



## Cabinet

Date: 3 February 2020  
Time: 7.00 pm  
Venue: Council Chamber  
District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe Bucks

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## Agenda

Item		Page
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	1
2.	<b>Minutes</b>	2 - 8
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	-
4.	<b>Response to the Motion Submitted to Council in October 2019- Climate Emergency Declaration</b>	9 - 12
5.	<b>New Cemetery, Penn Road</b>	13 - 26
6.	<b>Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Private Sector and Affordable Housing Strategy 2020 - 2022</b>	27 - 79
7.	<b>Public Spaces Protection Order Extension</b>	80 - 86
8.	<b>Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report for Period 9/ Quarter 3 Ending 31 December 2019</b>	87 - 99
9.	<b>File on Action Taken Under Delegated Authority</b>	100
10.	<b>Supplementary Items (If any)</b>	100
11.	<b>Urgent Items (If any)</b>	100

<b>Item</b>		<b>Page</b>
<b>EXEMPT</b>		
12.	<b>File on Action Taken Under Exempt Delegated Powers</b>	101
13.	<b>Supplementary Exempt Items (If any)</b>	101
14.	<b>Urgent Items (If any)</b>	101

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## **AGENDA**

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive apologies for absence.

### **2. MINUTES**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11 November 2019 (attached).

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any disclosure of disclosable pecuniary interests by Members relating to items on the agenda. If any Member is uncertain as to whether an interest should be disclosed, he or she is asked if possible to contact the District Solicitor prior to the meeting.

Members are reminded that if they are declaring an interest, they should state the nature of that interest whether or not they are required to withdraw from the meeting.

## Cabinet Minutes

Date: 11 November 2019

Time: 7.00 - 8.00 pm

**PRESENT:** Councillor Ms K S Wood (Executive Leader of the Council - in the Chair)

Councillor Mrs J A Adey	- Cabinet Member for Environment
Councillor D H G Barnes	- Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Engagement and Strategy
Councillor S Broadbent	- Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor D A Johncock	- Cabinet Member for Planning
Councillor Mrs J D Langley	- Cabinet Member for Housing
Councillor D M Watson	- Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor L Wood	- Cabinet Member for Digital Development & Customer Services

### By Invitation

Councillor C Etholen	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Digital Development and Customer Service
Councillor A R Green	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Unitary Transition
Councillor M Harris	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration
Councillor M E Knight	- Leader of the East Wycombe Independent Party
Councillor R Raja	- Leader of the Labour Group
Councillor S Saddique	- Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources
Councillor P R Turner	- Chairman of Council

**Also present:** Councillors Mrs L M Clarke OBE, A D Collingwood, A E Hill and S K Raja

### **PURDAH PERIOD - GENERAL ELECTION**

At the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman reminded all present that the purdah period had now commenced, and she asked Members not to make any political statements.

### **39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Adoh (Deputy Cabinet Member for Engagement and Strategy), Z Ahmed (Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing), Ms S Brown (Deputy Cabinet Member for Community), D Carroll (Cabinet Member for Youth and External Partnerships), R Gaffney (Chairman of Improvement and Review Commission), G Hall (Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment.), G Peart (Cabinet Member for Community) and A Turner (Deputy Cabinet Member for Planning).

#### **40 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That (i) the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 21 October 2019 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **41 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **42 CABINET RESPONSE TO THE REFERRAL FROM HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN COMMITTEE - HIGH WYCOMBE TOWN MARKET**

Cabinet had before it a report that set out the recommendations from the High Wycombe Town Committee that the market be restricted on the number of days it operates for further hot food sales and that the option of an international food market be investigated. The High Wycombe Town Committee had made the recommendations at its meeting on 10 September 2019.

The Chairman of the High Wycombe Town Committee (HWTC) presented the report to the meeting and invited Cabinet to consider the Town Committee's recommendations on the High Wycombe Town Market. It was noted that the report before Cabinet also included officers' comments and the Cabinet's recommendation on the HWTC'S proposals.

Councillor Mrs L Clarke OBE, A Hill and S Raja then addressed the meeting regarding their concerns in relation to the durability of the market going forward. The Cabinet Member reassured the meeting that the market was an important fabric of the town and that future options for the market had been included in the Regeneration Strategy. Cabinet confirmed that the consensus among Members was that they all wanted the market to remain prosperous and growing.

**RESOLVED:** That (i) the suggestions from the High Wycombe Town Committee be noted;

(ii) the Council continue to welcome discussions with the operator to maximise future opportunities; and

(iii) the Council remain open to exploring international food market opportunities.

#### **43 CABINET RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE IMPROVEMENT AND REVIEW COMMISSION - PARKING TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS**

The report before Cabinet detailed the Cabinet responses to each of the Improvement and Review Commission's Parking Task and Finish Group (TFG) recommendations. In September 2019, the recommendations of the Group's review of Parking had been presented to Cabinet and it was agreed that the responses would be presented to a future Cabinet meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Environment summarised the responses to the recommendations and Members noted that the reasons for changing or rejecting certain recommendations had been detailed in the report. She also expressed her thanks to the Task and Finish Group Members for all their hard work.

The Vice-Chairman of the Improvement and Review Commission, Councillor A Collingwood, gave a verbal presentation of the findings of the review that had been undertaken by the TFG. Councillor Collingwood thanked the TFG Members and all those that had contributed or supported the proposals.

David Skinner, the Acting Chief Executive, informed Members that the detailed work undertaken on the review of parking was being fed into the unitary process.

Cabinet also placed on record thanks to the TFG and its Chairman and officers for all their hard work.

After due consideration, the following decisions were made to formally respond to the recommendations made by the Parking Task and Finish Group.

**RESOLVED:** That (i) the proposed recommendations that had been contained in the Parking Task and Finish Group report to Cabinet in September 2019 be noted; and

(ii) the Cabinet responses set out in the report be agreed.

#### **44 TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2019/20**

The report before Cabinet provided the meeting with information relating to the mid-year report on Treasury Management activities, including details of the progress made during the year compared to the Treasury Management Strategy approved by Council in February 2019. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Audit Committee had considered and endorsed the Treasury Management Mid-year report at its meeting on 17 October 2019.

The following decision was made to promote effective financial management and comply with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations 2003 and other relevant guidance.

**RESOLVED:** That the treasury management mid-year report for 2019/20, covering the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019 be noted and approved.

#### **45 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR PERIOD 6/ QUARTER 2 ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2019**

The report before Cabinet set out the budgetary position at the end of September 2019 and reflected what had been reported to the Senior Management Board. The significant variables were summarised within the report.

The following decisions were made as the Cabinet approved a budget each year within the context of a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to achieve the

Council's priorities. The report updated Cabinet Members on the 2019/20 forecast position for Quarter 2.

**RESOLVED:** That the forecast outturn position for the financial year 2019/20 as at end of September 2019 be noted.

#### **46 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

Cabinet received the following files on actions taken under delegated powers:

Digital Development & Customer Services	DDCS/04/19
Planning & Sustainability	PS/14/19

#### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** That pursuant to Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Minute Nos 45 and 47 to 50, because of their reference to matters which contain exempt information as defined as follows:

**Minute 45 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report for Period 6/ Quarter 2 Ending 30 September 2019 – Appendices C1 to C3**

**Minute 47 Princes Risborough Relief Road – Phase One**

**Minute 48 Use of S106 Accrued Funds for Affordable Housing**

**Minute 49 26 – 28 White Hart Street – Construction Contract**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations)

**Minute 50 - File on Action taken under Exempt Delegated Powers**

**Economic Development & Regeneration sheet nos: EDR/37/19 - EDR/44/19**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

(The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations)

#### **47 PRINCES RISBOROUGH RELIEF ROAD - PHASE ONE**

The report before Cabinet set out the projected cost of Phase 1 of the Princes Risborough Relief Road, highlighting the associated costs and outlining the main risks. Cabinet authority was sought to progress the scheme through detailed design and commencing the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process/land negotiations. It was confirmed that a further update would be provided to the new Buckinghamshire Council in 2020/21 to determine the way forward.

Members recalled that the Princes Risborough relief road was a scheme that assisted a 2,500 home expansion of Princes Risborough that was allocated in the recently adopted Wycombe District Local Plan. It was the largest single housing allocation in the south of Buckinghamshire, playing a critical role in meeting the housing target for Wycombe District.

The following recommendations were made to ensure that the project remained on track with Homes England, with particular regards to the Housing Infrastructure Funding (HIF) agreement.

**Recommended:** That (i) the latest projected costs for Princes Risborough Relief Road Phase 1 and support Option 3 which involved progression of the scheme through detailed design and commencing CPO process/land negotiations (including the letting of a contract by Buckinghamshire County Council to progress design work), funded from the existing Wycombe District Council capital programme funds, at a cost to the authority as set out in paragraph 18 of the report be noted;

(ii) the funds set out in paragraph 18 of the report be released from the Princes Risborough Relief Road Phase 1 budget, which forms part of the WDC approved Capital Plan, as set out above;

(iii) an update report be brought to the new Buckinghamshire Council in 2020/21 to update on costs and potential section 106 and other income, prior to any commitment to commence construction or undertake substantive land purchase; and

(iv) It be noted that the report had been through the Informal Shadow Executive process and would be referred to Formal Shadow Executive on 12th November 2019 for consideration.

#### **48 USE OF S106 ACCRUED FUNDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Cabinet approval was sought to release developer contribution funds to enable Paradigm Housing to develop 35 additional affordable rented homes in High Wycombe. The Cabinet Member confirmed that the Council would benefit from nomination rights in perpetuity for the additional 35 affordable rented homes in High Wycombe.

The following recommendations were made to award a grant from the accumulated S106 financial developer contributions for affordable housing, to Paradigm Housing



in return for nomination rights to an additional 35 new build affordable rented units in High Wycombe.

**Recommended:** Pending approval by the Shadow Executive, a recommendation be made to Full Council that:

(i) a supplementary estimate to support funding as set out in paragraph 6 of the report be awarded to Paradigm Housing Association on the terms set out in paragraph 23 of the report;

(ii) the funding be provided from accrued S106 Affordable Housing contributions;

(iii) the award be paid in instalments, the final payment to be made upon handover of the completed homes which were subject to a funding agreement due to be completed between the Council and the association; and

(iv) the Head of Housing, Environment and Community in conjunction with the District Lawyer be granted delegated powers to enter into the funding agreements on the basis of the terms set out in the report.

#### **49 26 - 28 WHITE HART STREET - CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT**

Cabinet approval was sought to enter into a construction contract for the refurbishment of 26 -28 White Hart Street. A competitive tender exercise had been conducted.

The following decisions were made to enter into a construction contract.

**RESOLVED:** That: (i) the virement to meet the revised scheme cost estimate as set out in section [4] of the report be approved; and

(ii) delegated authority be granted to the Acting Chief Executive, Head of Finance, and Major Projects Executive, to sign a construction contract for the refurbishment of 26 - 28 White Hart Street, conditional upon the cost of works falling within the capital budget for the project.

#### **50 FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER EXEMPT DELEGATED POWERS**

Cabinet received the following files on exempt actions taken under delegated powers:

Economic Development & Regeneration Sheet Nos: EDR/37/19 – EDR/44/19

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Chairman

**The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:**

- Ian Hunt - Democratic Services Manager
- Catherine MacKenzie - Principal Democratic Services Officer
- David Skinner - Acting Chief Executive & Head of Finance & Commercial



Report For:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 3 February 2020
Part:	Part 1 - Open

<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>RESPONSE TO THE MOTION SUBMITTED TO COUNCIL IN OCTOBER 2019 - CLIMATE EMERGENCY DECLARATION</b>
Cabinet Member: Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Councillor Mrs Julia Adey Carl Griffin 01494 421742 carl.griffin@wycombe.gov.uk
Wards affected:	All
Reason for the Decision:	To support national and international efforts to minimise the effects of climate change.
<b>Proposed Recommendation:</b>	<p><b>That:</b></p> <p><b>Council resolves to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i) Recognise that climate change, and the associated challenges it brings, constitutes a global emergency.</b></li> <li><b>(ii) Understand that, although it contributes 1% of global carbon emissions, the UK must irrespectively lead by example in promoting change both within the UK and globally.</b></li> <li><b>(iii) Note that Wycombe District Council has already made significant progress to date in preserving the environment, as evidenced by its strong recycling performance and the adoption of an air quality action plan. It has recently developed supplementary planning documents requiring 25% tree canopy cover to be included within developments, is at the public consultation stage for an air quality supplementary planning document and has recently launched an anti-engine idling campaign, signing its air quality management areas, so informing drivers of this.</b></li> <li><b>(iv) Wycombe District Council declares a climate emergency by supporting the UK government target to be net-zero by 2050,</b></li> </ul>

	<p><b>as contained in the 2008 Climate Change Act (as amended).</b></p> <p><b>(v) Agree that addressing climate change should be considered as one of the priorities of the new Buckinghamshire Council and recommend that it seeks opportunities to achieve a net-zero level as soon as reasonably possible before the 2050 UK government target.</b></p>
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	<p>Risk: No perceived risk</p> <p>Equalities: No equalities issues – The declaration will cover all areas of the district and everyone is affected by climate change.</p> <p>Health &amp; Safety: Not applicable.</p>
Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b> Whilst there is no legal requirement for climate emergency to be declared, it is considered prudent to set as a priority in view of the steps taken by other countries following the UN Climate Change Conference, Poland, December 2018 to take measures to limit climate warming. The report also accounts for the motion to full Council.</p> <p><b>S.151 Officer:</b> There are no direct financial implications of this decision. Any additional financial requirements of any actions that are developed will need to be built into the medium term financial planning framework and budget setting process.</p>
Consultees:	None
Options:	<p><b>i) <i>Declare a climate emergency as recommended i.e. supporting the UK government target of net zero by 2050</i></b></p> <p>Evaluation: Declaring a climate emergency as recommended will align us with Buckinghamshire County Council's declaration that was made in September 2019. However, it will put our ambition at a lower level than the other district councils in Buckinghamshire who have all suggested a target of 2030.</p> <p><b>ii) <i>Declare a climate emergency with a determination to support a 2030 target to be net zero carbon.</i></b></p> <p>Evaluation: Declaring a climate emergency with a determination to support a 2030 target to be net zero carbon will align us with both Aylesbury Vale District Council's and Chiltern</p>

	<p>District Council's declarations that were made in 2019. However it will put our ambition at a higher level than Buckinghamshire County Council and the UK government who have both set a target of 2050.</p> <p><b>iii)</b> <i>Whilst Wycombe District Council fully supports the move towards being carbon neutral at the earliest date, it would seem sensible in light of the formation of the new Buckinghamshire Council in April 2020 for the new Council to agree a climate change declaration at its earliest opportunity. It recognises that this is only possible once detailed baselining work on the newly formed council's emissions have been carried out.</i></p> <p>Evaluation: This option will leave Wycombe DC as the only local authority in the Thames Valley region that hasn't declared a climate emergency. It's main point of encouraging the new Buckinghamshire Council to agree a climate change declaration at its earliest opportunity is already sufficiently covered in the recommended declaration (option i).</p>
Next Steps:	Wycombe District Council must continue to encourage, at all stages of its development, that environmental considerations form a large part of the decision making process of the soon to be Buckinghamshire Council.
Background Papers:	None.
Abbreviations:	None

#### Detailed Report

1. The report has been drafted in response to the Motion submitted to Full Council in October 2019. The following Notice of Motion was submitted by Councillor R Raja and seconded by Councillor K Ahmed.
2. In accordance with Standing Order 12.7, Cabinet "shall report back by way of recommendation to Full Council and the report shall advise the Council as to whether or not the motion should be adopted or give such other advice as is appropriate".

#### **Motion Text (as proposed by Cllr R Raja and seconded by Cllr K Ahmed)**

3. World leaders are at last taking an interest in the potential devastation caused by global warming and climate change. Climate Science experts from around the world tell us that unless we switch away from fossil fuels within the next 12 years, we will be unable to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. We face a Climate Emergency. Reducing energy use and switching to clean energy will increase our energy security, improve our air quality, minimise fuel poverty, boost our local economy and provide jobs and training.
4. Wycombe District Council is prepared to play its small part in this big debate by declaring a climate emergency and committing to being carbon neutral by the year 2030. This move

will raise the profile of this vital issue with our residents and enable us to secure additional external support and funding. Wycombe District Council also agrees to sign up to the covenant of Mayors, to track our progress and itself with Towns around the world who are engaged in cutting emissions.

5. Wycombe District Council would no longer exist after April 2020 and therefore the motion has been submitted to Cabinet under Standing Order 12.6 where more detailed thought could be effected and suitable recommendations made for the new Unitary Authority could be developed.



Report For:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 3 February 2020
Part:	Part 1 - Open

**SUMMARY**

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>NEW CEMETERY, PENN ROAD – REQUEST TO INCREASE THE PROJECT BUDGET AND FOR DELEGATED AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO A BUILD CONTRACT.</b>
Cabinet Member: Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Councillor Graham Peart Nigel Dicker 01494 423701 nigel.dicker@wycombe.gov.uk
Wards affected:	All High Wycombe Town unparished wards and Hazlemere South.
Reason for the Decision:	<p>Wycombe is running out of burial capacity, and the project is needed to meet the legal requirement to be able to provide burials in the High Wycombe Town area.</p> <p>WDC’s Cabinet approved an initial budget to build the new cemetery in March 2017 and was informed of a potential outturn cost of £1,679,790. The cost of the works has increased by £253,210 resulting in total revised cost of £1,993,000.</p> <p>Allocated funds to date and final required commitment are as follows: -</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">£404,000 SER commitment (March 2017) £886,000 CIL commitment to date £389,790 Acknowledged requirement (March 2017) <u>£253,210</u> Additional cost to be funded</p> <p>Total: £1,933,000 project cost</p> <p>Options for funding are either from: 1) CIL (in full or in part) 2) Loan from the Council or 3) Special Expenses Reserve (topped up with CIL).</p> <p>The project was granted full planning permission on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and tenders for a build contract were returned in November 2019.</p> <p>Delegated authority is now requested to enter into the build contract for up to £1.933m to ensure final designs are concluded within the budget, without referring back to Cabinet.</p>

<p><b>Proposed Decision:</b></p>	<p><b>That:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>(i) Cabinet agrees to enter into a build contract with the successful bidder to build the new cemetery at Penn Road, High Wycombe;</b></li> <li><b>(ii) delegated authority be granted to the Acting Chief Executive to agree and approve the contract and final designs and sign the build contract on behalf of WDC;</b></li> <li><b>(iii) Cabinet acknowledges and approves the increase in the cost of £253,210, resulting in total project cost of £1,933,000;</b></li> <li><b>(iv) the remaining funding of the project from the Special Expenses Reserve: £143k and CIL: £500k be agreed; and</b></li> <li><b>(v) the £50,000 annual maintenance cost of the new facility be built into the budget setting process.</b></li> </ul>
<p>Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications</p>	<p><b>Risk:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Failing to proceed will risk Wycombe District Council not fulfilling its legal duty and obligation to provide burial areas for its residents within the district.</li> <li>(ii) Not giving delegated authority to enter into a build contract might delay delivery, resulting in increases to the current tender prices, received in November 2019.</li> </ul> <p><b>Equalities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 places a duty (“the public sector equality duty”) on the Council, in the exercise of its functions to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not. One of the protected characteristics is religion or belief.</li> <li>(ii) An Equalities Impact Assessment describing steps taken to comply with this duty has been completed and is appended to this report for members to duly consider. (Appendix B)</li> </ul>



	<p>Health &amp; Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Surveys carried out include: topographical, ecological, environmental and geotechnical investigations on the proposed site to ensure it is safe and fit for purpose.</li> <li>(ii) A CDM officer has been appointed and a Pre-Construction CDM file has been prepared Oct 2019.</li> </ul>
Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b> Subject to procurement and decision making processes being followed, the Council has power under S111 of the Local Government Act 1972 to undertake the development described in this report.</p> <p><b>S.151 Officer:</b> The remaining funding of £643k for this investment will be met from the special expense reserves and local CIL allocation for HWTC. The ongoing maintenance costs will need to be factored into the budget setting process.</p>
Consultees:	<p><b>Penn, Hazlemere, Hughenden &amp; Chepping Wycombe Parish Councils.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Statutory formal Public Consultation was carried out as part of the planning permission awarded for the Cemetery, in September 2019.</li> <li>(ii) Two public consultations were held on 16th and 25th October 2018 in Hazlemere and High Wycombe, when developing the cemetery designs.</li> </ul>
Options:	Options for the location of new cemetery for High Wycombe were considered by HWTC in 4 March 2014. A final site was selected by HWTC on 23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2015.
Next Steps:	Sign off cemetery designs, award a building contract for the new cemetery, and start on site.
Background Papers:	<p><b>4 March 2014 HWTC New Cemetery options paper</b>  <b>23 June 2015 HWTC New Cemetery options paper</b>  <b>7 March 2017 HWTC New Cemetery funding paper</b>  <b>13 March 2017 WDC Cabinet paper new Cemetery Funding</b>  <b>4 February 2019 Cabinet Budget papers</b></p>
Abbreviations:	<p>HWTC High Wycombe Town Committee  WDC – Wycombe District Council  CIL – Community Infrastructure Level  CDM – Construction Design Management</p>

## **Background and Issues**

1.0 This report was considered by the High Wycombe Town Committee at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2020 and it was recommended that the remaining funding of the project from the Special Expenses Reserve: £143k and CIL: £500k be authorised.

