

Open

Cabinet

Agenda

6pm
Tuesday, 14 September 2021
Council Chamber
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster



Cabinet

The Cabinet Members and their responsibilities:-

Councillor H Dyke	Leader of the Council & Economic Regeneration, Planning & Localism
Councillor G Ballinger	Deputy Leader & Culture, Leisure & Community Safety
Councillor N Martin	Housing, Health, Well-being & Democratic Services
Councillor M Rayner	Finance & Capital Portfolio
Councillor J Thomas	Operational Services

Scrutiny of Decisions of the Cabinet

The Council has one Scrutiny Committee that has power to investigate policy issues and question members of the Cabinet who have special responsibility for a particular area of the Council's activities. The Cabinet also considers recommendations from this Committee.

In accordance with Section 10 of the Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, and Standing Order 2.4 of Section 7, any item on this agenda may be scrutinised by the Scrutiny Committee if it is "called in" by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and any other three non-Cabinet members.

The deadline for "calling in" Cabinet decisions is 5pm on 24 September 2021.

Councillors wishing to "call in" a decision on this agenda should contact Louisa Bright, Principal Committee and Member Services Officer, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster. Telephone: 01562 732763 or email louisa.bright@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Urgent Key Decisions

If the Cabinet needs to take an urgent key decision, the consent of the Scrutiny Committee Chairman must be obtained. If the Scrutiny Committee Chairman is unable to act the Chairman of the Council or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council, must give consent. Such decisions will not be the subject to the call in procedure.

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.

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

Documents referred to in this agenda may be viewed on the Council's website - www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm

Wyre Forest District Council

Cabinet

Tuesday, 14 September 2021

Council Chamber, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster

Part 1

Open to the press and public

Agenda item	Subject	Page Number
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interests by Members In accordance with the Code of Conduct, to invite Members to declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI's) and / or Other Disclosable Interests (ODI's) in the following agenda items and indicate the action that they will be taking when the item is considered. Please see the Members' Code of Conduct as set out in Section 14 of the Council's Constitution for full details.	
3.	Minutes To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 6 July 2021.	7
4.	CALL INS a verbal update will be given on any decisions which have been "called in" since the last meeting of the Cabinet.	
5.	Items Requiring Urgent Attention To consider any item which, in the opinion of the Chairman requires consideration at the meeting as a matter of urgency.	
6.	Public Participation In accordance with the Council's Scheme for Public Speaking at Meetings of Full Council/Cabinet, to allow members of the public to present petitions, ask questions, or make statements, details of which have been received by 12 noon on Monday 6 September 2021. (See front cover for contact details).	

7.		
7.1	<p style="text-align: right;">Councillor H Dyke</p> <p>Future High Streets Fund Update Report</p> <p>To consider a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place which reports 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.</p> <p>To also consider recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 2 September 2021.</p>	<p>12</p> <p>18</p>

8.		
8.1	<p style="text-align: right;">Councillor N Martin</p> <p>Local Lettings Plan & Rural Housing</p> <p>To consider a report from the Head of Strategic Growth 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.</p> <p>To also consider recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 2 September 2021.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>29</p>
8.2	<p>Worcestershire Homeless and Rough Sleeper Strategy</p> <p>To consider a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place 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.</p> <p>To also consider recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 2 September 2021.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>71</p>

9.		
9.1	<p style="text-align: right;">Councillor M Rayner</p> <p>Budget Monitoring First Quarter 2021-22</p> <p>To consider a report from the Corporate Director: Resources on the Council's financial performance for Quarter 1 ending 30 June 2021 and to present the current projected outturn position for the 2021-22 financial year. It provides forecasts on the capital programme 2021-22 and the final capital outturn for 2020-21 against programme.</p> <p><i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically.</i></p>	<p>72</p>

10.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to the Council before the commencement of the meeting, which the Chairman by reason of special circumstances considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.	
11.	Exclusion of the Press and Public To consider passing the following resolution: “That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of “exempt information” as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act”.	

Part 2

Not open to the Press and Public

12.		
12.1	Councillor M Rayner Capital Portfolio Fund – Development Funding Proposal To consider a report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place to agree a business case to support the development of new temporary accommodation from the Capital Portfolio Fund and s106 funding. To also consider recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 9 September 2021.	
13.	To consider any other business, details of which have been communicated to the Solicitor to 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.	

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
CABINET
HELD REMOTELY
6 JULY 2021 (6PM)**

Present:

Councillors: H E Dyke (Chairman), G W Ballinger (Vice-Chairman), N Martin, M Rayner and J W R Thomas.

Observers:

Councillors: J F Byng, R H Coleman, N J Desmond, C Edginton-White, S Griffiths, I Hardiman, P Harrison, M J Hart, K Henderson, F M Oborski MBE, C Rogers and P W M Young.

CAB.12 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

CAB.13 Declarations of Interests by Members

No declarations of interest were made.

CAB.14 Minutes

Decision: The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 19 May 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

CAB.15 Call Ins

No decisions had been called in since the last Cabinet meeting.

CAB.16 Items Requiring Urgent Attention

There were no items requiring urgent attention.

CAB.17 Public Participation

There was no public participation.

CAB.18 Localism – Asset Transfers

A report was considered from the Chief Executive to agree various asset transfers as part of the localism agenda.

The Leader of the Council presented the report and formally moved the recommendations for approval. She explained that in November 2020 the

Cabinet had agreed key steps towards establishing Bewdley Museum as an independent trust. She was pleased to report that good progress was being made which included identifying trustees to serve the trust and progress the project plan. She added that the aim was for the trust to be fully operational by January 2022.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded the proposals.

Decision:

- 1.1 The Cabinet agreed that, subject to the satisfactory conclusion of the matters delegated under paragraph 1.3, the transfer of the following land and buildings for a consideration of £1 for each site in accordance with the Council's power under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to dispose of land at less than best value:**

Description of land and buildings	Freehold to be transferred to
The Guildhall (WR106170), 12 Load Street; Bewdley Museum (WR106170), 12 Load Street: and Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Gardens (WR108752), High Street, all in Bewdley	Bewdley Town Council Subject to a lease to the proposed Bewdley Museum Trust (see paragraph 1.2)

- 1.2 The Cabinet agreed that the transfer to Bewdley Town Council will be subject to the completion of a lease with the proposed Bewdley Museum Trust in respect of the land and buildings in Bewdley mentioned in paragraph 1.1. The terms of the lease shall be a full repairing lease for a period of not less than 99 years, to run from the date of the transfer of the freehold to Bewdley Town Council, with an annual rental (payable to Bewdley Town Council) of not more than £1 a year and otherwise on such terms as the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and the Solicitor to Council may decide;**
- 1.3 The Cabinet give delegated authority to the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place, in consultation with the Leader, to advertise the intention to dispose of such areas of the land referred to in paragraph 1.1 as constitutes public open space and to consider any objections made as a result of the advertisement and to take the final decision on disposal in the event of objections having been received.**

CAB.19 Flood Mitigation Scheme – Externally Funded

A report was considered from the Head of Strategic Growth to recommend amending the Capital Programme to include the external funding to be received from the national flood schemes funding for 3 flood mitigation schemes in Areley Kings in the Wyre Forest District, Plack Brook in the Redditch Borough and property level resilience measures in Bromsgrove and

Redditch.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Well-being and Democratic Services presented the report and formally moved the recommendation for approval. She explained that the North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWM) service had applied for the funding on behalf of the local authorities in North Worcestershire. The schemes include partnership working with Severn Trent Water, Worcestershire County Council Highways and the Environment Agency (EA).

She further explained that approximately 29 properties in the Wyre Forest district will have flood risk reduced, 7 of which will have a significant reduction. She added that the 3 local authorities had a successful long-standing shared service and experience of managing projects of this nature. Members were advised that the EA will be giving out the funding and will monitor the delivery of the schemes.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded the proposal.

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor M Hart, presented the recommendations from the Committee which fully supported the Cabinet proposal.

Decision: In line with the recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from its meeting on 1 July 2021:

Cabinet APPROVED that there is an amendment to the Capital Programme of £115k for flood mitigation schemes funded from an external grant.

CAB.20 Recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 1st July 2021

- **Climate Change Action Plan**

The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee presented the recommendations which sought approval for the Wyre Forest Climate Change Action Plan 2021-22.

Decision: Cabinet APPROVED the Wyre Forest Climate Change Action Plan 2021-22, as attached at Appendix 1 of the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

CAB.21 Write-off of Amounts Outstanding Report

A report was received from the Corporate Director: Resources to enable the Cabinet to consider writing off the sum of £91,057.94 in respect of debts that cannot be collected.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio presented the report and formally moved the recommendation for approval.

She explained that as billing authority the Council was responsible for the collection of Business Rates (National Non-Domestic Rates or NNDR) c£30m pa and for the recovery of any related debt in the event of non-payment. She added that the Council had several property tenants whose trading had been affected by the Coronavirus pandemic, most notably those in the hospitality and beverage industry some of whom are in arrears. She further explained that the Council's property managing agents, BNP Paribas, were liaising with all of the businesses in an attempt to agree terms to ensure that as much of the arrears as possible is settled as quickly as possible. She said the business referred to in the exempt appendix to the report was the first tenant to have settled their arrears, the others are currently in negotiation.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio added that every effort had been made to pursue the debts proposed for write-off following the policies and procedures of the Council. She assured members that even after write-off debts continued to be monitored and would be pursued if circumstances change.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded the proposal.

Decision: The Cabinet DECIDED that the total of £81,057.94 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, be written off, for National Non-Domestic Rates and £10,000 for Property debts as detailed in Exempt Appendix 2.

CAB.22 Exclusion of Press and Public

Decision: "Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of "exempt information" as defined in paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

CAB.23 Write-off of Amounts Outstanding Report - EXEMPT Appendix 2 – Proposed Property Debt Write-off

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio presented the confidential appendix and gave a summary of the reason for the proposed write-off.

Having received additional information, the Cabinet re-affirmed their decision made in the open session.

CAB.24 Unity Park (Former Frencro Site) – Erection of Industrial Units – Amendment to Capital Programme

A report was considered from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place on the current position regarding the finalisation of the construction of the industrial units at the Unity Park site, off Silverwoods Way and to agree to recommend to Council that the Capital Programme is amended to enable the completion of the works.

The Cabinet Member for Operational Services presented the confidential report and outlined the key issues. He said that the completion of the project would enable revenue income streams to be realised as there was a market demand for the industrial units.

In addition to the recommendation to amend the Capital Programme, the Cabinet Member for Operational Services moved a proposal to commission a review of the project by the Internal Audit Manager.

The Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Community Safety seconded the proposals.

