

To: All Members of the EXECUTIVE

When calling please ask for:  
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Calls may be recorded for training or monitoring  
Date: 20 November 2023

### **Membership of the Executive**

Cllr Paul Follows (Chair)  
Cllr Peter Clark (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Tony Fairclough  
Cllr Victoria Kiehl  
Cllr Mark Merryweather

Cllr Kika Mirylees  
Cllr Nick Palmer  
Cllr Paul Rivers  
Cllr Liz Townsend  
Cllr Steve Williams

Dear Councillors

A meeting of the EXECUTIVE will be held as follows:

Date: Tuesday, 28 November 2023  
Time: 6.00 pm  
Place: Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Burys, Godalming

The Agenda for the Meeting is set out below.

Yours sincerely

Susan Sale  
Executive Head of Legal & Democratic Services & Monitoring Officer

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The meeting can be viewed remotely via Waverley Borough Council's [YouTube channel](#) or by visiting [www.waverley.gov.uk/webcast](http://www.waverley.gov.uk/webcast)

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### Notes for members

Contact Officers are shown on each report and members are welcome to raise questions, make observations etc. in advance of the meeting with the appropriate officer.

**Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Leader, Deputy Leader or an appropriate Portfolio Holder to respond to any informal questions from members of the public, for a maximum of 15 minutes.**

*[Questions will be taken in the order in which questioners register with the Democratic Services Officer prior to the start of question time. When read out, each question must be concluded within 2 minutes. In the event that it is not possible to give a verbal response, a written response will be provided following the meeting.]*

## Agenda

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence.

2. **Minutes** (Pages 7 - 12)

To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 October 2023.

3. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive from Members, declarations of interest in relation to any items included on the agenda for this meeting, in accordance with the Waverley Code of Local Government Conduct.

4. **Questions from Members of the Public**

The Chairman to respond to any questions received from members of the public for which notice has been given in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.

The deadline for receipt of questions is 5pm on Tuesday 21 November.

5. **Questions from Members of the Council**

The Chairman to respond to any questions received from Members in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.

The deadline for receipt of questions is 5pm on Tuesday 21 November.

6. **Leader's and Portfolio Holders' Updates**

7. **Recommendations from the Overview And Scrutiny Committees** (Pages 13 - 22)

To receive any recommendations.

8. **Guildford and Waverley Transformation And Collaboration** (Pages 23 - 62)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 8.

Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development and Governance

9. **General Fund MTFP Mid-Year Review** (Pages 63 - 90)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 9.

Portfolio Holder for Finance, Assets and Property

10. **HRA Mid-Year Review** (Pages 91 - 112)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 10.

Portfolio Holder for Finance, Assets and Property  
Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Operations and Services)

11. **Covert Investigative Powers (Surveillance) Policy** (Pages 113 - 164)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 11.

Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Policy, Governance and Communications; Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development and Governance

12. **Growth Bid - Operational Safeguarding** (Pages 165 - 186)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 12.

Portfolio Holder for Community Services, Leisure and EDI

13. **Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2023-28** (Pages 187 - 300)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 13.

Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Delivery)

14. **Housing Revenue Account - New Build Housing Delivery** (Pages 301 - 378)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 14.

Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Delivery)

15. **Housing Delivery - 12 New Homes at Woodside Park, Catteshall Lane** (Pages 379 - 390)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 15.

Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Delivery)

16. **New Build Housing Delivery - Witley** (Pages 391 - 430)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report

at agenda item 16.

Co-Portfolio Holder for Housing (Delivery)

**17. Exclusion of Press And Public**

To consider the following recommendation on the motion of the Chairman:

Recommendation

That, pursuant to Procedure Rule 20 and in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Executive agrees:

- (1) that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following matter on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information (as defined by Section 100I of the Act) of the description specified in Paragraph 1 & 2 of the revised Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972; and
- (2) that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**18. Resourcing of Waverley Borough Council's In-House Legal Services Function** (Pages 431 - 455)

The Executive are recommended to make the resolutions set out in the report at agenda item 18.

Leader of the Council & Portfolio Holder for Policy, Governance and Communications; Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development and Governance

**19. Any Other Issues to be considered In Exempt Session**

To consider matters (if any) relating to aspects of any reports on this agenda which, it is felt, may need to be considered in Exempt session.

**For further information or assistance, please telephone  
Ben Bix, Democratic Services Manager by email  
[ben.bix@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:ben.bix@waverley.gov.uk)**

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## WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE - 31 OCTOBER 2023

### SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING – 12 DECEMBER 2023

(To be read in conjunction with the Agenda for the Meeting)

#### **Present**

Cllr Paul Follows (Chair)  
Cllr Peter Clark (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Tony Fairclough  
Cllr Victoria Kiehl

Cllr Nick Palmer  
Cllr Paul Rivers  
Cllr Liz Townsend  
Cllr Steve Williams

#### **Apologies**

Cllr Mark Merryweather and Cllr Kika Mirylees

#### **Also Present**

Cllr Hyman

#### EXE 72/23 MINUTES (Agenda item 2)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 October 2023 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

#### EXE 73/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Agenda item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

#### EXE 74/23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (Agenda item 4)

There were no questions from members of the public.

#### EXE 75/23 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (Agenda item 5)

There were no questions from Members of the Council.

#### EXE 76/23 LEADER'S AND PORTFOLIO HOLDERS' UPDATES (Agenda item 6)

76.1 Cllr Clark, Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder for Customer Services, Business Transformation and IT updated Members on progress toward the Council's ambition for electronic access to meeting papers. It was pleasing that 40 of the 50 Councillors now accessed their papers electronically either on a Council provided device or on their own device. It was also accepted and understood that there were good reasons for some Members to continue to request paper copies of agendas. The paperless approach was a cash saving of £20,000 per annum, and a contribution toward the Council's ambition to be carbon neutral.

- 76.2 Councillor Kiehl, Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development and Governance advised that the Executives of Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council had met informally the evening before to reaffirm support for the partnership Vision between the two Councils and to receive a Financial update. Members were united in supporting the collaboration as had been demonstrated in the recent Council Motion debates. The Joint Governance Committee and the Joint Constitution Review Group would meet in November to consider matters within their respective terms of reference.
- 76.3 Councillor Townsend, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Regeneration and Economic Development was pleased to report that the Planning Service had continued to improve and the performance measure for Major applications was now 20% above the 70% threshold set by the government. Similarly, appeals performance had improved and was below the 10% threshold set by the government. Thanks were conveyed to Officers for their hard work.
- 76.4 Councillor Townsend was looking forward to the opening of the Godalming and Farnham BID ballots during the week; and as Chair of Waverley Training Services (WTS) invited Members to visit Farnham Memorial Hall to see the work of WTS.
- 76.5 Councillor Williams, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Sustainability announced that an engagement process would take place including with Farnham Town Councillors regarding a proposal to install a solar canopy on the Upper Hart Car Park. A bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme would be made to seek support for the decarbonisation of Leisure Centres. Farnham Leisure Centre represented a significant challenge as the roof would have to be replaced before a solar installation could be considered.
- 76.6 The Leader voiced his appreciation for the hard work that Guildford Borough Council and its Leader were doing to tackle their financial challenges, and was pleased that both Executives had met informally the previous evening.

**EXE 77/23 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**  
(Agenda item 7)

- 77.1 The Leader noted that no recommendations had been made from the last meeting of the Services Committee, but that matters had instead been raised at the last meeting of Council. The Leader would register to speak at both forthcoming Committees to emphasise the importance of timely scrutiny in good governance.

**EXE 78/23 SOFTWARE CONTRACT FOR REGULATORY SERVICES** (Agenda item 8)

- 78.1 Councillor Clark introduced the report and explained that Guildford Borough Council had fully implemented the preferred supplier's software for Regulatory Services. Given the limited market availability of the type of software, the ongoing successful implementation of the preferred supplier by Guildford, the level of support offered by the preferred supplier and looking ahead to future collaboration opportunities, the project team were of the view that it was opportune to utilise the same software system as Guildford.

Consideration had been given to the cost per user, data security, maintenance fees and future service harmonisation. Councillor Fairclough spoke in endorsement of the proposal as a demonstration of the benefits of collaboration for both Councils.

There being no further discussion the Executive **RESOLVED** that:

1. **The contract in respect of the Council's Regulatory Services IT Management System be awarded to Idox**
2. **The Council's Contract Procedure Rules in respect of tendering be waived in respect of the procurement**
3. **Authority to spend the funding allocated to the IT system replacement in the 2023/24 capital programme be granted**
4. **Authority be delegated to the Head of Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Joint Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services, to complete and execute the necessary contractual documents.**

Reasons:

- I. To take advantage of the offer of significant free support for data migration elements of the implementation of the new system, and align systems with Guildford Borough Council to facilitate future collaboration.
- II. To enable the procurement of the new system to proceed.

#### EXE 79/23 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS (Agenda item 9)

79.1 The Leader moved, with the assent of the Executive, that, pursuant to Procedure Rule 20 and in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it be agreed:

1. that the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the matter on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information (as defined by Section 100I of the Act) of the description specified in Paragraph 1 of the revised Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972; and
2. that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

#### EXE 80/23 SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE (Agenda item 10)

The Executive **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendations set out in the Exempt report.

Reasons:

As set out in the Exempt Report.

Executive 4  
31.10.23

**The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and concluded at 6.19 pm**

**Chairman**

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

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# 2023-24 Master Tracker

## Recommendations to the Executive from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

### November 2023 Committee Cycle

Last updated: 20/11/2023 15:39

#### Document Purpose

The intention of this document is to collate and track progress of all recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to the Executive throughout the year, and to log the Executive decisions on the submitted matters. The recommendations are split into separate tables for each of the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committees and the [explanation of terms used](#) can be found in section 5. Additionally, a table with all remaining [Committees meeting dates](#) for this calendar year have been listed below, followed by information on key [officers supporting the process](#).

#### Resources Overview and Scrutiny – Recommendations to Executive

**Resources O&S Chair:** Cllr Peter Martin, **Resources O&S Vice Chair:** Cllr Andrew Laughton

Unique Ref.	Name of the Agenda Item	Recommendation	O&S Meeting Date (when the item was raised)	To be received at the Executive Meeting on	Progress Status	Reason for the Executive Decision and Next Steps	Key Officer responsible for the item
<b>R19-09-23 13.1</b>	69 High Street, Godalming	The Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the 69 High Street Stage 1 report as received at the Council meeting on 29th August 2023. The Committee made the following recommendation to the Executive: 1. A full review of the 69 High Street project is to be undertaken, including Lessons Learned for the future. Upon completion of the review, this is to be brought back to the O&S Resources Committee.	19/9/23	3/10/23	Received by Executive on 3/10	An analysis is being undertaken by the Asset Investment Executive Working Group, the results of which will be brought before the O&S Resources Committee when complete.	Debbie Smith
<b>R14-11-23 9.1</b>	Housing Revenue Account – New Build Housing	The Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the Housing Revenue Account - New Build Housing Delivery - Elstead & Ockford Ridge report. The Committee made	14/11/23	28/11/23	To be received by Executive on 28/11	To be considered.	Louisa Blundell

Unique Ref.	Name of the Agenda Item	Recommendation	O&S Meeting Date (when the item was raised)	To be received at the Executive Meeting on	Progress Status	Reason for the Executive Decision and Next Steps	Key Officer responsible for the item
		<p>the following recommendation to the Executive:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'The Committee resolved to express concern as to whether this project is employing the correct methods of market valuation, whether a greater financial contingency is required, how cost overruns will be prevented and adequate value for money is being obtained.'</li> </ol>					

## Services Overview and Scrutiny – Recommendations to Executive

Services O&S Chair: Cllr Carole Cockburn, Services O&S Vice Chair: Phillip Townsend

Unique Ref.	Name of the Agenda Item	Recommendation	O&S Meeting Date (when the item was raised)	To be considered at the Executive Meeting on	Progress Status	Reason for the Executive Decision and Next Steps	Key Officer responsible for the item
<b>S26-09-2023 8.1</b>	THE EDGE – Consideration of Petition received	<p>The Committee considered the Petition received at Full Council 18<sup>th</sup> August 2023 RE: THE EDGE LEISURE CENTRE, HASLEMERE and made the following recommendation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To move forward with SCC negotiations to re-open the facility and attempt to find a long-term solution. Members emphasised importance of encouraging correspondence with local groups linked to the Edge. Community involvement is vital and O&amp;S Committee supports dialogue including the Community.</li> </ol>	26/9/2023	Received by Executive on 3/10.	Pending.	Officers to continue moving forward with Surrey County Council.	Matt Ellis
<b>S26-09-2023 9.1</b>	Cranleigh Leisure Centre new build update	<p>The Committee NOTED the update report and made the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that an exit-strategy is in place and a</li> </ol>	26/9/2023	Received by Executive on 3/10.	Pending	<p>The Executive resolved its recommendations in order to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver a new build, low carbon leisure</li> </ol>	Kelvin Mills

Unique Ref.	Name of the Agenda Item	Recommendation	O&S Meeting Date (when the item was raised)	To be considered at the Executive Meeting on	Progress Status	Reason for the Executive Decision and Next Steps	Key Officer responsible for the item
		<p>financial viability assessment is carried out in light of increased estimated costs.</p> <p>2. To consider/assess which form of contract would best suit this project.</p>				<p>centre in Cranleigh, as per Council approval in December 2021.</p> <p>The Executive recommended the proposal to Full Council on 17 October, at which the new capital budget was approved.</p>	
<b>S26-09-2023 11.1</b>	Local Plan Update	<p>The Committee NOTED the proposed recommendations to the Executive on the approach to updating the Local Plan and agreed that the Executive should additionally consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The impact on Neighbourhood Plan groups who will need to restart Development Plans to ensure they can deliver required housing numbers and will also need to find 11 years' worth of additional housing up to end of the new plan period 2043.</li> <li>2. To reinforce, within the development of the Local Plan, that Waverley's attractive character and valuable environmental assets constrain the amount of development that can be planned for.</li> <li>3. To ensure that WBC can demonstrate five years' worth of housing land supply to defend local communities against inappropriate speculative development within the period where the new Plan is being prepared</li> <li>4. To consider appropriate policies to ensure that the right types, sizes, and costs of houses are delivered to meet the needs of our communities.</li> </ol>	26.09.2023	Received by Executive on 3/10.	Pending	The Leader requested that the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny – Services asks the committee to vote on the points raised as recommendations to specific actions.	Andrew Longley

Unique Ref.	Name of the Agenda Item	Recommendation	O&S Meeting Date (when the item was raised)	To be considered at the Executive Meeting on	Progress Status	Reason for the Executive Decision and Next Steps	Key Officer responsible for the item
		5. To consider how the Local Plan can facilitate land that will help to deliver viable affordable homes					

## Explanation of terms used

**Unique ref. –** Each recommendation added to this tracker will be assigned a unique reference number following specific sequence (for e.g. P21-1123-1 or S22-0124-5.2) where R stands for Resources O&S and S for Services O&S, 21-1123 and 22-0124 represent the year-month and date of the meeting at which the item was raised, -1 or -5.2 represent the agenda item reference from that O&S meeting, and if more than one recommendation was raised against a specific item this can be indicated by 0.1 or 0.2, etc. next to the original agenda item reference number such as -1 or -5.

