

**Open**

# **Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

## **Agenda**

**6pm**  
**Thursday, 2 September 2021**  
**Council Chamber**  
**Wyre Forest House**  
**Finepoint Way**  
**Kidderminster**



## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### Members of Committee:

**Chairman: Councillor M J Hart**  
**Vice-Chairman: Councillor S E N Rook**

**Councillor S J Chambers**  
**Councillor P Dyke**  
**Councillor S Griffiths**  
**Councillor S Miah**  
**Councillor D R Sheppard**

**Councillor N J Desmond**  
**Councillor C Edginton-White**  
**Councillor A L L'Huillier**  
**Councillor T L Onslow**

**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.

### **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](mailto:louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)**

Wyre Forest District Council  
Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 2 September 2021

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
2.	<b>Appointment of Substitute Members</b>  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.	<b>Declarations of Interests by Members</b>  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.	<b>Minutes</b>  To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 1 July 2021.	6
5.	<b>How Are We Doing? Performance Update</b>  To consider a report from the HR & Organisational Development Manager which updates members on the performance of the Council for quarter 1 from 1 April to 30 June 2021.	10
6.	<b>Future High Streets Fund</b>  To consider a draft of a Cabinet report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place on progress with the proposed delivery models for the commercial development sites which will be enabled through the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) works and on the future operation of the Former Magistrates' Court (FMC) building.	53

7.	<b>Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021</b>  To consider a draft of a Cabinet report from the Principal Strategic Housing Officer on the adoption of the new Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy.	60
8.	<b>Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022</b>  To consider a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth to agree that the modified Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022 is publicly consulted on in advance of adoption and the preparations for a new strategy for 2022.	71
9.	<b>Work Programme</b>  To review the work programme for the current municipal year with regard to the Corporate Plan Priority, Annual Priorities and the Forward Plan.	113
10.	<b>Press Involvement</b>  To consider any future items for scrutiny that might require publicity.	
11.	<b>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.</b>	
12.	<b>Exclusion of the Press and Public</b>  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

13.	<b>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.</b>	
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**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**HELD REMOTELY**  
**THURSDAY, 1ST JULY 2021 (6PM)**

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**Present:**

Councillors: M J Hart (Chairman), S E N Rook (Vice-Chairman), N J Desmond, P Dyke, C Edginton-White, S Griffiths, A L L'Huillier, S Miah, T L Onslow, C Rogers and D R Sheppard.

**Observers**

Councillors: G W Ballinger, J F Byng, A Coleman, R H Coleman, P Harrison, N Martin and M Rayner.

**OS.20      Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor S J Chambers.

**OS.21      Appointment of Substitutes**

Councillor C Rogers was appointed as a substitute for Councillor S J Chambers.

**OS.22      Declarations of Interests by Members**

No declarations of interest were made.

**OS.23      Minutes**

**Decision: The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.**

**OS.24      Update from Worcestershire County Council – Flooding Outcomes**

The committee received a verbal update from Worcestershire County Council (WCC) on the flooding in January 2021.

Glenn Lucitt, Winter Service Manager, gave an update on the proposals from WCC in terms of the resurfacing works they are planning to undertake along and around Beales Corner, Bewdley.

Members were advised that the works will comprise of the removal of 110mm of the existing surface material which will be re-laid with a binder course, a final course of hot rolled asphalt and 20mm pre-coated chippings. He said the extent of the works will run across the bridge on Load Street, along Beales Corner and into the Stourport road, terminating in Westbourne Street and then up Kidderminster Road to the Pewterers Alley junction. The works are programmed to commence on 8 September for 5 days. He added that the works will be undertaken overnight to

minimise the disruption to road users and the general travelling public.

The chairman thanked the WCC representative for the update and for taking the time to attend the meeting.

**Agreed: The update be noted.**

**OS.25      Climate Change Action Plan**

The committee received a report from the Principal Health and Sustainability Officer which provided an update on the Climate Change Action Plan for 2021-22.

The Principal Health and Sustainability Officer presented the report and outlined the key issues. Members were advised that the action plan focused on key areas where WFDC and partners can have the most impact in the district within current resources. She added that the four key themes for plan were warmer, healthier homes; building a low carbon economy; transport and infrastructure; and healthy and resilient communities.

In addition to the actions listed in the plan, the committee were advised that it was proposed to run some in-house carbon literacy training, which would be included in the cost cutting actions as a free on-line tool kit.

The committee fully scrutinised the report. Members acknowledged the work that was being undertaken to tackle climate change issues in Wyre Forest and fully supported the recommendation to cabinet.

**Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet that the Wyre Forest Climate Change Action Plan 2021-22, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report, is approved.**

**OS.26      Flood Mitigation Schemes**

The committee considered a draft of a cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth on the external funding to be received from the national flood schemes funding for 3 flood mitigation schemes in Areley Kings in the Wyre Forest, Plack Brook in the Redditch borough and property level resilience measures in Bromsgrove and Redditch.

The Head of Strategic Growth presented the report and outlined the key issues. Members were reminded that the cabinet has delegated authority to make amendments to the capital programme where the council receives external grants and the resultant capital expenditure is fully funded. She added that as the host authority for the North Worcestershire Water Management shared service, Wyre Forest would receive the funding on behalf of the shared service which must be included in the council's capital programme.

The committee discussed the report. Members welcomed the funding which enabled the minor schemes to be undertaken for the benefit of local residents and businesses. The committee fully supported the recommendation to cabinet.

**Agreed: Recommend to Cabinet to APPROVE that there is an amendment to**

**the Capital Programme of £115k for flood mitigation schemes funded from an external grant.**

**OS.27      Review of Kidderminster Town Centre Public Space Protection Order (PSPO)**

The committee received a draft of a Strong Leader report from the Chief Executive which sought approval to commence a review of the Kidderminster PSPO.

The Community Services Manager presented the report and outlined the key issues. Members were advised that as part of the statutory process, an evidence gathering exercise had been undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership Analyst at West Mercia Police. Following a review of the data provided, it was recommended that a review of the PSPO be undertaken.

Members were advised that this would be the second time the PSPO had been reviewed and assured members that all County, District, Town and Parish Councillors would be formally consulted as part of the process. The map of the current PSPO area was displayed electronically for the attention of members.

The committee discussed the report. A member suggested that it would be beneficial if as part of the consultation process, a pop-up session be held in the town centre to capture the views of town centre users. The committee unanimously supported the recommendation.

**Agreed: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends that there is a strong leader report that the Leader goes out to formally consult the public in respect of this matter. As part of the consultation process noting what is said in paragraph 5.3 of the report, there is some modest officer resource provided to allow a town centre pop-up session to be included as part of the consultation process with in the town centre.**

**OS.28      Treasury Management Review Panel**

The committee received the dates for the review panel meetings and training sessions for the new municipal year. The chairman invited nominations from the committee. Councillors S Miah and N Desmond agreed to sit on the panel, and Councillor Miah was appointed as chairman. Membership for the panel would be offered to non-committee members via group leaders.

**Agreed:**

- **Councillor S Miah be appointed as chairman of the review panel.**
- **The Principal Committee and Member Services Officer to request nominations for membership of the panel from group leaders.**

**OS.29      Work Programme**

The Committee reviewed the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. A member asked if an update from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place on the role of the River Severn Partnership could be added to the work programme, the chairman agreed to consider the request.



**OS.30 Press Involvement**

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

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 7.06pm.

The full meeting is available for viewing on the Council's website

<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-committees-and-meetings/council-meetings/>

# Overview & Scrutiny Committee

## Briefing Paper

Report of: Rachael Simpson  
Date: Thursday 2 September 2021  
Open

### How Are We Doing? Performance Update

#### 1. Summary

- 1.1 To update Members on the performance of the Council for Quarter 1 (from 1 April to 30 June 2021).

#### 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, as amended.
- 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 Wyre Forest Forward Actions report which details the progress against Wyre Forest Forward actions that are not directly associated with a Corporate Plan Priority.
- 3.2 **Appendix 2** details the progress made against the Corporate Plan Priority of a 'safe, clean and green living environment'.
- 3.3 **Appendix 3** details the progress made against the Corporate Plan Priority of 'supporting a successful local economy'.
- 3.4 **Appendix 4** is the Capital Projects report.
- 3.5 **Appendix 5** is the Exception report for all Wyre Forest Forward and Risk Actions

#### 4. Key Achievements/Issues

- 4.1 The two items in the exception report relate to

- (1) the development of industrial units at Unity Park, Silverwoods, completion of which is in abeyance following the full Council decision in July that a tendering exercise should be undertaken. The outcome of the procurement will be reported to Council on 2 November for decision;
  - (2) implementation of hybrid working, which commenced from 1 September following full risk assessments of the Council's buildings. This item is therefore expected to be reported as complete in the next update.
- 4.2 Looking across other performance indicators, regrettably there has been a clear upward movement in the number of fly-tipping incidents over the last four quarters compared to historic trend. While this might have been associated with the closure of household recycling centres at the onset of the pandemic, the centres have long been open and no significant queues have been observed recently. Householders have no excuse about making appropriate arrangements for disposal of waste. It will be seen that enforcement activity has been maintained, and successful prosecutions are reported through press releases. In addition the Council has run the #CrimeNotToCare campaign over the summer, to remind householders of their responsibility to check that anyone taken away their waste is properly licensed and how they can be prosecuted if their waste is fly tipped, even if they gave it to a third party to dispose of.

## **5. Options**

- 5.1 That the progress in performance for quarter 1 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 – Wyre Forest Forward Actions report  
12.2 Appendix 2 – Corporate Plan Priority: A safe, clean and green living environment report  
12.3 Appendix 3 – Corporate Plan Priority: Supporting a successful local economy report  
12.4 Appendix 4 – Capital Projects report  
12.5 Appendix 5 – Exception report

**13. Background Papers**

Corporate Plan action information is available on the Council's Performance Management System, Pentana Performance. Alternatively, reports can be provided on request.

**Officer Contact Details:**

Name: Rachael Simpson  
Title: HR & Organisational Development Manager  
Contact Number: Ext. 2701  
Email: [rachael.simpson@wyreforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:rachael.simpson@wyreforestdc.gov.uk)

## Wyre Forest Forward Actions

This report details the progress against Wyre Forest Forward actions that are not directly associated with a Corporate Plan Priority



### Chief Executive's Unit

WFF 21/22 55 We support our people and enable them to work well 

50%

Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2022	Corporate Leadership Team; Rachael Simpson	Ongoing	11-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 88 COVID-19 Recovery Plan 

60%

Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Jul-2021	Corporate Leadership Team	Government announced on 19th July the de-restriction of pandemic regulations allowing employees to return to the workplace. However, there is an expectation that employers will manage carefully with safety of employees and customers being paramount. Accordingly, the Council do not propose to use new hybrid working model until 1st September at the earliest. This will enable risk assessments and action plans to be ready to enable safe return to building. The review of the Council administration footprint continues parallel to that work and discussions are continuing with Cabinet on final proposals for the longer term work environment and the implications for surplus floor space.	20-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 91 Service Transformation Reviews 

10%

Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
30-Apr-2023	Corporate Leadership Team	Early work on service transformation has commenced , preceded by strategic conversations between the chief executive and other potential partners	17-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 92	Management Review	<div><div>70%</div></div>	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Dec-2021	Corporate Leadership Team	Council on the 12th May 2021 approved a revised Management Restructure to be implemented by 31st December 2020.	22-Jun-2021

## Community and Environment

WFF 21/22 95	Reopening of Wyre Forest Leisure Centre	<div><div>100%</div></div>	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2022	Steve Brant	Leisure Centre reopened following various lockdowns due to global COVID-19 pandemic	11-Aug-2021

## Economic Prosperity & Place

WFF 21/22 37	Review Local Development Framework including provision for significant housing growth	<div><div>70%</div></div>	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2022	Mike Parker	Local Plan modifications expected to be agreed in principle with Planning Inspector late July/August with view of being reported to September cycle of Committee meetings for approval of modifications to go out to six	11-Aug-2021

week statutory consultation. Council still on course for final approval of Local Plan in Spring 2022


WFF 21/22 59	Apprenticeships Programme (Year 9)			0%	
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date		
31-Mar-2022	Mike Parker	Further apprenticeship support for 2021/2022 financial year agreed externally and internally (ie WFDC) at same levels as 2020/21.	23-Mar-2021		
WFF 21/22 70	Investment in income generation through asset development			0%	
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date		
31-Mar-2022	Mike Parker	Council's current temporary policy remains to consider in District opportunities only of which there have been none to progress	11-Aug-2021		
WFF 21/22 94	Review of operational floor space requirements at Wyre Forest House and Green Street			25%	
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date		
30-Sep-2021	Mike Parker	Government announced on 19th July the de-restriction of pandemic regulations allowing employees to return to the workplace. However, there is an expectation that employers will manage carefully with safety of employees and customers being paramount. Accordingly, the Council do not propose to use new hybrid working model until 1st September at the earliest. This will enable risk assessments and action plans to be ready to enable safe return to building. The review of the Council administration footprint continues parallel to that work and discussions are continuing with Cabinet on final proposals for the longer term work environment and	11-Aug-2021		

the implications for surplus floor space.

## Resources

RA21/22 62	Fraud Work	25%	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2022	Cheryl Ellerton; Tracey Southall	To raise awareness and demonstrate the commitment of the Council to tackling fraud and protecting the public purse. A formal report on the counter fraud arrangements within the Council for an annual report is presented to the Audit Committee {2020/21~in October 2020} with a position statement on 2021/22 arrangements scheduled for September 2021 The Councils commitment to a zero tolerance of fraud continues with current fraud and cyber scams published within the Wyred Weekly e-magazine. With heightened fraud risks and cyber scams following the lockdowns and tier restrictions during the Covid19 pandemic regular monitoring of new threats continues with weekly updates from the National Anti-Fraud Network reviewed and shared with service managers as appropriate. The mandatory National Fraud Initiative has been commenced. The required mandatory sets for Payroll, Trade Creditors, Taxi Driver Licences, Council Tax Single Person Discounts, Electoral Register, Housing Benefits and Council Tax Reduction Scheme have been provided to the Cabinet Office for the 2020/21 national data matching exercise, along with details of the recipients of the Covid-19 Business Grants. All data matches are currently being reviewed and the outcomes will be reported to the Audit Committee during 2021.	22-Jun-2021

WFF 21/22 57	Delivery of the ICT Strategy 2018-2023	78%	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2023	Dave Johnson	See detailed update re sub actions	16-Feb-2021

WFF 21/22 57.11 Digital by Default including supporting the Commercial Agenda  80% 

Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2023	Dave Johnson	Continue to support staff at the depot with MyWyreForest system and plan for the next 6 - 12 months	11-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 57.13 Application Software  75% 

Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2023		Preferred supplier for Income Management system replacement has been chosen. Working about to commence on new contract	11-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 57.14 ICT Infrastructure  85% 

Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2023		Continue to roll out new laptops as required and currently review requirements for new hybrid working	11-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 57.8 Review and Update Security Systems  74% 

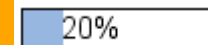
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2023		Updating endpoint with new anti-malware clients in the next few months, firewall updates ongoing	05-Jul-2021

WFF 21/22 58 Business Rates Retention Scheme  25% 

Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2022	Tracey Southall	At the end of Q1 2021/22, collection rates for NNDR are 0.84% above this time last year. Bills have now been issued to businesses who qualify for Expanded Retail Discount to grant them 100% relief for the period 01/04/2021 – 30/06/2021 and 66% relief for the period 01/07/2021 – 31/03/2022. They will have to pay 34% of the annual bill for the year.	06-Jul-2021

WFF 21/22 78

Universal Credit



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2022	Lucy Wright	The current pandemic has seen a sharp rise in UC claimants. The impact for WFDC is that more people are claiming CTRS. Our working age caseload was 4,396 on 1st April 2020 rising to 4,995 on 1st June 2021. However CTRS expenditure has remained fairly static due to less pension age claimants. In June 2020, CTRS expenditure was £7.566m and in June 2021 CTRS expenditure was £7.578m This cost is shared across all preceptors.	22-Jun-2021

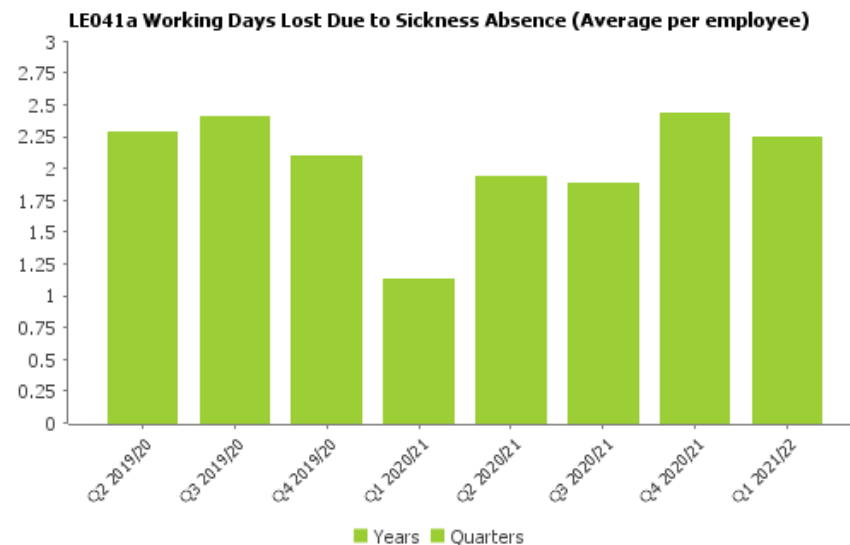
## Measures

This report details the latest date for our measures that are not directly associated with a Corporate Plan Priority



### Chief Executive's Unit

**LE041** Working Days Lost Due to  
**a** Sickness Absence (Average per  
employee)



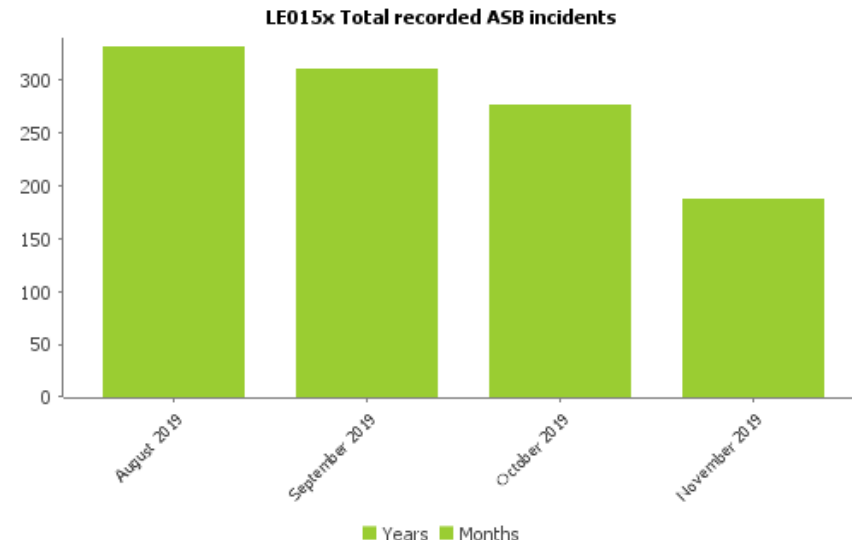
Current Value 2.24

Managed By Rachael  
Simpson

### Community and Environment

LE015 Total recorded ASB incidents

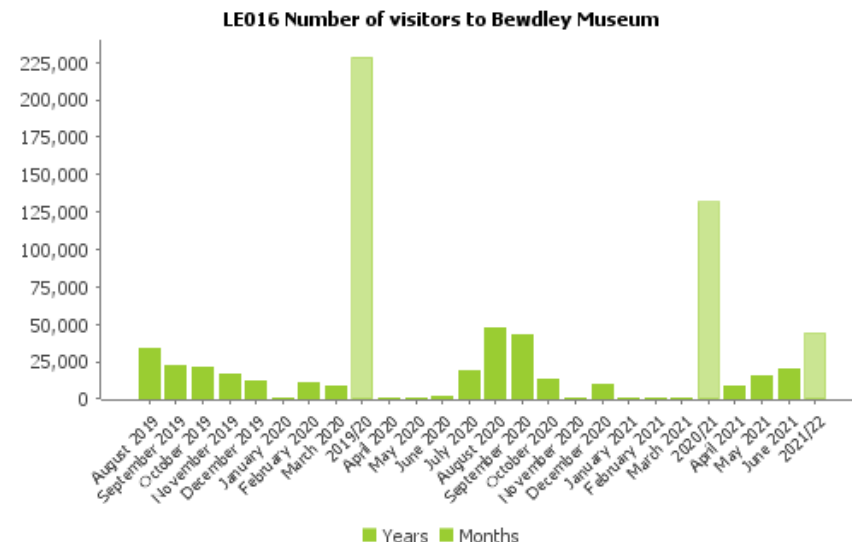
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Current Value 188

Managed By Kathryn Underhill

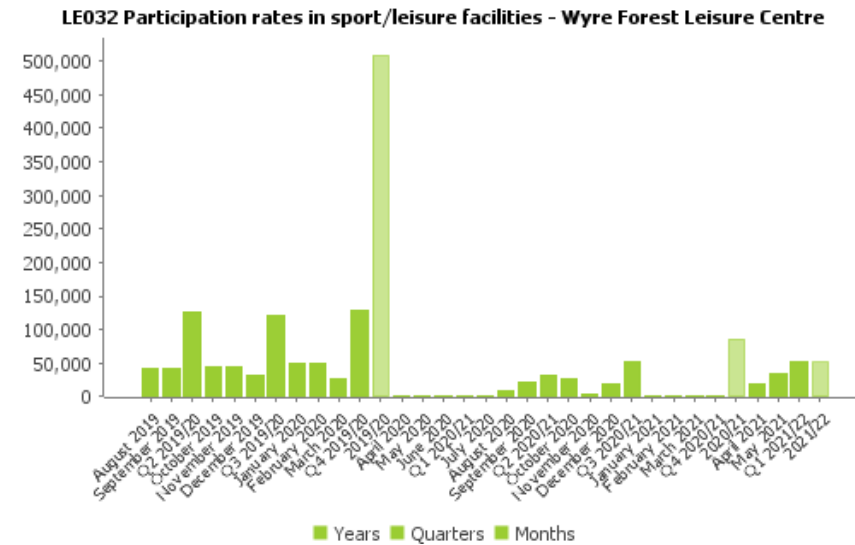
LE016 Number of visitors to Bewdley Museum