Decision: The Cabinet RECOMMEND to Council:

- 1.1 That the Capital Programme provision for Industrial Units on the Unity Park Site is increased by the amount shown in the confidential report, funded from the Capital Portfolio Fund and from the Evergreen Investment Fund to provide a revised overall Capital budget. This will enable the completion of the six industrial units on the Unity Park site.**
- 1.2 Cabinet DECIDED to commission a review of the project by the internal audit manager, the scope and timing of the review to be agreed by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Audit Committee and the Leader of the Council; and RECOMMENDS to Council to note that this review will be undertaken.**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.38pm

The full open meeting is available for viewing on the Council's website
<https://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/your-council/councillors-committees-and-meetings/council-meetings/>

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

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Helen Dyke – Leader and Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning & Localism
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Mike Parker - Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place
CONTACT OFFICER:	Mike Parker ext 2500 Mike.parker@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	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 & Localism 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 3rd 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

11. APPENDICIES

None

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Cabinet February 2021

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cabinet
Tuesday 14 September 2021**

**Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 2 September 2021**

Future High Streets Fund

The Committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity and Place on the 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.

The Committee discussed the report and acknowledged the challenges surrounding economic regeneration. Members welcomed the news that the planning application for the FMC building had been submitted, and the Committee fully endorsed the proposal and direction of travel.

Recommend to Cabinet that:

Cabinet AGREE 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.

Background papers:

See the report on page 53 of the pdf at this link:

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc56838_20210902_o_and_s_agenda.pdf

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH SEPTEMBER 2021

Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021

CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Nicky Martin, Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Kate Bailey - Head of Strategic Growth 01562 732560
CONTACT OFFICER:	Barbara Sarbinowska - Principal Strategic Housing Officer. Barbara.Sarbinowska@wyreforestdc.gov.uk 01562 732181
APPENDICES:	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

Agenda Item 8.1
Appendix 1

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	

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cabinet
Tuesday 14 September 2021**

**Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 2 September 2021**

Local Lettings Plans and Rural Housing Policy 2021

The Committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth which sought 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.

The Committee discussed the report and unanimously supported the recommendation.

Recommend to Cabinet:

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

Background papers:

See the report on page 60 of the pdf at this link:

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc56838_20210902_o_and_s_agenda.pdf

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14TH SEPTEMBER 2021

Worcestershire's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 - 2022

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Nicky Martin - Cabinet Member for Housing, Health, Wellbeing and Democratic Services
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Corporate Director: Economic Prosperity & Place
CONTACT OFFICER:	Kate Bailey, Ext.2560 Kate.bailey@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	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)

Contents

1.	Foreword by the chair of Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership	3
2.	Introduction.....	4
3.	Worcestershire Housing Partnership Plan 2017	5
4.	Rough Sleeping Task and Finish Group 2019.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.	Defining homelessness	6
6.	Impact of homelessness	7
7.	Evidence base - Worcestershire Homelessness Review 2016.....	8
8.	Achievements - Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy 2012-17.....	10
9.	Positive pathways approach.....	11
10.	Our priorities for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping	12
	Priority 1 Prevent homelessness at a much earlier stage	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	Priority 2 Provide flexible and comprehensive responses to those in crisis and those with complex needs.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	Priority 3 Improve supply of/access to good quality, affordable and supported housing	Error! Bookmark not defined.
11.	Delivering on our approach	19
12.	Implementation.....	21
	Appendix One – Legal duties	22

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 13th 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"> • Housing market failure including low levels of housing supply • Adverse childhood experiences • Family breakdown or poor relationships • Becoming a looked after child • Domestic abuse • Substance or alcohol misuse • Low income or benefit dependency • Involvement with the criminal justice system • Not in education, employment and training • Welfare reform • Public sector austerity leading to cuts in housing related support and other services • Teenage pregnancy • Overcrowding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • Poor physical health- greater risk of infection (delayed access to health care / immunisations) • Lower education attainment for children especially if access to school places is affected • Social isolation and loneliness • Additional financial burdens • Greater likelihood of not being in education, employment or training • Substance or alcohol misuse • Young people in particular might face; exploitation, abuse and trafficking, involvement in gangs. • Likelihood of premature death, dementia or other long term health condition • Low self-esteem and confidence

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

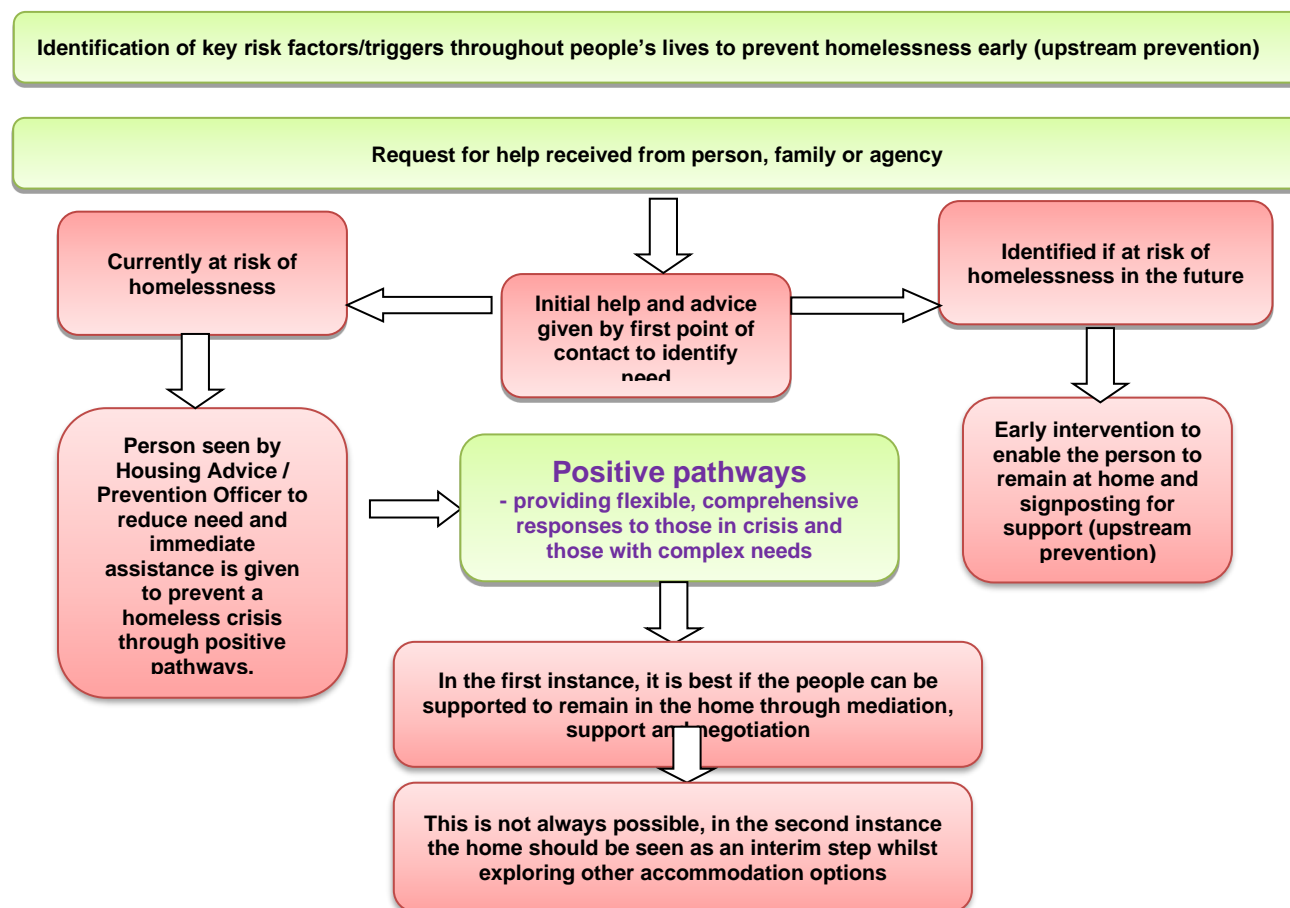
- Review and expand the provision of interim accommodation and permanent affordable accommodation, particularly for large families and those under 35 who are increasingly finding it hard to access any accommodation options. This may include a local authority owned/procured property.
- Consider how to 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

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.

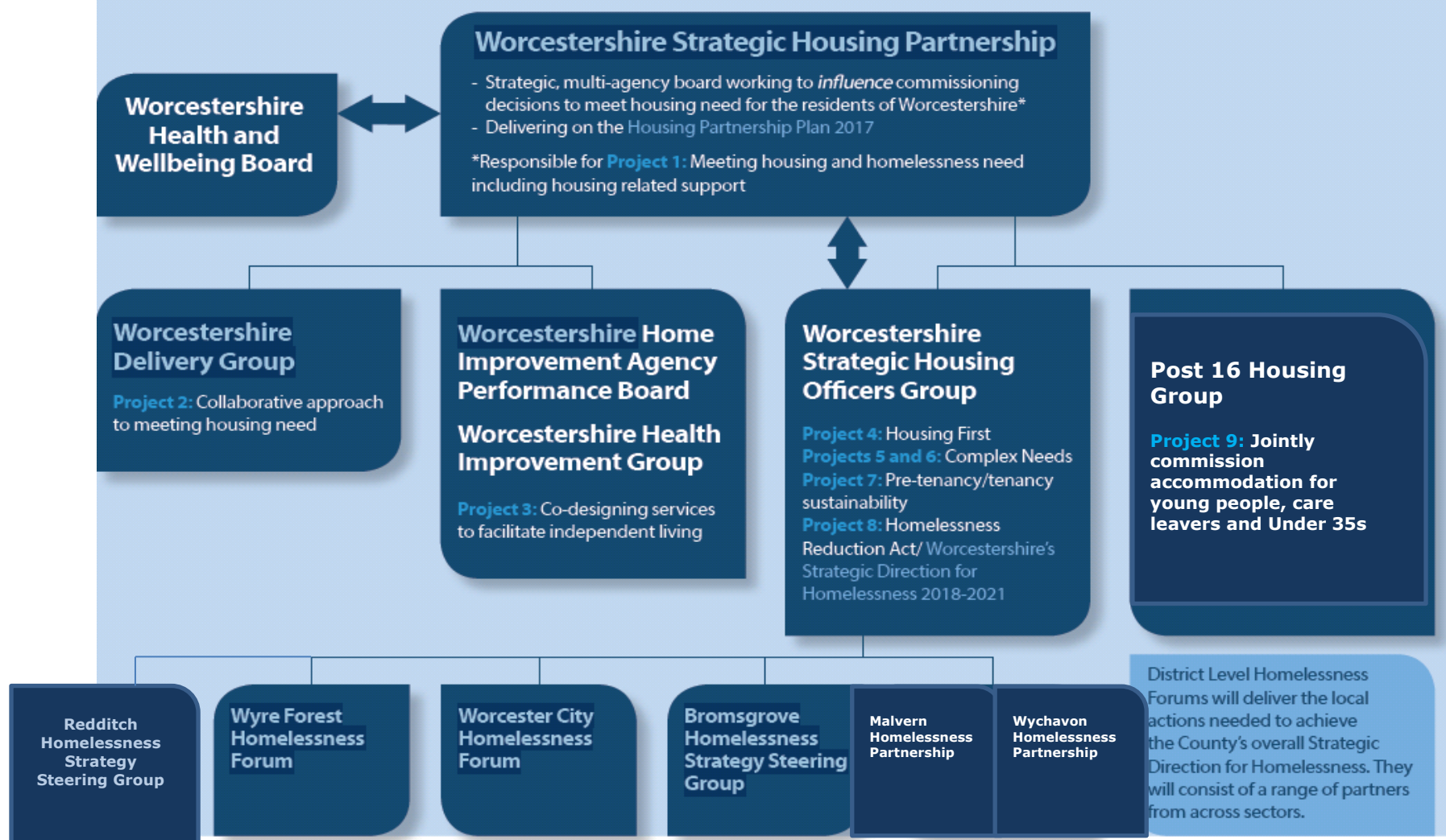
Monitoring

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
Prevention objective: 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	

Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
Prevention objective: 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	
Prevention objective: 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	
Prevention Objective: 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	
Prevention Objective: 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	

Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
Intervention objective: 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	
Intervention objective: 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	
Intervention objective: 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	

[illegible]

Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
Intervention objective 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	
Recovery Objective: 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	

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	
Recovery Objective: 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 & 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>	

Objective	Inputs	Outputs/Actions	Outcomes	Responsible owner/partners	Target delivery date	Current RAG rating and description
Recovery Objective: 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	
Recovery Objective: 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.