**Progress Status –** This column indicated individual progress status for each recommendation and will present 1 of 3 options: 1) Awaiting Executive Consideration, 2) Accepted / Approved by the Executive or 3) Rejected by the Executive

**Reason for the Executive Decision and Next Steps –** this column will include details on why a specific recommendation was accepted or rejected by the Executive, and where appropriate, will indicate what are the next steps for the officers or councillors.

## Contact Officers

Officer Name	Role	Email	Responsibilities in the process
<b>Jake Chambers</b>	Senior Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny)	Jake.Chambers@waverely.gov.uk	Owner of this document. Responsible for collation of the recommendations after each O&S cycle and following up with the Democratic Services Team on their progression, and feeding back the outcomes to the O&S Committees and relevant officers at the following committee cycle

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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# Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils

Report to: Executive

Date: 28 November 2023 (Waverley Borough Council)

Ward(s) affected: **All**

Report of Director: Transformation & Governance

Author: **Robin Taylor, Executive Head of Organisational Development**

Tel: 01483 **523108**

Email: [robin.taylor@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:robin.taylor@waverley.gov.uk)

Executive Portfolio Holder/ Lead Councillor responsible: Cllr Morson  
(Guildford Borough Council) and Cllr Kiehl (Waverley Borough Council)

Email: [carla.morson@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:carla.morson@guildford.gov.uk) and [victoria.kiehl@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:victoria.kiehl@waverley.gov.uk)

Report Status: Open

## Transformation and Collaboration Programme

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils agreed to enter a collaboration in July 2021, starting with the appointment of a Joint Management Team (JMT) as a way of bringing forward further business cases for collaboration. This report sets out the progress made so far and makes recommendations in respect of future collaboration, including options analyses, governance, and financial matters.

## 2. Recommendation to Executive

That the Guildford Borough Council Executive and the Waverley Borough Council Executive separately resolve the following, subject to the other Executive also agreeing likewise:

- 2.1. Note and endorse the Guildford and Waverley Partnership Vision statement in Appendix 1;
- 2.2. Note the progress made to date with regards to the Guildford and Waverley collaboration initiative as set out in Appendix 2 and section 7;
- 2.3. Adopt the proposed Transformation and Collaboration Programme set out at Appendix 3;
- 2.4. Approve a project to explore the potential benefits of co-locating Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council staff within shared premises or single HQ, resourced separately from this Transformation and Collaboration Programme, and receive a report for consideration with an options appraisal and recommendations;
- 2.5. Approve a project to explore a single shared officer structure between Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council, resourced through the initial Transformation and Collaboration budget allocations, and receive a report for consideration with an options appraisal and recommendations;
- 2.6. Agree the additional resources as set out in section 10 of this report (£100,000 of revenue and £100,000 of capital. For **Guildford Borough Council** this will be funded from flexible use of capital receipts and the Finance Recovery Reserve. For **Waverley Borough Council** this will be funded from the invest to save reserve) to support the initial start-up of this programme and note how the revenue funding will be spent to secure officer support as set out within Appendix 4;
- 2.7. Note that the initial benefits realisation work with the joint Executive Heads of Service has been carried out by the Organisational Development and Finance Teams, with a rough order of magnitude for

savings through collaboration projects at £700,000 but that this figure is expected to increase over time as the detail of more plans is developed;

- 2.8. Note that the required level of funding to support the delivery of the programme in the longer term cannot be made available at this time, necessitating a phased and prioritised approach in the first instance (focusing more on staff terms and conditions and immediate savings opportunities and less on the broader and more complex questions of the operating model for both authorities);
- 2.9. Request that consideration be given in February 2024 to how the broader programme can be fully funded and taken forward when the budgets of both Councils are agreed (and adopting a revised programme structure in line with that increased level of funding at that time);
- 2.10. Approve the principle of the Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council Executives working in partnership on matters relating to the Transformation and Collaboration Programme;
- 2.11. Approve the principle of Simultaneous Executive Meetings (SEMs) for the Executives of Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council to consider matters relating to the Transformation and Collaboration Programme;
- 2.12. Delegate authority to the Joint Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services to schedule regular meetings, as required, simultaneously of the Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council Executives, in consultation with the Leaders of both Councils, and
- 2.13. Invite Overview and Scrutiny Committees to scrutinise and comment upon the draft options appraisals, the recommendations and the costs and savings before these are finalised and brought back to the Executive for further consideration.

### **3. Reason(s) for Recommendations:**

- 3.1. The recommendations made are considered by officers as the most appropriate way to:
  - 3.1.1. Articulate and set the framework and goals for the collaborative work between Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council and provide a direction of travel;
  - 3.1.2. Enable collaborative work to continue with the resources available and allow officers to resubmit bids for funding to deliver the vision in future years;
  - 3.1.3. Ensure Executive members of both Councils can jointly debate and decide matters coming to them relating to the Transformation and Collaboration programme, ensuring transparency and agile decision making across both authorities, whilst maintaining sovereignty of both councils;
  - 3.1.4. Ensure decisions relating to sharing premises and staffing are subject to proper scrutiny; and
  - 3.1.5. Support the plans of both councils to achieve financial sustainability, particularly for Guildford Borough Council in the light of the reset Budget 2023/24 report (Full Council 25 July 2023) and Financial Recovery Plan (Full Council 10 October 2023) and revised Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

### **4. Exemption from publication**

- 4.1. This report is open and no parts of it are exempt from publication.

### **5. Purpose of Report**

- 5.1. The purpose of this report is to outline the journey to date of the collaboration between Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council, including reasons for the collaboration, and to secure

agreement from the Executives on the approach for further collaboration.

5.2. This report proposes the Transformation and Collaboration Programme as the approach for collaboration and recommends the Executive agree the recommendations to enable officers to undertake the work needed to realise the benefits of collaboration.

5.3. To secure agreement from the Executives to work closely together when considering matters relating to the Transformation and Collaboration Programme with a view to supporting the vision of partnership working across the two Councils, and to receive proposals for how that may be achieved, whilst maintaining independence and sovereignty.

## **6. Strategic Priorities**

6.1. A vision for the partnership was reported to both Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council Full Council meetings in July 2021. This vision has been summarised and updated and is presented in this report (Appendix 1) for formal agreement.

6.2. The work of the Transformation and Collaboration Programme will support the delivery of the five principles set out in the vision.

6.3. In July 2023 Guildford Borough Council's [Full Council](#) received the expected Budget review report which sets out that council's urgent financial situation<sup>1</sup>. While all councils face critical financial challenges in the medium term, the shared senior officers have reported to Guildford Borough Council that its situation is more urgent and at a larger scale than most. Guildford Borough Council will have to transform parts of how it operates and the services it provides if it is to avoid a "Section 114" declaration, which is a statement by the Chief Finance Officer that expenditure is greater than the available resources. The management team believes that the proposals for the shared Transformation and Collaboration Programme are vital to both councils' sustainability plans

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<sup>1</sup> <https://democracy.guildford.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=159&Mid=1659>

and, indeed, that the alternatives (either to pause or reverse collaboration) would represent missed opportunities for cost reduction and avoidable expense. The partnership risk register and the provisions of the Inter-Authority Agreement provide protection for one council from adverse events in the other. The Joint Governance Committee (JGC) is charged with reviewing both the risk register and the Agreement and should continue to do so, with the support of the officer team, in the light of the Guildford Borough Council Budget reset report.

## 7. Background

7.1. Following a [report](#) by the Local Government Association (LGA)<sup>2</sup> commissioned to understand the scale of financial and other benefits that closer partnership working between Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils could unlock, on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council each agreed to pursue the creation of 'a single management team, comprising statutory officers (Head of Paid Service; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer), directors and heads of service as the most appropriate means for bringing forward business cases for future collaboration'. The Joint Chief Executive was appointed in December 2021, followed by the adoption of the Inter-Authority Agreement in April 2022, creation of the JGC, and appointment of Strategic Directors in July 2022. The new JMT of Executive Heads of Services came into effect in October 2022. The creation of the JMT exceeded both councils' financial savings targets. Since then, the Transformation and Collaboration Programme Initiation Document (PID) (Appendix 5) and programme structure (Appendix 3) have been drafted.

7.2. Financial saving was one potential benefit identified from future collaborative working, but the collaboration initiative also seeks to deliver several non-financial benefits. The Guildford and Waverley Partnerships Vision statement (Appendix 1) states that the 'partnership will form a stable basis for any future partnership discussions that arise, whether locally or as a result of Government policy'. Collaboration

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<sup>2</sup> [Agenda for Council on Tuesday, 25th July, 2023, 7.00 pm - Guildford Borough Council](#)

between the two councils seeks to provide opportunities to deliver carbon neutral operations by 2030 (both Councils have declared climate emergencies and have action plans in place) and unlock opportunities to deliver sustainable and resilient public services.

- 7.3. The creation of the JMT has enabled several early benefits to be delivered by both Councils, through informal and interim collaborative approaches. These are summarised in Appendix 2.
- 7.4. The JMT is exploring longer-term possibilities for providing services differently, digitally, and together with less financial cost and less impact on the environment. The proposals for the structure of the Transformation and Collaboration Programme contained within this report reflect the thinking and planning work which has already been undertaken. As further options for collaboration develop these will be developed into projects and managed through the Transformation and Collaboration Programme

#### Partnership working between the two Executives

- 7.5 It is likely there may be several additional matters relating to the Transformation and Collaboration Programme coming before both Executives for consideration as the programme progresses. There may be benefit to the two Executives being able to consider and debate such matters together, including greater transparency, the opportunity for harmonised decisions, and ability to negotiate solutions, as well as reducing officer time and meeting duplication.
- 7.6 One option would be to make no change. This would mean officers would take separate reports to separate meetings of the two Council's Executives. There would be a time delay between the two meetings which would mean decisions would be made in isolation, and to be effective, may need to be made subject to the decision of the Executive of the other authority. The decision of one Executive would be in the public domain prior to the other Authority considering the same matter. The Executives would be able to observe the meetings of the other Council's Executive and listen to the debate but would have no opportunity to join such a debate.

- 7.7 A second option would be to schedule SEMs, and this is the recommended approach. Such meetings would be separate meetings of the two Council's Executives, with identical agendas to include matters relating to the Transformation and Collaboration Programme, held at the same time and in the same meeting room. This would allow the Executives to debate matters collectively and hear the views of the other prior to making their decisions. A separate vote would be taken on each agenda item, meaning that each Executive retained its sovereignty and independent decision making. The location of each meeting would alternate between Guildford and Godalming. Members of each authority would be able to ask questions of their Executive, albeit in the presence of the other authority's Executive. There would be two Chairs present; one for each of the meetings taking place. A protocol may be helpful to govern the practical arrangements of such meetings, but no changes would be required to the constitution of either Council. As set out in paragraph 11.6, Section 102 Local Government Act 1972, as amended by section 9 Local Government Act 2000, permits a Local Authority to establish joint committees of two or more local authorities to discharge any of their functions.
- 7.8 A third option would be for the Executives of both Councils to form a Joint Executive Committee, comprising of the Members of the Executives of both Councils. This has the added complication arising from the lack of parity in the number of members on each Executive so the 'power' of such a committee would not be equal and for this reason, it is not recommended. This option would require change to each Council's constitution and has an impact on the sovereignty of each Executive.

## **8. Consultations**

### **8.1. Staff consultation**

The formation of the JMT was carried out in consultation with affected staff and their union representatives from both authorities. This will continue to be the approach taken to any projects which directly affect staff as per each Council's agreed policies. The Chief Executive, Executive Head of Service for Organisational Development and both

organisations' HR managers meet on a regular basis with union representatives of both authorities and transformation and collaboration activity is a standing item. In addition to formal consultation and engagement with union and staff representatives, there will be a programme of staff communications and engagement to ensure staff are kept up to date with the programme as it progresses.

## 8.2. Councillor consultation

This report recommends both Councils' overview and scrutiny functions be invited to engage with the proposed programme as it progresses. Beyond this, councillor briefings will be held at key stages of the process.

## 8.3. Public consultation

As far as any proposals may affect public-facing services or external stakeholders, the appropriate consultation will be undertaken.

# 9. Key Risks

9.1. The PID (Appendix 5) sets out the risks identified in spring 2023 during the set-up of the Transformation and Collaboration Programme spring of 2023:

9.1.1. The risk of delivering little very slowly if not enough resource is provided or the programme is not prioritised;

9.1.2. The risk we will not be able to afford the IT/Terms and Conditions costs needed to deliver business cases that achieve the vision/objectives; and

9.1.3. The risk we do not have enough expertise in house to deliver a programme of such magnitude.

9.2. The JGC periodically undertakes a formal review (at least once every 6 months) of these and other identified risks on the collaboration risk register, reviewing impact and likelihood scores and making any changes to the list of risks and mitigating actions.

9.3. The main risks to the Programme so far are having a lack of resource to support the programme, including within the enabling functions.

## **10. Financial Implications**

10.1. These are challenging times financially, for both Councils. The Transformation and Collaboration Programme is part of a range of actions aimed at meeting financial shortfalls in both MTFPs. The programme does, however, require resources to carry out critical enabling work required to realise savings from further collaboration.

10.2. Initial benefits realisation work with the joint Executive Heads of Service has been carried out by the Organisational Development and Finance Teams, with a rough order of magnitude for savings through collaboration projects at £700,000. It is clear from this work, and from that of other council partnerships elsewhere over the years, that future savings are likely to be found from the ability to share teams across both councils, thereby realising efficiencies and economies of scale.

10.3. The enabling work needed at this next stage of the programme will focus on establishing the best approach to harmonising staff terms and conditions. It is recommended each Council initially contribute one-off funding of £100,000 of revenue and £100,000 of capital. For **Guildford Borough Council** this will be funded from flexible use of capital receipts and the Finance Recovery Reserve. For **Waverley Borough Council** this will be funded from the invest to save reserve.

## **11. Legal Implications**

11.1. On 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council each agreed to pursue the option of creating and sharing a single management team as the most appropriate means for bringing forward business cases for future collaboration.

11.2. On 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022 Guildford Borough Council resolved to enter into an agreement with Waverley Borough Council on a jointly agreed set of terms for the purpose of establishing a joint senior management team. On 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022 Waverley Borough Council resolved to enter into an

agreement with Guildford Borough Council on a jointly agreed set of terms for the purpose of establishing a joint senior management team.

- 11.3. Section 113 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides a local authority with a statutory power to enter into an agreement with another local authority for the placing at the disposal of the latter for the purposes of their functions, on such terms as may be provided by the agreement, of the services of officers employed by the former, after consulting such officers.
- 11.4. An inter authority agreement, in accordance with s113 Local Government Act 1972, was executed between the parties of Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2022, to govern the provision of a joint senior management team. It was varied on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023 to reflect the review in March 2023 carried out by the JGC.
- 11.5. That joint senior management team, consisting of a Joint Chief Executive, Joint Strategic Directors, Joint Statutory Officers, and Joint Executive Heads of Service, has been created and appointed to. It has been operational since October 2022.
- 11.6. Section 102 Local Government Act 1972, as amended by section 9 Local Government Act 2000, permits a Local Authority to establish joint committees of two or more local authorities to discharge any of their functions. In April 2022, each of the two Councils, agreed to establish a JGC, in accordance with section 102(1) of the Local Government Act 1972. Within the terms of reference, the Committee's role and function is said to be to undertake periodically a formal review, at least once every 12 months, of the inter-authority agreement, ensuring it continues to be fit for purpose and recommending to both full Councils any changes required. The last such review was undertaken by the JGC in November 2023.
- 11.7. A further inter authority agreement, in accordance with s113 Local Government Act 1972, was executed between the parties of Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2023, in respect of temporary staff sharing arrangements.