### **1.1 Background and Issues**

1.2 Wycombe District Council is in need of more burial space so that it can continue to fulfil its obligation to provide burial areas for residents. Options for the cemetery location were considered in the HWTC paper in 2014, and a site was selected in 2015.

1.3 Designs were developed and a public consultation took place in October 2018. A further statutory public consultation was carried out in 2019 as part of the planning process, and planning permission was awarded for the new Penn Road Cemetery in September 2019. A general plan of the new cemetery can be found at Appendix A.

1.4 A competitive tender process was undertaken in November 2019 in order to select a contractor. This resulted in tender returns at circa 15% higher than the original budget requirement, set in March 2017. The cost of the project has increased from the estimated £1,679,790 to £1,933,000. The original budget was an estimate only, and the revised requirement reflects inflation between 2017 and 2019 and the current state of the market, i.e. actual costs quoted by bidders in tender returns. Permission is therefore now required to increase the overall project budget by £253,210.

1.5 In the March 2017, HWTC and WDC Cabinet approved the total project budget of £1,679,790. From this approved budget, the funding of phases 1 & 2 for £1,290,000 was agreed at the time. It was also agreed that the remaining funding for phase 3, of £389,790, would be approved at a future date.

1.6 Officers are therefore now seeking authorisation for the use of funds from the Special Expenses Reserve (SER) of £143k and for the use of CIL funding of £500k, to cover the remaining funding requirement for phase 3 and the additional costs revealed by the tendering exercise.

### **2.0 Revenue Costs**

2.1 The new cemetery planning permission requires that *'maintenance arrangements are arranged and agreed before any works commence on site, that might otherwise be left unaccounted for'*. In time, the new cemetery will generate income and this will help offset the costs of burial services and maintenance. However, the March 2017 HWTC and WDC cabinet report noted that the new cemetery will generate a cost to Special Expenses Reserve. This includes grounds maintenance, overheads for buildings, maintenance costs, business rates, repairs, and renewals. With an adjustment for inflation, this additional annual revenue requirement is now estimated to be £50,000 and it is requested that this requirement is built into the budget setting process.

### **3.0 Conclusions**

3.1 HWTC and WDC Cabinet are requested to agree the recommendations above to enable construction to start on the new cemetery at Penn Road.

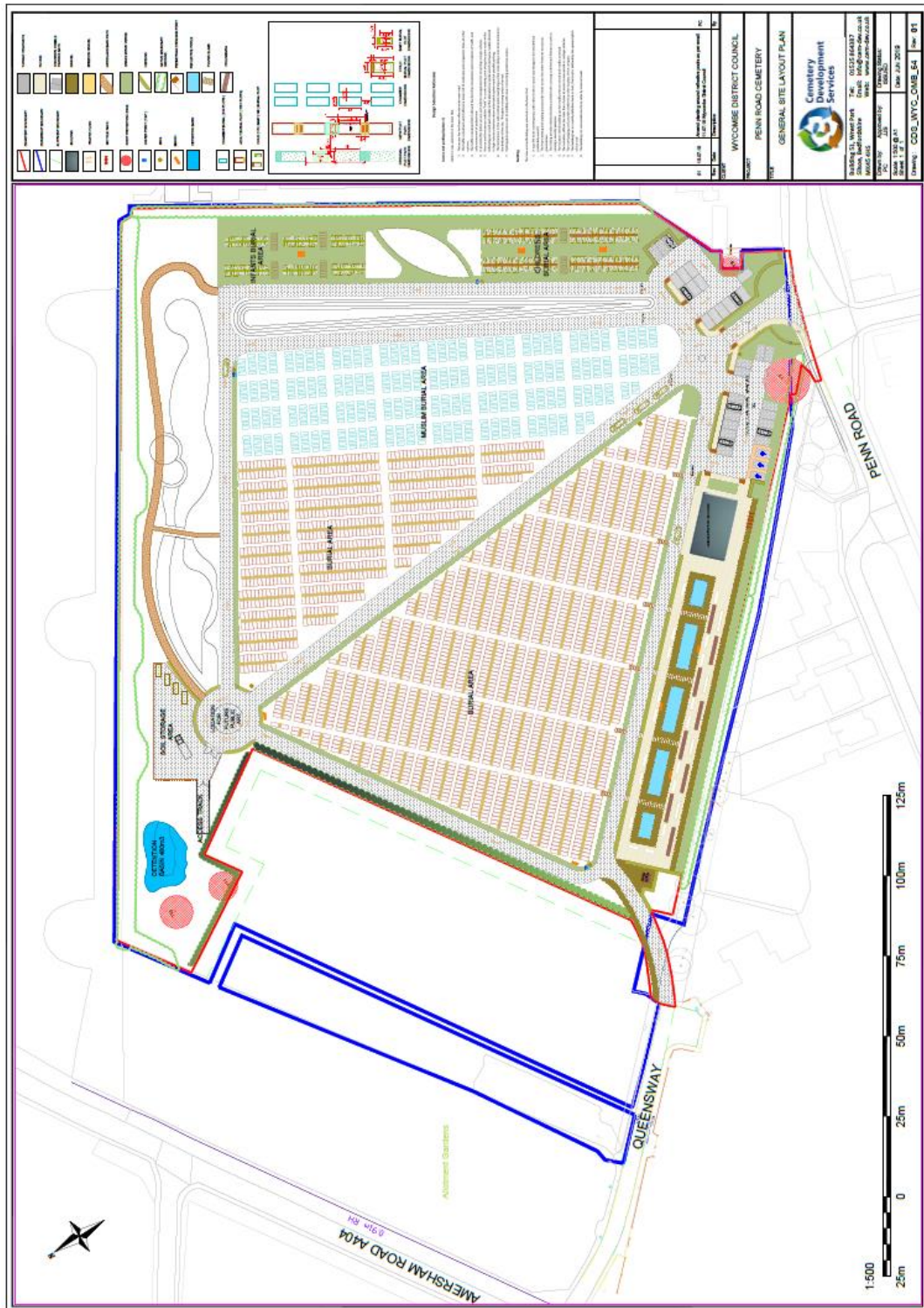
### **Appendices:**

Appendix A: Site Plan, Proposed Penn Road Cemetery.

Appendix B: Equalities Impact Assessment.

**Appendix A**

**1. General Cemetery Site plan as agreed by Planning Sept 2019**





### Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Name of project/strategy/service being assessed</b>	<b>Proposed new Penn Road Cemetery – Queensway, Hazlemere</b>	<b>Cabinet meeting date</b> <i>If applicable</i>	
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Community Services</b>	<b>Date EIA created</b>	<b>04/07/16</b> <b>Reviewed</b> <b>20/12/19</b>
<b>Name of Completing Officer</b>	<b>Andy Sherwood</b>		
<b>Approved by Head of Service</b>	<b>Nigel Dicker</b>	<b>Date approved</b>	

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's) are designed to ensure that Wycombe District Council complies with all relevant legislation and fulfils its duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This comprises of three limbs which are set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. This requires that all public bodies, in the exercise of its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Each service area has an Equality Champion (see the Equalities tab on WySpace for an up to date list). Please ensure that the relevant Champion is aware that an EIA is being undertaken as, if needed, your Equality Champion can provide advice and guidance on completing the EIA.



## Stage 1 – Initial Scope of the Equality Impact Assessment

Please answer the five questions below to determine whether a full EIA needs to be conducted.

Will the service/policy/strategy affect any people or groups of people directly (including staff/members of the public)?	Yes	Yes	No	
Will it affect how other services are provided?	Yes		No	No
Will it have employment implications?	Yes		No	No
Do you have information suggesting that this service/policy/strategy will affect particular groups of people?	Yes	Yes	No	
Do you need further information or to undertake further research to answer any of the above questions?	Yes		No	No

If the answer to any of the above is 'yes', then a full EIA will need to be carried out and Sections 2- 4 will need to be completed.

If the answer to all of the above is 'no' then a full EIA does not need to be carried out, but to ensure consistency in approach, the EIA will need to go through the Challenge Process. Then, if following the Challenge Process:

- a) it is agreed with the Policy Officer that no further stages need to be completed the Head of Service needs to approve the assessment and return a Word electronic copy to the Policy Officer for publication.

OR

- b) it is agreed with the Policy Officer that Stages 2 - 4 need to be completed, then the Head of Service will need to approve only once the full EIA is completed at which point a Word electronic copy should be returned to the Policy Officer for publication.



### Stage 2 – Information Gathering/Data Collection

<p><b>What are the aims of the strategy/policy/procedure?</b> Why is it necessary? What is it trying to achieve?</p>	<p>The creation of a new cemetery at Queensway in Hazlemere.</p> <p>The current cemetery within High Wycombe is close to reaching capacity. The children’s burial area will be full in approximately 3 to 4 years; non Church of England burials will reach capacity in 8 – 10 years and Church of England burials will be at full capacity in 15 – 18 years. There are on average a 150 burials a year at the current cemetery; this figure is likely to increase as the population increases within the High Wycombe Town Committee (HWTC) area over the next decade.</p> <p>The building of a new cemetery within Wycombe District will enable burials to take place within the District and is funded and supported by High Wycombe Town Committee. The new cemetery will, in the future, also feature designated columbaria enabling people to have a specific location to inter ashes.</p>
<p><b>Which aspects of the policy/strategy/procedure are relevant to equalities?</b> NB A list of impacts is NOT required at this stage, just identify areas – can be a bullet point list.</p>	<p>New cemetery will impact on the following: Religion Age Disability</p>
<p><b>Identify the main data sources/information gathered</b> e.g. Workforce reports, census data, staff survey etc.</p>	<p>Current burial rates at the cemetery in High Wycombe. Over the last two years (2018 &amp; 2019) the average number of burial remains relatively constant at a 150 burials a year.</p> <p>Census (2011) and demographic data (including population forecasts provided by BCC in 2014) for Wycombe District area. The 2011 Census<sup>1</sup> showed that 171,644 people were resident within Wycombe District which is an increase of 6% since the last census (2001)<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>Buckinghamshire County Council published additional demographic work in 2015, and calculated that in 2014 the population of Wycombe District had increased to 174,878 people<sup>2</sup>.</p>



## WDC Equality Assessment form

people ● place ● pounds

	<p>In addition, they have projected that the population of Wycombe District is likely to increase to 186,500 people by 2025, an increase in the population of over 11,000 people in ten years.</p> <p>From the 2011 census data<sup>1</sup> – 57% of those who responded within Wycombe District identified as affiliated to the Christian religion (98,182 people). The size of the group who stated that they had no religious affiliation has increased by 64% since 2001, from 16% (25,279) to 24% (41,582) in 2011. Other religions accounted for 11% of the Wycombe District population in 2011 and those who did not state a religion accounted for 7%.</p> <p>The ethnic makeup of the district (according to the 2011 census<sup>1</sup>) is 81% White British, Irish or European with the remaining 19% coming from a wide ethnic/ heritage base which includes, but is not limited to Pakistani, Black Caribbean, Chinese, Indian and Black African people, most of whom live in High Wycombe. 12% of people identified as either Asian, or Asian British (including Chinese); 3% of Wycombe residents identified as Black or Black British and 3% identified as having a Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Heritage. No other group comprise more than 1% of the total population.</p> <p>(<sup>1</sup> <a href="http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/community/research/2011-census-profiles/">http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/community/research/2011-census-profiles/</a> &amp; accessed 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016 &amp; <sup>2</sup> <a href="http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/2906123/Appendix-Projections-Dec2014-.pdf">http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/2906123/Appendix-Projections-Dec2014-.pdf</a> accessed 28<sup>th</sup> June 2016)</p>
<p><b>How have you engaged with service users/members of the public/staff?</b> e.g. staff forums, consultations, questionnaires etc.</p>	<p>Planning permission was granted in Sept 2019. The permission included a consultation on the project and considerations on the design.</p>
<p><b>Is the responsibility for this strategy/policy/procedure shared with another service/organisation/agency?</b></p>	<p>The site shares boundaries with other local Parishes Councils: Hazlemere Parish Council, The Parish Council of Chepping Wycombe, The Parish Council of Penn &amp; The Parish Council of Hughenden</p>
<p><b>Is further consultation/research or data collection planned or required?</b> Is so, what is the aim of the research? Why is it needed?</p>	<p>Planning permission was agreed in Sept 2019.</p>



### Stage 3 – Impact Assessment & Analysis

Areas to consider	Impact Identified Y/N	Description of impact and likelihood of occurrence (positive, negative, no impact; high/medium/low likelihood)
<p><b>Protected Characteristics</b> (i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage &amp; civil partnership, pregnancy &amp; maternity, race, religion &amp; belief, sex and sexual orientation)</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p><b>Age (Positive impact)</b> – The current Snowdrop Burial garden is close to reaching capacity. Once this has reached capacity, there would be no designated area for baby and child burials within Wycombe District. Whilst, some such burials could be accommodated within the current main cemetery site, this would not be ideal. By building a new cemetery a separate designated area can be designed to enable an appropriate burial and memorial area for baby &amp; child burials for people within the High Wycombe Town Committee area. This would enable local residents to have a local burial area, rather than being required to travel out of area (as would happen once the current cemetery has run out of space).</p> <p>In addition, the new Cemetery site is predominantly flat. This will enable ease of access for all people, but is something which older people may particularly find helpful when navigating the Cemetery.</p> <p><b>Disability (Positive impact)</b> – the current cemetery within High Wycombe is set on a hill and the cemetery features steep slopes and terraced burials. Whilst the site is accessible, it can be difficult for people with limited mobility to access and visit particular grave sites. Whilst every effort is made to assist those with mobility requirements, some areas of the current cemetery are still difficult to access. In contrast, the new cemetery at Queensway is a mainly flat site. Considerations for those with limited mobility/disabilities will be incorporated into the design enabling people to access the majority of the site without restriction (including wheelchair accessible toilets, a flatter layout, and wheelchair accessible routes).</p>





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		<p><b>Religion (Positive Impact)</b> – Muslim burial spaces at the current cemetery will reach capacity within the next 8 – 10 years. Once capacity is reached, any additional Muslim burials would need to take place out of the High Wycombe Town Committee area which would not be ideal for local residents. The new cemetery at Queensway will have an allocated area for Muslim burials ensuring that the burial vaults are orientated correctly towards Mecca.</p> <p>In addition, burial spaces will be available for Church of England, Catholic and Jewish faiths which can be consecrated at time of burial as well as non-consecrated burial spaces. This will enable burials for people of all religions and faiths and those of no religion or faith.</p> <p>There will also be columbaria where people can inter the ashes of their loved ones should they wish to do so. This again can be used by people of all religions and faiths</p>
<p><b>Other relevant groups</b> (E.g. low income, ex-armed forces personnel, homeless people etc.)</p>		<p><b>Low Income (Positive Impact)</b> - the building of a new cemetery within the Wycombe District area should have a positive impact on people with low incomes. Once the current cemetery reaches capacity, residents would be required to travel out of the Wycombe District Council area for funerals and/or to visit burial plots. An out of area burial is also likely to incur additional non-resident fees. By providing a cemetery within the district, High Wycombe Town Committee is ensuring a local service is provided and that residents will only have to pay a resident burial fee rather than an out of area burial cost.</p>

NB. Please note that when considering impacts in relation to marriage & civil partnership - the duty is solely to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against this protected characteristic.



### Stage 4 - Equalities Improvement Plan

Protected Characteristic/Other relevant groups	Impact Identified Y/N	Measures identified to reduce/mitigate impact (Also include all positive actions included in your proposals)	Review date	Review update/ monitoring comments	Officer/Service Responsible
Disability	Y	<p><b>Positive</b> – ensure design of new cemetery is easily accessible to those with limited mobility/disability.</p> <p><b>Positive</b> – ensure all signage and layout information is clean and simple.</p> <p><b>Positive</b> – 2 x wheelchair accessible toilets could be provided.</p> <p><b>Positive</b> – The design and number of car parking spaces at the new cemetery will create better parking conditions for those with disabilities.</p>			
Religion	Y	<p><b>Positive</b> - design of the burial spaces will enable people to choose appropriate burial spaces:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muslim burial vaults appropriately orientated;</li> <li>• Burial spaces for those of Church of England/Catholic/Jewish faith which can be consecrated at time of interment;</li> <li>• Non-consecrated burial spaces for those of no religion or faith.</li> </ul>			



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		In addition, interment of ashes within columbaria will also be available to all.			
<b>Age</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Positive</b> – the creation of a designated Children’s Burial area within the Cemetery will enable these burials to take place close to town. In addition, the design of this burial area will be separated enabling people to leave appropriate tributes to children & babies as required.			