Current Value 19,531

Managed By Alison Bakr

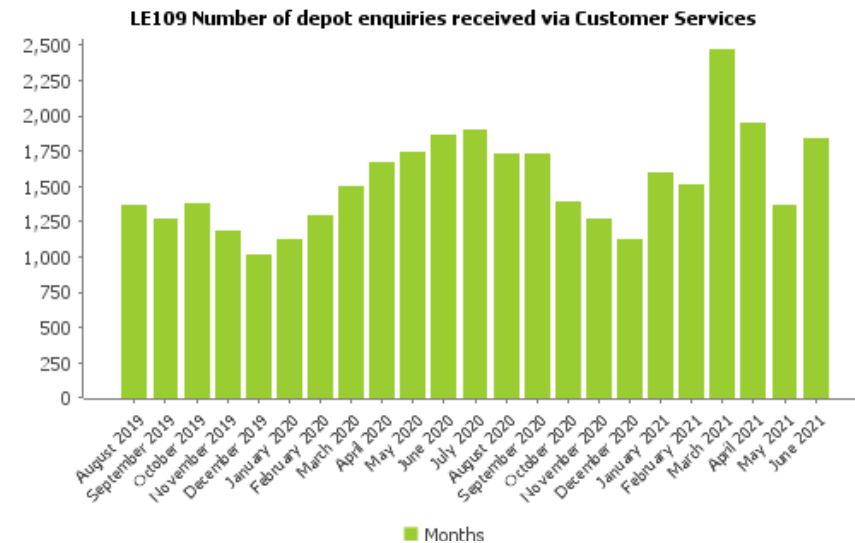
**LE032** Participation rates in sport/leisure facilities – Wyre Forest Leisure Centre



Current Value 34,266

Managed By Steve Brant

**LE109** Number of depot enquiries received via Customer Services

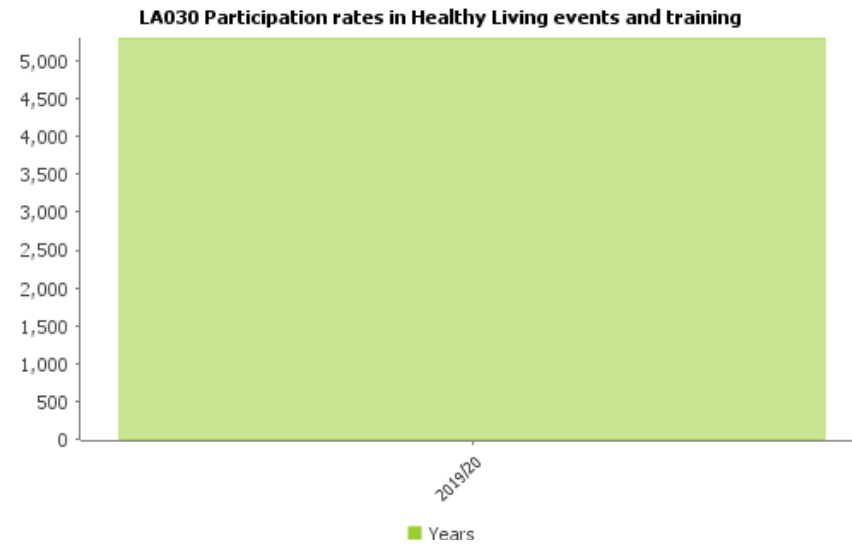


Current Value 1,835

Managed By Steve Brant

**Economic Prosperity & Place**

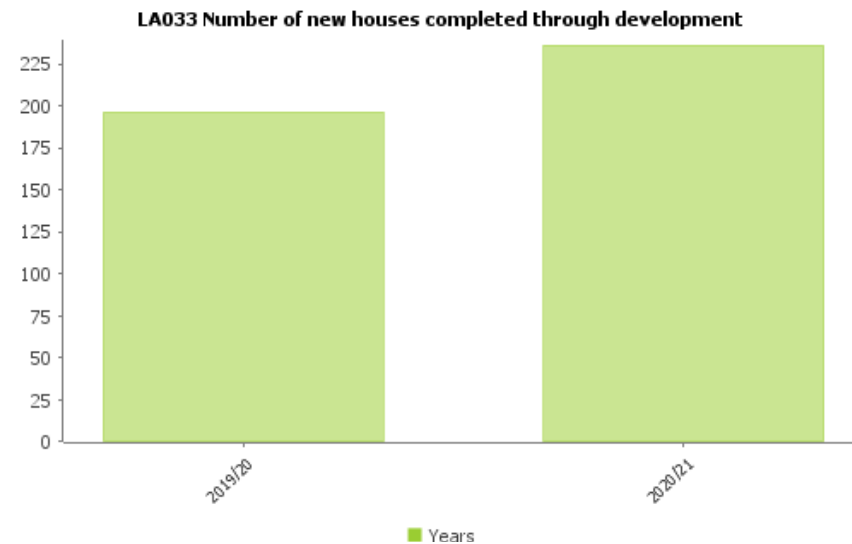
**LA030** Participation rates in Healthy Living events and training



Current Value 5,297

Managed By Kate Bailey

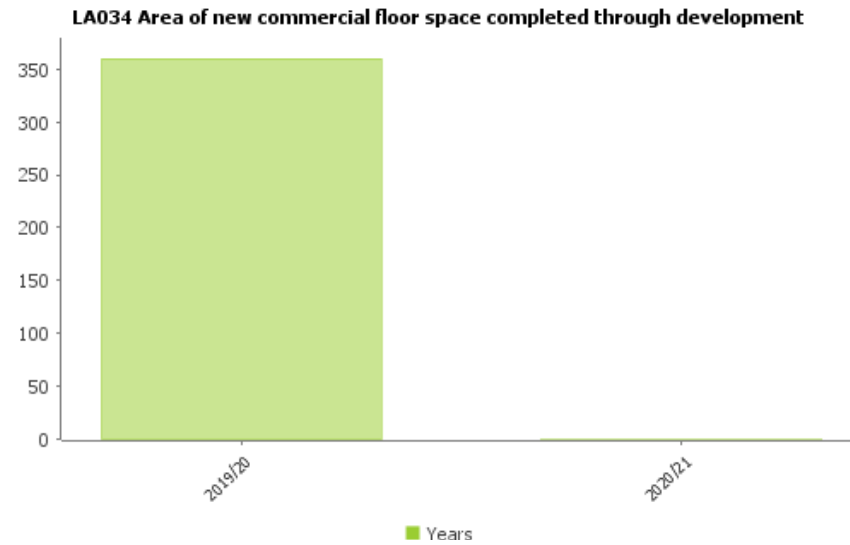
**LA033** Number of new houses completed through development



Current Value 236

Managed By Kate Bailey

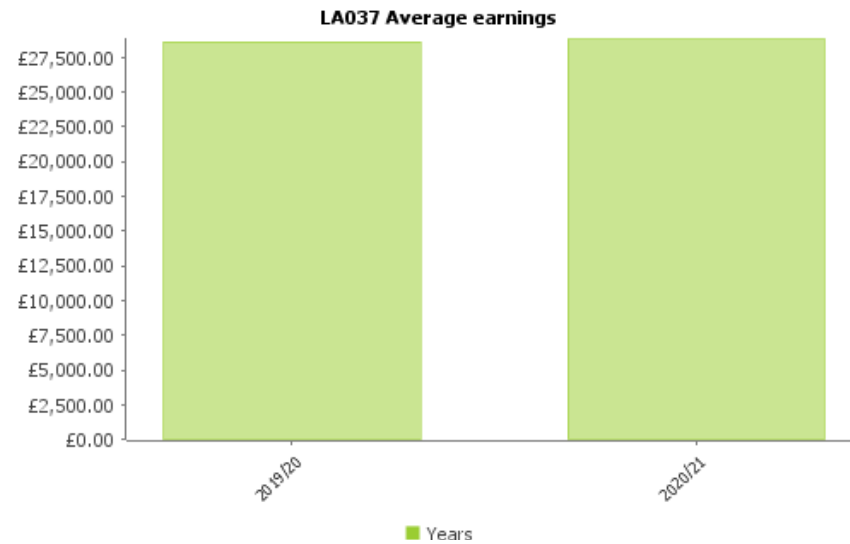
**LA034** Area of new commercial floor space completed through development



Current Value 0

Managed By Kate Bailey

**LA037** Average earnings



Current Value £28,828.80

Managed By Kate Bailey

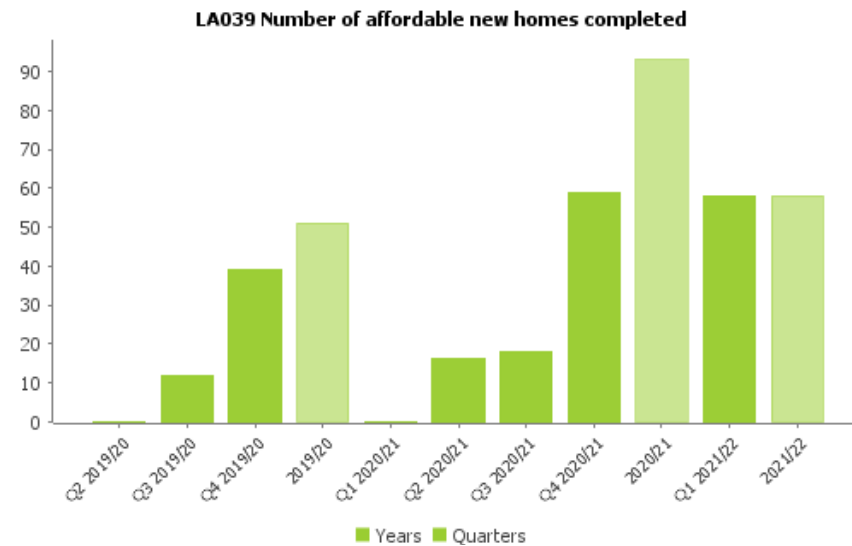
**LA038** Average house price



Current Value £201,362.18

Managed By Kate Bailey

**LA039** Number of affordable new homes completed



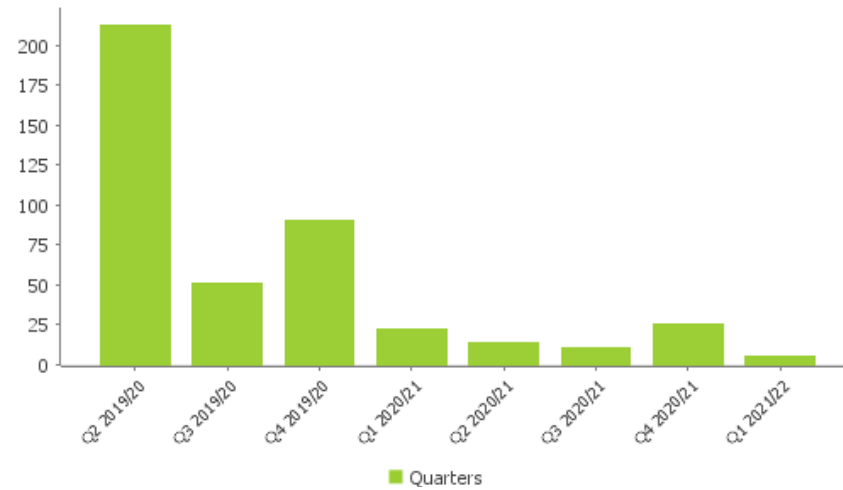
Current Value 58

Managed By Kate Bailey



**LA044** Number of residents who experience a positive health outcome as a consequence of a housing improvement intervention

**LA044 Number of residents who experience a positive health outcome as a consequence of a housing improvement intervention**

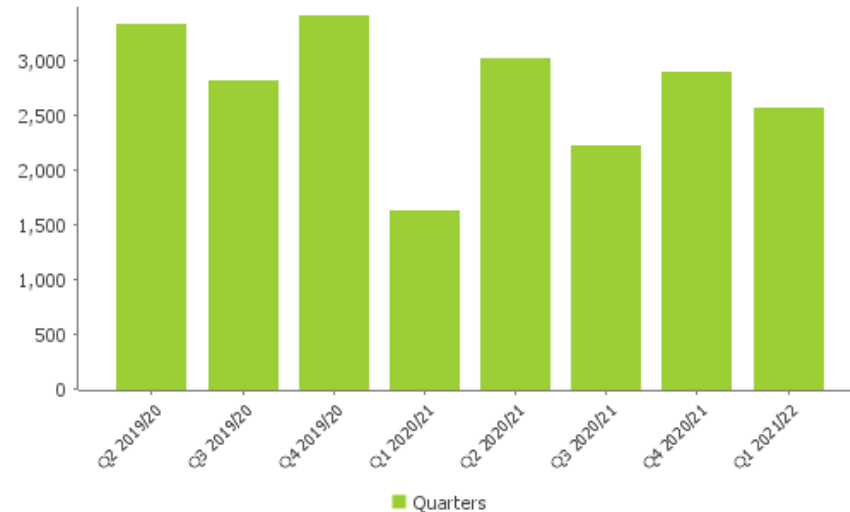


Current Value 5

Managed By Kate Bailey

**LA045** Number of people presenting themselves in need of housing advice

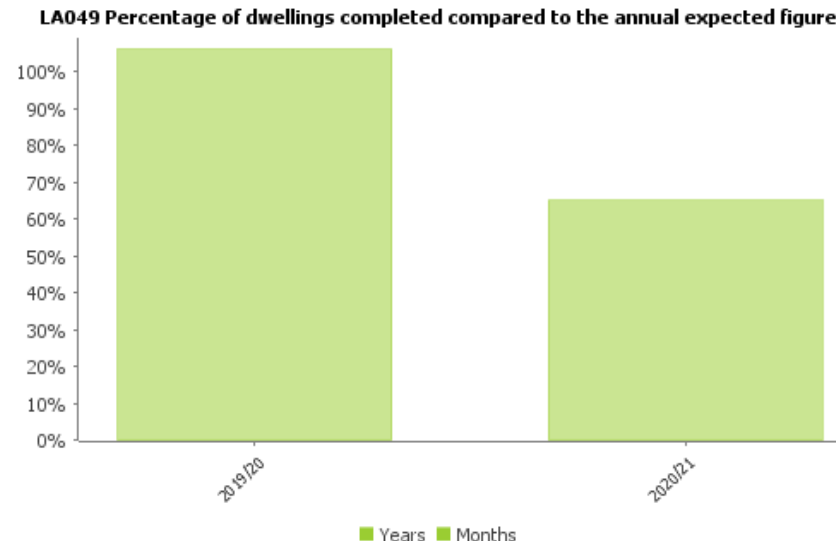
**LA045 Number of people presenting themselves in need of housing advice**



Current Value 2,564

Managed By Kate Bailey

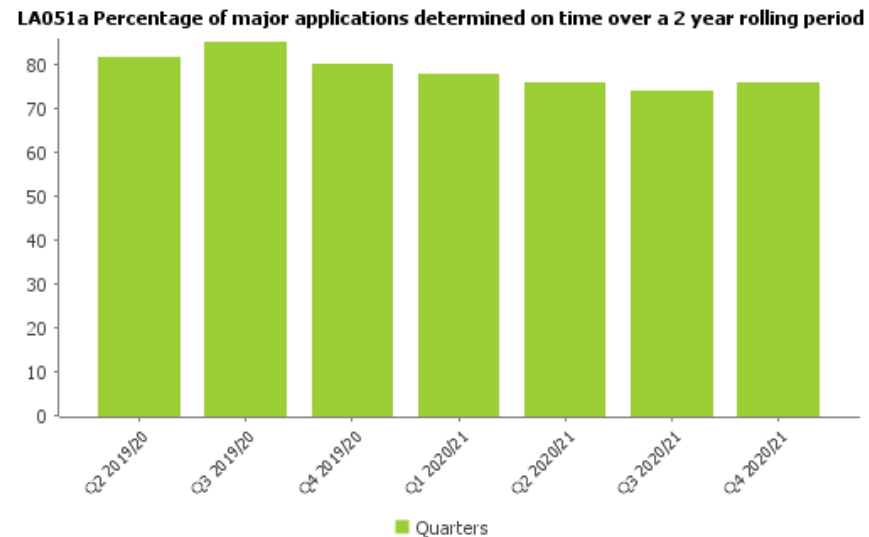
**LA049** Percentage of dwellings completed compared to the annual expected figure



Current Value 65%

Managed By Kate Bailey

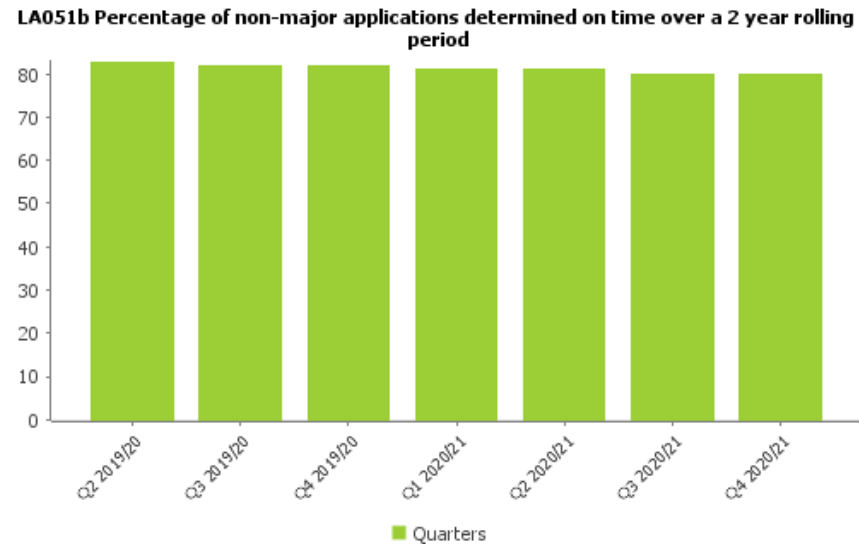
**LA051** Percentage of major applications determined on time over a 2 year rolling period  
a



Current Value 76

Managed By Paul Round

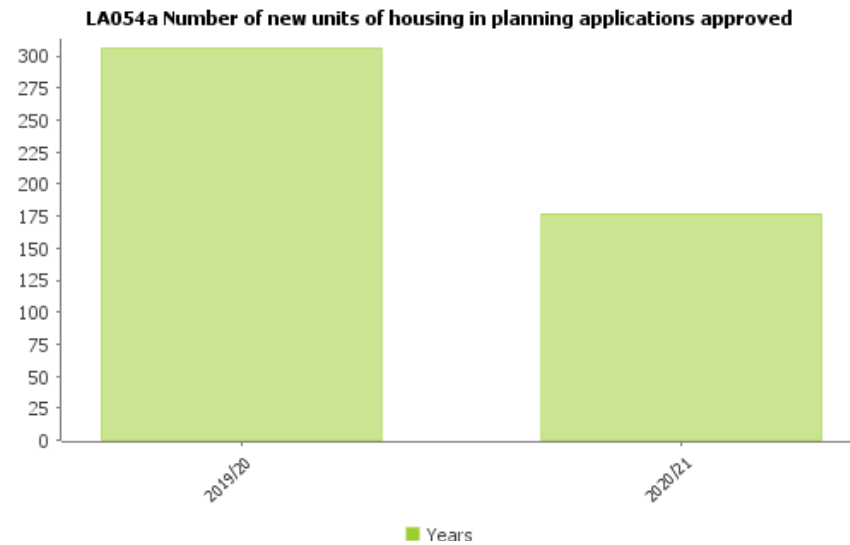
**LA051** Percentage of non-major applications determined on time over a 2 year rolling period  
**b**



Current Value 80

Managed By Paul Round

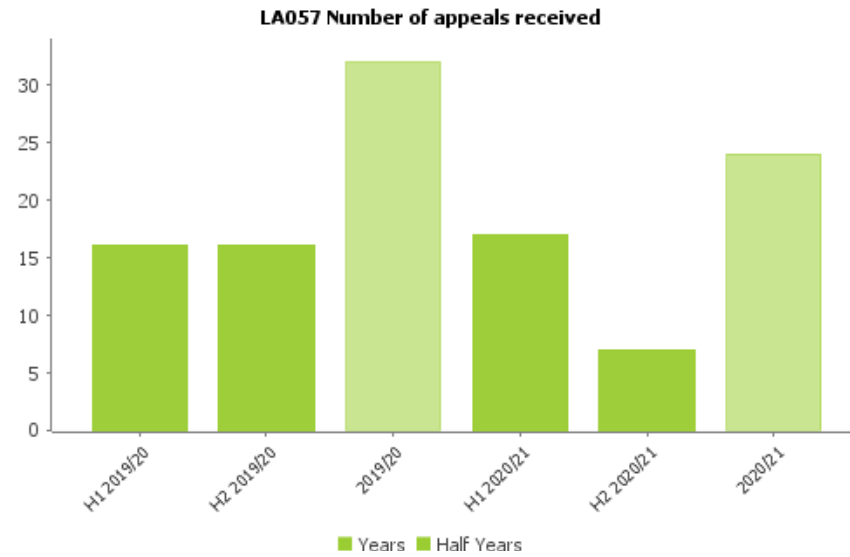
**LA054** Number of new units of housing in planning applications approved  
**a**



Current Value 177

Managed By Kate Bailey

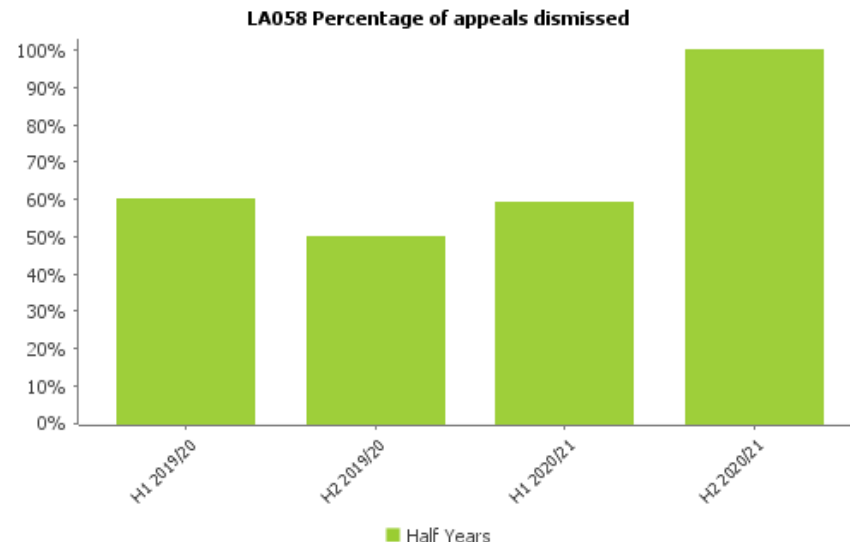
**LA057** Number of appeals received



Current Value 24

Managed By Paul Round

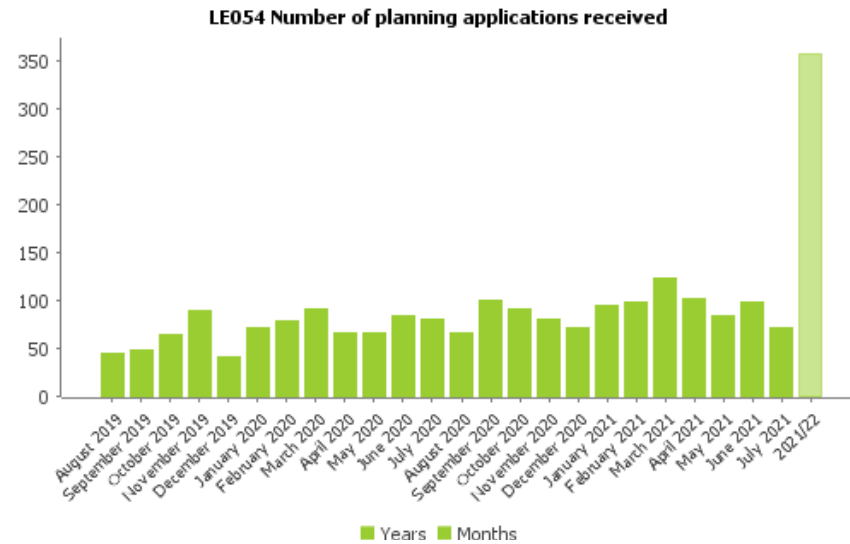
**LA058** Percentage of appeals dismissed



