

Open

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

To be held remotely
6pm
Thursday, 11th June 2020



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Members of Committee:

Chairman: Councillor M J Hart
Vice-Chairman: Councillor S J Chambers

Councillor N J Desmond
Councillor S Griffiths
Councillor T L Onslow
Councillor S E N Rook

Councillor C Edginton-White
Councillor S Miah
Councillor M Rayner
Councillor D R Sheppard

Would Members please note that, to ensure continuity in scrutiny, substitutes should only be appointed for the Scrutiny Committee in exceptional circumstances.

Information for Members of the Public:

Part I of the Agenda includes items for discussion in public. You have the right to inspect copies of Minutes and reports on this Agenda as well as the background documents used in the preparation of these reports.

Part II of the Agenda (if applicable) deals with items of “Exempt Information” for which it is anticipated that the public may be excluded from the meeting and neither reports nor background papers are open to public inspection.

1. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting is open to the public except for any exempt/confidential items. These items are normally discussed at the end of the meeting. Where a meeting is held remotely, “open” means available for live or subsequent viewing.
2. Members of the public will be able to hear and see the meetings by a live stream on the Council's website:

<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/streaming.aspx>
3. This meeting is being held remotely online and will be recorded for play back. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. All streamed footage is the copyright of Wyre Forest District Council.

Declaration of Interests by Members – interests of members in contracts and other matters

Declarations of Interest are a standard item on every Council and Committee agenda and each Member must provide a full record of their interests in the Public Register.

In addition, alongside the Register of Interest, the Members Code of Conduct (“the Code”) requires the Declaration of Interests at meetings. Members have to decide first whether or not they have a disclosable interest in the matter under discussion.

Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's constitution for full details.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) / Other Disclosable Interest (ODI)

DPI's and ODI's are interests defined in the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the District.

If you have a DPI (as defined in the Code) in a matter being considered at a meeting of the Council (as defined in the Code), the Council's Standing Orders require you to leave the room where the meeting is held, for the duration of any discussion or voting on that matter.

If you have an ODI (as defined in the Code) you will need to consider whether you need to leave the room during the consideration of the matter.

Co-opted Members

Scrutiny Committees may wish to appoint Co-Opted Members to sit on their committee in order to add value to the scrutiny process. To appoint a Co-Opted Member, a Committee must first agree to appoint either a specific

person or to approach a relevant organisation to request that they put forward a suitable representative (e.g. the local Police Authority). Co-Optees are non voting by default but Committees can decide to appoint voting rights to a Co-Optee. The Co-Option of the Member will last no longer than the remainder of the municipal year.

Scrutiny Committees can at any meeting agree to terminate the Co-Option of a Co-Opted Member with immediate effect. Where an organisation is appointed to put forward a Co-Opted Member, they are able to send a substitute in exceptional circumstances, provided that they notify Democratic Services in advance. Co-Opted Members must sign up to the Members Code of Conduct before attending their first meeting, failure to sign will mean that they are unable to participate. This also applies to substitute Co-Opted Members, who will need to allow sufficient time before a meeting in order to sign the Code of Conduct.

The following will apply:

- i) The total number of voting co-opted members on any Scrutiny Committee will not exceed 25% at any one time.
- ii) The total number of voting Co-opted Members on any Review Panel will not be limited.
- iii) Those Co-opted Members with voting rights will exercise their rights in accordance with the principles of decision making set out in the constitution.

For Further information:

If you have any queries about this Agenda or require any details of background papers, further documents or information, you should contact Louisa Bright, Principal Committee and Member Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Wyre Forest District Council
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 11th June 2020

To be held remotely

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Appointment of Substitute Members To receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, together with the name of the Councillor for whom he/she is acting.	
3.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
4.	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 5 th March 2020 and the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 23 rd March 2020.	6
5.	How Are We Doing? Performance Update To consider a report from the Business Improvement Officer which updates Members on the performance of the Council for quarter 4, from 1 st January 2020 to 31 st March 2020.	12
6.	Consideration of the flooding motion from Council To consider a briefing paper from the Chief Executive.	30
7.	Car Parking Changes as of 1st June 2020 To consider the changes made to the way payment can be taken due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.	

8.	Work Programme To review the work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Corporate Plan Priority, Annual Priorities and the Forward Plan.	37
9.	Press Involvement To consider any future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.	
10.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor of the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
11.	Exclusion of the Press and Public To consider passing the following resolution: “That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

12.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor of the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
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WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COUNCIL CHAMBER, WYRE FOREST HOUSE, FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER

THURSDAY, 5TH MARCH 2020 (6PM)

Present:

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), S J Chambers (Vice-Chairman), N J Desmond, C Edginton-White, S Griffiths, S Miah, M Rayner, C Rogers, S E N Rook and D R Sheppard.

Observers

Councillors: G W Ballinger, H E Dyke, N Martin, F M Oborski MBE, J W R Thomas and P W M Young.

OS.71 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T L Onslow.

OS.72 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor C Rogers was a substitute for Councillor T L Onslow.

OS.73 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

OS.74 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 6th February 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

OS.75 Annual Review of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership 2019/20

The Chairman welcomed Superintendent Mark Colquhoun and Chief Inspector Helen Kinrade to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

The Community Safety and Partnerships Officer delivered a report providing an update on the properties, performance, successes and challenges in relation to the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP) during 2019/20 explaining that it was a statutory duty for local authorities to scrutinise the work of its Local Community Safety Partnership, under Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. She led Members through each section of the report explaining in detail the way the Partnership was organised and the partners involved. The 3 year rolling Partnership Plan was detailed and each type of crime was reported to the Committee.

Councillor P W M Young entered the meeting at this point (6:15pm).

Superintendent Mark Colquhoun and Chief Inspector Helen Kinrade explained they were new to their roles in North Worcestershire and gave the Committee an overview of their work.

Councillor Miah commented that he had attended the Young Citizenship Celebration Evening in his role as Chairman of Wyre Forest District Council and passed on his congratulations to everyone involved as it was a great success. He asked how the results of the Partnership Plan compared to previous years. The Community Safety and Partnerships Officer informed Members that they would be able to feed back that information following a meeting on the 18th March. The Community Safety and Partnerships Officer gave great detail on the Community Safety Officers role.

Councillor N J Desmond entered the meeting at this point (6:20pm).

The Committee discussed the Smart Water initiative at length and the importance of encouraging the public to engage with the scheme and how Councillors could support this. There was in depth discussion around anti-social behaviour, harassment, and criminal damage and the progress that was being made, as well as what could be done to target early intervention. The White Ribbon Campaign was discussed and the number of domestic violence incidents as well as theft from stores. The Community Safety and Partnerships Officer discussed options as to funding for the Community Safety Project Officers.

Agreed: That progress by the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership and the Safer Wyre Forest Operational Group be noted.

Councillor S Griffiths left the meeting at 6:57pm and returned at 6:59pm.