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

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

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Cabinet
Tuesday 14 September 2021**

**Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 2 September 2021**

Worcestershire's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2022

The Committee considered a draft of a Cabinet report from the Head of Strategic Growth which sought 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.

The committee discussed the report unanimously supported the proposals.

Recommend to Cabinet to:

- 1.1 Agree the proposed amendments to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 – 2022 are publicly consulted on from 20 September for 6 weeks.**
- 1.2 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.**
- 1.3 agree that the final amendments to the strategy determined in accordance with 1.2 above be adopted by the Council as soon as they are finalised.**

Background papers:

See the report on page 71 of the pdf at this link:

http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/docs/doc56838_20210902_o_and_s_agenda.pdf

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14th September 2021

Budget Monitoring First Quarter 2021-22

OPEN	
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Mary Rayner, Cabinet Member for Finance and Capital Portfolio
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Corporate Director: Resources
CONTACT OFFICERS:	Tracey Southall Ext. 2100 Tracey.southall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Helen Ogram Ext. 2907 Helen.Ogram@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Lisa Hutchinson Ext. 2120 Lisa.Hutchinson@wyreforestdc.gov.uk Kath Pearsall Ext.2165 Kathryn.pearsall@wyreforestdc.gov.uk
APPENDICES:	Appendix 1 - Wyre Forest District Council Revenue Budget Total Requirements - District Council Purposes Appendix 2 - Final Capital Outturn against Programme 2020-21 Appendix 3 - Capital Programme 2021-22 with slippage from 2020-21 Appendix 4 - Budget Risk Matrix Appendix 5 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt <i>The appendices to this report have been circulated electronically and a public inspection copy is available on request. (See front cover for details.)</i>

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to brief members on the Council's financial performance for Quarter 1 ending 30th June 2021 and to present the current projected outturn position for the 2021-22 financial year. It provides forecasts on the capital programme 2021-22 and the final capital outturn for 2020-21 against programme.
- 1.2 The report sets out the current forecast of income and expenditure against budget for 2021-22. In addition to the usual information presented in the Quarterly Budget Monitoring Reports, the report provides key information relating to estimates of the Council's financial position for the next three years, highlighting the revised Funding Gap that will need to be closed to bring expenditure into line with income.

Revenue - the year end position is forecast to be £305,500 better than the position forecast in the 2021-24 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Capital – the forecast outturn is £40.41m assuming that the whole of the balance of the Capital Portfolio Fund and Development Loans Fund is spent and including £10m Future High Street spend (£21.24m excluding the Capital Portfolio Fund and Development Loans Fund). Whilst it is highly unlikely that the whole of these balances will be required, this assumption provides maximum flexibility to act swiftly should suitable proposals arise. The balance includes £10.36m re-profiled (slipped) from previous financial years.

1.3 The 2021-22 revenue budget was set to accommodate additional costs and losses of income arising as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These pressures appear to be less severe than the central case that we budgeted for, but projections are more uncertain than in any year prior to 2020-21 due to uncertainty about the future course of the pandemic and the future responses of government.

1.4 Appendix 5 of the report informs members of the Housing Benefit Overpayment debt position and the Sundry/Property debt position as at 30th June 2021.

- **Housing Benefits overpayment recovery**- The total debt outstanding at 30th June 2021 is £1.392m which represents a 7% decrease over the balance outstanding at the end of Quarter 1 2020-21, including debts within payment terms.
- **Sundry/Property Debt** - The total debt outstanding at 30th June 2021 (Quarter 1) on the Council's ledgers was £1.399m which represents a 18.8% increase over the balance outstanding at the 30th June 2020 (Quarter 1) including debt within payment terms.
- The overdue debt (not within payment terms) has increased by £43,200; compared to the same period in 2020-21.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to:-

2.1 NOTE the projected budget variations and comments outlined within this report and appendices 2 to 5

2.2 NOTE the proposal that a net neutral amendment is made to the revenue budget, for the additional funding in respect of the Levelling up fund of £125,000 as set out in paragraph 9.2.

3. LATEST ESTIMATE OF THE REVISED FINANCIAL POSITION (FUNDING GAP)

3.1 The tables below provide key information relating to early estimates of the Council's financial position through to 2024-25, taking into account the impact of estimates of the Covid Recovery Roadmap and the Quarter 1 Budgetary Control projections presented in this report.

3.2 Quarter 1 Budgetary Control Projections:

Agenda Item No. 9.1

DIRECTORATE	Original Budget	Q1 Outturn Projection	Variance Original to Outturn
	£000	£000	£000
Community and Environmental Services	4,626	4,660	34
Resources	4,640	4,645	5
Economic Prosperity and Place*	1,945	1,885	(60)
Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council	634	652	18
Capital Account	455	405	(50)
Corporate Covid contingency	0	(170)	(170)
Pay variances - Pay and grading review	0	18	18
SUB TOTAL	12,300	12,095	(205)
COVID Support grants - Tranche 5 LA support grant	(564)	(564)	0
COVID Support grants - Sales Fees and Charges	(384)	(324)	60
Additional Covid related S31 Grants	0	(160)	(160)
TOTALS	11,352	11,047	(305)

3.3 Starting Position

Projection of Reserves as per Approved Budget - Revised for 2020-21 Final Accounts Saving				
Reserves Statement	2021-22 £'000	2022-23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £
Reserves as at 1st April	4,400	3,897	3,240	2,568
Increase to Working Balance				
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	(503)	(657)	(672)	(700)
Reserves as at 31st March	3,897	3,240	2,568	1,868
Funding Gap	2021-22 £	2022-23 £	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £
Localism Savings not yet achieved	14,530	228,350	385,770	558,940
Wyre Forest Forward savings not yet achieved	1,272,300	1,336,810	1,582,880	1,568,180
Efficiency Savings in approved Business cases	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000
Efficiency Savings 2%. 1%, 1% !5	76,570	76,570	76,570	76,570
Sub-total	1,381,400	1,659,730	2,063,220	2,221,690
Use of reserves in current financial strategy	503,110	657,170	672,960	700,000
Balance of savings to be identified and implemented = Funding Gap	1,884,510	2,316,900	2,736,180	2,921,690

Agenda Item No. 9.1

3.4 Estimate of major variances compared to approved budget assumptions including Q1 projection

	2021-22 £	2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024/25 £
Quarter 1 - early projection of year end variance	(305,500)	(100,000)	(100,000)	(100,000)
Pay Inflation 2% included in budget 1.75% actual	(25,000)			
Estimates of savings proposals from Transformation work currently being progressed		(325,000)	(325,000)	(325,000)
Savings Management Review from 1/01/2022	(57,450)	(234,590)	(240,670)	(245,560)
Release of Pensions Reserve based on 2020-21 Pension Accounts	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)	(50,000)
Potential deferment of negative RSG		(356,790)		
Sub Total Other Pressures/Savings	(437,950)	(1,066,380)	(715,670)	(720,560)

3.5 Revised Funding Gap

	2021-22 £	2022-23 £	2023-24 £	2024-25 £
Revised Funding Gap Q1 Report	1,446,560	1,250,520	2,020,510	2,201,130
Previous Funding Gap	1,884,510	2,316,900	2,736,180	2,921,690
Increase/(decrease) in Funding Gap - increase in take from reserves	(437,950)	(1,066,380)	(715,670)	(720,560)

3.6 Revised Reserves Position

Revised Projection of Reserves - Q1 Budget Monitoring Report				
Reserves Statement	2021-22 £'000	2022-23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £
Reserves as at 1st April	4,400	4,252	4,102	3,579
Contribution (from)/to Reserves	- 148	- 150	- 523	- 550
Reserves as at 31st March	4,252	4,102	3,579	3,029

3.7 Revised Funding Gap analysis

Revised Funding Gap Table Q1 Report	2021-22 £	2022-23 £	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £
Localism Savings not achieved	14,530	228,350	385,770	558,940
Wyre Forest Forward savings not yet achieved	1,189,850	777,220	1,017,210	997,620
Efficiency Savings in approved Business cases	18,000	18,000	18,000	18,000
Efficiency Savings 2%. 1%, 1% !5	76,570	76,570	76,570	76,570
Sub-total	1,298,950	1,100,140	1,497,550	1,651,130
Revised Use of reserves	147,610	150,380	522,960	550,000
Balance of savings to be identified and implemented = Funding Gap	1,446,560	1,250,520	2,020,510	2,201,130

4 **IN YEAR FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

4.1 **REVENUE** - The monthly budget monitoring includes the forecast position for the current financial year. The revenue summary shows net expenditure by Directorate and where some costs are funded by reserves this is incorporated.

4.2 **REVENUE DETAIL** - The following table presents the emerging budget pressures, cost reductions and growth summarised by Directorate:

DIRECTORATE	Quarter 1 - Projected Outturn Variance				
	Cost Pressure	Income shortfall	Cost Reduction	Income Growth	Total Predicted Variance
	£	£	£	£	£
Community and Environmental Services	43,000	245,000	(66,000)	(188,000)	34,000
Resources	0	115,000	(95,000)	(15,000)	5,000
Economic Prosperity and Place	10,000	77,000	0	(147,500)	(60,500)
Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council (excl covid contingency)	33,000	0	(15,000)	0	18,000
Capital Account	0	0	(50,000)	0	(50,000)
Covid contingency			(170,000)		(170,000)
Pay and grading review	18,000				18,000
Covid related S31 Grants (Net)				(100,000)	(100,000)
	104,000	437,000	(396,000)	(450,500)	(305,500)
	Total Variance			(305,500)	

4.3 Community and Environmental Services

Service Area	Detail	Quarter 1 - Projected Outturn Variance			
		Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
Car Parks	Site maintenance			(5,000)	(150,000)
Cemetery	Pace of recovery is volume of ticket sales exceeding expectations			(10,000)	
Parks Green Spaces	National Assistance Act burials and building repairs			(10,000)	
Domestic waste	Reduced repairs and maintenance buildings				
	Purchase of bins (£10k); Protective clothing (£5k) and Waste	23,000			
	Strategy Partnership officer (£8k)				(3,000)
	Developer/new property bins				
Trade waste	Income growth reduction due to recruitment delays to new sales post		75,000		
Garden waste	Demand growth	15,000			(25,000)
Public conveniences	Delay in transfer to Town Councils (agency cleaner)	5,000			
Bulky waste collections	Increased demand				(10,000)
Wyre Forest Leisure Centre	Net shortfall against budget after NLRf grant and SF&C grant has been applied (assumes open book accounting until Dec '21)		170,000		
Sports Development	Pay and running costs saved			(41,000)	
		43,000	245,000	(66,000)	(188,000)
		Total Variance			34,000

4.4 Resources

Service Area	Detail	Quarter 1 - Projected Outturn Variance			
		Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
ICT	Reduced income from telephone recharges		5,000		
Revenues and Benefits	Reduced software costs			(5,000)	
	Cancellation of subscription and related work			(15,000)	
	Staffing (Subject to restructure proposal progressing)			(70,000)	
	Additional Admin Subsidy grant				(15,000)
BSU	Court and legal fees		110,000		
	Reduction in postage costs			(5,000)	
		0	115,000	(95,000)	(15,000)
		Total Variance			5,000

Note: Revenues and Benefits figures include early savings that form part of the ongoing Transformation work to close the funding gap.