Current Value 100%

Managed By Paul Round

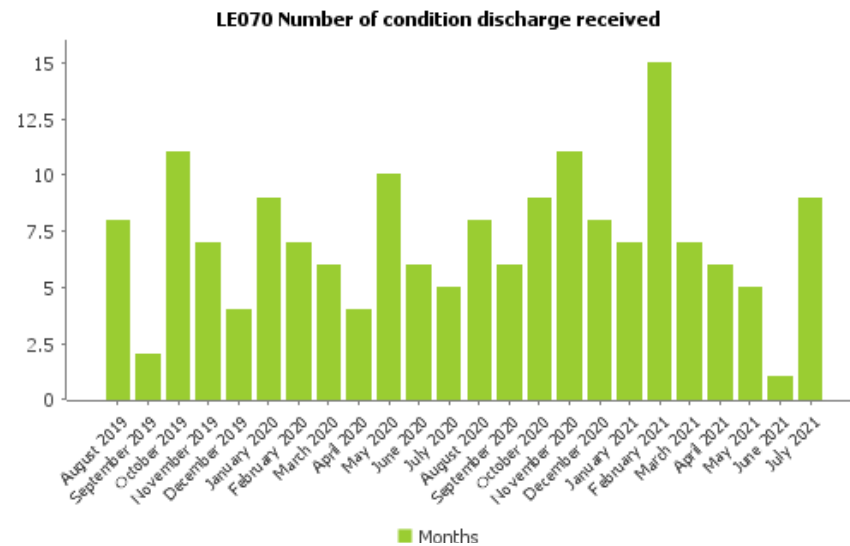
**LE054** Number of planning applications received



Current Value 72

Managed By Paul Round

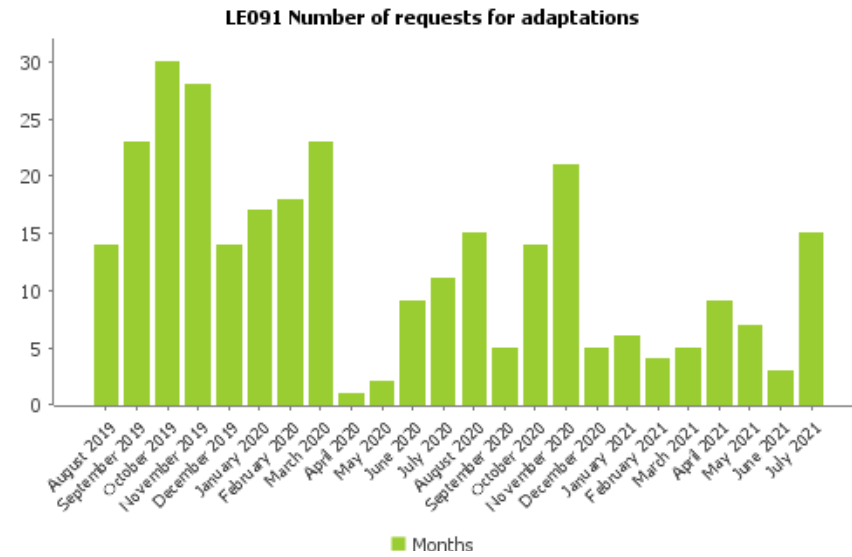
**LE070** Number of condition discharge received



Current Value 9

Managed By Paul Round

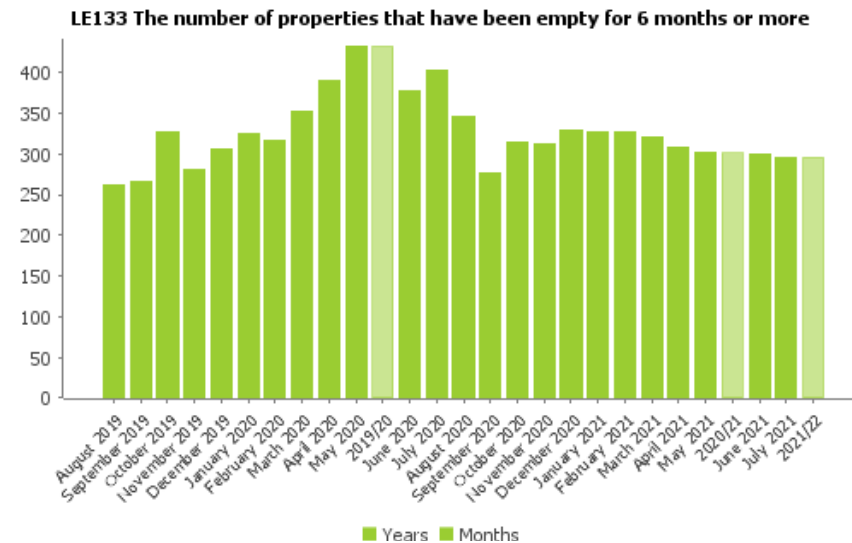
**LE091** Number of requests for adaptations



Current Value 15

Managed By Kate Bailey

**LE133** The number of properties that have been empty for 6 months or more

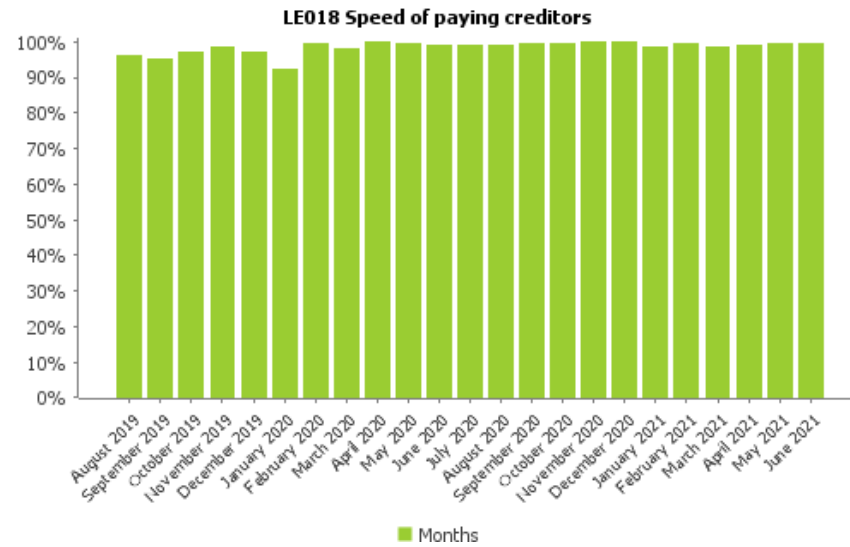


Current Value 296

Managed By Kate Bailey;  
Mike Parker

## Resources

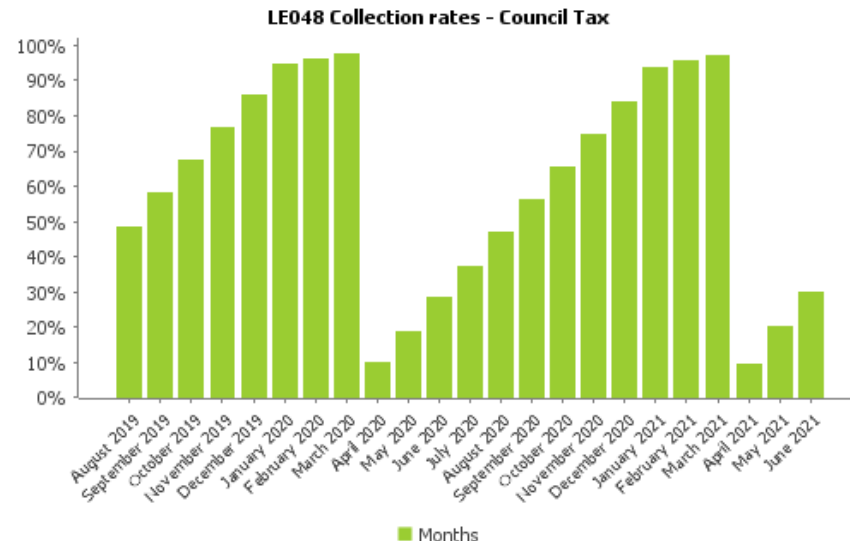
LE018 Speed of paying creditors



Current Value 99.41%

Managed By Tracey Southall

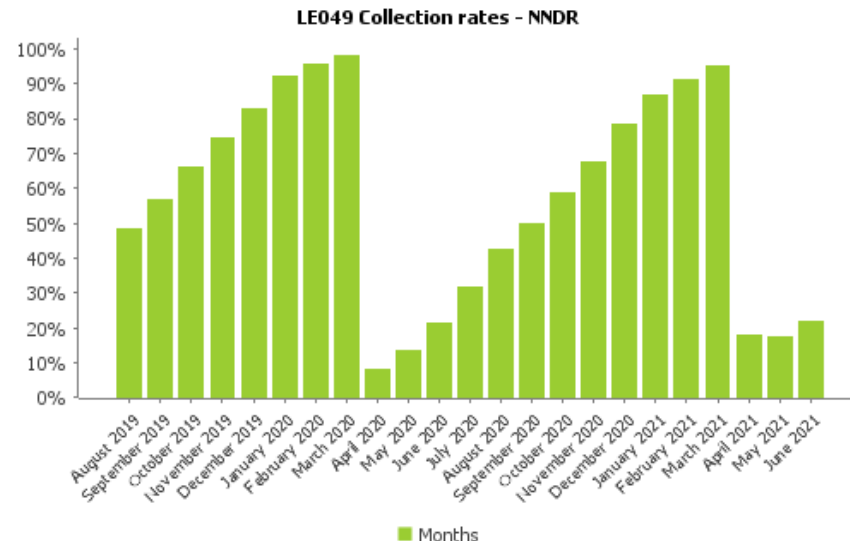
LE048 Collection rates – Council Tax



Current Value 29.74%

Managed By Lucy Wright

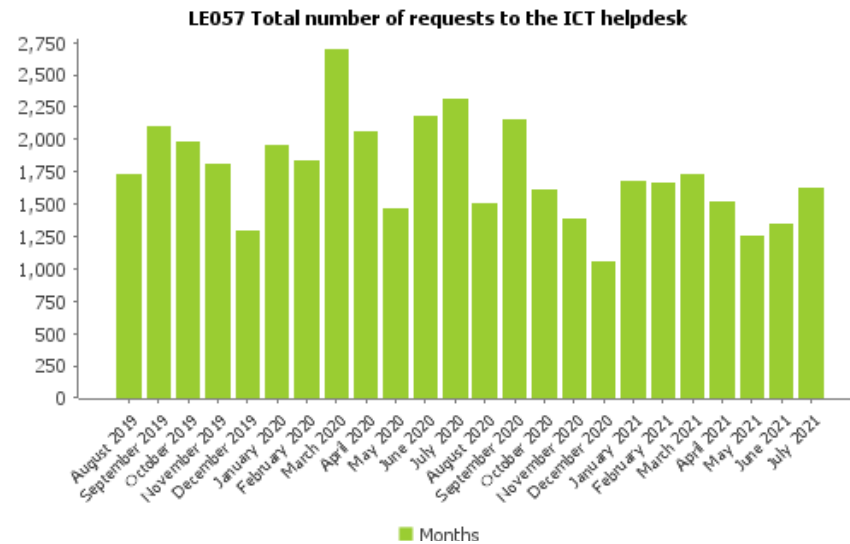
LE049 Collection rates – NNDR



Current Value 21.99%

Managed By Lucy Wright

LE057 Total number of requests to the ICT helpdesk

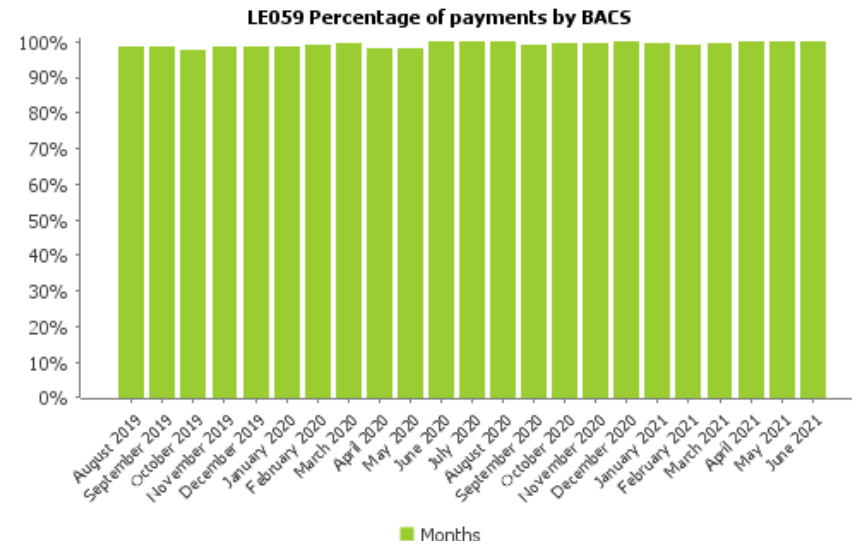


Current Value 1,621

Managed By Dave Johnson



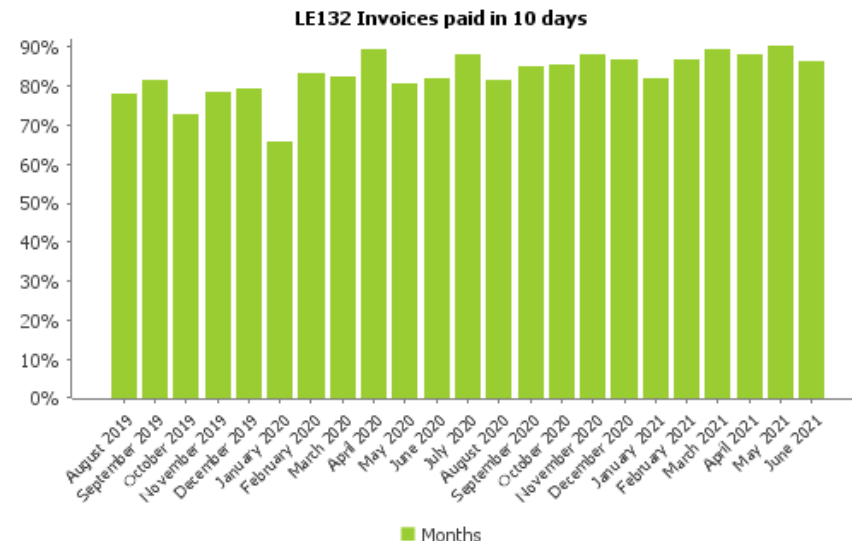
LE059 Percentage of payments by BACS



Current Value 99.8%

Managed By Tracey Southall

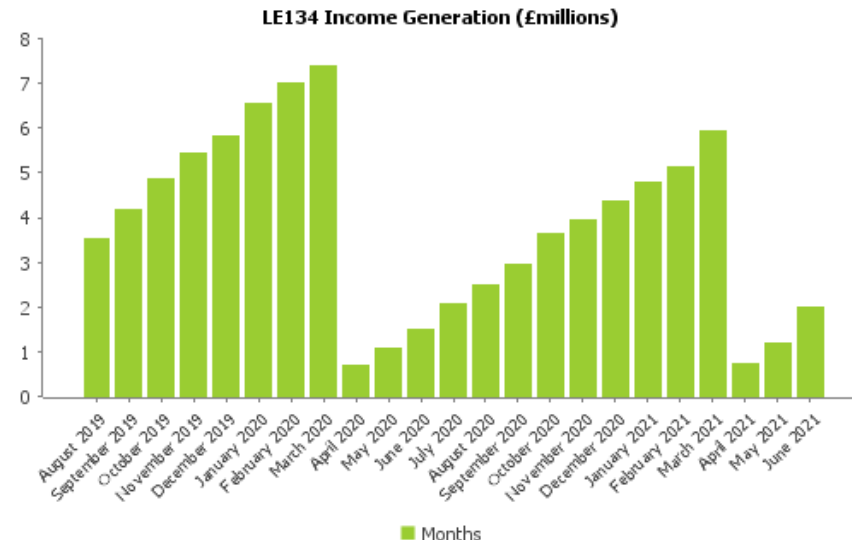
LE132 Invoices paid in 10 days



Current Value 86.34%

Managed By Tracey Southall

LE134 Income Generation (£millions)



Current Value 2

Managed By Tracey Southall

## Corporate Plan Priority: A safe, clean and green living environment

This report details the progress we have made against the Corporate Plan Priority of 'a safe, clean and green living environment'.



WFF 21/22 30

Stourport Canal Basins

25%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Oct-2021	Mike Parker	During June 2021 the Leader of the Council undertook meeting with Stourport Town Council and Stourport Forward to discuss their aspirations for the future of the site. Further information regarding those aspirations to be provided to Council, but not yet received. The Council	11-Aug-2021

can advise and further discuss the practicality of any suggestions that could be implemented

WFF 21/22 69

Stourport Riverside

60%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Dec-2021	Steve Brant; Alan Breen	Tender work completed and contract awarded. With works planned for September 2021 to be completed by October 2021. Works for wildlife area extended to Spring 2022	11-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 87

To monitor the potential impact of the government's waste strategy as this could reduce current commercial income streams

25%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
23-Mar-2023	Steve Brant; Ian Miller	The national Resources and Waste Strategy for England 2018 (RWS) will drive a range of changes and measures to achieve a more Circular Economy, moving from an inefficient take, make, use, & throw away culture to keeping resources in use for as long as possible. The government's clear direction is for the increased segregation and treatment of waste streams and a new target of 65% recycling. The Environment Bill will provide landmark primary legislation for delivery of the policies and approaches set out in RWS. It has passed through the detailed committee stage in the House of Commons and on 26th January a delay was announced with Royal Assent originally expected in Spring now put back to Autumn 2021. The Bill will require the separate collection of food waste every week from all households	10-Aug-2021

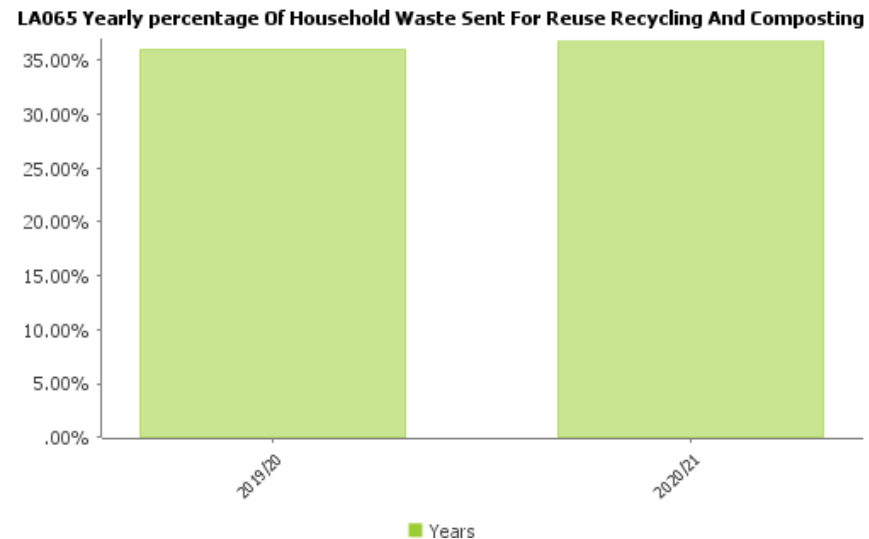
The Bill is at Committee stage.

Three formal consultations undertaken by the  
Government: EPR, DRS & Consistency

## 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:

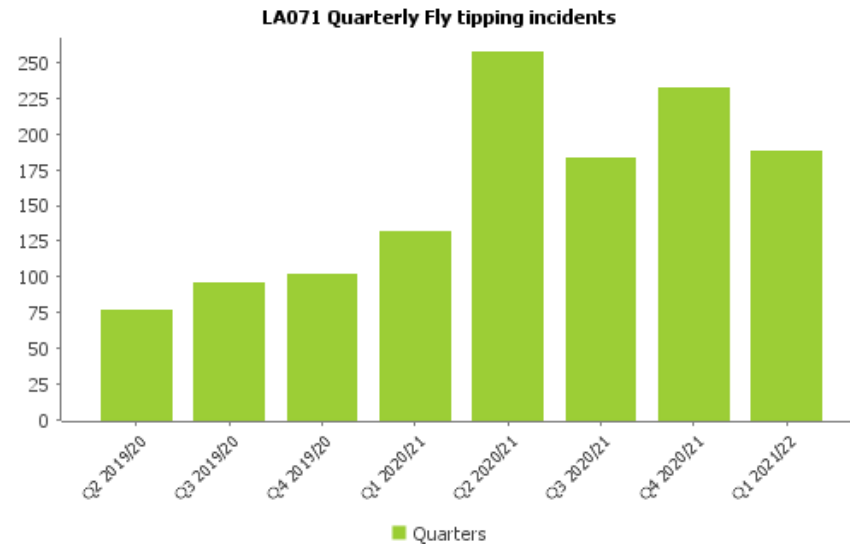
**LA065** Yearly percentage Of Household  
Waste Sent For Reuse Recycling  
And Composting



Current Value 36.74%

Managed By Steve Brant

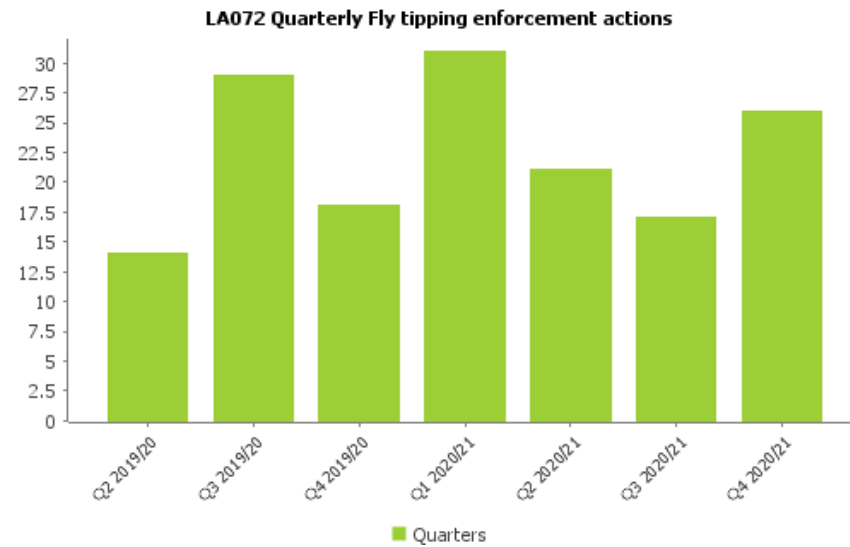
**LA071** Quarterly Fly tipping incidents