## **12. Human Resource Implications**

- 12.1. The overall drivers for the collaboration between Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils are about providing sustainable services and making financial savings across the two Councils. These are both likely to have significant impact in terms of Human Resources Implications for the workforce.
- 12.2. The Transformation and Collaboration Programme is likely to result in changes to service delivery, staffing structures and numbers which will involve significant staff and Union consultation in relation to relevant legislation such as the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) legislation (TUPE) and consultation on changes to roles and potential redeployment and redundancy.
- 12.3. The period of the Transformation and Collaboration Programme creates a prolonged period of workforce instability over a number of years and is likely to impact significantly on both Councils' ability to both recruit and retain good quality staff during the transformation period. A workforce strategy will be developed that sets out how both councils will, during this period, ensure employees remain engaged, supported and motivated.
- 12.4. The interim period has and will continue to provide challenges in terms of managing and preparing the short-term arrangements as well as ensuring appropriate governance, contractual paperwork and system requirements are in place.
- 12.5. Additional staffing resources will need to be recruited to assist with the delivery of the Transformation and Collaboration Programme or to backfill and allow existing staff to take on the additional work required in the delivery of the programme. The amount of additional resource will depend on the options chosen and the pace at which the project needs to be delivered.

### **13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 13.1. Both Councils will need to ensure they have assessed and understood the equality implications of policy and service changes brought forward as a result of this programme.
- 13.2. Where options analyses are undertaken and recommendations for change are put forward (including in regard to the two projects to explore the potential benefits of staff co-location and a single shared officer structure recommended at paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5), these will need to be accompanied by Equality Impact Assessments at that time to ensure that change does not discriminate or unfairly impact residents or staff.
- 13.3. Options analyses and recommendations put forward in regard to the two projects to explore the potential benefits of staff co-location and a single shared officer structure recommended at paragraphs 2.4 and 2.5 will, in particular, need to take account of the responsibility of both councils to provide an accessible and inclusive environment and practices where residents and staff are treated fairly, consistently and with respect.
- 13.4. Any proposed changes to Council premises will need to have regard to accessibility for people with disabilities.

### **14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

- 14.1. Proposals for sharing premises and/or co-location will need to have regard to the councils' policies of carbon reduction.
- 14.2. Collaborative working between Waverley Borough Council and Guildford Borough Council allows for enhanced coordination and planning of carbon reduction projects across a wider administrative region.

14.3. Proposals for the SEMs for the Executives of Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council will allow streamlined decision making for cross-boundary carbon reduction projects.

14.4. Proposals for shared staff, co-location and SEMs allow for the consolidation of resources and reduced duplication of work.

## **15. Summary of Options**

15.1 The main options open to the Executive are:

i. Take the approach recommended within this report

This report sets out a proposed programme of transformation and collaboration for Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils. If the Executives agree the recommendations contained within this report, they will be endorsing the overall programme structure, governance and timelines and agreeing that options analyses be undertaken in respect of the potential for creating a shared workforce and (resourced separately from this programme) premises for both Councils.

Other potential elements of the programme such as looking at a joint operating model and an IT workstream are not currently funded by the allocation within this report but will be included in proposals brought in February (as outlined in recommendation 2.8).

ii. Take no further action on collaboration.

The Executive could choose not to progress the collaboration initiative as set out within this report. The JMT is already in place and the Executives could decide that this joint team will continue to manage the two councils' separate teams and services as they are without any further change, foregoing any future potential opportunities for service development and cost reduction.

iii. Do something else

The Executive could agree to pursue the collaboration in a different way or to a greater or lesser degree. Options for the Economic Case to deliver the objectives of the Programme are set out in the PID (appendix 5). For example, the Executive could resolve to pursue some of the projects referenced within this report but not others or it could ask for officers to focus on something else altogether. If collaboration were to be abandoned, the termination provisions of the Inter-Authority Agreement would apply and the significant costs of dissolution would have to be reported to both councils appropriately.

## 16. Background Papers

- Minutes of the Guildford Borough Council meeting 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021
- Minutes of the Waverley Borough Council meeting 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021
- Minutes of the Guildford Borough Council meeting 5<sup>th</sup> April 2022
- Minutes of the Waverley Borough Council meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022
- Minutes of the JGC meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2023
- Guildford Borough Council Constitution
- Waverley Borough Council Constitution

## 17. Appendices

- Guildford and Waverley Partnership Vision (Appendix 1)
- Achievements of collaborative working to date (Appendix 2)
- Transformation and Collaboration Programme structure (Appendix 3)
- Investing in Change Capacity (Appendix 4)
- Transformation and Collaboration PID (Appendix 5)

<b>Service</b>	<b>Sign off date</b>
Finance / S.151 Officer	09/10/23

Legal / Governance	22/06/23
HR	28/06/23
Equalities	04/07/23
Lead Councillor	08/11/23 (Guildford Borough Council) 14/11/23 (Waverley Borough Council)
CMB	31/10/23
Executive Briefing	08/11/23 (Guildford Borough Council) 14/11/23 (Waverley Borough Council)
Committee Services	15/11/23

Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council Partnership Vision

Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils have agreed to create a robust partnership to provide more sustainable services for local residents, based on these five principles.

- 1. The two councils will continue to be accountable to their own residents.***
- 2. The partnership will help protect and enhance priority services in the face of the critical local government funding challenge.***
- 3. The partners will seek to do more together than they could separately to respond to the climate emergency.***
- 4. The councils will harmonise internal processes and external service delivery except when there is a good reason not to.***
- 5. This partnership will form a stable basis for any future collaborative discussions.***

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## **Achievements to date for collaborative working between Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council**

### **Savings**

- The new JMT with its business support costs GBC £421k and WBC £438k less than the former teams per year, against a target of £300k per council.
- Coordinated emergency planning contracts with Applied Resilience 2023, improving resilience and a saving in removing the 'red phone' allowance
- Shared staff wellbeing survey, enabling us to benchmark and compare, and saved 7k on procuring separately.

### **Staffing**

- Appointment of shared Joint Management Team (Chief Executive Officer, Strategic Directors, and Executive Heads of Service) (as listed above).
- Shared S151 prior to JMT 2022
- Shared interim Borough Solicitor in 2022-2023
- Shared temporary Business Manager for Planning 2022/3

### **Collaborative working**

- Joint working on consultations - Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill: 2nd March 2023, Infrastructure Levy: 9th June 2023, AONB: 13th June 2023
- Developed a single committee template for May 2023
- Shared work on UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund 2022/3
- Joint response to civil emergencies
- Numerous external meetings reducing duplication
- Shared business event at Charterhouse College 2023
- One-off meetings between the two councils relating to Benefits and differences in service delivery between the two councils
- SCC's Borough and District Flood generic updates – will now be held jointly for Guildford and Waverley BCs – an example of time efficiencies
- Joint Administration of Energy grant application scheme, GBC administering on behalf of WBC.
- Support from Guildford Borough Council to Waverley Borough Council's procurement function

### **Policies Harmonised**

- Pre-election period 2022
- Community asset transfer 2023
- Covert Investigative Powers Policy 2023
- Pay Policy Statements 2023

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## Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council

### Transformation and Collaboration Programme Structure

This document is a key component of the Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) Business Case. It sets out the structure and approach to designing and delivering the Transformation and Collaboration Programme.

In 2021 Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils commenced discussions about partnership working. Both councils agreed to create a Joint Management Team (JMT) which would be asked to bring forward proposals for further collaboration.

The JMT, which came into existence in October 2022, includes a Joint Chief Executive, Joint Strategic Directors, and Joint Executive Heads of Service.

The Guildford and Waverley Transformation and Collaboration Programme aims to meet a number of objectives:

#### **Principal objective**

1. Bridge budget gaps by making savings

#### **Other objectives**

2. Deliver sustainable and resilient public services
3. Deliver carbon neutral operations by 2030 in both organisations.
4. Realise the aims of the collaboration vision, including the delivery of any agreed business cases for further change.
5. Deliver on existing transformation commitments unless these undermine the above or there is a case for suspending or rescinding these; and
6. Respond to local and national economic challenges in terms of services, contracts, and staffing

In Autumn 2022, consultation took place with the JMT and relevant Portfolio Holders of both councils and one-page collaboration proposals were written and evaluated as a first step in the process of building a Transformation and Collaboration Programme. Subsequently, the Executive Heads of Service were asked to identify how both councils can deliver services differently, digitally and together to meet the aims of this collaborative work (listed above). Their proposals, and the budget initially allocated for Transformation and Collaboration work, have informed the approach and proposed Programme structure below.

Nov 2022 - Nov 2026	Programme Management
Nov 2022 – March 2026	Workstream 1 –Terms and Conditions Options Analysis
Oct 2023 – Nov 2026	Workstream 2 – Cost Saving and Revenue Raising Projects (cashable)

## **Rationale for this Approach**

A programme management approach will be taken to deliver the leadership, direction, and governance for the change. Both Councils will need to invest in Business Transformation and programme/project management resource to deliver the change required. Workstream 1 (Terms and Conditions Options Analysis) will deliver a long-term solution for the shared staffing aim of the Collaboration vision. Front loading the cashable savings projects, in Workstream 2, gives the Programme the best chance of an affordable Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for both boroughs.

## **Assumptions – This Transformation and Collaboration Programme will...**

- Deliver the six objectives set out on the first page of this document
- Run over the next 3-4 financial years.
- Be delivered within an affordable MTFP for both Councils
- Develop robust mandates and business cases at programme and project level demonstrating benefits before permanent structural changes are implemented.
- Comply with Project Portfolio Management (PPM) Governance Framework principles
- Be project-managed by a team comprising colleagues from both authorities
- Report into a new Guildford and Waverley Transformation and Collaboration Board
- Be overseen by the Enterprise Portfolio Board which comprises the Joint Chief Executive and Joint Strategic Directors
- Be guided by the decisions and recommendations of formal committees at both Councils (Executive and Full Council as per constitutional rules) as well as any existing or future joint committees.
- Take a flexible approach and be open to change as issues arise.
- Learn lessons from previous transformation and change programmes in terms of approach; benefits; issues; costs and savings, including those at Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council, but also other authorities that have done/are doing collaborative work

Neither Council is able, at the outset, to provide the level of funding needed to deliver all aspects of the vision at pace. As a result, programme delivery will be phased and consideration will need to be given as part of the budget-setting process in early 2024 as to whether both Councils are able to invest in the full Programme or whether to continue with a phased and reduced approach.

More detail on the proposed structure of the Programme is provided below.

## **Programme Management (define, design and deliver) - Nov 22 to end of Programme**

Initiation – delivery of control documents such as business case and Programme brief

- Governance – set up of boards, approval/decision points & reporting (this will include both programme and project management mechanisms and any formal committees, sub-committees, or joint committees of both Councils)
- Definition– delivery of products such as Vision, Blueprint, Plan
- Design – initiation of projects to deliver outputs
- Communications and Stakeholder Engagement plan

- Assurance – a plan for independent assurance

### **Workstream 1 – Terms and Conditions Options Analysis - Nov 2022 – March 2026**

#### **Shared staffing - harmonisation of terms and conditions**

Project-managed by HR Manager (Waverley Borough Council) and HR Lead Specialist (Guildford Borough Council) to identify and articulate the options for long-term shared staffing through harmonised terms and conditions, governed through the Programme Board. Allocated funds will be used to pay for expert support on this complex area of work.

### **Workstream 2 – Priority Collaboration Projects delivering savings or generating income to deliver Waverley Borough Council and Guildford Borough Council MTFPs (business cases still need to quantify the savings anticipated) - Oct 2023 – Nov 2026**

Through the consultation done so far with JMT to identify opportunities to deliver services differently, digitally and together to meet the aims of the collaborative work, over 50 ideas have been put forward for collaborative working. Work is ongoing with Finance teams to produce more detailed breakdowns of savings of these potential projects but a rough order of magnitude for savings is £700,000. However, a significant proportion of these projects relate to shared internal teams/staffing and this is reliant on decisions relating to Workstream 1.

#### **Related projects**

##### **Colocation**

Both Executives have confirmed their desire to explore the possibility of co-locating staff within a shared HQ. This major project can be delivered mostly independently from other collaboration work but consideration must be given to IT and terms and conditions (i.e. changing staff place of work). The initial budget available for the Transformation and Collaboration Programme is not sufficient to project manage this major project but the two will interface through the Transformation and Collaboration Board and Team.

##### **Guildford Borough Council Financial Recovery Project**

A project set up to deliver a balanced MTFP for Guildford Borough Council. This will provide the Guildford Borough Council baselines for the wider Programme in terms of headcount, budgets and service levels and secure a MTFP for Guildford Borough Council that can afford the Transformation and Collaboration Programme. This work is therefore a major dependency.

#### **Programme Governance**

Senior Responsible Officer – Strategic Director for Transformation and Governance, Ian Doyle

Programme Lead – Executive Head of Organisational Development, Robin Taylor (Richard Bates owning Finance Case and links to MTFP)

Programme Manager – Waverley Borough Council Business Transformation Manager, Yasmine Makin

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## **Investing in Change Capacity – summary of allocated funds**

Economic Case options 2 (scaled back)

### One-off non-establishment change/consultancy budget

£200,000 split 50/50 between Guildford Borough Council and Waverley Borough Council.

### One-off HR establishment growth

1 x HR Business partner, c£56,000 (2 year temporary)

### One-off Business Transformation establishment growth

1 x Business Transformation Officer, £44,000 (2 year temporary)

The above allocations relate to Economic Case option 2 within the programme initiation document (appendix 5). As recommendation 2.9 sets out within the report, it is requested that consideration be given in February 2024 to how the broader programme can be fully funded and taken forward when the budgets of both Councils are agreed (and adopting a revised programme structure in line with that increased level of funding at that time). Resource that could be considered at that point could include the following with further funding:

### HR establishment growth

1 x HR Business Partner = £56,000

1 x HR Change Lead (make temporary position permanent) c£65,000 (estimate – would need re-evaluation)

### Business Transformation establishment growth

1 x Business Transformation Officer £44,000

2 x Business analysts, £40,000 x 2 = £80,000 (estimate – would need evaluation)

### Programme and Project Management Growth

1 x Enterprise Portfolio Manager c£65,000 (estimate – would need evaluation)

1 x PMO officer (in addition to existing PMO officer) £61,348

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# Transformation and Collaboration Programme Initiation Document (PID)

November 2023 v.05

EPB - Please note this document will continue to evolve over time as more information becomes available and decisions are made.

# Mandate

In 2021 Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils commenced discussions about partnership working. Both councils agreed to create a Joint Management Team (JMT) which would be asked to bring forward proposals for further collaboration. The JMT, which came into existence in October 2022, includes a Joint Chief Executive, Joint Strategic Directors, and Joint Executive Heads of Service.

