their physical health (although 22% cited a negative impact), 36% of residents said the pandemic had a positive impact on their mental health (25% negative) and 25% said it had a positive impact on their access to paid or unpaid care (17% negative).

7.5. 24% said the pandemic had a positive impact on their financial situation and 29% said it had a negative impact.

7.6. 23% believed the pandemic had a positive impact on their work, whereas 42% said it had a negative impact.

7.7. 21% said the pandemic had a positive impact on their employment status and 24% said it had a negative impact.

7.8. Only 13% believed the pandemic had a positive impact on their or their children's education (e.g. school/college/university), while 58% said it had a negative impact.

Figure 7.1: Impact of the pandemic on aspects of life, health and wellbeing
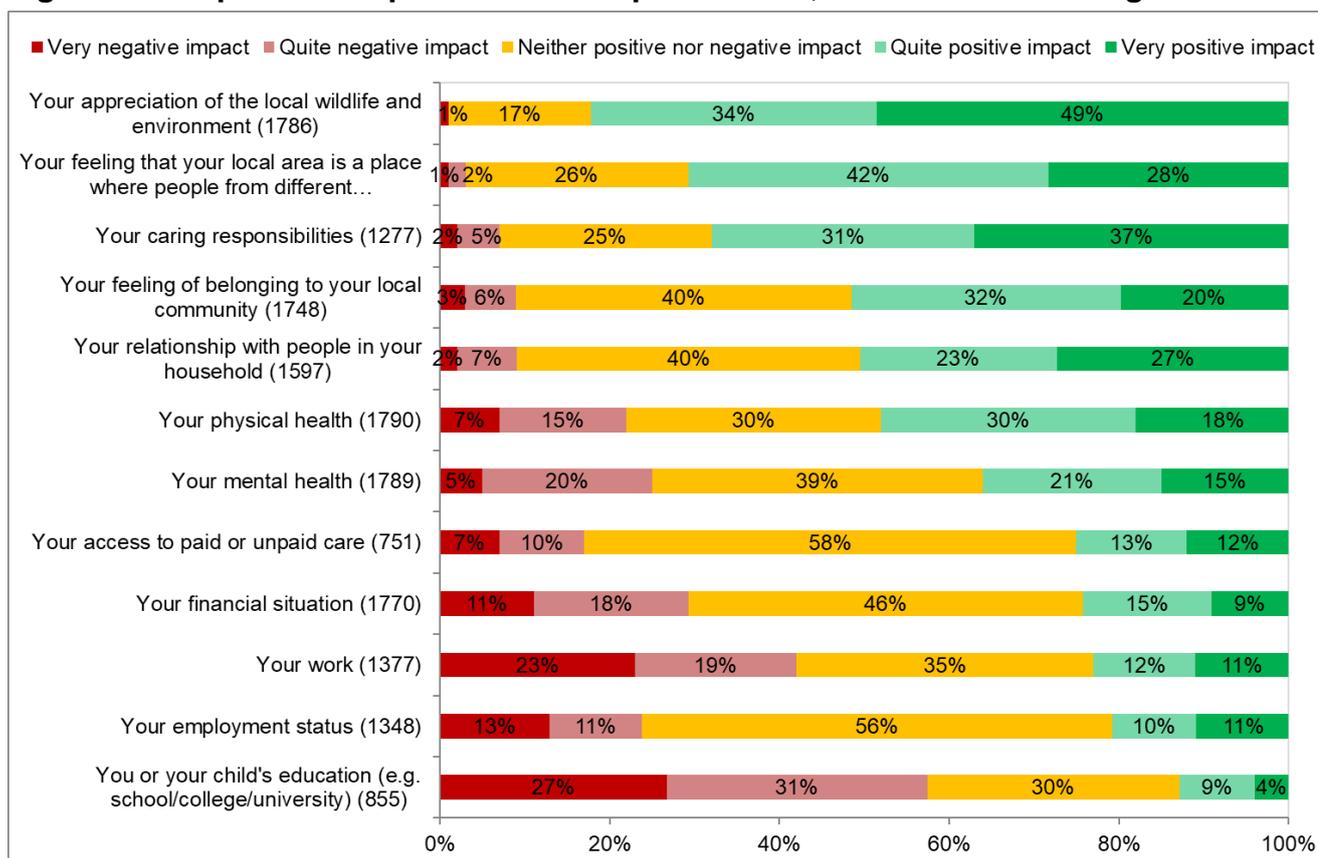
Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each statement (excludes don't know responses).

Question: How much, if at all, has the pandemic had a positive or negative impact on each of the following aspects of your life, health and wellbeing?

7.9.   The findings are, on the whole, consistent across demographic groups except for the following key differences:

- **Younger residents are less likely to say that the pandemic had a positive impact on their mental health:** For example, 24% of residents aged 18 to 34 said the pandemic had a positive impact on their mental health compared to 36% of residents overall.

- **Non-White British or Irish residents are more likely to say that the pandemic had a positive impact on their relationship with people in their household:** For example, 61% of Non-White British or Irish residents said the pandemic had a positive impact on their relationship with people in the household compared to 50% of residents overall.

- **Disabled residents are less likely to say that the pandemic had a positive impact on their physical health:** For example, 23% said so compared with 48% of residents overall.

- **Residents in social housing are less likely than other residents to say that the pandemic had a positive impact on their physical health:** For example, 27% of residents in social housing said so compared with 48% of residents overall.

Frequency of doing activities since lockdown began

Around six-in-ten residents spent more time in nature, visiting open spaces since lockdown began on 23rd of March and about half of residents tried a new form of exercise or exercised more, while smoking and drinking levels remained about the same

7.10.   59% of residents spent more time in nature, visiting open spaces since lockdown began on 23rd of March and 48% tried a new form of exercise or exercised more.

7.11.   34% are eating more or more unhealthily, compared to 21% that are doing this less.

7.12.   Similar proportions are drinking more (24%) as those that are drinking less (22%).

7.13.   And similar proportions are smoking more (6%) as those that are smoking less (8%).

Figure 7.2: Frequency of doing activities since lockdown began
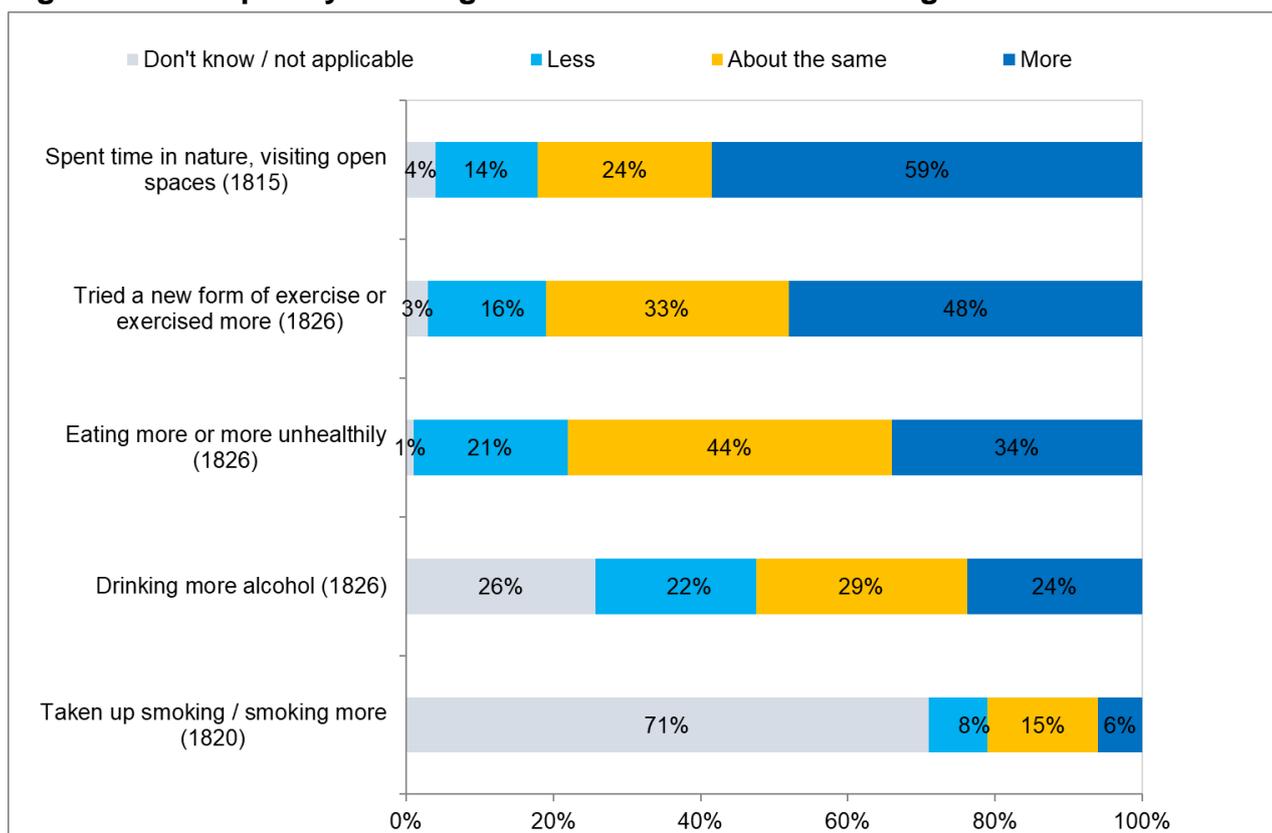
Numbers in brackets are the number of respondents to each statement.

Question: Have you done each of the following, more, about the same or less since lockdown began on 23rd March?

7.14.   The following represent some demographic differences of note:

   • Women were more likely to have eaten more or more unhealthily since lockdown began, 39% said so, compared with 29% of men.

   • Residents aged 18-34 were more likely than other residents to say that they tried a new form of exercise or exercised more since lockdown began, 69% did so, compared with 45% of residents aged 35-54 and 35% of residents aged 55 and above.

   • Residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week were more likely to eat less or less unhealthily since lockdown began (61%).

   • Disabled residents were less likely to say they had spent more time in nature, visiting open spaces (36%).

Health and care support during the pandemic

Two-thirds of residents feel that their health and care needs have been supported overall during the pandemic, with those aged 18-34 more likely to say so

7.14.   Overall, 64% of residents said their health and care needs have been supported during the pandemic, with 20% disagreeing (the rest said 'don't know/not applicable).

7.15.   Residents aged 18-34 were more likely to say they felt their health and care needs have been supported during the pandemic, 77% said so (and by extension older people are less likely to say their care needs have been supported).

7.16.   Residents that look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week were more likely to feel that their health and care needs had been supported, 91% said so.

Figure 7.3: Whether health and care needs have been supported during the pandemic
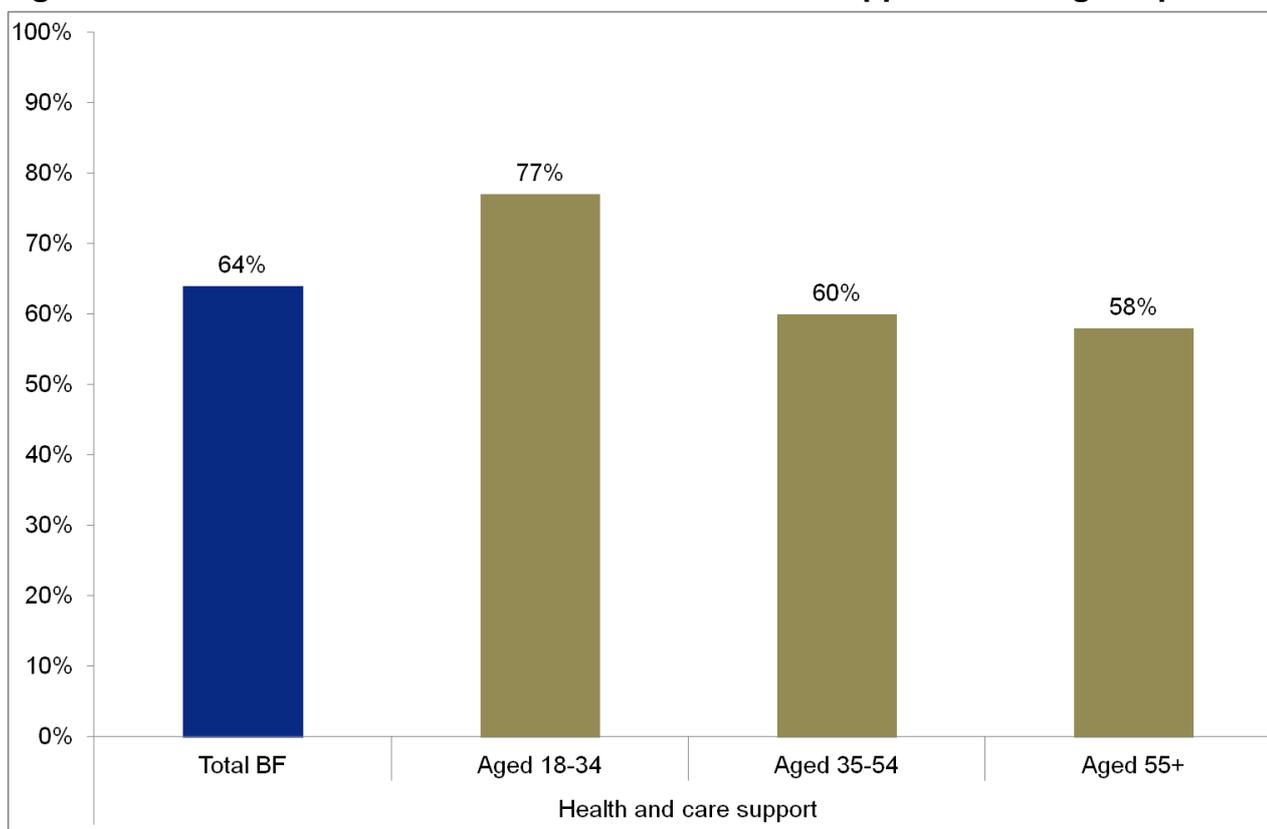
Number of respondents: 1806.

Question: Do you feel your health and care needs have been supported overall during the pandemic?

Confidence accessing health and care services that are not Covid-19 related

The majority of residents are confident accessing health and care services that are not Covid-19 related, although disabled residents are less confident

7.17. Overall, 82% of residents were confident about accessing health and care services that are not Covid-19 related. 18% of residents were not confident.

7.18. Residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 55 or more hours a week were less confident, 61% were confident (39% not confident).