Current Value 188

Managed By Steve Brant

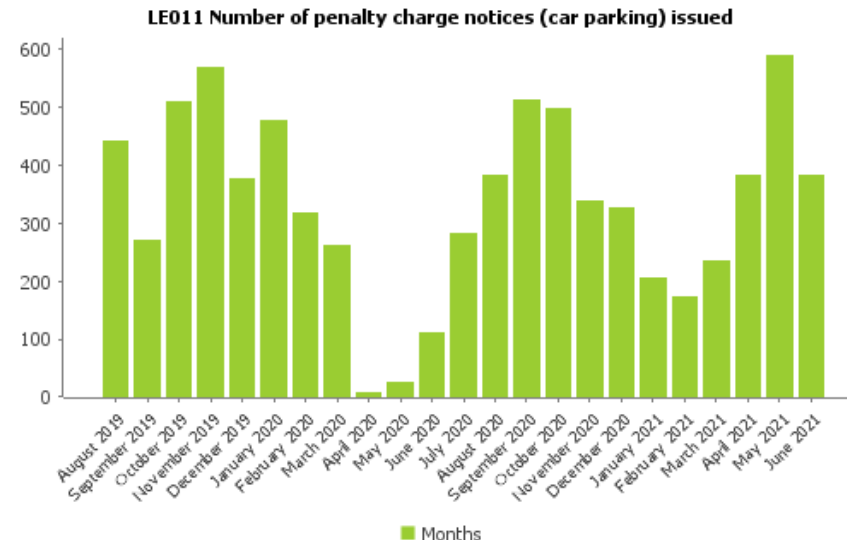
**LA072** Quarterly Fly tipping enforcement actions



Current Value 26

Managed By Steve Brant

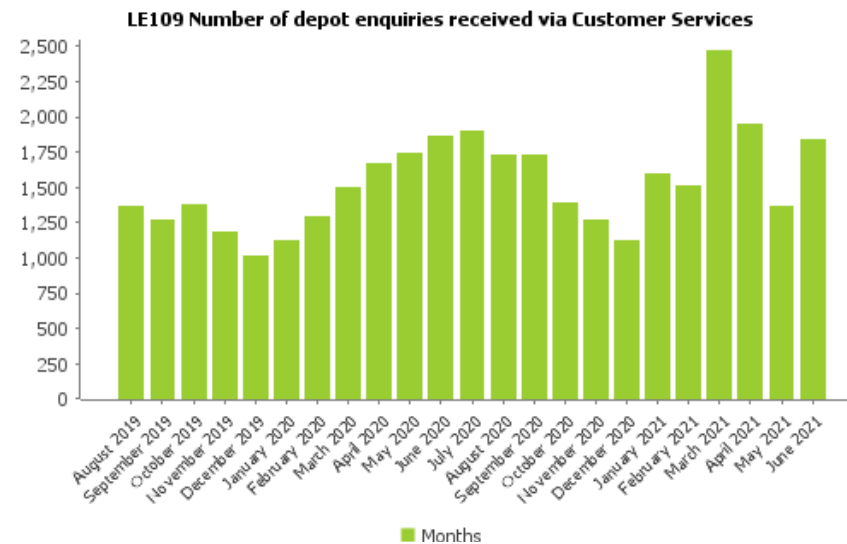
**LE011** Number of penalty charge notices (car parking) issued



Current Value 381

Managed By Steve Brant

**LE109** Number of depot enquiries received via Customer Services

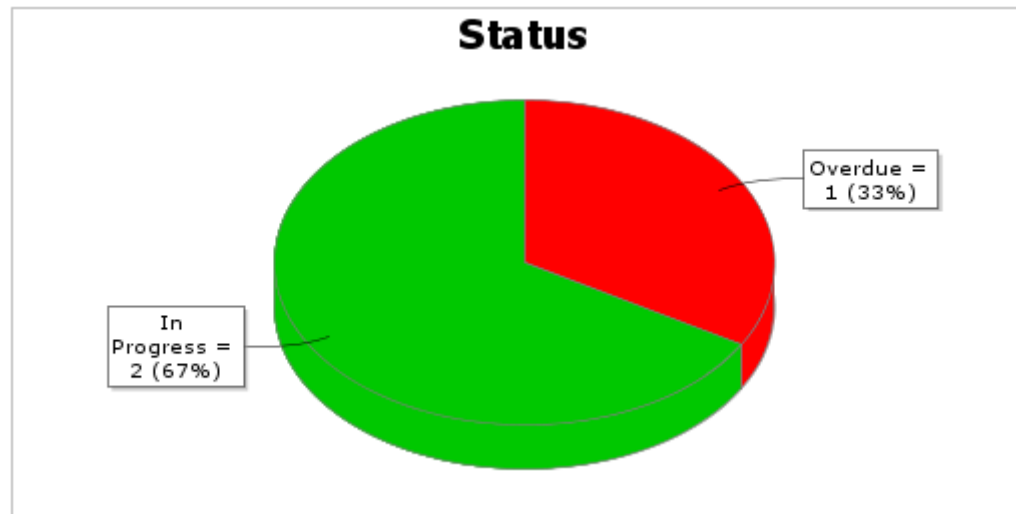


Current Value 1,835

Managed By Steve Brant

## Corporate Plan Priority: Supporting a successful local economy

This report details the progress we have made against the Corporate Plan Priority of 'supporting a successful local economy'.



WFF 21/22 82

Erection of industrial units former Frenco site



80%



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Aug-2020	Mike Parker	Council considered a report on 14th July 2021 to increase the capital programme to enable the timely and effective delivery of the completion of the nine industrial units. Council decided to request a full tendering of the remaining works to ensure best value for money; this will	11-Aug-2021



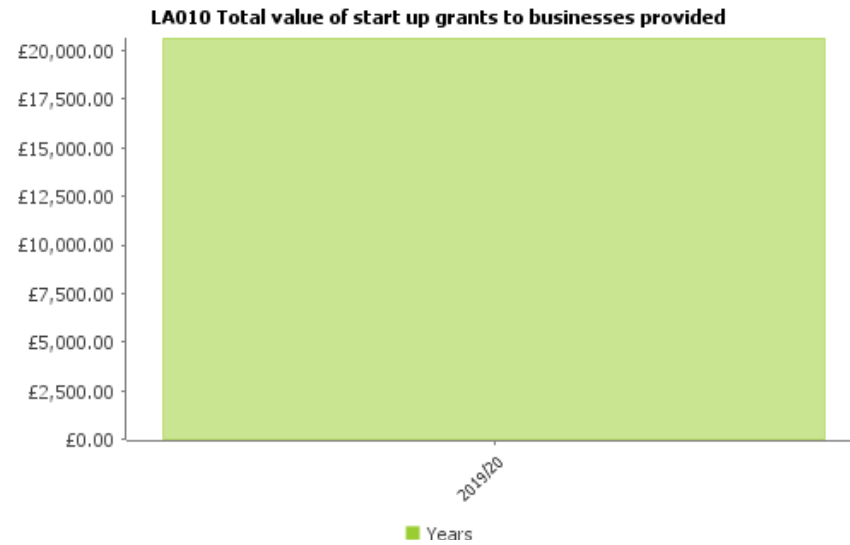
necessitate the revision of a specification that will then be put out to tender in accordance with the Council tender procedure and will be reported back to Council in approx. three months.

WFF 21/22 83	Erection of industrial units on Silverwoods Way	75%	
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Dec-2021	Mike Parker	Works commenced on site in accordance with programme; construction of units progressing well with expected completion due end of September 2021. Council has appointed GJS Dillon to market the units for potential occupation by interested parties.	16-Aug-2021
WFF 21/22 89	Future High Streets Fund Programme	6%	
Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2024	Mike Parker		

## 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:

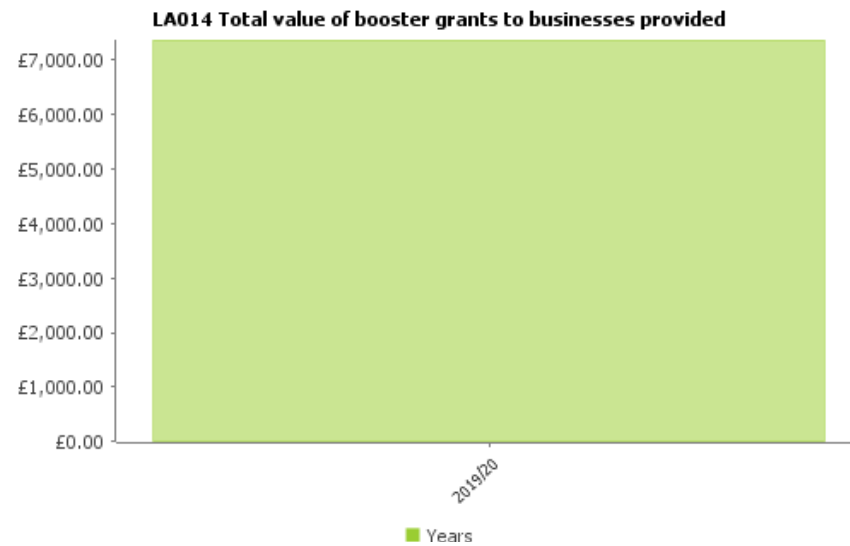
**LA010** Total value of start up grants to businesses provided



Current Value £20,617.43

Managed By Jonathan Elmer

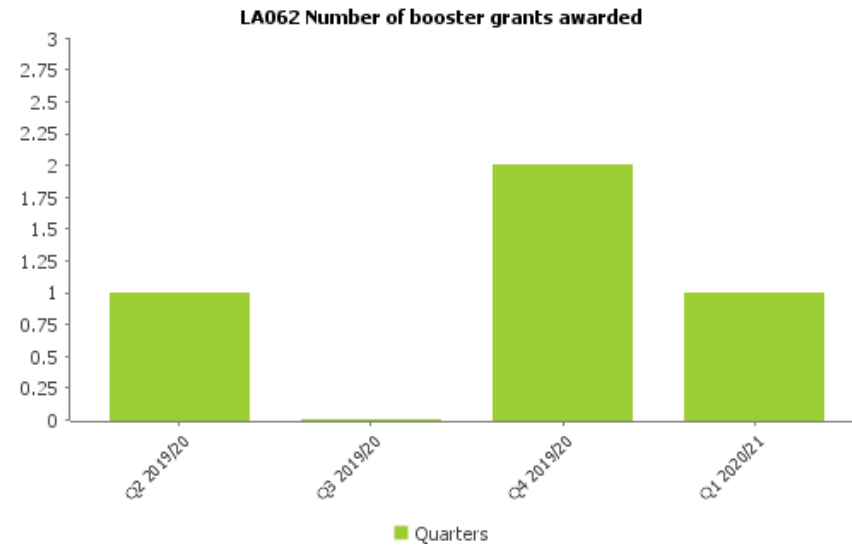
**LA014** Total value of booster grants to businesses provided



Current Value £7,360.29

Managed By Jonathan Elmer

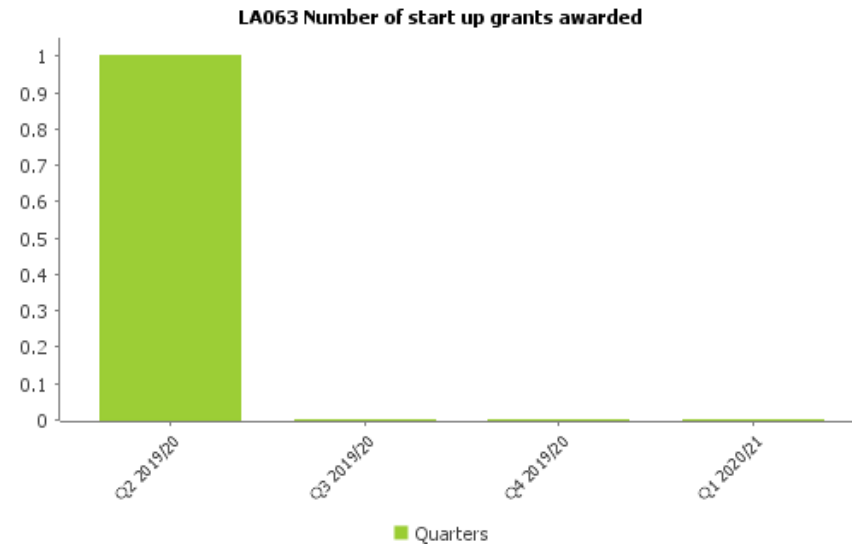
**LA062** Number of booster grants awarded



Current Value 1

Managed By Jonathan Elmer

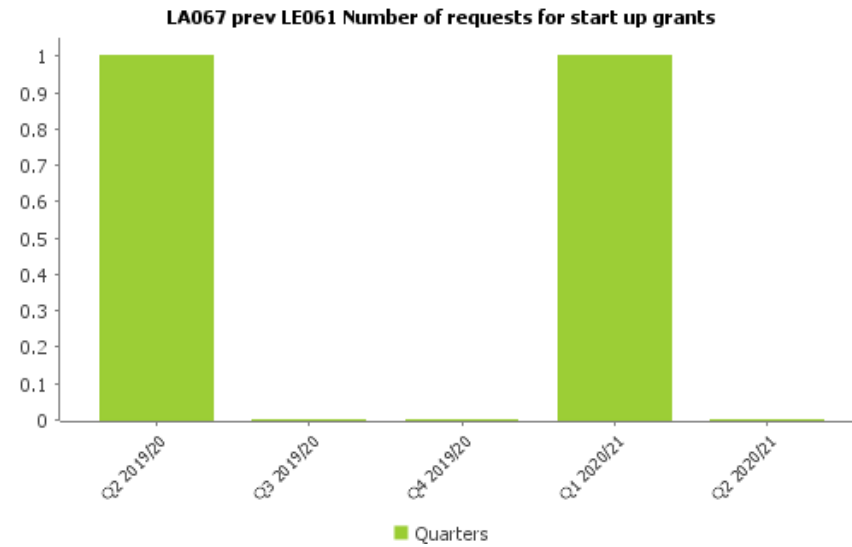
**LA063** Number of start up grants awarded



Current Value 0

Managed By Jonathan Elmer

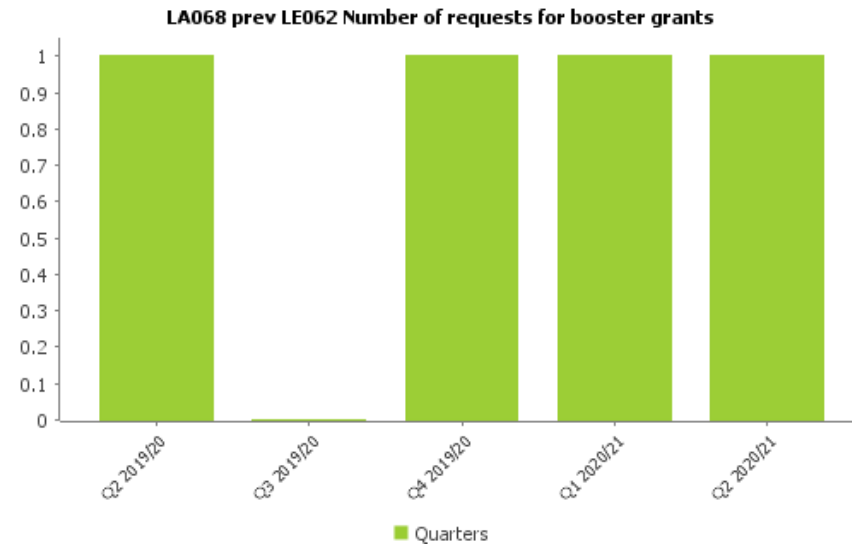
**LA067** Number of requests for start up  
prev grants  
LE061



Current Value 0

Managed By Jonathan  
Elmer

**LA068** Number of requests for booster  
prev grants  
LE062



Current Value 1

Managed By Jonathan  
Elmer

**LA100** Number of businesses benefiting from information, advice and guidance

**LA100 Number of businesses benefiting from information, advice and guidance**

Current Value

Managed By Jonathan Elmer

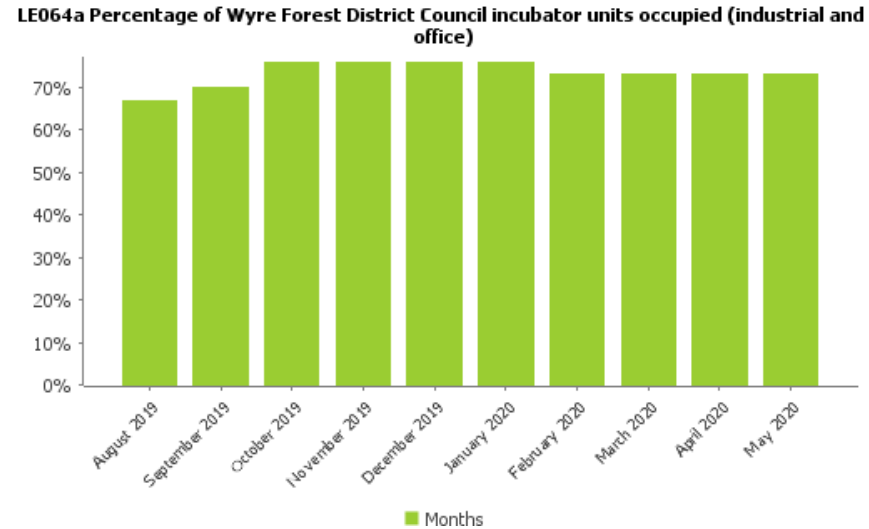
**LA101** Number of businesses benefitting from business support programmes

**LA101 Number of businesses benefitting from business support programmes**

Current Value

Managed By Jonathan Elmer

**LE064** Percentage of Wyre Forest District Council incubator units occupied (industrial and office)



Current Value 73%

Managed By Jonathan Elmer

## 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 priority of 'supporting a successful local economy'.

CORPRISK02	<p><b>Unable to improve the economic prosperity of the district.</b> Lack of vitality in the local economy – although the District is holding up reasonably well in the current economic conditions it still aims to stimulate growth to support the economic recovery and to support the recovery of the local economy. The Council is now in its eleventh year of the State of the Area Programme which includes a number of projects to assist in the stimulation of economic recovery. The Council continues to host of the North Worcestershire Economic Development and</p>	Current Risk Matrix	<p>Impact Marginal Likelihood Significant</p>		Target Risk Matrix	<p>Impact Marginal Likelihood Very Low</p>	
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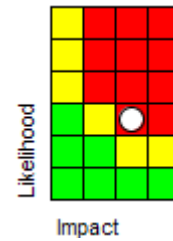
Regeneration Service (having adopted a new North Worcestershire Economic Strategy in 2019 and new Strategic Asset Management and Business Growth and Enterprise Strategies in 2021) and maintains its membership of two Local Enterprise Partnerships and continues to maximise the benefit of that position, although it is recognised that this may change as the Government seeks to eliminate dual LEP membership from a future date that is as yet unknown. The Business Rates Retention Scheme introduced in 2013/14 increases the incentive to promote growth as there is significant financial risk to this Council if we are unable to sustain the baseline level of the business rates reflected in government projections. The detail in relation to reform of the Business Rates System has been delayed yet again so we will continue to review our position as more information is released. Ongoing membership of the Worcestershire Business Rates Pool has only mitigated this risk to a certain extent and economic growth is key to the future financial sustainability of the Council, this may change following Business Rates Reform. The Council has successfully bid for funding through the Future High Streets Fund initiative and begins its £20.5m programme in earnest to ensure delivery by end of March 2024. The announcement of the Levelling Up Fund and Community Renewal Fund offer additional opportunities to secure further funding for projects in the district. The impact of Brexit influences this risk and COVID-19 presents a significant challenge and increase in this key risk, but the Council has been

CORPRISK16

proactive in distributing Covid related funding to businesses.

Risk that the three-year programme to end of March 2024 delivering £20.5million programme of interventions across Kidderminster Town Centre will not be delivered on time and within budget. Governance arrangements established with board overseeing programme delivery and individual project boards to oversee each specific intervention. Additional capacity to be added to NWEDR to oversee programme and project delivery. Regular liaison with MHCLG to ensure delivery in accordance with programme and specifically focussing on monitoring and evaluation. Provision made in capital programme at February 2021 Council.

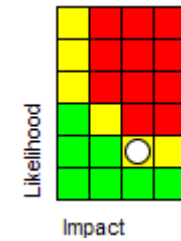
Current  
Risk  
Matrix



**Impact** Critical  
**Likelihood** Low



Target  
Risk  
Matrix



**Impact** Critical  
**Likelihood** Very Low





## Capital Projects

This report details the progress of all of our capital projects



WFF 21/22 89.1	Bullring gateway to Kidderminster Town Centre	5%	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2024		Council has appointed Arcadis to assist with the Future High Streets Fund programme management as well as the individual project management within the programme. Bullring project work has been commissioned to test the load bearing capacity of the concrete slabs on which Crown House was built. Next stages will be to commission the design of the proposed gateway to enable costing and progression of implementation.	16-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 89.2	Refurbishment and redevelopment of former Magistrates Court, Worcester Street	10%	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Mar-2024		Good progress continues to be made by multi-disciplinary team designing the refurbishment and new build parts of the project. Next stage is to submit application for planning and listed building consent which is expected by end of July.	16-Aug-2021

WFF 21/22 89.3	Town Centre connectivity infrastructure	5%	
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Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
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31-Mar-2024

Similar to the Bullring, the Council, through Arcadis, need 16-Aug-2021 to appoint a design team to design new public realm connectivity for costing and programme implementation. The Council's programme of property acquisition continues to be progressed with acquisition completed for 1 Worcester Street and 66/67 Worcester Street and other properties at advance stages of due diligence.

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

WFF 21/22 90	Former Glades Leisure Centre
WFF 21/22 93	Redevelopment of Castle Road car park
WFF 21/22 96	Redevelopment of land at Radford Avenue

## Exception report for all Wyre Forest Forward and Risk Actions

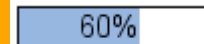
Those actions that are approaching their due date or are overdue



### Enabling others to do what they need to do

WFF 21/22 88

COVID-19 Recovery Plan



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Jul-2021	Corporate Leadership Team	Government announced on 19th July the de-restriction of pandemic regulations allowing employees to return to the workplace. However, there is an expectation that employers will manage carefully with safety of employees and customers being paramount. Accordingly, the Council do not propose to use new hybrid working model until 1st September at the earliest. This will enable risk assessments and action plans to be ready to enable safe return to building. The review of the Council administration footprint continues parallel to that work and discussions are continuing with Cabinet on final proposals for the longer term work environment and the implications for surplus floor space.	20-Aug-2021

### Support me to run a successful business

WFF 21/22 82

Erection of industrial units former Frencos site



Due Date	Managed By	Latest Note	Latest Note Date
31-Aug-2020	Mike Parker	Council considered a report on 14th July 2021 to	11-Aug-2021

increase the capital programme to enable the timely and effective delivery of the completion of the nine industrial units. Council decided to request a full tendering of the remaining works to ensure best value for money; this will necessitate the revision of a specification that will then be put out to tender in accordance with the Council tender procedure and will be reported back to Council in approx. three months.



## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Report of: Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place

Date: 2 September 2021

Open

### Future High Streets Fund

#### Summary

Attached is a draft of a Cabinet report on this subject, which Cabinet is expected to consider on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the report and provide recommendations to Cabinet.