OS.76 Housing Assistance Policy

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Strategic Growth to agree the policy that would be used to determine how the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding from Central government would be spent. She informed Members that from April 2020 the contract provider would be changing to Millbrook Healthcare and that the Housing Assistance Policy was similar to those adopted across each of the Districts in Worcestershire.

Councillors P W M Young and J W R Thomas left the meeting at 7pm.

Members discussed the customer satisfaction rates of the service and were pleased to learn that they were normally in excess of 95% satisfaction.

Councillor P W M Young returned at 7:03pm.

The Head of Strategic Growth explained the process for people accessing the service from application to completion of works and the support available to make the process accessible to those who needed it. The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services thanked the Head of Strategic Growth

for the comprehensive report.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

1.1 That the Housing Assistance Policy 2020 be approved.

Councillor H E Dyke left the meeting at this point (7:06pm)

OS.77 Feedback from Cabinet

Agreed: The content of the Cabinet decision list, following consideration of the recommendations from it's meeting on 11th February 2020 be noted.

Councillor N Martin left the meeting at this point (7:08pm)

OS.78 Work Programme

The Committee reviewed the work programme for the current municipal year. The Chairman advised that the April meeting would go ahead to discuss the Council motion about flooding.

Agreed: The work programme be noted.

OS.79 Press Involvement

There were no future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.

OS.80 Kidderminster Town Centre Acquisition Strategy

The Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place which set out a proposed strategy for the acquisition of properties in Kidderminster town centre in support of the Council's bid for funding under the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) and an approach to master planning the future of the remainder of the town centre not otherwise covered by the FHSF. He explained the background to the FHSF and the progression of the Wyre Forest Bid and explained that a full business case was being prepared to include the former Crown House site, the Bromsgrove Street car park and the former Magistrates Court site.

The Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place discussed the importance of rebalancing the town and re-connecting different areas to ensure a flow to the town centre. He explained the need to be prepared to act on acquisitions and make provision in the Capital programme should the FHSF bid be successful.

The different acquisition options were covered under exempt information.

OS.81 Exempt Information

Decision: Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "Exempt Information" as defined in paragraphs 2, 6 and 7 of

Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

OS.82 Agenda Item 10 - Kidderminster Town Centre Acquisition Strategy

The Committee considered the Exempt appendices for the Kidderminster Town Centre Acquisition Strategy report. The Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place took Members through each of purchase options in detail explaining the advantages of each option.

Councillor N J Desmond left the meeting at this point (7:40pm).

In depth discussion took place by Members with the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place answering questions on different aspects of the proposals.

Councillor S E N Rook left the meeting at this point (7:49pm) and returned at 7:52pm.

The Committee agreed to rescind the decision to exclude the press and public. The remainder of the meeting was held in the open session.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet:

1.1 That the Acquisition Strategy should be adopted and provision made in the Capital Programme for potential acquisitions to be made.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8:06pm.

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

**STOURPORT-ON-SEVERN ROOM/BEWDLEY ROOM, WYRE FOREST HOUSE,
FINEPOINT WAY, KIDDERMINSTER**

MONDAY, 23RD MARCH 2020 (6.30PM)

Present:

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), N J Desmond, S Griffiths and S Miah.

Observers

Councillor N Martin.

OSSC.06 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Edginton-White.

OSSC.07 Appointment of Substitutes

No substitutes were appointed.

OSSC.08 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

OSSC.09 Exempt Information

Decision: Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of “Exempt Information” as defined in paragraphs 2, 6 and 7 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

OSSC.10 A Loan Proposal Under the Development Loan Fund

The Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place which set out a loan proposal to support a development in Wyre Forest under the Development Loan Fund.

The Committee heard from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place on the economic benefits of the proposal and from the Investment Director – Property at Finance Birmingham who had conducted the financial due diligence check on behalf of the Council, together with the Corporate Director: Resources on the financial elements.

After fully examining the proposal and satisfying themselves on a number of matters

it was agreed that the loan proposal should be supported.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet that the loan should be made.

OSSC.11 Investment Proposal

The Committee considered a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place which set out a proposed investment in Wyre Forest using the Council's Capital Portfolio Fund.

The Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place, the Corporate Director: Resources and the Financial Services Manager explained in detail the proposed acquisition, setting out the details of the building, the financial modelling and options for potential mix of future tenants and the risks associated with this particular purchase.

The Committee discussed the proposal at length and considered each of the available options in great detail.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm and reconvened at 7:49pm. The Committee concluded that having considered all of the relevant matters and balancing the risk and financial considerations, the acquisition should not proceed.

Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet that the acquisition should not proceed.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 8:00pm

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Rhiannon Foxall, Business Improvement Officer
Date: 11th June 2020
Open

How Are We Doing? Performance Update

1. Summary

- 1.1 To update Members on the performance of the Council for Quarter 4 (from 1st January 2020 to 31st March 2020).

2. Background

- 2.1 Performance management is instrumental in all council activities as it helps us to keep track of how well we are performing and enables any potential issues to be identified at an early stage so remedial action can be taken. It also informs our decision making processes which underpin the delivery of our Corporate Plan 2019-23.

- 2.2 The Council has a number of processes in place to monitor our performance including:

- Corporate Plan Actions
- Corporate Risks and associated actions
- Leading Measures
- Lagging Measures

3. Progress

- 3.1 **Appendix 1** is the [exception report](#) (reported from 2020/21 Programme of Projects)
- 3.2 **Appendix 2** is a detailed report of performance against our purpose of [‘Planning’](#) (reported from 2019/20 Wyre Forest Forward Programme of Projects)
- 3.3 **Appendix 3** is a detailed report of performance against our purpose of [‘Housing’](#) (reported from 2019/20 Wyre Forest Forward Programme of Projects)
- 3.4 **Appendix 4** is the [Capital Projects](#) report (reported from 2020/21 Programme of Projects)

4. Key Achievements/Issues

- 4.1 LA045 Number of people presenting themselves in need of housing advice:

The trend chart for this measure shows a significant increase in the quarterly figure. This is due to a change in data collection which now captures all contacts with regards to housing advice so provides a more accurate reflection of the service demand.

5. Options

- 5.1 That the progress in performance for quarter 4 be noted.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 Leader of the Council
6.2 Corporate Leadership Team

7. Related Decisions

- 7.1 None.

8. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

- 8.1 Wyre Forest District Council Corporate Plan 2019 – 2023.

9. Implications

- 9.1 Resources: No direct implications from this report.
9.2 Equalities: No direct implications from this report.
9.3 Partnership working: No direct implications from this report.
9.4 Human Rights: No direct implications from this report.
9.5 E-Government: No direct implications from this report.

10. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

- 10.1 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and it is considered that there are no discernible impacts on the nine protected characteristics as set out by the Equality Act 2010.

11. Wards affected

- 11.1 None.