4.5 Economic Prosperity and Place

Service Area	Detail	Quarter 1 - Projected Outturn Variance			
		Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
Land Charges Street naming Planning (DC) Housing Property (General)	Fee income				(25,000)
	Revised income projection				(5,000)
	Fee income				(100,000)
	Pre Application advice				(10,000)
	Private sector housing HMO's		77,000		(7,500)
	CPF properties	10,000			
	Other Property repairs				
		10,000	77,000	0	(147,500)
		Total Variance			(60,500)

4.6 Chief Executive and Solicitor to the Council

Service Area	Detail	Quarter 1 - Projected Outturn Variance			
		Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
Member Allowances	Special responsibility allowances saving as only one allowance payable to any member and remote meetings resulted in savings in travel, printing costs and other			(15,000)	
Election Expenses	Write back debtor re old irrecoverable expenses	33,000			
		33,000	0	(15,000)	0
		Total Variance			18,000

4.7 Capital Account

Service Area	Detail	Quarter 1 - Projected Outturn Variance			
		Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
Various	MRP saving due to capital programme slippage			(50,000)	
		0	0	(50,000)	0
		Total Variance			(50,000)

4.8 Other Corporate variances

Service Area	Detail	Quarter 1 - Projected Outturn Variance			
		Cost Pressure £	Income shortfall £	Cost Reduction £	Income Growth £
Covid contingency	Contingency allocated to services			(170,000)	
Pay variances	Pay and grading review (provisional indication requires further validation)	18,000			(100,000)
Covid Support Grant	Covid related S31 Grants (Net)				
		18,000	0	(170,000)	(100,000)
		Total Variance			(252,000)

Other corporate variances such as pay and administrative costs will continue to emerge and will be reported at Quarter 2 as part of the December MTFS report. All variances reported will be further investigated and refined as part of the revised budget cycle.

4.9 Central Items – Collection Fund

Council Tax - The level of discounts and awards, together with collection rates, and write-offs are being closely monitored. There is continued risk that assumed growth in the tax base might not be achieved in year. The latest Delta monitoring submission estimates that the projected full year impact of additional LCTS claims is £0.5m, and delayed payments arising from slower growth in the tax base and arrears of £0.9m. This is the full estimate of losses, the amount attributable to WFDC is likely to be in the region of £200k, however, at this early stage in the year it is assumed that this position will improve, and any loss can be offset by improved collection rates.

Business Rates – Officers continue to liaise closely with the Valuation Office Agency to monitor developments in the sector particularly around material changes of circumstance and new applications lodged in the Check, Challenge, Appeal system. The overall impact of transactions in the collection fund will continue to be monitored to assess the impact on the council's MTFS.

Collection Rates

Council Tax: As at 1st July 21, Council Tax in year collection rates are at 20.41% compared to 19.02% last year which is a significant improvement. All CTRS claimants received up to £150 towards their council tax in 2020/21 so they are having to adjust to paying more this year.

Business Rates: 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.

5 SALES FEES AND CHARGES AND OTHER INCOME SOURCES

- 5.1 Many of our income streams appear to be recovering more quickly than predicted when the budget was prepared in February however there are a number of risks and uncertainties that may affect the projected outturn. The projections are based on the assumption that no further lockdowns or restrictions will be introduced during the autumn or winter to control new variants.
- 5.2 The table below sets out Quarter 1 projections of outturn compared to the Original Budget. These will continue to be revised and refined as the year progresses and the Covid Recovery Roadmap continues.

DIRECTORATE	Original Budget	Q1 Outturn Projection	Variance Original to Outturn	Q1 Profiled Budget	Q1 Actual	Q1 Variance
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bewdley Museum	(141,470)	(141,470)	0	(35,368)	(40,416)	(5,049)
Building Control	(184,400)	(184,400)	0	(46,100)	(78,696)	(32,596)
Bulky Waste and external contracts for sweeping	(142,500)	(152,500)	(10,000)	(35,625)	(18,537)	17,088
Cemetery	(50,300)	(50,300)	0	(12,575)	(16,044)	(3,469)
CTAX & NNDR Court Costs	(210,000)	(100,000)	110,000	(52,500)	0	52,500
Garage, Driver training, Tree Gang, Grounds Maintenance	(381,490)	(381,490)	0	(95,373)	(37,586)	57,786
Green Waste	(425,000)	(438,000)	(13,000)	(106,250)	(402,137)	(295,887)
Homelessness & Private Sector Housing	(30,550)	(38,050)	(7,500)	(7,638)	(10,225)	(2,588)
Land Charges	(73,800)	(98,800)	(25,000)	(18,450)	(37,058)	(18,608)
Leisure Centre	(551,590)	(381,590)	170,000	(137,898)	(100)	137,798
Licensing Activities	(231,530)	(231,530)	0	(57,883)	(86,237)	(28,354)
Markets	(39,780)	(39,780)	0	(9,945)	11,420 *	21,365
Parking and Enforcement	(1,081,200)	(1,231,200)	(150,000)	(270,300)	(326,942)	(56,642)
Parking Weavers wharf	(173,140)	(173,140)	0	(43,285)	(99,740)	(56,455)
Parks and Green Spaces (including Highway Verges)	(67,470)	(67,470)	0	(16,868)	(64,511)	(47,643)
Planning	(377,070)	(487,070)	(110,000)	(94,268)	(291,284)	(197,016)
Property Rental	(660,990)	(660,990)	0	(165,248)	(145,164)	20,084
Property Rental Capital Portfolio	(1,560,710)	(1,483,710)	77,000	(390,178)	(222,141)	168,036
Property Rental WFH	(185,180)	(185,180)	0	(46,295)	(28,708)	17,587
Trade Waste & Highway General Cleansing	(850,810)	(775,810)	75,000	(212,703)	(166,760)	45,943
Various/Other	(89,790)	(89,790)	0	(22,448)	(62,404)	(39,957)
TOTALS	(7,508,770)	(7,392,270)	116,500	(1,877,193)	(2,123,268)	(246,076)

**Markets Q1 actual includes credit notes in respect of the Covid closures so are anomalies due to the pandemic*

The £170,000 loss of Leisure Centre Income is offset by Covid Contingency

- 5.3 For the Depot based demand led services of Garage, Driver Training, Tree Gang and Driver Maintenance, early indications are that the teams will struggle to generate income levels included in the approved budget as a consequence of the ongoing impact of the Covid Pandemic. The range of reduction is difficult to gauge at this time, but it could be as much as £100,000 less than the £381,490 income budget included in the table in paragraph 5.2. However, the Operational Service Manager is seeking to mitigate the impact of this by reducing variable costs where possible and ongoing service review work to achieve cost reductions and ensure opportunities for income growth are progressed. For this reason and based on previous positive trends on budgetary control at the Depot, a neutral position has been assumed for Quarter 1. This will be updated for the Revised Budget/Quarter 2 projections when more information will be available.

6 CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING

- 6.1 The pandemic has created some significant risks for the Council's capital programme, such as increasing costs for construction and equipment renewals.
- 6.2 The original approved programme was £40.57m. Slippage from 2020-21 totalled £10.36m and includes £6.0m from the Capital Portfolio Fund and £2.0m from the Development Loans Fund. The 2021-22 adjusted budget is currently £50.93m prior to the re-profiling of the Capital Programme as part of the Revised Budget process. The updated Capital Programme and Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewal Schedule for 2021-22, including slippage from 2020-21 and actual expenditure as at 30th June 2021, are enclosed as Appendix 3.
- 6.3 Construction of a suite of small industrial units at Silverwoods Way, Kidderminster (part funded by the Capital Portfolio Fund) has not yet been completed because the company undertaking the construction works has been liquidated. A further procurement exercise is being undertaken in relation to this Scheme.

7 CAPITAL PORTFOLIO FUND AND DEVELOPMENT LOANS FUND

- 7.1 The Capital Portfolio Fund supports regeneration, economic growth and housing. The Development Loans Fund will help deliver the Council's regeneration and economic development objectives in terms of both housing and commercial regeneration, whilst also potentially generating future income streams. External Support has been procured to ensure that specialist advice and financial due diligence is readily accessible to support proposals.
- 7.2 Capital Portfolio Fund Spend, Allocations and Commitments are shown in the table below:

Capital Portfolio Capital Fund	Expenditure		Committed
	Purchase Price/ Development Cost	SDLT, Fees and Capitalised Costs	
	£000	£000	£000
Acquisitions at Quarter 1 2021-22			
Worcester Street/High Street Retail Units, Kidderminster	1,034	51	
Stratford Court Offices, Solihull	6,110	424	10
Buntsford Gate Offices, Bromsgrove	1,487	87	
Forest House Start-up Units, Kidderminster	730	37	
Riverside Food and Beverage Units, Kidderminster	2,420	135	
Goldthorn Road Industrial Unit	4,100	240	
Committed Schemes			
Industrial Units, Kidderminster		428	*-
*(Council on 14th July 2021 approved a further procurement exercise would be undertaken in relation to completion of this capital scheme)			
	15,881	1,402	10
Total Capital Expenditure		17,283	17,293
Total Capital Approval			26,500
Balance of Funds remaining			9,207

- 7.3 CPF Monitoring – the following table summarises the current projection of the revenue impact of the Capital Portfolio Fund acquisitions in 2021-22:

Property Portfolio Fund	2021-22 Original £	2021-22 Q1 Actual £	2021-22 Est. Out £	Variance £
EXPENSES				
Property specific	293,060	71,338	293,060	
General expenses	55,000	13,463	55,000	
Recharges	30,780	7,695	30,780	
Bad debt provision	35,770	0	35,770	
	414,610	92,495	414,610	0
INCOME				
Gross Income from rents & service charges	(1,560,710)	(363,013)	(1,370,312)	190,398
COST OF CAPITAL				
Capital Financing (MRP & Interest)	1,048,580	262,145	954,310	(94,270)
NET IMPACT ON COUNCIL TAX	(97,520)	(8,373)	(1,392)	96,128
Transfer to/(from) sinking fund + other EMRs	19,504		278	(19,226)
NET CONTRIBUTION TO FUNDING GAP	(78,016)	(8,373)	(1,114)	76,902

*Figures exclude Forest House and Unity Park

- 7.4 Some of the tenants had to close their business premises due to Covid-19. The council has supported tenants through this period and some accounts fell into arrears. The Council's property management agents (BNP Paribas) are currently following arrears recovery processes with these tenants. The total overdue debts (Rent, Service Charges and Insurance) at 30th June is £107k. This compares to £205k outstanding at 31st March, a reduction of 48%.