#### Officer Contact Details:

Name **Mike Parker**

Title **Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place**

Contact Number **01562732500**

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL****CABINET****14th September 2021****Future High Streets Fund**

<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Cllr Helen Dyke – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning & Capital Investments
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	Mike Parker - Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Mike Parker ext 2500 Mike.parker@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	None

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To report back to Cabinet following the February report on progress with the proposed delivery models for the commercial development sites which will be enabled through the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) works and on the future operation of the Former Magistrates' Court (FMC) building.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**Cabinet is asked to AGREE:**

- 2.1 to delegate to the Corporate Director: Economic prosperity & Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning & Capital Investments and the Corporate Director: Resources the appointment of Public Sector Plc (PSP Facilitating Ltd) to work in collaboration with the Council's officers to bring forward the business cases for the development sites at the Bullring and Worcester Street/Bromsgrove Street locations.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In February 2021 Cabinet agreed a report setting out the background to the award of the successful FHSF comprising £20.51m. Cabinet recommended to Council that provision of £21.761m be made in the Council's Capital Programme to enable the receipt of the FHSF award together with the sum of £1.25m being the expected contribution from the Council to the proposed new build element in the FMC; this provision was agreed by Council at the February meeting.
- 3.2 As part of the recommendations agreed by Cabinet in February, further work was expected to advance both the future arrangements for bringing forward expected development sites at both the Bullring and Worcester Street/Bromsgrove Street which would be enabled by the FHSF works, as well as the future arrangements for the operation of the FMC project. This is what this report covers.

- 3.3 Since the February report good progress has been made with the initial arrangements for the delivery of the FHSF. Governance arrangements are now in place to oversee the delivery through a FHSF Board which is Chaired by the Corporate Director: EP&P and attended by key delivery partners and includes the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning & Capital Investments. A procurement exercise has also been completed to appoint Programme and Project Managers, Arcadis, to supplement the capacity and expertise of the Council's team. Good progress is being made with the programme for the refurbishment, conversion and new build at the FMC, led by a multi-disciplinary team under the lead of Burrell Foley Fischer; as well as with the acquisition of key properties in Worcester Street, led by Jones Valerio. In June the Head of NWEDR provided Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on progress with the delivery of the FHSF programme.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 As a result of implementing the FHSF works to the Bullring area to create the proposed gateway into the town centre, it is expected that it will create a new site development opportunity, primarily on the site of the former Crown House; similarly whilst the FHSF proposes the new public realm connectivity between Worcester Street and Bromsgrove Street, it will also create a development site opportunity linking the Worcester Street frontage with the part of the public car park at Bromsgrove Street which is surplus to requirements. Members will recall that Council agreed in July an amendment to the Council's Capital Programme to include the acquisition of properties in Worcester Street, which were not part of the FHSF, in order to create a more comprehensive redevelopment opportunity. As both development site opportunities sit alongside the FHSF programme, it is important for the Council to have parallel plans in place to bring forward the resultant development sites alongside the FHSF work to ensure that they are brought forward in a seamless and timely fashion to avoid a prolonged period of undeveloped sites in the town. At present it is not possible to say what the form and function of the development sites will be, that is part of the next stage of work once the Council decides the means by which the sites will be brought forward.
- 4.2 In a similar vein, whilst good progress is being made by Burrell Foley Fischer on the proposed works to the FMC, including the submission of the planning application, the Council also needs to further develop the optimal operating model for the future overall management of the proposed creative and innovation hub. Following the February Cabinet report, further work has been undertaken by specialist in this field, David Clarke Associates, to assist the Council's decision making.
- 4.3 In 2017 the Council entered into its Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) with Public Sector Plc (PSP Facilitating Ltd T/A PSP) as the means by which it would be able to accelerate the disposal and/or development of its assets without having to undertake protracted procurement exercises for professional services to develop the business case for bringing forward development (such as site surveys, quantity surveying and architectural support) as well as finding partners to deliver developments or advancing disposal opportunities. The Council is already commissioning support from PSP to develop business cases for development of assets it owns which are unconnected to the FHSF and it is logical that the LLP should be the vehicle to bring forward the development sites enabled by the FHSF,

rather than to have to break new ground in forming partnerships with another company. In any relationship with a partner the Council has to balance risk and reward and it must guard against having to take all of the risk whilst a partner takes the reward. The Council has just adopted its Kidderminster Vision 2040 setting out the high-level strategy for the future development of the town centre. Through the FHSF the Council has invested in plans to accelerate the transformation of the town centre and it is important that the Council retains its stewardship role over its own sites so that it demonstrates leadership in delivering the town centre vision. It is important that the Council continues to direct the pace and form of new development opportunities on land in its ownership, rather than pass this responsibility on to a third party. By utilising its role in the LLP, the Council will be able to ensure that it retains this role as custodian.

- 4.4 At this point in time the Council does not know what the practical feasibility or financial viability is of bringing forward the development sites; nor does it know the form or end use the developments might be, nor whether it wishes to undertake and retain the development itself or dispose of it in the market, all of these matters require thorough investigation. Until such investigation is completed it will not be possible to make any firm recommendations to Members regarding these sites, or the role of the LLP. What is clear is that these investigations need to be undertaken in parallel with the delivery of the FHSF programme so that when the sites are made available for development, the Council is clear about how such development will be advanced. In order to undertake these works the Council realistically has three options – to procure a multi-disciplinary team to undertake the works, the procure a new joint venture partner to bring forward the sites or to continue to work with PSP as the Council's LLP partner. The recommended option is the latter as relationships between the Council and PSP are well developed, with PSP understanding the Council's priorities, ways of working and desired outcomes and it is the most time effective as no direct procurement is required by the Council, the design team can be an appointment made between PSP and Arcadis. Both of the other options require extensive procurement, management and relationship building which the Council has neither the time nor the resource to invest in.
- 4.5 It is proposed that PSP will be appointed by way of a direct appointment through the NEPRO3 procurement framework which the Council is a member of. NEPRO3 has been procured through the North East Procurement Organisation and was originally launched in 2012 and accords with the Public Contract Regulations 2015, providing specialist professional services and consultancy to the public sector (over 300 public sector organisations use the framework). The NEPRO3 services are accessed through Bloom Procurement Services Ltd via a call off contract. The framework enables direct appointment as well as mini competition and because the Council already has its LLP relationship with PSP it is proposed to appoint them through a direct appointment. This then offers the Council the advantage of a seamless transition between the work to develop the feasibility of the development sites and the use of the LLP to actually bring them forward for development or disposal.
- 4.6 An introductory site meeting was undertaken on 3<sup>rd</sup> August between the Council, PSP and Arcadis to discuss the optimal working relationships to ensure that the momentum of the delivery of the FHSF programme was maintained and seamlessly integrated with the work required to advance the development sites. In short four stages of investigation to delivery can be identified:



1. Agree scope of works and programme for FHSF and development sites; instruct design team;
2. Develop masterplan comprising development sites and FHSF sites including location and design of FHSF public realm and business cases for advancement of development sites;
3. Obtain necessary planning approvals;
4. Delivery of FHSF works and development sites

- 4.7 It is thus proposed that the Council appoints PSP to work in parallel with Arcadis to develop the four stages outlined above. When work at stage 2 is sufficiently advanced a further report on the business cases for the development sites will be brought to Members for approval.
- 4.8 Turning to the operating model for the FMC, the work undertaken so far by David Clarke Associates (DCA) has found it difficult to establish any firm commitments from interested partners as the final completion of the project is still too far away, being 2024. However, it is possible to report a continued positive and encouraging dialogue with wide interest in and enthusiasm for the proposed use of the building from a range of stakeholders comprising potential occupiers, incubation and accelerator support service providers, key local businesses, including further and higher education providers, and operators of other similar buildings. Although in view of the time until the building will be ready for occupation, use and management (early 2024), it is difficult to drive discussions with potential occupiers or operators to firm conclusions, particularly in light of the ongoing uncertainties caused by Covid19, but the range of interest and goodwill indicates that a dynamic mix of uses, occupation and support can be achieved. This interest from potential occupiers and operators is encouraging and the dialogue will be maintained.
- 4.9 In terms of an operating model there are basically two options the Council could pursue, with some different variants. Firstly, to seek a partner operator (through an open procurement route) to operate the building on behalf of the Council. It isn't expected that the overall lettable space proposed within the FMC will be sufficient to support a basic letting-only, stand-alone operation. So it is anticipated that an operator run model would be likely to come from an operator who already has other operations in the region and can maximise the locational economies of scale, or from operators interested in the trading and event potential of the former weaving sheds and proposed court room venue in addition to the letting workspace; or finally from operators able to secure public grants for business development or incubation (such as through the Shared Prosperity Fund or similar or with LEP support) to complement the commercial letting income.
- 4.10 As an alternative to the operator run model though is the second alternative which is a more bespoke approach which would enable the Council to play a more active operating role. There are variations to this alternative, such as the creation of a Special Purpose vehicle (SPV), with the Council as shareholder, to manage the operation; this could also include the option of a Community Interest Company (CIC) which is a non profit making business for primarily social interest purposes. A variant might also be to develop a 'partnership' with another public sector or quasi-public sector partner to share operating and administrative services; or finally a public/private partnership for space occupation and financing, this is arguably the

most challenging at launch due to lack of trading 'proof of concept' but could become more viable after a demonstrable period of successful operation.

- 4.11 All of these opportunities need to be further developed and as work begins to progress on the building itself and the project is nearer completion it should be possible to ascertain more firm commitments from interested parties such that a further report with more definitive recommendations can be brought back to Cabinet for a firm approval.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report other than those relating to the appointment of PSP as outlined in para 4.6 and those preceding. It is anticipated that PSP will be appointed through a recognised Procurement Framework that the Council will sign up to. Initial indications are that the completion of stages 1-3 in paragraph 4.5 above (which includes the development sites at Bullring, Worcester Street and Bromsgrove Street) will be c£100,000, but to cover off the first two stages to enable the report back to Cabinet as outlined would be c£50,000.
- 5.2 The Council is due to receive in 21/22 financial year a windfall grant of £125k as part of the Levelling Up Fund of which £65k remains unallocated following the Council's LUF bid; it is anticipated that this combined with supplementary budgets for ReWyre and the State of the Area will enable the cost of the works outlined to be undertaken.

## **6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council will use relevant powers to acquire and dispose of property in implementing the FHSF programme, such as sections 120 to 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, and will manage and undertake capital expenditure in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003. There are no other. There are no other direct legal or policy implications arising from the report.
- 6.2 The North East Procurement Organisation first set up the NEPRO framework in 2012 running a fully compliant OJEU process to identify an operator. Bloom Procurement Services were successful and have managed the solution since. Bloom provide a full end-to-end marketplace solution for the procurement, contract management and payment of all professional services. By using the framework, the Council would be contracting with Bloom Procurement Services with Bloom subcontracting our services to our appointed supplier. In identifying our supplier the framework allows either mini-competition or direct award. Due to the existing knowledge and involvement of PSP, the Council's partnership with them and the added value that they can bring due to this, it is deemed suitable to use the direct award procedure under the framework to appoint PSP.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Screening Assessment is not required.

**8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 Risk management was part of the FHSF business case submission, but individual projects will need to have their own risk registers developed as implementation is progressed. Provision was made for a capital contingency within the business case submission.
- 8.2 A separate risk assessment will accompany further reports to Cabinet regarding both the business cases for the development sites and the future operating model for the FMC.
- 8.3 Appointing PSP through the direct appointment route does negate the competitive advantage of a mini competition, but in order to ensure a seamless relationship in assessing the viability and feasibility of the development sites and their delivery at a later stage through the LLP, if this is the Council's preference, would be achieved by ensuring that PSP are involved in the work required now.

**9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 This report sets out the proposed method for capturing the design of the works required under the FHSF for the Bullring and Worcester Street/Bromsgrove Street sites and how that will be conjoined with the parallel work required to develop the businesses cases for the development sites which will be enabled through the FHSF works. It is proposed that the existing appointment of Arcadis as FHSF Project Managers will be aligned with the appointment of PSP, the Council's LLP partner to bring forward the development sites under the stewardship of the Council. The report also outlines the ongoing discussions and development of the future operating model for the FMC, but concludes that at this stage with the development of the site it is premature to be able to obtain any firm commitment from any partners taking part in the discussions.

**10. CONSULTEES**

- 10.1 Cabinet/CLT

**APPENDICIES**

None

**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Cabinet February 2021



## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Report of: Principal Strategic Housing Officer

Date: 2 September 2021  
Open

### Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021

#### Summary

Attached is a draft of a Cabinet report on this subject, which Cabinet is expected to consider on 14 September 2021.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the report and provide recommendations to Cabinet.

#### Officer Contact Details:

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Principal Strategic Housing Officer  
01562 732181/07773 535957

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**  
**14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021**

**Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021**

<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Cllr Nicky Martin, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic services
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	Kate Bailey -Head of Strategic Growth 01562 732560
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Barbara Sarbinowska - Principal Strategic Housing Officer. <a href="mailto:Barbara.Sarbinowska@wyreforestdc.gov.uk">Barbara.Sarbinowska@wyreforestdc.gov.uk</a> 01562 732181
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	Appendix 1 - Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend the adoption of the new Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy. This will align the policy with the Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy and the emerging Local Plan 2016 – 2036 policies and replaces the existing Wyre Forest District Council Local Connection Policy 2013.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet is asked to **DECIDE**.

- 2.1 To adopt the Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Council is required to hold a housing register and have an Allocations Policy, which is used to allocate Registered Provider housing stock. This should ensure that, as well as any locally agreed priorities, the council prioritises households under the reasonable preference criteria outlined below;

- 3.1.1. Reasonable Preference is given to the five categories of applicant set out in the Housing Act 1996 section 167(2) [as amended].

- 3.1.2. Those categories are:

- (a) people who are homeless (within the meaning of Part 7);
- (b) people who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3);

- (c) people occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- (d) people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds; and
- (e) people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others)."

- 3.2 The current Wyre Forest District Council Local Connection Policy (2013) addresses how new build rural affordable housing is allocated to local residents. In addition to the Local Connection Policy the Council also uses Local Lettings Plan (LLP) on new build developments and on existing developments where particular issues have arisen, such as anti-social behaviour. The purpose of the LLP is to create a sustainable and settled community and may include restrictions on family size or ages of the occupiers for example.
- 3.3 If the Council wishes to deviate from the Allocations Policy then the reasons for this, such as the use of LLPs or management transfers, should be clearly outlined in the Allocations Policy. This is the case with the Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy. The LLP are signed off by Cabinet and made available on the Council's website. Any properties advertised for letting should make it clear when a LLP or the rural housing policy is being applied to them in the property advert.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Council receives a number of planning applications for rural exception sites as well as allocated rural housing sites which will come forward during the Local Plan period 2016- 2036. Officers need a robust policy to ensure rural affordable housing is allocated in a fair and equal manner to local residents.
- 4.2 For housing delivered in rural areas, through allocated sites, rural exception sites or windfall sites the Council will use the rural housing policy on all new build development to ensure the housing is allocated primarily to households who live, work or have connections to the area or adjacent parishes. If other restrictions are required, such as age or sizes of families, to create a sustainable community then a LLP will be used in conjunction with the Rural Housing Policy. This policy will inform developers, Registered Providers, Parish Councils etc what the council expects to be included on development sites in these rural areas.
- 4.3 In certain circumstances, it is necessary to introduce a Local Lettings Plan into either a new build housing or existing housing scheme to ensure the housing is allocated primarily to households who have specific characteristics such as age restrictions for extra care schemes. This applies to non-rural areas within the District. These will be developed in conjunction with the relevant stock owning Registered Provider.
- 4.4 This policy will align with the Home Choice Plus Allocation Policy local connection criteria and the policies on housing and rural exception sites within the emerging Local Plan 2016 – 2036. The local connection criteria included the Allocations Policy is the definition from the Housing Act 1996 and clarified by the Local Government Association guidelines.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Costs in relation to using this policy will be met by existing budgets.

**6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Local Lettings Plan and Rural Housing Policy 2021 will ensure that delivery of the rural affordable housing is fair and equal and in line with other council policies.
- 6.2 The Council is required to hold a Housing Register and have an Allocations Policy under Housing Act 1996.

**7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Needs Assessment has been undertaken and this indicates there are no adverse effects of this decision on any groups with protected characteristics, so a full EIA is not required. Separate EIA's will be produced for individual Local Lettings Plans as they come forward.

**8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 The Local Lettings Plan and Rural Housing Policy 2021 will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it is in line with the Home Choice Plus local connection criteria and allocation policy and the emerging Local Plan 2016 – 2036.
- 8.2 The policy will be open, equal and fair thus reducing the risk of requests for reviews of housing allocations by local residents.

**9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 This policy addresses the issues of supporting the development of balanced and sustainable communities across the district and ensuring rural affordable housing is available to local residents through the use of a rural housing policy and LLP.
- 9.2 LLPs will be used on both existing and new housing developments and will be developed in conjunction with the stock owning Registered Provider.

**10. CONSULTEES**

- 10.1 CLT

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 Wyre Forest District Council Local Connection Policy 2013

## Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this Local Letting Plans and Rural Housing Policy ("the Policy") is to outline when the Council will step outside its Allocation Policy to allocate housing. This can be to a new build or existing housing schemes. The Rural Housing Policy will apply only to rural areas designated as such by the Secretary of State or any Rural Exception Sites that sit outside these designated areas. Local Lettings Plans can be required throughout the District and can be used in addition to the Rural Housing Policy in rural areas. The Council will use information gathered through Housing Needs Surveys to inform decisions as to whether a plan is necessary. Certain key phrases in the Policy are defined in Appendix One.

### 2. Local Lettings Plans

- 2.1 Wyre Forest District Council reserves the right to apply additional criteria for example specific local connection criteria, offers of family sized accommodation to smaller households or employed within the parish, while still meeting the statutory obligations for Reasonable Preference (please see definitions in Appendix One) when using Local Letting Plans (LLPs). The Local Authority may, in the interests of promoting balanced and sustainable communities, agree with participating Registered Providers an LLP for specific areas, estates, or blocks, this is to ensure that lettings plans are tailored to the needs of an area and protect the interests of existing residents and the wider community and may include criteria to either include or exclude certain categories of occupier. The plan will apply both initial and subsequent lettings following its introduction.
- 2.2 All LLPs will be available on request and should be published on the Home Choice Plus or Council website. They will be prepared using the template set out in Appendix Two.
- 2.3 The principles in applying LLPs
  - LLPs may be developed to meet the particular needs of a local area.
  - There must be a clear reason for having an LLP (this may take the form of recurring antisocial behaviour issues, high child densities or a concentration of older residents).
  - LLPs must be developed and approved in accordance with the Constitution and will be regularly reviewed.
- 2.4 The decision to implement an LLP will be developed by the Council's senior officer responsible and a senior manager of the relevant Registered Provider (RP) in a new build affordable housing development or any other relevant housing scheme. Any decision to implement an LLP will always take into account the implications for equal opportunities and the need to ensure that the Council is able to meet the allocation needs of those owed a Reasonable Preference.
- 2.5 Examples of possible Local Lettings Plans:
 

The following are examples of local letting policies that could be employed in covering an area, estate, or block:

  - Age restrictions.



- Where the property forms part of a rural housing scheme on an exception site or in an area designated as rural by statutory instrument
- Restrictions on lettings to certain households where there are already a concentration of this household type and it is having an impact on the community (evidenced by Police or RP)
- Lettings to childless households where there are high concentrations of children and young people living on a specific estate or scheme

2.6 This policy recognises that allocations in housing stock, outside of the Allocations Policy, can generally be split into two main types, those that address the need of a rural community on a rural housing site which may work to protect the interests of the local community and those that are site specific on new or existing developments in the District and help to address the need for a balanced community.

### 3. Rural Housing Policy

3.1 When a specific approach for allocating housing in a rural housing area is required the Council will always use the standard Rural Housing Policy which is based on local connection to the area shown below (see 3.4 and 3.5 below). If any deviation to this standard rural housing policy is required a separate LLP will be agreed through the process outlined in 2.4.

3.2. A proactive approach to the provision of affordable housing within the District's rural areas will be encouraged through working in conjunction with Parish Councils, Community Land Trusts, Landowners, Developers and Registered Providers to identify appropriate sites for the sole provision of affordable housing through the site allocations process, within or immediately adjacent to the District's villages, rural settlements, and other rural hamlets where a local need exists

3.3 For the purposes of the Rural Housing Policy and determining local connection, this policy considers 'local area' to comprise the parish in which the housing is located or adjoining rural parishes within the Wyre Forest area.

3.4 Generally, it is considered that local connection would comprise of one or more of the following being a person:

- a. who is ordinarily resident in the Parish, or
- b. whose family are ordinarily resident in the Parish and has lived there for the last 5 years
- c. Who is employed within the Parish in a permanent job and has been for the previous 6 months at the point of application to Home Choice Plus
- d. Has a local connection to the Parish as a result of special circumstances (subject to the approval of the Principal Strategic Housing Officer).

If no person qualifies pursuant to (a) – (d) above a person who is on the Home Choice Plus register administered by the Council and who is approved in writing by the Council and:

- e. Who is ordinarily resident in any of the neighbouring parishes
- f. Whose families are ordinarily resident in any of the neighbouring parishes and has lived there for the last 5 years or
- g. Who is employed within any of the neighbouring parishes in a permanent job and have been for the previous 6 months at the point of registration on Home Choice Plus, or

- h. Has a local connection to the Parish as a result of special circumstances (subject to the approval of the Principal Strategic Housing Officer).

If no person qualifies pursuant to (e) – (h) above, a person who is on the Home Choice Plus register administered by the Council and who is approved in writing by the Council as being in need of Affordable Housing.

- 3.5 In addition, as with allocations under the Allocations Policy, the household must be a “Qualifying Resident”. This means they will be a household who are on the Home Choice Plus register (or its successor) administered by the Council and who meet the financial criteria outlined below (e.g. not in reduced banding unless they are being considered for shared ownership).

#### 4. Affordability Criteria - Financial Resources

- 4.1 For households seeking affordable housing, there are income, saving and capital thresholds that will be considered and these are outlined in the Councils Allocation Policy
- 4.2 Owner occupiers and people with sufficient financial resources available to them to meet their housing needs will be placed in reduced band if they have -
  - a) a gross household income (including benefits) of more than £38,000 per annum
  - b) savings / capital / assets / equity of £50,000 or more unless they are in receipt of a pension (or fixed income where they would be unable to obtain a mortgage) where they would be allowed savings/capital/assets/equity of up to £95,000. The savings etc. of all adult members of the household should be taken into account for this criterion.
- 4.3 Applicants will be asked to provide income and asset/savings/capital details at the point of application and if, at that stage, they exceed the threshold their banding will be the reduced (where they have a housing need). The income and assets/capital/savings details will also be considered at the point of offer to ensure the applicant is still on the correct banding and they are therefore eligible for the offer.
- 4.4 The financial resources of an armed forces applicant will be disregarded where it is a lump sum that was received as compensation for an injury or disability sustained on active service.
- 4.5 Financial thresholds may also be determined by Registered Providers and applicants should contact individual organisations where they believe income or capital may be an issue at the point, they are made an offer of accommodation.
- 4.6 Where applicant(s) have an exceptional need that can only be met through the provision of affordable housing then the reduced banding won't be applied.

#### 5. Shared Ownership

Applicants who are registering for shared ownership purposes only, who have an income above £38k but below £60k will not be adversely affected by the reduced banding category as it doesn't apply to shared ownership schemes.