12. Appendices

- 12.1 Appendix 1 – Exception report
12.2 Appendix 2 – Full 'Planning' report
12.3 Appendix 3 – Full 'Housing' report
12.4 Appendix 4 – Capital Projects report

13. Background Papers

Corporate Plan action information is available on the Council's Performance Management System, Pentana Performance.

Alternatively, reports can be requested from the Business Improvement Officer.

Officer Contact Details:

Name: Rhiannon Foxall
Title: Business Improvement Officer
Contact Number: Ext. 2786
Email: rhiannon.foxall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Exception report for all purposes

Those actions that are approaching their due date or are overdue



Support me to run a successful business

WFF 20/21 82

Erection of industrial units former Frenco site

70%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-May-2020	Mike Parker	Completion of project delayed due to Covid-19 lockdown; work to resume when lockdown lifted.	21-Apr-2020

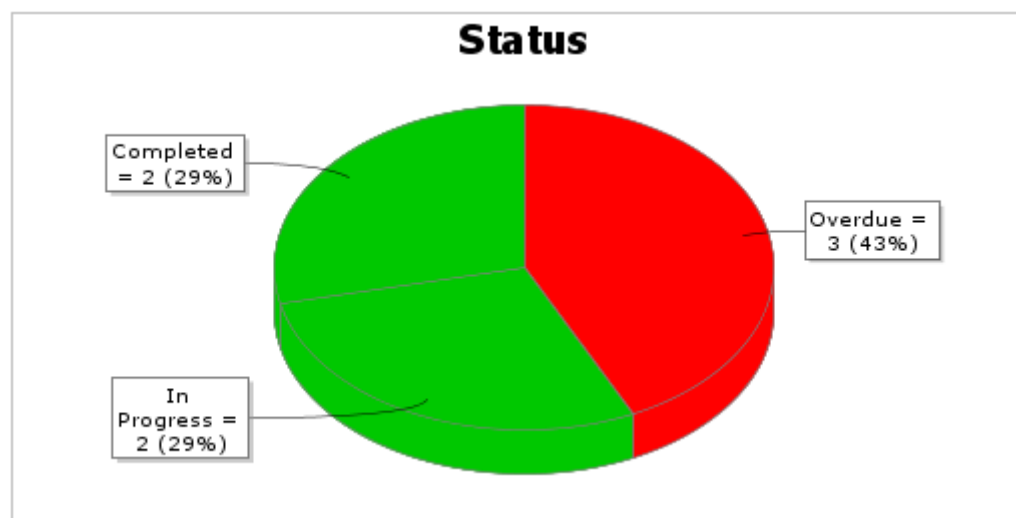
MAKE GOOD DEVELOPMENT HAPPEN

This report details the progress we have made against our purpose of 'make good development happen'.



Actions

Listed below is the progress against our current major projects that support the delivery of our purpose of 'make good development happen'



WFF 19/20 16

Crown House/Kidderminster Western Gateway

100%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
29-Feb-2020	Mike Parker	Demolition now fully completed; Practical Completion agreed at site meeting on 20th March. All tenant	24-Mar-2020

specification requirements met eg post demolition culvert survey, clearance of site, etc. Final surrender of lease imminent and expected before end of March. Works in hand for next stage of use of site as temporary car park.

WFF 19/20 30

Stourport Canal Basins

50%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Oct-2020	Mike Parker	Legal agreement with PSP expected to be completed imminently with submission of planning application to follow.	19-May-2020

WFF 19/20 31

Lion Fields

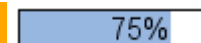
38%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2020	Mike Parker	<p>Parcel 1: Discussion ongoing between Cordwell and cinema operator but now delayed due to Covid-19, programme likely to need revisiting inc proposed planning application date submission.</p> <p>Parcel 2: Work to complete FHSF bid almost complete, expecting submission by beginning of June.</p> <p>Parcel 4: February Cabinet agreed vision for remainder of Bromsgrove Street area. This is also part of the FHSF bid.</p> <p>Parcel 5: Worcester Street now open to traffic and complete.</p>	19-May-2020

WFF 19/20 37

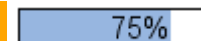
Review Local Development Framework including provision for significant housing growth



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Dec-2020	Mike Parker	Local Plan submitted to Secretary of State on 30th April. Planning Inspectorate have confirmed appointment of Inspector Mary Travers to undertake the Examination into the 'soundness' of the Plan.	19-May-2020

WFF 19/20 70

Investment in income generation through asset development



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2020	Mike Parker	Strong Leader decision issued to pursue acquisition proposal subject to completion of delegated actions which are currently in progress.	21-Apr-2020

WFF 19/20 71

Delivery of Kidderminster Railway Station



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
29-Feb-2020	Mike Parker	Entry into service delayed by Covid-19; progress to resume when lockdown lifted.	21-Apr-2020

WFF 19/20 72

Delivery of Worcester Street, Kidderminster Public Realm Improvements



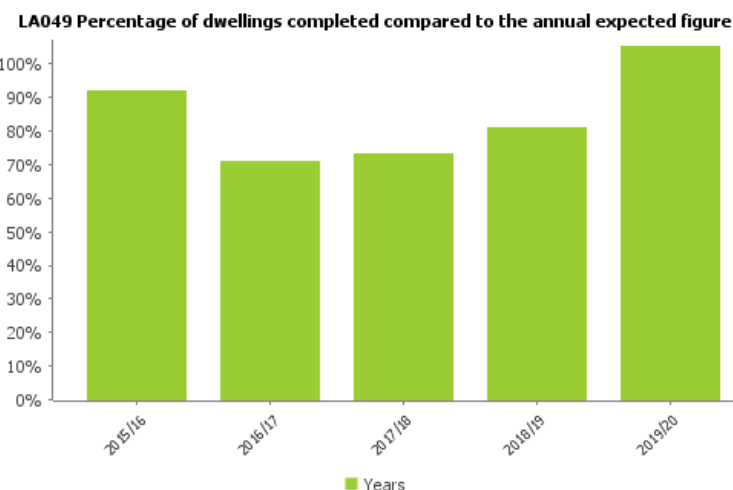
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Dec-2019	Mike Parker	Now open to traffic and WCC completing final road safety audit.	16-Dec-2019

Measures

As a way of measuring the progress with our purpose, we collect key data to monitor trends and patterns. This data not only helps us to understand the impact of the work that we are doing but it also assists with decision making at a corporate level. The latest available data is detailed below:

LA049 Percentage of dwellings completed compared to the annual expected figure

Aim to
Maximise



Current
Value

105%

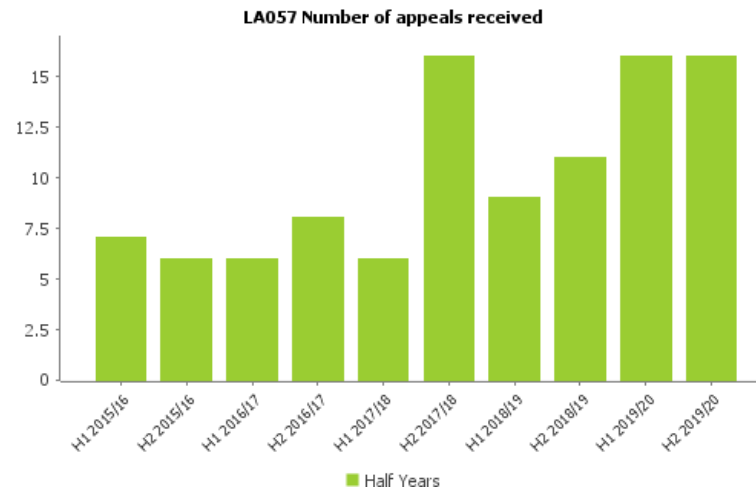


Managed By Kate Bailey

Agenda Item No. 5 Appendix 2

LA057 Number of appeals received

Aim to
Minimise



Current
Value

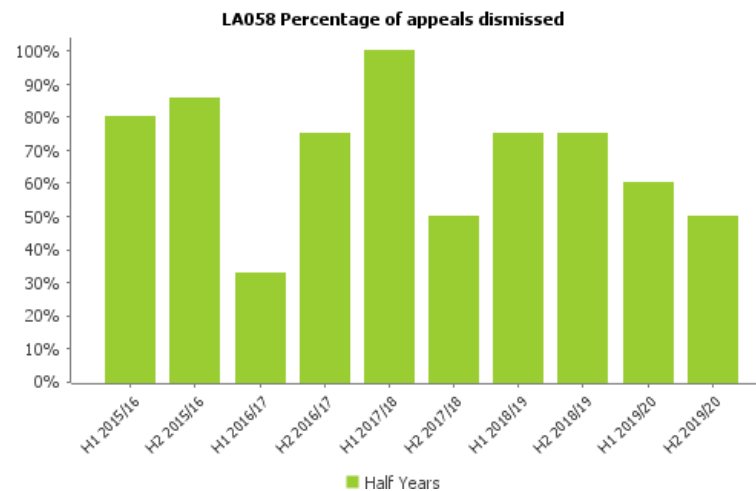
32



Managed By Paul Round

LA058 Percentage of appeals dismissed

Aim to
Maximise



Current
Value

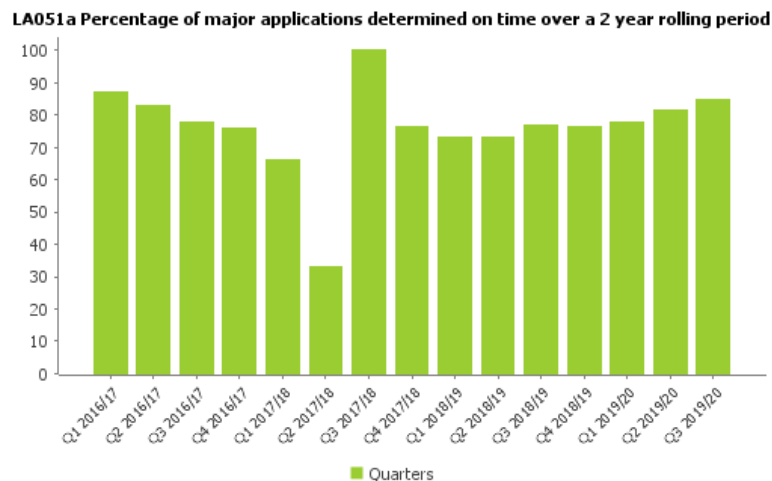
50%



Managed By Paul Round

LA051a Percentage of major applications determined on time over a 2 year rolling period

Aim to
Maximise



Current
Value

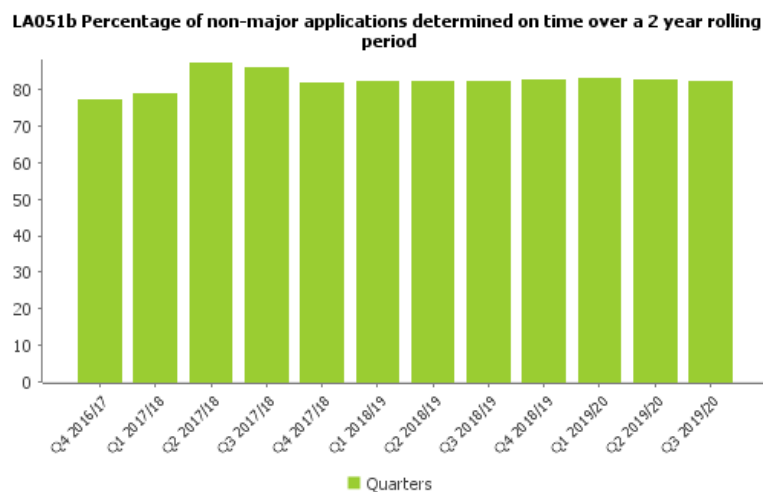
85



Managed By Paul Round

LA051b Percentage of non-major applications determined on time over a 2 year rolling period