The Joint Management Team and both Executives have informally agreed that the Guildford and Waverley Transformation and Collaboration Programme should:

**Primary objective:**

- 1. Bridge budget gaps where these exist.**

**Secondary objectives:**

- 2. Deliver sustainable and resilient public services.**
- 3. Deliver carbon neutral operations by 2030 in both organisations.**
- 4. Realise the aims of the collaboration vision, including the delivery of any agreed business cases for further change.**
- 5. Deliver on existing transformation commitments unless these undermine the above or there is a case for suspending or rescinding these; and**
- 6. Respond to local and national economic challenges in terms of services, contracts, and staffing**

# Draft Strategic Outline Programme (SOP) Business Case Summary

Case	Strategic Question	Strategic Answer
<b>Strategic Case</b>	What is the compelling case for change?	<p>Given the current financial challenges and threats to local government there is a need to save money and deliver more sustainable services. Collaborating between the two councils unlocks benefits such as economies of scale and increased resilience.</p> <p>The programme must design and deliver an 'organisation' capable of delivering the vision in the mandate.</p>
<b>Economic Case</b>	What are our options for delivering the best value for money solution?	<p>Our strategic options at this stage concern the best way to deliver this Programme</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Do Nothing – Mandate already approved - this is not an option</li> <li>2. Do Minimum – (scaled back solution) manage in House with no/minimum additional external support (&lt;£500k)</li> <li>3. Do More – Manage in House with only targeted specialist external support (ROM £2m+ Rev)</li> <li>4. Do Most - Out-Source to External Management Consultancy (ROM £2-3m+)</li> </ol>
<b>Commercial Case</b>	What do we need to buy to deliver the best solution?	Achieving the vision set out by Executives will require buying in some external/specialist resources. We can probably use existing frameworks
<b>Financial Case</b>	Can we afford it?	<p>The budget for a scaled back option 2 (do minimum) has been identified. It is not yet clear the extent to which this will address the current £16m financial shortfall over the next 4 years.</p> <p>Service Plans will hold the financial baselines for Directorates and Service Areas. The financial success of this Programme will be baselined and reported through the MTFPs of both authorities. Specific projects will be managed and reported through this Programme.</p>
<b>Management Case</b>	Can we deliver it?	Both Councils have learned lessons from previous change programmes and want to deliver this transformation and collaboration differently. Option 2 is manageable change within the resources we have. To ensure alignment between the Programme and the organisation all change will be embedded in Service Plans.

## Programme Management Assumptions Approved by Enterprise Portfolio Board (EPB) March 2023 (M) or October 2023 (O)

- Deliver the six objectives set out in the mandate over the next four financial years [subject to confirmation of dates with delivery leads] within an affordable MTFP for both Councils (M)
- Be overseen by the Enterprise Portfolio Board which comprises the Joint Chief Executive and Joint Strategic Directors. Report into a new Guildford and Waverley Transformation and Collaboration Board (which will replace the existing GBC savings programme board and the existing WBC Business Transformation Board). (M)
- Comply with the PPM Governance Framework. Develop robust mandates and business cases at programme and project level demonstrating benefits before permanent structural changes are implemented. Be guided by the decisions and recommendations of formal committees at both Councils (Executive and Full Council as per constitutional rules) as well as any existing or future joint committees. (M)
- Adopt and be guided by a recognised approach to organisational design and development, such as McKinsey 7S. Take a flexible approach and be open to change as issues arise.(M)
- Assumption that the existing Waverley Business Transformation Team needs review to deliver Transformation and Collaboration (O) (in light of revenue allocation)
- Financial Recovery at GBC has inherited and will review residual GBC Savings Programme initiatives (O)

# Strategic Assumptions

- There is an assumption that to succeed this Programme will need to embed a culture that is equipped to manage change and is comfortable doing so. The vision of the Organisational Development Service is for it to be a hub for change, strategy and improvement across both councils. All staff will need to understand how they fit in and feel ownership of the solutions and the change.

# Strategic Risks for the Programme at this early stage

Strategic Case Risk – There is a risk that if we don't prioritise, we will deliver very little, very slowly. Both Councils are over-stretched. Re-directing resources to priorities will be essential to managing this risk (High Risk)

Financial Risk – There is a risk that costs (ROM £2-3m+) associated to achieve the vision will be too high, particularly in relation to IT.

Management Case Risk – Project & Programme Management, Business Analysis and Operating Model Design skills and resources are scarce across the Councils. Do we have the capacity and capability to deliver? Council staff learning these skills is essential to limiting costs (High Risk)

# Dependencies

- Dependency on Financial Recovery Project (GBC) to deliver agreed baselines for Guildford Borough Council service plans as part of budget book work.
- Critical dependency on enablers (HR, IT & Finance)

# Economic Case – Original Options Evaluated Against Programme Success Criteria

Option	Approach	Pros - Benefits	Cons – Dis-Benefits	Programme Success Criteria			
				Bridge Budget Gap (Cost/Ben)	Ownership of the Change	Embed Change Culture	Better Public Services (VFM)
Do Nothing	Mandate already approved - this is not an option	No additional costs	No managed change, savings or efficiencies				
Do Minimum	Manage in House (scaled back) with no additional external support	Lowest cost option Delivery of some savings Ownership of the change	Without the specialist skills delivery of complex change is improbable (scale back ambitions)				
Do More	Manage in House with targeted specialist external support	Delivery is more probable if we can access some specialist support Potential to deliver more savings Strongest ownership of the change	A ROM cost of £2m+				
Do Most	Out-Source to External Management Consultancy	Fills essential capacity and skills gap and brings experience of managing big transformations and complex org change	Highest cost option. Potentially unaffordable Hard to estimate ROM of £2-3m+ Lack of ownership of the change				

# Management Case – Rationale for Programme Structure

Approved by EPB

A programme management approach will be taken to deliver the leadership, direction, and governance for the change. Both Councils will need to invest in Business Transformation and programme/project management resource to deliver change-required.

Workstream 1 (Terms and Conditions) will deliver a long-term solution for the shared staffing aim of the Collaboration vision.

Workstream 2 (cashable savings projects) gives the Programme the best chance of an affordable Medium Term Financial Plan for both boroughs.

# Programme Board (escalating to EPB)

To be developed with Programme Team

- **Senior Responsible Officer – Ian Doyle** - Responsible for delivering the successful outcomes of the programme
- **Programme Director – Robin Taylor** - Day to day leadership and strategic direction to the programme (jointly led by Richard Bates owning Finance Case and links to MTFP)
- **Senior Business User - Annie Righton** – Responsible for frontline business areas realising the change
- **Senior Supplier & HR Lead - Robin Taylor** - Responsible for over-arching Operating Model, HR, culture and delivery of change management.
- **Finance & Procurement Lead (151 Officer) – Richard Bates**– Responsible for finance strategy/model, financial case, benefits, MTFP & procurement timeline
- **ICT & Comms Lead – Nicola Haymes** – Responsible for IT strategy/model and delivery of supporting systems, and comms

The Programme Manager, Yasmine Makin, will be responsible for day-to-day delivery of the programme & management of the team and will prepare reports and agendas for the programme board meetings. They will manage the interface between the Programme Team and Board.

Other Strategic Directors & Executive Heads to receive reports and invited to attend if interested or required

# Programme Team – Prog Mgmt

To be developed with Programme Team

PPM Role	Post	Responsibilities	Name(s)
Prog Manager	WBC Bus Transform Mgr	Day to day delivery of the programme & management of the team	Yasmine Makin (WBC)
Prog Support, Project Mgrs	WBC Bus Transform Officers	Day to day management of programme information, control documents, reporting and support team	
Prog Team Member	Strategy Leads	Ensuring alignment of strategies and embedding change in Service Plans and reporting on BAU performance	Being recruited
Prog Comms	GBC and WBC Comm Managers	Design, deliver and manage comms with key stakeholders to ensure staff engagement, collective view and active senior support.	Ian Mackie (WBC) Mel Battams (GBC)
Additional Enterprise Level Support			
PPM Governance (Advisor)	PMO officer	Encourage compliance with PPM Framework. Supports decision making through EPB.	
PPM Governance (Interim)	PPM best practice	Encourage the use of PPM methodology (MSP & Prince2) in a pragmatic and useful way. Deliver skills transfer to Programme & Project Team members.	Louise Odell
Specialist leads	Enabling services managers (Finance, IT, HR, Regeneration /Assets, Legal, Strategy)	Deliver specialist elements of the workstreams	

# Operating Model Design Principles

Draft for discussion with JMT, Programme Team and Lead G/W HR Change consultant (once appointed)

Principle	Description
Service Design	Services will be sustainable and resilient. We won't assume the way it's always been done is the way it should be done from now on. The services of both councils will be jointly designed and delivered if there is a saving to be made.
Digital	Digital first. We will start with user needs rather than services and build from there. We will build digital services, not just websites.
Financial	We will operate within available resources. We will invest in the future but not at the expense of the present. We will understand the costs and benefits of decisions before committing to them.
Customer	All initial customer contact will be online or routed through a customer services team. There will be a 'front door' for face-to-face customer contact in both boroughs.
Procurement and commissioning	We will agree and manage contracts effectively to ensure value for money and excellent service for residents. We will consider and evaluate all delivery options.
Data and insight	Decision-making in both councils will be evidence-based. Data insights will be captured and analysed, so that we can evaluate impact and value of our activity.

Principle	Description
Leadership	Leaders will be visible and accessible to staff, councillors and the public. We will invest in our current and future leaders. Leadership at all levels will be nurtured. Councillors and officers will learn and develop together.
Organisation	We will identify and build on the best of both organisations. Neither organisation will remain the same. Both will change and improve. Directorates and services will not work in silos and where matrix management structures are beneficial these will be implemented or preserved. Where they are not beneficial or sustainable they will be removed.
People Page 61	We will be one staffing organisation serving two democratic councils. The terms and conditions of both organisations will be reviewed and harmonised, with input from expert independent consultants. Our approach will be fair on staff and on the public taxpayer and we will continue to consult and engage with the unions in both organisations. We will ensure that staff are effectively and appropriately recruited, rewarded, developed, led and motivated. We will facilitate modern and hybrid ways of working but our people will not be strangers to each other in the office or to the borough.
Process	Processes will be defined, deliberate and lean. Activities that do not add value will cease. Some systems will be shared. Others will be harmonised. Others will need to stay the same.
Governance	We will continue to serve two distinct boroughs and two sovereign councils but our processes and policies will be shared or harmonised to ensure efficiency and successful collaboration where there is resource to do so.
Property	Guildford and Waverley will share a single HQ. Where beneficial, satellite sites will also be shared.

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## Waverley Borough Council

**Report to:** Executive

**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report of Director:** Transformation & Governance

**Author:** Rosie Plaistowe-Melham, Financial Services Manager

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**Executive Portfolio Holder/ Lead Councillor responsible:** Councillor Mark Merryweather, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Assets and Property

**Email:** [mark.merryweather@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:mark.merryweather@waverley.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Open

# General Fund mid-year MTFP review 2023/24

## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the latest projections for the MTFP. It highlights the emerging pressures on the General Fund Revenue budget and the compensating measures both of which have been identified at the time of writing and estimates their financial impact on the Council's services and finances.

## 2. Recommendation to Executive:

That the Executive:

- i. Notes the 2023/24 forecast outturn position for the General Fund;
- ii. Notes the emerging pressures and risks set out in the report;
- iii. Notes the position regarding the General Fund capital programme and individual capital projects.

### **3. Reason(s) for Recommendation:**

- 3.1 The annual General Fund budget is a major decision for the Council and setting a balanced budget is a statutory requirement. The uncertain economic climate necessitates a review of the MTFP in the light of its financial impacts on the council: the Council must act quickly to ensure the risk of a net budget shortfall is addressed so that the Council can continue to function.
- 3.2 Scrutiny of this MTFP through a Mid-Year Review demonstrates transparency and good governance.

### **4. Exemption from publication**

Is the report or any part of it exempt from publication?

No

### **5. Purpose of Report**

- 5.1 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is the Council's [please change throughout] key financial planning document which takes account of all the various currently known factors and influences that may impact on the Council's General Fund for the forthcoming financial years up to and including 2026/27. These factors are both within and beyond the Council's control and include; general macro-economic conditions, Government funding plans and restrictions, current expenditure patterns, inflation, planned changes to service delivery, changing demand for services, and changes affecting our sources of independent income etc. The MTFP also includes the identification of the risks that the Council has identified that it faces.

5.2 The MTFP looks forward over the next four years to anticipate the spending pressures faced by the Council. In light of the changing economic picture, planning now to meet expected and known changes in the future provides greater opportunity to mitigate the impact.

## **6. Strategic Priorities**

6.1 Having a robust, sustainable budget is essential to deliver all aspects of the Corporate Plan. The Corporate Strategy is reliant on financial sustainability and the MTFP is at the heart of its delivery.

## **7. Background**

### **7.1 Outturn Position 2022/23**

7.1.1 A summary of the General Fund revenue outturn was reported to members in the Q4 performance report in July 2023. In total, there was a net underspend of £729k after allowing for agreed budget carry forwards. That underspend equates to a 5% movement from the net General Fund service budget of £15million. Proposals for the apportionment of this underspend will reflect the stresses assessed in this report.

7.1.2 The service-by-service outturn analysis was also included in the Q4 performance report to O&S in July accompanied by commentaries from the S151 Officer and the Heads of Service. In preparing this 2023/24 mid-year review the key matters arising have been reviewed further and matters particularly impacting on the MTFP are noted below.

7.1.3 Key items to note are as follows:

- Assets and Property
  - Central Offices experienced some savings on business rates with the top floor of The Burys not in use, and additional rental incomes.
- Environment

- Car Park income performed much better than the approved budget in 2022/23. This was due to the combined effect of rate increases as per the Council approval in September 2021 while the reduction in volumes due to covid-19 and the fee uplift not materialising to the degree forecast.
- Finance
  - Investment income from cash deposits benefitted from higher than expected deposit rates that in part mitigated the even higher rates of inflation experienced, achieving a gross £840k improvement on budget in 2022/23.
- Planning
  - Planning income outturn in 2021/22 fell £98k short of budget however this was mitigated through some cost control.
- Other
  - Establishment spend was carefully managed and monitored throughout the financial year and delivering a final saving for General Fund.
  - Collaboration delivered savings in year following the restructure of the Joint Management team in year.

## **7.2 2023/24 Budget Management and emerging pressures on the MTFP (Annexe 1)**

7.2.1 The Council is now six months into the new financial year, and eight months have passed since the Council set its 2023/24 budget. Current Forecasts estimate a forecast outturn of a net £234k surplus. Officers have reviewed the latest position and, even though inflationary pressures are higher than expected, there are sufficient compensating measures identified to currently forecast that General Fund should remain in an overall balanced budget position in 2023/24.

7.2.2 Despite this position, there remain significant pressures on the current and longer term outlook for the Council's financial plans. The latest updates on these are summarised below:

- **Impact of inflation on Waverley's budgets – pay, contracts, IT, utilities (Annexe 2)**

At present, across £168k adverse variance is projected in 2023/24 for General Fund inflation. Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) is currently 6.7% (August 2023). Many of the Council's contracts are linked to February and March CPI (10.1-10.4%) whilst budgeted inflation was estimated between 5% and 9%, which has led to costs incurred beyond the original budget.

One mitigating consequence of inflation is currently higher deposit rates which, when applied to constant cash deposits has driven better than expected gross treasury yield, with Bank of England base rate increases and robust management of staff costs. This income is forecast to perform a net improvement of over £800k compared to budget. This is not without its own adverse impact however, as the financial benefits of holding cash deposits makes them more attractive compared to investing in the capital projects that the Council needs to pursue its Corporate Strategy.