<b>Area of Consideration</b>	<b>How are/will we work to:</b> (Also include all positive actions included in your proposals)	<b>Review date</b>	<b>Review update/ monitoring comments</b>	<b>Officer/Service Responsible</b>
Eliminate discrimination, harassment & victimisation	<b>N/A</b>			
Advance equality of opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By offering different burial options (for different religious beliefs) High Wycombe Town Committee is ensuring that, as far as practically possible, people with differing faiths are able to inter their loved ones within the District.</li> <li>The aim is to ensure that the site is easily accessible to all people and that all information and signage regarding the cemetery will be clear and easy to read.</li> </ul>			
Promote good relations between groups (including community cohesion)	Within the scope of the cemetery, a woodland walk is being incorporated along one of the edges. It is hoped that the design of this			



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	woodland walk will be enjoyed by local residents and users of the cemetery.			
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NB. Please note that when considering impacts in relation to marriage & civil partnership - the duty is solely to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against this protected characteristic



Report For:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 4 February 2019
Part:	Part 1 - Open

<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>HOMELESSNESS, ROUGH SLEEPING, PRIVATE SECTOR AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY 2020 – 2022</b>
Cabinet Member: Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Councillor Mrs Julia Langley Brian Daly 01494 421601 Brian.daly@wycombe.gov.uk
Wards affected:	All
Reason for the Decision:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Council is required under section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 to publish a Homelessness Strategy based upon a review of homelessness in the area every 5 years.</li> <li>2. Strategies must be aimed at providing advice and assistance to prevent homelessness and address the needs of customers where homelessness cannot be prevented.</li> <li>3. Wycombe District Council published its last homelessness review and Homelessness Strategy in 2013 with the Strategy being for the period 2014 to 2019.</li> <li>4. There are currently no direct financial implications for the Council as existing resources only are required to implement the strategy with the exception of a number of additional grants obtained from MHCLG to fund county wide rough sleeping and homelessness schemes.</li> </ol>
<b>Proposed Recommendation:</b>	<b>That the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Private Sector and Affordable Housing Strategy 2020 – 2022 be adopted.</b>
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	<p><b>Risk:</b> Should the Council not have an agreed homelessness strategy in place, it will be in breach of the Homelessness Act 2002.</p> <p><b>Equalities:</b> attached EIA (Appendix B)</p> <p><b>Health &amp; Safety:</b> No health and safety implications.</p>

Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b> There is a legal requirement under section 1 of the Homelessness Act 2002 to publish a Homelessness Strategy based upon a review of homelessness in the area every 5 years.</p> <p><b>S.151 Officer:</b> All costs can be met from existing budgets or from supplementary estimates matched by specific grants. Any requirements in excess of budget or approved grants will require additional member approvals and need to build into the annual budget setting and MTFS process.</p>
Consultees:	<p>Statutory consultation took place with the Public via the Council's website between 5<sup>th</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019. This followed extensive consultation with the Council's partners and stakeholder agencies via the Housing Forums.</p> <p>Members were consulted via a Member Seminar in October 2019.</p>
Options:	Cabinet can choose to recommend or reject the strategies
Next Steps:	If Cabinet are minded to recommend the Strategy, a request to be made to Full Council to adopt.
Background Papers:	The 2020-2022 Strategy document and accompanying Action Plan.
Abbreviations:	<p><b>CBL - choice based lettings</b>  <b>LHA – Local Housing Allowance</b>  <b>RP – Registered Provider of Housing</b></p>

Appendices to this report are as follows:

Appendix A: Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Private Sector and Affordable Housing Strategy 2020 – 2022 and Wycombe District Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Private Sector and Affordable Housing Strategy: Action Plan 2020 – 2022

Appendix B: Equality Impact Assessment

## Detailed Report

### Executive Summary

1. This Strategy covers the period 2020-2022 and is published in line with the requirements of the Homelessness Act 2002 and follows on from the successful 2014-2019 Homelessness Strategy.
2. This combined strategy defines how the Council will meet our obligations to have a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy, as well as including the related strategy areas of private sector and affordable housing.
3. The strategy comprises of an overall action plan with clear, defined actions and targets to ensure we are best placed to meet our aims of preventing homelessness and rough sleeping, enforcing standards in private sector housing as well as meeting the need for affordable housing in the district.
4. These actions will continue to be monitored by officers and the independently chaired housing forum (attended by the portfolio holding Cabinet Member) and forum subgroups, to ensure we meet our stated aims.

### Background to the 2020-2022 Strategy

5. The Council has a statutory obligation to produce a homelessness strategy as per the 2002 Homelessness Act. Central Government's 2018 rough sleeping strategy also places a requirement on local authorities to have a rough sleeping strategy in place.
6. The previous strategy was effective from January 2014 to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2019 and was subject to an independent review by Shelter in April 2019 in order to help inform the new strategy.
7. Following Shelter's review and recommendations, consultation was commenced with our stakeholder agencies via our housing (and homelessness) forums with a number of actions agreed by all for inclusion. These actions were subject to formal consultation with the public via the Council's website between 5<sup>th</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019. A further presentation was made to Members via a seminar held on the 29<sup>th</sup> October, following the public consultation. The action plan is attached to this report.
8. A two-year strategy was devised, as the new Buckinghamshire Council is required to have a homelessness strategy in place by 2022.

### Review of the 2014-2019 Strategy

9. Shelter reviewed the Council's progress on the 2014-19 Homelessness Strategy in April 2019 and provided the following summary:  
*"Overall, the authority has been working proactively to address a number of key housing and homelessness challenges with a committed team. There is good awareness and understanding of those areas where continuous progress and resources are required in light of ongoing and new local homelessness demand, for the purposes of a developing a the next Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy"*
10. The overall aim of the previous strategy was to prevent homelessness in all forms, from rough sleeping through to homeless households in temporary accommodation. To meet this aim, a number of actions were devised and assessed by our stakeholders at the quarterly homelessness subgroup and bi annually at the housing forum. Of the 51 actions within the action plan, the final assessment showed 33 marked as completed/ 'green', 16 'amber' and 2 as red or uncompleted.
11. Overall, the strategy can be said to have met its broad aims of preventing and reducing homelessness as the number of households in B&B and temporary accommodation is at a much lower level than in 2013. Also, the number of rough sleepers has fallen by 33%

from 2018, although it is higher than the figure recorded in 2013 which is consistent with the increase in number of rough sleepers nationally.

### **2020-2022 Strategy**

12. The proposed 2020-2022 Strategy is split into 3 parts as follows:

- Part One. Strategic Objectives to minimise homelessness and rough sleeping through prevention and relief.
- Part Two. To ensure the provision of affordable housing for those in housing need.
- Part Three. To enhance the quality of housing in the District, including standards in the District, including standards in the private sector and use of available grants to improve health and well-being of residents.

13. Each part of the strategy contains an agreed number of actions which will be monitored regularly by the housing service and by our partners at the quarterly homelessness and the bi annual housing forums. Progress made against the action plan items will also be published regularly on the Council's website.

### **Unitary Position & Relevant Provisions in the Transitional Regulations**

14. With effect from 1 April 2020 all the statutory functions previously carried out by the District and the County Council are carried out by the new unitary council. Regulation 4 provides that anything which immediately before 1 April 2020, is in the process of being done by the Districts or BCC in the exercise of, or in connection with, a function that is exercised after 1 April 2020 by Buckinghamshire Council, shall have effect as if it was done by or in relation to Buckinghamshire Council.

15. Regulation 12 (1) (c) provides that where it is practicable to do so, in the period between the Buckinghamshire Structural Changes Order 2019 coming into force and the reorganisation date of 1 April 2020, the shadow authority shall:-

16. Carry out a homelessness review within the meaning of the Homelessness Act 2002 for the whole of its area based on the results of that review, formulate and publish a homelessness strategy within the meaning of the Act. Where a homelessness review/strategy has not been completed, formulated or prepared and published before 1 April 2020, the Buckinghamshire Council shall take such steps as are necessary to secure this is done as soon as practicable and not later than the 1 April 2022

17. Until the new Buckinghamshire Council homelessness strategy is in place, the strategies prepared and published by the AVDC, CDC, SBDC and WDC will be treated as if they had been prepared and published by Buckinghamshire for such part of its area that corresponds to the area covered by the respective former District Council.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps.**

18. If approved by Cabinet and full Council the strategy will be adopted and delivered in the area corresponding to the former Wycombe District, until a new strategy is developed and adopted by the new Buckinghamshire Council, no later than the 1 April 2022.



## **Wycombe District Council**

### **Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Private Sector and Affordable Housing Strategy 2020 – 2022**

	<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	Foreword from the Cabinet Member for Housing	3
2	Executive Summary	4
3	Background	5
4	Review of Homelessness Strategy 2014 - 2019, including Findings/ Achievements and challenges	6
5	The National Picture	8
6	The Local Picture for the Wycombe District	10
7	Recommendations from the Review- for the new Strategy	17
8	The Strategy 2020 – 2022	18
	Strategy 2020 - 2022 Part 1 - Strategic Objectives to minimise homelessness and rough sleeping through prevention and relief	19
	Strategy 2020 - 2022 Part 2 - To ensure the provision of affordable housing for those in housing need	21
	Strategy 2020 - 2022 Part 3 - To enhance the quality of housing in the District, including standards in the private sector and use of available grants to improve the health and well-being of residents	22
9	Future Monitoring and Review	25
10	Glossary of Housing Terms	25
11	Appendix: Action Plan 2020 - 2022	29

## **1. Foreword from Cllr Julia Langley - Cabinet Member for Housing, Wycombe District Council**

This new Strategy is aimed at building on the successes of the Council's 2014 - 2019 Homelessness Strategy and the Action Plan for wider housing issues, as well as addressing the challenges which have arisen during that time.

This Strategy links with the Sustainable Community Strategy 2013 - 2031 for the Wycombe District and the Council's Corporate Plan to 2020.

The challenges of finding suitable affordable accommodation in an area of high housing demand have been compounded by limitations on the Local Housing Allowance, welfare reform changes (including Universal Credit) and the capping of housing benefit - which have increased the pressure on households in managing their finances.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 requires the Council to provide support and assistance to people who make an approach for housing advice.

The main focus of this Strategy is the prevention of homelessness and rough sleeping, as well as securing appropriate support where this is needed. The provision of long term accommodation that is safe, secure and affordable is also a priority.

Another priority for the Council is to enhance the quality of housing in the District, including housing in the private sector, to improve health and well-being of the residents.

This can only be achieved by continuing the Council's strong relationships with a range of partners, each contributing their valuable knowledge, skills and other resources to this important work.

The forthcoming change to a Unitary Council for Buckinghamshire, to be known as Buckinghamshire Council from April 2020, has resulted in this Strategy being for a shorter period than would otherwise be expected. The two year period of the Strategy is aimed at covering the period until the new Buckinghamshire Council has become established and has prepared its own Strategy.

I wish to thank everyone who has taken part in the consultation process, including Council officers and external partners, whose dedicated work and commitment are essential to enable us to collectively meet the on-going challenges and to try to assist in improving people's housing circumstances.

*Councillor Julia Langley  
Cabinet Member for Housing  
Wycombe District Council*

## 2. Executive Summary

This Strategy includes information on the national position on issues affecting homelessness and also the local context. The Strategy sets out:

- The review of the current homelessness position in the Wycombe District;
- The main challenges;
- The recommendations;
- Objectives and Actions for 2020 - 2022.

It is considered that affordable housing and private sector housing have links with homelessness and the Strategy therefore extends to these areas.

The Strategy is supported by an Action Plan Appendix for homelessness, rough sleeping, affordable housing and private sector housing. This sets out the Council's objectives; aims; who we will work with and the targets for delivery.

The Action Plan will be regularly monitored and reviewed via meetings of the Wycombe District Housing Forum Core Group and the Homelessness Subgroup (subject to any changes via the new Buckinghamshire Council).

This Strategy contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy 2013 - 2031 for the Wycombe District and the Council's Corporate Plan to 2020.

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Wycombe District aims to address a number of key challenges and includes a vision that "Wycombe District will be economically strong and the place to live, work and visit."

This includes balancing the need to provide more homes (including affordable homes) - sustainably balanced with jobs and essential infrastructure; and reducing homelessness.

### 3. Background

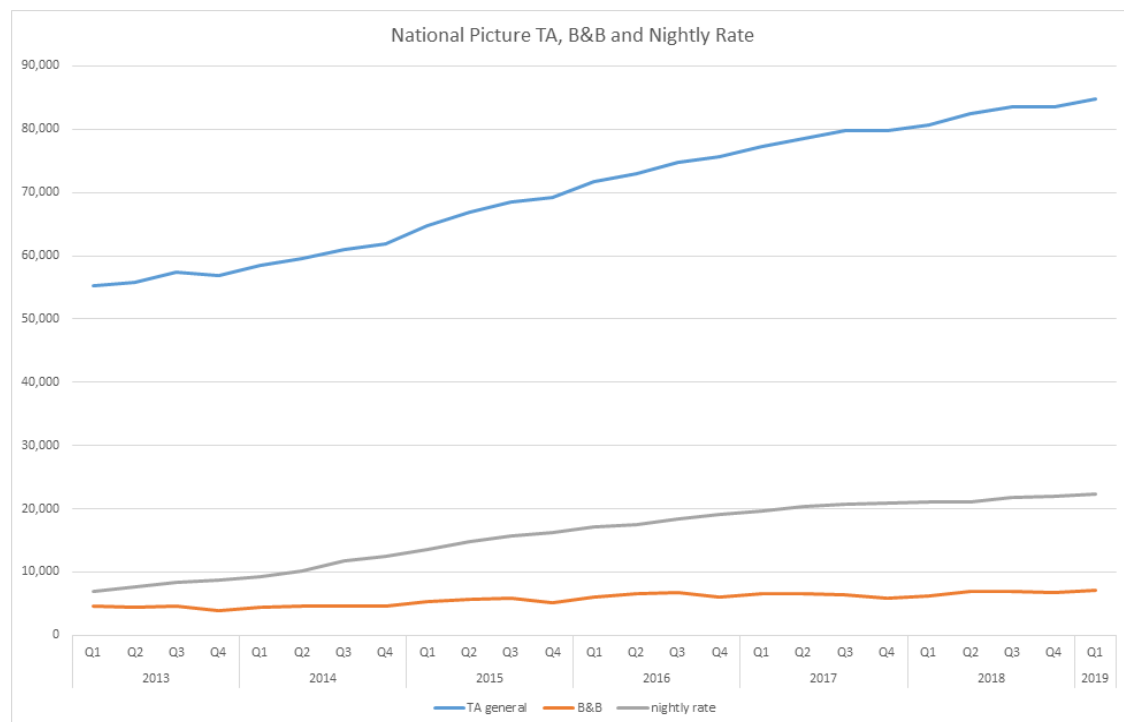
The Homelessness Act 2002 places a requirement upon Local Authorities to publish a Homelessness Review and Strategy every five years, setting out the issues of homelessness in their area and their plans to address the needs of customers.

In common with much of the South East, the high demand for housing in the Wycombe District impacts upon rent levels and property prices. The affordability pressures mean there is a high demand for the limited amount of affordable rented housing that comes available.

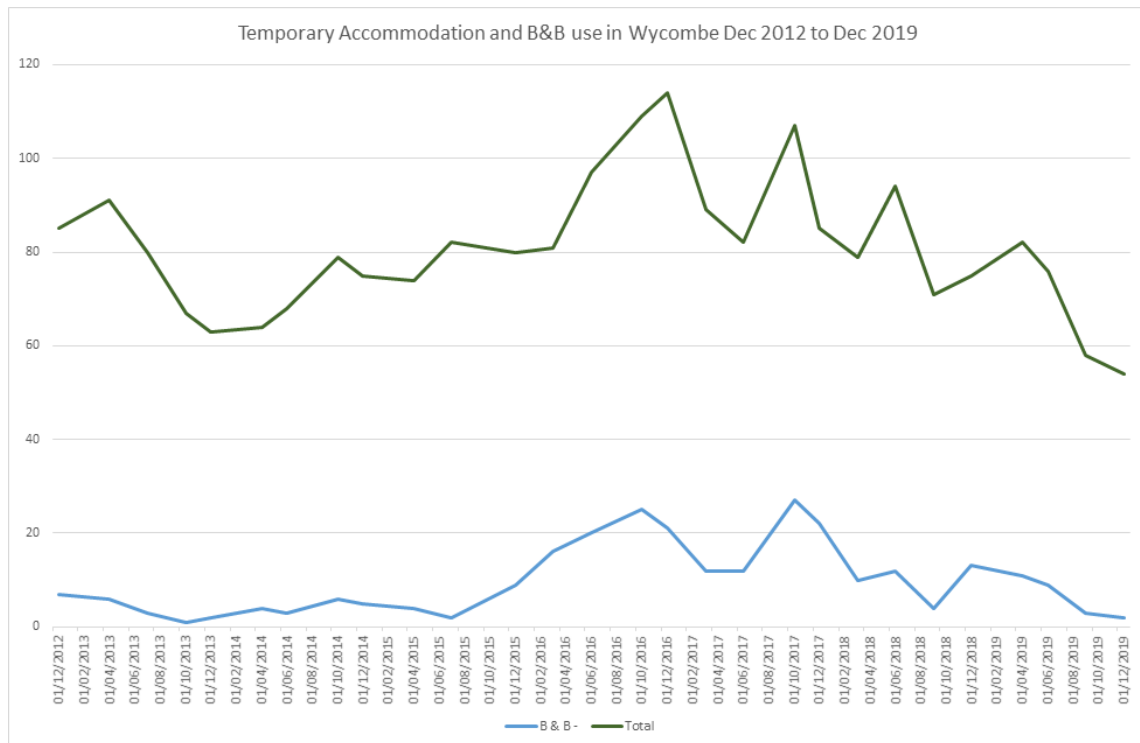
Wycombe District Council's most recent Homelessness Strategy covered the period 2014 - 2019. This followed on from earlier Strategies. In 2013, when the 2014 - 2019 Strategy was prepared, the key issues were to address the increasing numbers of homeless applications and acceptances, as well as the increasing number of households in temporary accommodation - which (both nationally and locally) had been rising since 2011.

In England, between 2013 and 2019 there has been a significant increase in the number of households in temporary accommodation.

Due to the success of prevention work, this increase has not been reflected in Wycombe – as can be seen from the following two charts. The first chart illustrates the total number of households in Temporary Accommodation (TA) nationally. The second chart shows numbers in TA per 1000 population nationally, compared to Wycombe.



Source - Government website gov.uk



Source - WDC Housing Service Records

## 4. Review of the Homelessness Strategy 2014 - 2019

The initial process in preparing for the new Strategy was to commission an independent review of homelessness and rough sleeping in the District, including the Council's 2014 - 19 Homelessness Strategy.

Following a tender process for specialist consultants, Shelter was selected to undertake this review. Shelter's work involved a review of available information and consultation with stakeholders, customers and staff. Shelter's review report was produced in April 2019.

Shelter considered the aims of the 2014 - 19 Strategy and their report identifies the achievements and the challenges, and makes recommendations for improvements which are to be incorporated into the new Strategy. Their findings, within these three elements, are summarised as follows.

### 4.1 Findings/ Achievements:

\* The Housing Options Service has been developed, with a new staff structure. Additional staff were employed in prevention and landlord liaison in the build up to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Subsequently a single person's officer has been added and there are also staff with specialist money advice and debt advice skills who have either been employed into the team, or who have trained for professional qualifications with the Institute of Money Advice.

\* The numbers in B&B accommodation remain low and no families are in B&B for longer than 6 weeks (not the picture nationally) and no 16/17 year olds have been placed in B&B.

\* New temporary accommodation is also to be developed.

\* The Council have made good and increasing use of the private sector both in the relief of homelessness and, on a lesser scale, in the discharge of duty. Applicants are assisted into the private sector through the use of rent deposit guarantees.

\* There is a strong focus on rough sleeping using funding from MHCLG and working in partnership with the local voluntary sector. Although rough sleeping rose during the years 2014 – 2017 it did so more slowly than for the wider South East region, albeit with a sharp increase in 2018. In partnership with other District Councils, there is an effective outreach service and the provision of cold weather provision was greatly expanded in the last year.