Aim to
Maximise



Current
Value

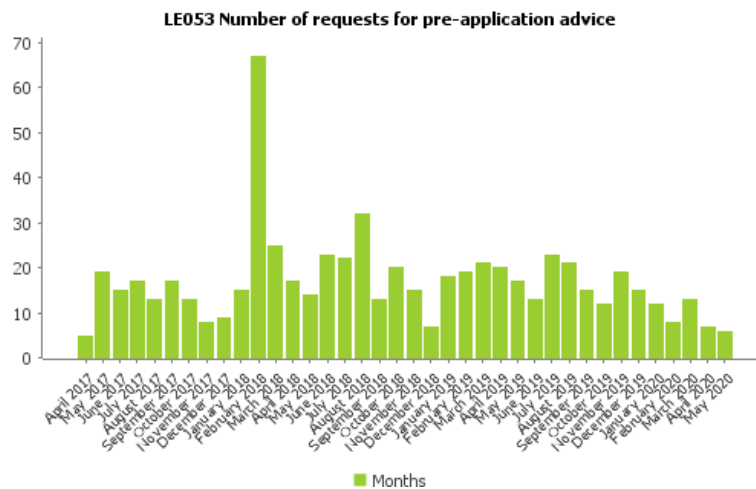
82



Managed By Paul Round

Agenda Item No. 5 Appendix 2

LE053 Number of requests for pre-application advice
Aim to Maximise

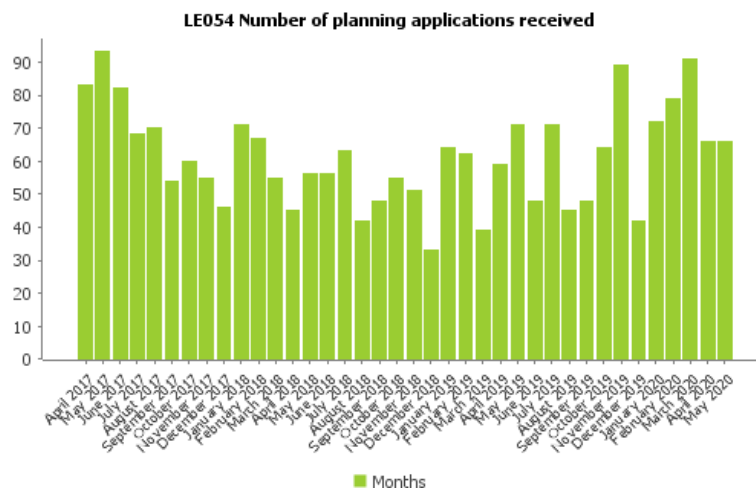


Current Value 6



Managed By Paul Round

LE054 Number of planning applications received
Aim to Maximise



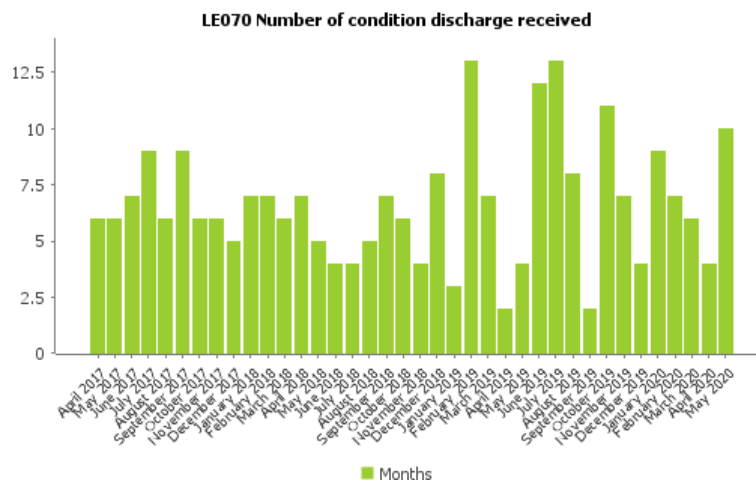
Current Value 66



Managed By Paul Round

LE070 Number of condition discharge received

Aim to
Maximise



Current
Value

10



Managed By Paul Round

Cross cutting measures

Listed below are primary measures for other purposes but also impact on this purpose:

LA034 Area of new commercial floor space completed through development

LA039 Number of affordable new homes completed

HELP ME TO HAVE ACCESS TO A GOOD QUALITY AND AFFORDABLE HOME

This report details the progress we have made against our purpose of 'help me have access to a good quality and affordable home'.

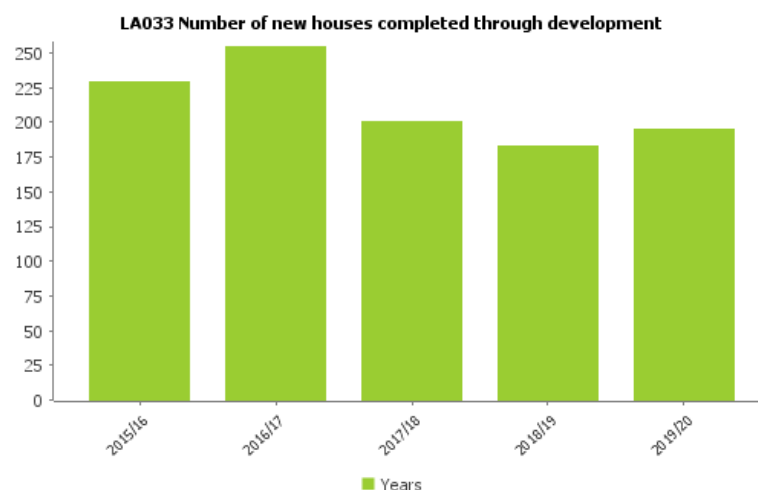


Measures

As a way of measuring the progress with our purpose, we collect key data to monitor trends and patterns. This data not only helps us to understand the impact of the work that we are doing but it also assists with decision making at a corporate level. The latest available data is detailed below:

LA033 Number of new houses completed through development

Aim to
Maximise



Current
Value

195



Managed By Kate Bailey

LA038 Average house price

Goldilocks



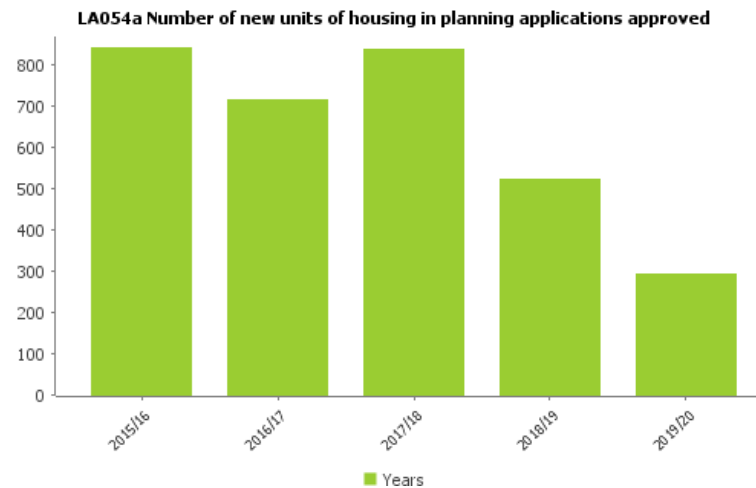
Current Value £196,326.66



Managed By Kate Bailey

LA054a Number of new units of housing in planning applications approved

Aim to Maximise



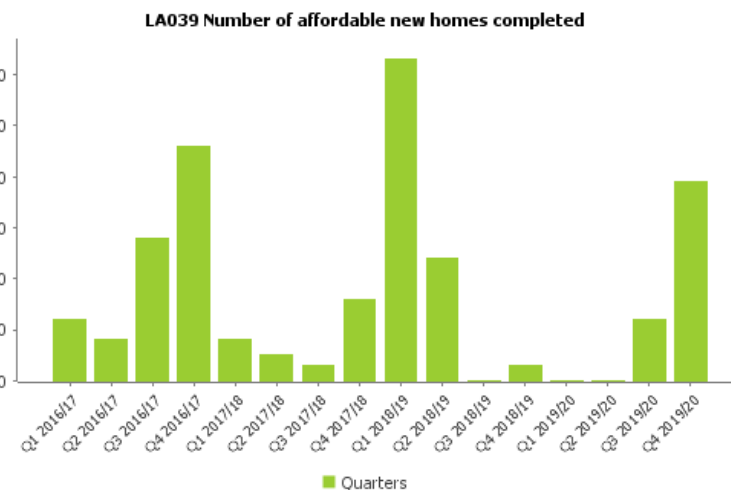
Current Value 293



Managed By Kate Bailey

LA039 Number of affordable new homes completed

Aim to
Maximise



Current
Value

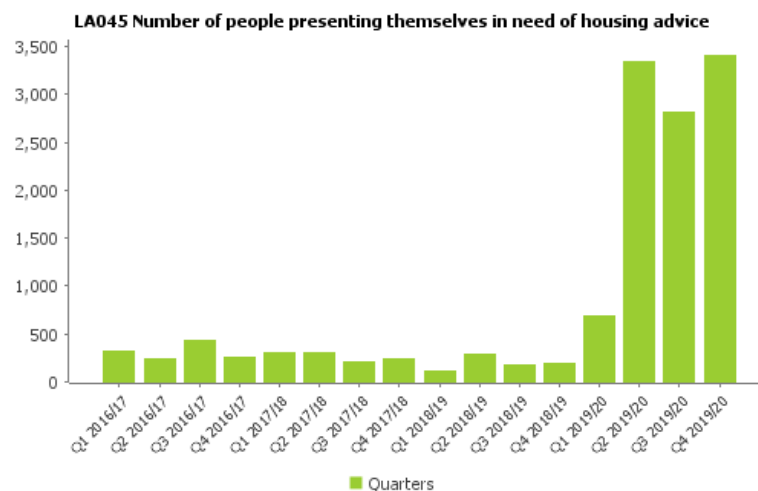
39



Managed By Kate Bailey

LA045 Number of people presenting themselves in need of housing advice

Aim to
Maximise



Current
Value

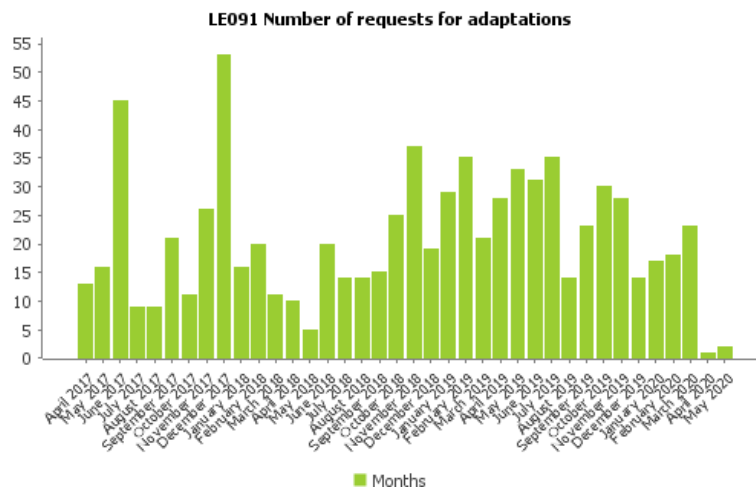
3,405



Managed By Kate Bailey

LE091 Number of requests for adaptations

Goldilocks

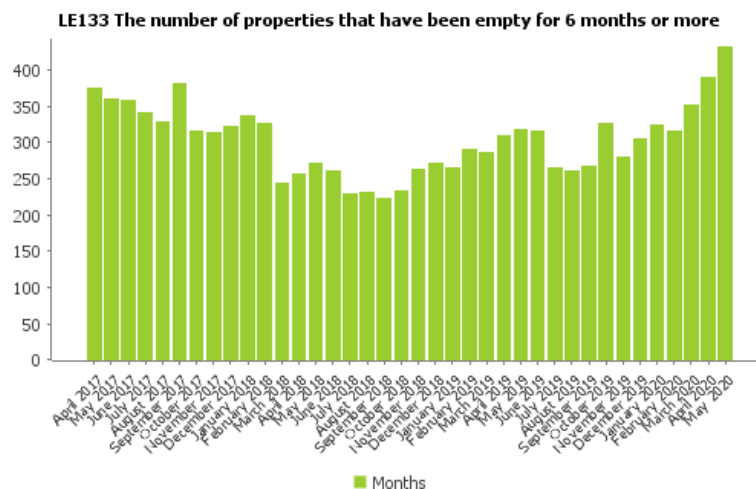


Current Value 2



Managed By Kate Bailey

LE133 The number of properties that have been empty for 6 months or more
Aim to Minimise



Current Value 432



Managed By Kate Bailey;
Mike Parker

Risks

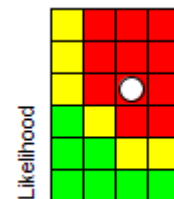
The below risk(s) has been identified as part of our Corporate Risk Register. All of the actions and measures detailed in this report aim to mitigate this risk(s) as well as drive forward our purpose of 'help me to have access to a good quality and affordable home'.

CORPRISK03

Unable to deliver good quality, affordable homes.

The need for good quality, decent and affordable homes in the district is increasing but supply relative to demand is decreasing. The risk is increased by the emerging national position regarding changes in the National Planning Policy Framework the Voluntary Right to Buy pilot in the West Midlands and the First Homes Proposals.

Current
Risk
Matrix



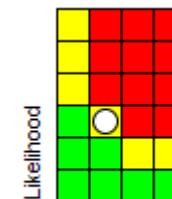
Impact

Impact Critical

Likelihood Significant



Target
Risk
Matrix



Impact

Impact Marginal

Likelihood Low



Capital Projects

This report details the progress of all of our capital projects



WFF 20/21 68	Green street depot 2020 improvement and investment plan	<div><div>95%</div></div>	
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
30-Jun-2020	Steve Brant	Practical completion certificate has been issued and we are entering the final stages of the retention fee and dealing with the snagging list.	01-May-2020
WFF 20/21 77	Churchfields	<div><div>50%</div></div>	
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Dec-2020	Mike Parker	County Council have confirmed that contractor will resume work imminently.	19-May-2020

Listed below are actions that will become capital projects in the future

WFF 20/21 31	Lion Fields
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Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Thursday 11th June 2020

Briefing Paper

1. Introduction and the task

1.1 This briefing paper considers how the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should approach the task that it has been set following the resolutions of Council at its February and May meetings.

1.2 The following motion from Councillor C Edginton-White, as amended by Councillor M Hart, was agreed by Full Council 26th February 2020. "Council

a) Extends its thanks to all public agencies, voluntary organisations and individuals for their response in assisting local residents and businesses affected by the flooding caused by Storm Dennis, noting in particular the work and commitment of the Environment Agency staff who worked through very adverse conditions throughout the night to respond to the emergency situation and the ongoing support they provided on site especially at Beale's Corner;

b) Notes that there was good forewarning from the Met Office about the impending storm event, with Storm Dennis being named on 11 February, although there were unprecedented local weather conditions which led to a very rapid rise in river levels at Bewdley on the night of Saturday 15 February;

c) Expresses concern that it was not possible for the Environment Agency to erect the Severnside South barrier and the temporary barrier at Beale's Corner in time to prevent a number of properties being flooded in Lax Lane and leaving Beale's Corner properties vulnerable and the bridge closed on Sunday 16 February;

d) Refers the issues arising from this and the ongoing current flooding events to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for it to take evidence from relevant bodies including the Environment Agency, with a view to making recommendations no later than the Council's meeting in July 2020 on lessons to be learned and what case can be made to the Government for permanent flood protection arrangements at Beale's Corner."