Unfortunately, despite being under control in the current year, the impact of inflation will have further negative impact in future years as inflation compounds, and current forecasts for inflation remain higher than usually anticipated. Officers have built increased inflation forecasts into the updated Inflation Schedule (Annexe 2) and Updated MTFP (Annexe 3), however these rates remain unknown with more uncertainty than is usual.

- **Cost of living and its economic impact on Waverley's community, businesses and residents**

Officers have seen the impacts of the cost of living on both expenditure and income. Some services have experienced an uptake in support needs, with officers supporting through funds such as Household Support Fund and hardship funds where possible. Presently, financial impacts to the Council are relatively small and within overall current budgets.

- **Key Income**

Key Income overall is performing well, mainly due to treasury investment income with higher than anticipated interest rates. However, some areas are struggling to achieve budgeted income and budgets relating to these areas going forward will need to be carefully considered in budget setting.

- Car Parking – recovery of car park usage and therefore car park income following Covid-19 has plateaued. Current forecasts are that car park income will not hit budget in 2023/24, potentially around £280k short of budget.
- Development Management – the Council has been experiencing a reduction in planning applications which is in line with the national trends, income could fall circa £150k short of budget
- Building Control – reduced income has been experienced to date, currently forecast to fall £60k short of the budget. This reduction often follows the trend for reduced planning applications.
- Leisure Centres - The 2023/24 leisure contract has now been let to Everyone Active, and Waverley will continue to receive a management fee in to the Council. In the short to medium term this is at a lower level than experienced with the previous contractors, this is due to the investment the leisure provider will be making in the centres, however this has been provided for within the budget and MTFP. The contracted income will return to usual levels over the life of the MTFP.

- **Recruitment and retention**

The employment market is currently competitive and both retaining and recruiting staff has been a challenge this financial year. Interim support where needed for hard to fill vacancies is at a particularly high cost due to the active market, therefore careful management by managers is helping to minimise these costs and keep them within approved staffing budgets to date. At this stage this is not of concern as officers are managing the impact on service budgets and in depth

regular monitoring is taking place to ensure variances are kept to a minimum.

There exists a risk that returns sought from efficiencies will diminish to a point of exhaustion if not reversal. The Council has benefitted from its investment in the Development Planning team included in the 2023/24 budget. However, there can be no guarantee that the level of annual cost savings secured in recent years can be sustained.

- **Updates on measures to balance the General Fund budget**

The MTFP includes various saving/efficiency programmes in place to address the forecast budget shortfall. These are particularly important to identify given the uncertainty in the estimates and local economy caused by the pandemic and rising costs. Some updates included in this MTFP review include:

- Commercial Strategy

- Fees and charges increases including non-statutory planning fees have been applied and delivering income, however in some areas, volume has fallen.
- Expected new income from new car parking charges haven't been delivered to date, however projects are being pushed forward.
- The Edge has been passed back to Surrey County Council and is no longer in the leisure management contract.

- Business Transformation

- 2023/24 target delivered in year.

- Asset Management

- 2023/24 income target in year. Awaiting handover of Brightwells site.

- **Other new items identified since February Council;**

- Changes in planning fees due in reform of national planning policy, awaiting outcome, draft regulations have been laid before parliament – 35% increase for major applications and 25% increase for all other applications.

### **7.3 MTFP Forward Look**

7.3.1 Looking forward to 2024/25 and beyond, a budget gap remains in our MTFP rising to £7.2m p.a. gross pressures (£20.4m cumulative) by 2026/2027. After identified measures to mitigate this gap, the budget shortfall remaining to be resolved rises to £1.4m p.a. (£6.7m cumulative) by 2026/2027.

7.3.2 Inflation rates applied in the following years in the MTFP range between 2% and 5% which are applied dependant on the contractual agreements in place or expectations on general market inflation. The breakdown of the current forecast inflationary position can be seen at Annexe 2, table 2.

7.3.3 The mid-year update to the MTFP is at Annexe 3 and any further changes forecast at this stage has explanatory notes.

7.3.4 During the budget setting period officers will work with services and members to cover the 2024/25 £1.2m projected shortfall. And, in addition, look to improve the future years financial position. Options to be considered could include;

- Reductions in Revenue Contributions to Capital
- Additional savings targets
- Income targets

## **8. Capital Programme Review**

8.5 Capital projects are also experiencing significant contractor driven adverse cost and timing pressures.

- Where projects are funded from elastic sources, measures can be taken to mitigate these pressures. For example, projects that will be funded from future income streams may be recalibrated so that the future income streams are increased to compensate for increased costs.

- However, projects – including those that had previously been “secure” - that are to be funded from inelastic sources are more threatened as additional or alternative funding will need to be identified to reassure their delivery.

Capital projects are also adversely affected by:

- Higher deposit yields as the financial benefits of holding cash deposits makes them more attractive compared to investing in the capital projects that the Council needs to pursue its Corporate Strategy, and
- The increasingly fragmented and competitive environment for external funding and support, to the extent one even exists.

8.2 Officers have undertaken a review of the current years capital programme to identify variance. These variances include:

- Assets – Both 69 High Street and Wey Court East will require carry forwards of budget into 2024/25. The estimated carry forwards required are £4.5m. This is due to additional reviews taking place on viability, delays in lease agreements and in house resource.
- Environment – Several projects will have carry forward requests within this service. These are partially due to resource issues, timing of funding conditions, and further work being required to business cases. The total carry forwards identified at this stage are £344k. Savings of £41k have been identified in this area however these savings relate to external funding and not GF revenue.
- Organisational Development – A savings of £69k has been identified for the EV charging points project. Going forward the purchase and installation of EV charges will be done by contractors; the Council will then have profit sharing arrangements with these contractors. This budget to purchase EV charges is therefore no longer required.

8.3 Other projects are experiencing an inflationary impact on tender returns. Officers are updating feasibility assessments on these projects and where possible seeking additional funding to try and ensure they can go ahead.

8.4 In the upcoming budget setting process, projects will continue to be assessed against corporate priorities and have full feasibility assessments undertaken. Officers will be reviewing 10-year maintenance programmes for all assets to start to forecast the future year budget requirement for these asset capital bids.

## **9. Consultations**

9.1 The Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise these proposals at its meeting on 14 November 2023.

## **10. Key Risks**

10.1 In addition to the issues identified above, there are a range of risks associated with the delivery of the 2023/24 budget and forward financial plan aims. A summary of the key risks to the Council's finances is included below:

10.2 We do not have significant non-earmarked reserves:

- Limited ability to fund change in the Corporate plan, zero carbon delivery, structural deficit.
- One-off adverse impacts such as planning appeals, judicial reviews are not well provided for.

10.3 Adequacy of reserves:

- Business rates – under the current retention system we carry some of the cost of appeals, including backdated refunds, plus reducing total rateable value in the Borough, for example the impact of permitted development on commercial premises, therefore it is appropriate to hold a reserve to mitigate the costs if they come through.
- Housing benefit overpayment recovery – will be limited in future due to Universal Credit however a reserve is still held to mitigate this risk.

- Investment property voids – investment property income is an important revenue stream to the Council and where properties are empty, the loss of income is covered by the void provision to minimise immediate impacts on the revenue budget.

#### 10.4 Negative Government grant:

- Still on the agenda – upcoming Fair Funding Review which further delays have been confirmed until next government spending review.

#### 10.5 Further constraints on income:

- The unknown economic impact of inflation and interest rates

### **11. Financial Implications**

11.1 All decisions made with regard to the budget will impact on the Council's resources.

### **12. Legal Implications**

12.1 The report meets the duty to report on the robustness of the estimates provided, the adequacy of the financial reserves in place and the monitoring arrangements in line with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003. It is critical that the overall financial plans to deliver the Council's aims and objectives, and the proposals included in this report support this aim.

### **13. Human Resource Implications**

13.1 No direct impact.

### **14. Equality and Diversity Implications**

14.1 There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications in this report. Equality impact assessments of the detailed budget proposals

will be carried out to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

## **15. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

15.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report. The annual budget includes £100k recurring budget for ongoing staffing costs and other resources and projects to support the climate change action plan delivery.

## **16. Summary of Options**

16.1 Set out within the papers.

## **17. Background Papers**

17.1 There are no background papers, as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

## **18. Appendices**

18.1 This report contains the following Annexes:

- Annexe 1 – Q2 Performance Summary
- Annexe 2 – Inflation Position Statement
- Annexe 3 – Updated General Fund MTFP

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report.  
Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	05/10/23
Legal / Governance	TBC
HR	n/a
Equalities	n/a
Lead Councillor	TBC
CMB	3/10/23
Executive Briefing/Liaison	17/10/23
Committee Services	TBC

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<b>General Fund - Q2/AP06 2023/24</b>						
	<b>Approved Budget</b>	<b>Forecast Outturn</b>	<b>Forecast variance</b>		<b>% variance on</b>	
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>adverse/favourable</b>	<b>approved budget</b>	
<b>Assets &amp; Property</b>	<b>-1,003</b>	<b>-1,063</b>	<b>-60</b>	<b>favourable</b>	<b>6%</b>	
expenditure	3,712	3,664	-48	favourable	-1%	
income	-4,715	-4,727	-12	favourable	0%	
<b>Commercial Services</b>	<b>-3,321</b>	<b>-2,943</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>adverse</b>	<b>-11%</b>	
expenditure	7,395	7,204	-192	favourable	-3%	
income	-10,716	-10,147	569	adverse	-5%	
<b>Communications &amp; Customer Services</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>favourable</b>	<b>-2%</b>	
expenditure	4,132	4,126	-6	favourable	0%	
income	-3,766	-3,766	0	adverse	0%	
<b>Community Services</b>	<b>1,208</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>adverse</b>	<b>4%</b>	
expenditure	2,536	2,527	-9	favourable	0%	
income	-1,328	-1,276	52	adverse	-4%	
<b>Environment</b>	<b>7,686</b>	<b>7,713</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>adverse</b>	<b>0%</b>	
expenditure	11,853	11,801	-52	favourable	0%	
income	-4,168	-4,088	80	adverse	-2%	
<b>Finance</b>	<b>976</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>-877</b>	<b>favourable</b>	<b>-90%</b>	
expenditure	25,854	26,116	262	adverse	1%	
income	-24,878	-26,017	-1,139	favourable	5%	
<b>Housing - GF</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>-18</b>	<b>favourable</b>	<b>-6%</b>	
expenditure	2,407	2,389	-18	favourable	-1%	
income	-2,103	-2,103	0	adverse	0%	
<b>Joint Management Team</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>adverse</b>	<b>449%</b>	
expenditure	2,315	2,331	16	adverse	1%	
income	-2,311	-2,311	0	adverse	0%	
<b>Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>	<b>1,666</b>	<b>1,629</b>	<b>-37</b>	<b>favourable</b>	<b>-2%</b>	
expenditure	4,072	4,035	-37	favourable	-1%	
income	-2,406	-2,406	0	adverse	0%	
<b>Organisational Development</b>	<b>2,790</b>	<b>2,622</b>	<b>-168</b>	<b>favourable</b>	<b>-6%</b>	
expenditure	5,117	4,948	-168	favourable	-3%	
income	-2,327	-2,327	0	adverse	0%	
<b>Planning Development</b>	<b>2,362</b>	<b>2,621</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>adverse</b>	<b>11%</b>	
expenditure	6,492	6,559	67	adverse	1%	
income	-4,129	-3,938	191	adverse	-5%	
<b>Regeneration &amp; Planning Policy</b>	<b>1,178</b>	<b>1,160</b>	<b>-19</b>	<b>favourable</b>	<b>-2%</b>	
expenditure	2,656	2,638	-19	favourable	-1%	
income	-1,478	-1,478	0	adverse	0%	
<b>Regulatory Services</b>	<b>840</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>favourable</b>	<b>-1%</b>	
expenditure	4,041	3,968	-73	favourable	-2%	
income	-3,202	-3,138	64	adverse	-2%	
<b>GF Funding</b>	<b>-15,056</b>	<b>-14,819</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>adverse</b>	<b>-2%</b>	
expenditure	2,230	2,468	238	adverse	11%	
income	-17,287	-17,287	0	adverse	0%	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-235</b>	<b>-234</b>	<b>favourable</b>		

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<b>Inflation Position Statement</b>					
Table 1.					
<b>Inflation included in the February MTFP</b>					
		<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
		5-9%	4.0%	2%	2%
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Contracts</b>					
	Waste inc house number increases	578	317	200	204
	Grounds Maintenance	112	54	28	29
	Leisure Centres - no allowance, income	0	0	0	0
	Other Contracts	117	73	38	38
Utilities		86	59	30	31
Staffing					406
	Pay increase assumption	1,079	766	398	90
	Increment assumption	95	90	90	10
	Members	37	19	10	
		2,104	1,378	794	808
Table 2					
<b>Updated Inflation Position included in the MTFP</b>					
		<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
		5-10.4%	5%	2.5%	2%
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Contracts</b>					
	Waste inc house number increases	670	384	237	208
	Grounds Maintenance	110	68	35	29
	Leisure Centres - no allowance, income	0	0	0	0
	Other Contracts	148	89	47	38
Utilities		171	79	42	35
Staffing					
	Pay increase assumption	1,079	958	503	413
	Increment assumption	94	90	90	90
	Members	0	22	11	9
		2,272	1,690	965	822
	Movement	168	312	171	14

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## GENERAL FUND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2022/23 - 2026/27