\* The county-wide Bucks Home Choice (BHC) Allocation Policy, was updated with effect from May 2014. It has since been reviewed again, to take account the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The new BHC policy is being implemented with effect from October 2018.

\* A Wycombe Welfare Reform Group was set up to work on understanding the impact of welfare reforms. Welfare reforms have now been implemented and there is a good understanding. The service works in partnership with the DWP and employs specialist money and debt advisors to assist people affected by the reforms.

\* There is a joint working protocol for households found intentionally homeless containing children and the Councils consider it to be working well. A further protocol exists for care leavers.

\* The Strategy contained a target to investigate the scope to create a local lettings agency. However, the conclusion was reached by the Council that this was not feasible.

\* The targets for the delivery of affordable or social homes have been exceeded.

#### **4.2 The main homelessness challenges:**

\* Financial: The Local Housing Allowance rates being lower than most rents, the move to Universal Credit, the lack of control of Discretionary Housing Payment in the homelessness service and the need for more affordable housing.

\* The issue of substance misuse, particularly heroin as a cause of homelessness, a barrier to housing and having a major impact on the rough sleepers.

\* The lack of support when people move from temporary accommodation to other housing and the long delays and/ or inability to obtain assessments by specialist services.

\* Rough sleepers - links to substance misuse, increase in numbers - some with no recourse to public funds.

## **5. The National Picture**

Some key changes in legislation have taken place during the period of the most recent strategy (2014-19). These all need to be taken into account in the new Strategy and Action Plan and brief summaries of these changes are set out in this section.

### **5.1 Homelessness Prevention and Relief**

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 came into effect from 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2018. The HRA places new duties on Local Authorities to properly assess the cause of homelessness, circumstances, and needs of all household members, including children. It also places new duties on Local Authorities to develop and agree with applicants a personalised plan of the steps that will be taken to prevent or relieve homelessness.

This Act also made changes to the Council's statutory homelessness duties placing more emphasis on the prevention and relief of homelessness. These include that the Council now has a duty to provide advice and assistance within 56 days of a household being threatened with homelessness (previously this was 28 days). The Council also has legal duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible households, regardless of whether they are in priority need.

In February 2018 (last amended April 2019) the Government published a revised Homelessness Code of Guidance on how Local Authorities should exercise their homelessness functions in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, namely: - the duties, powers and obligations on housing authorities and others towards people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

### **5.2 Rough Sleeping**

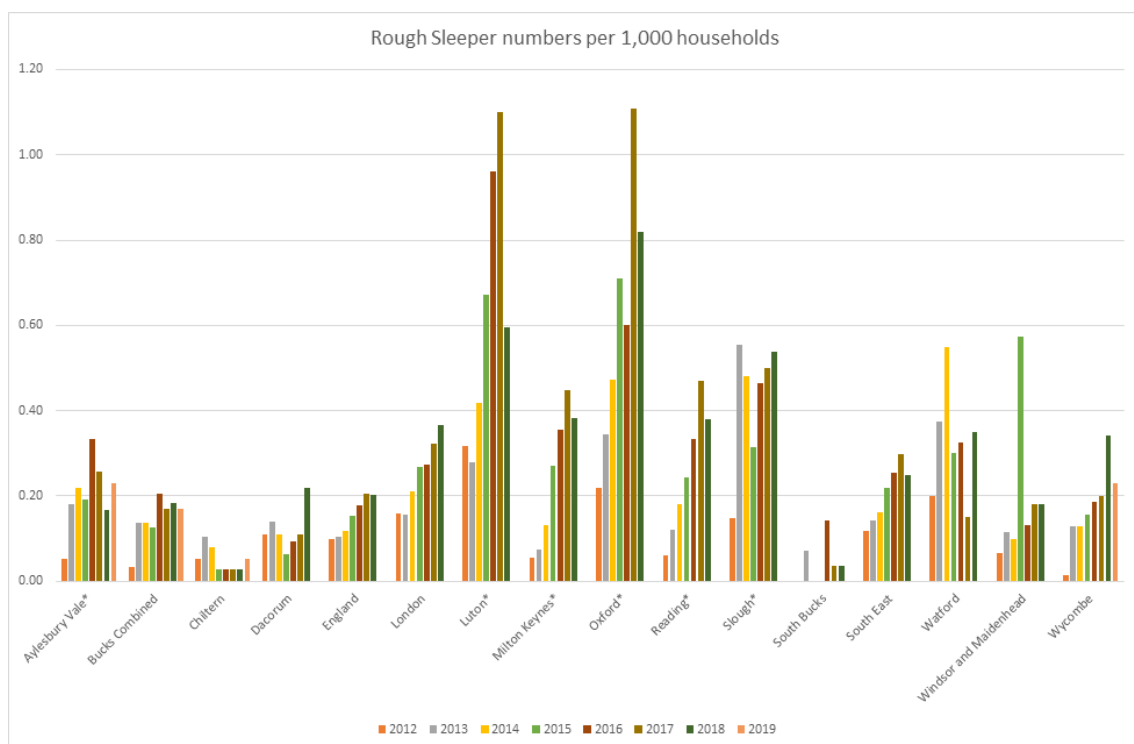
In August 2018 the Government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy. This sets out the Government's plan to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and to end it by 2027. It includes a range of commitments, intended both to help those who



are sleeping on our streets or currently at risk of doing so, and to lay the foundations for a system focused on prevention, early intervention, and a rapid rehousing approach to recovery.

As per the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) instruction, since 2010 Local Authorities continue to carry out an Annual 'snapshot' figure to MHCLG to indicate the number of people sleeping rough in the area on a typical night.

The following chart illustrates the number of Rough sleeper numbers per 1000 population for England, the South-East, Wycombe and a number of nearby Local Authority areas.



Data Source - Government Statistics

### 5.3 Welfare Reform

Universal Credit was introduced via the Welfare Reform Act 2012. The intention of the new Act was to simplify the welfare system for people of working-age, replacing and combining six benefits / tax credits into one single monthly payment.

The new benefit began to be rolled out gradually to Jobcentres in 2013 but the initial timescale for transferred claimants to the new system has been extended and is on-going.

One of the concerns arising from the new system of one payment being made monthly is that there can be a waiting period of at least five weeks before the

first payment is made to the claimant. If required, claimants can apply for emergency loans, however this delay can lead to potential rent arrears.

## **6. The Local Picture for the Wycombe District**

### **6.1 Local Strategies and Policies Related to the Strategy**

There are a number of these, as listed below:

Bucks Home Choice Allocation Policy – Final Version 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019;

Buckinghamshire Tenancy Strategy 2013;

Wycombe District Local Plan 2013 - 2031, adopted August 2019;

Buckinghamshire's Health and Social Care Market Position Statement 2018-2022 Housing and Accommodation Solutions for People with Care and Support Needs - produced by Buckinghamshire County Council and the NHS Buckinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Wycombe District Council Corporate Plan to 2020;

Buckinghamshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016 – 2021;

Buckinghamshire Affordable Warmth Strategy 2017 – 2022.

Buckinghamshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2016 – 2022.

### **6.2 Homelessness Prevention and Relief**

Working in partnership with agencies and other partners, the Council's housing service Officers provide relevant housing advice, including the prevention and relief of homelessness.

The main reasons for homelessness, or threat of homelessness, include the loss of rented accommodation (primarily in the private sector), relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, leaving institutions (such as prison, hospitals or care), gambling, and sexual trafficking.

The Council continues to comply with the relevant legislation and guidance, including the HRA 2017, through training for officers in the Housing Options service and adapting internal working practices.

Successful bidding for additional funding from Government in recent years has enabled the Council to increase the number of officers in the Housing Options service. This has led to a direct impact on the prevention and relief work, and

has also assisted in reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation.

This funding has enabled the Council to introduce/ continue a number of successful initiatives, including:

- \* Negotiation with landlords, families and friends to prevent homelessness;
- \* Helping clients to contact the relevant specialist support services;
- \* Debt and money advice;
- \* Incentives to encourage private sector landlords to provide accommodation to households threatened with homelessness, through the provision of a rent guarantee, deposits and loans to pay the deposit. This includes an in house deposit scheme and grant funding for the independent Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (WRDGS) which sources accommodation and carries out tenancy rescues and sustainment work;
- \* Access to accommodation with supported housing schemes and hostels;
- \* Closer working with the local office of the Jobcentre+ / Department for Work and pensions (DWP).

During the period of the 2014 - 2019 Strategy, the housing service has provided statistics on homelessness, comparing Wycombe's position to that of similar Councils and the national picture, which was obtained from information collected and published by MHCLG.

With the introduction of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017 (on 3rd April 2018) the information reported in the old P1E was deemed by MHCLG to be no longer fit for purpose. A new reporting mechanism for homelessness came into use, known as H-CLIC, to replace the quarterly P1E statistics.

A number of additional reporting fields were added to H-CLIC data collection during the financial year 2018/2019 and MCHLG advised that the data for this period would be classed as experimental.

H-CLIC became fully operational in April 2019.

### **6.3 Households in Temporary Accommodation**

Wycombe uses a number of sources for temporary accommodation, including the Council's hostel, which has 33 units, mainly bedsit type rooms, and additionally a small number of individual properties within the Council's ownership.

The Council also has access to up to 50 properties from Red Kite Community Housing that can be used for temporary accommodation. When there are

particularly high levels of demand, households are sometimes placed into bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation. The Council continues to aim to not place any families in B&B for longer than 6 weeks, in accordance with the relevant guidance.

## 6.4 Rough Sleeping

The Council, in partnership with other local agencies and organisations, continues to offer support to help people who are rough sleeping to try to find suitable accommodation and improve their lives.

The number of people rough sleeping in Wycombe is identified via the annual 'snapshot' figure, carried out in accordance with the national guidance. These figures for the most recent Homelessness Strategy period are shown in the following chart on Page 13. It will be seen that the numbers are fairly low, due mainly to the on-going partnership work with local agencies and organisations, including the Rough Sleeper Outreach Service for Buckinghamshire provided by Connection Support.

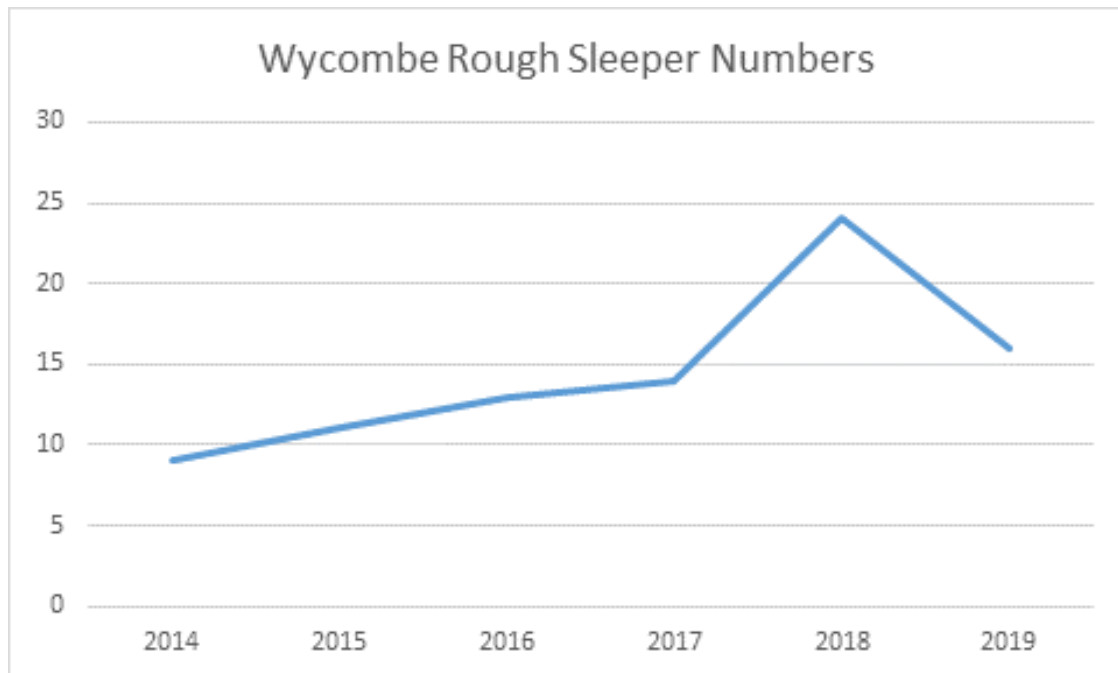
This local organisation was initially set up with Government funding for Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. When the Government funding ended, the four District Councils in Buckinghamshire agreed to continue the service via joint funding from their own resources.

Although the Outreach Service has continued to work well, the Annual 'snapshot' figure of rough sleepers gradually increased year on year, but in 2018 there was a sudden and significant increase in numbers.

The Council has also bid for and received funding from, a number of Government initiatives. This included the 2019/20 Homelessness Prevention Trailblazers Fund. A summary of the funding received recently under various programmes is listed in the following table.

Flexible homelessness support grant 2019/20	£376,000
Top up flexible homelessness support grant	£82,000
Top up prevention grant	£31,000
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>£489,000</b>
Emergency Beds Rough Sleeper funding	£160,000
Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding - Tenancy Sustainment	£110,000
Cold Weather Funding 2018/19	£50,000
<b>Overall total</b>	<b>£809,000</b>

With the additional funding from Government, the Council and agency partners were collectively able to increase staff resources and provide an enhanced SWEP initiative for rough sleepers in Winter 2018/19. This contributed to the lower number of rough sleepers in the annual 'snapshot' figure for 2019.



A further enhanced SWEP initiative is in place for 2019/20.

## 6.5 Partnership Working

The Council works with a wide range of statutory and agency partners. During the period of the 2014 - 2019 Strategy, some protocol arrangements have been agreed with statutory partners. Additional work needs to be done and the existing Protocols are to be kept under review to ensure they meet relevant statutes/ guidelines.

To enable regular engagement with statutory and independent agency stakeholders, the Council facilitates a multi-agency forum for both statutory and voluntary agencies - known as the Wycombe District Housing Forum (WDHF) Homelessness Subgroup.

The Subgroup is independently chaired by a member of one of the partner agencies and meets quarterly. At each meeting, the group discusses current issues, best practice and scrutinises progress against the actions and targets set out in the Council's Homelessness Strategy, which also identifies areas for improvement.

Membership of the Homelessness Subgroup includes the following partner organisations:

- Wycombe Homeless Connection
- Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme
- Connection Support
- Department of Work and Pensions/ Jobcentre+
- Buckinghamshire County Council
- One YMCA

Citizens Advice High Wycombe  
Office of the local MP  
Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company  
Probation Service  
P3 charity  
Christians Against Poverty  
Red Cross  
Riverside  
Community Mental Health Team  
One Recovery Bucks  
Wycombe Women's Aid  
Thames Valley Police

The Council also encourages private sector landlords and letting agents to let their properties to clients in housing need. To enable regular engagement on topics of mutual interest, the Council facilitates meetings of a local Landlords Forum. Meetings of this Forum are held jointly with the National Landlords Association on a quarterly basis and are independently chaired, currently by a local agent.

The Chairs of both the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup and the Landlords Forum are members of the Wycombe District Housing Forum (WDHF) Core Group.

Membership of the WDHF Core Group also includes the Chairs of the other two WDHF Subgroups. These Subgroups focus on Development and Management issues respectively, with membership being comprised mainly from Registered Providers (RPs).

The WDHF Core Group membership also includes the Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and managers from the Council's housing service, Red Kite Community Housing and Buckinghamshire County Council. The WDHF Core Group meetings are held on a 6 monthly basis and their remit includes reviewing feedback from the Subgroups and reviewing the progress on the Council's Homelessness Strategy.

## **6.6 Housing Allocations and Lettings**

In cooperation with the other Districts in Buckinghamshire, Wycombe operates a Choice Based Lettings Scheme, known as Bucks Home Choice (BHC), for the allocation of social housing for rent. The Bucks Home Choice Allocation Policy was reviewed in 2018/2019 and the new policy was implemented at the beginning of October 2019.

The following table shows the number of live applications registered with the Council by dwelling size within the five Bands A to E (Band A being the highest priority need) as at mid-December 2019. For example, the total number of 442 household applicants in Band D for one bed accommodation includes 204 households registered as seeking accommodation for people over 55.

<b>BHC Band</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>Total</b>
Size of Property Required						
1 bed	43	37	49	442	46	617
2 bed	18	143	43	47	46	297
3 bed or larger	21	236	14	18	26	315

## **6.7 Universal Credit**

Universal Credit is a key element of the Government's welfare reforms. Considerable work has been carried out during the time of the 2014 - 2019 Strategy, including regular meetings of the Wycombe Welfare Reform Group, staff training, developing links with the DWP and gaining an understanding of Universal Credit and its impacts.

Moving forward, there will be regular meetings of the Bucks Stakeholder Group, which are coordinated by the DWP and cover updates on Universal Credit and welfare reforms.

## **6.8 Repossessions**

The Council monitors the approaches from households regarding mortgage repossessions. During the period of Homelessness Strategy 2014 - 2019 the number of approaches has generally been falling. The monitoring continues in case the numbers increase.

## **6.9 Domestic Abuse**

The Council recognises that everybody has the right to a life free from abuse. The Housing Options staff are trained to work with everyone experiencing domestic abuse.

The Council works with, and provides grant funding assistance to, a local Women's Aid Charity - Wycombe Women's Aid. Women are able to access their services for independent advice, including placement and can, if it is an appropriate option, be assisted into refuges in other areas.

## **6.10 Supply of Affordable Housing**

The supply of affordable housing for rent comprises the re-letting of existing homes when they become vacant and the delivery of additional affordable housing, mainly via the development of new homes.

The District Council does not retain its own housing stock but works with a number of Registered Providers (RPs). The RP with the largest amount of existing affordable housing stock in the District is Red Kite Community Housing but there are many other RPs operating in the District. Additional affordable homes are also being provided by RPs, mainly delivered via new-build developments although some RPs also purchase existing dwellings from the market.

Although some development sites are purchased outright by RPs, the majority of homes are currently delivered via the planning system - known as Section 106 agreements. These require that new-build market housing above certain thresholds must include a proportion of affordable housing. Details are contained in policies in the Council's Local Plan, adopted in August 2019, and in subsequent draft guidance.

New affordable housing delivery is therefore, to a significant extent, dependent upon the development of sites for new homes for market sale.

Whilst RPs are able to submit bids to the Government agency Homes England, in recent years Homes England programmes have mainly focussed on strategic work, rather than on individual developments. RPs are reliant on raising private finance to fund new development programmes. Most new RP developments for rent are based on the RPs charging affordable rents (which are higher than social rents) - with no grant funding. The Council does however continue to liaise with Homes England, retaining awareness of funding opportunities.

During the 5 years from the start of the financial year 2014/2015 to the end of the financial year 2018/2019, a total of 416 affordable properties for rent or affordable home ownership were delivered via new development or purchase. This included 110 Extra Care properties.

### **6.11 Specialised Supported Housing**

The District Council works with Buckinghamshire County Council, which provides strategic direction and predictions of need for specialised housing need for interested stakeholders. From the findings, a large Extra Care development, known as the Hughenden Gardens Retirement Village, was developed by the Extra Care Charitable Trust and opened in the Spring of 2018.

The forming of the new unitary Buckinghamshire Council presents an opportunity to continue to develop this joined up approach between the statutory organisations and the providers.