7.19. Disabled residents were less confident, 70% were confident (30% not confident).

Figure 7.4: Whether residents feel confident about accessing health and care services
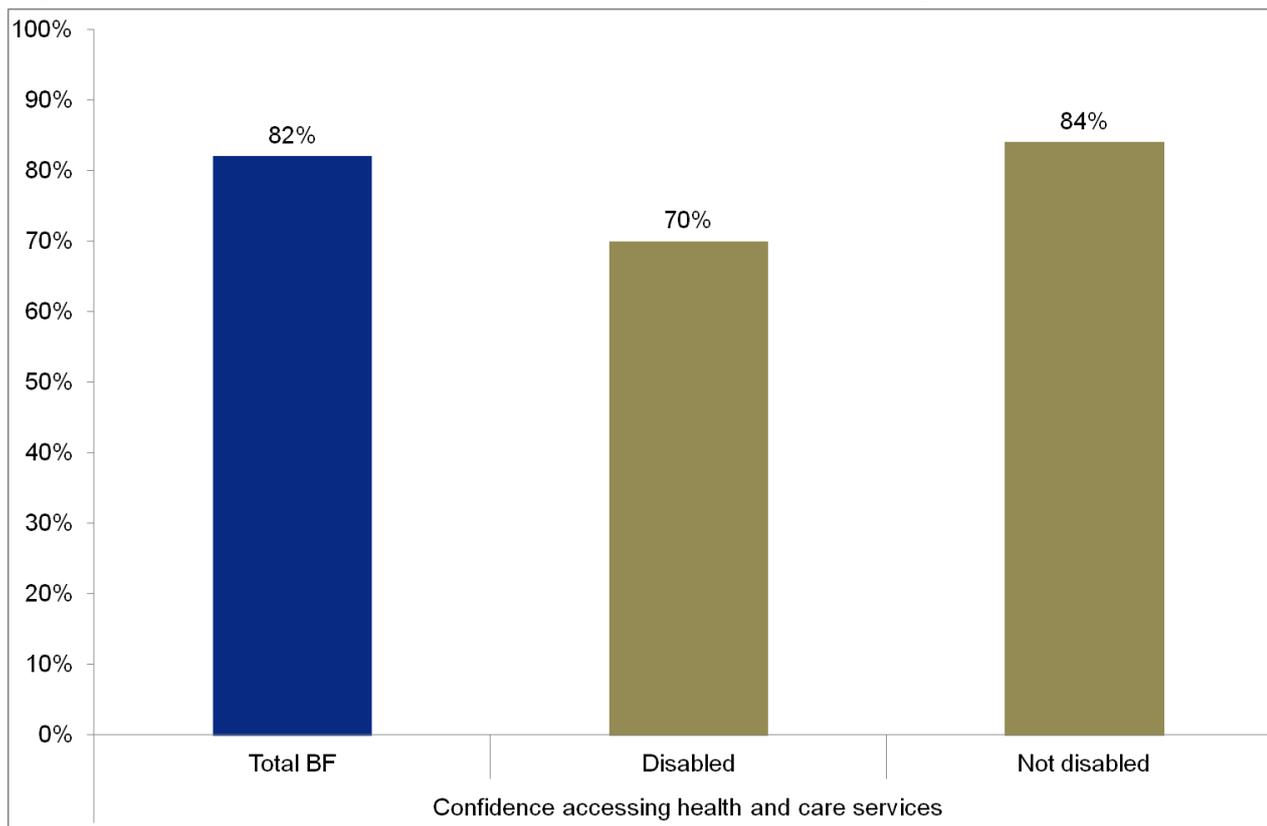
Number of respondents: 1819.

Question: Do you feel confident about accessing health and care services that are NOT Covid-19 related?

Health and medical experiences

Two-fifths of residents said they had avoided going to the GP / hospital because they did not want to overburden them and a third said they have had a pre-existing (non-GP/hospital) medical appointment postponed because of Covid-19, for example a dentist or optician appointment (older and disabled residents are more likely to have had an appointment postponed)

7.20. Overall, 40% of residents said they had avoided going to the GP / hospital because they did not want to overburden them.

7.21. 35% said they had a pre-existing (non-GP/hospital) medical appointment postponed because of Covid-19 and 30% had a pre-existing GP / hospital appointment postponed because of Covid-19.

7.22. 25% said they had avoided going to the GP / hospital because they were concerned about catching Covid-19.

7.23. 22% said they had sought medical advice through NHS 111, online or via phone.

Figure 7.5: Health and medical experiences
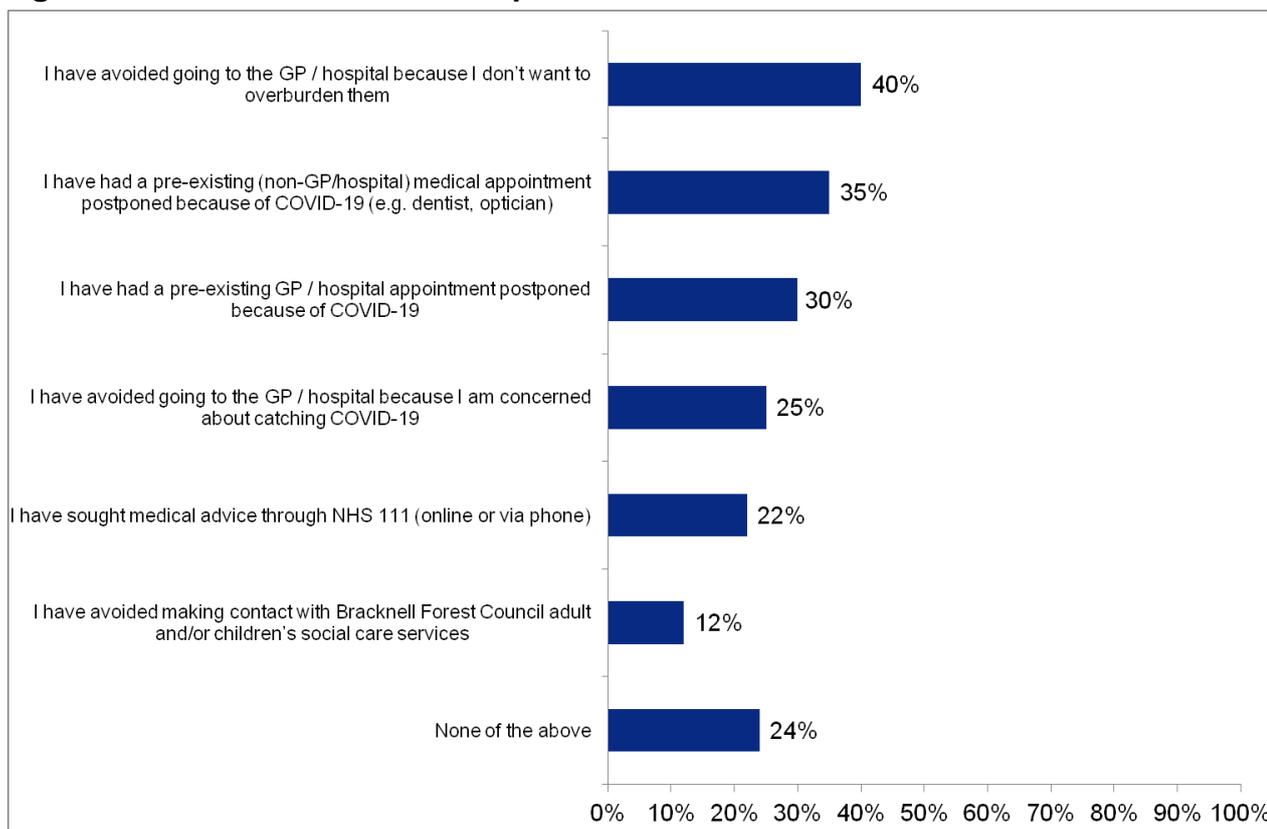
Number of respondents: 1780.

Question: Which of the following health or medical experiences, if any, apply to you?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

7.24. The following demographic differences are of note:

- Residents aged 55 and over (40%) were more likely to have had a pre-existing GP / hospital appointment postponed than younger residents.
- Non-White British or Irish residents (20%) were less likely to have had a pre-existing GP / hospital appointment postponed because of Covid-19.

- Residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 50 or more hours a week (62%) were more likely to have had a pre-existing GP / hospital appointment postponed.
- Disabled residents (55%) were more likely to have had a pre-existing GP / hospital appointment postponed.
- Residents in social housing (44%) were more likely to have had a pre-existing GP / hospital appointment postponed.
- Parents or guardians of a dependent child (28%) were more likely to have sought medical advice through NHS 111 online or via phone.

Need support, due to Covid-19

The majority of residents do not need any help or support due to their experience of Covid-19

7.25. Most residents (87%) said they did not need any help or support. This is followed by health or medical care support (5%).

7.26. Residents that look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 50 or more hours a week were more likely to need help (30% said they need help or support, including 9% with healthcare/medical support and 9% personal care and 8% family/parental support).

7.27. Disabled residents were more likely to mention they need support (32% said they need help or support, including 15% with healthcare/medical support).

7.28. Residents in social housing were more likely to need support (24% said they need help or support, including 10% with healthcare/medical support).

Figure 7.6: Need support, due to Covid-19
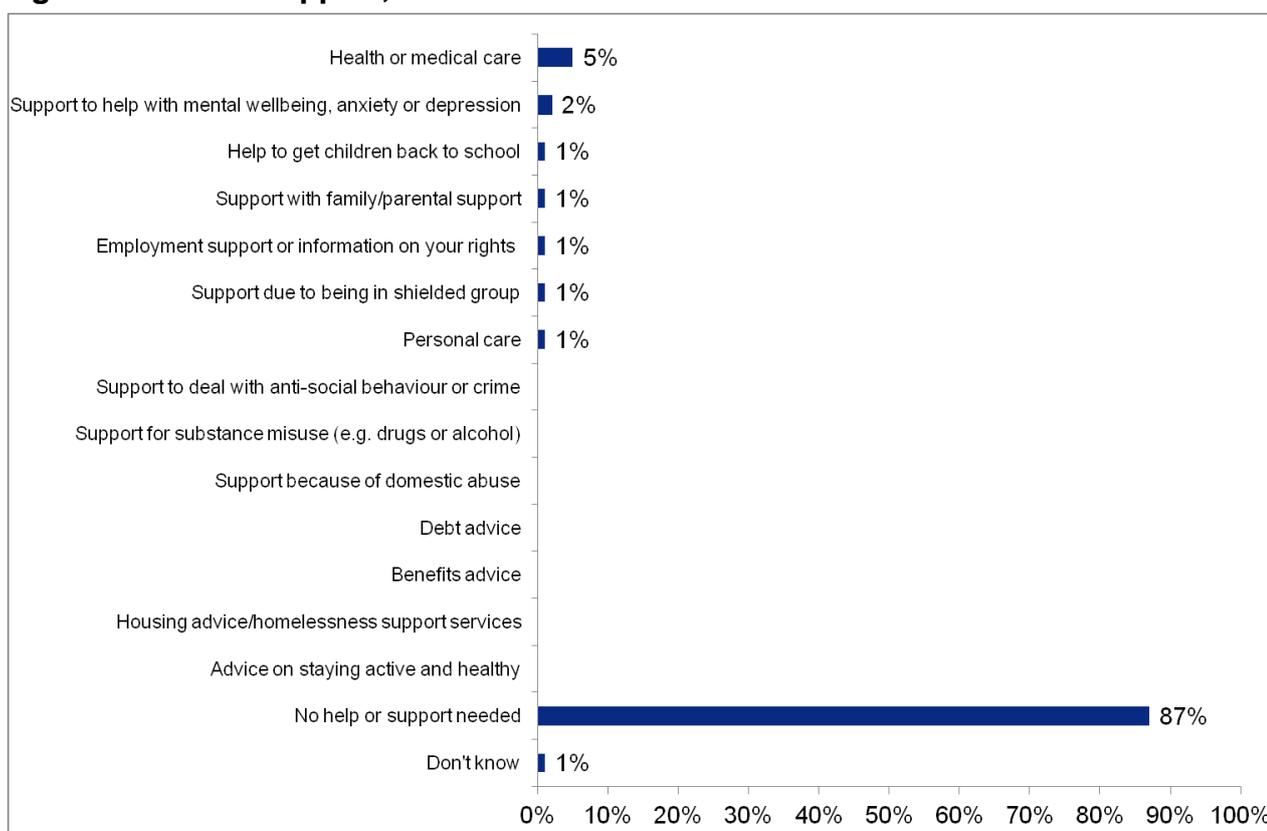
Number of respondents: 1808.

Question: What help or support do you need, if any, due to your experience of Covid-19?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

The new national Covid-19 Test and Trace system

The majority of residents said they are aware of the new national Covid-19 Test and Trace system and will comply with it

7.29. 91% of residents are aware of and will comply with the new national Covid-19 Test and Trace system and 4% are aware of it but will not comply.

7.30. This proportion is down to 84% among residents in social housing, where 7% are aware but will not comply, 4% are not aware and 5% don't know.