1.3 Council debated the timetable for the report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 13 May and resolved that it "AGREED an extension, to September 2020, to the deadline for the Committee to report back about the flooding issues, and any earlier relevant information from the Environment Agency to be provided in an interim report to July 2020 Council".

2. Background

2.1 Storm Ciara was a powerful and long-lived extratropical cyclone that was the first of a pair of European windstorms to impact the United Kingdom in February 2020. Ciara was the most significant storm across England and Wales since February 2014 and arrived over the weekend of Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th February causing widespread wind and flood damage with inland winds of up to 69mph recorded.

2.2 Storm Dennis was a European windstorm which became one of the most intense extratropical cyclones ever recorded exacerbating the impact of Storm Ciara. Dennis impacted the UK on Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th February bringing heavy and persistent rain across much of the UK - especially Wales and Western England. Western upland parts of the UK received 50 - 100mm or more rain on already saturated ground causing the River Severn to reportedly reach its highest ever levels and the Environment Agency to issue 600 flood warnings and alerts including several severe flood warnings. Many parts of the UK received the February whole-month average rainfall over the 9 day period of both storms. In all parts of the UK except Scotland, the Met Office reported that February 2020 was the wettest February on record and the fifth wettest of any calendar months since 1862:

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/press-office/news/weather-and-climate/2020/2020-winter-february-stats>

3. Impact of the storms on the Wyre Forest District

3.1 High winds from Storm Ciara caused damage to enclosures at the West Midlands Safari Park which led to 16 animals being killed. Due to the warnings provided by the Met Office the decision was taken to cancel or postpone many events on safety grounds, including cancelling the Kidderminster retail market. Winds were of a considerable enough strength to cause damage to trees, fences and property.

3.2 Ground already saturated by rainfall from Storm Ciara was unable to absorb the rainfall from Storm Dennis causing widespread, significant ground flooding. A large amount of rain in a short period caused flash floods of roads and fields which then led to landslides in some cases such as Wilden Lane in Stourport-on Severn which had to be closed on several occasions. Extreme localised rainfall events caused flash flooding that entered several properties in Wolverley on 15/16 February and a very sharp rise in levels on the River Severn at Bewdley which caused flooding at both Beales Corner and Severnside South. The storms approached the UK from the west which caused heavy rainfall in Wales. This rainfall then fed into the Rivers Severn, and Stour, causing river levels to rise through the District and causing extensive flooding in Stourport and Bewdley. Heavy rain in the West Midlands added to localised flooding and several roads across the District were closed due to flash flooding. The B4194 'Switchback' was especially affected between Stourport and Bewdley due to rising river levels.

3.3 An emergency shelter at The Parish Church of Saint John the Baptist in Kidderminster was activated on a number of occasions to offer shelter to rough sleepers during the difficult weather conditions. A free Shuttle bus for the general Public operated in Bewdley between the Village Hall at Queensway, Wribbenhall and Load Street, Bewdley due to full closure of Bewdley Bridge.

3.4 Train services between Kidderminster and Worcester were disrupted and road closures were required around Severnside South, Beales Corner and Stourport Road areas of Bewdley to facilitate the deployment of flood defences. Bewdley Bridge had to be repeatedly closed for safety reasons.

3.5 Public toilets and the riverside play area in Stourport had to be closed due to flooding and the businesses on the riverside all suffered from extreme flood damage.

Car parks in Severn Meadow, Stourport and Dog Lane, Bewdley were affected by flood water and had to close or operate at a reduced capacity. Refuse collections and bus services were disrupted by road blockages, diversions and closures. Contingency plans were put in place for the by-elections in Stourport and Bewdley to take into account possible road closures.

3.6 The estimated number of properties flooded across the district was as follows:

Total number of residential properties where flood water entered the habitable areas	82
Total number of residential properties where flood water did not enter into the habitable areas; but the local authority regards that the residence was otherwise considered unliveable for any period of time (these were mainly caravans on caravan parks where the parks required residents to leave because the sites were soon to be flooded. The caravans in question are treated as primary residences because they are liable for council tax and in many cases the residents are registered as electors in Wyre Forest.)	254
Total number of businesses directly impacted by flooding	70
Total number of businesses indirectly impacted by flooding (e.g. direct access roads flooded) (This is distinct from businesses affected by more general disruption to the local highway network over a period of weeks, for example as a result of the closure of the bridge in Bewdley).	10

4. Response by Wyre Forest District Council

4.1 Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC) offered support to residents and businesses in a number of ways. Households that experienced flooding or rendered unliveable were offered 3 months council tax relief. Details of immediate financial support for households and businesses were released by WFDC and an additional flood relief scheme designed to help those who were most affected was implemented <https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/community-wellbeing-and-environment/affected-by-flooding.aspx> The Housing Advice Team supported those residents made homeless by the floods and unable to make their own arrangements, and on the weekend of 29th February and 1st March officers staffed a multi agency flood information hublet at Bewdley Library to give residents information on support available to them. There was an extensive social media campaign to keep residents informed of latest events and advice with the WFDC website detailing the latest news on local events with frequent press releases. North Worcestershire Water Management team delivered flood information packs to all known affected properties and collated data on affected properties and individuals.

4.2 Aqua sacks were made available from locations across the District with staff working to meet increased demand as the flooding continued. Free bulky waste collections were offered to those residents who had suffered flooding to their property and WFDC cleansing teams acted to clean roads that have been flooded as soon as the flood water receded. Colleagues from Worcestershire Regulatory Services were available to offer support to local businesses affected by flooding. Car Park charges in Stourport & Bewdley were suspended over 2 weekends in March to encourage people to support local businesses.

4.3 A rest centre was established at Wyre Forest House offering shelter to those residents who had to leave their properties and had nowhere else to go. The rest centre was staffed throughout the key periods of need as identified by partner agencies and operated on 4 separate days but, in the event, offered shelter to only one resident and his dogs for a few hours.

4.4 As of the 29th May 2020, 74 properties have applied for, and received, Community Grants with reminders sent to the remaining 8 properties believed to be entitled to the grant. 74 businesses were believed to be eligible for, and received, business grants. There are another 6 business premises believed to be eligible that are under consideration. A further 7 households were awarded additional flood grants totalling £3,080.

4.5 The National Flood Forum have held two video appointment days in early June to help flood affected residents with the Principal Environmental Health Officer (Housing & Water Management) also being available to offer support during these appointments. The Council has recently launched a Property Flood Grants scheme to assist with further protection works at eligible properties.

5. Summary timeline of events

4th February - Met Office issued a yellow warning for the following weekend with forecasted wind gusts of 50 - 60mph across the United Kingdom.

9th February - Environment Agency issued 186 flood alerts, 251 flood warnings and 1 severe flood warning in England.

12th February - Flood barriers at Severnside North in Bewdley constructed. An email message from the Environment Agency on 12 February at 1327 had said "Operational information issued: Severn at Severnside Barrier Deployment.