## **6.12 Gypsies Travellers & Travelling Show-people**

The Council's approach to the need for pitches is set out in a planning policy in the Wycombe District Local Plan, adopted in August 2019. This is based on the assessment of local needs identified in the Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe District Council's 'Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment Final Report,' published in 2017.

## **7. Recommendations from the Shelter Review - for the new Strategy:**

- \* Build on the established and very successful partnership working with local agencies to prevent homelessness and provide a more integrated service.
- \* Identify outstanding actions from the homelessness forum and rough sleeper group.
- \* Consult local landlords and agents on what would encourage them to let properties via the Council.
- \* Address the less successful areas of partnership working with the statutory agencies, particularly with the County Council.
- \* Review the Strategy towards the private sector taking into account the challenges - in particular the roll out of Universal Credit and out of area placements from other authorities.
- \* Develop a support strategy aimed at tenancy sustainment and preventing recurring homelessness.
- \* Create affordable and social housing, working both in partnership with key stakeholders.
- \* A multi-agency approach is required to tackle the issue of substance misuse, particularly the influx of heroin.
- \* Prevention work to address rough sleeping and tackle a core group with no recourse to public funds.
- \* Address the provision of advice to the vulnerable groups.
- \* Provide training to newer staff members, and temporary staff, on dealing with particular vulnerable groups, including rough sleepers.
- \* Minimise waiting times to see clients on the day.
- \* Address mortgage repossessions and include information on mortgage arrears on the website.

- \* Create a range of accessible tools to enable stakeholders and applicants to provide feedback.
- \* Develop the website to provide advice and tools for the prevention and reduction of homelessness.
- \* Further identify where and how early prevention can be delivered, to intervene before people are legally threatened with homelessness.
- \* Develop outreach working to engage with potential service users at an earlier stage to maximise opportunities to both prevent homelessness and to prevent people sleeping rough.
- \* Consult service users on the new strategy.
- \* Build on the expertise of members of staff in key areas beyond immediate homelessness (e.g. money advice).
- \* When a new homelessness strategy is adopted training should be given to all staff on the contents of the strategy and their role in implementation. This training should also be included in the induction training for all new staff in the homelessness service.
- \* Disseminate the key messages of the new strategy, to other council teams and departments, the voluntary sector and other statutory sector bodies, in particular the County Council.
- \* The new strategy needs to link with other local strategies and programmes (health, & wellbeing, education, employment) and neighbouring authorities.

## **8. The Strategy 2020 – 2022**

The aim is for the Wycombe District to have a Strategy that is proactive, is regularly monitored and reviewed annually in order to be responsive to emerging needs, until the new Buckinghamshire Council has its own Strategy in place.

The process involved a steering group of partner agencies, working with Council Officers and, as a result, an initial consultation draft Strategy Action Plan was prepared.

The draft Action Plan was presented to a wider group of agencies at a meeting of the Wycombe District Housing Forum Homelessness Subgroup.

This draft Action Plan was sent out for public consultation for 8 weeks during August and September 2019.

The issues raised in the responses were considered at the Homelessness Subgroup and agreed amendments were made.

The amended draft Action Plan was circulated to Council Members and an evening presentation/ question & answer session was held in October 2019.

The objectives of the new Strategy were identified via the recommendations of the homelessness review and from the various consultation methods that took place.

The objectives fall into three main themes.

- \* a) Objectives aimed at minimising homelessness and rough sleeping in the District through prevention and relief;
- \* b) The provision of affordable housing, and;
- \* c) To address and enhance issues of housing quality aimed at improving health and wellbeing in the private sector.

### **The Objectives of the new Strategy**

The objectives contained in Parts 1 and 2 of the Strategy are derived from a combination of the homelessness review, the continuation of actions from the current Strategy and the discussions with stakeholder partners. These are set out as follows:

#### **Strategy Part 1 - Strategic objectives to minimise homelessness and rough sleeping through prevention and relief**

**1. The Council is to have a Corporate commitment to produce a Strategy for the prevention and relief of homelessness, to include strategic housing issues.**

This is essentially to have an adopted Strategy, which is to be publicised, regularly monitored and reviewed annually to consider if any amendments are required.

**2. Continue to develop partnership working with agencies to prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping in the Wycombe District**

This is to include:

- \* Continuing to gather information/ statistics on levels / trends for homelessness and rough sleeping in the Wycombe District, and comparing statistics for the Wycombe District with other Councils.
- \* Continuing with the current Outreach Service - for assisting rough sleepers to access accommodation and support.

- \* Provide targeted support for rough sleepers, bidding for funding when opportunities arise and making effective use of funding when allocated.
- \* Developing closer working relationships with agencies specialising in support for clients, particularly those affected by mental health issues and / or substance misuse.
- \* Reach and support people at risk of homelessness at the earliest opportunity, aiming to prevent them becoming homeless.
- \* Obtain feedback on the Council's Housing Options service from service users.
- \* Monitor the impacts on homeless households following the implementation of the amended Bucks Home Choice Allocation Policy.
- \* Seek to prevent mortgage repossessions.
- \* Continue to work closely with Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (WRDGS) to assist households who are not in priority need.
- \* Encourage the provision of emergency accommodation during periods of severe weather

### **3. Continue to implement the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**

This includes continuing to deliver appropriate information for clients to obtain advice and support, giving consideration to developing a self-help guide and monitoring of the Duty to Refer from public bodies.

### **4. Provision of sufficient good quality temporary accommodation**

This includes minimising use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation, and enhancing the provision of temporary accommodation.

### **5. Monitor and respond to the impacts of Universal Credit**

This includes closer working between Officers in the Council's Housing service and officers in the Department for Work and Pensions and partner agencies.

**6. Review and develop partnerships with providers who are working with clients with additional needs who may be at risk of homelessness, including monitoring of existing Protocols and development of additional Protocols as appropriate**

There are various client groups, including prison leavers, young people leaving care, 16/17 year olds, people with complex needs, people being discharged from hospital, people needing move-on accommodation and people who are homeless and have no recourse to public funds.

The Action Plan Appendix to this Strategy includes a number of actions within these objectives, setting out the partners involved and the target outcomes.

**Strategy Part 2: Strategic objectives for the provision of affordable housing for those in housing need**

The Council continues to work with Registered Providers of social housing. These are organisations registered with the Regulator of Social Housing - requiring the providers to meet certain regulatory standards for their homes, their rents and the tenancies they offer.

The main source of additional affordable housing is new build homes. Potential sources include:

\* Section 106 opportunities via the Council's planning policy - where the Registered Provider acquires the new homes which are designated for affordable housing within major private sector developments. The Council's new Local Plan policies support the development of major sites - which assists in bringing forward affordable homes. Housing officers work closely with officers in the Council's planning and sustainability service in securing opportunities for new affordable homes via Section 106;

\* Registered Providers acquiring whole sites and developing homes of mixed affordable tenures, including homes for rent and shared ownership, as well as homes for market sale. High land and property values impact on this;

\* Registered Providers purchasing homes from the open market. This can be achieved with subsidy from the District Council - via Section 106 accumulated financial developer contributions provided from other sites in the District, in lieu of on-site provision.

The key priority for the Council's housing service is access to affordable general needs homes for rent. The Local Plan policy approach includes a requirement for a proportion of affordable housing for low cost home ownership - mainly shared ownership. In addition, officers work with Buckinghamshire County Council and specialist providers for the delivery of supported housing accommodation for people with disabilities, where there is an identified need.

The Council's new Local Plan policy and draft guidance regarding affordable housing sets out the percentages, tenure mix and dwelling size mix of the affordable homes required.

The Action Plan Appendix to this Strategy includes a number of actions within this objective. The objectives in Part 2, the provision of affordable housing to those in housing need are:

**7. Provision of appropriate affordable settled accommodation**  
This is to include maximising the use of nominations to affordable housing and encouraging the provision of good quality private rented sector accommodation.

**8. Monitor the levels of new home building delivery in the district and maximise the provision of affordable housing, within Local Plan policy and guidance**  
This includes:  
\* Achieving the new house building target through the Local Plan;  
\* Securing and reviewing the quality of new housing;  
\* Supporting funding bids to Homes England/ Government;  
\* Working with RPs to maximise the provision of affordable / social housing within Local Plan policy;  
\* Use Council resources to enable the provision of affordable housing;  
\* Enable the provision of specialised housing in accordance with identified needs.

The Action Plan Appendix to this Strategy includes a number of actions within these objectives, setting out the partners involved and the target outcomes.

**Strategy Part 3: Strategic objectives to enhance the quality of housing in the District including standards in the private sector and the use of available funding to improve the health and well-being of residents**

**National Issues**

This section of the Strategy sets out the Council's intentions for improving housing conditions, particularly in the private sector. It is also to outline the approach to providing assistance via The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 in delivering preventative assistance and the Council's approach to The Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation.

The English Housing Survey is a continuous national survey commissioned by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). It collects information about people's housing circumstances and the condition and energy efficiency of housing in England.

Key findings set out in the MHCLG Headline Report 2017-18 include:

- The energy efficiency of English homes has increased considerably in the last 20 years, but has not increased since 2015.
- In 2017, the average SAP rating of English dwellings was 62 points, up from 45 points in 1996. This increase was evident in all tenures. However, the increase appears to be slowing and there was no change in the average SAP rating of homes between 2016 and 2017 (in any tenure).
- There remains a lower proportion of non-decent homes in the social sector than in the private rented and owner occupied sectors.
- In 2017, 13% of dwellings in the social rented sector failed to meet the Decent Homes Standard. This is lower than the proportion of private rented (25%) and owner occupied (19%) homes.

### **The Local Context**

The Council provides grants and other financial assistance to enable improvements and/ or adaptations to be carried out to homes to make them safe for occupation and/ or accessible for people with disabilities and enable people to remain independent at home for longer.

In terms of housing standards, the Council works to ensure warm, safe and healthy homes for all, to include people living in owner occupied, privately rented or housing association properties.

The Council's overall objective is for the housing stock to be of good standard, energy efficient and free from significant hazards, and also for the housing stock to be suitable to meet the needs of disabled and older residents.

If people believe the condition of their property is affecting their health or safety, they can contact the Council and we will assess the property using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This assessment focuses on the 29 hazards that are most likely to be present in housing, allowing us to evaluate any risks to health and safety that may be present in the home.

Following the assessment, the Council will provide advice and, if necessary, take enforcement action in accordance with our Enforcement Policy to ensure the property meets an acceptable standard.

### **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

A key change from Government is the extension of the HMO licensing scheme first enacted in 2006, such that with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018 all HMOs with five or more people living in them who form more than one household must have a Council-granted HMO licence.

## **Preventative Assistance**

The Council recognises that living in poor housing has an adverse effect on physical and mental health, and the value people place on leading fulfilling lives and staying independent for longer.

Under the Housing Renewal Policy, a number of types of assistance have been developed to target resources in preventative programmes in order to help prevent hospital admissions, additional medical interventions and ill health; and to aid speedy discharges from hospital. The aim is to reduce the burden on health and social care services whilst helping people to remain safe at home.

In the main this is funded through innovative assistance developed under the Better Care Fund, and includes measures such as the Healthy Homes on Prescription Grant, Flexible Home Improvement Loans, funding for energy efficiency measures and insulation upgrades - all in addition to the mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants offering.

The objectives in Part 3 - to address issues of housing quality and improve health and wellbeing in the private sector are outlined as follows:

### **Objective 9 - Enhance the quality of housing in the district, including standards in the private sector and improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable residents**

This is to include engaging with owners, landlords, tenants, agents and other appropriate organisations regarding:

- \* Housing standards;
- \* Requests for service on issues of any disrepair in residential accommodation;
- \* HMO licensing and management;
- \* Continuing with partners to deliver a fuel poverty strategy - using available funding streams;
- \* Improving the energy efficiency levels for properties in all tenures;
- \* Promoting and delivering Flexible Home Improvement Loan products;
- \* Reducing the number of long term empty homes in the private sector, to bring empty properties back into use;
- \* Undertaking adaptations to residential properties and improving access to housing for households which include one or more persons with a disability;
- \* Improving the wellbeing of vulnerable residents through preventative interventions, using resources from the Better Care Fund.



The Action Plan Appendix to this Strategy includes a number of actions within these objectives, setting out the partners involved and the target outcomes.

## **9. Future Monitoring and Review**

In addition to quarterly scrutiny of the Action Plan by the Wycombe District Housing Forum Homelessness Subgroup, the Wycombe District Housing Forum Core Group will review the Strategy and Action Plan annually, including consideration of any amendments or additions required for improvement or to respond to any changes in legislation or Government guidance.

## **10. Glossary of Housing terms**

### **Affordable housing**

Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented, intermediate housing and starter homes, provided to households whose needs are not met by the market.

### **Affordable rented housing**

Affordable rented housing is let by registered providers (RPs) of social housing (also known as housing associations) to people who are eligible and qualify for the Council's housing register. Affordable rents are above social rent but are not in excess of 80 per cent of local market rent.

### **Assured shorthold tenancy (AST)**

The type of tenancy generally used for letting homes in the private rented sector.

### **Assured tenancy**

This is the type of tenancy agreement usually offered by housing associations.

### **Choice-based lettings (CBL)**

Choice-based lettings schemes are designed to allow an element of choice for people applying for housing association homes and existing tenants who want a transfer. As properties become available for letting, full details are advertised on the Bucks Home Choice (BHC) website and eligible applicants can express interest in suitable, available properties.

### **Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)**

A grant to help pay for housing adaptations essential to help people who have a disability stay in their homes.

### **Fuel Poverty**

Households which need to spend more than 10% of their income on fuel to heat their home to an adequate standard.

### **Help to Buy**

A government programme which aims to help first time buyers, and those looking to move home, purchase a residential property.

### **Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)**

Properties with five or more people living in them who form more than one household.

### **Housing Register**

The Council's list of people applying for social housing including housing owned and/or managed by housing associations. People have to meet certain criteria to join the register.

### **Intermediate Housing**

Intermediate housing includes shared ownership, shared equity schemes and discounted market sales schemes.

### **Local Housing Allowance (LHA)**

Valuation Office Agency Rent Officers determine LHA rates used to calculate HB for tenants renting from private Landlords.

LHA rates are based on private market rents being paid by tenants in the Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA), which is the area within which a person might reasonably be expected to live.

### **Local Plan**

The Wycombe Local Plan was adopted on 19 August 2019. It defines how future development should take place, allocates particular areas of land for development and designates other areas to be protected from development. It also includes a set of policies to guide the location and nature of development, including housing.

### **Low cost home ownership**

This covers a range of schemes intended to help people into home ownership who are unable to afford to buy a home on the open market.

### **National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS)**

An organisation that provides free expert advice, training and support to housing professionals, working in local Councils, voluntary advice agencies, local Citizen Advice and public authorities in England.

### **National Landlords Association**

An association for private residential landlords which provides support, advice, information and guidance to keep members up-to-date on laws and regulations.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, alongside the Government's requirements for the planning system.

### **Possession order**

The Court order that allows a landlord, or lender in the case of homeowners, to take possession of a property.

### **Registered Provider (RP)**

A not-for-profit organisation set up to provide low cost housing to rent and/ or to buy - sometimes known as housing associations. RPs are registered providers of social housing and are regulated - to be viable, efficient and well-governed - by the Regulator of Social Housing.

### **Rough Sleepers**

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) defines people who sleep rough as:

People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or "bashes").

### **Section 21 notice**

In England and Wales, a section 21 notice, also known as a section 21 notice of possession or a section 21 eviction, is the notice which a landlord must give to their tenant to begin the process to take possession of a property let on an assured shorthold tenancy without providing a reason for wishing to take possession.

### **Section 106 agreement**

This is a planning agreement between a developer and the local authority. The local authority grants planning permission subject to the developer agreeing to provide some benefit to the local community, for example affordable housing. The agreement applies to the land.

### **Shared Ownership**

A scheme that allows people to buy a part share in a home, if they are unable to buy the whole property, with another party (often an RP/ housing association) retaining the remainder. Shared owners can often increase their stake in the home, through a process known as 'staircasing'. Shared ownership

schemes are offered through RPs, typically at between 25 per cent and 75 per cent share of the full value of the home. A capped rent is paid on the remaining share.

### **Social rented housing**

Rented housing which is owned and managed by housing associations or RPs is provided on an assured tenancy at a rent level set in accordance with a formula set by Government.

### **Severe weather emergency protocol – SWEP**

Aims to get rough sleepers off the streets during periods of severe weather, including night temperatures of zero and below, by providing emergency accommodation.

### **Temporary accommodation (TA)**

Bed and Breakfast (B&B), hostel accommodation or privately leased accommodation that the Council may use to accommodate homeless households.

### **Universal Credit (UC)**

A benefits scheme of monthly payments for eligible people who are unemployed or on low incomes.