Figure 7.7: Awareness of and compliance with the Covid-19 Test and Trace system
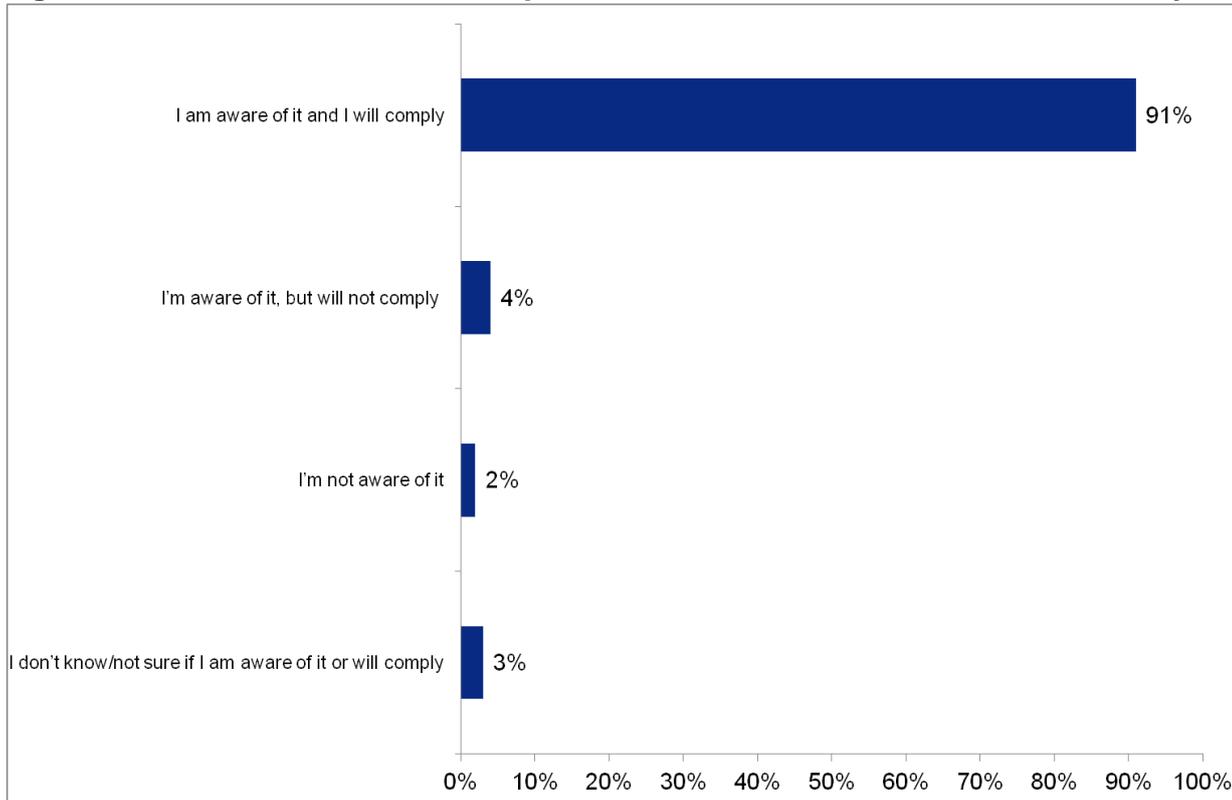
Number of respondents: 1824.

Question: Are you aware of, and would you comply with, the new national Covid-19 Test and Trace system, where if you have close contact with someone that tests positive you will be asked to isolate for 7-14 days?

Section 8: Recovery

Introduction

8.1.   This section presents findings about the future recovery of the local area.

Concerns moving out of lockdown

Two thirds of residents had concerns moving out of lockdown, with fear of coming out of lockdown too quickly and risk of local lockdown being the most mentioned concerns

8.2.   67% of residents mentioned concerns moving out of lockdown, including 20% that feared coming out of lockdown too quickly (and around 20% of respondents in 'other comments' also raised concerns about people not following social distancing/hygiene measures and the risk of a 2nd spike).

8.3.   11% mentioned risk of local lockdown and 8% were concerned about support for the local economy / businesses.

8.4.   6% mentioned support for older and vulnerable people.

Figure 8.1: The concerns of residents as we move out of lockdown
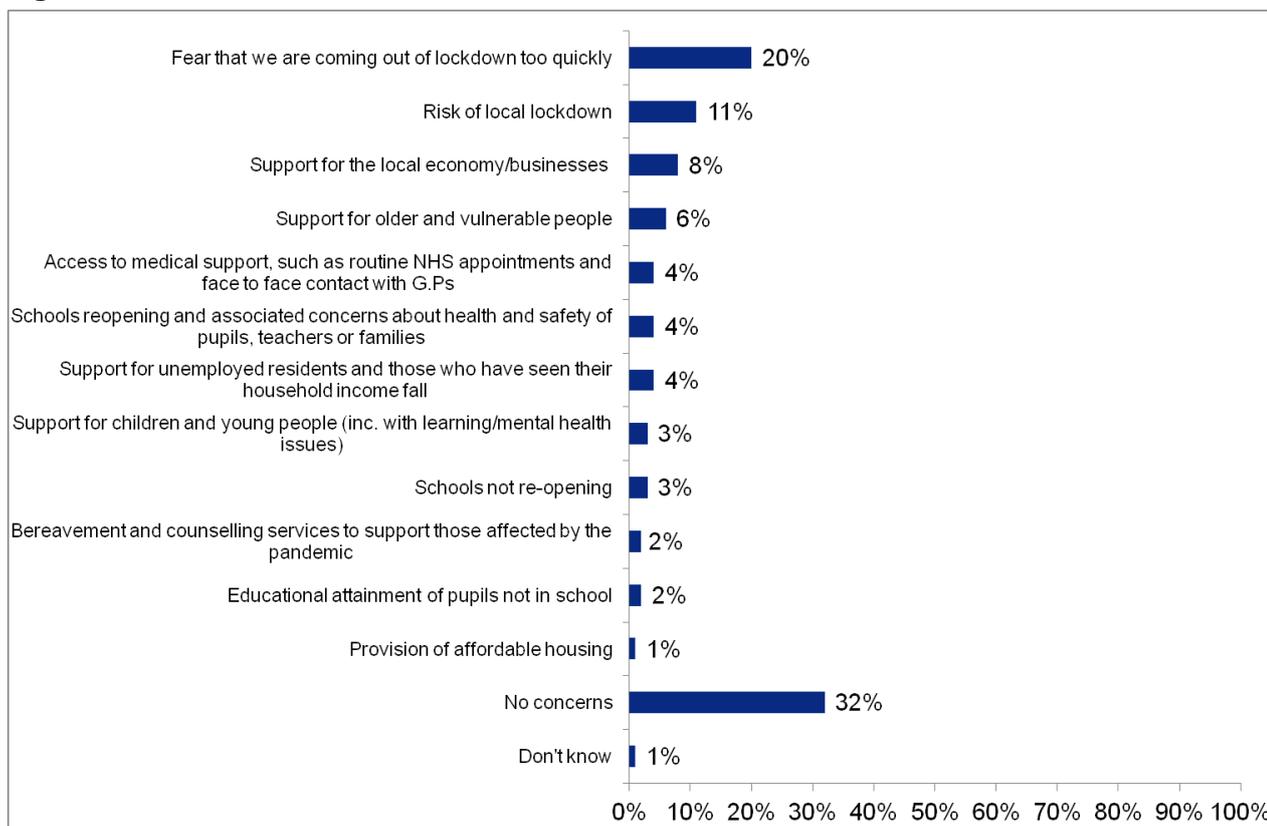
Number of respondents: 1684. Question: What are your concerns, if any, as we move out of lockdown?
Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

8.5. The following demographic differences are noted:

- **Residents aged 18-34:** 52% mentioned concerns compared with 67% overall.
- **Residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week:** 68% fear coming out of lockdown too quickly compared with 20% overall.
- **Disabled residents:** 13% mentioned access to medical support compared with 2% of non-disabled residents.

Council's top priorities to help the borough's recovery from the pandemic

Helping the local economy and businesses, supporting the most vulnerable / most affected people to recover and health protection and promotion were the top mentioned priorities by residents for the Council to help the borough's recovery from the pandemic

8.6. One-fifth of residents said helping the local economy and businesses to recover should be the Council's top priority over the next few months to help the borough's recovery (21%), a similar proportion mentioned supporting the most vulnerable to recover (21%) and the same proportion mentioned health protection and promotion (21%).

8.7. Additionally, about 10-15% mentioned in 'other' comments that the priority should be getting schools re-opened and children back to school.

8.8. Non-White British or Irish residents are more likely than White British or Irish residents to mention communicating government guidelines. For example, 26% of Non-White British or Irish residents mentioned this compared with 14% of White British or Irish residents.

8.9. 74% of residents who look after family members, friends, neighbours or others for 35-49 hours a week said helping the local economy and businesses to recover should be the Council's top priority, compared with 21% of residents overall.

Figure 8.2: What should be the Council's top priorities to help the borough's recovery
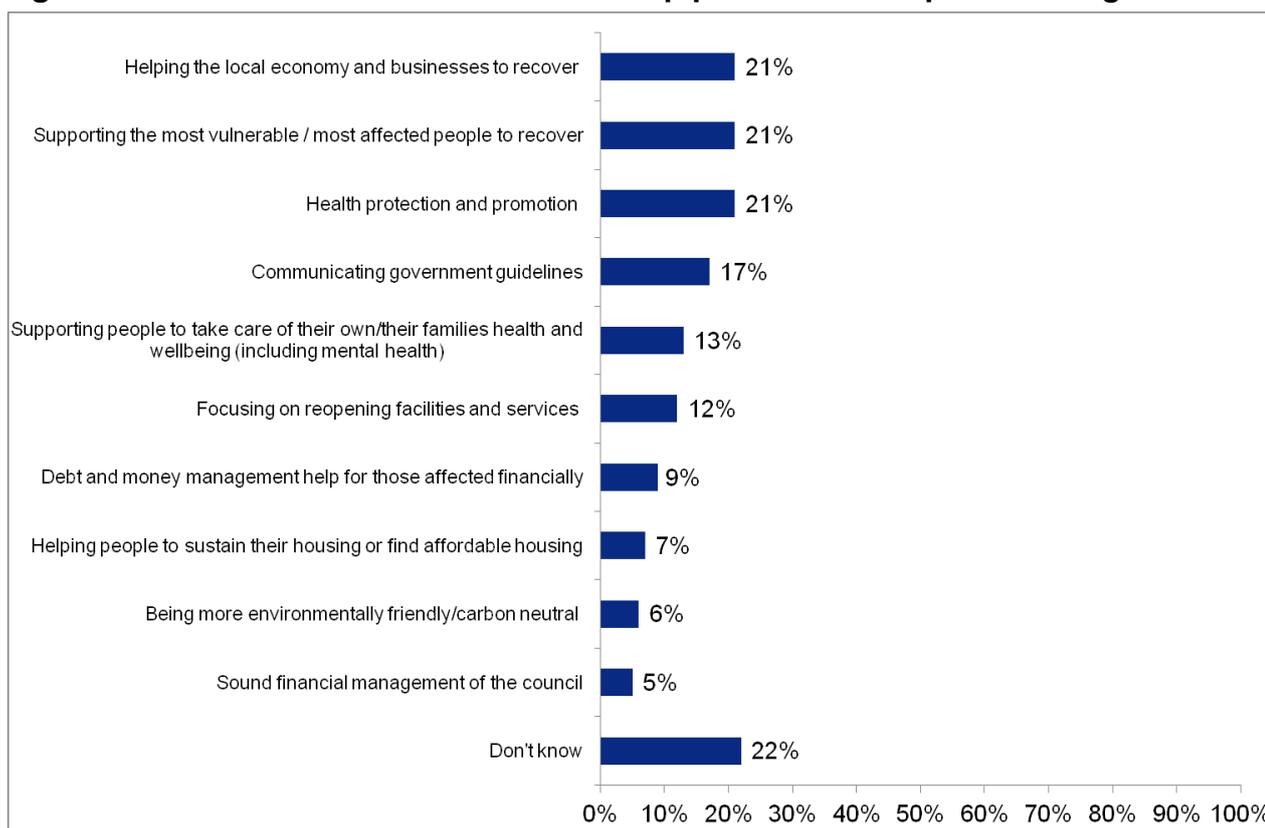
Number of respondents: 1673.

Question: Over the next few months, what do you think the Council's top priorities should be to help the borough's recovery from the pandemic?

Note: Respondents could select more than one answer.

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Appendix: Questionnaire

Bracknell Forest Council: COVID-19 community impact survey

Hello, my name is . . . and I am calling on behalf of Bracknell Forest Council. We are conducting a survey of local residents about your experience of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, its impact on you and your family, and how the council and its partners can help local residents and the local area recover.

Would you be willing to spend about 15 minutes answering some questions (note: if not currently able, please find out an alternative suitable time)?

(If respondent shows any sign of concern or requires clarification, please offer the following contact number: Public Perspectives: 0800 533 5386 or check the council's website: www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/consultations/coronavirus-phone-survey

Section 1: Initial demographic questions

Note to interviewer: Where a question has a "don't know/not applicable' response option - <u>do not read out</u> to the respondent. Only select it if the respondent is unable to choose a relevant answer.

Note to interviewer: Only select 'other' responses if they do not fit at all into pre-existing response options. Briefly summarise any 'other' responses i.e. do not write long messages.

Note to interviewer - read out: Before we go any further, I'd like to ask you some questions about you. This will help us understand if there are differences in opinion between different groups of people. We just want to stress that what you say is anonymous and confidential, this means that your responses will not be linked to your name or personal details.

Q1. Are you? Note to interviewer: Do not ask question, just note down gender
- ❑ Male
- ❑ Female
- ❑ Other

Q2. What was your age on your last birthday? Note to interviewer: ask unprompted and select one answer only
- ❑ 18-24
- ❑ 25-34
- ❑ 35-44
- ❑ 45-54
- ❑ 55-70
- ❑ Over 70

Q3. How would you describe your ethnic background? Note to interviewer: ask unprompted and select one answer only
- ❑ White British or Irish
- ❑ Other white background
- ❑ Asian / Asian British
- ❑ Black / African / Caribbean / Black British
- ❑ Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups
- ❑ Other ethnic group
- ❑ Prefer not to say

If 'Other', please specify:

_____

_____

Q4. What is your postcode? (check against database to ensure correct Ward for quotas/make sure in area)

_____

Note to interviewer: If after asking Q1-Q4 your quotas are exceeded, please politely end the call saying - "Thank you for providing that information. In order to make sure we are interviewing people that reflect the make-up of the local area, we need to interview a certain number of people from different age and gender groups. We've already interviewed enough people like you so on this occasion we do not need to go any further. Thank you for your interest". END INTERVIEW.

Note to interviewer: If quotas are exceeded you can ask if there is anyone else in the household that may be willing to take part that fit within quotas that you have not yet met.

Section 2: The council
We'd now like to ask you a couple of questions about the council during the pandemic.

Q5. Have you contacted the council since the pandemic began? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Don't know

Note to interviewer: If 'Yes', please continue. Otherwise, go to Q8. This is automated on-line.

Q6. What was your reason for contacting the council? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ To report a problem
- ❑ To request a service
- ❑ To request information
- ❑ To receive support or information about the pandemic
- ❑ Other

If 'Other', please specify:

_____

Q7. How would you rate your contact with the council? Note to interviewer: Read out response options and select one answer only.
- ❑ Excellent
- ❑ Good
- ❑ Fair
- ❑ Poor
- ❑ Very poor
- ❑ Don't know - note to interviewer: do not read out

Q8. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council is supporting your local community during the coronavirus pandemic? Note to interviewer: Read out response options and select one answer only.
- ❑ Very satisfied
- ❑ Fairly satisfied
- ❑ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ❑ Fairly dissatisfied
- ❑ Very dissatisfied
- ❑ Don't know - note to interviewer: do not read out

Section 3: Community

We'd now like to ask you some questions about volunteering and community during the pandemic.