	Ref.	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	Total	
		Change from 2022/2023 Base	Change from 2023/2024 Base	Change from 2024/2025 Base	Change from 2025/26 Base		
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
<b>Anticipated Budget Variations</b>							<b>Changes from February 2023/24 MTFP</b>
Ongoing Covid19 impact - costs	Note A	-20	0	-106		-126	
Ongoing Covid19 impact - income	Note A	-596	-195	-158		-949	Reduced income recovery assumption for Car Parking and Careline due to actual performance in 2023/24.
Inflation and contractual increases - 2022/23 & 2023/24 impacts		324	168			492	Increase due to overspend in inflation in 2023/24.
Inflation and contractual increases - provision for uncertain contractual inflation	Annexe 2	2,104	1,690	965	822	5,581	Increased inflation estimates in 2024/25 and 2025/26.
One off staff payment - funded by NHB (below)		642	-642			0	
New Homes Bonus (NHB)- no legacy or future years		971	642			1,613	
NI impact - reversal of social care levy		-105				-105	
Services Grant - one-off		60	78			138	
Lower Tier Service Grant - one off from 2022/23		89				89	
Business Rates - safety net increase		-71				-71	
Revenue Support Grant (RSG), Local Council Tax Support Grant and Family Annexe Grant		-14	113			99	
Funding Guarantee Grant		-1,006	1,006			0	
Fair Funding Review - forecast impact on Waverley's retained business rates				700	700	1,400	
Borough Elections Reserve 2020/21 deferred contribution		30	-30			0	
Unavoidable Budget Adjustments	Note B	117	51	0	0	168	
Budget Growth Requests	Note C	238	-18	-50	-290	-120	
New Service Savings	Note D	-159	-56	-57		-272	
Head of Service Cost Review recurring savings identified	Note E	-151				-151	
Car Parking Fees & Charges review - approved by Council in September 2021		-255	-170			-425	
SCC - Off-street parking & Surrey verges		10				10	
Net impact of Homelessness Grant reductions		0	0			0	
Leisure Management Contract provision		300	0	-300		0	
Council tax collection fund adjustments including tax base changes, surplus/deficits etc.		-294	181	-50	-50	-213	
<b>Budget Shortfall</b>		<b>2,213</b>	<b>2,818</b>	<b>945</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>7,158</b>	
		<b>From 2022/23 Base</b>	<b>2,213</b>	<b>5,031</b>	<b>5,976</b>	<b>7,158</b>	
		<b>Total over MTFP period</b>	<b>2,213</b>	<b>7,245</b>	<b>13,220</b>	<b>20,378</b>	
<b>Measures</b>							
Council tax increase - 3%		-336	-354	-243	-249	-1,181	
Treasury management interest, arising from revised capital strategy		-1,040	-725	504	504	-757	Increased income assumption in 2024/25 due to investments made in year in 2024/25 which will delivery incomes in 2025/26. Reductions in following years to reduce income to a more normal level.
Commercial Strategy Savings	Note F	-270	-89	-40	-40	-439	Reduced WTS income target due to recruitment difficulties.
Business Transformation Savings	Note G	-9	-107			-116	
Asset Management Income	Note H	-159	-391	-70		-620	Removal of Fairground income target as likely to fall outside of MTFP timeline.
Collaboration Project Savings		-200	-200	-150		-550	
Reduction in revenue contribution to capital		-200	200			0	
<b>Ongoing base budget reductions</b>		<b>-2,214</b>	<b>-1,666</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>-3,663</b>	
		<b>From 2022/23 Base</b>	<b>-2,214</b>	<b>-3,880</b>	<b>-3,878</b>	<b>-3,663</b>	
		<b>Total over MTFP period</b>	<b>-2,214</b>	<b>-6,093</b>	<b>-9,972</b>	<b>-13,635</b>	
<b>Budget Shortfall: recurrent deficit</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1,152</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>1,397</b>		
		<b>Total over MTFP period</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,151</b>	<b>3,249</b>	<b>6,744</b>	
<b>Use of Reserves to mitigate Impact of Fair Funding Review</b>				<b>-700</b>		<b>-700</b>	

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

### Estimated ongoing Covid-19 impact on pre-pandemic income and cost budgets

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/26	Total	
	Change from 2022/2023 Base	Change from 2023/2024 Base	Change from 2024/2025 Base		
	£000	£000	£000	£000	
<b>Income</b>					
Leisure Centres	-30			-30	
Car Parks General	-495	-170	-118	-783	Reprofiled income returning due to expectations of future return of income having plateaued.
Building Control	-46			-46	
Careline		0		0	Reprofiled income, not returned quickly as originally assumed and no further growth expected.
Council Tax and Business Rates debt summons charges	-25	-25	-40	-90	
<b>Total Income Impact</b>	<b>-596</b>	<b>-195</b>	<b>-158</b>	<b>-949</b>	
<b>Costs</b>					
COVID-19 - PPE	-20			-20	
COVID-19 - Additional Staffing Revenues and Housing benefits			-106	-106	
<b>Total Cost Impact</b>	<b>-20</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-106</b>	<b>-126</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>-616</b>	<b>-195</b>	<b>-264</b>	<b>-1,075</b>	

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

Unavoidable Budget Adjustments				
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	
	Change from 2022/2023 Base £'000	Change from 2023/2024 Base £'000	Change from 2024/2025 Base £'000	Changes from February 2023/24 MTFP
External Audit	77			
Housing Benefit admin grant reduction	37			
Stovolds waste collection	14			
Frensham Pond Car Parking	24			
Green Waste recycling	30			
Legal fee income	47			
Land Charges		35		
Staffing regrades	46			
BID costs	22	22		
IT licenses from capital programme projects	30	29		
Planning advertising	15			
Correction of Bin purchase funding	50			
Waste Collection - bank holiday additional cost for coronation	35	-35		
<b>SERVICE TOTAL</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0</b>	
Recharges update	-311			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0</b>	

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

## Summary of Growth items

	2023/2024 Change from 2022/2023 Base £'000	2024/2025 Change from 2023/2024 Base £'000	2025/26 Change from 2024/2025 Base £'000	2026/27 Change from 2025/2026 Base £'000	Changes from February 2023/24 MTFP
<b>Cessation of one year budget growth in 2022/23 budget</b>					
GDPR project - data audit	-50				
Boundary Review - systems adjustments	-20				
Bid Funding Officer	-50				
Thriving Communities	-49				
Collaboration Costs	-50				
Increased Revenue contribution to Capital	-100				
Climate Change reserve contribution	-100				
Council Tax Hardship Fund	-50				
<b>New growth bids</b>					
Waste officer - 2 year role to support zero waste strategy	0	40		-40	
Thriving Communities	28	-28			
IT Service Desk - Additional Resource	19				
Local Plan Review	150	150	-50	-250	
Farnham Museum Scaffolding	10	-10			
Development Management Staffing	330				
Property Maintenance Fund	170	-170			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>-18</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>-290</b>	

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

New Service Savings

	2023/2024 Change from 2022/2023 Base £'000	2024/2025 Change from 2023/2024 Base £'000	2025/2026 Change from 2024/2025 Base £'000	Notes
				<b>Changes from February 2023/24 MTFP</b>
Triennial pension review	-61	-56	-57	
Finance systems	-41			
Printing	-9			
Godalming Museum grant tapering	-7			
Small staff savings	-15			
Water contract review	-5			
Homeless funding review	-12			
Small savings/new income items	-9			
<b>Total anticipated</b>	<b>-159</b>	<b>-56</b>	<b>-57</b>	

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

## Head of Service cost review

2023/2024

Change from  
2022/2023Base  
£'000**Changes from February 2023/24 MTFP****Finance**

* Compensatory Grants - reduction	-7
* Council Tax Support Grant - reduction	-5
Insurance Contract	-139

**Total anticipated**


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**-151**


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\* Continuation of previously Council approved tapering down of allocations

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

### Commercial Strategy Savings

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/26	2026/27	
	Change	Change	Change	Change	
	from	from	from	from	
	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	
	Base	Base	Base	Base	<b>Changes from February 2023/24 MTFP</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
Fees & Charges - proposed increases by inflation where applicable, not including car park charges	-165	-75	-40	-40	
Farnham Park Car Park Charges	-10				
Net Planning Income increase- review of non-statutory Fees conditional on review & economic position	-20				
Careline - new service and equipment offerings	-20				
The Edge - review operating model	-45	-14			
Waverley Training Services additional income	-10				Removed income increase in 2024/25 due to difficulty in recruitment and therefore reduced delivery
<b>Total anticipated</b>	<b>-270</b>	<b>-89</b>	<b>-40</b>	<b>-40</b>	

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

### Business Transformation Savings

	2023/2024 Change from 2022/2023 Base £	2024/2025 Change from 2023/202 4 Base £	2025/26 Change from 2024/202 5 Base £	
Customer Services Review		-72		<b>Changes from February 2023/24 MTFP</b>
Staff Travel Review	-9	-35		
<b>Total anticipated</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>-107</b>	<b>0</b>	

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

### Asset Management Additional Income

	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	
	Change from 2022/2023 Base £'000	Change from 2023/2024 Base £'000	Change from 2024/2025 Base £'000	<b>Changes from February 2023/24 MTFP</b>
Brightwells income	-25	-75		
Pumphouse	-34	-11		
Wey Court East		-205		
Fairground Site				Removed as no approved scheme and likely to fall outside of current MTFP
Garages	-100	-100		
69 High Street, Godalming			-70	
<b>Total anticipated</b>	<b>-159</b>	<b>-391</b>	<b>-70</b>	

Note - figures showing a minus sign indicate a favourable change from previous years budget

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# Waverley Borough Council

**Report to:** Executive

**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report of Director: Transformation & Governance**

**Author:** Candice Keet, Senior Accountant

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**Executive Portfolio Holder/ Lead Councillor responsible:** Councillor  
Mark Merryweather & Councillor Paul Rivers

**Email:** [mark.merryweather@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:mark.merryweather@waverley.gov.uk)  
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**Report Status:** Open

**Key Decision:** No

## Housing Revenue Account Mid Year Review

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the latest projections for the Housing Revenue Account 30 (HRA) Year Business Plan. It highlights the emerging pressures on the HRA revenue and capital budgets and estimates their impact on HRA service delivery and long-term forecast.

## **2. Recommendation to Executive/ Committee/ Council**

The Executive is asked to recommend:

That the Council:

- 2.1 Notes the 2023/24 forecast outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account;
- 2.2 Notes the emerging pressures and risks set out in the report;
- 2.3 Notes the position regarding the HRA capital programme and New Development Scheme.

## **3. Reason(s) for Recommendation:**

- 3.1 The annual Housing Revenue Account budget is a major decision for the Council. The uncertain economic climate necessitates a review of the HRA and Capital budget in the light of its financial impacts on the long term sustainability of the HRA Business Plan
- 3.2 Scrutiny of the HRA budget and capital budgets through a Mid-Year Review demonstrates transparency and good governance.

## **4. Exemption from publication**

No

## **5. Purpose of Report**

- 5.1 The HRA Business Plan is a key financial planning document which takes account of all the various currently known factors and influences that may impact on the Council's Housing Revenue Account for the forthcoming financial years, the HRA business plan is a 30 year plan.

5.2 These factors are both within and beyond the Council's control and include; general macro-economic conditions, Government restriction on rent increases, current expenditure patterns, inflation, changing demand for services and new legislation impacting how we deliver the landlord services.

5.3 The HRA business plan looks forward over the next 30 years to anticipate the spending pressures faced by Waverley. In light of the changing economic picture, planning now to meet expected and known financial changes in the future provides greater opportunity to mitigate the impact.

## **6. Strategic Priorities**

6.1 Having a robust, sustainable HRA budget is essential to deliver multiple aspects of the Corporate Plan. The report supports the Council's Corporate commitment to promote "Good quality housing for all income levels and age groups" and aim to "be the best council landlord in the South East and to be acknowledged so by our tenants."

## **7. Background**

### **7.1 Outturn Position 2022/23**

- Summary of the Housing Revenue Account outturn was reported to members in the Q4 performance report in July 2022. In total, there was a net underspend of £12k. However, following some year-end postings since this position was reported, the underspend has increased to £50k.
- Rent income was £370k under budget for 2022/23. This was due in part to an error when setting the budget but also an increase in void loss and long term voids. The long term voids are due to delays within the New Build programme as all schemes were paused during the Strategic Review in 2022/23. The budget errors were corrected in 2023/24 budget setting.
- The service charges and other income budgets both overachieved expected income. This was due to the release of some historic

- balances relating to water charges on the HRA balance sheet and an increase in the service charges to the leaseholders. These service charges will offset spend with the repairs and utility budgets.
- Interest receipts from the Treasury Management investments overachieved by £399k in 2022/23. This was due to the increase in interest rates.
  - On the expenditure side, cost of operations and support service recharges both had overspends totalling £644k. This was primarily due to inflation increases that were not budgeted for on utility and staff costs. This has been addressed in the 2023/24 and an inflation provision have been created.
  - Responsive Repairs and Staffing both came in under budget. Staff savings were due to careful budget management throughout the year and increased vacancy savings. The responsive repairs savings were due to savings in the Cyclical Maintenance budgets caused by some delays by contractors and some budgets being set too high and not deliverable. The issues with these budgets were rectified for the 2023/24 budget setting.

## **7.2 2023/24 Budget Management and emerging pressures on the Housing Revenue Account**

- Waverley is now six months into the new financial year, and eight months have passed since the Council set its 2023/24 budget. Officers have reviewed the latest position and following discussions with the budget managers have updated the forecasts for the year. The overall picture, as seen in Annexe 1 is a net underspend of £65k.
- **Increase in void rent loss**  
At present, £113k (September 2022) of void loss is projected against the 2023/24 budget. This equates to a void loss overall of approx. 1.35% against a budgeted target of 1%. This target will be reviewed in the 2024/25 and may need to be increased based on the previous year's outturn and current year predictions.
- **Increase of void repairs and void council tax costs**  
Void repairs has a current projected overspend of £105k. There have been a number of high cost voids in 2023/24 that are contributing to

this overspend. The service will keep this under review and are looking further into the data to gain a better understanding of this variance. The increase in void period and number of long term voids is also causing a forecast overspend of £100k on council tax. When one of our dwellings is void Waverley become liable for the council tax. As the number of voids have increased and long term voids have also increased this has caused council tax to increase from a predicted £100k in 23/24 to £200k.

- **Establishment Savings**

The current forecast is for HRA to overachieve the vacancy savings target by around £90k. There have been a number of vacancies throughout the year. However, the service has now worked on a new structure within the Housing Operations team which will see these vacancies now being filled so this trend is not expected to continue into 2024/25.

- **Overachievement of investment income**

The current forecast is for HRA to overachieve the investment income budget by £312k. This is due to the interest rate increases since the budget was set in February 2023.

### **7.3 HRA Business Plan Forward Look**

- The HRA Business Plan will be updated along with the 2024/25 budget proposal. During 2022/23 a strategic review was undertaken during which all assumptions within the Business Plan were reviewed and where necessary revised. One of the outcomes of this review was that additional borrowing of £26m would be needed over the next 12 years. This is due to the current debt repayment schedule not being affordable within current forecasts. This position will be reviewed, and, in light of current interest rates, action will be taken to try to reduce, and where possible delay, this borrowing need
- Annual rent increases are capped under the current rent standard by September CPI (Consumer Prices Index) + 1%. September CPI has not been released and was 6.7%. We will use this to refresh the assumption in the business plan. Rent is the main sources of income

for the Business Plan and any changes from the assumption used in the 2023/24 budget setting will massively impact the overall affordability of the plan.

- During the budget setting period finance officers will work with services and members to find savings, where possible, to mitigate the need for additional borrowing and cover any additional costs as a result of a number of risks identified in section 9.

#### **7.4 Capital Programme Review**

- The HRA Capital Programme is mostly being delivered as per budget, as show in Annexe 2.
- In early 2023/24 Waverley submitted a bid to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. This bid was unsuccessful and as a result of this the capital budget of £102k is no longer required.
- The stock condition survey budget is forecast to have a saving of £85k in 2023/24, the total approved budget is £335k but only £250k will be required to complete the project.
- The roofing budget is currently forecast to save £100k this financial year. This will be reviewed in Q3 as discussions are continuing with contractor as to whether it will be possible for them to deliver the full programme
- The Energy Efficiency budget is forecast to save £150k in 2023/24. This is due to the post needed to deliver this programme being vacant. The aim is to have someone in this post in the next few months at which point spend against this budget will increase.
- The finance team meets with budget managers on a monthly basis to review the capital programme and this will continue for the remainder of the year.
- Inflation has been considered and a provision was provided for 2023/24 to mitigate the impact. This will be reviewed for 24/25 budget setting. The forecast is that inflation will have an impact of approximately £400k in 24/25.

- In the upcoming budget setting process, projects will continue to be assessed against corporate priorities and asset maintenance plans. Each bid for 2024/25 will require a supporting programme of works (where appropriate).