### ***Disclaimer***

*This glossary is designed for the purpose of explaining some of the terms used in connection with this Strategy but is not intended to provide a detailed legal interpretation.*

## 11. APPENDIX: ACTION PLAN 2020 – 2022

### Appendix

### Wycombe District Homelessness, Rough Sleeping, Private Sector and Affordable Housing Strategy Appendix: Action Plan 2020 – 2022

#### PART 1: To minimise homelessness and rough sleeping through prevention and relief

Objectives	What will we do?	Who will deliver this?	Target/ Outcome
<b>1. Corporate commitment to produce a Strategy to prevent and reduce Homelessness following an external Review of the previous Strategy, including strategic housing issues</b>	1.1a) Have an adopted Strategy in place  1.1b) Publicise the new Strategy, following adoption  1.1c) Regularly monitor progress & consider annually if any amendments to the Strategy are required	WDC Officers and partner organisations	a) New Strategy in place early 2020  b) Hold an event to share the new Strategy with colleagues and partner organisations  c) Action Plan to be monitored quarterly at the Wycombe District Housing Forum (WDHF) Homelessness Subgroup; Strategy and Action Plan to be considered annually at the WDHF Core Group
<b>2. Continue to develop partnership working to</b>	2.1a) Continue to gather information/ stats on Rough Sleepers and on current levels / trends of	Officers from WDC Housing Service, agencies	a) (i) Estimate the numbers of rough sleepers monthly  a) (ii) Carry out an annual street count/ estimate

<p><b>prevent and reduce Homelessness and rough sleeping in the Wycombe District</b></p>	<p>Homelessness &amp; Rough Sleeping in Wycombe District</p> <p>b) Compare stats for Wycombe District with other councils</p>	<p>including YMCA, OTW, Outreach, WHC, WRDGS; also Homeless Link for the annual count/ estimate</p>	<p>b) Quarterly reporting of data on homelessness and rough sleeping to the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup meetings - reporting to include numbers of prevention cases, relief cases and those owed the main housing duty</p>
	<p>2.2 a) Support and monitor the current Outreach Service in Bucks for assisting rough sleepers to access accommodation and support</p> <p>b) Consider future provision of the service in the longer term</p>	<p>Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies</p>	<p>a) Minimise the incidences of rough sleeping in the Wycombe District</p> <p>b) Provision of funding support for the Outreach service, in partnership with other District Councils in Buckinghamshire</p>
	<p>2.3 Provide targeted support for rough sleepers, using Flexible Homelessness Support Grant; Rapid Rehousing Pathway funding etc. - working towards the Government aim of ending rough sleeping</p>	<p>Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies</p>	<p>Provide appropriate assistance to rough sleepers, including the provision of emergency accommodation and tenancy sustainment once in accommodation</p>
	<p>2.4 Explore opportunities and where appropriate submit applications for available funding</p>	<p>Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies</p>	<p>Submit funding bids for appropriate initiatives</p>

	2.5 Develop closer working relationships with agencies specialising in support for clients affected by substance misuse	Officers from WDC Housing Service, the Street Support Partnership, One Recovery Bucks and Thames Valley Police	Contribute to the work of the organisations providing outreach help for clients affected by substance misuse to engage with specialist services
	2.6 Develop closer working relationships with agencies specialising in support for clients affected by mental health issues	Officers from WDC Housing Service and the Street Support Partnership, Bucks CC commissioning and specialist mental health agencies	Explore potential for provision of additional help for clients to engage with specialist mental health support services
	2.7 Reach and support clients at risk of homelessness at the earliest opportunity, with the aim to prevent homelessness	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies - including P3, Connection Support, WHC; Targeted use of DHP funding	Promotion of agencies to notify WDC of potential clients (with consent)

	2.8 Obtain feedback on the Housing Options service from service users - including via an online website link to a survey form	Officers from WDC Housing Service	Findings to be reviewed and shared annually at the WDHf Homelessness Subgroup
	2.9 Monitor the impacts on homeless households following the implementation of the amended Bucks Home Choice Allocation Policy	Officers from WDC Housing Service	Findings to be reviewed and shared annually at the WDHf Homelessness Subgroup
	2.10 Actively support households who are at risk of homelessness, with the aim to prevent mortgage repossessions	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies	(i) Monitor the number of approaches involving provision of advice for households in mortgage arrears/ facing repossession  (ii) Update the information available on the Council's website
	2.11 Continue to work closely with Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (WRDGS) with the aim to assist clients who are not in priority need	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agency - WRDGS	(i) WRDGS figures to be reported at the quarterly WDHf Homelessness Subgroup  ii) Arrange review meeting(s) in connection with annual revenue grant
	2.12 Encourage provision of emergency accommodation during periods of severe weather	Agency partners and Officers from WDC Housing Service	Ensure adequate arrangements are in place for Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP)



<b>3. Continue to implement the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017</b>	3.1 Continue to deliver appropriate information for clients, including use of information from NHAS and consider developing a self-help guide	Officers from WDC Housing Service	(i) Provide information via website links to NHAS factsheets for members of the public  (ii) Aim to have a self-help guide available on the District Council's website
	3.2 Ensure information is available for clients to obtain advice and support	Agency partners and Officers from WDC Housing Service	Carry out an annual review of service mapping information
	3.3 Monitoring of the Duty to Refer from public bodies and impacts it has on the housing service	Officers from WDC and other public bodies	Provision of monitoring statistics to the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup and liaison with the organisations
<b>4. Provision of sufficient good quality temporary accommodation</b>	4.1 Minimise use of Bed & Breakfast Accommodation - no placement of family households into B&B other than in exceptional circumstances or emergencies and then for less than 6 weeks	Officers from WDC Housing Service	(i) Minimise use of B&B for single person households – monitor and report quarterly to the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup  (ii) Minimise the use of B&B for family households – monitor and report quarterly to the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup
	4.2 No placement of 16/17 year olds by the WDC housing service into B&B	Officers from WDC Housing Service and Bucks CC	Joint Protocol with Buckinghamshire County Council Social Services – monitor and report quarterly
	4.3 Enhance provision of temporary accommodation	Officers from WDC Housing	Deliver the Desborough Road project for new accommodation - to replace Saunderton Lodge

		Service and other services at WDC	
	4.4 Provide funding for the project for 8 additional homes for letting on ASTs to homeless families	Officers from WDC Housing and Harrow Churches HA	Enable to project to be delivered by March 2020
<b>5. Monitor and respond to the impacts of Universal Credit</b>	5.1 Closer partnership working between Officers in the Council's Housing service and agencies involved in UC cases	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies - including DWP, RPs & CAB	WDC attendance at meetings of the County-wide Stakeholder Group run by the DWP; sharing information and providing feedback
<b>6. Review and develop partnerships with providers working with clients with additional needs who may be at risk of homelessness, including monitoring /</b>	6.1 Strengthen links with the Prison Service and develop a protocol for prison leavers, to include those with complex needs	Officers from WDC Housing Service and the Prison Service	(i) Working with other District Councils in Buckinghamshire, to fund a specialist Probation and Prison liaison worker  (ii) Develop and agree a Protocol for prison leavers who need access to housing
	6.2 Monitor the effectiveness of the Protocol with Social Services for families considered to be intentionally homeless	Officers from WDC Housing Service and BCC Social Services	Discuss / report any feedback regarding the existing Protocol - annually

<b>development of Protocols</b>	6.3 Monitor the effectiveness of the Protocol with Social Care for 16/17 year olds	Officers from WDC Housing Service and Bucks CC Social Services	Discuss / report any feedback regarding the existing Protocol - annually
	6.4 Monitor the effectiveness of the Protocol for young people leaving care	Officers from WDC Housing Service and Bucks CC Social Services	Discuss / report any feedback regarding the existing Protocol - annually
	6.5 Continue to work closely with Women's Aid services in helping victims of domestic abuse	Officers from WDC Housing Service and Wycombe Women's Aid	Consider if a Protocol is required
	6.6 Develop partnership working with primary care providers for people with complex needs, including a protocol for people being discharged from hospital	Officers from WDC Housing Service, Bucks housing leads and the Community Mental Health Service	(i) Develop and agree a Protocol for people leaving hospital who need access to housing  (ii) Develop and agree a Protocol for people with mental health issues who need access to housing
	6.7 Develop move-on arrangements from specialist/ supported accommodation	Officers from WDC Housing Service and partner agencies	Explore potential options for more move-on opportunities

	6.8 Develop partnership assistance for people experiencing homelessness who have no recourse to public funds - signposting to include specialist agencies	Officers from WDC Housing Service, BCC Social Services and Refugee Support/ Red Cross	Specialist external agencies to discuss findings / feedback at meetings of the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup
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## **PART 2: The provision of affordable housing for those in housing need**

<b>7. Provision of appropriate affordable settled accommodation</b>	7.1 Maximise the use of nominations / allocations to local affordable housing	WDC Officers to monitor the effectiveness of Bucks Home Choice policy	Monitor the number of nominations via Bucks Home Choice and share findings annually at the WDHF Homelessness Subgroup
	7.2 Encourage the provision of good quality private rented sector accommodation for prevention & relief of homelessness	Officers from WDC Housing Service WRDGS; RPs and Private Landlords	(i) Engage with landlords and agents, including regular Landlord Forum meetings;  (ii) Achieve an increased use of the private rented sector; target of 15 households per quarter - monitor and report quarterly
<b>8 Monitor the levels of new home building delivery in the district and</b>	8.1 Achieve the new house building target through the Local Plan and secure the delivery of housing	Officers from WDC, Private Developers,	10,925 homes to be provided in the period 2013 to 2033 (average 546.25 dwellings per annum)

<b>maximise the provision of affordable housing, within Local Plan policy and guidance</b>		Landowners and RPs	
	8.2 Secure quality new housing development through planning negotiations and review quality of new housing	Officers from WDC, Private Developers and RPs	Officers from the housing service respond to consultation from Officers in the Planning and Sustainability Service at the planning application stage and also view some of the affordable dwellings on each scheme around the handover date
	8.3 Support appropriate funding bids to Homes England/ Government	Officers from WDC, RPs and Homes England	Submit funding bids as appropriate within the prescribed timescales
	8.4 Continue to work with RPs to maximise the provision of affordable / social housing within Local Plan policy, including shared ownership, shared equity and affordable home ownership tenures	Officers from WDC, RPs and Private Developers. May include grant from Homes England / MHCLG	Delivery of homes in accordance with the Local Plan and needs identified in the Buckinghamshire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA)

	8.5 Use of Council resources to enable the provision of affordable housing Resources from S106 financial developer contributions; land/ properties in WDC ownership	Officers from WDC and RPs; possible resources from S106 financial developer contributions; land/ properties in WDC	(i) Make effective use of accumulated S106 financial developer contributions to deliver additional affordable housing  (ii) Work with WDC Estates team regarding land or properties in which WDC has ownership and which may have potential for affordable housing
	8.6 Enable the provision of specialised housing in accordance with identified needs	Officers from WDC, Bucks CC, RPs and other appropriate organisations	Work with Bucks CC and housing providers to deliver appropriate specialised housing accommodation to help meet identified needs

**PART 3: To enhance the quality of housing in the District including standards in the private sector and use available funding to improve the health and well-being of residents**

<b>9. Enhance the quality of housing in the district, including standards in the private sector</b>	9.1 Take a pro-active approach to engaging with owner-occupiers and landlords & tenants of rented properties regarding housing standards	Officers from WDC	(i) Provide information via the Council's website  (ii) Provide information at the Landlord Forum, to include information regarding landlord responsibilities
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	9.2 Engage with owner-occupiers, tenants and landlords of rented properties in respect of requests for service regarding issues of any disrepair in residential accommodation - in accordance with legislation	Officers from WDC, private sector landlords, letting agents, Registered Providers & other agencies (including potential increased budget)	(i) Respond within timescales based on level of priority  (ii) Application of Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 and appropriate enforcement action  Monitor & report quarterly
	9.3 Engage with landlords, tenants & other appropriate organisations - to ensure mandatory HMO licensing is undertaken as appropriate in accordance with legislation	Officers from WDC, private sector landlords, Bucks New University and letting agents	Application of Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 and appropriate enforcement action  Monitor & report quarterly
	9.4 Support the WDC Housing Options Service, Bucks CC Children's Services and Adult Social Care and other voluntary sector organisations in their use of private sector homes by inspecting the properties	Officers from WDC, including the Housing Options Service; Bucks CC Children's Services and Adult Social Care; other	Property inspections to be arranged within 10 working days of referral  Report quarterly

	prior to the commencement of letting	voluntary sector organisations; also private sector landlords & letting agents	
	9.5 Explore options to develop partnerships with other agencies	Officers from WDC, Bucks CC, Thames Valley, Trading Standards, Fire & Rescue, HMRC, Immigration and other agencies	Develop intelligence-led enforcement via information sharing protocols  Report quarterly
	9.6 Continue with partners to deliver a fuel poverty strategy - using funding from the Better Care Fund and other external funding streams	Officers from WDC, National Energy Foundation, Government Agencies, local authority partners, housing providers etc.	Report quarterly



	9.7 Improve energy efficiency levels for properties in all tenures in accordance with the Housing Act 2004 and The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England & Wales) Regulations 2015	Officers from WDC, housing providers, owners, Trading Standards etc.	Report quarterly
	9.8 Continue to promote and deliver Flexible Home Improvement Loan (FHIL) products	Officers from WDC & property owners – subject to qualifying criteria	To spend the allocated funding - allocations to be linked with demand  Annual monitoring and report
	9.9 Reduce number of long term empty homes in the private sector and continue to work with owners to bring empty properties back into use	Officers from WDC & property owners	(i) Monitor the number of long term empty homes in the district and report quarterly  (ii) Report quarterly on the number of long term empty homes brought back into use  (iii) Review and update the Council's private sector housing improvement and adaptations policies
	9.10 Undertake adaptations to residential properties using resources from the Better	Officers from WDC, Bucks CC, residential	(i) Report quarterly on the numbers of adaptations to homes

	Care Fund, including mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)	property owners, NHS Occupational Therapy teams and GP practices	(ii) Report quarterly on the predicted savings to the NHS and social care due to adaptations being provided
	9.11 Improve access to housing for households which include one or more persons with a disability, using a range of resources under the private sector housing improvement and adaptations policy – including discretionary DFGs, Health funding, RPs funding, Relocation Grant and Healthy Homes on Prescription	Officers from WDC, Clinical Commissioning Groups, Bucks Health Trust, BCC and RPs	Develop, with partners, a central list of adapted properties and encourage owners occupiers and tenants to apply for DFG funding, where works are required  Report quarterly
	9.12 Be proactive in promoting and positively improving the health and wellbeing of vulnerable residents using resources from the Better Care Fund	Officers from WDC, Bucks CC, residential property owners, NHS Occupational Therapy teams and GP practices	(i) Report quarterly on the number of Healthy Homes on Prescription (HHOP) referral cases agreed with NHS partners (ii) Report quarterly on the predicted savings to the NHS and social care due to HHOP being provided (iii) Report quarterly on the number of hospital discharges being expedited by HHOP interventions



## Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Name of project/strategy/service being assessed</b>	<b>Homelessness, Rough Sleeper, Private Sector and Affordable Housing Strategy</b>	<b>Cabinet meeting date <i>If applicable</i></b>	<b>February 2020</b>
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Housing and Environment</b>	<b>Date EIA created</b>	<b>December 2019</b>
<b>Name of Completing Officer</b>	<b>Brian Daly</b>		
<b>Approved by Head of Service</b>	<b>Nigel Dicker</b>	<b>Date approved</b>	

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's) are designed to ensure that Wycombe District Council complies with all relevant legislation and fulfils its duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This comprises of three limbs which are set out in Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010. This requires that all public bodies, in the exercise of its functions, to have '**due regard**' to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Each service area has an Equality Champion (see the Equalities tab on WySpace for an up to date list). Please ensure that the relevant Champion is aware that an EIA is being undertaken as, if needed, your Equality Champion can provide advice and guidance on completing the EIA.



## Stage 1 – Initial Scope of the Equality Impact Assessment

Please answer the five questions below to determine whether a full EIA needs to be conducted.

Will the service/policy/strategy affect any people or groups of people directly (including staff/members of the public)?	Yes	X	No	
Will it affect how other services are provided?	Yes		No	X
Will it have employment implications?	Yes		No	X
Do you have information suggesting that this service/policy/strategy will affect particular groups of people?	Yes	X	No	
Do you need further information or to undertake further research to answer any of the above questions?	Yes		No	X

If the answer to any of the above is ‘yes’, then a full EIA will need to be carried out and Sections 2- 4 will need to be completed.

If the answer to all of the above is ‘no’ then a full EIA does not need to be carried out, but to ensure consistency in approach, the EIA will need to go through the Challenge Process. Please e-mail the EIA to Catherine Herries-Smith; [Catherine.Herries-Smith@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:Catherine.Herries-Smith@wycombe.gov.uk) , Policy Officer at who will review and discuss as necessary. Then, if following the Challenge Process:

- a) it is agreed with the Policy Officer that no further stages need to be completed the Head of Service needs to approve the assessment and return a Word electronic copy to the Policy Officer for publication.

OR

- b) it is agreed with the Policy Officer that Stages 2 - 4 need to be completed, then the Head of Service will need to approve only once the full EIA is completed at which point a Word electronic copy should be returned to the Policy Officer for publication.



## Stage 2 – Information Gathering/Data Collection

<p><b>What are the aims of the strategy/policy/procedure?</b> Why is it necessary? What is it trying to achieve?</p>	<p>To prevent and relieve rough sleeping, and homelessness as well as the provision of long term accommodation that is safe, secure and affordable. The strategy also aims to enhance the quality of housing in the district to improve the health and well-being of residents.</p>
<p><b>Which aspects of the policy/strategy/procedure are relevant to equalities?</b> NB A list of impacts is NOT required at this stage, just identify areas – can be a bullet point list.</p>	<p><b>Those affected by rough sleeping and homelessness are often the most vulnerable members of society defined by a number of protected characteristics including disability, age, sex and ethnicity.</b></p>
<p><b>Identify the main data sources/information gathered</b> e.g. Workforce reports, census data, staff survey etc.</p>	<p>Main data sources have been taken from existing internal housing service information, the current Bucks Home Choice Policy, Homeless Reduction Act 2017, and national data sources.</p>
<p><b>How have you engaged with service users/members of the public/staff?</b> e.g. staff forums, consultations, questionnaires etc.</p>	<p>All stakeholders have been consulted via the Council's housing forum and via the Wycombe District Council Website. Consultation finished on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019.</p>
<p><b>Is the responsibility for this strategy/policy/procedure shared with another service/organisation/agency?</b></p>	<p>Indirectly only, as the Council has statutory duties in regard to homelessness, disabled facility grants and enforcement of housing standards. However, the Council works in partnership with a wide range of stakeholder agencies to achieve our aims.</p>
<p><b>Is further consultation/research or data collection planned or required?</b> Is so, what is the aim of the research? Why is it needed?</p>	<p>No</p>



### Stage 3 – Impact Assessment & Analysis

Areas to consider	Impact Identified Y/N	Description of impact and likelihood of occurrence (positive, negative, no impact; high/medium/low likelihood)
<p><b>Protected Characteristics</b> (i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage &amp; civil partnership, pregnancy &amp; maternity, race, religion &amp; belief, sex and sexual orientation)</p>	<p>Y</p>	<p><b>Occurrence High, Impact Low.</b></p> <p><u>Age</u> – Low- people of all ages are affected by homelessness, rough sleeping and a need for safe, affordable homes</p> <p><u>Disability</u>- High Impact- disabled facility grants are provided to those who require adaptations to existing homes (subject to a formal assessment) Rough sleepers are more likely to have mental health or substance misuse issues. The strategy aims to ensure the continued provision of DFG’s and to positively improve the health and well-being of residents.</p> <p>Ethnicity- Low</p> <p><u>Gender Reassignment</u>- No Impact</p> <p><u>Sex</u>- No impact currently anticipated, however in general woman are more likely to become statutory homeless whilst men are more likely become street homeless. This strategy aims to prevent and relieve all forms of homelessness.</p> <p><u>Maternity &amp; pregnancy</u>- No impact currently anticipated, however this will be kept under review.</p> <p><u>Marriage &amp; civil partnership</u>- no impact currently anticipated but will be kept under review</p> <p><u>Race</u>- no impact currently anticipated but will be kept under review</p>



## WDC Equality Assessment form

people ● place ● pounds

		<p><u>Religion and belief (including no belief)</u> - no impact currently anticipated but will be kept under review</p> <p><u>Sexual Orientation</u>- no impact currently anticipated but will remain under review.</p>
<p><b>Other relevant groups</b> (e.g. low income, ex-armed forces personnel, homeless people etc.)</p>		<p><b>Homeless Households &amp; Rough Sleepers</b> are more likely to be from low income families will be affected however the strategy is designed to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping, as well as to ensure the provision of suitable, affordable accommodation. Therefore the impact is deemed to be positive.</p>

NB. Please note that when considering impacts in relation to marriage & civil partnership - the duty is solely to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against this protected characteristic.



### Stage 4 - Equalities Improvement Plan

Protected Characteristic/Other relevant groups	Impact Identified Y/N	Measures identified to reduce/mitigate impact (Also include all positive actions included in your proposals)	Review date	Review update/ monitoring comments	Officer/Service Responsible
Disability	Y	<b>Positive Action to improve access to accommodation and/or adapt/improve existing homes for those with health and mobility needs.</b> Disabled facility grants are provided to those who require adaptations to existing homes (subject to a formal assessment)	Dec 2020		Housing Service Manager
Sex		<b>Support to single men who fall into the trap of homelessness</b>	Dec 2020		Housing Service Manager

Area of Consideration	How are/will we work to: (Also include all positive actions included in your proposals)	Review date	Review update/ monitoring comments	Officer/Service Responsible
Advance equality of opportunity	The strategy is designed to provide greater opportunities for housing to those vulnerable members of the community who fall prey to rough sleeping and often include those with protected characteristics. The policy will be	<b>TBC Post implementation</b>		Housing Service Manager





## WDC Equality Assessment form

people ● place ● pounds

	reviewed internally to monitor the improvement for those affected including those with protected characteristics.			
Promote good relations between groups (including community cohesion)	By supporting opportunities for rough sleepers for shelter and housing they will feel more integrated into mainstream society.	<b>TBC post implementation</b>		<b>Housing Service Manager</b>

NB. Please note that when considering impacts in relation to marriage & civil partnership - the duty is solely to ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination against this protected characteristic.