Q9. How, if at all, have you volunteered to help in your local community during the pandemic? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ Getting to know or supporting a neighbour
- ❑ Bracknell Forest Council/Healthwatch/Involve community response volunteer
- ❑ NHS volunteer responder
- ❑ Other volunteering to support people in my local community
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Not volunteered at all / don't know

If 'Other', please specify:
_____

Note to interviewer: If 'volunteer', please continue. Otherwise, go to Q12. This is automated on-line.

Q10. What were your reasons for choosing to volunteer in your local community during Covid-19?
Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ I volunteered before Covid-19 and have continued to do so
- ❑ I wanted to do good for others and the community
- ❑ I had extra time to commit to volunteering
- ❑ I wanted to feel more of a connection with my local community
- ❑ I wanted a distraction from the current situation
- ❑ I felt it would help with my mental health and wellbeing
- ❑ Other

If 'Other', please specify:
_____

Q11. Do you intend to keep volunteering in your local community? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Don't know

If 'No', why do you think you will not volunteer? (note to interviewer: just note down headline points succinctly):
_____

Section 4: Internet use and streaming

We'd now like to ask you some questions about doing activities on-line, including during the pandemic.

Q12. Which of the following do you have access to? Note to interviewer: Read out list and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ Internet at home
- ❑ Smart phone
- ❑ Home computer
- ❑ Laptop
- ❑ iPad or tablet
- ❑ Alexa (or equivalent)
- ❑ None of the above

Q13. Which of the following activities have you done for the first time or done more often since the lockdown began on 23 March? Note to interviewer: Read out each activity and select the appropriate option for each. If the respondent has said 'none of the above' to Q13, please still briefly 'sense check' that their answers to this question are 'do not do activity'.

Since lockdown, how often have you . . .

	Done the first time	Doing about the same	Doing more often	Do not do activity
Used the internet in general	❑	❑	❑	❑
Contacted the council online (including via social media)	❑	❑	❑	❑
Accessed services on-line, such as shopping, ordering takeaway, general shopping online or on-line banking	❑	❑	❑	❑
Communicated using digital technology such as Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or Facetime etc	❑	❑	❑	❑
Engaged on social media	❑	❑	❑	❑
Used Alexa (or equivalent voice activated device)	❑	❑	❑	❑

Q14. How confident or not are you in accessing services on-line? Note to interviewer: Read out response options and select one answer only.
- ❑ Very confident
- ❑ Quite confident
- ❑ Not that confident
- ❑ Not confident at all
- ❑ Don't know - note to interviewer: do not read out
- ❑ Never go on-line - note to interviewer: do not read out

Section 5: Environment

We'd now like to ask you some questions about travel and the environment, as a result of the pandemic.

Q15. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about travel and the environment in the future, due to your experience of Covid-19? Note to interviewer: Read out each statement and select one response option for each.

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know - do not read out
I am more likely to use public transport	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am more likely to walk or cycle	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am less likely to drive	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
I am more likely to use local parks and open spaces	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Covid-19 is a chance for people to be more environmentally friendly	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

This is an opportunity for Bracknell Forest to accelerate its plans to become Carbon Neutral by 2050   ❑   ❑   ❑   ❑   ❑   ❑

Q16. What, if any, changes have you made to reduce your carbon footprint during the pandemic? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ Use public transport more
- ❑ Walk or cycle more
- ❑ Drive less
- ❑ Travel less in general
- ❑ Try to use less electricity or gas
- ❑ Other
- ❑ I have not made any changes to reduce by carbon footprint
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:
_____

Note to interviewer: If 'made change(s)', please continue. Otherwise, go to Q18. This is automated on-line.

Q17. Of the change(s) you mentioned, which ones will you continue with? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ Use public transport more
- ❑ Walk or cycle more
- ❑ Drive less
- ❑ Travel less in general
- ❑ Try to use less electricity or gas
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:
_____

Section 6: Employment and the economy

We'd now like to ask you some questions about employment and the economy.

Q18. What is your employment status as a result of the pandemic? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ No change, I wasn't employed and am still not employed
- ❑ No change, I am a full-time student
- ❑ No change, I was and am still employed on the same terms and conditions
- ❑ No change, I am self-employed and not affected
- ❑ I am self-employed and my business has been affected
- ❑ I'm employed but my pay/hours have reduced
- ❑ I'm being paid 80% of my salary under the government scheme, and my company is topping this up, but I am not working (furloughed)
- ❑ I'm being paid 80% of my salary under the government scheme, but I am not working (furloughed)
- ❑ I was employed, and I have now lost my job
- ❑ I am concerned that my job is at risk
- ❑ I am concerned that I will have less work (if self-employed or company owner)
- ❑ Retired
- ❑ Don't know
- ❑ None of the above
- ❑ Other

If 'Other', please specify:
_____

Note to interviewer: If 'in employment or education', please continue. Otherwise, go to Q20. This is automated on-line.

Q19. What is your current working arrangement? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted (although read options if respondent requires clarification about the meaning of the question) and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ I am now working from home
- ❑ I am a frontline key worker
- ❑ I am a non-frontline key worker
- ❑ I am going into a place of work (for example, either because cannot or do not want to work from home)
- ❑ I am a university student studying from home/remote learning
- ❑ None of these
- ❑ Prefer not to say

Q20. Since the pandemic began, what, if any, support from the UK Government have you accessed or received (this may include support through your local council or your employer)? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ I have been/am furloughed under the **Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme**
- ❑ I have received **statutory sick pay** covered by the government for small/medium size businesses
- ❑ I will/am using the **Self-Employment Income Support Scheme**
- ❑ I have accessed a **grant or loan for my business**
- ❑ I have signed up to **Universal Credit**
- ❑ I have used the three-month **'mortgage holiday'**
- ❑ My car/van/motorcycles **MOT has been extended by six months**
- ❑ Other
- ❑ None of the above

If 'Other', please specify:
_____

Q21. As lockdown is eased, how likely, if at all, are you to do each of these activities that are now permitted? Note to interviewer: Read out each activity and select the appropriate option for each.

	Very likely	Fairly likely	Not very likely	Not likely at all	Don't know - do not read out	N/A – I would not do this before lockdown - do not read out
Visiting the Lexicon, Bracknell	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Visiting local shops	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Visiting local pub/restaurant/cinema/theatre etc	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Going to your workplace	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Using public transport	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Visiting parks, open spaces or play areas	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Section 7: Life, health and wellbeing

We'd now like to ask you some questions about your life, health and wellbeing, and the pandemic.

Q22. How much, if at all, has the pandemic had a positive or negative impact on each of the following aspects of your life, health and wellbeing? Note to interviewer: Read out each aspect and select one response option for each.

	Very positive impact	Quite positive impact	Neither positive nor negative impact	Quite negative impact	Very negative impact	Don't know / not applicable - do not read out
Your work	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your employment status	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your financial situation	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
You or your child's education (e.g. school/college/university)	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your relationship with people in your household	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your feeling of belonging to your local community	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your feeling that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (By getting on well together, we mean living alongside each other with respect)	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your appreciation of the local wildlife and environment	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your caring responsibilities	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your access to paid or unpaid care	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your physical health	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Your mental health	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Q23. Have you done each of the following, more, about the same or less since lockdown began on 23rd March? Note to interviewer: Read out each aspect and select one answer only for each.

	More	About the same	Less	Don't know / not applicable - do not read out
Tried a new form of exercise or exercised more	❑	❑	❑	❑
Eating more or more unhealthily	❑	❑	❑	❑
Drinking more alcohol	❑	❑	❑	❑
Taken up smoking / smoking more	❑	❑	❑	❑
Spent time in nature, visiting open spaces	❑	❑	❑	❑

Q24. Do you feel your health and care needs have been supported overall during the pandemic? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No
- ❑ Don't know / not applicable - note to interviewer: do not read out

Q25. Do you feel confident about accessing health and care services that are <u>NOT</u> Covid-19 related? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.
- ❑ Yes
- ❑ No

If 'No', why do you say that (note to interviewer: just note down headline points succinctly):
_____

Q26. Which of the following health or medical experiences, if any, apply to you? Note to interviewer: Read out and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ I have avoided going to the GP / hospital because I am concerned about catching COVID-19
- ❑ I have avoided going to the GP / hospital because I don't want to overburden them
- ❑ I have avoided making contact with Bracknell Forest Council adult and/or children's social care services
- ❑ I have had a pre-existing GP / hospital appointment postponed because of COVID-19
- ❑ I have had a pre-existing (non-GP/hospital) medical appointment postponed because of COVID-19 (e.g. dentist, optician)
- ❑ I have sought medical advice through NHS 111 (online or via phone)
- ❑ None of the above
- ❑ Prefer not to say

Q27. What help or support do you need, if any, due to your experience of Covid-19? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.

- ❑ Health or medical care
- ❑ Support to help with mental wellbeing, anxiety or depression
- ❑ Personal care
- ❑ Advice on staying active and healthy
- ❑ Support due to being in shielded group
- ❑ Housing advice/homelessness support services
- ❑ Benefits advice
- ❑ Debt advice
- ❑ Employment support or information on your rights
- ❑ Support with family/parental support
- ❑ Help to get children back to school
- ❑ Support because of domestic abuse
- ❑ Support for substance misuse (e.g. drugs or alcohol)
- ❑ Support to deal with anti-social behaviour or crime
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know
- ❑ No help or support needed

If 'Other', please specify:

_____

Q28. How many hours a week, if at all, do you look after, or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours or others because of either long-term physical or mental ill-health/disability, or problems related to old age? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select appropriate answer, clarifying if needed.

- ❑ None
- ❑ 9 hours a week or less
- ❑ 10-19 hours a week
- ❑ 20-34 hours a week
- ❑ 35-49 hours a week
- ❑ 50 or more hours a week

If 'a carer', what was your experience of being a carer during the lockdown? (note to interviewer: just note down headline points succinctly):

_____

Q29. Are you aware of, and would you comply with, the new national Covid-19 Test and Trace system, where if you have close contact with someone that tests positive you will be asked to isolate for 7-14 days? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.

- ❑ I am aware of it and I will comply
- ❑ I'm aware of it, but will not comply
- ❑ I'm not aware of it
- ❑ I don't know/not sure if I am aware of it or will comply

If you said you would not comply (response option 2), what would encourage you to do so? (note to interviewer: just note down headline points succinctly):

_____

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Section 8: Recovery

We'd now like to ask you some questions about the future recovery of the local area.

Q30. What are your concerns, if any, as we move out of lockdown? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers. Remind the respondent that we're most interested in their concerns about the local area/Bracknell Forest.
- ❑ Support for unemployed residents and those who have seen their household income fall
- ❑ Support for the local economy/businesses
- ❑ Schools reopening and associated concerns about health and safety of pupils, teachers or families
- ❑ Schools not re-opening
- ❑ Educational attainment of pupils not in school
- ❑ Support for older and vulnerable people
- ❑ Support for children and young people (inc. with learning/mental health issues)
- ❑ Bereavement and counselling services to support those affected by the pandemic
- ❑ Access to medical support, such as routine NHS appointments and face to face contact with G.Ps
- ❑ Risk of local lockdown
- ❑ Fear that we are coming out of lockdown too quickly
- ❑ Provision of affordable housing
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know
- ❑ No concerns

If 'Other', please specify:
_____
_____

Q31. Over the next few months, what do you think the Council's top priorities should be to help the borough's recovery from the pandemic? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ Health protection and promotion
- ❑ Communicating government guidelines
- ❑ Supporting people to take care of their own/their families health and wellbeing (including mental health)
- ❑ Supporting the most vulnerable / most affected people to recover
- ❑ Debt and money management help for those affected financially
- ❑ Being more environmentally friendly/carbon neutral
- ❑ Sound financial management of the council
- ❑ Helping the local economy and businesses to recover
- ❑ Focusing on reopening facilities and services
- ❑ Helping people to sustain their housing or find affordable housing
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Don't know

If 'Other', please specify:
_____

Section 9: About you

Note to interviewer: Read out: I would now like to ask you some final questions about yourself. As mentioned previously, this will help us understand if there are differences in opinion between different groups of people. We just want to stress that what you say is anonymous and confidential, this means that your responses will not be linked to your name or personal details.

Q32. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? (Please include any problems related to old age) Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.
- ❑ Yes, a lot
- ❑ Yes, a little
- ❑ No

Q33. How would you describe your current accommodation? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted (although provide an example of the type of responses to help the respondent best understand the question if required) and select one answer only
- ❑ Owned outright
- ❑ Buying on mortgage
- ❑ Rent from council
- ❑ Rent from Housing Association
- ❑ Rent from private landlord
- ❑ Shared ownership
- ❑ Student accommodation
- ❑ Living with parent/guardian
- ❑ Other

Q34. Are you a parent or a guardian of a dependent child / children? If yes, what age groups are your child / children? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select all relevant answers.
- ❑ 0 - 4 years
- ❑ 5 - 10 years
- ❑ 11 - 15 years
- ❑ 16 years or over
- ❑ I am not a parent or guardian of a dependent child

Q35. What is your Religion or belief? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.
- ❑ Buddhist
- ❑ Christian
- ❑ Hindu
- ❑ Jewish
- ❑ Muslim
- ❑ Sikh
- ❑ Not religious
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Prefer not to say

Q36. What is your sexual orientation? Note to interviewer: Ask unprompted and select one answer only.
- ❑ Heterosexual
- ❑ Gay/Lesbian
- ❑ Bi-sexual
- ❑ Other
- ❑ Prefer not to say

Note to interviewer: Thanks and close - read out: "That is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your time and input - it is very important in helping local residents and the local area for the future."

Research
Evaluation
Community Engagement
Strategy Development

public
perspectives

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TO: THE EXECUTIVE
20 October 2020

COUNCIL PLAN OVERVIEW REPORT
Chief Executive

1   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To inform the Executive of the performance of the council over the first quarter of the 2020/21 financial year (April - June 2020).

2   RECOMMENDATION

2.1   To note the performance of the council over the period from April - June 2020 highlighted in the Overview Report in Annex A.

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

Quarterly Service Reports

5.1   The council's performance management framework provides for 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 council website.

Council Plan Overview Report

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 Executive 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.

Overview & Scrutiny

5.3   The CPOR will also be considered by Overview & Scrutiny. This process enables all Members to be involved in performance management.

5.4   The CPOR for the first quarter (April - June 2020) is shown in Annex A.

6   ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1   There are no specific legal issues arising from this report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2   There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3   Not applicable.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4   Any specific issues are included in the QSRs and in the CPOR in Annex A.