## **7.5 New Delivery Capital Programme Review**

- Annexe 3 details the forecasts for the New Delivery Capital Programme for 2023/24. There have been some delays to schemes resulting in approximately £7m of carry forwards being required.
- The Chiddingfold Sites require carry forwards of approx. £4.6m. Start on site is due later this year and works will continue into 2024/25. This forecast will be kept under review as the scheme progresses. Revised cash flows are provided when any changes in the programme are known, and this will be reflected in future forecasts.
- The Aarons Hill site is currently still in pre contract and works will continue into 2024/25. Once in contract a revised cash flow forecast will be provided, and this will be reflected in future forecasts.
- Catteshall Lane now has planning approval, but this was delayed which has led to a carry forward of approx. £2.1m being required. Works expected to start on site in Jan 24 which this work continuing into 2024/25.
- All other live schemes are currently forecast to spend their 2023/24 budget allocation in full.
- Within the 2023/24 financial year a number of schemes have had to be reviewed and budgets increased as a result of continued high inflation rates. The inflation risk is being reviewed and adequate provision made for all predevelopment and live schemes.
- Interest rate risk continues to be a factor in how we plan to finance New Build schemes. The current strategy is to borrow internally when appropriate, as our internal rate of return is lower than current market borrowing rates. When external borrowing is required, we will undertake short-term borrowing whilst rates remain high, switching to

longer term borrowing once rates start to settle. Any decision to vary this strategy and borrow externally will be taken by the Executive Head of Finance (S151 Officer), based on forecast cash flow needs and in line with the Treasury Management Strategy

## **8. Consultations**

8.1 The Landlord Services Advisory Board and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise these proposals at its meeting in November.

## **9. Key Risks**

9.1 In addition to the issues identified above, there are a range of risks associated with the delivery of the 2023/24 budget and the HRA Business Plan. A summary of the key risks is included below:

9.2 Non-earmarked reserves not sufficient:

- Limited ability to fund change in the HRA Business Plan
- One-off adverse impacts such as emergency repairs and legal cost are not provided for

9.3 Rent increase capped by government and changes to rent standard:

- Currently the allowable increase for rent in 2024/25 will be CPI 1%, based on current forecasts this would be a maximum increase of 7.5%. However, for the 2023/24 rent setting government introduced a cap which restricted the allowable increase to below CPI+1%. There has been no announcement as to whether this will continue for 2024/25.
- As stated above the rent standard currently allows a maximum increase of CPI + 1%. The rent standard is due for an update in 2025/26 and any change to this will impact the current forecasts within the Business

Plan. If, for example, the increase was restricted to CPI only this would reduce the forecast income over the life of the business plan by £15m.

#### 9.4 Inflation:

- In the current financial year, the inflation provision is sufficient to cover impacts to the HRA budget. Going forward assumptions, of lower inflation rates, have been reflected throughout the business plan and changes to this will impact the affordability of the plan. Within the Housing Delivery budget build cost inflation will be a risk to those schemes not currently in contract.

#### 9.5 Changes to regulation:

- The Social Housing (Regulation) Act, which received Royal Assent in July 2023, introduced new consumer standard requirements to ensure tenants have good quality homes and services, prioritise tenants; safety, treat tenants with respect and be open and honest. To meet these requirements there will be an additional resourcing need, improvement in IT systems and other costs. There will be growth bids addressing this within 2024/25 budget setting.

#### 9.6 Interest rate risk:

- With the need for additional borrowing from 2025/26, based on forecasts used for the 2023/24 budget setting, high rates of interest will add further costs to the business plan. To mitigate this, we will need to try push the need to borrow to future years when the forecast is for interest rates to reduce.

## **10. Financial Implications**

10.1 All decisions made with regard to the budget will impact on Waverley's resources.

## **11. Legal Implications**

11.1 The report meets the duty to report on the robustness of the estimates provided, the adequacy of the financial reserves in place and the monitoring arrangements in line with Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003. It is critical that the overall financial plans to deliver the Council's aims and objectives, and the proposals included in this report support this aim.

## **12. Human Resource Implications**

12.1 No direct impact.

## **13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

13.1 There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report. Equality impact assessments of the detailed budget proposals will be carried out to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

## **14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

14.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report. Implication of Climate Change and Sustainability are considered within all capital projects.

## **15. Summary of Options**

17.1 No decision is required; this is just an update based on the mid-year review of the HRA and Capital budgets.

## **16. Conclusion**

18.1 Within year the HRA budget is forecasting a saving. This will continue to be closely reviewed. The Capital Programme has identified a number of

savings, and the New Delivery Programme has several delays which will require budget carry forward

18.2 There have been several risks identified in this report. These will need to be considered and addressed by both officers and members in the 2024/25 budget setting process.

## **17. Background Papers**

19.1 HRA budget setting documents from Council February 2023.

## **18. Appendices**

20.1 Annexe 1 – 2022/23 HRA Outturn & 2023/24 Forecast

20.2 Annexe 2 – Capital Programme 2022/23 Outturn & 2023/24 Forecast

20.3 Annexe 3 – New Delivery Capital Programme 2022/23 Outturn and 2023/24 Forecast

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report.  
Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	CK 02/11/23
Legal / Governance	
HR	n/a
Equalities	n/a
Lead Councillor	10/10/23
CMB	10/10/23
Executive Briefing/Liaison	17/10/23
Committee Services	

## HRA Business Plan 2022/23 Outturn &amp; 2023/24 Forecast

	2022/23 Approved Budget	2022/23 Outturn	2022/23 Variance	2023/24 Approved Budget	2023/24 Forecast Outturn	2023/24 Forecast Variance
<b>HRA WORKING BALANCE</b>						
<b>INCOME</b>						
Net Dwelling Rent	-30,220,200	-29,848,829	371,371	-31,294,059	-31,180,796	113,263
Net Garage Rent	-357,115	-369,136	-12,021	0	0	0
Service Charges	-423,216	-580,645	-157,429	-396,448	-391,962	4,486
Cost Recovered	-342,247	-328,898	13,349	-458,205	-449,149	9,056
Other Income	-388,458	-479,092	-90,634	-294,098	-288,098	6,000
Interest Receipts	-147,967	-547,161	-399,194	-538,180	-850,324	-312,144
Grant Income	-14,986	-18,012	-3,026	-184,528	-184,528	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-31,894,189</b>	<b>-32,171,773</b>	<b>-277,584</b>	<b>-33,165,517</b>	<b>-33,344,857</b>	<b>-179,339</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
Cost of Operation	1,511,631	1,981,552	469,921	3,058,282	3,159,476	101,194
Operational Staffing	3,608,845	3,334,500	-274,346	3,936,037	3,844,241	-91,796
Support Service Charges	765,459	939,246	173,787	790,570	790,570	0
Back Funding Pension Cost	658,285	656,901	-1,384	638,037	638,037	0
Responsive Maintenance	6,272,936	6,108,145	-164,791	6,865,346	6,970,673	105,327
Corporate and Democratic Costs	614,950	635,714	20,764	834,651	834,651	0
Mortgage Interest	5,327,754	5,325,080	-2,674	5,116,002	5,116,002	0
Mortgage Principal Repayment	7,998,000	7,998,000	0	8,574,400	8,574,400	0
Hardship Fund	25,000	24,083	-917	30,000	30,000	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>26,782,860</b>	<b>27,003,219</b>	<b>220,359</b>	<b>29,843,325</b>	<b>29,958,050</b>	<b>114,725</b>
<b>Net INCOME -/ Net EXPENDITURE +</b>	<b>-5,111,329</b>	<b>-5,168,554</b>	<b>-57,225</b>	<b>-3,322,192</b>	<b>-3,386,807</b>	<b>-64,615</b>
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS TO (+)/FROM (-) RESERVES</b>						
Capital Programme Contribution	7,792,086	7,801,049	8,963	8,288,586	8,288,586	0
Release Contingency Reserve	-2,024,000	-2,025,888	-1,887	-15,770	-15,770	
Working Balance	-656,757	-606,607	50,150	-4,950,664	-4,886,050	64,615
<b>Total to/from reserves</b>	<b>5,111,329</b>	<b>5,168,554</b>	<b>57,225</b>	<b>3,322,152</b>	<b>3,386,766</b>	<b>64,615</b>
<b>Working Balances - MOVEMENT IN YEAR ADDED (-)/REDUCED (+)</b>						
Opening Balance	-9,942,758	-9,942,758	0	-9,336,151	-9,336,151	0
Movement in year added/ (-ve) reduced	656,757	606,607	-50,150	4,950,664	4,886,050	-64,615
<b>CLOSING BALANCE (MIN £2m)</b>	<b>-9,286,001</b>	<b>-9,336,151</b>	<b>-50,150</b>	<b>-4,385,486</b>	<b>-4,450,101</b>	<b>-64,615</b>

Note - Negative number (-) represent income/surplus

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## 2022/23 Capital Programme Outturn

Cost Centre description(T)		Approved Budget	Outturn	Savings	Carry Forward	Comment
Communal & Estate works	Flooring	20,000	13,749	-6,251		
Communal & Estate works	Lighting	10,000	5,299	-4,701		
Communal & Estate works	Parking, Paths & Curtilage	85,000	46,709	-38,291		Budget not required in year, no works identified
Communal & Estate works	Scooter Store (Sheltered Schemes)	581	581	0		
Health & Safety Works	Fire safety	750,000	577,167	-1,192	-171,641	Works not complete by year end, carry forward to 23/24. Works to complete early 23/24.
Health & Safety Works	Riverside Court	44,654	41,785	-2,869		
MRA Prog Decent Homes Occupied Properties	Commercial Heating	186,700	47,726	0	-138,974	Works not complete by year end, carry forward to 23/24. Works to complete early 23/24.
MRA Prog Decent Homes Occupied Properties	Rewiring	500,000	374,110	-125,890		
MRA Prog Decent Homes Void Properties	Bathroom Work	157,500	125,508	-31,992		
MRA Prog Decent Homes Void Properties	Kitchen Work	472,500	478,306	5,806		
MRA Prog Disabled Adaptations Occupied Properties	Disabled new	472,308	509,580	37,272		
MRA Programmed work	Asbestos Removals	294,000	259,820	-34,180		
MRA Programmed work	Bathroom Work	267,000	266,961	-39		
MRA Programmed work	CCTV	15,000	0	0	-15,000	Works not complete by year end, carry forward to 23/24. Works to complete early 23/24.
MRA Programmed work	CO detector program	125,000	83,200	-41,800		
MRA Programmed work	Door Entry System	12,920	0	0	-12,920	Works not complete by year end, carry forward to 23/24. Works to complete early 23/24.
MRA Programmed work	Heating Upgrade	413,300	390,398	-22,902		
MRA Programmed work	Kitchen Work	348,000	350,168	2,168		
MRA Programmed work	Lift Maintenance	35,000	4,455	0	-30,545	Works not complete by year end, carry forward to 23/24. Works to complete early 23/24.
MRA Programmed work	Porch replacement	60,000	0	0	-60,000	Works not complete by year end, carry forward to 23/24. Works to complete early 23/24.
MRA Programmed work	Riverside Court	17,080	17,079	-1		
MRA Programmed work	Senior living Wi-Fi	25,000	0	-25,000		
MRA Programmed work	Stock Survey	175,000	14,985	0	-160,015	Works not complete by year end, carry forward to 23/24. Works to complete early 23/24.
MRA Programmed work	Vernon Ct	125,000	117,022	-7,978		
MRA Programmed work	Wyatt's close	0	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	Grounds Maintenance	50,000	49,844	-156		
MRA Programmed work	Housing Property Fees	50,000	21,323	-28,677		
Roofing & Associated works	Energy efficiency	125,557	83,603	-41,954		
Roofing & Associated works	Roofline & Fascia's	250,000	208,907	-41,093		
Roofing & Associated works	Re-roofing	400,000	392,876	-7,124		
St James Court	Legal Fees	0	4,785	4,785		

## 2022/23 Capital Programme Outturn

Cost Centre description(T)		Approved Budget	Outturn	Savings	Carry Forward	Comment
Structural & Damp works	Cesspool Emptying	34,032	35,816	1,784		
Structural & Damp works	Internal Remodelling	0	-2,964	-2,964		
Structural & Damp works	Structural Works	180,968	153,435	-5,532	-22,000	Works not complete by year end, carry forward to 23/24. Works to complete early 23/24.
Windows & Doors	Glazing	450,000	443,418	-6,582		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6,152,100</b>	<b>5,115,652</b>	<b>-425,353</b>	<b>-611,095</b>	

### 2023/24 Capital Programme Forecast Outturn

Cost Centre description(T)		Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance	Savings	Carry Forward	Comment
Communal & Estate works	Flooring	20,000	20,000	0	0		
Communal & Estate works	Lighting	20,000	20,000	0	0		
Communal & Estate works	Parking, Paths & Curtilage	75,000	75,000	0	0		Budget not required in year, no works identified
Communal & Estate works	Sewerage	75,000	75,000	0	0		
Health & Safety Works	Fire Doors	100,000	100,000	0	0	0	
Health & Safety Works	Fire safety	1,021,641	1,021,641	0	0		
MRA Prog Decent Homes Occupied Properties	Commercial Heating	200,000	200,000	0	0	0	
MRA Prog Decent Homes Occupied Properties	Rewiring	700,000	700,000	0	0		
MRA Prog Decent Homes Void Properties	Bathroom Work	157,500	157,500	0	0		
MRA Prog Decent Homes Void Properties	Kitchen Work	472,500	472,500	0	0		
MRA Prog Disabled Adaptations Occupied Properties	Disabled new	388,000	388,000	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	Asbestos Removals	250,000	250,000	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	Bathroom Work	550,000	550,000	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	CCTV	27,500	22,872	-4,628	-4,628	0	Project now complete - remaining funding is savings
MRA Programmed work	CO detector program	90,000	90,000	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	Door Entry System	12,920	12,920	0	0	0	
MRA Programmed work	Heating Upgrade	651,876	651,876	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	Kitchen Work	550,000	550,000	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	Lift Maintenance	65,545	65,545	0	0	0	
MRA Programmed work	Porch replacement	60,000	59,280	-720	-720	0	Project now complete - remaining funding is savings
MRA Programmed work	Social Housing Decarb Fund	102,000	0	-102,000	-102,000		Bid unsuccessful, funds no longer required
MRA Programmed work	Stock Survey	335,015	250,000	-85,015	-85,015	0	Contract value for 23/24 is £250k, remaining budget not required
MRA Programmed work	St James Court	140,500	140,500	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	Grounds Maintenance	35,000	35,000	0	0		
MRA Programmed work	Housing Property Fees	50,000	30,000	-20,000	-20,000		Will not require full budget this year
Roofing & Associated works	Energy efficiency	350,000	200,000	-150,000	-150,000		Works delayed as post to deliver post is vacant, aiming to have someone in post to delivery this project in the next few months. Funds could be used on other projects if contracts are able to add to current work programmes

**2023/24 Capital Programme Forecast Outturn**

Cost Centre description(T)		Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Outturn Variance	Savings	Carry Forward	Comment
Roofing & Associated works	Roofline & Fascia's	350,000	250,000	-100,000	-100,000		Based on spend to date, contractor may spend more. Will review in Q3
Roofing & Associated works	Re-roofing	530,000	530,000	0	0		
Structural & Damp works	Internal Remodelling	125,000	125,000	0	0		
Structural & Damp works	Structural Works	122,000	122,000	0	0	0	
Windows & Doors	Glazing	450,000	450,000	0	0		
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8,076,997</b>	<b>7,614,634</b>		<b>-462,363</b>	<b>0</b>	