#### 6. Planning Policy

The provision of residential development to meet specific local needs within the district's designated rural settlements will be encouraged. Residential development will be permitted where it is in accordance with the relevant rural development or Green Belt policies as contained within the Local Plan. Residential and Community-Led Housing schemes that take account of local housing needs on windfall sites will be positively considered within the rural areas. Housing should be located where it will maintain or enhance the vitality of rural communities and within the settlement boundary.

**7. Rural Exception Sites**

The District Council will work closely with the Parish Councils, Registered Providers, Community Led Housing Groups and Neighbourhood Planning Forums to identify appropriate sites for rural exception schemes where there will be an expectation to provide 100% affordable housing of a size, type and tenure to meet local housing needs. Such schemes will be subject to the following criteria:

- i. The provision of affordable housing must remain so in perpetuity in agreement with the Registered Provider but where legislation prevents this from happening then agreement must be reached with the Registered Provider to find a replacement unit if the original property is sold.
- ii. The number, size, type, mix and tenure of dwellings must not exceed the extent of identified local need.
- iii. The scale of the scheme should be appropriate to the size and character of the settlement and must not significantly damage the character of the settlement or the any surrounding valued landscape.
- iv. The site should be accessible to local services and facilities.
- v. Any enabling market housing required to make the development of affordable dwellings on the site viable must be accompanied by a robust viability assessment in order to justify the required enabling development. The number of enabling market dwellings should not be higher than the number of affordable dwellings and would normally be expected to be up to 20% of the overall number.

## Appendix One: Definitions

**“Allocations Policy”** is the allocations policy adopted by the Council to allocate properties from the Home Choice Plus register

**“Housing Needs Survey”** are surveys that collect data on a wider range of housing needs for all households and not just those that would be considered for affordable housing. This is to assist in plan making, where the Local Planning Authority is seeking to meet a wider range of housing needs across the District.

**“Reasonable Preference”** is given to the five categories of applicant set out in the Housing Act 1996 section 167(2) [as amended].

Those categories are:

- “(a) people who are **homeless** (within the meaning of Part 7);
- (b) people who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3);
- (c) people occupying **insanitary or overcrowded housing** or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;
- (d) people who need to move on **medical or welfare grounds**; and
- (e) people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).”

**Appendix Two – Local Letting Plan Template**

Scheme Name:	
Landlord:	
Does a S.106 agreement apply to this scheme?	Yes / No Details
Full Address (as advertised)  Please include all property numbers	
Number, Size, Type and Tenure of units	
Reasons for developing an LLP (including evidence where relevant)	
Aims and Objectives of LLP	
Are any allocation restrictions proposed in terms of Home Choice Plus bandings?	Yes/No Details
Are any allocation restrictions proposed in terms of numbers of household members to be allocated to family sized properties?  (i.e. different to Home Choice Plus bedroom standard)	Yes/No Details
Are any allocation restrictions proposed	Yes/No

in terms of ages of children?	Details
Is it proposed to advertise any properties for priority to Transfer applicants?	Yes/No Details
Are any other restrictions outside of the Home Choice Plus allocations policy proposed?	Yes/No Details
Date of LLP	
Date of review against objectives	



## Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Report of: Kate Bailey

Date: 2 September 2021

Open

### **Worcestershire's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 - 2022**

#### **Summary**

Attached is a draft of a Cabinet report on this subject, which Cabinet is expected to consider on 14 September 2021.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the report and provide recommendations to Cabinet.

#### **Officer Contact Details:**

Kate Bailey  
Head of Strategic Growth  
Ext 2560

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL****CABINET**  
**14TH SEPTEMBER 2021****Worcestershire's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 - 2022**

<b>OPEN</b>	
<b>CABINET MEMBER:</b>	Councillor Nicky Martin - Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic Services
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:</b>	Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Kate Bailey, Ext.2560 Kate.bailey@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	Appendix One: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Appendix Two: Rough Sleeper Action Plan Appendix Three: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy original action plan and achievements Appendix Four: Consultation questionnaire

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To agree that the modified Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022 is publicly consulted on in advance of adoption and the preparations for a new strategy for 2022. The current strategy has been amended to take into consideration the changes in dealing with homelessness, as a consequence of Covid 19.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

**The Cabinet is asked to DECIDE to:**

- 2.1 Agree the proposed amendments to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2022 are publicly consulted on from 20 September for 6 weeks.
- 2.2 delegate to the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic Services to determine the final form of amendments to the strategy following any changes arising as a consequence of the consultation and that the final amendments to the strategy no later than 31 December 2021.
- 2.3 agree that the final amendments to the strategy determined in accordance with 2.2 above be adopted by the Council as soon as they are finalised.



### 3. **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Local Authorities have a duty to publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (Homelessness Act 2002 as amended by Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) every five years and must include the local authority's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for ensuring that sufficient accommodation and support are or will be available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so. Prior to the publication, for new strategies the local authorities must undertake a review of homelessness in their area. The review is a comprehensive assessment of the nature and extent of homelessness, developed by analysing homelessness data and the views of customers and partner organisations. The last review was undertaken in 2016/17 and requires an update.
- 3.2 In August 2018 the Government published the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 and has subsequently required all Local Housing Authorities (LHA) to take this into consideration and update their Homelessness Strategies. The national strategy aimed to support everyone off the streets and into a home and to end rough sleeping entirely by 2027. The Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2019) incorporated the changes brought about by the Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- 3.3 During the pandemic general homeless numbers have remained constant despite the embargo on evictions and demand for housing advice has risen by 27% in the first few months of the financial year (April to July 2021) compared to the same time last year and a corresponding small increase in the number of households accommodated in temporary accommodation. Throughout the pandemic the Housing Advice Team remained open to the public for those in housing crisis and we had an average of 17 households in emergency accommodation in addition to those in New Street throughout 2020-2021. All those picked up under the Housing First or Housing Led schemes, where intense support is provided by specialist officers to very entrenched rough sleepers, remain housed.
- 3.4 However, the supply of accommodation became very restricted during the successive lockdowns, with many Registered Providers and Landlords seeing a reduction in churn and ceasing to let properties that became vacant due to a combination of covid restrictions and staff shortages. This has lengthened households stay in temporary accommodation.
- 3.5 The Coronavirus pandemic affected the way homelessness services were delivered across the country. In March 2020 the then Minister for Local Government and Homelessness asked that all Local Housing Authorities offered accommodation to those rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping, known as "Everyone In". During the phases of "Everyone In" up to the present time the Council offered accommodation to 49 rough sleepers (or at risk of rough sleeping) and provided either somewhere safe to stay or no second night out accommodation to a further 45 households. Of these two groups the Council were able to secure longer term housing for 47 of these. Some households remain in temporary accommodation waiting for a longer-term offer and others have returned to the streets or more insecure housing arrangements. As of 3 August 2021, we have 4 rough sleepers working with the Housing Pathway Officers, who will support them to leave the streets.

- 3.6 The pandemic has therefore required the Council to review the current strategy and propose amendments in advance of the preparation a new strategy that will follow the review of homelessness data referred to below. Local Authorities must consult on any substantial modification to the existing strategy in addition to any new strategy under Homelessness Act 2002. The Council needs therefore to go out to consultation with the current modified strategy.
- 3.7 Local Authorities have a duty to improve the health of the people in the local area (Health and Social Care Act 2012) and should therefore be mindful of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of homeless people. In Worcestershire the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is being renewed and officers anticipate it being published for consultation in Autumn 2021.
- 3.8 The Council is also working with other organisations across the county to bring forward a Worcestershire Housing Strategy, which will come before members in Autumn 2021. Both these new strategies are relevant in relation to developing the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2021-22 and must be taken into consideration.
- 3.9 The amended Strategy has been considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 2 September 2021 and their comments will be reported.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 Under the Homelessness Act 2002 all Housing Authorities must have in place a homelessness strategy based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district.
- 4.2 The current Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy has three priorities:
- 4.2.1 To prevent homelessness at a much earlier stage
  - 4.2.2 To provide flexible and comprehensive responses to those in crisis and those with complex needs.
  - 4.2.3 To improve the supply of and access to good quality, affordable and supported housing
- 4.3 The amended strategy will replace these priorities with Prevention, Intervention and Recovery and the action plan has been updated to reflect the current position post Covid 19. This is shown in Appendix One.
- 4.4 The majority of actions from the original 2019-2022 have been achieved but some actions were delayed, prevented or unable to proceed due to Covid 19. The original action plan is shown updated and in detail in Appendix Three.
- 4.5 The proposed amended Strategy (Appendix One) will go out to consultation from 20 September for a period of six weeks. The consultation will be promoted through the Council's website and social media as well as through notification to Council partners and stakeholders. Consultation responses can be given through the questionnaire (Appendix Four), through Survey Monkey and/or electronic forms.

- 4.6 Due to the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Housing Strategy, in addition to a five year old Homelessness Review, work will now commence on a new strategy in September 2021, beginning with an update to the Homelessness Review to identify current issues and trends around homelessness. This work will be led by a countywide officer group and overseen by Governance Group made up of senior managers across the county and chaired a Public Health Consultant. It is proposed that regular updates on progress are reported to the Countywide Cabinet Portfolio Holders group attended by the Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic Services.
- 4.7 It is anticipated the Homeless Review and Strategy development will conclude by Spring 2022 and come back to Cabinet for approval before going out to public and stakeholder consultation. The strategy will then be revised and adopted prior to the end of the current strategy in December 2022.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The current Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy actions will be delivered within existing financial resources.
- 5.2 During the pandemic the Council received additional funding from the Government to help towards the costs of accommodating households through “Everyone In” and to assist with finding households a longer-term solution. The funding received for Next Steps Accommodation Programme was approximately £66k and covered severe winter emergency provision, accommodation and support. More recently the Council has received an award of approximately £220k for the Rough Sleeper Initiative which will fund the Housing Pathway Workers and No First Night Out accommodation as well as the Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator (who is hosted by WFDC but shared across five of the six councils). As part of the obligations of this funding, the Council is required to write and deliver action a Rough Sleeper Action Plan by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and this is included at Appendix Two.

**6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Local Housing Authorities have a legal duty to undertake a review of homelessness in their area and to publish a Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy every five years.

**7. EQUALITY IMPACT NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1 An Equality Impact Needs Assessment screening exercise was completed in July 2018. As the strategy amendments are minimal it is not proposed that a further screening exercise is required. However, a new screening exercise will be undertaken as part of the new strategy development.

**8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 The Council is required to have a strategy in place and to modify if there are changes taking place including anything that may affect the composition of homelessness and/or the risk of homelessness in the district; anything that may

change the delivery of the strategy; changes to the relationships between the partners involved in the strategy; or changes to the organisational structure of the housing authority. The Council is mitigating this risk by updating the current strategy and putting into place actions to develop a new strategy for 2022.

- 8.2 The strategy will support working collectively with other councils and partners to reduce statutory homelessness across the county. By focusing on early intervention and prevention where possible the strategy should reduce the risk of homeless crisis situations which are costly to the Council and homeless applicant.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

- 9.1 The Covid pandemic has had a considerable impact on people's lives and an impact around homelessness, include the focus on taking "Everyone In". This has meant the Council and partners have changed models of service delivery and who they offer assistance to. It is therefore appropriate to take this opportunity to modify the current homelessness and rough sleeping strategy.
- 9.2 The current Homelessness Review, which underpins the strategy is approaching five years old and this, combined with a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Housing Strategy, obligates the Council to develop a new homelessness and rough sleeping strategy to be in place by December 2022.

## **10. CONSULTEES**

- 10.1 Local Homelessness Forum
- 10.2 CLT

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 Not applicable

# Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022 (update)

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## 1. Foreword by the chair of Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership

I am very pleased to introduce Worcestershire's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy. It is the third homelessness strategy developed for the County and comes at a crucial time with implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act and the publication of the national Rough Sleeping Strategy in 2018.

This document represents the continued commitment that we have as a County to preventing homelessness in partnership, across sectors and districts. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the organisations and individuals who have contributed towards its development.

We are clear that we want to tackle homelessness in all its forms. Although the most acute and obvious form of homelessness can be seen among those sleeping rough, it is much wider than this. It can include those "hidden homeless" who might be sleeping on a sofa. It can also include those who have a roof over their head, but where it is not safe to remain, perhaps due to abuse or violence, or those living in a home that is unsuitable for a variety of reasons e.g. severe overcrowding, poor property standards, poor health.

Homelessness is experienced by single people, couples and families alike. It can be a consequence of individual risk factors and triggers, or wider structural issues that are beyond their control.

The effects of homelessness for families and individuals can be devastating and can have significant negative impacts on health and wellbeing, employment, education, and crime. It can also have significant costs to communities, local authorities and public services.

Tackling homelessness is becoming particularly challenging in today's tough external environment. Welfare reform has increased pressure on people's ability to manage their finances and access and sustain accommodation. The

demand for social and affordable housing far outstrips supply. Whilst reductions in public spending and additional duties contained within the Homelessness Reduction Act have increased pressure on housing and homelessness services.

We need to work together to ensure the best use and balance of limited resources.

This is why it is vital that this strategy sits at strategic partnership level within the umbrella of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Plan - recognising that tackling homelessness benefits the economy, the health of our population, reduces crime and disorder, and reduces costs to the taxpayer. It should therefore be seen as all of our problem to solve.

Our approach to tackling homelessness is based around 3 Priorities. Firstly, to prevent homelessness at a much earlier stage by targeting groups that are more vulnerable to becoming homeless (and developing complex needs in the future).

Secondly, to provide flexible and comprehensive responses to those in crisis and those with complex needs. We need to design services based on what is best for customers whose needs go beyond homelessness – so that they receive the services they need (not limited by existing practice or legislation).

Finally to improve the supply of, and access to, good quality affordable and supported housing.

This strategy will govern our approach for three years. However, in a period of new legislation, welfare reform and austerity measures, it is vital that it remains responsive.

***Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils and Chair of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership***

## 2. Introduction

The causes of homelessness are complex, and it is often a combination of individual circumstances as well as structural issues (that are often outside of someone's control) that lead up to crisis point.

Each person or household's journey into homelessness is different and requires a tailored and flexible approach in order to prevent it from happening.

It is widely recognised that individual risk factors and triggers such as poor mental or physical health, adverse childhood experiences, substance misuse, and domestic abuse can increase the risk of homelessness. Recent research found that the chances of experiencing homelessness by age 30 can be predicted by childhood poverty, geography, adverse experiences as a teenager and early adult experiences.

It is vital that the right interventions and solutions are provided at the right time in someone's life, to prevent crisis and a reoccurring cycle of homelessness. The earlier, more "upstream" the intervention, the more chance there is of avoiding a situation that is complex and expensive to resolve, both in the human and financial sense.

Structural issues such as the demand for social and affordable housing outstripping supply, welfare reform, and affordability/access to private rented housing also impact on levels of homelessness.

In order to carry out more "upstream" prevention activities and to mitigate the risk of structural issues resulting in homelessness, true collaboration across statutory, voluntary and community sectors is required – now more

than ever with the implementation of the [Homelessness Reduction Act](#) in 2018.

It is also important to recognise that however good our upstream prevention efforts, there will always be some people who find themselves homeless, therefore the need to take a systemic approach and co design services to help people not just at crisis point, but also to recover and move on from homelessness is essential.

To ensure this systemic approach is taken, this document sits within the umbrella of the [Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan 2017](#), in recognition that homelessness is not just a housing issue and needs to sit within the wider context if we are to truly tackle it.

On 13<sup>th</sup> August 2018, the Government published a new national [Rough Sleeping Strategy](#) which sets out its vision to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and end it by 2027. It requires all local authorities in England to update their homelessness strategies and rebadge them as homelessness and rough sleeper strategies by the end of 2019. The refreshed strategies must have a stronger emphasis on rough sleeping. Local authorities are also required to publish annual action plans and report on progress.

The Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022 replaces the Worcestershire Strategic Direction for Tackling Homelessness 2018-2021.



### 3. Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan 2017

In 2017 the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership developed their first [Housing Partnership Plan](#). This is the overarching document which sets out Worcestershire's strategic combined approach for housing including homelessness. The Plan's vision is;

**“To create the *right* home environment for Worcestershire residents that is essential to their health, wealth and wellbeing, throughout life”**

This new way of developing a partnership document/approach to housing for the County is viewed as a real step forward. It recognises that to maximise the health, wealth and wellbeing of residents and make the most effective use of existing resources, we need to work very closely with partner organisations across a range of sectors.

Creating the right home environment and meeting housing need is not only essential for residents, but is vital to enable the Partnership's organisations to achieve their ambitions, policy objectives and duties, such as reduced homelessness, improved health and wellbeing, educational achievement of children and young people, employment, crime reduction and sustainable, resilient communities.

To achieve its Vision, the Partnership Plan sets out five high level actions and a number of projects to deliver on those actions. The links to the prevention of homelessness are clear throughout many, if not all, of the projects. Therefore, it is important to note that the Partnership Plan has set the strategic direction for tackling homelessness.

Partnership Plan projects;

- Develop a county wide supported housing plan
- Undertake a whole systems review of support and accommodation for people with vulnerability or disability
- Develop a 'Housing First' approach to provide permanent housing quickly for homeless people and then provide services as needed
- Develop an intensive support provision for those with complex needs
- Establish clear pathways into support and accommodation for people with complex needs
- Jointly commission new models of accommodation for young people and care leavers
- Establish a multi agency approach to sharing information
- Demonstrate the impact poor housing has on health and social care intervention, to promote the strategic relevance and future design of services

This document will provide a more in depth focus on homelessness and provide the detail on how all the partners dealing with homelessness are going to work together to address the need at both a county and local level. It will provide the link to the wider strategies of our partners and each district council's corporate objectives.



#### 4. Defining homelessness

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) says that someone is considered to be homeless if “they do not have accommodation that they have a legal right to occupy, which is accessible and physically available to them (and their household) and which it would be reasonable for them to continue to live in.”

Local Housing Authorities (LHA) are bound by various Housing Acts defining what assistance they should provide to those facing homelessness. For further details on definitions of homelessness and the legal duties please see Appendix One.

However this current legislation has been amended to further extend legal duties and these are outlined below.

##### **Homelessness Reduction Act 2017**

The Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017 significantly reformed England’s homelessness legislation by placing duties on local authorities to intervene at earlier stages to prevent and relieve homelessness in their areas. It also requires LHAs to try to help households to secure accommodation but it isn’t a duty to rehouse all homeless households.

The HRA will also impose a duty on some public authorities to refer homeless cases to LHAs and the LHAs will work with public and non-public bodies to ensure an effective referral process. It is essential LHAs are clear to partners about the range of duties we now have.

## 5. Impact of homelessness

Identifying and addressing the impact of homelessness for people at every stage of life is essential. The cost of homelessness is too high; for individuals, for communities, for Local Authorities and the tax payer, for it not to be considered a priority.

One of the drivers of the Homelessness Reduction Act was the recognition that homelessness has a higher impact on single people and childless couples who are more likely to be considered “non priority” homeless. The Act will transform the way homelessness services are delivered and ensure that all eligible applicants are given some help to resolve their homelessness regardless of whether they have a “priority need.”

### The impact of homelessness on health and wellbeing

Homelessness affects many different household groups and happens for a variety of reasons. The table opposite outlines some of the reasons for homelessness and the variety of impacts homelessness can have on a person’s life. Some groups can be particularly adversely affected including young people and prison leavers, who perhaps don’t have the resilience, social networks and/or income to resolve the issues they face.

***“Young people who experience homelessness are at risk of embarking on a ‘career’ in homelessness, criminal justice and health systems, at significant cost to their own health and wellbeing, their families and communities, and to the public purse. Their potential to contribute to and benefit from society and the economy is affected by homelessness.”***

The Impact of Homelessness on Health: a Guide for Local Authorities, LGA 2017

Social / economic / political factors that may lead to homelessness	Consequences of homelessness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing market failure including low levels of housing supply</li> <li>• Adverse childhood experiences</li> <li>• Family breakdown or poor relationships</li> <li>• Becoming a looked after child</li> <li>• Domestic abuse</li> <li>• Substance or alcohol misuse</li> <li>• Low income or benefit dependency</li> <li>• Involvement with the criminal justice system</li> <li>• Not in education, employment and training</li> <li>• Welfare reform</li> <li>• Public sector austerity leading to cuts in housing related support and other services</li> <li>• Teenage pregnancy</li> <li>• Overcrowding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor mental health including stress for adults / children – common mental health problems are over twice as high among people who are homeless compared with the general population, and psychosis is up to 15 times as high.</li> <li>• Poor physical health- greater risk of infection (delayed access to health care / immunisations)</li> <li>• Lower education attainment for children especially if access to school places is affected</li> <li>• Social isolation and loneliness</li> <li>• Additional financial burdens</li> <li>• Greater likelihood of not being in education, employment or training</li> <li>• Substance or alcohol misuse</li> <li>• Young people in particular might face; exploitation, abuse and trafficking, involvement in gangs.</li> <li>• Likelihood of premature death, dementia or other long term health condition</li> <li>• Low self-esteem and confidence</li> </ul>

## 6. Evidence base - Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016

The evidence base for this homelessness strategy is the [Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016](#).

The review is a comprehensive assessment of the nature and extent of homelessness across the County, developed by analysing homelessness data and the views of customers and partner organisations.

It draws a number of conclusions and recommendations which have been used to develop our approach to preventing and managing homelessness locally, and these fed directly into the development of the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Plan.

It is vital that services are developed and delivered in partnership if we are to truly prevent homelessness from an individual, structural and systemic point of view. We believe that sitting our approach firmly within the Partnership Plan is the key to achieving this, bringing together statutory, voluntary and community organisations.

Local Housing Authorities are also working with the County Council in the development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The JSNA is designed to inform decisions made locally about what services are commissioned to improve the public's health and reduce inequalities; therefore, it is vital to make sure it contains robust homelessness data and supports the county's homelessness prevention approach.

### What did the Homelessness Review tell us?

- Homelessness is increasing locally, as it is nationally. Successful prevention work across the county continues to have an impact as homelessness

applications have remained relatively static whilst approaches for homelessness assistance have increased.

The impact of legislation, national policy, austerity measures and welfare reform will have a huge effect on housing options and the ability to continue preventative work at the same levels.

- Welfare reform will impact the affordability of housing. There are concerns about whether there are any affordable housing options for some households, especially large families and those under 35 in the private rented sector.
- It is becoming increasingly difficult to move people on from temporary accommodation not just due to affordability, but also due to complex or higher support needs and poor tenancy histories – both in the private and social rented sectors.
- The demand for social and affordable housing far outstrips supply, a buoyant private sector housing market means private landlords can afford to be selective.
- Pressures on temporary accommodation are set to increase with the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- The homelessness service does not adequately meet the needs of people with complex needs and the reduction in public sector budgets have meant the removal of housing related support for most homeless households.
- The ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies continues to be a major reason for homelessness, and should become a priority for prevention work.
- The Single Person and Childless Couples service focuses on prevention work and quickly moving those newly arrived to the streets into long term

housing, but there is gap in provision for continuing and entrenched rough sleepers – this will be reduced by the new MOATS service (rough sleeper outreach) commencing in April 2018.