Other Officers

6.5   Not applicable.

7   CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1   Not applicable.

Method of Consultation

7.2   Not applicable.

Representations Received

7.3   None.

Background Papers
QSR – People Directorate – Quarter 1 2020/21
QSR – Delivery Directorate – Quarter 1 2020/21
QSR – Central Directorates – Quarter 1 2020/21

Contact for further information
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COUNCIL PLAN OVERVIEW REPORT

Q1 2020 - 21
April – June 2020

Chief Executive:
Timothy Wheadon

Contents

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

1 Introduction

1.1 This report sets out an overview of the council's performance for the first quarter of 2020/21 (April - June 2020). 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 Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs) and is based upon the performance data that is available to all Members online.

1.2 As you know the council is currently functioning in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and many staff have been focused on leading our community response. Actions in the departmental service plans have been put on hold, deferred or modified. Nevertheless, at the end of the first quarter progress showed:

- 97 actions (86%) are green (9 complete, 57 in progress, 7 not started or deferred)
- 15 actions (13%) are amber (11 in progress, 4 not started or deferred)
- 1 action (1%) is red (and in progress)

1.3 Section 3 of this report contains information on the performance indicators across the council for each of the strategic themes. Again, the picture was positive, showing that the status for the key indicators in the Council Plan in the first quarter is:

- 28 (72%) green
- 1 (3%) amber
- 10 (26%) red

20 further indicators have no set target or data is currently unavailable.

2. Overview of Q1 and what went especially well

2.1 Teams have continued to deliver services to a high standard during the period, especially in response to Covid-19. I have highlighted here a small selection of examples from across the organisation;

2.2 The council's resilience and ability to deal with adverse situations is planned for and managed by the council's emergency planning team. The Joint Emergency Planning Unit (JEPU) is a joint service with West Berkshire Council and the Royal Borough of Winsor and Maidenhead. This service is the council's link to the regional emergency planning function, Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum (TVLRF).

2.3 The council had, just prior to the Covid-19 emergency, reviewed its disaster recovery (DR) and Business Continuity (BC) plans, in readiness of any Brexit scenario. This has stood us in good stead, as plans were current and fresh in managers minds, allowing the council to quickly and efficiently respond to the "rising tide" nature of the Covid-19 emergency. This team stays on 24/7, 365 days per year and have supported a highly effective response, by the council to this public health emergency.

2.4 The council's IT investments have been proven to be the correct direction of travel. The council had already moved to issuing of laptops to all staff and Members. November 2019 to February 2020 had seen a move to the cloud, seeing email, document storage and communication tools being migrated to the Microsoft Office 365, cloud-based platform. These enabling technology changes, meant that the

impact of the stay at home order, issued by the Prime Minster, allowed the council to, almost overnight, have most staff and Members accessing the systems from their homes.

2.5   As this was at the beginning of the pandemic, these facilities allowed the council to reduce the number of staff in Time Square from around 800 to 12 staff. Although this put a massive, and unexpected unplanned load on the homeworking infrastructure, with only minor tweaks to the setup of our Virtual Private Network (VPN) nodes, we have been able to go from handling around 400 users per day, to having around 1000 users, using the full range of IT facilities.

2.6   A Supplier and Business Support cell has also been established as part of the council's emergency governance arrangements, to investigate and implement proposals aimed at maintaining the sustainability of key suppliers to the council during the lockdown period, where services were unable to continue as normal. This has been ably supported by the Corporate Procurement team, who have managed to provide invaluable insight, support and challenge to service areas across the council despite seeing a 25% reduction in resources on 1 April.

2.7   The Standards and Effectiveness Team have provided ongoing support and advice to school leaders following the temporary closure of schools. A key aspect of this support has been ensuring the implementation of DfE guidance as it has evolved and changed from provision for the pupils of critical workers and vulnerable pupils to the wider opening of schools to eligible year groups across the summer term.

2.8   The team have produced a range of resources and signposted leaders to relevant information to support their thinking regarding curriculum development and remote learning. Feedback from headteachers has been positive, highlighting the consistent and solution focused approach of team members.

2.8   The final bidder proposals for the Property Joint Venture were received and have been evaluated by the cross-functional team against the council's requirements, facilitated by Corporate Procurement. Following approval to proceed to the preferred bidder stage by the Executive, attention is turning to the next phase of finalising the contractual documents with the preferred bidder.

2.9   The Council Plan sets out that addressing and mitigating man-made climate change is a key and overarching strategic objective of the council. Progress towards a revised Climate Change Strategy is well underway. Officers engaged the assistance of the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) to establish a set of baseline figures for the council's current carbon footprint.

2.10   The next step will be for the strategic pillars of the strategy to be agreed and for this to be agreed at full council, now scheduled for January 2021.

What are we doing about things not going so well?

3.1   The council's financial position has been significantly affected by additional costs and income losses directly related to the pandemic. Financial monitoring arrangements were revised significantly to reflect the unprecedented level of uncertainty in the current year and are now focused on tracking against predicted best and worst-case scenarios.

3.2   Difficulties with the internal audit contractor being able to complete the 2019/20 programme and growing concerns about the contract's sustainability have led to the council bolstering its in house resources, to maintain service continuity.

Forward Look

Going forward, the council's strategic objectives will continue to progress in the coming weeks albeit within the constraints of the Covid-19 restrictions and in the context of the council's community response to Covid-19. It is important that we retain our focus on the issues that present to us in Bracknell Forest as we have done throughout the pandemic.

Timothy Wheadon
Chief Executive

Section 2: Budget Position

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING

The monthly monitoring returns are set out in detail in each directorate's Quarterly Service Report (QSR).

Due to the impact of the pandemic on the current years' budget and the resulting uncertainty, a range of potential outcomes have been considered. The returns now include estimated best and worst case scenarios which reflect actual expenditure to date plus a range of financial predictions from Assistant Directors covering the remainder of the year. Across the council, variances have been identified indicating expenditure is within budget (Best Case) or up to £5.558m above the approved budget (Worst Case), after taking into account the corporate contingency (£2.207m) and unspent government funding for Covid-19 (£6.457m).

Subsequent to these figures being calculated for Q1, additional Government grant has been received and the Government has also announced a scheme to compensate authorities for lost income from sales, fees and charges. The impact of these will be to reduce the potential overspend being reported in the next quarter's report. It will also be possible at that point to provide a more accurate assessment of the overall financial impact of Covid-19 at that point, which has been extremely difficult to assess given the extreme volatility experienced in the early part of the year.

Key information around departmental variances being reported follows.

Overall Summary

	Original Cash Budget (£'000)	Virements & Budget C/Fwds (£'000)	Current Approved Cash Budget (£'000)	Variance - Best Case Scenario (£'000)	Variance - Worst Case Scenario (£'000)
Central	13,738	1,136	14,874	944	1,686
Delivery	15,550	-501	15,049	2,958	6,253
People	53,989	889	54,878	3,433	6,708
Non-Departmental	-4,051	-578	-4,629	-575	-425
TOTAL	**79,226**	**946**	**80,172**	**6,760**	**14,222**
Contingency	2,250	-43	2,207	-2,207	-2,207
Covid Grant Funding				-6,457	-6,457
TOTAL	**81,476**	**903**	**82,379**	**-1,904**	**5,558**
Transfer to/from Earmarked Reserves	8,348	-903	7,445	0	0
TOTAL CASH BUDGETS	**89,824**	**0**	**89,824**	**-1,904**	**5,558**
Central	4,878	-78	4,800	0	0
Delivery	-1,688	78	-1,610	0	0
People	22,930	0	22,930	0	0
Non-Departmental	-26,666	0	-26,666	0	0
TOTAL NON-CASH BUDGETS	**-546**	**0**	**-546**	**0**	**0**
SCHOOLS BUDGET	**1,929**	**0**	**1,929**	**703**	**703**
OVERALL TOTAL	**91,207**	**-26**	**91,207**		

Best Case Scenario Variance

Worst Case Scenario Variance
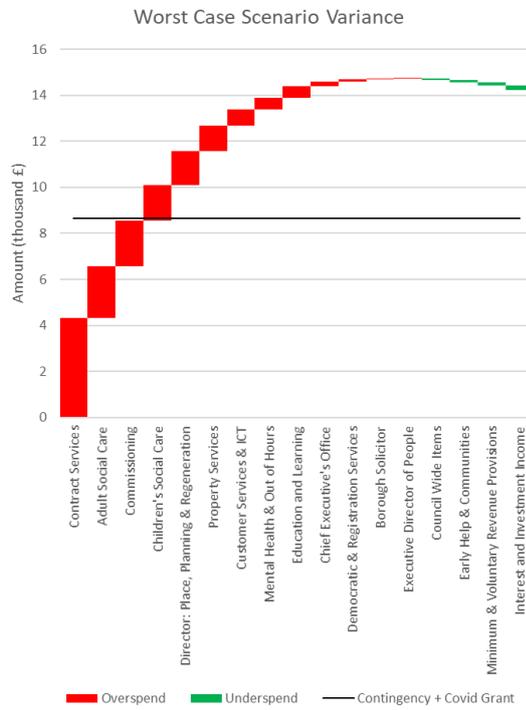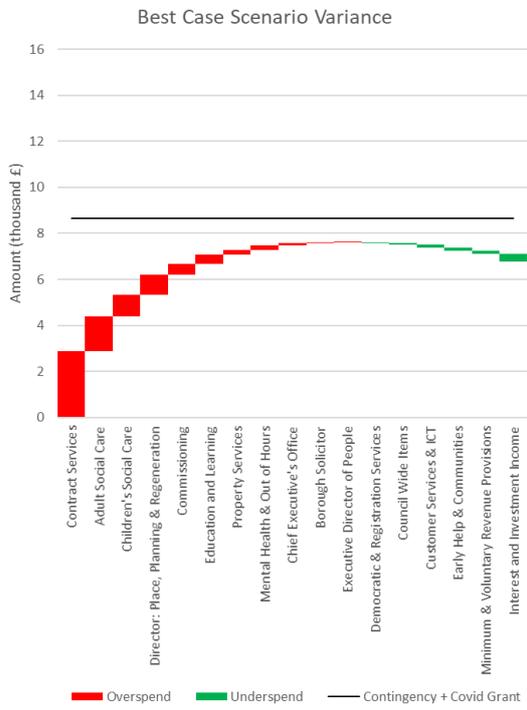
Cash Budget Summary

Key variances: CENTRAL

- Net income lost due to the closure of The Look Out and the need for social distancing upon reopening is forecast to be between £0.690m (Best Case) and £0.909m (Worst Case).
- There has been a downturn in Planning and Development Control income in the first two months of the financial year. It is too early to project the full impact of Covid-19 but early projections indicate a pressure of between £0.153m (Best Case) and £0.461m (Worst Case).

Key variances: DELIVERY

- Within Leisure a management fee payment holiday has now been agreed for the whole year (a quarter of which will be repayable over the life of the contract) along with support for staff costs operating costs. Dependant on the profits achieved, it is hoped that the remaining 9 months of the management fee and the other costs will also be recouped over the contract by adjusting the existing profit share ratio in the Council's favour (£2.389m Best Case and £2.490m Worst Case).
- A lack of income from daily charges, PCNs and staff parking from Apr-Jun has resulted in a pressure of £0.760m. Whilst charges were reintroduced on 1 July current figures suggest that the numbers of cars returning are down 45% on budgeted figures but are expected to increase over time. The overall pressure is estimated to be between £0.426m (Best Case) and £1.676m (Worst Case) with the main difference being the speed/size of recovery and the assumption that the government will provide income support in the Best Case scenario.
- A budget pressure has been identified for Commercial Property of between £0.217m (Best Case) and £1.119m (Worst Case). The best case scenario assumes no further lockdowns or financial difficulty of the tenants but that the larger units currently vacant remain vacant until the end of the financial year. The worst case scenario assumes further lockdowns, some of our tenants requiring rent free periods and increased write-offs and voids.

Key variances: PEOPLE

- Within Children's Social Care an overspend is projected on Children Looked After which will also have a knock on effect to other demand led services, such as Special Guardianship Orders and Childcare Solicitors, and the Devolved Staffing Budget (DSB). The forecast pressure is between £0.970m (Best Case) and £1.531m (Worst Case) depending on the forecast increase in numbers (20% up to 35%).
- Within Adult Social Care, pressures continue to be experienced on both Learning Disability and Adult Community Team placement costs. These make up the bulk of the projected variance of between £1.510m (Best Case) and £2.258m (Worst Case), with the Worst Case scenario assuming a more significant increase in both client numbers and package costs.
- Within commissioning a process of one-off payments to Adult Social Care providers has been implemented to help sustain the marketplace during the pandemic. There is much uncertainty over how long these payments will be required for resulting in an overall pressure of between £0.471m (Best Case) and £0.971m (Worst Case).
- Further pressures are being experienced within Education and Learning, due to DSB and income pressures and within Mental Health from placement costs. The combined impact is between £0.606m (Best Case) and £1.030m (Worst Case).

Section 3: Strategic Themes

Value for money

Action	30/06/2020				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
1.01.01 Maintain Council Tax	Completed	30/06/2020	100%	✔	Council Tax in lowest 10% of all similar authorities
1.01.02 Spending is within the approved budget for this year	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	?	
1.01.03 Budget monitoring	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	
1.01.04 Transformation savings	In Progress	31/03/2021	30%	●	Transformation programme paused due to impact of Covid-19
1.01.05 Delivery of the transformation programme	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	The Covid-19 lockdown in March meant that most of the transformation programme projects were put on hold though as resource has been focussed on responding to the crisis.
1.01.06 Commercial sponsorship contract	Not Started	31/12/2020	0%	★	The framework has not yet been published and as a result work on this contract has been delayed.
1.02.01 HR support offer to managers	In Progress	31/03/2021	30%	★	Significant ground has been covered in completing a service redesign of the HR and OD support offer to managers and staff. This has included fast paced revision to processes and advice to enable managers to support there teams, the majority of whom are home based remote working due to COVID-19.

Virtual Training sessions and managers handbook are in continuous development and being adjusted to reflect any changes required whilst we continue to work through these unprecedented times. |
| 1.02.02 Council digital skills requirement | In Progress | 31/03/2021 | 20% | ★ | Started to investigate different options for digital skills analysis for all staff.. Starting to use Teams for virtual classroom experience in support of the current covid situation. Additional e learning has been uploaded for the current working at home situation. Short videos created for new starters |
| 1.02.03 Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy | Waiting | 31/12/2020 | 0% | ★ | Work on an overarching workforce strategy is being scoped to include learning and development, talent management, organisational development and staff wellbeing. To inform the scope of the strategy participation in the COVID-19 renewal work is underway.