8 **RESERVES – EARMARKED AND GENERAL**

- 8.1 The Council holds significant levels of ear marked reserves totalling £20.682m at 1st April 2021. This is set out in the table below together with the prior year comparison:

Balances at 31 March 2021 compared to prior years are as follows:

Comparison of Balance of Reserves	General Reserves (including £1.2m Working Balance)	Earmarked Reserves Note 13	Total General Fund Balance Note 6
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Balance at 31st March 2021 carried forward	5,600**	20,682	26,282*
Balance at 31st March 2020 carried forward	6,033**	8,752	14,785

*Note: 2021 EMR balances include £10.621m exceptional Covid related reserves as a result of Section 31 Covid related grants/reliefs to meet future obligations

**Note General Reserves include £1.2m Working Balance that is not available for the MTFS

- 8.2 The further table below shows the movement of reserves in Quarter 1, excluding the exceptional Covid reserves. The total held at the end of the Quarter was £9.921m, the balance remaining and uncommitted as at this date was £7.338m.

EARMARKED RESERVES	Quarter 1 Summary of Funding			
	Total Reserves at 1st April £000	Expenditure to Q1 £000	Commitments £000	Reserve Remaining £000
External Funding	1,805	36	680	1,089
Shared Service	496	11	267	218
WFDC Budget	7,003	11	1,546	5,446
General Risk Reserves	675	0	90	585
TOTAL	9,979	58	2,583	7,338

- 8.3 A General Risk Reserve is held to meet one-off unexpected costs and to manage most future operational risks. Allocations against the reserve are approved by the Corporate Leadership Team. The current level of the General Risk Reserve is £585k taking into account commitments, at the end of Quarter 1.

9 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES AND VIREMENTS

- 9.1 Service managers who wish to incur expenditure that falls within approved Council Policy, for which either there is no or insufficient provision within approved estimates, may incur that expenditure by virement (transferring from one approved budget cost centre to another) or by supplementary estimate, subject to specified conditions as set out in the Financial Regulations – 6.7 and 6.8.
- 9.2 The levelling Up Fund Prospectus issued in March 2021 announced that a flat £125,000 of capacity funding would be allocated to support development of the bid for funds. It is proposed that a net neutral amendment is made to the budget, that a £125,000 income budget is created to reflect the additional funding and an equal expenditure budget for costs associated with the application. A proposal to utilise part of this funding for delivery of the Future High Street Fund project is included in a separate report on this agenda, the funding will be fully applied hence the neutral impact on the MTFS.

10 LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Local Government Act 2003 (sections 25–29) placed additional duties on Local Authorities on how they set and prioritise budgets.
- 10.2 Section 28 places a statutory duty on an authority to review its budget from time to time during the year. If the Budget Monitoring Report shows that there has been deterioration in the Authority's financial position, the Authority must take such action as it concludes necessary. The Cabinet currently reviews the Budget on a quarterly basis. The budget monitoring report for Quarter 1 updates the estimates and takes account of the most recent announcements of Government funding.
- 10.3 Our External Auditor Grant Thornton makes an assessment based on the annual programme of external audit work. The focus is on ensuring there are proper arrangements in place for securing financial resilience and that the organisation has

proper arrangements for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Additional assurance work is being undertaken for the 2020-21 Statement of Accounts audit to provide evidence that the Council remains a Going Concern.

- 10.4 Under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the chief financial officer in consultation with the monitoring officer has the power to issue a report if there is, or is likely to be an imbalanced budget. A full council meeting must then take place within 21 days to consider the notice. In the meantime, no new agreements involving spending can be entered into. The impact of this would effectively be to “freeze” the financial activity of the council in terms on any new/non-essential expenditure. There is no plan to do so at present.

11 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This is a financial report and there is no requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment.

12 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 12.1 The inability to deliver a balanced budget is one of the Council's key corporate risks. The Budget Risk Matrix has been reviewed to reflect the current assessment of risk. A copy is enclosed for information as **Appendix 4**.
- 12.2 There is a risk that the savings and income targets included within the approved MTFS that are estimated to be greater due to the impact of the pandemic, will not be achieved in full, because of the scale of them and the fact that they will require politically controversial proposals and decisions.
- 12.3 The approved management review means that there will be a loss of capacity from January 2022 and the Chief Executive is working with his current and new management teams to realign work with reduced capacity levels. Appropriate time has to be allowed for matters such as consultation with service users or staff, negotiation with other parties (e.g. for asset or service transfer or creation of shared services), finalisation of legal agreements or contracts etc. The additional pressures on the new managers of undertaking a significant amount of activity in the period between January 2022 and April 2023 (to ensure full year savings are achieved from then) has risks. These are not just internal, such as capacity, but importantly are also external if progress depends on other organisations.
- 12.4 Reduced income and increased costs as a result of the ongoing impact of Covid as the country continues on the roadmap to recovery represents a significant risk. Key income streams including the Management fee from the Leisure centre contract, car parking and planning income are being carefully monitored to assess performance against assumptions in the approved budget. The full Leisure centre management fee was included in the approved budget and also a corporate £700k generic Covid Risk budget. It is not yet known how much of the £700k will be required to cover lost income, the current estimate is circa £170k for the Leisure contract. This will be kept under review and reported to Cabinet as part of the regular Budget Monitoring reports.
- 12.5 Relying on reserves to get us through until 2024 depends on further savings being implemented and the rate of drawing on reserves not increasing significantly. However, there are major external risks that could undermine the position. The

delayed reforms to local government finance represent significant uncertainty. It is impossible to predict how and when they will affect Wyre Forest. New homes bonus might not survive (it is not funding distributed on the basis of needs), although alternative incentive mechanisms to encourage housing growth or other actions might be introduced.

13 CONCLUSIONS/ACTION

- 13.1 The information contained within Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5 provides Members with an overview of financial trends within the period to 30th June 2021.
- 13.2 The estimates and assumptions included in this report will continue to be updated and refined as more information becomes available particularly as more clarification on government funding emerges, and the position will be clarified as part of the revised budget process. What is certain is the position will change but work to address the funding gap cannot be delayed.

14. CONSULTEES

Corporate Leadership Team
Cabinet
Service Managers

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council 1st March 2021
Strong Leader Report on Provisional Final Accounts 2020-21, 17th July 2021
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021-24

Hyperlink to Committee Reports
<http://www.wyreforest.gov.uk/council/meetings/main.htm>

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCILREVENUE BUDGET TOTAL REQUIREMENTS - DISTRICT COUNCIL PURPOSES

SERVICE	2020/21		2021/22			2022/23			2023/24		
	Original Estimate £	Revised Estimate £	At Nov.20 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.20 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £	At Nov.20 Prices £	Inflation £	TOTAL £
CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL	1,374,060	1,906,710	587,140	47,330	634,470	304,030	95,800	399,830	44,900	145,860	190,760
COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	4,421,860	6,593,050	4,468,720	156,590	4,625,310	4,022,590	311,080	4,333,670	3,788,500	476,540	4,265,040
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE	1,990,960	2,515,280	2,216,270	106,430	2,322,700	1,938,880	216,000	2,154,880	1,866,520	324,700	2,191,220
RESOURCES	3,689,640	3,625,920	4,677,290	(37,010)	4,640,280	3,853,470	(71,240)	3,782,230	4,252,510	(106,490)	4,146,020
LESS: CAPITAL ACCOUNT	11,476,520	14,640,960	11,949,420	273,340	12,222,760	10,118,970	551,640	10,670,610	9,952,430	840,610	10,793,040
INTEREST RECEIVED	237,960	(88,060)	97,560	2,360	99,920	306,650	4,750	311,400	379,870	7,250	387,120
CAPITAL PORTFOLIO FUND AND DEVELOPMENT LOANS FUND	(180,000)	(50,000)	(20,000)	0	(20,000)	(20,000)	0	(20,000)	(20,000)	0	(20,000)
	(71,200)	(23,530)	(3,130)	1,050	(2,080)	(4,080)	2,000	(2,080)	(5,080)	3,000	(2,080)
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	11,463,280	14,479,370	12,023,850	276,750	12,300,600	10,401,540	558,390	10,959,930	10,307,220	850,860	11,158,080
LESS: CONTRIBUTION (FROM) TO RESERVES	(485,290)	(419,850)			(503,110)			(657,170)			(672,960)
NET BUDGET REQUIREMENT	10,977,990	14,059,520			11,797,490			10,302,760			10,485,120
LESS: REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT	0	0			0			356,790			356,790
BUSINESS RATES INCOME	(3,341,180)	(3,691,180)			(2,869,590)			(2,898,290)			(2,927,270)
EXPENDITURE RELATED COVID SUPPORT GRANT	0	(1,603,970)			(563,800)			0			0
CO-FUNDING COVID SUPPORT GRANT	0	(1,110,560)			(383,940)			0			0
COVID TAX INCOME GUARANTEE GRANT (CTAX)	0	(17,000)			0			0			0
COLLECTION FUND DEFICIT	70,220	70,220			146,000			95,100			95,100
NEW HOMES BONUS	(261,530)	(261,530)			(242,510)			(63,390)			0
LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT GRANT	0	0			(184,250)			0			0
LOWER TIER SERVICES GRANT	0	0			(121,190)						
GENERAL EXPENSES -											
COUNCIL TAX INCOME	7,445,500	7,445,500			7,578,210			7,792,970			8,009,740
COUNCIL TAX LEVY		219.34			224.34			229.34			234.34
COUNCIL TAX BASE		33,945			33,780			33,980			34,180