- The Audit of Services identified a number of gaps in provision for certain client groups and also geographically. Gaps could increase as services become unviable due to further funding cuts.
- General lack of supported accommodation especially for victims of domestic abuse, young people, prison leavers and those with low level mental health or learning disabilities.
- General lack of good quality shared accommodation, particularly for young people and those under the age of 35. This is particularly acute in some areas.

### Recommendations from the review

#### Increase the range of prevention services

- Protect and increase good quality, cost effective support services that will prevent homelessness from the earliest possible stage and equip people with the skills to establish and maintain lifelong independence (systems thinking approach).
- Develop pathways to ensure a different and more integrated approach to meet the needs of single people and families with complex needs e.g. mental and physical health, social care, substance misuse.
- Increase service provision to assist entrenched rough sleepers move off the street.

- Increase the use of tenancy ready schemes and tenancy support especially for those in private rented accommodation to improve access and to prevent homelessness.
- Explore gaps in service provision identified by the audit of services - mediation and reconciliation services, support for ex offenders, those with mental health issues, low level Learning Difficulties and Autism.
- Work with partners to improve people's wealth and resilience to prevent homelessness occurring throughout their lives - getting people into work, provision of debt advice/financial management and maximising benefits.
- Upscale communications on housing options and support services to avoid crisis point and improve likelihood of preventing homelessness. Review whether current systems are achieving this.

#### Increase the supply of accommodation

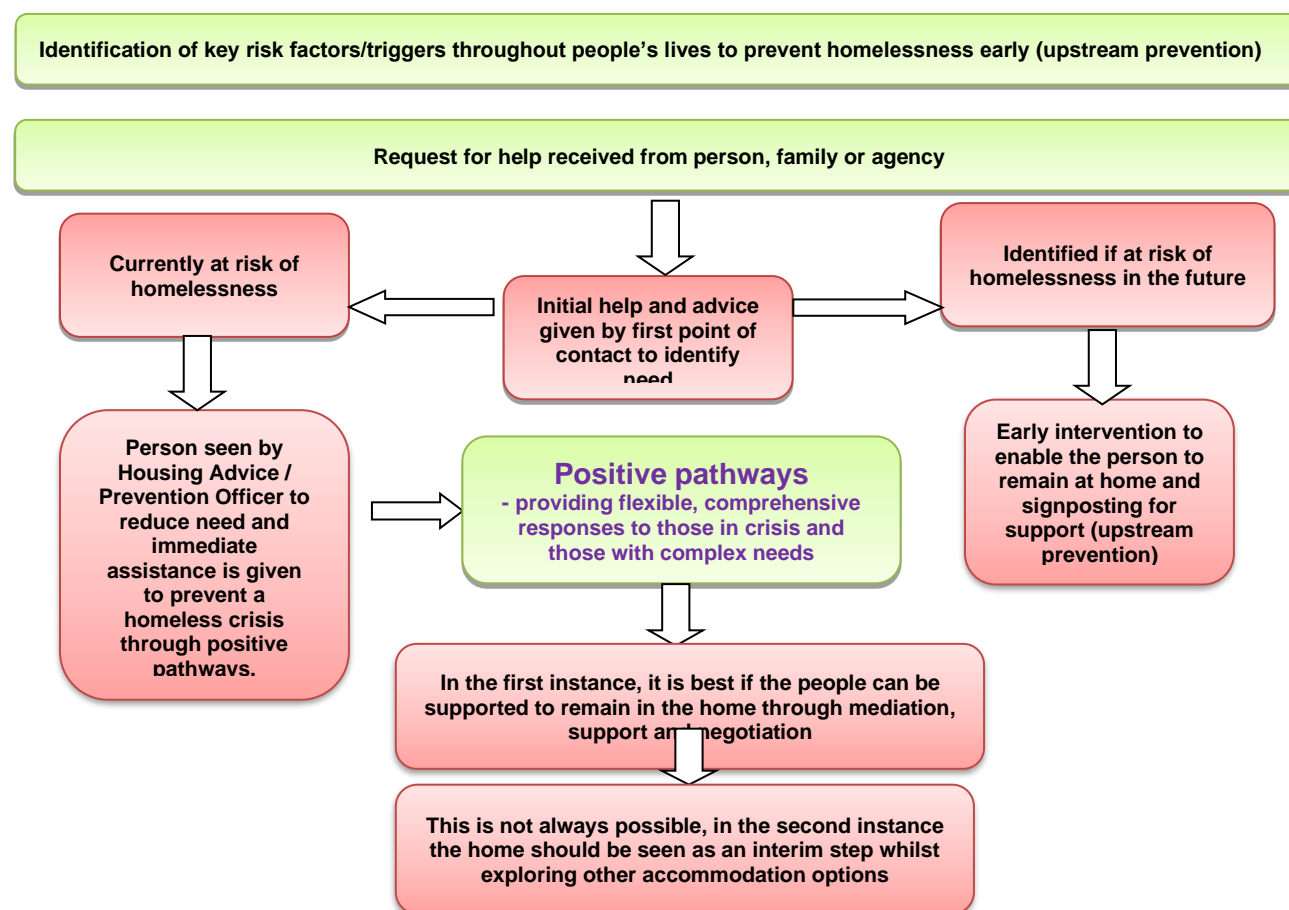
- Review and expand the provision of interim accommodation and permanent affordable accommodation, particularly for large families and those under 35 who are increasingly finding it hard to access any accommodation options. This may include a local authority owned/procured property.
- Consider how to overcome the lack of supported accommodation for care leavers (especially those with complex needs) and young parents.
- Consider the lack of direct access accommodation for individuals who are homeless in an emergency.
- Improve data recording and analysis to reflect the true nature of homelessness across the County.
- Analyse the cost effectiveness of homelessness services (cost of statutory vs cost of prevention).

## **7. Achievements - Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy 2019-22**

Through the work of the Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy 2019-22 and recommendations from the Homelessness Review, we have been able to improve services across Worcestershire.

## 8. Positive pathways approach

Like many Local Authority areas, the Positive Pathways Model first developed by St. Basil's (in relation to young people) has been successfully implemented in Worcestershire. We would like to build on that success and extend the concept across all groups that might be more vulnerable to becoming homeless. The following diagram and priorities outlined in the next section explain how we will do this.



## 9. Our priorities for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping

The Partnership Plan and the Homelessness Review identified a number of priorities and actions to aim to end homelessness from these perspectives. There are also clear links with the Pathways approach we want to achieve.

The national Rough Sleeping Strategy published in 2018 is based around three principles;

- **Prevention:** timely support before someone becomes homeless. For example, making sure no one leaves prison without suitable accommodation in place.
- **Intervention:** targeted support to get people off the streets.
- **Recovery:** the need for accommodation and support.

The pandemic has impacted on the community and services across Worcestershire in a range of ways and highlighted and widened existing inequalities. This has resulted in the current Homelessness & Rough Sleeper Strategy needing a refresh to build on the existing strategy themes and action plan of Prevention, Intervention and Recovery using the learning from the pandemic. One of the benefits resulting from the pandemic has been the strengthening of the partnerships and cross agency working highlighting the important role local government plays in understanding and addressing health, wellbeing, and community need.

Across all of the strategy themes it will be a priority to ensure that the safeguarding of all adults including those who sleep rough is explicitly stated and addressed within service aims.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1 – Prevention

Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022

The impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic will mean that helping people remain in their own home and preventing homelessness becomes even more important as the numbers of households facing homelessness is forecast to increase. Preventing homelessness is much more cost effective than dealing with its consequences and the strategic priority to prevent homelessness will remain a focus within the updated action plan. A range of studies have been completed including the MHCLG figures in 2012 estimating that the average annual cost of homelessness was between £24,000 and £30,000 per person. More importantly, we also know that preventing homelessness and dealing with the root causes delivers far better outcomes for individuals.

We want to look at new and effective ways of preventing homelessness:

- we will improve communication and the knowledge of new services and changes to services with our partners to make sure every customer contact counts
- we will improve customer information and enable access to good quality joined up advice to prevent homelessness at the earliest stage.
- we will improve the advice and prevention tools that are specific to the top 3 main causes of homelessness in the county for example:
  - relationship breakdown,
  - loss of private rented tenancy and
  - domestic abuse
- we will revitalise systems used with building societies and other lenders to ensure that people who build up arrears on their mortgage repayments can receive advice and support early on
- we will complete a review of the demand for homeless services post Covid 19 to inform the new Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy which will be developed during 2021/22 to understand the causes of homelessness in the county and district council areas so that measures can be put in place to tackle them
- we will work to continue with the Everyone In approach and adopt no first night out principles to prevent rough sleeping



- we will work with Public Health to explore and understand what work can be done to prevent and reduce harm from substance misuse and improve mental health.
- We will work with health partners to improve the health offer to rough sleepers e.g. lead GP across districts

### **Household Income/Economic Impact**

The health and social effects of the previous decade of austerity means that already disadvantaged groups are even more vulnerable to the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and inequalities have been highlighted and widened. Without mitigation, any recession accompanying the pandemic will lead to spikes in unemployment and lost income. This number is likely to rise. Worcestershire has a strong relationship with the Department of Works and Pensions and a network of advice providers. There is a strong track record of supporting vulnerable people who are in receipt of welfare benefits. Increase in the numbers of people claiming benefits have already been seen across the county and this is forecast to become worse with the end of furloughing. We will address this by:

- ensuring use of Discretionary Housing Payments and Spend to Save resources supports homeless prevention
- supporting access to financial advice, skills and employment services
- working with the voluntary sector to deliver impartial advice and identify those at risk of homelessness
- raising awareness of the existing network of advice that is available for people
- exploring the possibility of supporting vulnerable people (with their consent) who lack the capability to manage their finances due to lifestyle factors

**Strengthen relationships with partners to help prevent homelessness, specifically those who work with vulnerable groups**

We believe that we can prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place by working with partners to identify risk and intervene earlier. We will:

- ensure there are specialised outreach and housing advice services to identify needs at an early stage. We will improve the joint working with Caring for Communities and People providing the HoPES service, continue to employ the Countywide Homeless Hospital Pathway Worker funded by the NHS & Care Trust, work with Social Care to jointly fund the Young Persons Pathway Worker.
- we will refresh and review the housing and support pathways for vulnerable groups – domestic abuse, care leavers and young people, ex-offenders, asylum seekers, veterans, teenage parents, people with autism, people with mental health, people with physical disabilities, older people, people with substance misuse and rough sleepers

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2 – Intervention

Plans are in place to complete a new homelessness review. The current strategy identified the most vulnerable groups who are at risk of becoming homeless. It is recognised this was using the homelessness review undertaken in 2016 and plans are in place to complete a new homelessness review especially considering the pandemic and its impact on the most vulnerable groups. Under the intervention theme of the strategy we need to offer a range of accommodation and support choices to meet specific needs and complexities:

### Survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of violence

The Domestic Abuse Act requires the 6 district councils to co-operate with Worcestershire County Council in meeting the housing and support needs of children and victims of domestic abuse. This work is currently being undertaken and will assess need and supply, a published strategy for the provision of support to cover the locality and diverse groups of victims which will be used to make commissioning and de-commissioning decisions. The Local Housing Teams need to be able to offer a range of safe accommodation choices for victims of violence and abuse according to their needs and complexities. Some will need to be supported in their own home where it is safe to do so. For others, immediate access to emergency short-term refuge provision may be the safest options. There is also a need to ensure there is 'through-put' in the refuges with shorter stays, quicker access in to permanent accommodation, and tenancy support through the crisis period which is then maintained. We will:

- make sure victims of domestic abuse know how to access help and are able to leave abusive relationships
- put the victim first shifting focus from risk to 'need' and recognise the impact of trauma and their ability to engage with support services

- develop needs led provision, that meets the needs of diverse groups, especially with complex needs and from isolated and marginalised communities with re-sponses tailored according to the stage of change supporting them to safety and independent living
- provide flexible services, a range of options for safe and secure accommodation and outreach support services in their local authority area or outside their area through collaborative cross-boundary working
- ensure joint working and visits between staff from specialist domestic abuse providers and wider support agencies/professionals to facilitate access to victims alongside on-going assessment of risk and need; building trusted, supportive relationships with the victim to support engagement using clear engagement plans which are developed and reviewed as the victim moves through their stages of change.
- to become a strong partner on the Local Partnership Board to oversee the governance and implementation of the new legislative requirement providing of-ficer support and local knowledge of housing and community safety need.

### Reduce Rough Sleeping and maintain the “Everyone In” Approach

The “Everyone In” approach has supported the Government national target to reduce rough sleeping by half by 2022 and to eradicate it all together by 2027. The pandemic provided an offer of accommodation to all rough sleepers with the majority accepting and only a small number of entrenched rough sleepers remaining on the street. The Councils have also supported several individuals with no recourse to public sector funding who would have faced homelessness and destitution following a loss in employment. Local information regarding the rough sleepers and a joined up multi-disciplinary approach to meeting rough sleeper need has improved and evolved. The numbers remain small and intervention will be essential to maintaining these levels due to the impacts of covid on employment, mental health, alcohol and substance misuse and housing affordability. We will continue to address the issue by:

- ensuring effective outreach services are delivered to identifying those at risk and addressing their issues at an early stage
- monitoring the new local provision and capacity of no first night accommodation
- developing the local rough sleeper teams and support options for individuals who face multiple exclusions
- developing a support offer for individuals with no recourse to public sector funds
- expand Housing First / Led provision across the social and private rented housing sector, and embed this model within our strategic approach, as one of a range of options for Rough Sleepers.
- ensure that safeguarding of adults who sleep rough is explicitly stated by the service aims of this Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and incorporating into any newly developed service arrangements

### **Design services to support people with multiple complex needs**

Mental ill health is the most common need cited by people presenting as homeless and living within temporary accommodation. Often these needs sit alongside other issues such as substance misuse, disability, involvement with the criminal justice system and a history of anti-social behaviour meaning the housing and support pathway can be challenging. We will:

- ensure that there is adequate provision including through social prescribing and ease of access to treatment services
- through the Health Needs Audit understand the use of new substances in the county and their impact on health
- continue to work in partnership through the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) approach to work with the most complex individuals
- look at accommodation options for individuals with high support needs and explore how health services can be integrated into these services so that a therapeutic approach to recovery can be adopted

- thread the principle of engaging with individuals in a trauma informed way to achieve personal recovery, into services
- improve awareness and support for individuals to obtain general access to physical health care.

### **Care leavers and young people**

There are a disproportionate number of people who present as homeless in the county who were in care as a child, many of them have been evicted from supported accommodation. Worcestershire has a higher than average number of Children In Need cases and Child Protection cases. We need to ensure that strong processes and procedures are in place to support young people through this process to achieve positive outcomes. We will:

- undertake further work to ensure that a whole picture of demand is jointly understood between Children's First and Adults Services, particularly in relation to young people who are homeless but are not care leavers or looked after
- work with the County Council to review the transition from early years to adult services needs so that a coherent and consistent pathway is in place for homelessness
- Worcestershire Children's First and Housing Services refresh the joint protocol which sets clear and practical arrangements to prevent youth homelessness and to ensure 16 or 17 year olds have accommodation which meets their needs. This will be based on the recommendations above and in the light of Government guidance with a target date for completion being March 2019
- make every attempt to avoid young person being placed in emergency bed and breakfast with shared facilities.

### **Veterans**

The number of veterans returning to the county between 2018-2021 is low. Despite this we will ensure that appropriate services are in place to meet the needs of veterans and their families. We will:

- continue to support the Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant so that veterans have a trusted pathway for accessing housing and support services
- monitor the number of veterans seeking housing assistance over the next 12 months and ensure this data is used to inform the new Homelessness & Rough Sleepers Strategy.
- to participate in the West Midlands regional focus group to feed into the development of the armed forces covenant legislation planned to be passed through Government 2022.
- to investigate if a veteran's self-build project is required to meet local housing need

### **Individuals being discharged from prison**

When someone is released from prison they need stability and security to get their lives back on track. The HoPES contract has identified the increasing number of rough sleepers that are ex-offenders in some Districts. Too often offenders are released from prison with nowhere to go. We need to support offenders into accommodation and reduce the risk of individuals reoffending and will do this by:

- developing clear housing pathways for individuals being discharged from prison that include appropriate accommodation and support
- developing move on solutions ensuring that offenders are signposted back to their originating authority once their bail or licence has ended
- exploring the role that the Private Rented Sector can play in supporting ex-prisoners to access permanent rehousing and look at funding opportunities that may support this
- Public Health participating in regional work to improve the medication and prescription pathway for people being released from prison.

### **Safeguarding – human trafficking/modern day slavery**

We know that there are links between modern slavery and homelessness and that victims may also present to services as victims of domestic abuse. We will:

- continue to raise awareness of modern slavery so that providers can identify those at risk and continue to promote ways of reporting to partners
- continue to gather and share intelligence between agencies to enable West Mercia Police service to tackle the issue

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3 - Recovery

### Provide sustainable housing solutions

Affordable and supported housing supply in Worcestershire is an on-going problem where demand outstrips the supply. Since the outbreak of the pandemic the English national housing market has been in its own version of lockdown after the government intervened in unprecedented fashion to ensure stability for millions of residents by effectively making it impossible to undertake evictions or repossessions in this country. As a result of this intervention activity levels around homelessness have remained relatively stable nationally and locally while new creative ways of working across health services and housing services have developed around, for example, the needs of rough sleepers.

However, there is a real risk in assuming that this situation will remain stable over the next year. It is very difficult to assess how much pressure is in the system but when the restrictions on the housing market are lifted and the furlough scheme ends we could see a significant upturn in households losing their homes and a rise in unemployment.

Any rises in homelessness or uncertain housing situations, unemployment, covid levels or deteriorating health conditions could all impact on several systems, health included, so managing demand could become increasingly important. In normal circumstances local authorities employ a homelessness prevention approach to try to manage demand in the local market and this will need to be enhanced even further to deal with the forecast increases in homelessness.

Also an overwhelming number of individuals presenting as homeless have multiple and complex needs resulting in exclusion from social rented tenancies and whilst accommodation in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) can be sourced it has limited levels or no support and is difficult to sustain.

### Tenancy support – sustainment and prevention

Sustainment challenges are often linked to crisis situations and general lack of skills and understanding around tenancy issues. A large proportion of cases presenting as homeless, recorded mental ill health as a need – often alongside many other needs. Tailored support and advice to these cohorts may reduce the number of households presenting in a crisis. We will:

- consider how social care pathways can be reviewed to be more responsive to individuals with multiple complex needs
- work in partnership with a range of providers to explore the most effective model of floating support to sustain tenancies
- continue to support and evaluate the Housing First model in the county as an option for some of the most chaotic individuals
- through existing outreach and drop-in sessions, identify those who are or may be at risk of rough sleeping and proactively engage with them to develop individual tailored plans that will lead to positive outcomes
- explore how recovery can be built into future specifications for accommodation and support.

### Work with partners including landlords, Registered Housing Providers, and developers to increase supply for vulnerable households and those on low incomes

The Core Strategies and Development Plans in the South of the County and the Local Plans of the 3 authorities in the North set out our long-term plan for development across the plan areas to 2030 and beyond. This will be supported by the development of a long-term Housing Strategy will be published in Autumn 2021. It will ensure that the right type of development is focused in the right places to meet the needs for local people and businesses. We will:

- work with registered housing providers to access the Homes England Funding to meet identified gaps in provision

- through affordable housing policies, the council will seek to ensure that the maximum level of affordable housing achievable is secured
- diversify the housing offer to meet identified housing needs
- make the best use of empty homes to bring them back into use and consider how they may be used to meet housing need
- complete the development of a county wide supported housing plan

### **Reduce our reliance on unsupported temporary accommodation**

Temporary Accommodation has played a huge role in the county in terms of providing accommodation to some of the most entrenched individuals during Covid. This has been made possible with the provision of support and security. The continuation of this provision will not be possible and an alternative and more local approach will need to be developed to meet the needs of the most entrenched group that it will not be possible to place in the usual temporary accommodation much of which is not supported. We will:

- look at alternatives forms of accommodation that are supported, on a smaller scale and dispersed throughout the county
- continue to raise standards in accommodation through regulation in the private sector
- continue to work in partnership with accommodation providers to understand the needs of the hostel population
- work with neighbouring authorities to ensure that any cross-authority placements are managed appropriately

### **Define the role that the private rented sector will play in reducing homelessness in the county**

The Rough Sleepers Strategy recognises that for many, the private rented sector offers a route out of homelessness and plays a vital part in delivering the homes that the county needs. The Government is also aware that the dysfunction in the private rented sector can exacerbate the risk of

homelessness and as such has introduced a wide range of reforms to redress the balance between tenants and landlords. We will:

- provide regular advice and information to support the development of a professional private landlord sector – landlord forums and newsletters and landlord advice lines
- to develop accessible and good quality tenancy rights and advice information
- to promote and increase the supply of private rented accommodation using local authority lettings services
- to review and implement pre-eviction protocols with private landlords
- to review the use of discretionary housing payments and maximise the prevention of homelessness
- to review/implement the local Private Sector Housing Strategies and support the improvement property standards in the private rented housing stock and the prevention of homelessness.

## 10. Delivering on our approach

### Oversight

Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership (WSHP) is responsible for ensuring that the commitments within this strategy are realised. It is a multi-agency, and cross sector partnership, ensuring homelessness prevention is placed in the wider context. See diagram on page 20 for more detail.

The role of the WSHP is to influence commissioning and system change across sectors to resource and deliver on this Strategy.

### Delivery

Worcestershire Strategic Housing Officers Group (WSHOG) is responsible for delivery of this document. WSHOG is a well established group, with a proven track record of housing and homelessness strategy delivery, representing each of the districts.

### Assurance

WSHP will seek assurance from the delivery group on the effectiveness of partnership working in the development and implementation of local strategy implementation plans. In addition, Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board will seek assurance on the commitment to the Local Housing and Health Memorandum of Understanding and the Homeless Health Charter.