Established and recovery specific OD activity has been ongoing and will continue to support the workforce, however it is anticipated that the scope and scheduling of the workforce strategy will not commence before November 2020. |
1.02.04 Integration of service and workforce planning	Completed	31/03/2021	100%	★	Workforce planning arrangements in place supporting service delivery across the department. Further development work required to use data workforce data.
1.02.05 Staff training budgets	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	★	Centralisation of training budgets is in progress. The Corporate Manager Team will consider the proposed centralisation during July 2020 with a view to HR and Finance working together on implementation from September 2020.
1.02.06 Develop Recruitment and Retention Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2021	20%	★	Foundation research and development is taking place to inform the recruitment and retention strategy which will form part of an overarching Workforce Strategy. HR are working with Finance to review data taken from the agency system provided by the neutral provider 'Matrix' and the Councils financial accounting data sources which will provide a clearer picture of volumes and costs. This will then link to actions planned in each service area to develop a package of HR/OD support that will ensure the reduction of agency reliance and stabilise core staff base within the Adults workforce which is currently heavily reliant on agency staff.
1.02.07 Customer Experience Strategy	In Progress	31/12/2020	25%	★	Work has begun on developing the Customer Experience Strategy, with workshops with Members and Senior Officers, alongside analysis of outputs from the Recovery work underway.
1.02.08 Digital and IT Strategy	In Progress	31/12/2020	50%	★	Further workshops have been completed with senior officers and elected members. An initial draft of the strategy has been completed.
1.02.10 Move services online and via self-service	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	Additional online forms have been created for a number of services during the Covid-19 period.
1.02.11 Automated processing of transactions	In Progress	31/03/2021	5%	★	First process is live in ICT leavers
1.02.12 Move to cloud for IT infrastructure and applications	In Progress	31/03/2021	30%	★	Completed move to Office365 for email, office products, OneDrive, Teams. In progress with the move to SharePoint Intranet and SharePoint file store. Procurement is underway to start process or moving server infrastructure to the cloud.

☑ 1.02.13 Review of IT applications to consolidate and rationalise estate	In Progress	31/03/2021	10%	●	Business Partner reviewing with services where applications need to be upgraded to look at SaaS options
☑ 1.02.14 Digital skills of staff, members and customers	In Progress	31/03/2021	10%	★	Understanding the digital skills needed for the future is forming part of the Recovery work underway. Outputs from this work will inform the future skills development plans.
☑ 1.02.15 Review our digital offer to residents	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	The content of the website has been reviewed and areas for improvement identified and these will be updated in line with our service developments. As well as the content we have identified an opportunity to investigate if this is still the best platform to host our offering, this was outside of the initial scope of our review but we will engage with our digital services to investigate further.
☑ 1.03.01 Appraisal of Asset Management Plan	Not Started	31/03/2021	0%	★	
☑ 1.03.02 Commercial Centre and associated land	In Progress	31/12/2020	75%	★	
☑ 1.03.03 Review of Waterside Park	In Progress	31/12/2020	90%	★	Waterside Unit C - Planning Permission granted. Solicitors re-instructed, initial meeting held with BICS on legal process. Legal paperwork issued to BICS on the 23rd June. Waterside Unit B - EDS / Forestcare move from the Depot to Waterside Park - Construction works planned to commence on site during Oct and to be completed by December 2020.
☑ 1.04.01 Joint Property Venture Project	In Progress	31/12/2020	90%	★	The preferred partner now has now been chosen and work continues on the Joint Venture.
☑ 1.04.02 Legal advice for Joint Property Venture Project	In Progress	31/03/2021	75%	★	Preferred bidder chosen. Working on governance arrangements, delegations arrangements and business plan. Report to Executive in November for Business Plan approval.
☑ 1.04.03 Release of town centre sites into the Joint Property Venture Project	In Progress	31/03/2021	80%	★	The JV Project board have now evaluated all bids and a decision report has been finalised with recommendations to approve the Preferred Bidder to work with the Council to create a 50:50 Property Joint Venture Partnership to take forward development of sites, subject to contract. This is being tabled at the Executive meeting on 14th July. Following this we will have 5 days call in before the bidders are notified of the result. A standstill period of 10 days follows this.
☑ 1.04.04 One Public Estate	In Progress	31/03/2021	80%	★	Heathlands - New Dementia Care Home - The contractor is onsite and is undertaking asbestos removal and demolition. Site set up to various parts of the site will continue over the next few weeks. Currently the construction works are programmed to be completed November 2021
☑ 1.04.05 Asset Management Plan	Completed	31/03/2021	100%	★	Complete

Quarterly Indicators	30/06/2020			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
› L051 % of council tax collected	97.9%	27.8%	29.0%	★
› L053 % of Business Rates collected in year	102.2%	33.8%	35.0%	★
L220 Number of ICT Helpdesk Calls	5,874		5,625	?
› L221 Satisfaction with Customer Services	79.6%	66.7%	85.0%	▲
L257 Number of complaints received	49	42	55	★
L311 Number of people actively engaged with Public Health social media channels			2,746	?
L391 % of posts filled by agency staff	22%	30%	38%	★
L392 % of agency workers council wide	6%	5%	7%	★
L395 Number of self-service transactions processed via customer account			0	?
L396 Number of hours of staff time saved by utilising robotic process automation	0	0	1,250	▲
L397 % of IT estate delivered from cloud	15%	30%	20%	★
L444 Number of Facebook followers for Public Health	24	35	25	★
L445 Number of users accessing Thrive!	102	720	200	★
› L261 Level of staff sickness absence	2.01	0.85		n/a
› L262 Level of voluntary staff turnover	2.37%	1.80%		n/a

Economic resilience

Action	30/06/2020				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
2.02.01 Princess Square refurbishment	Completed	02/10/2020	100%	★	Refurbishment now completed
2.02.02 The Deck	In Progress	31/12/2022	10%	●	Proposed timetable under review pending impact of Covid 19
2.03.01 Governor recruitment strategy	In Progress	31/07/2021	25%	★	The Governor Services Team have maintained a focus on recruitment through the promotion of Volunteers Week (1-7 June) with posts on social media to thank and promote becoming a school governor, partnership working with the Digital Services Team to create a new page on the BFC website on Case Studies – School Governors where three Chairs of Governors answered various questions. The team have worked with the Clerk to Governors to ensure vacancies are promoted on the BFC website pages so that interested individuals can be directed to vacancies. Our new advert appeared in Town & Country this month. We became a School Governor Champion through Inspiring Governance and continue to work with them as a third party to connect schools and trusts with skilled volunteers in our area who are interested in becoming a school governor or trustee.
2.04.01 Business Brochure	In Progress	30/09/2020	90%	★	Draft brochure is in place; final sign off on hold at the moment due to Coronavirus
2.04.02 Economic Skills and Development Partnership	In Progress	31/03/2021	90%	★	ESDP is being continuously supported. Spring event has been moved to some time in autumn. First virtual meeting took place in July.
2.05.01 Business Investment District	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	★	The BID has been successfully implemented and they started operation in April 2020. The council will have a present on the BID board going forward to work closely and in collaboration with them. Levy payments have been slow as Revenues service halted all recovery work due to Coronavirus. Government loan has been applied for on behalf of the BID and should be paid out shortly.
2.05.02 Implementation of changes to property assets	In Progress	31/03/2021	33%	★	
2.06.01 Business Liaison Programme	In Progress	31/03/2021	0%	★	Target is to visit at least 12 businesses over the course of year. Programme currently on hold due to Coronavirus
2.07.01 Downshire Way Dualling Project	Completed	30/06/2020	100%	✔	This project is now complete.
2.07.02 A3095 Improvement Project	In Progress	31/03/2021	15%	★	The main project work has commenced, involving a northbound closure of the A3095 until 1 September 2020. Current work includes lengthening of an existing subway and road and drainage construction. Work will continue for approximately 14 months.
2.07.03 Funding for infrastructure improvements	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	★	£400k secured through the Governments Local Growth Fund for further improvements to the A322/A329 corridor by increasing capacity further at the Sports Centre roundabout.

£57k sercured from the Emergency Active Travel Fund to provide new pedestrian and cycle facilities to help with Covid 19 recovery and promoting walkingand cycling as a healthy alternative to Public Transport which is still seen as a risk |
2.08.01 Infrastructure Delivery Plan & Local Plan	In Progress	31/12/2020	80%	★	Updates to the Infrastructure Delivery Plan are being prepared in response to comments received during the consultation held at the end of 2019 and further evidence including development of proposals for Jealotts Hill.
2.08.02 Infrastructure Funding Statement	In Progress	31/12/2020	40%	★	
2.08.03 S106 agreements	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	The number of S106 Agreements having being completed, 9, is a little lower than usual for this quarter, but this will no doubt be due to Covid 19

Quarterly Indicators	30/06/2020			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
L268 % of working age people who are unemployed	2.2%	2.6%		n/a
L269 % of working age population in employment	84.9%	84.1%		n/a
L271 % of borough covered by superfast broadband	95.9%	96.2%	97.0%	★
L442 Vacancies on school governing boards	20%	19%	18%	★

Education and skills

Action	30/06/2020				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
3.01.01 New education facilities	In Progress	30/06/2020	80%	★	Proposals for new schools at Jealotts Hill were included in the Revised Growth Strategy for the Local Plan. The proposals are being refined following the consultation.
3.01.02 Property support to ensure capacity is in line with School Places Plan	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	Property continue to assist education team with planned works and capital works scheme
3.01.03 Place planning tool for school places	Completed	31/03/2021	100%	★	The new pupil forecasting system was introduced in 2019 and was used as the basis of the School Places Plan and Capacity Strategy 2020-24. The forecasting system has proved to be 98% accurate in predicting the numbers of primary pupils for September 2020.
3.01.04 Capacity strategy for schools	Completed	31/03/2021	100%	★	The School Places Plan and Capacity Strategy 2020-24 was approved by the Executive in January 2020. The SPP forecasts suggest that there will be sufficient school places in Bracknell Forest during the forecast period. It is proposed to update this document annually going forward
3.02.02 Support for schools with standards and effectiveness partners	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	Since March 2020 the Standards and Effectiveness Team have provided ongoing support and advice to school leaders following the temporary closure of schools to all pupils. A key aspect of this support has been ensuring the implementation of DfE guidance as it has evolved and changed from provision for the pupils of critical workers and vulnerable pupils to the wider opening of schools to eligible year groups across the summer term. The team have produced a range of resources and signposted leaders to relevant information to support their thinking regarding curriculum development and remote learning. Feedback from headteachers has been positive, highlighting the consistent and solution focused approach of team members.
3.02.03 Promote best practice in schools	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	During the period of partial school closures, the Standards and Effectiveness Team has continued to encourage and support partnership working to improve practice and contribute to system led improvement. Weekly communications between headteachers and Standards and Effectiveness Partners have facilitated effective sharing of practice, as well as generating shared solutions to the very challenging circumstances within which schools have been operating. The Local Authority Schools Recovery Group, comprising of LA officers and primary and secondary headteachers, has also provided a forum for solution focused discussions relating to these challenges. Termly network meetings have been delivered remotely, using Microsoft Teams, and have had a strong focus on effective approaches to recovery on return to school in September, showcasing examples of effective local practice. Effective practice gathered via weekly headteacher discussions and subject network meetings have been included in the LA document, 'Passport for Tomorrow', alongside current research evidence relating to the return to school in autumn. Partnership working between the Local Authority and Forest Learning Alliance continues to strengthen, and the joint venture to offer network meetings for subject leaders in science and some of the foundation subjects is on track to commence in the autumn term.
3.02.04 School Ofsted ratings	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	There have been no Ofsted school inspections this quarter due to the Covid 19 pandemic and therefore the percentage of schools that are judged to be good or better has remained unchanged at 83% of all schools and 89% of Bracknell Forest maintained schools.
3.03.01 Economic Skills and Development Partnership: Education Sub-group	In Progress	31/03/2021	90%	★	Is being supported in line with the wider ESDP.
3.04.01 Town centre youth hub build and fit out	In Progress	31/10/2020	25%	★	Tender analysis complete and awaiting approval for the award report on the 21st July. If approved the contractor will be appointed to carry out the works commencing in August.
3.04.02 Youth Hub at Braccan Walk	In Progress	31/10/2020	40%	★	The contract for this project has been awarded and works commenced in mid September. Completion is expected around Christmas time. Young people have been involved in design decisions throughout and will continue to be involved in agreeing the colour schemes, furnishings and fittings for the new youth hub
3.05.01 Entry level apprenticeships	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	Apprenticeships have continued with providers and education institutions modifying delivery to online and virtual tutoring where possible.
3.05.02 Apprenticeship levy	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	Apprentice levy continues to be utilised where possible. New cohorts and courses are currently on hold due to COVID-19 which will have an impact on options over the coming months.