Q4 Budget Monitoring 2020-21 (to March 2021)
Capital Programme 2020-21

APPENDIX 2a

CAPITAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION	2020-21 Budget (Full Year) £	YTD Actual Expenditure £	Projected Variation vs Budget £	Slippage to 2021 22 £	Explanation
<u>RESOURCES</u>					
ICT Strategy	417,910	149,620	Cr 268,290	268,290	2020-21 projects complete. Balance slipped to 21-22 for ongoing Strategy..
TOTAL RESOURCES	417,910	149,620	Cr 268,290	268,290	
<u>COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND ENVIRONMENT</u>					
Green Street Depot Investment	208,950	40,540	Cr 168,410	168,410	Practical completion achieved. Balance held for retention & fuel tank replacement in 21-22.
Stourport Riverside	71,500	10,235	Cr 61,265	61,270	Scheme commenced. Balance to slip into 21-22.
Brinton Park HLF Scheme	43,720	13,370	Cr 30,350	30,350	Initial consultancy work underway. Balance to slip into 21-22.
Commercial Activity Capital Funding	10,390	0	Cr 10,390	10,390	Future spending dependent upon approval of individual business cases.
TOTAL COMMUNITY WELL BEING & ENVIRONMENT	334,560	64,145	Cr 270,415	270,420	
<u>ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE</u>					
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,799,370	869,170	Cr 930,200	930,200	Some planned expenditure for 20-21 has been completed. Balance to slip to 21-22.
Private Sector Measures	100,000	7,690	Cr 92,310	92,310	Scheme ongoing, balance slipped to 21-22.
Property Conversion, Stourport	60,000	40,890	Cr 19,110	19,110	Scheme nearing completion, balance slipped to 21-22.
Property Flood Grants	200,000	47,665	Cr 152,335	152,340	Scheme commenced. Balance slipped to 21-22.
Flood Relief	28,410	0	Cr 28,410	28,410	Awaiting decision from Severn Trent for scheme in Stourport-on-Severn. Balance slipped to 21-22.
Green Homes Grant	300,000	0	Cr 300,000	300,000	Budget will slip to 21-22.
Carbon Management Plan	20,000	0	Cr 20,000	20,000	Budget will slip to 21-22.
Future High Streets Fund	0	236,150	236,150	Cr 236,150	Consultancy work commenced in 20-21, this expenditure will be carried against the 21-22 budget.
New Street Conversion	2,530	2,900	370	0	Scheme complete.
Crown House Car Park	27,400	24,220	Cr 3,180	3,180	Works complete.
Industrial Units Development - Silverwoods	220,000	190,020	Cr 29,980	29,980	Scheme being progressed. Balance slipped to 21-22.
Industrial Units Development - Silverwoods (former Frencos site)	293,250	241,320	Cr 51,930	51,930	Scheme delayed, further works to be carried out in 21-22 to complete these units.
Churchfields Development (Grant Funded)	2,700,000	2,533,480	Cr 166,520	166,520	Scheme to complete in 21-22, balance slipped.
Capital Portfolio Fund	6,000,000	0	Cr 6,000,000	6,000,000	No acquisitions in 20-21. Budget to slip to 21-22.
Development Loans Fund	2,000,000	0	Cr 2,000,000	2,000,000	First loan in 21-22. Budget to slip.
TOTAL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY & PLACE	13,750,960	4,193,505	Cr 9,557,455	9,557,830	
<u>VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS RENEWALS</u>					
Vehicle & Equipment Renewals (Capital Programme)	776,280	472,810	Cr 303,470	217,680	See separate Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals schedule.
Financial Management System Replacement	69,500	23,550	Cr 45,950	45,950	See separate Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals schedule.
TOTAL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY & PLACE	845,780	496,360	Cr 349,420	263,630	
TOTAL	15,349,210	4,903,630	Cr 10,445,580	10,360,170	

Q4 Budget Monitoring 2020-21 (to March 2021)
Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals 2020-21

APPENDIX 2b

VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT RENEWALS	Revised Capital Programme 2020-21	Q4 Expenditure 2020-21	Slippage to 2021-22	Old fleet number to be replaced	Comments
(Based upon Revised Capital Budgets)	£	£	£		
1. <u>VEHICLES</u>					
GARAGE EQUIPMENT	31,280	13,600	17,680	N/A	Exhaust Extraction Unit. Balance to slip to 21-22.
REFURBISHMENT FUND	30,000	0	30,000	N/A	Contingency fund. Slipped to 21-22 as not required in 20-21.
TIPPER 3500kg	30,000	26,360	0	AV063	Complete.
TIPPER 3500kg	30,000	0	30,000	AV223	Slipped to 21-22
LIGHT VAN	30,000	12,320	0	AV218	Complete.
LIGHT VAN	30,000	12,320	0	AV230	Complete.
LIGHT VAN	30,000	12,320	0	AV229	Complete.
TIPPER 3500kg	35,000	30,290	0	AV255	Complete.
TIPPER 3500kg	35,000	30,290	0	AV256	Complete.
PAVEMENT SWEEPER	80,000	67,130	0	AV258	Complete.
SMALL REFUSE FREIGHTER 7500kg	90,000	86,460	0	AV261	Complete.
ROAD SWEEPER	140,000	0	140,000	AV184	Slipped to 21-22
REFUSE FREIGHTER 26000kg	175,000	171,830	0	NEW	Complete.
2. <u>OTHER</u>					
Financial Management System Replacement	69,500	23,550	45,950	N/A	Slipped to 21-22
ZIP Boilers at Wyre Forest House	10,000	9,890	0	N/A	Complete.
Total	845,780	496,360	263,630		

Q1 Budget Monitoring 2021-22 (to June 2021)

APPENDIX 3a

Capital Programme 2021-22

CAPITAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION	2020-21 Slippage carried forward £	2021-22 Original Budget £	2021-22 Adjusted Budget £	YTD Actual Expenditure (Net Income) £	Anticipated Expenditure £	Anticipated Slippage £	Explanation
CHIEF EXECUTIVE							
New Headquarters - Office Accommodation	0	413,610	413,610	0	0	413,610	The account with the Wyre Forest House construction contractor continues to remain outstanding because of a number of unresolved issues.
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE	0	413,610	413,610	0	0	413,610	
RESOURCES							
ICT Strategy	268,290	488,000	756,290	10,986	756,290	0	Equipment and infrastructure upgrades due to be completed.
TOTAL RESOURCES	268,290	488,000	756,290	10,986	756,290	0	
COMMUNITY WELL-BEING AND ENVIRONMENT							
Parking Facilities: Improvements to Car Parks	0	54,530	54,530	0	74,530	0	Scheme being developed.
Green Street Depot Investment	168,410	70,000	238,410	0	173,950	0	Practical completion achieved. Balance held for retention & final works in 21-22.
Stourport Riverside	61,270	78,500	139,770	0	150,000	0	Scheme being progressed.
Brinton Park HLF Capital Funding	30,350	1,086,520	1,116,870	1,000	2,600,000	0	Scheme being progressed.
Commercial Activity Capital Funding	10,390	385,000	395,390	0	195,390	0	Future spending dependent upon board approval.
TOTAL COMMUNITY WELL BEING & ENVIRONMENT	270,420	1,674,550	1,944,970	1,000	3,193,870	0	
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AND PLACE							
Disabled Facilities Grants	930,200	1,000,000	1,930,200	11,354	1,930,200	0	Scheme progressing, expected to complete in 2021-22.
Property Conversion, Stourport	19,110	0	19,110	3,593	2,530	0	To complete in 2021-22.
Private Sector Measures	92,310	33,950	126,260	0	126,260	0	Scheme ongoing.
Green Homes Grants	300,000	0	300,000	7,526	300,000	0	Scheme ongoing.
Property Flood Grants	152,340	450,000	602,340	29,288	602,340	0	Scheme ongoing.
Flood Relief	28,410	0	28,410	0	28,410	0	Awaiting decision from Severn Trent for scheme in Stourport-on-Severn.
Carbon Management Plan	20,000	0	20,000	0	20,000	0	Spending subject to successful business case.
Future Investment Evergreen Fund	0	639,660	639,660	419	639,660	0	Schemes being developed.
Works to Former Crown House site	3,180	0	3,180	0	3,180	0	Scheme being progressed.
Industrial Units Development - Silverwoods	29,980	1,930,040	1,960,020	1,000	2,150,040	0	Scheme being progressed.
Industrial Units Frenco Development	51,930	0	51,930	0	51,930	0	Scheme being progressed.
Churchfields Development	166,520	0	166,520	0	166,520	0	Scheme being progressed.
Capital Portfolio Fund	6,000,000	3,175,620	9,175,620	0	9,175,620	0	Scheme being progressed.
Development Loans Fund	2,000,000	8,000,000	10,000,000	781,089	10,000,000	0	Scheme being progressed.
Future High Streets Fund	Cr 236,150	21,760,600	21,524,450	1,039,102	10,000,000	0	Scheme being progressed.
TOTAL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY & PLACE	9,557,830	36,989,870	46,547,700	1,873,371	35,196,690	0	
VEHICLE, EQUIPMENT AND SYSTEMS RENEWALS							
Vehicle & Equipment Renewals (Capital Programme)	217,680	1,004,000	1,221,680	0	1,221,680	0	See separate Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals schedule.
Financial Management System Replacement	45,950	0	45,950	0	45,950	0	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
TOTAL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY & PLACE	263,630	1,004,000	1,267,630	0	1,267,630	0	
TOTAL	10,360,170	40,570,030	50,930,200	1,885,357	40,414,480	413,610	

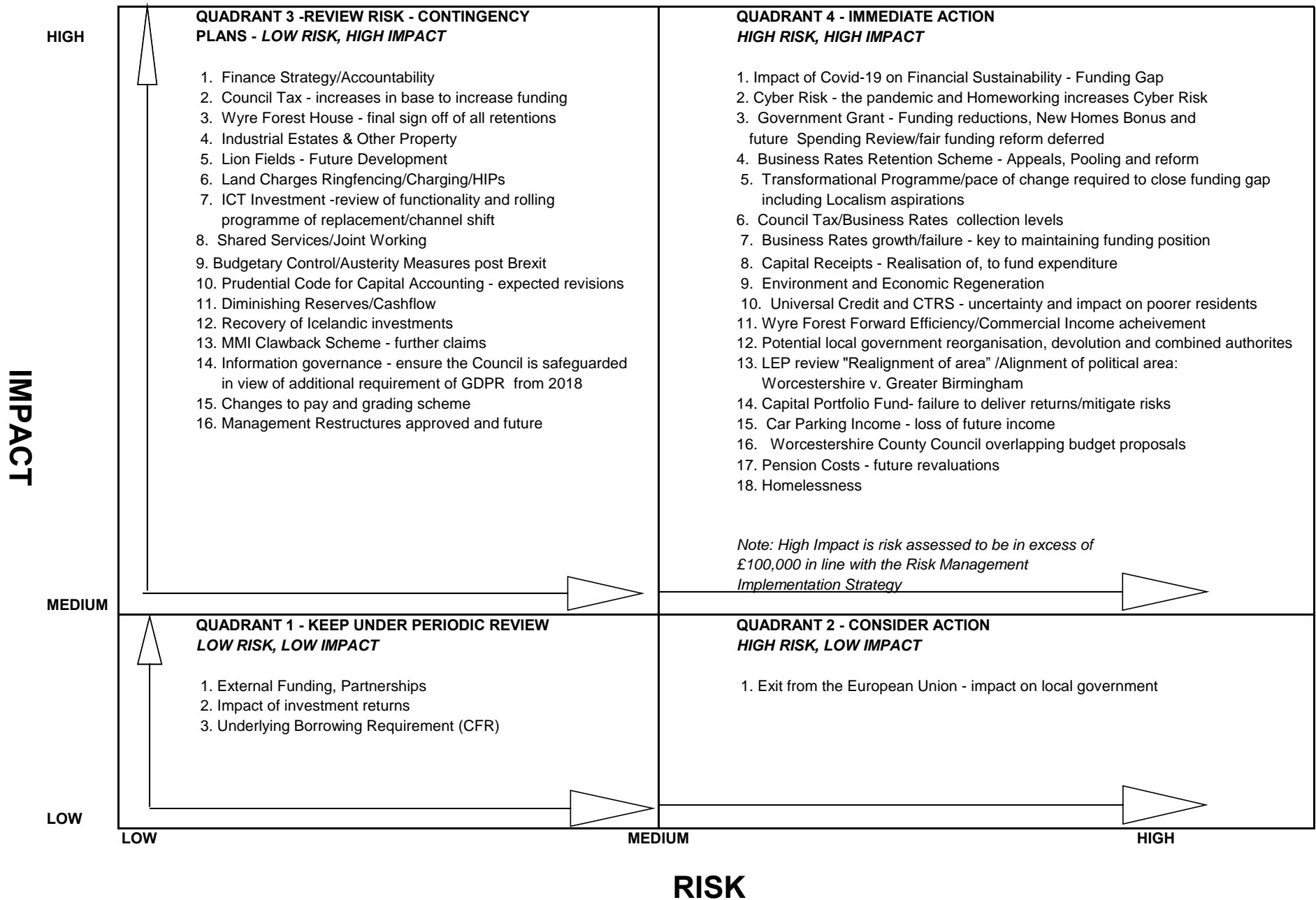
Q1 Budget Monitoring 2021-22 (to June 2021)
Vehicle, Equipment and Systems Renewals 2021-22