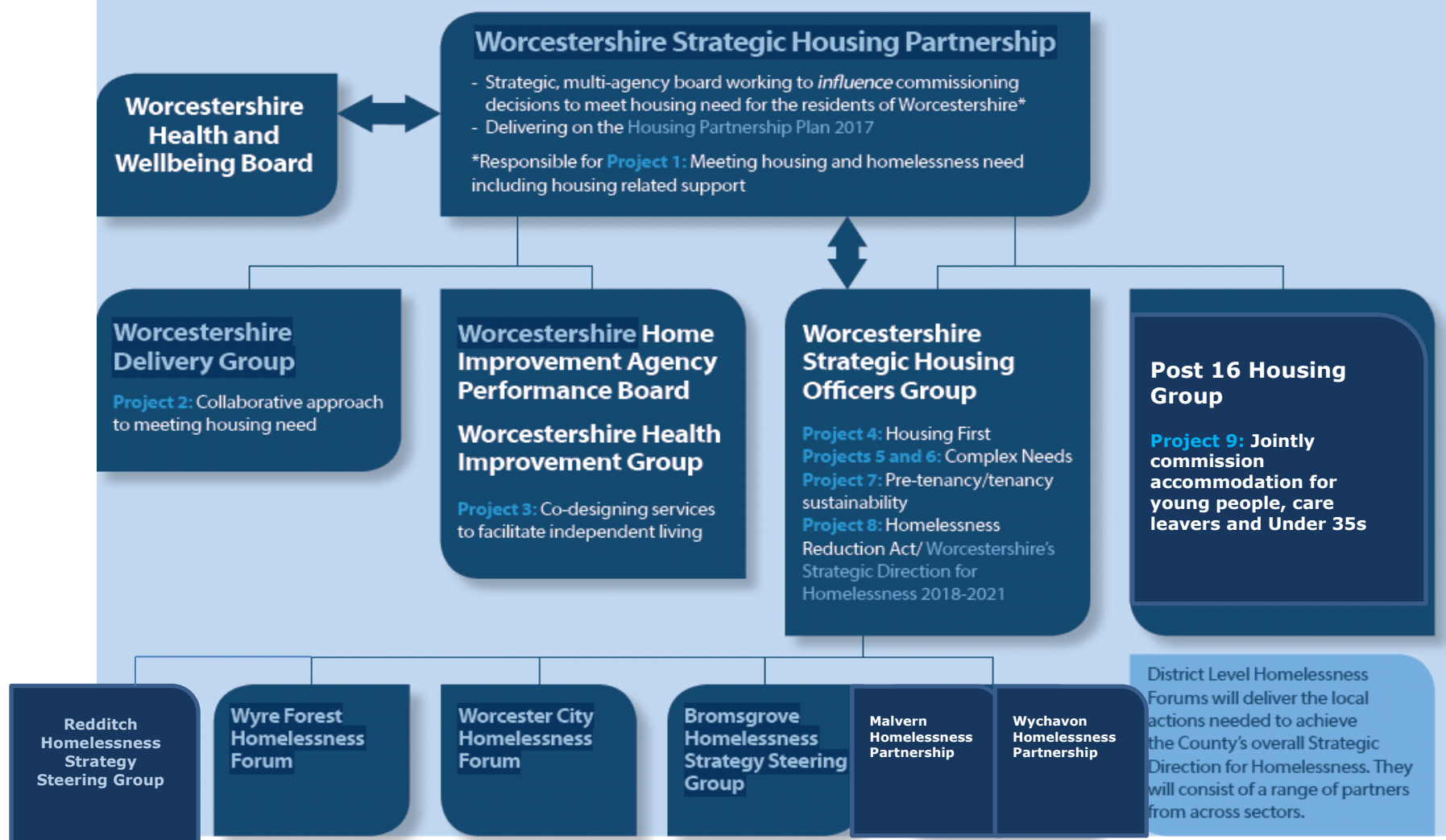
### Monitoring

WSHOG will report progress against local strategy implementation plans to WSHP. WSHP will undertake a review of progress on an annual basis up to and including 2022.

### Equality duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. Our approach will adhere to this.

## Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan - Delivery Groups





## **11. Implementation**

Our approach recognises that the causes of homelessness are complex and multi faceted – and that to tackle it holistically, we need to prevent the structural as well as individual factors that lead to homelessness.

By sitting this homelessness strategy within the Partnership Plan, we will ensure that homelessness prevention will be placed at the forefront when designing system change needed to achieve our vision.

It is important to recognise that although this is a county approach, there are differences between districts that will need individual district focus. Some districts experience higher levels of rough sleeping, some have higher levels of deprivation and domestic abuse, some have a huge lack of supported and temporary accommodation as compared to others.

Worcestershire Strategic Housing Officers Group will be responsible for delivery of this strategy. Local strategy implementation plans will be developed in partnership with local organisations and partners via local homelessness forums that currently exist in each of the districts. They will identify a series of actions, initiatives and opportunities.

The implementation plan will be delivered by working with key partner agencies and will be achieved through task and finish groups and through the expertise and resources of existing meetings/groups. They will continually be reviewed and monitored by Worcestershire Strategic Housing Officers Group and the Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership – to keep up to date and have the flexibility it needs to have.

There will be briefings and regular training on the importance of tackling homelessness, including an annual stakeholder event.

## Appendix One – Legal duties

### Legal duties

The primary homelessness legislation – Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 – provides the statutory under-pinning for action to prevent homelessness and provide assistance to people threatened with or actually homeless.

In 2002, the Government amended the homelessness legislation through the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002 to ensure a more strategic approach to tackling and preventing homelessness and to strengthen the assistance available to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness by extending the priority need categories.

### Statutory Homelessness – where the rehousing duty is owed

Housing authorities have a legal duty to provide advice and assistance to anyone that is homeless or threatened with homelessness. If a housing authority has reason to believe that someone may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, they must investigate what duty they owe to them under the homelessness legislation.

A ‘main homelessness duty’ is owed where the authority is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a specified ‘priority need’ group.

The ‘priority need groups’ include households with dependent children or a pregnant woman and people who are vulnerable in some way e.g. because of mental illness or physical disability. In 2002 the priority need categories were extended to include applicants who are aged 16 or 17, care leavers aged 18-20, people who are vulnerable as a result of time spent in care, in HM Forces, in prison or custody, and those who are vulnerable as a result of having to flee their home because of violence or the threat of violence

### Homelessness Households not owed the rehousing duty

Homeless people not owed the full rehousing duty are typically single people or childless couples who are not assessed as being in ‘priority need’ or those deemed to be intentionally homeless. These groups are only entitled to advice and assistance if homeless, not the “main housing duty”. Some non-priority homeless people are offered access to Local Authority commissioned housing support services.

### Street Homelessness

DCLG defines street homelessness 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”.



## Wyre Forest District Council Ending Rough Sleeping Plan 21/22

*This document will outline your plans to contribute to preventing single homelessness and ending rough sleeping by the end of the parliament during this financial year. It will be used by your MHCLG adviser to track your progress against your agreed objectives.*

### 1. Targets

What was your 2020 rough sleeping snapshot figure?	4
Please confirm your rough sleeping operational target as agreed with MHCLG (RSI4 funding principle)	1

### 2. Objectives and Actions

*[Please complete the following table with actionable objectives that will help you to meet your target laid out above. These objectives will be agreed with your MHCLG adviser to test the level of ambition and used to monitor your progress on reducing single homelessness and rough sleeping. Please include at least one objective for each of the following three pillars:]*

1. *Prevention - Stopping people sleeping rough for the first time.*
2. *Intervention – Support to those currently sleeping rough to move off the streets.*
3. *Recovery – Support to those who have slept rough to ensure they don't return to the streets.*

Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
<b>Prevention objective:</b> Reduce the number of people 'at risk' rough sleeping	Homelessness Prevention Grant / RSI4	Targeted prevention services including officers who focus on early intervention and prevention through regular meetings with social and private sector landlords and other services who come into contact with people who are at risk of homelessness.	Reduction in number of households evicted from social housing  Reduction in number of households whose tenancies end in PRS	Housing Advice and Housing Strategy teams - Homeless Support Officers and Housing Advice Officer Other partners including RPs and PRS landlords	Ongoing	

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Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
<b>Prevention objective:</b> Reduce the number of people 'at risk' rough sleeping	Homelessness Prevention Grant / Public Health COMF	Provision of counselling services where this is a contributory factor to tenancy breakdown.	Reduction in number of households evicted from social housing Reduction in number of households whose tenancies end in PRS	Counsellor	Ongoing	
<b>Prevention objective:</b> Reduce the number of people 'at risk' of rough sleeping	Homeless Prevention Grant / internal resources	Provision of "Help to stay" service for private sector landlords considering ending tenancies and for tenants where they need support and signposting to stay.	Reduction in number of households whose tenancies end in PRS	PSL Co-ordinator, Private Rented Sector Officer and Homeless Support Officers	Ongoing	
<b>Prevention Objective:</b> Reduce the number of people rough sleeping	NHS	Provision of a hospital based officer working with discharge teams when patient is homeless or at risk of being so	Reduction in number of households homeless from hospital.	Countywide Homeless Hospital Pathway Worker	Ongoing	
<b>Prevention Objective:</b> Reduce the number of people rough sleeping	Internal resources	Reducing re-offending by supporting offenders into accommodation	Reduction in number of households homeless from prison	Prison leavers T&F group / Offender Management group / MAPPA / DRIVE etc	Ongoing	

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Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
<b>Intervention objective:</b> Ensure needs of individuals sleeping rough are fully understood	RSI4	Co-ordinating work on RS across agencies and LHAs to ensure RS are properly assessed and learning is shared.	Ensure homelessness assessments are carried out and a personalised housing plan (PHP) is provided.  Target - 100% of those engaged	Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator Housing Advice Team Other partners	March 2022	
<b>Intervention objective:</b> Reduce the length of time people sleep rough	RSI4	No First Night Out / SWEP if required Referrals via Streetlink Outreach provided by Navigators and Housing Pathway Officers	Reduction in the number of Rough Sleepers	Housing Advice Team / Housing Pathway Officers	Ongoing	
<b>Intervention objective:</b> Increase range of accommodation options available to people sleeping rough	Homelessness Prevention Grant / internal resources	Increase access to the PRS by providing leased accommodation to provide longer term, self-contained and shared temp accommodation to single homeless / RS	Reduction in the number of nights RS spend on the streets by 20%	PSL Co-ordinator and Private Rented Sector Officer	10 bed spaces by Autumn 2021	

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Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
<b>Intervention objective</b> To provide a response to people sleeping rough that responds to their individual needs	Internal Resources	Working with those with NRPF; Access to home office support Passport/ID Repatriation	Reduction in the number of NRPF rough sleeping	Housing Advice Team / Housing Pathway Officers	Ongoing	
	Internal Resources / Public Health	Participate in the establishing of Blue light meetings which includes substance misuse cases in addition to alcohol	Reduction in drug related deaths (current data 20 p.a)  Reduction in the number of households homeless from social housing and the PRS	Head of Strategic Growth / HAT	March 2022	
	RSI4	Personalised Budgets	100% Spend of personal budget	Housing Pathway Officers	Ongoing	
<b>Recovery Objective:</b> To ensure the needs of people sleeping rough are met through strengthening partnership work	HPG / RSI4 / Internal Resources	Work on building the partnership and developing the Homelessness Health Charter with PCN  Support role and remit of the countywide Homelessness Taskforce	100% of rough sleepers handed over to community services if required	Housing Strategy / Health and Sustainability and HAT Head of Strategic Growth / HA team leader / PSHO / PH&SO	March 2022  Ongoing	



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Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
Develop ongoing engagement with partners; health, substance misuse, criminal justice services and VCS in local rough sleeping response.	As above	Local Homelessness Forum – to coordinate work around homelessness	Delivery of the Homelessness and RS action plan / HRA 2017	Principal Strategic Housing Officer / HAT manager	March 2022	
<b>Recovery Objective:</b> Increase the supply of long term accommodation	RSI4 / HPG / Homes England / Business Rates Retention scheme / Internal resources	Support the development of safe and appropriate longer term solutions including shared social housing model, private rented sector, new build supported and general needs social housing, Housing Led and Housing First tenancies	<p>2 PSL schemes in place by end of March 22 &amp; 10 rent bond tenancies</p> <p>New supported housing unit in planning application stage</p> <p>2022/23 5 Housing First tenancies 17 Housing Led tenancies</p>	<p>PSL Co-ordinator / PRS Officer</p> <p>HofSG / Principal Strategic Housing Officer</p> <p>HAT</p> <p>HAT</p>	<p>March 2022</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>5 in place</p> <p>5 in place 2 in TA</p>	

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Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
<b>Recovery Objective:</b> Increase the number of RS accessing EET	BBO / DWP / Community Renewal Fund if successful	Maintain links to EET services by BBO and other third sector providers Maintain links to DWP job coaches Develop new EET service with the VCS if CRF successful	Ensure that employment, education and training is a central consideration to support individuals= 100%	Principal Strategic Housing Officer	Ongoing	
<b>Recovery Objective:</b> Increase the number of RS engaging appropriately with social prescribers	NHS	Maintain links with social prescriber services with collaborative training	Ensure RS are engaging with PCN services	HAT and PH&SO	Ongoing	

### 3.Strategic Narrative

The Head of Strategic Growth and the Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator meet regularly with the MHCLG and have effective methods for collecting and responding to data requests.

The current Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy (2019-22) has been refreshed and will be signed off through the decision-making process in Autumn 2021. The new Strategy is already being planned and we anticipate a new strategy being adopted towards the end of 2022 with the vision of making homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. In the last strategy we worked with those with lived experience of homelessness & rough sleeping to ensure that the Strategy delivered the right outcomes and we will repeat this, to a greater degree, from August onwards including through getting the views of our Housing First clients. This work will cover all genders and also those with no successful outcomes who are still on the streets and will help inform service delivery and future commissioning arrangements. The RS have already been identified but don't want to do group work at this stage but ultimately, we would like to develop them into an expert panel.

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We support a number of strategic and operational partnerships across the District and County with a variety of statutory and voluntary sector bodies this includes the following; RS Intelligence Group – including Police, MAGGS, CCP, Cranstoun, ASC, Housing First / Housing Led meetings– any organisation if involved in supporting clients, Local Homelessness Forum, Reducing re-offender group, Offender management workers group – prison leavers / vol agencies / DWP, Care leavers panel and PCN (WF Health Partnership) and Housing.

In addition, we use the DTR we receive to allow for partnership engagement to prevent homelessness through early engagement especially in relation to prisons. The partnership working has led to stronger relationships with colleagues from mental health services, probation, police and the local substance abuse team and these relationships have benefited our clients through joined up working, sharing of information to support clients onto a positive housing pathway plan and safeguarding. This joint working provides opportunities for learning from each other's experiences, share training and good practice from around the county. – joint PIE training with WDC & MHDC, Worcestershire Communities of Practice, Worcestershire Homeless Working Group.

The HPG funds a number of staffing posts including those helping access to the private rented sector, support officers and additional resources in the housing advice team. It also funds accommodation in various guises including covering income shortfalls in PSL schemes. The additional posts in the HAT has meant we have set up monthly prevention panels with local RSL's, PRS landlord and Supported Housing providers and with Domestic Abuse related agencies. Ongoing work by the RSCo, HAT, Navigators, Housing First team, RPs links clients into alternative support packages/positive activities following TA or NFNO placements.

Our Rough Sleeper Count information has shown that numbers have reduced year on year since being a RSI area: 2018 – 9 RS (6 Males & 3 Females) 2019 – 6 RS (4 Male & 2 Female) 2020 – 4 RS (4 Males).

We have reconfigured our outreach and support services to allow for additional assertive outreach to take place (a minimum of twice a week) allowing for greater coverage across the District and a rapid response when new rough sleepers are identified and are continuing Bi Monthly street counts countywide (co-ordinated by the RS co-ordinator). We have joined a Rough Sleeper WhatsApp Group with local policing teams, town centre manager, street rangers, MOATS & support officers. The new team and Navigators mean we offer wrap around support services in an integrated and person-centred way/strengths-based approach that reduces the chances of clients returning to rough sleeping. For those clients in the recovery phase and any accommodation setting (housing led, housing first, NFNO) have officers funded through HPG and RSI4 retaining relationships with the placements and bringing them back through the MDT process if there is a problem or additional support need identified.

With the TPG we have been able to reduce from 7 to 1 case and we continue to work with the last case to secure housing. New clients that meet this criteria will constantly get added into this cohort and so we have increased housing options for people moving on from supported housing placements to reduce the reliance on social housing. We support and promote access to alternative housing options in the private rented sector via our social lettings agency (Re-wyre Lettings) including PSL or our bond scheme. Tenancy support packages can also be included as part of the offer to increase the move on routes. We ensure there is ongoing flexible and agile support as and when needed. If

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we aren't able to assist clients that we can also utilise Maggs Day Centre (through the Navigator service) and Whabac rent bond and leased accommodation who work with different landlords (as well as direct access to stock they lease) and often have success getting complex clients rehoused.

We will support NUKN/ those with restricted eligibility through providing assistance to get UK status, including the provision of funding for ID, accessing Home Office support or assistance with repatriation.

We continue to work within the Council and with RP partners to pursue additional units of accommodation funded through relevant Homes England programmes, including through utilising council owned land. This includes a mix of short term accommodation and longer term move on accommodation and could see the delivery of up to 50+ units of self-contained accommodation.

### Appendix Three - Rough Sleeper Task & Finish Action Plan (WFDC)

Priority	High Level Action	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	Comments
Prevention	Develop Housing and Support pathways for specific vulnerable groups so that customers and partners are clear on what tools/services there are in place to prevent homelessness  Upscale communication with customers, stakeholders and communities	1. Develop a Housing Option Toolkit for Local Authority staff	Worcestershire Strategic Housing Officers Group (WSHOG) led by WDC	12 months	Completed
Prevention		2. Develop a charter that highlights stakeholder commitment to refer anyone who is homeless or threatened with Rough Sleeping (Duty to refer / Commitment to Refer)	WSHOG led by WC and WFDC	12 months	Suspended
Prevention		3. Develop a charter with PCNs in Wyre Forest around homelessness and health, with an initial focus on Rough Sleepers in Year One	Principal Health and Sustainability Officer / Principal Strategic Housing Officer	12 months	Ongoing after delay due to covid
Prevention		4.Support Partnership Events (on an annual basis) to confirm roles and responsibilities around tackling and preventing homelessness and rough sleeping	WSHOG / Local Homeless Forum	12 months	Completed
Intervention		5. Provide up to date advice on support and guidance services available in the local community for those customers who are homeless and rough sleeping – to include website and written materials	Principal Strategic Housing Officer / County element led by WDC	6 months	Completed
Intervention		6. Improve communication through website, social media, promotional materials etc as per WFDC communication plan including scheduled posts promoted on Council social media to provide a consistent message	WF Media Team / County element led by WFDC	12 months	Completed

Priority	High Level Action	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	
Prevention		7. Review website to ensure compliance with HRA and other useful, up to date advice	Principal Strategic Housing Officer	6 months	Completed
Prevention		8. Implement an alternative giving scheme	Principal Strategic Housing Officer	6 months	Suspended
Prevention	Identify critical intervention opportunities to divert people away from homelessness	9. Continue to commission WF Nightstop and Mediation to provide Schools Education Programme (where funding available)	Head of Strategic Growth	3 months	Completed
Intervention		10. Work with commissioned social prescribers in GP surgeries to ensure support available to homeless / rough sleepers.	Public Health /Principal Strategic Housing Officer	12 months	Completed
Prevention / intervention		11. Support VCS with drop in sessions from statutory services (where required) to ensure consistent approach with regards to homelessness /rough sleeping	Local Homeless Forum / Principal Strategic Housing Officer	12 months	Suspended
Intervention	Develop different and more integrated pathways to meet the needs of families and single people with complex needs. Identify any gaps in provision and risks.	12. Develop an information sharing protocol for those involved with rough sleepers.	Worcester City	12 months	Suspended
Prevention		13. To explore CHAIN and similar to understand the software they use for intelligence gathering	Worcester City	12 months	Suspended
Intervention		14. Develop an “expert by experience” user group who can share feedback on experiences and inform learning / future commissioning. Utilise this group to ensure effective service delivery.	WSHOG / Project Officer & RS Support Worker	12 months	Ongoing after delay due to Covid

Priority	High Level Action	Action	Responsibility	Timescale	
Intervention	Work with partners to build family stability and supportive social networks within communities	15. Role out pre-eviction protocol across social landlords	Naomi Morris WDC	12 months	Completed – pre eviction panel
Intervention		16. Explore funding opportunities for training with partners e.g. motivational interviewing / PIE	WSHOG led by Naomi Morris	12 months	Completed
		17. Explore opportunity to develop protocols / SLA with Registered Providers around homelessness / rough sleepers,	Principal Strategic Housing Officer	12 months	Work from learning outcomes of Housing First pilot – ongoing as awaiting evaluation.
Recovery	Deliver the Housing First model to provide permanent housing and support for entrenched rough sleepers	18. Deliver and evaluate Housing First pilot in partnership with RPs and St Pauls Hostel	Housing Advice Team Leader / HofSG	2 years	Ongoing. Evaluation to be undertaken by UofW.
Recovery	Develop services for those with complex needs – focus on mental health, substance misuse, domestic abuse, loneliness and isolation.	19. To investigate joint funding / commissioning opportunities with regards to Mental Health to specifically support Homeless and Rough Sleepers	Mental Health T&F WSHOG	12 months	Unsuccessful funding bid.
Recovery		20. To identify ways for Rough Sleepers to take part in meaningful activities such as EET, volunteering.	Principal Strategic Housing Officer / CHG / Fusion	12 months	Ongoing after delay due to covid.
Recovery		21. Explore opportunities for developing a day centre or similar in WF where Rough Sleepers can access services, support and meaningful activity	Principal Strategic Housing Officer	2 years	Ongoing after delay due to covid.

## **Appendix Four: Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-22 update consultation questions**

We are asking for your views on the update to Worcestershire's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-22. This document amends the strategic priorities for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping to reflect the current position during the Covid pandemic.

In order to tackle homelessness comprehensively, we need to ensure that we are preventing homelessness where we can, intervening for those in crisis and helping people that have experienced homelessness recover.

We value your input and are therefore collecting views on the amended strategy. Please take a look at the Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-22 and let us know your views in a short questionnaire using this link:-

**The consultation period runs from XX to XX. We would ask that you return your comments to us online or via the post, no later than 9.00am on XXXX to Strategic Housing, Wyre Forest District Council, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster DY11 7WF.**

### **Questions**

Q1 Do you think there is anything missing from the Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy?

No (please go to Q2)

Yes (please provide examples of what we have missed);

Q2 Thinking about the Action Plan - do you agree with our plans to tackle homelessness? If not, please tell us why.

Yes (please go to Q3)

No (please provide more detail on why you do not agree);

Q3 Do you have any further comments to make on the document, which are not covered in the previous questions?

No

Yes



**Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme 2021-2022**

**May 2021**

“How are we doing?” Q4 update (Housing and Planning)  
Update from the Environment Agency – Flooding Outcomes  
Wyre Forest Health and Wellbeing Plan Update (Recs to Cabinet)  
Kidderminster 2040 - A Town Centre Vision

**June 2021**

Kidderminster Future High Street Fund – Update  
Kidderminster Property Acquisitions – EXEMPT

Information Items:

Recommendation Tracking 2020-2021  
Feedback from Cabinet 19-05-2021

**July 2021**

Update from the WCC – Flooding Outcomes  
Climate Change Action Plan (Recs to Cabinet)  
Flood Mitigation Schemes  
Review of Kidderminster Town Centre Public Space Protection Order  
Nominations for Treasury Management Review Panel (Chair to be appointed)

**2 September 2021**

“How are we doing?” Q1 update  
Future High Streets Fund  
Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021  
Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2022

(Capital Portfolio Fund Quarterly Performance Report (Qtr ending June 2021) –  
EXEMPT Appendix – item deferred)

**9 September 2021 (Special)**

Capital Portfolio Fund – Development Funding Proposal (EXEMPT)

**October 2021**

Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy  
Backward Look 2020/21 & recs from the TMRP 20-09-2021  
Worcestershire Housing Strategy (Recs to November Cabinet)  
Local Plan - Main & Minor Modifications consultation

**November 2021**

“How are we doing?” Q2 update  
Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy Mid-year  
Review Report 2021-22 & recs from the TMRP 01-11-2021

**December 2021**

Update on Future High Streets Programme delivery

**February 2022**

“How are we doing?” Q3 update

Treasury Management Strategy 2022-23 & recs from the TMRP 31-01-2022