☑ 3.06.01 Support the efficacy of early years professionals	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	Currently the member of the Standards and Effectiveness Team that has been allocated the strategic responsibility for Early Years is working in close partnership with the Early Language Consultant, who is part of the EYFS Quality and Development Team. The focus is on delivering pilot programmes to nursery teachers in maintained schools to mitigate any impact of nursery aged children missing education during the Covid-19 outbreak. Ensuring that the Learning Improvement Strategy aspect of 'Getting the Best Start in Life' remains a key aspect of the LA's responsibilities, the STEP has continued a full quota of work during the summer term. The STEP advises on practices for schools to share with parents and offers advice and guidance through the regular networking session where nursery and reception practitioners attend. Strategic practising leaders support the work and offer practical advice to Early Years providers in schools which have been identified as requiring improvement. Throughout the summer term weekly sessions were held online with leaders, led by the STEP, to discuss current events, future actions and how to interpret and share the DfE guidance. High quality professional development and advice for all EYFS teachers and support staff continued to be provided across the summer term with positive feedback from participants.
☑ 3.07.01 Support care leavers to access education, training or employment	In Progress	31/03/2021	75%	●	69% of all Bracknell Forest Council Leavers were either in education, employment or training. The main reasons for the remaining cohort to be NEET included mental health barriers, pregnancy and caring for their child. These accounted for 18 out of the 33 young people who were NEET. The remaining 15 were engaging either with the Virtual School or the Leaving Care Service and work on plans to transition to a positive destination. Opportunities to do so however have been limited due to the Covid - 19 situation which has led to a lack of appropriate work placements being available.
☑ 3.08.01 Establish a culture of high expectations for all children	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	The termly SENDCO Forum meeting took place on the 30 June as a virtual meeting. The focus for this meeting was 'Wider SEN issues and the implications of the 'new normal' for vulnerable children and young people'. This forum covered aspects such as positives from the lockdown and how they could be used effectively to inform practice moving forward; transition, guidance and the support structures available; recovery curriculum and the importance of the social, emotional and mental health of children and young people on their return to school and the balance between it and the academic curriculum. This was underpinned by up to date educational and SEND thinking, research and guidance. A range of LA specialists presented at the meeting to support SENDCO colleagues and answer the questions posed. Further areas of support will be identified from analysis of the evaluations.
☑ 3.08.02 Support transition to next stage of learning	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	Standards and Effectiveness continue to work closely with colleagues from Children Support Services to provide high quality support for the transition of children and young people with SEND within the current climate. This cohesive and effective partnership working was particularly effective during the recent SENDCO forum where LA officers from the Educational Psychology Service, Behaviour Support, Support for learning, Virtual Schools, Autism Support and Early Years jointly delivered. Colleagues were able to sign posted to high quality support from the LA, answer focussed questions relating to transition, as well as facilitate the effective sharing of good practice in schools.
☑ School attendance legal advice	In Progress	01/04/2021	50%	★	Continued ad hoc advice given to Education Welfare Service as to matters pertaining to School Non Attendance policy and procedures during the current Covid-19 crisis. All still outstanding Prosecution cases, concerning pre-covid-19 crisis irregular school attendance, that were previously listed for Hearing at Court in May 2020 have now been postponed by the Court to an administrative "holding date" in early July 2020 in order for the Court to then fix future new effective Hearing dates and to notify the Defendants of those dates accordingly.

Quarterly Indicators	30/06/2020			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
L394 % of staff that have undertaken apprenticeship training : Education and skills	1.8%	4.7%	2.2%	★
L402 % of care leavers aged 19-21 years who are NEET : Education and skills	31%	50%	25%	▲
L403 % of care leavers aged 19-21 years who are in touch with LA : Education and skills	100%	97%	89%	★
› L139 % of schools rated good or better : Schools	83%	83%	78%	★
› L139 % of schools rated good or better : Maintained Primary Schools	88%	88%	83%	★
› L139 % of schools rated good or better : Maintained Secondary Schools	100%	100%	100%	★
› L139 % of schools rated good or better : Academy Primary Schools	40%	40%	100%	▲
› L139 % of schools rated good or better : Academy Secondary Schools	100%	100%	100%	★

Annual Indicators	30/06/2020			
	Last Year	This Year	Current Target	RAG
› L272 % of children obtaining a place at one of their Primary School preferences	98.8%	98.0%	99.0%	⭐
› L273 % of children obtaining a place at one of their Secondary School preferences	95.5%	95.3%	93.0%	⭐
› L361 % of children obtaining their first preference of Primary School	93.6%	87.9%	94.0%	🟠
› L362 % of children obtaining their first preference of Secondary School	86.3%	84.5%	86.0%	⭐

Caring for you and your family

Action	30/06/2020				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
4.01.01 Participation in sports, leisure and cultural activities	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	●	With COVID 19 national health lockdowns, for this period, residents and visitors have not been able to engage in the social activities normally available within the borough. The library network, leisure centres and cultural offers were required to close, along with other non-essential activities. That said, innovative solutions have been put in place to make the lockdown process more tolerable and to respond to the releases of restrictions, as they became available. The home library services has been expanded by over 400%, having started the year with 75 customers and now having 367, at the end of the quarter. Since the 15th of May, The Downshire Golf Centre, has had 3,847 tee times available for booking, with 3,566 filled (97%). This is over 9,000 golfers participating in outdoor activity, facilitated by a golf booking app for smart phones. So, although the original targets will not be achieved, the objective of fostering an atmosphere that encourages participation continues.
4.01.02 Tailored support for healthy lifestyles	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	The Public Health tailored support for healthy lifestyles includes help for children, adults (across the lifecourse) and families to get more active, eat better and lose weight. As a consequence of the COVID-19 intervention to socially distance, many of the lifestyle services are in the process of being moved online. The Public Health on-line web pages provides a wide selection of lifestyle information and advice.
4.02.01 Practitioners in Family Hubs supporting tier 2 mental health needs	In Progress	31/07/2020	80%	★	All practitioners have now been recruited and the team are embedded in the family hubs (virtually currently due to covid-19 necessitating building closures). A referral pathway and memorandum of understanding (which sets out the basis of the service offer) have been signed off. Referrals are now being accepted.
4.02.02 Local Transformation Plan for children & young people's mental health and wellbeing	In Progress	31/03/2021	60%	★	The Local Transformation Plan for East Berkshire has been revised and adopted. A new Getting Help early intervention team is in place as part of the Bracknell Early Help offer and the authority and CCG have successfully bid for a Mental Health Support Team to support a cohort of Bracknell schools (part of a phased national roll out of this programme). Recruitment for the MHST is starting - a one year training programme for the team commences Jan 2021. A children and young people's mental health and wellbeing workforce training offer for professionals is in place.
4.04.01 Disabled Facilities Grant Policy	In Progress	31/12/2020	25%	●	A review has been undertaken which will inform the new policy, with key principles established. Policy drafting has been delayed by staff churn in a very small team and covid-19.
4.05.01 Blue Mountain community and health facility	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	●	Tenders for the Design and Build work have been received, however due to the Covid-19 Pandemic a decision to postpone appointing a contractor has been taken, whilst the CCG and Council are continuing to respond to emergency planning matters. This decision is being reviewed on a month by month basis. However it is clear that the appointment and subsequent approvals are all likely to be put back by at least 3 months.
4.06.01 Libraries engaged in the development of new community facilities	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	The new Library facility provides extended opening hours through Open+ technology, and is now open 59.5 hours per week longer than the old Library. Five of the Borough's Libraries now have extended opening hours with Open+ technology, with a combined increase in opening hours of an additional 232.5 hours per week. In addition, Bracknell Library is hosting community events that were previously held in Coopers Hill. There has been a vast increase in the diversity of events, including yoga, pilates, exercise classes and meditation sessions for adults and children. The feasibility of hosting a pop up Post Office in Crowthorne Library is also being considered, but is dependent on permission being received from the property owner
4.06.02 New Community Hubs	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	★	Warfield CH - work continued regarding the land covenants with further advice received from legal counsel.. Crowthorne CH - the Deed of Variation - the developer agreed to CPC's request for a financial contribution towards future running costs and final negotiations continue regarding fixtures and fittings. Blue Mountain CH - work to demolish the clubhouse began and procurement of the contractor for the main build commenced and interviews took place.
4.07.01 Family hub services expansion and development of multi-disciplinary teams	In Progress	31/03/2021	40%	★	The new early intervention mental health support team 'Getting Help' is in embedded in the family hub teams and now live. Covid-19 has prevented further physical integration of services within the hubs at this time. However, the community midwifery service have been operating from one of our family hubs throughout the pandemic. IT solutions are being explored to enable workstations to be utilised by either LA or Health staff to facilitate integration on site. Plans are in place for other services to offer surgeries at the hubs when they are able to re-open.
4.08.01 Family Safeguarding Model implementation	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	★	The Family Safeguarding Model has been successfully embedded in part of CSC. Therefore, in order to have a systemic impact, it has been decided to broaden the model to include D&A and CSST, which will take upto another year. The model has been sustained for another year upto March 2021 and the York Evaluation will be publicised this year.

☑ 4.08.02 Youth offending service review	Completed	31/03/2021	100%	⭐	Self assessment has been undertaken in line with the national standards. The YOT is now part of the CSC QA programme and there will be a peer review undertaken in 2020/21
☑ 4.09.01 Heathlands residential facility	Waiting	31/03/2021	5%	⭐	The construction is estimated to be completed in October 2021. The provider model work stream is affected by COVID19 emergency with our healthcare colleagues in Frimley Healthcare Foundation Trust, it will recommence in the near future.
☑ 4.09.02 Secure planning permission and commence enabling work at Heathlands	In Progress	30/06/2020	95%	⭐	Planning permission secured, contracts for construction nearing completion
☑ 4.09.03 Appropriate structure for a joint venture company for the Heathlands facility	In Progress	30/09/2020	70%	⭐	Discussions with Frimley on hold due to focus on Covid-19
☑ 4.10.01 Promotion of volunteering for grounds maintenance at the Cemetery & Crematorium	In Progress	31/03/2021	0%	⭐	All volunteers were stood down in Q1 as a result of COVID19. We are awaiting clearer social distancing guidance before re-commencing efforts to promote volunteering within the grounds.
☑ 4.10.02 Leisure, libraries and arts services used for social prescribing	Not Started	31/03/2021	0%	🟠	The Covid-19 situation and staff pressures in ASC have meant that this action has been deferred.
☑ 4.10.03 Social prescribing and primary prevention programmes	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	The social prescribing service has flexed its approach and offer in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The service has moved from signposting to community resources (including utilising our community asset map) to a telephone based service, signposting clients to virtual and online, support and resources as well as home based interventions.
☑ 4.11.01 Arts and culture activities available through libraries	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	The Library Service organises events throughout the year, including a theatre performance of "Connie's Colander" in Bracknell Library, to raise awareness of dementia, live performances of music recitals by several different quartets, in addition to regular film groups, art classes, creative writing groups, book groups and an annual craft fair.
☑ 4.11.02 Schools service level agreement for PE	Completed	31/07/2020	100%	⭐	We have had very high levels of commitment from Bracknell Forest Primary Schools this year with all schools purchasing one of two levels of service level agreement. 15 schools upgraded to the premium level service. Every possible element of the agreement has been delivered to a very high standard. Feedback from the Headteacher reference group is positive and importantly the feedback from the young people has been extremely impressive. This year has shown an increase in schools attendance – every school in the borough has attended 8 or more events, activities or CPD over the year which is an increase on prior years.
☑ 4.12.01 Suitable Natural Green Space (SANG)	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	SANG creation and management in place through pump priming and is ahead of anticipated demand.
☑ 4.12.02 Improvements for open spaces	In Progress	31/03/2021	10%	⭐	Planning stages in progress. Implementation likely to be COVID affected.
☑ 4.13.01 Civilian Military Partnership	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	The partnership continue to liaise regarding the Civilian Military Partnership action plan and any issues arising from the plan. The CMP were due to meet in March but this has been postponed due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation.
☑ 4.13.02 Armed forces policy for children looked after	Completed	30/04/2020	100%	✔	There is now a policy in place and all decisions for CLA to join the armed forces will be through a panel including the Assistant Director and Head of Service

Monthly Indicators	30/06/2020			
	Last Month	This Month	Current Target	RAG
› L346 Average caseload for Family Safeguarding Model	15	16	13	🔺
› L385 Rate per 10k of children on Child Protection Plans	49.1	53.6		n/a
› L386 Rate per 10k of Children Looked After	52.2	51.5		n/a
L411 Number per 10,000 of care proceedings	12.0			?!

Quarterly Indicators	30/06/2020			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
L003 Number of visits to leisure facilities			365,000	?
L404 Number of children and young people visits to leisure facilities managed by Everyone Active				?!
L405 Number of older people visits to leisure facilities managed by Everyone Active			46,500	?
L412 Number per 100,000 of first-time entrants to criminal justice system	11.0	3.0	20.0	n/a
L413 Time taken in weeks to process Disabled Facilities Grant applications				?!
L414 % of children who achieve a BMI Z-score reduction	0%	0%	15%	⭐
L415 % of smokers who have quit at 4 weeks in the quarter (co-verified)	2%	0%	30%	🔺
L416 % of smokers who have quit at 4 weeks in the year to date (co-verified)	1%	0%	30%	🔺
L436 Number of visits by customers with a disability to leisure facilities managed Everyone Active			10,950	?

Protecting and enhancing our environment

Action	30/06/2020				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
5.01.01 Local Plan	In Progress	30/09/2020	80%	🟠	The comments received from the previous consultation have been published and amendments made as required. Responses are being prepared to the comments received which will inform the next version of the Local Plan. Further evidence base work is under way but some has been subject to delay due to the impacts of the Coronavirus crisis. Further work is being carried out on the proposals for Jealotts Hill and the potential inclusion of the Peel Centre as a potential additional allocation. A revised programme will be prepared to reflect timetable changes but there will be some uncertainty about securing a date for the exmination as the Planning Inspectorate will have a backlog of Local Plan Examination work due to the COVID19 measures.
5.01.02 Local Plan Government Inspection	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	⭐	Local Plan examination has not yet been scheduled. Timing will depend on ability to progress Local Plan and availability of Inspectors following the Coronavirus lockdown which will have created a backlog of work for the Inspectorate. Programme for next stages of the Local Plan (for an updated Local Development Scheme) is being prepared.
5.01.03 Local Plan Implementation	Not Started	31/03/2021	0%	⭐	New Local Plan will not be adopted until 2021/22. Implementation of existing policy framework is ongoing through the development management process.
5.01.04 Green flag status of open spaces	In Progress	31/12/2020	25%	⭐	Submissions of evidence complete. Varied assessment criteria this year due to COVID. All sites to be mystery shopped in late summer / autumn, if possible.
5.01.05 Management of land assets	In Progress	31/03/2021	36%	⭐	
5.02.01 Green development of our waste collection services	In Progress	31/03/2021	10%	🟠	Due to Covid 19 the planned communications and support activities have been unable to go ahead. All events for the spring and summer were cancelled and face to face support visits that were due to commence in May were postponed. Vehicle manufacture and operational planning of new waste collection routes have also been impacted and are both delayed.
5.02.02 Educate, enable and encourage residents to maximise their recycling	In Progress	31/03/2021	30%	⭐	Although messaging around recycling may not have been what was planned during quarter 1 because of Covid 19, many residents have increased their recycling efforts and the waste team have responded to many requests for advice on recycling and additional recycling capacity; blue bins and brown bins have both been in high demand and collection frequencies have been increased at glass recycling sites.
5.02.03 Landfill site at Strong's Heath	Deferred	30/09/2020	12%	🟠	This project was to explore the options for resolving the Strong's Heath / London Road landfill site. Homes England has offered a grant that would allow the site to be resolved and potentially be used for a productive purpose. However, in order to confirm this, a viability project was commenced to assess the options and confirm the business case for change. The project for this performance year was to do intrusive site surveys, negotiations with the Environment Agency and changes to the site license. However, the COVID 19 national pandemic emergency has resulted in the work on site being put on hold, as this was not deemed as essential work and therefore subject to lockdown. It is unclear when work can commence but this overall project objective remains, albeit rescheduled.
5.03.01 Parking bay schemes	Not Started	31/03/2021	0%	🟠	Due to the constraints surrounding the COVID19 pandemic, in particular the challenges for operatives and residents within housing estate environments, progress on parking bay schemes is delayed. Work is currently underway to reschedule work whilst ensuring adherence to current public health guidance.
5.03.02 Parking enforcement contract	Completed	30/09/2020	100%	⭐	New contract successfully implemented 1st July 2020 and operating well after initial 2 months.
5.05.01 Horseshoe Lake play and parking improvements	In Progress	31/12/2020	5%	⭐	Connection to mains drainage underway. New management plan created. Other aspects of project may be affected by COVID.
5.06.01 Climate Change Action Plan and Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	The council's Corporate Plan sets out that addressing and mitigating man-made Climate Change, is a key and overarching strategic objective of the council. Progress towards a revised Climate Change strategy is well underway. Officers engaged the assistance of the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) to establish a set of baseline figures for the council's current carbon footprint.