Barrier Deployment

Arrangements are being made for the deployment of the lower stages of the Severnside flood barrier in Bewdley after 20:00 on 12/02/2020."

Night of 15th/16th February rapid rise in level of River Severn causes flooding at Severnside South and Beales Corner

16th February - Residents close to Beales Corner advised to deploy property level protection if in place. Bewdley Bridge shut. Severnside South and North Barriers completed to full height ready for the expected peak on Tuesday 18th February. Environment Agency deploys Beale corner barriers. Fastest surge of water ever recorded in Bewdley.

16th/17th February - Flooding in Wolverley Village affects 6 houses, pub and cafe. Road closures in place.

18th February - River Severn approaches its highest level since December 2000.

19th February - Properties at Beales Corner and Northwood Lane at risk of flooding due to high River levels. Residents advised to remain out of homes at risk of flooding.

20th February - Bewdley Bridge open to pedestrians and cyclists.

23rd February - Beales Corner barrier extension extended

24th February - Full closure of Bewdley bridge

25th February - Overtopping of Beales Corner flood barrier.

26th February - 525 tonnes of water per second recorded flowing under Bewdley Bridge.

28th February - Temporary flood barrier at Beales corner fully assessed and repaired in anticipation of approaching rising river levels. Bewdley Bridge opened to pedestrians and cyclists.

29th February - Bewdley Bridge fully reopened.

2nd March - Flood defences at Beales Corner extended due to anticipated rising river levels. Bewdley Bridge closed to vehicular traffic. Temperatures set to fall below zero. Gritters deployed. Bewdley bypass temporarily closed due to police incident.

3rd March - River Severn levels peaked at 4am and then start to fall slowly.

4th March - River levels continue to drop. Bewdley Bridge fully open to all traffic.

8th March - Prime Minister Boris Johnson visits Bewdley with Mark Garnier, MP

12th March - temporary flood barriers in Bewdley removed.

6. Wards affected

Areley Kings & Riverside

Bewdley & Rock

Wribbenhall & Arley

Lickhill

7. Agencies Involved

7.1 There was a co-ordinated multi agency response to deal with the issues arising from the two storms involving statutory agencies as well as voluntary and community organisations. Serious flooding was experienced at several points along the River Severn and Members of the Corporate Leadership Team were involved with the co-ordinated support for the whole of the local area with the following agencies involved:

Wyre Forest District Council

British Red Cross

Environment Agency

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service

Public Health England

Severn Area Rescue Association (SARA)

West Mercia Police

West Midlands Ambulance Service

Worcestershire County Council

7.2 The West Mercia Local Resilience Forum led the coordinated response of the “category 1” responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Meetings were generally chaired by West Mercia Police in the “response” phase while “recovery” activity was led by local government. The Strategic Coordinating Group (Gold Command) operated on the West Mercia footprint with Tactical Coordinating Groups at county/former county level (Silver Command; so there was a TCG for Worcestershire). Bronze operational cells were convened as part of very local response teams where significant flooding events were experienced such as Bewdley, Worcester and Tenbury Wells.

7.3 The first meeting in the LRF structures was a flood advisory service teleconference convened by the Met Office and Environment Agency at 1130 on Friday 14 February. The notes record:

“**Bewdley** - Severnside Phase 1 already deployed. Beales Corner to be deployed Monday. Severnside Phase 2 may be required Tuesday. Beales Corner no longer

looks required based on the latest peaks. will continue to monitor and prepare to deploy if required.”

As a consequence of the meeting, it was agreed that the Worcestershire TCG would meet daily, starting on the afternoon of Friday 14 February.

7.4 The meetings on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning took place but plans for Sunday 16 February were overtaken by events, following the sudden rise in river levels that caused severe flooding in Tenbury Wells and some initial flooding in Bewdley and other areas. As a consequence, the Worcestershire TCG met on five occasions on 16 February, the first meeting being at 0630 and the last at 2100, and there two meetings of the West Mercia Strategic Coordinating Group. The frequency of meetings reduced significantly in subsequent days but they were often at least daily.

7.5 WFDC was generally represented at the SCG meetings by the Chief Executive and at TCG meetings by the duty emergency response team leader. For the initial weekend of 15/16 February, the Chief Executive was the ERT leader and therefore covered the TCG meetings as well. Bronze cells consisted of “blue light” services, the Environment Agency and generally did not have local authority involvement.

8. Potential witnesses for the overview and scrutiny committee to consider in shaping its scrutiny

8.1 The Committee needs to consider from which bodies, other than Wyre Forest District Council staff, it should seek written and/or oral evidence. The Committee next meets on 2 July and this would allow it to consider further reports and evidence and produce an interim report for Council at its meeting on 15 July.

8.2 The principal agency involved in preparing for and defending against flooding is the **Environment Agency**. It is suggested that subject to availability this should be the main focus of the July meeting, and should be supplemented by oral evidence. Issues to be explored with the Agency include:

- Arrangements for predicting river levels;
- Why the barriers were not deployed along the whole length of Severnside on 12 February;
- The number of properties that had property level protection installed at Beales Corner and why it did not operate successfully;
- What Government or Environment Agency funding is available to provide better protection for communities in Wyre Forest in future;
- Whether permanent flood defences at Beales Corner are technically feasible; how much they might cost and how long would they take to construct if Government or Environment Agency funding were to be available; what implications they might have for the listed bridge and movement of traffic when deployed.

8.3 The main other agency that would be relevant to the question of permanent flood defences at Beales Corner is **Worcestershire County Council**, as “the lead local flood authority” under section 6 of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, and as highways authority including its responsibility for the bridge. Issues that could be explored with WCC include:

- Arrangements for signage when the bridge was shut

- Its view on implications for the bridge and traffic movements if there were to be permanent flood defences at Beales Corner.

- 8.4 Finally, the Committee will wish to consider hearing from **members of the public and businesses**, preferably residents who had their properties flooded (and in particular those that had property level protection which did not operate correctly or was overtopped) and those that didn't have their properties flooded but were directly affected. This could allow views to be gathered about flood warning and protection arrangements from the perspective of residents and businesses, and their views on the efficacy of response and recovery by agencies, including the financial support provided by WFDC.

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Work Programme 2020-2021**

June 2020

“How are we doing?” Q4 update (Housing and Planning)
Consideration of the flooding motion from Council
Car Parking Changes as of 1st June 2020

July 2020

Consideration of the flooding motion from Council
Review of Public Space Protection Orders and results of the consultation period
Bromsgrove Street Car Park - User Agreement
Community Led Housing Policy Update
Amendment to Capital Programme to administer Property Flood Grants
Nominations for Treasury Management Review Panel

September 2020

Treasury Management Report
“How are we doing?” Q1 update (Enabling)

November 2020

Treasury Management Report
“How are we doing?” Q2 update (Business and People)

February 2021

Treasury Management Report
“How are we doing?” Q3 update (Place)