Report For:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 3 February 2020
Part:	Part 1 - Open

<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER EXTENSION</b>
Cabinet Member: Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Councillor Graham Peart Sarah McBrearty 01494 421876 Sarah.mcbrearty@wycombe.gov.uk
Wards affected:	Abbey Ryemead and Micklefield Sands Terriers
Reason for the Decision:	The Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) within High Wycombe town centre, which deals with the consumption of alcohol, and the Desborough Road Public Spaces Protection Order, which deals with prostitution, both expire in February 2020. A decision is required as to whether the PSPOs should be extended. The Order is made pursuant to Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
<b>Proposed Decision:</b>	<b>That both PSPOs be extended for a further three years. There was support from both the public and High Wycombe BIDCo to extend both PSPOs for a further three years, and whilst the police support the extension of the Town Centre PSPO, there are clear benefits to extending the Desborough Road PSPO as well – in order to continue to provide an additional tool for both the police and delegated WDC Officers. This is the preferred option.</b>
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	<p>The extension of a PSPO will contribute towards the Council's priority 'People' in terms of working and engaging with local communities by reducing and dealing effectively with anti-social behaviour. It will also contribute to the 'Place' priority by making the district a place people want to live, work and visit by controlling and preventing low level crime and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p><b>Corporate and Legal Implications</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This report recommends legal action be taken by the Authority in accordance with the new legislation, and also involves subsequent legal enforcement relevant to that action. The legal parameters laid out within the Act will be considered carefully against the proposal for an Order.</li> <li>• As with any new legislation of this type, this is untested ground and the legislation is likely to be further defined in years to come by a process of appeals and High Court rulings. The introduction of any Order presents a risk of</li> </ul>

	<p>legal challenge to the Council. Section 66 of the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 states that “interested persons” may challenge the validity of any Order in the High Courts. This means that the Council could face a challenge against its ability to implement the Order. An application of this nature must be made within six weeks, beginning on the day the Order is made or varied. There are two grounds upon which a challenge could be made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– That the local authority did not have the power to make the Order, or variation, or to include particular prohibitions or requirements imposed by the Order (or by the Order as varied)</li> <li>– That a requirement under this element of the legislation was not complied with in relation to the order or variation</li> <li>– The High Court would have the power to quash, amend or uphold the Order.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The penalties for breaches of an Order are fines following a prosecution or Fixed Penalty Notices can be issued where appropriate by authorised officers.</li> </ul> <p><b>Finance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement costs under this order will be mostly met by Police resources. Any supplementary enforcement will be undertaken by officers within Environment Service and Anti-Social Behaviour team.</li> <li>• There would be some internal costs for the publication of the Order, along with stationery for FPNs and the official signage.</li> <li>• It is expected that these costs will be met from existing budgets, although as increases in workload as a result of adopting this legislation are largely unknown, this may need to be reviewed.</li> <li>• Income from FPNs is expected to be small and will be used to cover the associated costs of implementing the proposal, and has not been included in this year’s budgeting.</li> </ul>
Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b> Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) are covered by the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The detailed legal implications are set out above and the proposed extension falls within the legislation. Consultation was also carried out with the Act.</p> <p><b>S.151 Officer:</b> Any costs incurred will need to be met from within existing budgets. Any changes to the budget will need to be proposed by the service through the MTFP process.</p>
Consultees:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 72 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 sets out the necessary consultation and publicity which must be carried out before extending</li> </ul>

	<p>the period for which a Public Spaces Protection Order has effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal consultation letters were sent to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Police and Crime Commissioner Mr Stansfeld</li> <li>– Police Superintendent Kevin Brown</li> <li>– Head of Communities at Buckinghamshire County Council</li> <li>– Eden Shopping Centre</li> <li>– Oasis (drug/alcohol treatment agency)</li> <li>– SMART (drug/alcohol treatment agency)</li> <li>– MP Steve Baker</li> <li>– High Wycombe BIDCo</li> </ul> </li> <li>• WDC Councillors were made aware of the consultation via Members Update.</li> <li>• Official responses were received from Supt Brown, the HWBIDCo Manager and Thames Valley PCC Anthony Stansfield.</li> <li>• Two surveys were posted on the WDC website, asking for people’s views on the Town Centre PSPO (regarding alcohol related anti-social behaviour), along with the Desborough Road PSPO (which concerns people engaging in obtaining sexual services). The surveys were promoted via WDC website, social media posts, HWBIDCo and an article in the Bucks Free Press. Paper copies of the survey were also printed and made available at High Wycombe library, WDC reception and Eden Shopping Centre. 37 responses were received for the Town Centre PSPO survey, and just 27 for the Desborough Road PSPO survey.</li> </ul>
Options:	<p>Options Explored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do nothing</b> – Both the current PSPOs would expire in February 2020. The police have been using their own powers for dealing with prostitution within the Desborough Road area, however the PSPO does provide an additional tool for dealing with this issue, and it can also be enforced by delegated officers within WDC. If this PSPO was not extended, the Council would not have this power. The Town Centre PSPO is regularly enforced, and feedback from the police is that it is having an impact – one third of people who responded to the survey felt the problem with alcohol related anti-social behaviour had improved over the last three years – indicating that the PSPO has had an impact for the public.</li> <li>• <b>Extend just one of the PSPOs.</b> Each PSPO is independent from the other, so we can extend just one them. However, the arguments outlined above highlight that there are benefits to continuing with both.</li> <li>• <b>Extend both PSPOs for a further three years.</b> There was support from both the public and HWBIDCo to extend both PSPOs for a further three</li> </ul>

	years, and whilst the police support the extension of the Town Centre PSPO, there are clear benefits to extending the Desborough Road PSPO as well – in order to continue to provide an additional tool for both the police and delegated WDC Officers. This is the preferred option.
Next Steps:	Members to agree on which option to take.
Background Papers:	Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 Statutory Guidance Previous Cabinet papers
Abbreviations:	PSPO - Public Spaces Protection Order ASB – Anti-Social Behaviour FPN – Fixed Penalty Notice HWBIDCo – High Wycombe Business Improvement District Company PCC – Police and Crime Commissioner

## Detailed Report

### Executive Summary

1. We currently have one Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) within the High Wycombe town centre and surrounding area which deals with the consumption of alcohol, and a second PSPO in the Desborough Road area, which deals with prostitution. PSPOs can only be put in place for a maximum of three years, and these PSPOs will expire in February 2020.
2. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 states that before the time when a PSPO is due to expire, the local authority that made the order may extend the period it has an effect if satisfied on reasonable grounds that doing so is necessary to prevent:
  - a) occurrence or recurrence after that time of the activities identified in the order, or
  - b) an increase in the frequency or seriousness of those activities after that time.
3. Before a PSPO can be extended, a public and key stakeholder consultation need to be undertaken to ascertain their views as to whether the Orders will continue to tackle the behaviours outlined within them.
4. Following analysis of the consultation findings, there are three options available, which are outlined later.

### Background and Issues

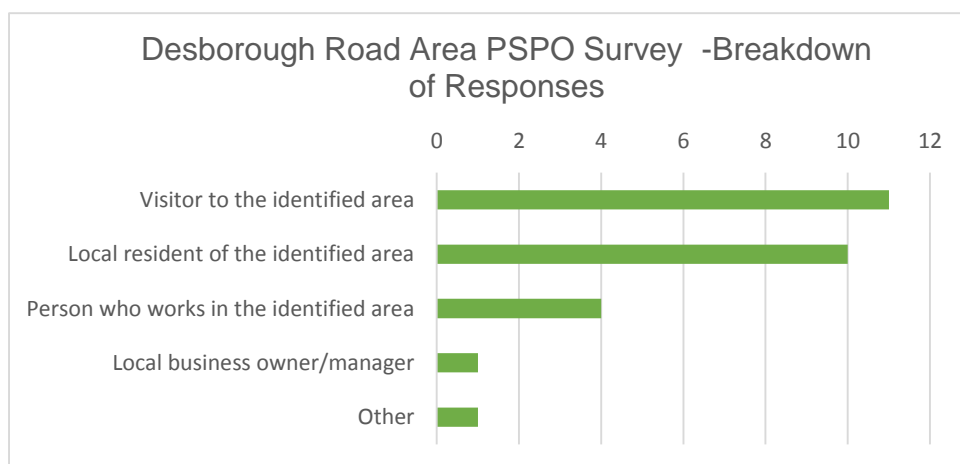
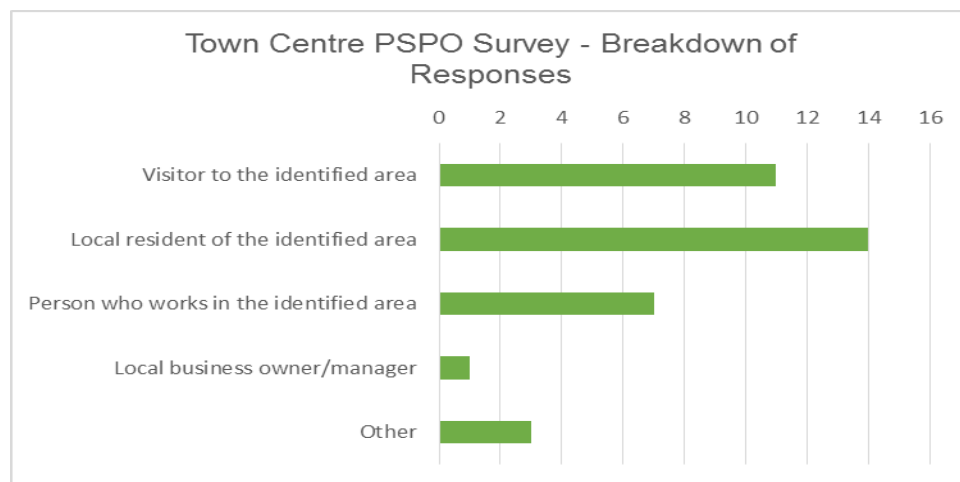
5. In October 2014 the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 introduced new powers to deal with anti-social behaviour, including the ability to create Public Spaces Protection Orders which are intended to address activities carried out in public spaces which have a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality.
6. Local authorities have the power to implement a PSPO if satisfied on reasonable grounds that two conditions have been met. The first condition is that:
  - a) activities carried out in a public place within the authority's area have had a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality, or
  - b) it is likely that activities will be carried out in a public place within that area and that they will have such an effect.
7. The second condition is that the effect, or likely effect, of the activities:

- a) is, or is likely to be, of a persistent or continuing nature
  - b) is, or is likely to be, such as to make the activities unreasonable, and
  - c) justifies the restriction imposed by the notice.
8. Following Cabinet approval, in February 2017 two PSPOs were put in place. One covers High Wycombe town centre (and surrounding area) and prohibits at all times 'consuming alcohol, or having an open container for alcohol, in the Restricted Area'. The second PSPO covers a smaller area in Desborough Road and requires that 'person(s) shall not engage, loiter or solicit with a view to engaging in obtaining sexual services'.
  9. If someone breaches either PSPO they can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice, and these fines are paid directly to WDC. PSPOs are enforced by delegated officers within Wycombe District Council, and Police Officers, and this year three Street Wardens were employed by WDC and part of their role was specifically to tackle alcohol related disorder within the town centre.

### **Extending a PSPO**

10. Section 72 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 sets out the necessary consultation and publicity which must be carried out before extending the period for which a Public Spaces Protection Order has effect.
11. Formal consultation letters were sent to:
  - Police and Crime Commissioner Mr Stansfeld
  - Police Superintendent Kevin Brown
  - Head of Communities at Buckinghamshire County Council
  - Eden Shopping Centre
  - Oasis (drug/alcohol treatment agency)
  - SMART (drug/alcohol treatment agency)
  - MP Steve Baker
  - High Wycombe BIDCo
12. WDC Councillors were made aware of the consultation via Members Update.
13. Official responses were received from Supt Brown, the HWBIDCo Manager and Thames Valley PCC Anthony Stansfield.
14. High Wycombe BIDCo were supportive of both PSPOs being extended, and made particular mention of the anti-social behaviour within the town centre and the impact the PSPO has had there
15. Thames Valley PCC Anthony Stansfield was also supportive of both PSPOs and was happy for them both being extended if the Council and Police felt they were effective.
16. Supt Brown, in consultation with his Chief Inspector and Neighbourhood Inspectors, responded to say that he supported the extension of the Town Centre PSPO, due to its regular and effective use. However, the PSPO in the Desborough Road area has not been enforced during the three years it has been in place. This is because the police are utilising their own powers with regard to the offenders and are working in partnership with WDC and local support agencies to engage with and support the street workers. As this work will continue within the Desborough Road area, the police do not feel the PSPO for this area needs to be extended.
17. Two surveys were posted on the WDC website, asking for people's views on the Town Centre PSPO (regarding alcohol related anti-social behaviour), along with the Desborough Road PSPO (which concerns people engaging in obtaining sexual services). The surveys were promoted via WDC website, social media posts, HWBIDCo and an article in the Bucks Free Press. Paper copies of the survey were also printed and made available at High Wycombe library, WDC reception and Eden Shopping Centre.
18. The results were:

- 37 responses were received for the Town Centre PSPO survey, and just 27 for the Desborough Road PSPO survey.
- 91% of those who responded felt that there is a problem with alcohol related anti-social behaviour in the town centre, whilst only 2% felt there wasn't.
- However, a third of respondents to the survey felt that this problem within the town centre had improved over the last three years.
- 88% of the respondents thought that the PSPO should be extended, and that it should be extended for a further 3 years. Only 11% of respondents (4 people) thought the PSPO should not be extended.
- 77% of those who responded felt that there is a problem with people engaging in obtaining sexual services in the Desborough Road area, whilst 3% felt there wasn't and 18% said they didn't know.
- 25% of the respondents to the survey felt that the problem within the Desborough Road area had improved over the last three years, 33% felt that it hadn't improved and 40% said they didn't know either way.
- 96% of the respondents thought that the PSPO should be extended, and that it should be extended for a further 3 years. Only 3% of respondents (one person) thought the PSPO should not be extended.
- The following tables show the breakdown of respondents for both surveys:



## Risk Implications

### 19. Options Explored

- **Do nothing** – Both the current PSPOs would expire in February 2020. The police have been using their own powers for dealing with prostitution within the Desborough Road area, however the PSPO does provide an additional tool for dealing with this issue, and it can also be enforced by delegated officers within WDC. If this PSPO was not extended, the Council would not have this power. The Town Centre PSPO is regularly

enforced, and feedback from the police is that it is having an impact – one third of people who responded to the survey felt the problem with alcohol related anti-social behaviour had improved over the last three years – indicating that the PSPO has had an impact for the public.

- **Extend just one of the PSPOs.** Each PSPO is independent from the other, so we can extend just one them. However, the arguments outlined above highlight that there are benefits to continuing with both.
- **Extend both PSPOs for a further three years.** There was support from both the public and HWBIDCo to extend both PSPOs for a further three years, and whilst the police support the extension of the Town Centre PSPO, there are clear benefits to extending the Desborough Road PSPO as well – in order to continue to provide an additional tool for both the police and delegated WDC Officers. This is the preferred option.

### **Next Steps**

20. Members to agree on which option to take.



# Agenda Item 8.



**WYCOMBE**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report For:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Cabinet 3 February 2020
Part:	Part 1 - Open Report with Part 2 Appendices
If Part 2, reason:	Para 3 - Information about the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR PERIOD 9 / QUARTER 3 ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2019</b>
Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Watson
Officer Contact:	David Skinner
Direct Dial:	01494 421322
Email:	Email: David.Skinner@wycombe.gov.uk
Wards affected:	All
Reason for the Decision:	The Cabinet approves a budget each year within the context of a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to achieve the Council's priorities. This report updates Cabinet members on the 2019/20 forecast position for Quarter 3.
<b>Proposed Decision:</b>	<b>That Cabinet consider the forecast outturn position for the financial year 2019/20 as at end of December 2019.</b>
Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications	Risk: Contained within the main body of the report.  Equalities: N/A  Health & Safety: N/A
Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments	<b>Monitoring Officer:</b> The Local Government Act 2003, section 25 requires the council's Section 151 officer to report to the council on the robustness of the estimates made and the adequacy of the proposed financial reserves assumed in the budget calculations.  <b>S.151 Officer:</b> This is a Section 151 Officer report and all the financial implications are included in the report.
Consultees:	N/A
Options:	N/A

Next Steps:	N/A
Background Papers:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revenue Budget and Council Tax setting 2019-20 to February 2019 Cabinet</li> <li>2. Capital Plan approved Cabinet February 2019</li> <li>3. Capital Refresh Cabinet September 2019</li> </ol>
Abbreviations:	BCC: Buckinghamshire County Council

Appendices to this report are as follows:

Revenue:

Appendix A – Savings Tracker

Capital:

Appendix B – Confidential – Scheme Forecast detail

## 1. Executive Summary

1.1. This report sets out the Council's Revenue projection for the year based on the position at 31 December 2019. The report reflects what was reported to Senior Management Board.

## 2. General Fund Revenue position

2.1. The net revenue forecast position shows a balanced budget as summarised in Table 1 below.

**Table 1** Revenue Projection by Portfolio 2019/20

Portfolio	Actuals	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	
	Year to	Year to	Year to	Outturn	Full Year	Variance
	Date	Date	Date	2019/20		
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Community	1,052	1,612	(558)	1,980	2,149	(169)
Environment	3,574	3,590	(16)	5,680	4,787	893
Economic Development & Regen	(3,497)	(3,390)	(108)	(4,435)	(4,520)	85
Planning	1,119	932	187	1,632	1,244	388
Digital Development and Customer	3,845	4,004	(161)	5,174	5,340	(166)
Housing	2,679	1,671	1,008	2,117	2,230	(113)
Strategy and Communications	2,232	3,426	(1,196)	4,371	4,568	(197)
Young People	67	58	9	78	78	-
Finance	1,376	4,465	(3,086)	5,095	5,953	(858)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,447</b>	<b>16,368</b>	<b>(3,921)</b>	<b>21,692</b>	<b>21,829</b>	<b>(137)</b>
<b>Corporate items</b>						
Interest receipt				(978)	(928)	(50)
Capital financing charges				(2,017)	(2,017)	-
Movement to/from Earmarked reserves				(2,395)	(2,582)	187
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay				660	660	-
<b>Budget Requirement</b>				<b>16,962</b>	<b>16,962</b>	-

Significant variances are summarised below:-

- **Community** – Underspend of £169k. £64k vacancy savings; £45k over recovery of management recharges; £105k underspend on Repairs & Renewals; £69k one-off surplus on Crematorium income; £125k loss on Court Garden Leisure Centre income from refurbishment programme.
- **Environment** - Overspend of £893k. Parking accounts for £721k of the overspend, £558k of which is from parking income due to lower usage and season ticket activity; £141k net pressure on operating budgets from delayed installation of new car park equipment. Additional pressure £63k in Parking from increased bank charges from change by provider to 'cost per transaction' from 'costs per banding volume' in line with its competitors] and £16k from increased security costs in MSCPs. £49k underspend in Repairs & Renewals [see note at Para 5 below]. £223k pressure on Joint Waste contract, in relation to property growth, extension of contract prior to new contract in September, and joint client costs. Vacancy savings £69k on Regulatory services.
- **Economic Development and Regeneration** – Overspend of £85k. £109k staffing pressures in Property Development from senior agency cover. £61k rental income pressure. £75k reduction in Repairs and Renewals spend due to contract delays.