The headline findings were that the council was directly responsible for the output of 6,288 tonnes CO2e (carbon dioxide equivalent). 3,427 t were generated by purchase of electricity (scope 2); 2,808 t were generated through the combustion of natural gas (scope 1); and 52 t were generated via emissions from council owned/leased fleet vehicles (scope 1). Roughly 25% of all our electricity outputs comes from the streetlighting infrastructure, 100% of which has already been converted to LED lanterns. At the time of the report the council was responsible for approximately 90 electric and 73 gas meters across its entire estate. Schools feature heavily in the top 5 emitters of both gas and electric, with Time Square (electric) and the Easthampstead Park (gas) also featuring too.

The next step will be for the strategic pillars of the strategy to be agreed and for this to be agreed at full council, now scheduled for Jan 2021 (taking into account the COVID 19 impact) |

☑ 5.06.02 Increase the range of digital services, reducing the number of customers visiting council	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	⭐	Newly designed customer journeys as a result of the Covid-19 situation have meant that it has not been necessary to see most customers in person at Time Square. As the Recovery activities are implemented we will retain these new ways of working.
☑ 5.06.03 Enhanced technology enabling more agile working	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	⭐	More staff and members have been provided with technology to facilitate remote working. Bring Your Own Device has been implemented, giving many officers and members much greater flexibility. Further analysis of field-working requirements will be central to developing the new Ways of Working coming out of the Covid-19 Recovery Cell.
☑ 5.06.04 Children's climate change conference	In Progress	30/09/2020	25%	⭐	The Climate Conference has been rescheduled for Friday 19th November 2021, so that pupils are able to engage in a face to face workshop and are more likely to be motivated and engaged by meeting the speakers in person. Chris Packham has been confirmed for this rescheduled date. All speakers have been notified of the new date, and all planning is in place.
☑ 5.07.02 National cycle route	In Progress	31/03/2021	90%	⭐	All construction works are now complete. The NCN422 route will be formally signed during 2020/21.

Quarterly Indicators	30/06/2020			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Target	RAG
L241 Income from CIL receipts				?!
L284 Number of homes given planning permission	102	38		!
› L286 % of successful planning appeals	68%	100%	64%	⭐
› L356 % of major planning applications determined within timescales	100%	83%	85%	⭐
› L357 % of minor planning applications determined within timescales	95%	94%	85%	⭐
› L358 % of other planning applications determined within timescales	95%	93%	85%	⭐
L418 Customer visits to Time Square	6,096	0	5,000	⭐
L434 Planning permissions granted for net additional dwellings not yet implemented	441	2,596		n/a
L446 Change in positive wellbeing score for social prescribing	12%	45%	10%	⭐
L447 Change in loneliness and social isolation score for social prescribing	8	17	10	⭐

Communities

Action	30/06/2020				
	Stage	Due Date	Percentage Complete	Status	Comment
☑ 6.01.01 Health check and action plan for retail centres	In Progress	31/12/2020	75%	🟠	The survey work has been largely completed but put in abeyance due to Covid 19. Anticipated completion by the end 2020.
☑ 6.02.01 Support for Community Associations	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	⭐	Support given to the community associations regarding COVID-19, including advice regarding H&S issues while the centres are shut, the Small Business Grant and support to some user groups. Once central government announced community centres could re-open, advice was given to the CAs about how to do this safely.
☑ 6.02.02 Cultural offer available through libraries	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	BFC Libraries are welcoming places where adults and children can immerse themselves in every form of art, from rhyme times to learning from poets and local artists, creating their own pictures, watching theatre, music and dance performances, discussing films and learning about arts and culture through books and reading. BFC Library Service is enabling the local community to access and participate in a variety of quality and diverse cultural experiences, whilst working with external partners such as the Arts Council and South Hill Park.
☑ 6.02.03 Develop the offer in Libraries to support the Adults and Children's agendas	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	The Library Service plays an important role in helping to combat social isolation by organising a large range of activities that enable members of the public to socialise, meet new people and make friends, including lunches for the over 60s, knitting groups, carers' coffee mornings and reminiscence sessions. The Home Library Service provides support to the elderly and vulnerable by delivering books and audio-visual materials to their homes, in addition to offering friendship and checking on the clients' welfare. In association with the NHS, chess clubs are run to assist with mental dexterity.

In addition, the Library Service provides a "Books on Prescription" service i.e. recommended self-help books covering a wide range of mental health issues and physical conditions, with members of the public being referred by GPs.

The Library Service has also played host to a number of Adoption and Fostering events for anyone considering this, in association with the Adoption and Fostering Team. The Service also plays a vital role in supporting literacy skills with the annual Summer Reading Challenge and new Winter Reading Challenge for children aged up to 11. |
☑ 6.03.01 Community Safety Plan	In Progress	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	Work continues again the priorities outlined in the CSP Plan with Q1 data for 20/21 currently being prepared for submission to the CSP Steering Group on 16 July 2020.
☑ 6.04.01 South Hill Park Service Level Agreement	In Progress	31/12/2020	75%	🔺	This is unlikely to be concluded in the near future, given the difficulties being experienced by the Trust due to Covid-19.
☑ 6.05.01 Bracknell Forest Lottery	Completed	30/06/2020	100%	✔	Complete
☑ 6.06.01 Housing caseworkers at MASH and Family Hubs	In Progress	31/08/2020	60%	⭐	Welfare and Housing are co-locating with MASH. Family Hubs is on hold due to the current Covid-19 situation.
☑ 6.07.01 Owned and leased properties for Homelessness	In Progress	31/03/2021	80%	⭐	Currently under review. Tenterden Lodge currently looking to site a one bedroom modular unit to the rear of the property.
☑ 6.07.02 Homelessness strategy	In Progress	31/12/2020	25%	🟠	Baseline research and consultation has been completed to inform the new strategy. The primary aims of the Homelessness Review were to understand the current situation in Bracknell Forest underpinned by a comprehensive needs analysis and to identify key aims and objectives that will inform the strategic direction of homelessness services between now and 2025. The service has formed a key part of the Council's covid-19 response - addressing needs, particularly of those at risk of rough sleeping. The additional pressure resulting from our covid-19 response has resulted in some delay to this action.
☑ 6.08.01 Affordable housing planning policy	Not Started	31/03/2021	0%	⭐	Updated affordable housing policy will be part of new local plan to be adopted in 2021/22. Current affordable housing policy is being implemented through the development management process.
☑ 6.08.02 Research phase for Housing Strategy	In Progress	31/03/2021	65%	⭐	The housing needs and affordability study commissioned by the Council's Housing and Planning Departments has concluded and the report has now been published. This comprehensive study provides evidence to underpin and inform both the Local Plan and the Council's future Housing Strategy.
☑ 6.09.01 Housing allocations policy	Not Started	31/03/2021	0%	🟠	Work has not yet commenced on policy development.
☑ 6.09.02 Implement new allocations policy for all live cases	Not Started	31/03/2022	0%	?	
☑ 6.10.01 Equality Scheme	In Progress	31/03/2021	20%	⭐	Initial work has started to develop an action plan of activity required to produce and launch a new equality scheme for 2021 to 2026. This includes a desk to review of best practice in other local authorities and an internal and external consultation process. Progress has been delayed due to the current situation.
☑ 6.10.02 Cultural Festival	In Progress	31/03/2021	50%	⭐	BFC had been working with the Lexicon Centre and Involve to combine the Community Day with the Cultural Day and host one event on 20 June 2020 in the Town Centre. Due to the Corona Virus social distancing restrictions the event has now been postponed.
☑ 6.10.03 Reuse of council owned property for under-represented groups	In Progress	31/12/2020	50%	⭐	Currently on going
☑ 6.10.04 Community groups supporting the half marathon	Deferred	31/03/2021	25%	⭐	Whilst progress on this initiative was going well the half marathon has been cancelled for 2020. This will be picked up again in 2021.

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Quarterly Indicators	30/06/2020			
	Last Quarter	This Quarter	Current Target	RAG
L185 Overall crime	1,666	1,198		n/a
L406 Number of visits to libraries	328,865	0	87,500	▲
L421 Number of community events held in libraries	2,506	0	538	▲
L422 Number of educational events held in libraries	299	0	63	▲
L424 Number of cases resolved by the partnership problem-solving groups	25	10		n/a
L425 % of homelessness preventions	54%	52%	53%	★

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Section 4: Corporate Health

a) Summary of People

Staff Turnover

Department	Previous Figure*	For the last 4 quarters	Notes
People	12.8%	13.7%	
Delivery	8.78%	8.08%	
Finance	7.46%	7.81%	
PPR	13.04%	10.97%	
OD, Transformation and HR	12.7%	11.3%	
Chief Executive's Office	16.6%	12.5%	
Total Voluntary Turnover	11.9%	11.9%	

* This figure relates to the previous 4 quarters and is taken from the preceding CPOR.

Comparator data	%
Total voluntary turnover for BFC, 2019/20:	11.9%
Average voluntary turnover rate UK public sector 2016:	10.0%
Average Local Government England voluntary turnover 2016:	14.0%

(Source: XPertHR Staff Turnover Rates and Cost Survey 2016 and LGA Workforce Survey 2016)

Staff Sickness

Department	Quarter 1 2020/21 (days per employee)	Previous Financial Year (Actual Average days per employee)	2020/21 Annual Average (days per employee)	Notes
People	1.4	9.38	5.6	
Delivery	2.37	6.61	9.48	
Finance	1.55	12.53	6.21	
PPR	0.47	4.06	1.89	
OD, Transformation and HR	0.8	8.29	3.2	
Chief Executive's Office	0	2.17	0	
Total staff sickness excluding maintained schools	1.4	8.28	5.6	

Comparator data	All employees, average days sickness absence per employee
Bracknell Forest Council 2019/20	8.28 days
English Local Authorities 2017/18	8.6 days

(Source: Local Government Workforce Survey 2017/18)

People
Absence in the last quarter has gone down dramatically in People Directorate across all areas. This may be a knock-on effect from the enforced working at home due to Covid-19. There are 6 members of staff currently on long term sick. Adult Social Care still has the highest sickness rate of the Directorate but that is to be expected with that service working in close to normal ways due to the nature of their work.

Delivery
Sickness Absence has increased on last quarter although there is some doubt as to some absence being recorded as Covid-19 sickness when it maybe self-isolation/shielding – these anomalies will be ironed out in the next quarter.

Central
Sickness rates within the Central Directorate have continued to decrease over the last quarter. The overall average for Central Directorates remains well below the authority figure for last year of 7.22.

b) Summary of Complaints

Department	Type of complaint	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total cumulative complaints	Outcome of all complaints received year to date
People: Adults	Statutory	12	2				1 – in progress 0 – upheld/fully substantiated 6 – partially upheld/partially substantiated 6 – not upheld/not substantiated 0 – no finding made
	Local Government Ombudsman	0	0				
People: Childrens	Statutory stage 1	11	7				3 – in progress 0 – upheld/fully substantiated 10 – partially upheld/partially substantiated 4 – not upheld/not substantiated 0 - no finding made 1 – proceeded to stage 2
	Statutory stage 2	1	0				0 – in progress 1 – partially upheld/partially substantiated 0 – not upheld/not substantiated
	Statutory stage 3	0	0				
	Stage 2	4	0				4 – in progress
	Stage 3	2	0				2 – in progress
	Local Government Ombudsman	0	0				0 – in progress 0 – Partially 0 – not upheld
People: Housing	Stage 2	1	0				1 – in progress
	Stage 3	0	0				
	Local Government Ombudsman	0	0				
Central	Stage 2	10	1				1 – in progress 2 – partially upheld/partially substantiated 2 – not upheld 6 - upheld 0 – proceeded to stage 3
	Stage 3	1	0				1 – in progress 0 – partially upheld/partially substantiated 0 – not upheld/not substantiated
	Local Government Ombudsman	0	0				
Delivery	Stage 2	0	0				
	Stage 3	0	0				
	Local Government Ombudsman	0	0				

People: Adults
There were 12 complaints in quarter 1. 6 of these were not upheld. This is 5 fewer than this time last year when there were 17 complaints in quarter 1.

People: Childrens
There were 18 complaints in quarter 1. This is 4 fewer than this time last year when there were 22 complaints in quarter 1.

Central
There were 11 complaints in quarter 1. This is up from 1 this time last year.

Delivery
There have been no complaints this quarter. Down from 3 complaints this time last year.

c) Strategic Risks and Audits

The Register was last reviewed by the Strategic Risk Management Group and the Corporate Management Team on 11th and 26th August respectively and the following key changes were made.

- The need to include a separate risk around demand for children's services was identified. Work is in progress to agree the wording for this risk and mitigating actions in consultation with the senior officers for the relevant areas.
- Increasing Risk 3 on Brexit to reflect a likelihood score of 5.
- The adult supply chain risk 6 has been increased for both unmitigated, current residual and target risk score reflecting the changing risk environment under Covid-19.
- Increasing the current residual and target risk scores risk score for Risk 7 because the Government's guidance has been that the full suite of safeguarding measures could not be delivered due to Covid-19.
- Reducing Risk 10 on information security following the outcome of the inspection from the Information Commissioner.
- To remove the housing risk as mitigating measures to address the risk have largely been implemented reducing the likelihood of this risk significantly.

There were no inadequate or partial audit opinion for quarter 1.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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By virtue of
Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive
Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England)
Regulations 2012.

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