APPENDIX 3b

Detail	Slippage from Capital Programme 2020-21 £	Original Capital Programme 2021-22 £	Amended Capital Programme 2021-22 £	Q1 Expenditure 2021-22 £	Projected Total 2021-22 Expenditure £	Anticipated Slippage £	Old Vehicle Fleet Number to be replaced	COST CENTRE	Comments
1. VEHICLES									
EMS & BIN LIFTS	-	13,500	13,500	-	13,500		N/A	N/A	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
REFURBISHMENT FUND	30,000	-	30,000	-	30,000	-	N/A	N/A	Contingency budget
GARAGE EQUIPMENT	17,680	-	17,680	-	17,680	-	N/A	R229	For garage equipment replacement.
CAR	-	10,000	10,000	-	10,000	-	AV279	R229	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
CAR	-	15,000	15,000	-	15,000	-	AV272	R229	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
MIDI TRACTOR	-	30,000	30,000	-	30,000	-	AV189	R236	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
MOWING MACHINE	-	35,000	35,000	-	35,000	-	AV240	R236	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
FORKLIFT	-	15,000	15,000	-	15,000	-	FORKLIFT	R229	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
TIPPER 3500kg	30,000	-	30,000	-	30,000	-	AV223	R200	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
TRACTOR	-	40,000	40,000	-	40,000	-	AV070	R236	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
PAVEMENT SWEEPER	-	67,000	67,000	-	67,000	-	AV275	R200	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
PAVEMENT SWEEPER	-	67,000	67,000	-	67,000	-	AV276	R200	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
REFUSE FREIGHTER 26000kg	-	180,500	180,500	-	180,500	-	AV185	R002	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
REFUSE FREIGHTER 26000kg	-	180,500	180,500	-	180,500	-	AV186	R002	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
REFUSE FREIGHTER 26000kg	-	180,500	180,500	-	180,500	-	AV187	R002	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
ROAD SWEEPER 15000kg	140,000	-	140,000	-	140,000	-	AV184	R200	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
JCB DIGGER	-	60,000	60,000	-	60,000	-	AV183	R236	Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
2. OTHER									
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REPLACEMENT	45,950	-	45,950	-	45,950	-	FMS001	R430	Timeframe to install new finance system dependant upon installation of new MS Office 365/Office 2017. Anticipated to complete in 21-22.
ZIP BOILERS REPLACEMENT (WYRE FOREST HOUSE)	-	10,000	10,000	-	10,000	-			Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
LIGHTING SYSTEM UPGRADE (WYRE FOREST HOUSE)	-	100,000	100,000	-	100,000	-			Anticipated to complete in 2021-22.
	263,630	1,004,000	1,267,630	-	1,267,630	-			

BUDGET RISK MATRIX 2021-24

APPENDIX 4



Appendix 5 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET
14th September 2021

Budget Monitoring First Quarter 2021-22

ANALYSIS OF OUTSTANDING DEBT

This appendix details the Council's income collection position at the end of Quarter 1 (30th June 2021)

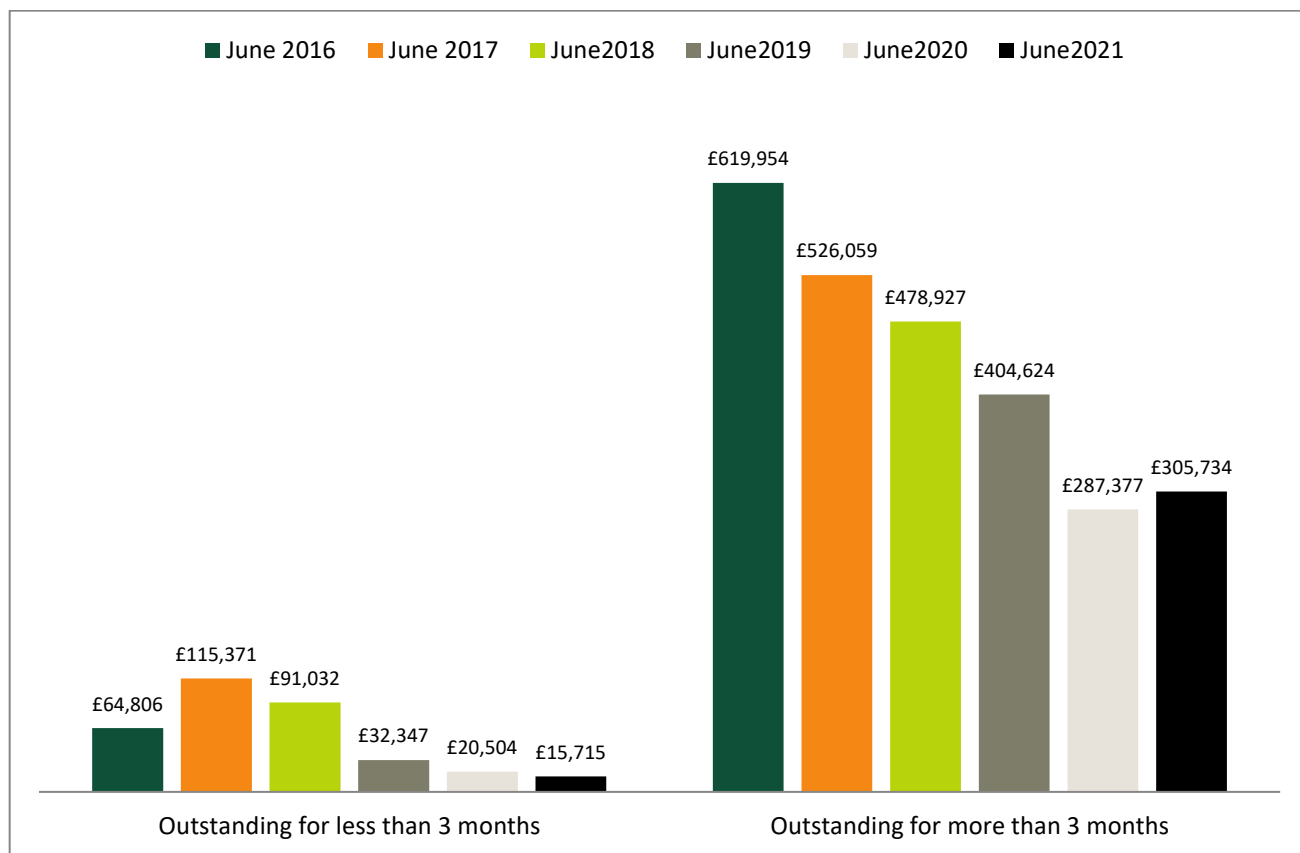
1.1. **Housing Benefit Overpayment Recovery**

Where customers have a change in their circumstances and we are later made aware of this, customers are expected to repay any Housing Benefit that has been overpaid.

A change in circumstances transfers the customer to Universal Credit and the overpayment is via a customer invoice. Customers who remain on Housing Benefit and have received an overpayment, have a deduction from their on-going benefit.

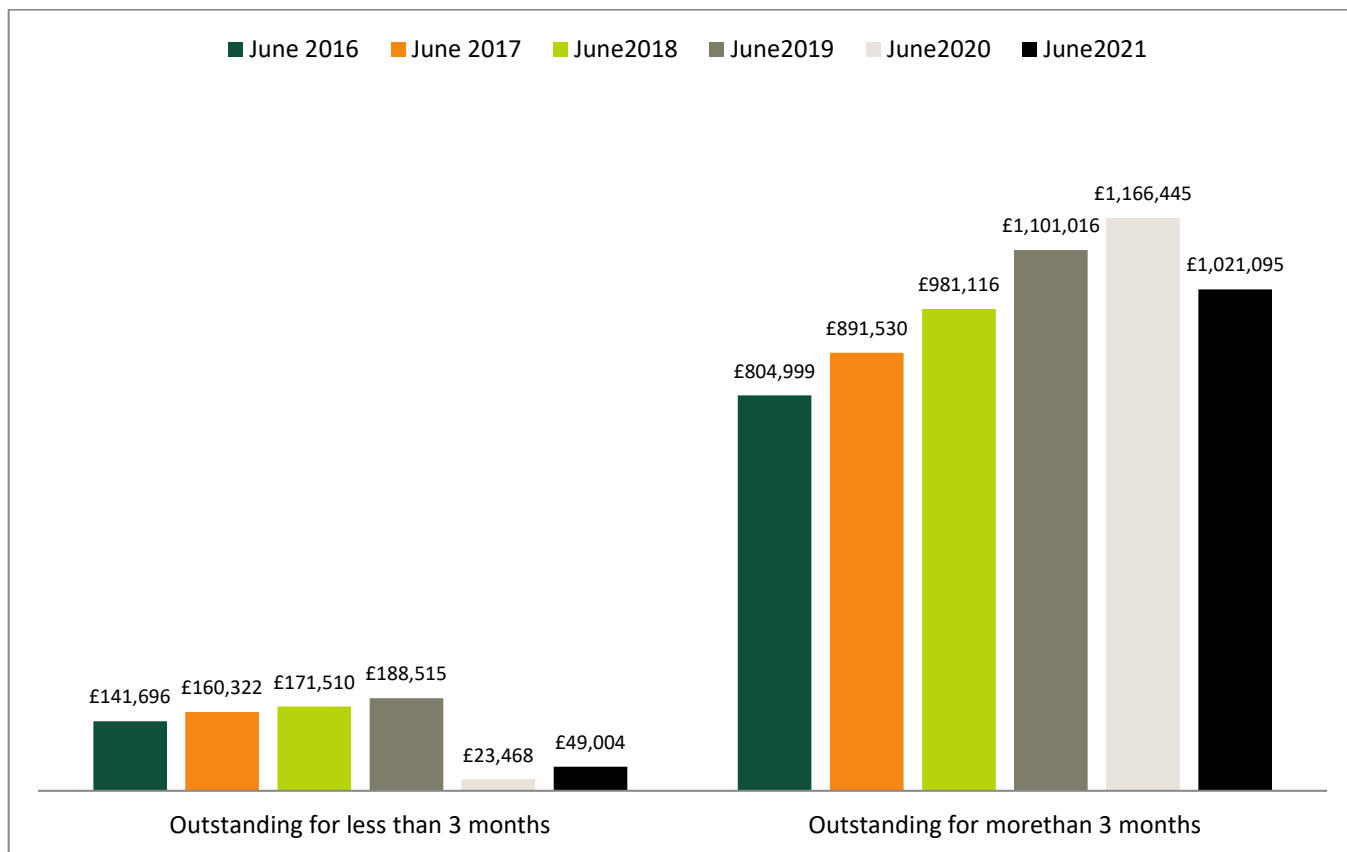
The position relating to Housing Benefit overpayment is shown in the next two graphs:

Recovery by On-going Benefit



Appendix 5 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

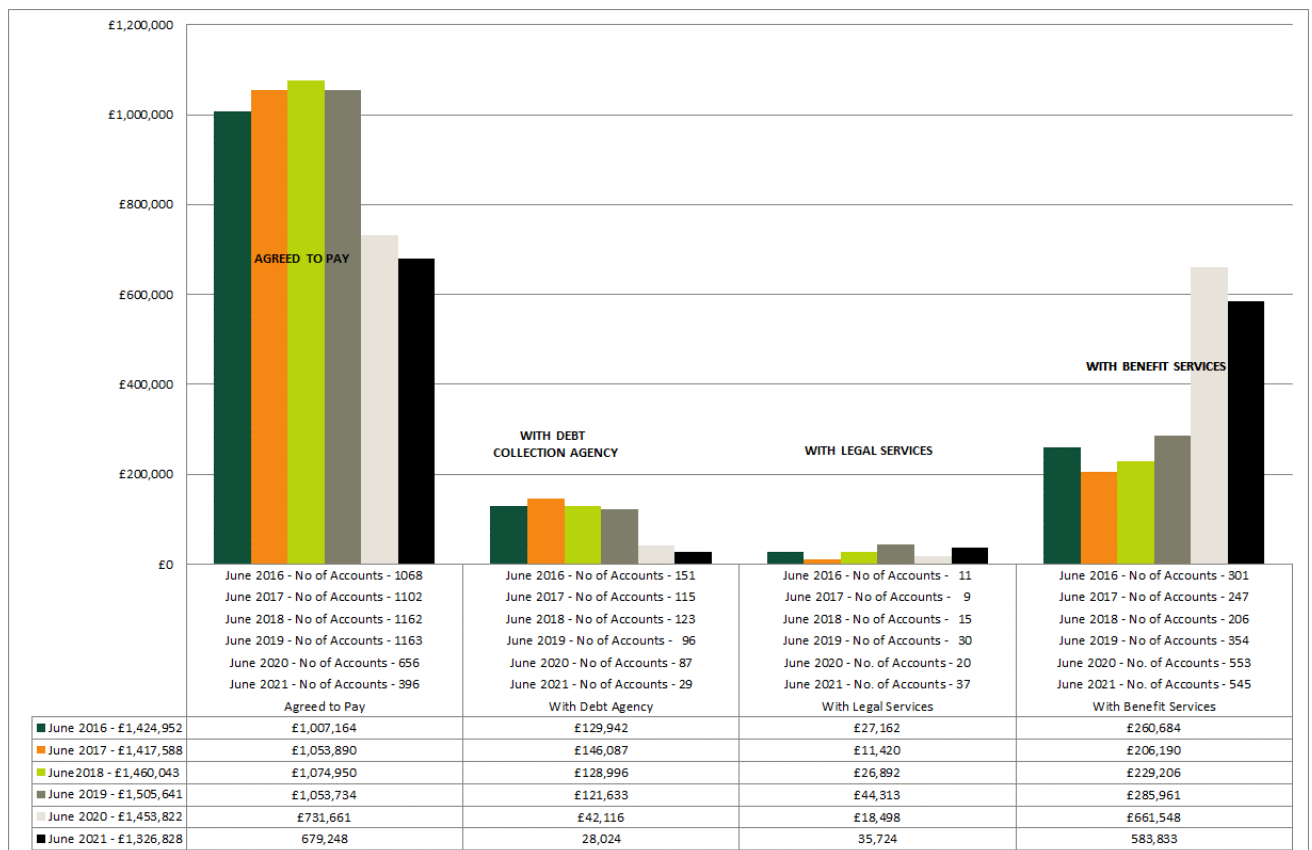
Recovery by Customer Invoice



Debts over three months old have either agreements in place to pay, have been referred to the Council's Legal Services, or remain with the Benefit Service to pursue. The Council employs the Debt Collection Agency Dukes. Debts are referred as a last resort. As at June 2021 debts of £1,452 have been recovered at a cost of £218. The number of accounts, the value outstanding and how this will be collected is shown in the following graph:

Appendix 5 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

Value and Number of Housing Benefit Overpayments over 3 months and Status



The total debt outstanding at 30th June is £1.392m (including debt within payment terms) which represents a 7% decrease over the balance outstanding at the end of Quarter 1 2020-21 (including debt within payment terms). The number of cases where there is an agreement to pay or our Benefit/Legal Services are dealing with the case, have decreased to 978 (1,229 in 2019-20) a reduction of 251 cases. Cases referred to an external debt collection agency have reduced to 29 (87 in 2019-20).

The introduction of Universal Credit in November 2018 has reduced the number of customers claiming Housing Benefit and the occurrence of overpayment and its collection via on-going benefit. Collection of overpayment via customer invoice has seen an increase in overdue debt. COVID-19 has had an impact on the collection of debt from customers on Universal Credit through the DWP and our own collection, as debt recovery was suspended at the beginning of the pandemic.

1.2. Sundry/ Property Debt

The total debt outstanding at 30th June (including debt within payment terms) was £1,399k (Sundry Debt £1,034k Property Debt £365k) which represents a 18.8% increase over the balance outstanding at the end of Quarter 1 2019 of £1,178k (Sundry Debt £835k, Property Debt £343k).

The COVID 19 pandemic had an impact on Property and Sundry debt, although there is now signs of recovery. The 2021-22 Quarter 1 overdue debt (more than 3 months old) has reduced (2018 £173k, 2019 £191k, 2020 £463K, 2021 £419). This is mainly due to a fall in outstanding Sundry Debt of £76K.

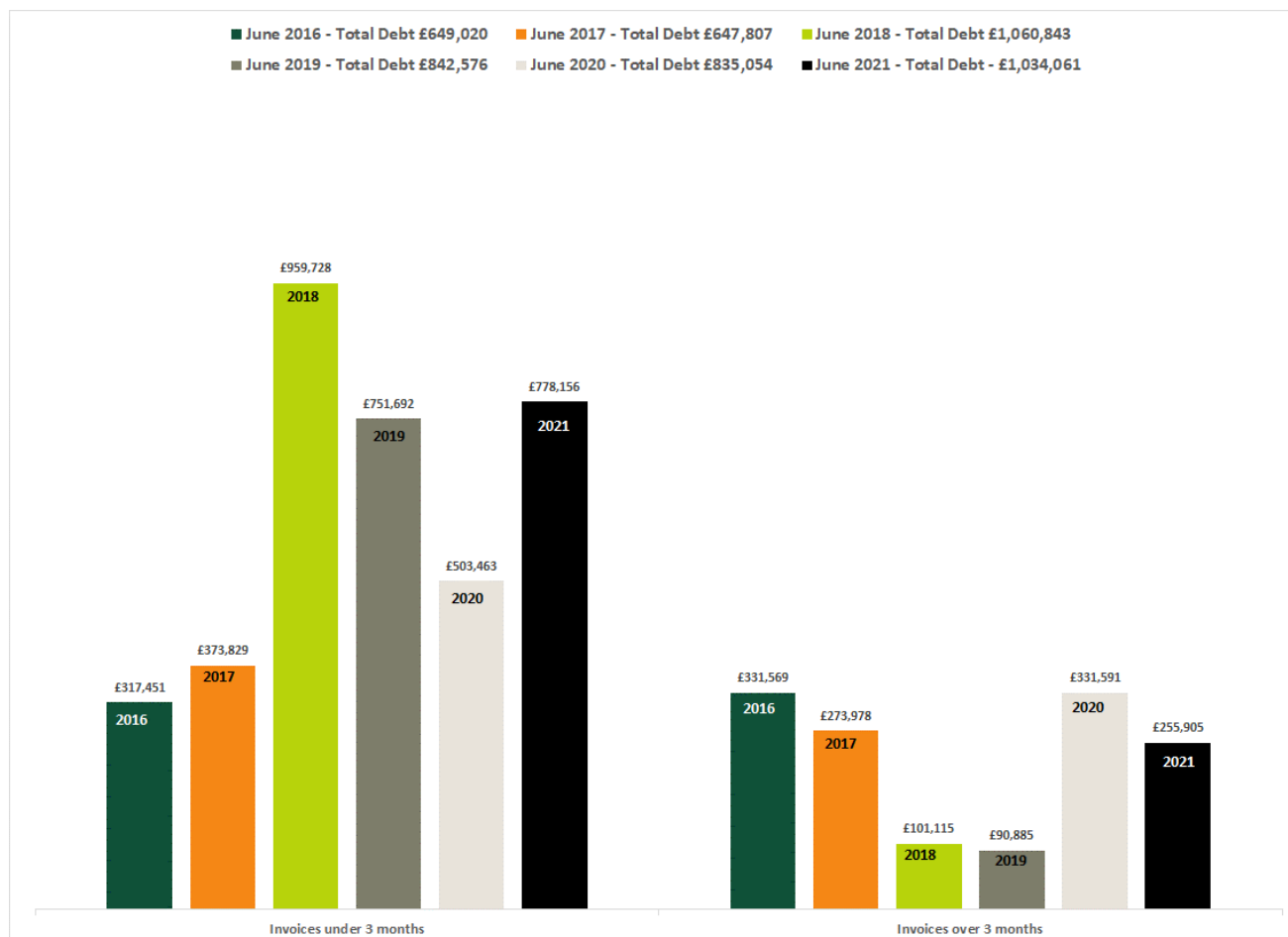
Appendix 5 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

Invoices overdue (older than 3 months)	Quarter 1 2018 £	Quarter 1 2019 £	Quarter 1 2020 £	Quarter 1 2021 £	Movement £
Sundry Invoice	101,100	90,900	331,600	255,900	(75,700)
Property Invoices	71,600	100,300	131,100	163,600	32,500
Total Invoices	172,700	191,200	462,700	419,500	43,200

1.3. The overdue debts over 3 months old over the past 3 years had remain low due to the introduction of a revised approach to the management of accounts in arrears. The Council suspended the recovery of debt during the first 2 months of the pandemic. Payments received in April 2020 were almost 40% down on the same period in April 2019. Payments to the end of June 2020 had recovered slight to 9% above those received in June 2019.

1.4. The position relating to Sundry Debtor and Property Invoices are as follows:

Sundry Debtors



Appendix 5 – Analysis of Outstanding Debt

Property Invoices and Debt