- **Planning and Sustainability** – Overspend of £388k. £325k pressure on pre-planning and planning application income, £82k pressure on Building Control income. £47k Staffing overspend is matched by unitary income. £100k pressure reported on Local Plan legal challenges which could be reduced to nil following outcome of judgement expected by end of January 2020. The movement from Quarter two of £223k mainly from £185k increase in Planning income pressure, a request to carry forward feasibility underspend £134k and a reduction in the staffing overspend £114k.
- **Digital Development & Customer Services** – Underspend of £166k. £96k saving in Repairs and Renewals spend on the Council Offices. £47k pressure on ICT licences, and £46k savings on Capita contract. £71k net vacancy, training and miscellaneous savings in HR and Processing.
- **Housing** – Underspend of £113k. £160k net underspend on Bed and Breakfast from Homelessness Prevention activity by placing households in private accommodation. £44k pressure on WDC licensed properties relating to void costs on temporary accommodation properties. The position assumes £134k underspend on Homelessness Prevention Grant is carried forward into 2020/21 to maintain current level of service delivery and associated Bed and Breakfast savings up to August 2020. Movement from Quarter two relates in the main to the carry forward request.
- **Strategy and Communications** – £197k underspend. £111k grant income for Elections and Individual Electoral Registration (IER), with associated offsetting staffing and supplier costs. £197k net staffing pressure includes £248k on new County legal service, wholly funded by fee recharge; and vacancy savings which include the Chief Executive and PA.
- **Young People** – Nil variance and no risks to report.
- **Finance** – £858k underspend. £163k pressure on staffing due to agency staff, offset by £547k saving on contingency budget and £428k underspend on Housing Benefit Bad Debt provision.

### 3. Savings and New Income Tracker – Appendix A

The 2019/20 budget has a savings target of £853k and new income target of £2,444k. This in total represents 15.7% of the net cost of service budget. Overall, most of the savings and income are on track to achieve budgeted target, notable exceptions are for Parking operations where both the savings and new income targets are facing challenges as summarised below:-

- Service review in Parking Operations - £250k Pressure due to the delayed implementation of new Parking system
- Reduced Operating Fees - £90k Pressure due to increased costs from banking charges and security patrols in MSCPs.
- New income from increase parking tariffs - £558k pressure from reduced activity

The above pressures are contained within the overall monitoring position.

Pressure on PPA Planning income of £42k reported above impacts on the 'Fit for Competition' target of £450k due to a slowdown in the Housing Market, plus a potential £50k pressure on internal income.

#### 4. Council Revenue Summary – by Subjective

Portfolio Subjective	Actuals	Budget	Variance	Forecast	Budget	
	Year to	Year to	Year to	Outturn	Full Year	Variance
	Date	Date	Date	2019/20		
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
<b>TOTAL Income</b>						
Fees & Charges	(3,872)	(4,691)	819	(6,960)	(6,254)	(706)
Rental Income	(5,171)	(5,556)	386	(7,322)	(7,408)	86
Car Parking Income	(2,460)	(2,940)	480	(3,362)	(3,920)	558
Planning Income	(1,121)	(1,347)	226	(1,471)	(1,796)	325
Government Grants	(27,183)	(33,742)	6,560	(38,603)	(44,990)	6,387
<b>Income Total</b>	<b>(39,807)</b>	<b>(48,276)</b>	<b>8,471</b>	<b>(57,718)</b>	<b>(64,368)</b>	<b>6,650</b>
<b>TOTAL Expenditure</b>						
Employee Costs	11,420	11,070	349	15,340	14,763	577
Premises Related Expenses	2,731	3,216	(486)	4,043	4,289	(246)
Supplies and Services	12,514	16,109	(3,595)	21,514	21,479	35
HB Payments	25,576	32,201	(6,624)	35,782	42,934	(7,152)
Capital Financing	13	2,048	(2,036)	2,731	2,732	(1)
<b>Expenditure Total</b>	<b>52,254</b>	<b>64,644</b>	<b>(12,392)</b>	<b>79,410</b>	<b>86,197</b>	<b>(6,787)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,447</b>	<b>16,368</b>	<b>(3,921)</b>	<b>21,692</b>	<b>21,829</b>	<b>(137)</b>

Significant variances are summarised below:-

**Fees & Charges** – Increased income £706k. Significant variances are within Strategy & Communications £299k for the Joint Legal Service fee recharge to Bucks CC and offsets employee costs. Environment £320k; of which £248k although falls within the subjective of income relates to the drawdown of the Waste Reserve being used to fund the project costs of the Waste Contract retendering and £54k Parking income for the Handy X Hub parking patrols. Community £105k; £70k from the one off income receipt from the joint crematorium service and £55k from Parks management fee to Higginson Park.

**Car parking income** – Pressure £558k. From lower usage and season ticket activity.

**Planning income** – Pressure £325k. From reduced projections of planning applications for the year. Pressure £82k Building Control due to activity levels remaining stable against a budgeted increase in activity, this is reflected regionally in an average 10% drop in income.

**Government grants (in Income) & HB Payments (in Expenditure)** – These variances offset to a large extent; they relate to payments to HB claimants and significant variance is due to claimants transferring to Universal Credits.

**Employees** – Pressure £577k. Key overspends in Planning £47k, Economic Development & Regen £109k, Housing £24k, Environment £63k, Digital Development & Customer Services £40k and Finance £197k. The main reasons for variance are agency staff used to fill permanent vacancies and also for project work. Community is underspent by £64k. Strategy & Communications shows overspend £197k but relates to the unbudgeted new joint legal service with Bucks CC which is fully funded by a fee recharge.

**Premises** – Underspend £246k. £298k relates to Repairs and Renewal from delayed projects and unused contingency budgets.

**Supplies and Services** – Pressure £35k. Key net overspends in Planning £22k from Development management consultants, Community £122k relating to the cost to the Council of income lost during refurbishment works at Court Garden Leisure Centre (Higginson Park), Environment £596k; includes £223k pressure from the joint waste contract due to an increase in properties, £192k waste contract retendering project costs, £140k Parking operational costs due to increases in bank charges and security patrol charges. Economic Development & Regen £23k relating to the service charge payable at Wycombe Air Park which is funded by rental income and Strategy & Communications £7k. Underspends in Digital Development & Customer services £72k; include £35k savings on HR software and £47k reduction in Council office operational costs, Housing £46k; being the net impact of the saving of £290k in B&B payments due to decreased demand and the £154k additional costs of Homelessness Prevention and Finance £617k of which £547k relates to the contingency budget.

## **5. Repairs & Renewals Programme**

The total allocated budget for the programme is £733k, including £100k supplementary budget for car park resurfacing. The forecast spend for the year is £435k. The saving of £298k derives from delayed projects including Rookery Garden Wall £98k, Car Park works £87k and unallocated contingency budgets. Due to the nature of these projects, subject to risks and delays, any unspent commitments will be considered for carry forward at year end.

## **6. Capital position**

### **6.1 Background**

In February 2019 Council agreed a Capital programme for 2019/20 of £51.745m. Amendments to the programme which included Carry forwards from 2018/19 of £5.927m, additions £2.587m, forward funding £0.979m and reprofiling of £34.996m was approved at September 2019 Cabinet.

### **6.2 Quarter 3 position**

Cabinet is requested to approve additional re-profiling of 2019/20 schemes totalling £5.546m into later years. A forecast outturn of £21.574 is reported at Quarter 3, an under spend of £0.590m on the revised budget of £22.164. Table 1 below shows the summary of the position for 2019/20 at Quarter 3.

**Table 1 Capital Outturn 2019/20****Capital Plan Summary 2019/20**

Portfolio	Original Budget Feb 2019 Cabinet	Revised 19/20 Budget	Reprofile Q3	Revised Budget February 2020 Cabinet	Forecast Q3	Variation Q3
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Community	3.825	4,087	(523)	3,564	3,536	(28)
Environment	2.130	2,130	(1,452)	678	678	-
Housing	7.300	4,898	(1,285)	3,613	3,570	(43)
Econ. Devt and Regen.	25.245	8,850	(1,260)	7,590	7,254	(336)
Planning	11.266	6,049	(591)	5,458	5,303	(155)
Finance and Resources	0.308	308	-	308	280	(28)
Digital Devt. & Cust. Services	1.671	1,388	(435)	953	953	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>51.745</b>	<b>27,710</b>	<b>(5,546)</b>	<b>22,164</b>	<b>21,574</b>	<b>(590)</b>

Please refer to **Appendix B** for the detailed outturn by scheme.

**6.3 Key Variances**

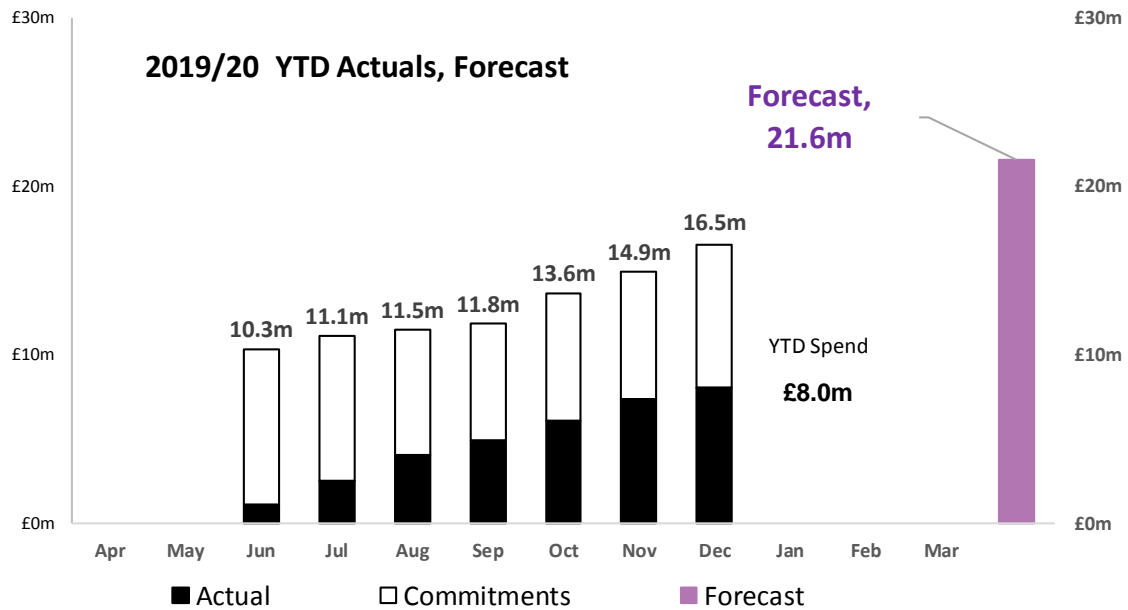
The underspend of £0.6m reported at Quarter 3 relates in the main to;

- £0.2m net underspends on the Baker St projects
- £0.1m savings on Westbourne Street
- £0.1m Wycombe Community hub/surgery is covered by the CIL funded scheme Adaptions to GP surgeries scheme.
- £0.2m costs of the Handy X – Phase 3 scheme can be charged against the sale proceeds rather than capitalised.

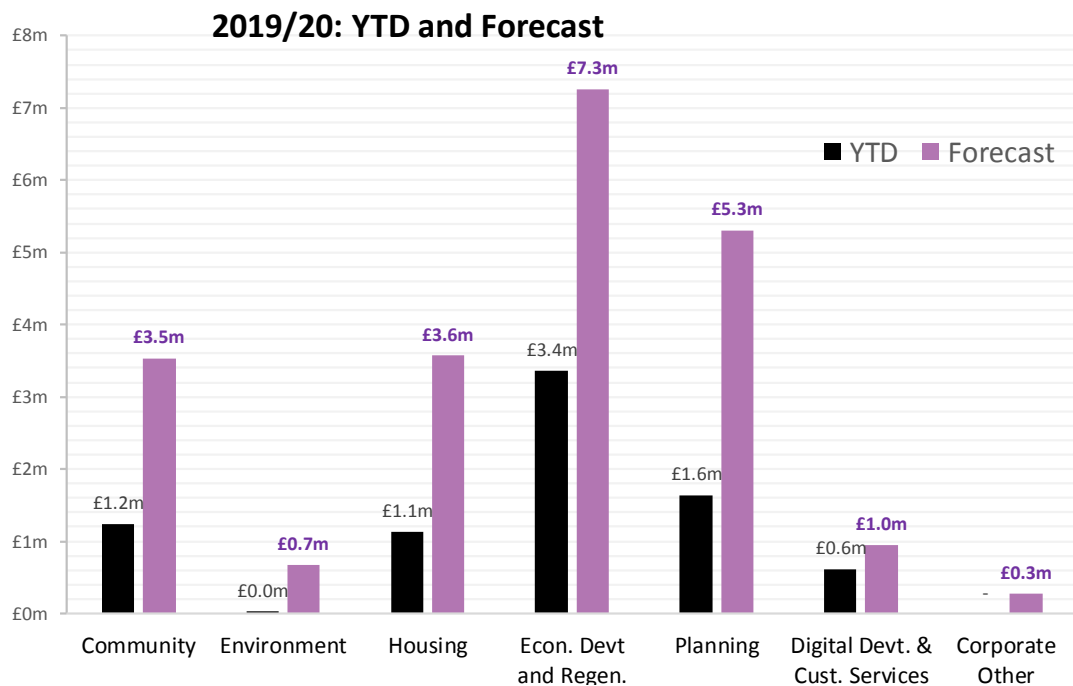
**6.4 Actual spend**

The 2019/20 forecast outturn of £21.574m still contains a degree of uncertainty. The forecast estimates are provided by the scheme project managers. Responsibility for the accuracy of the forecast ultimately sits with the scheme budget holder who will also report to the relevant Programme Board.

The graph below gives an overview of the year to date (YTD) spend profile, and total forecast. The £16.5m YTD figure comprises actual spend of £8m and open commitments of £8.5m.



This graph shows the year to date spend and outturn forecasts by Portfolio.



The forecasts include significant spend on the following schemes in Quarter 4:

- £1.2m - Court Garden Leisure Complex Refurbishment (Community)
- £1.1m - WAP Road Construction & Southside (Econ Dev and Regen)
- £0.8m - Affordable Housing
- £0.7m - Holmer Green Senior School 2fe Expansion (Planning)

## 6.6 Funding

All capital expenditure is funded from Capital receipts, CIL/S106 funding and grants.



In 2019/20 £9m income has been received:

- £3.97m - Bassetbury Allotments
- £3.25m - Handy X Hub Phase 3B
- £1.8m - Right to Buy.

## 6.7 Virement

The following virement is proposed:

Ref	Project	Project Code	£m	Reason for virement
1	Baker St HQube	EDBC37	0.100	Additional requirements arising during the HQube planning process require £100k additional budget. Budget being vired from forecast underpends on related schemes (Capital House and Hughenden Qtr Access Rd)
2	Baker St Capital House Phase 3	EDBC42	(0.050)	
3	Hughenden Qtr Access Rd	EDFB04	(0.050)	

The revised budget profiles for the schemes are as follows:

Project	2019/20 original £m	2019/20 Virement £m	2019/20 Adjusted £m	2020/21 £m	Total Adjusted Budget £m
Baker St HQube	0.712	0.100	0.812	1.750	<b>2.562</b>
Baker St Capital House Phase 3	0.050	(0.050)	-	0.391	<b>0.341</b>
Hughenden Qtr Access Rd	0.100	(0.050)	0.050	0.552	<b>0.602</b>

## Appendix A - Savings Tracker

<b>Savings</b>					
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Budget Description</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Status</b>
Community	CCTV	Service review	(50,000)	Amber	£38k shortfall due to delayed implementation.
	Various Services	Service efficiencies	(33,000)	Green	On track to achieve
Digital Development and Customer Service	FM & Processing	Service efficiencies	(31,000)	Green	On track to achieve
	HR	Software saving	(35,000)	Green	On track to achieve
	ICT Infrastructure	Capita contract reduction	(77,210)	Green	On track to achieve
Environment	Parking Operations	Reduced agency staff	(70,000)	Amber	Savings on agency staff are on track to achieve, but overall parking employees costs are forecasted to overspend
		Service review	(250,000)	Red	
		Reduced operating fees	(90,000)	Red	This will not be achieved as banking charges and security patrol costs in MSCP due to rough sleepers have increased
	Various Services	Service efficiencies	(35,000)	Green	On track to achieve
	Public conveniences	Business rate relief	(25,000)	Red	This will not be achieved
Finance and Resources	Various Services	Service efficiencies	(35,600)	Green	On track to achieve
Planning	Transformation programme	Fit for Competition efficiencies	(50,000)	Green	Service not raising issue currently
	Staffing	Vacancy management	(41,000)	Green	Service not raising issue currently
Strategy and Communications	Various Services	Miscellaneous efficiencies	(30,100)	Green	On track to achieve
			(852,910)		

<b>New Income</b>					
<b>Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Budget Description</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Status</b>
Community	New Crematorium	WDC share of income	(239,000)	Green	Over achieved by £69k.
	Various Services	Miscellaneous	(10,000)	Green	On track to achieve
Environment	Various Services	New income	(33,000)	Green	On track to achieve
	Parking	Increased Parking tariffs	(900,000)	Amber	Shortfall of £558k due to a reduction in usage
		New car park opened Sept	(70,000)	Amber	Income from the new car park is on track to achieve but overall there is a shortfall in parking income
	Environmental Services	Air Quality grant	(25,000)	Red	Grant not received. No expenditure expected so no revenue impact.
Housing	HMO	New licences	(50,000)	Green	On track to achieve
	Temporary Housing	Additional units	(30,000)	Green	On track to achieve
	Homelessness	New grant	(61,000)	Green	On track to achieve
Planning	Transformation programme	Fit for Competition new income	(450,000)	Amber	Pressure of £42k on PPA income due to a slowdown in the Housing Market and £50k capitalisation income.
Regeneration	Estates	New Rental income	(572,000)	Green	On track to achieve
Strategy & Communication	Legal	New income	(4,000)	Green	On track to achieve
			(2,444,000)		

Red	High risk of saving / change not being achieved
Amber	Medium risk of saving / change not being achieved
Green	Low risk of saving / change not being achieved

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

## Agenda Item 8. Appendix B

Document is Restricted

**FILE ON ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

**SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS (IF ANY)**

**URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)**

<b>Notification for Press and Public</b>
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**Notification of Items expected to be taken in exempt session,  
as required by access to information requirements.**

The meeting will be asked to resolve that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items as they contains exempt information as defined in Regulation 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, more particularly as follows:-

**Item 8 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report for Period 9/Quarter 3 Ending 31 December 2019– Appendix B**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

[The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations]

**Item 12 File on Action taken under Exempt Delegated Powers**

**Community Sheet No: C/04/20 – C/05/20**

**Economic Development and Regeneration Sheet No: EDR/45/19 - EDR/54/19**

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (Paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972)

[The need to maintain the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure, because disclosure could prejudice the Council's position in any future tender process or negotiations]

**FILE ON EXEMPT ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

**EXEMPT SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS (IF ANY)**

**EXEMPT URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)**