### Housing Delivery Programme - 2022/23 Outturn

	2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Outturn	Savings	Carry Forward	Comment
<b><u>Ockford Ridge scheme</u></b>					
Ockford Ridge	133,195	7,233	-125,962	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
Ockford Ridge - Site A	79,305	-33,600	-112,905	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
Ockford Ridge - Site B	65,000	63,454	-1,546	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
Ockford Ridge - Site C	3,149,061	3,181,415	32,354	0	Overspend reduces future years budgets. Does not impact overall scheme cost
<b><u>Chiddingfold scheme</u></b>					
Hartsgrove	88,000	101,373	13,373	0	Overspend reduces future years budgets. Does not impact overall scheme cost
Turners Mead	61,690	43,868	-0	-17,822	Remaining budget carried forward to 23/24 - part of total scheme cost
Pathfield	100,093	186,785	86,692	0	Overspend reduces future years budgets. Does not impact overall scheme cost
Queensmead	200,000	108,761	0	-91,239	Remaining budget carried forward to 23/24 - part of total scheme cost
<b><u>Other schemes</u></b>					
Aarons Hill	407,904	50,995	-0	-356,909	Remaining budget carried forward to 23/24 - part of total scheme cost
Borough Wide Refurbishment	320,646	21,167	1	-299,480	Remaining budget carried forward to 23/24 - part of total scheme cost
Cattershall Lane	900,000	0	0	-900,000	Remaining budget carried forward to 23/24 - part of total scheme cost
HRA Feasibility Studies	590,000	293,117	-296,883	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
HRA Property Purchase	2,500,000	10,779	-2,489,221	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
Pre-development Expenditure	707,033	178,312	-528,720	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
S106 affordable housing units	2,469,300	431	-2,468,869	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
Zero carbon retrofit pilot	1,765,000	25,251	-0	-1,739,749	Remaining budget carried forward to 23/24 - part of total scheme cost
Badgers Close	14,569	14,568	-1	0	
Ladymead	4,359	3,957	-402	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24

<b>Other</b>					
Latent Defects	173,000	750	-2,804	-169,446	Defect works required at Middlefield site - will commence in 23/24
Wyatts Close	1,234,936	1,204,030	-30,906	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
Station Road Development	9,040	0	-9,040	0	Remaining budget not required in 23/24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,972,130</b>	<b>5,462,644</b>	<b>-5,934,841</b>	<b>-3,574,645</b>	

Note - Negative number (-) represent income/surplus

**Housing Delivery Programme - 2023/24 Forecast Outturn**

	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Forecast Outturn	Savings	Carry Forward	Comment
<b><u>Ockford Ridge scheme</u></b>					
Ockford Ridge	176,850	176,850	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year
Ockford Ridge - Site A	13,000	13,000	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year
Ockford Ridge - Site B	10,150	10,150	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year
Ockford Ridge - Site C	4,413,131	4,413,131	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year
<b><u>Chiddingfold scheme</u></b>					
Hartsgrove	1,656,503	350,000	0	-1,306,503	Scheme will not start on site until later in the year - budget to be carried forward to 24/25 to complete the scheme
Turners Mead	692,947	500,000	0	-192,947	Scheme will not start on site until later in the year - budget to be carried forward to 24/25 to complete the scheme
Pathfield	3,214,333	1,100,000	0	-2,114,333	Scheme will not start on site until later in the year - budget to be carried forward to 24/25 to complete the scheme
Queensmead	1,961,496	950,000	0	-1,011,496	Scheme will not start on site until later in the year - budget to be carried forward to 24/25 to complete the scheme
<b><u>Other schemes</u></b>					
Aarons Hill	819,423	400,000	0	-419,423	Scheme in pre contract, will require carry forward to 24/25
Borough Wide Refurbishment	339,480	339,480	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year
Cattershall Lane	2,845,500	700,000	0	-2,145,500	Planning for site now approved, approx. start on site date Jan 24. Carry forward to 24/25 required
HRA Feasibility Studies	511,520	511,520	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year
Pre-development Expenditure	170,000	170,000	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year
Zero carbon retrofit pilot	1,739,749	1,739,749	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year

### Housing Delivery Programme - 2023/24 Forecast Outturn

	2023/24 Budget	2023/24 Forecast Outturn	Savings	Carry Forward	Comment
<u>Other</u>					
Latent Defects	189,446	189,446	0	0	On track to spend full budget this year
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18,753,528</b>	<b>11,563,326</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-7,190,202</b>	

Note - Negative number (-) represent income/surplus

# Waverley Borough Council

**Report to:** Executive

**Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Report of Director:** Transformation & Governance

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**Report Status:** Open

**Key Decision:** No

## Review of Waverley Borough Council's Covert Investigative Powers Policy

### 1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Executive is asked to consider the draft policy in Appendix 1 to this report and note that the Executive at Guildford Borough Council has been asked to recommend an identical policy to Guildford Borough Council, with a view to both councils updating their current policies to reflect best practice, and to put the councils in the position of separate but aligned policies. This would reflect the current position of maintaining sovereignty but the policy being aligned to support and facilitate future collaboration between the councils should that be forthcoming. On the 11<sup>th</sup> September, the draft policy was approved by the Audit and Risk Committee however

the constitution requires that the new policy is also considered by the executive and then approved by full Council.

1.2 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (POFA)) and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA) set out a regulatory framework for the use of covert investigatory techniques by public authorities who must also adhere to the published Codes of Practice. The purpose of the legislation is to regulate powers to access information in a manner that is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998, particularly Article 8 - the right to respect for private and family life.

1.3 Interference with these rights must be necessary and proportionate. Waverley Borough Council is committed to implementing the provisions of RIPA (and associated legislation) to ensure that any covert surveillance and/or obtaining of Communications Data is undertaken lawfully and is necessary and proportionate to alleged offences.

1.4 It should be noted that the Council only uses covert surveillance powers exceptionally. In the last five years, the Council has only used its powers twice, once in February 2019 and once in August 2021. Both uses were in relation to directed surveillance.

1.5 The proposed policy:

- describes the investigative techniques local authorities are allowed to use and the limited circumstances in which they can be used;
- outlines the need for authorisation, training and identifies examples of what exactly would constitute regulated activity; and
- seeks to outline the roles and responsibilities of various officers under the policy to ensure best practice and a consistency in approach when exercising RIPA and IPA powers.

1.6 The legislation and Codes of Practice are frequently amended, and this policy seeks to give up-to-date details of those changes. It will help the

Council to comply with the requirements of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Officer (IPCO) Inspectorate and also provide guidance to those who use these powers.

1.7 As there is now a Joint Management Team, some roles described within this policy, are shared across both Waverley and Guildford Councils and it makes sense for the policy to reflect this, and for Waverley and Guildford to have aligned policies so the responsibilities of shared officers are clear and consistent.

1.8 The draft policy draws the best parts and examples from each individual policy into one shared document.

**Options considered:**

- Maintaining two different policies, one for each council. (This is not recommended as both policies needed updating and as some of the personnel needed to fulfil these roles are based across the councils; it therefore makes sense to have the same policy and consistency).
- Adopt a joint policy for Waverley and Guildford – this is not recommended at the current time as it would not reflect the current status of two separate councils with limited collaboration in place, restricted to the Joint Management Team.
- Adopt two separate policies for Waverley and Guildford which are aligned – to reflect the separate sovereignty but enable and facilitate collaborative working whilst providing consistency and clarity for the roles and responsibilities of joint senior officers - in its current drafted form at Appendix 1. This is the recommended course of action.

**2. Recommendation to Executive**

The Executive is asked to consider the draft Covert Investigative Powers Policy and recommend that the Council approves the adoption of the Policy.

### **3.Reason(s) for Recommendation:**

3.1. To align the policies of Waverley and Guildford and to improve consistency in reporting, monitoring and approval of covert surveillance and acquisition of communications data.

3.2. To ensure the integrity of the processes in place for the use of directed surveillance, covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) and acquiring communications data.

3.3. To maintain compliance with the Legislation and Codes of Practice that govern Investigatory powers and the Human Rights

3.4. To ensure collaborative engagement with IPCO and their inspectors

3.5. To ensure staff are fully trained and aware of their powers, duties and the authorisation process.

### **4. Exemption from publication**

4.1 This report is not exempt from publication.

### **5. Purpose of Report**

5.1. To inform of proposed changes to the Covert Surveillance Policy and to agree a Policy that can be adopted by Waverley with the same policy being adopted by Guildford.

5.2. To streamline and update the Policy to reflect the most recent changes in law and changes in personnel responsible for different roles.

### **6. Strategic Priorities**

6.1. To be a trusted, efficient, innovative, and transparent Council by publishing the framework we will operate under.

6.2. To ensure local, open, participative government

6.3. To comply with our value that we ensure that our councillors and staff uphold the highest standards of conduct.

6.4. To use all techniques available to ensure effective regulation and enforcement.

## **7. Background**

7.1 Historically, both Waverley and Guildford have had their own separate and quite different policies in relation to covert surveillance. Waverley had a relatively short policy document, which referred to a detailed procedural document. They also had a separate social media guidance document. Both policies were somewhat out of date in respect of Communications Data terminology and procedure as implemented by the IPA. Guildford's Policy combined policy with practice and procedure and had some good examples to help illustrate when the power came into play. However, the policy was lacking in detail in some areas, particularly in relation to error reporting and social media usage guidance.

7.2 The draft policy at Appendix 1 aims to combine the best parts of both councils' documents into a coherent policy, which covers policy, practice, procedure, examples and social media guidance.

7.3 This policy applies to all employees of Waverley Borough Council, including those working from home or at non-Council locations. It also applies to councillors, consultants, agency staff and contractors working for the Council and external organisations working with the Council, whilst engaged on Council business. Provided the same Policy is adopted by Guildford Borough Council, that too will also apply to all their employees, councillors, consultants, agency staff and external organisations working on Council business. Hence, there will be clarity and consistency of both councils having an identical policy for employees and others employed jointly by the two councils or working collaboratively on joint or shared services or projects. The two councils having an identical policy will also put them in a strong position to support any future decisions to progress and extend the current collaborative working.

7.4 This policy applies to the authorisations of directed surveillance, CHIS and acquisition of communications data and other related activities.

7.5 The IPCO regularly inspects councils on their usage and compliance with the legislation and the contents of this draft policy has sought to address concerns raised in past inspections. It should be noted that Waverley Borough Council underwent an inspection from the IPCO in June 2023 and there were no matters of non-compliance raised. Guildford Borough Council is expecting an inspection from the IPCO in 2023-24.

7.6 By outlining different roles, responsibilities and procedure and training requirements it is hoped that there will be more clarity in the safe use of the councils' powers under these Acts, which are in turn a very useful enforcement tool to uphold the regulatory and enforcement duties of the councils.

7.7 Local authorities use covert techniques in support of their statutory functions where they are responsible for enforcing the law in respect of: environmental crime; consumer scams; taxi cab regulation; underage sales of knives, alcohol, solvents and tobacco; and the employment of minors. CHIS and directed surveillance techniques are used in test purchase operations to investigate the sale of tobacco, alcohol and other age-restricted products.

7.8 Historically the Council maintained records on the number of times covert techniques were used. Such record keeping should continue, as applicable.

## **8. Consultations**

8.1. Liaison has taken place between Waverley and Guildford Legal Services and the Data Protection Officer for Guildford and Fraud Investigative Officer at Waverley.

## **9. Key Risks**

9.1. Non-compliance with RIPA and associated legislation or the Human Rights Act, leading to non-admissibility of evidence, claims for compensation, maladministration, or criminal sanctions.

9.2. Criticism and negative results in IPCO inspections.

## **10. Financial Implications**

10.1 Training costs of approximately £2,000 - in order to comply with the training requirements in the policy. (NB. it is proposed these costs will be shared with other councils across Surrey.)

## **11. Legal Implications**

11.1 Having a policy which is not up to date with legislation and Codes of Practice, could lead to non-compliance with RIPA and associated legislation or the Human Rights Act.

11.2 If data is obtained unlawfully this could lead to non-admissibility of evidence, which would affect our ability to prosecute offences.

11.3 New criminal offences have been enacted under the IPA in relation to obtaining or disclosing data unlawfully.

11.4 Any use of legal powers under this policy will be proportionate.

## **12. Human Resource Implications**

12.1. None identified.

## **13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

13.1 We have had due regard to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) and our statutory duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, when drafting this policy.

13.2 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that any equality and diversity implications are adequately addressed in the processes outlined.

13.3 The policy itself does seek to safeguard juvenile and vulnerable sources and warns against employment of covert techniques in a disproportionate manner.

13.4 The considerations and authorisations that any application for the use of covert techniques must pass, will mean that any use will be necessary and proportionate, and consideration will have been given to collateral intrusion and the Human Rights Act.

13.5 Therefore, when the policy and legislative framework is followed, powers can only be employed in a balanced and non-discriminatory way. Powers can only be employed in a specific range of circumstances and checks and balances are in place.

#### **14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

14.1. There are no direct climate change or sustainability implications arising from this report. The Council must manage risk effectively, especially risks relating to programmes and projects, to achieve its goal of being net-zero carbon by 2030.

#### **15. Summary of Options**

15.1 The officers' preferred option is that the Council adopts the new policy as drafted (Appendix 1), which is up to date as to current legislation and helps to align the two councils' policies on usage of investigatory powers. Once approved by both councils, this document will replace:

1. GBC's Covert Surveillance Policy and Procedure version 1 (2022)
2. WBC's RIPA Policy version 2.0 (2023)
3. WBC's Regulation of Investigative Powers Act 2000 – Procedural Guide (2023)
4. Waverley social media in investigations procedure and guidance note.

15.2 The Executive and/or Council could adopt the new aligned policy with such amendments as it may see fit. However, the Council should be mindful that any amendments it makes may not be adopted by Guildford Borough Council which would negate the benefits of having an aligned and identical policy.

15.3 The Executive and/or Council could refuse to adopt the new policy and keep the separate and different policy framework for each borough Council. Along with not aligning to two authorities, there is also a risk that the policies are not compliant with the current guidance.

## **16. Conclusion**

16.1 It is recommended that the new aligned policy is considered and adopted as it contributes to consistent Practice across both Boroughs and updates the policies in line with changes in legislation and personnel.

## **17. Background Papers**

[RIPA 2000 - Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 \(](#)

[IPA 2016 - Investigatory Powers Act 2016](#)

[NAFN – Investigatory powers guidance booklet NAFN Investigatory Powers Act Guidance Booklet.pdf](#)

[Protection of Freedoms Act 2012](#)

[Excerpts from the HRA 1998](#)

[RIPA codes of Practice](#)

[RIPA forms](#)

## **18. Appendices Appendix**

Appendix 1: Proposed Waverley Covert Surveillance and Investigative Powers Policy and Procedure

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report.  
Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	As per Audit Ctte
Legal / Governance	7.11.23
HR	As per Audit Ctte
Equalities	
Lead Councillor	
CMB	
Executive Briefing/Liaison Committee	14/11
Services	15/11

# **Waverley Borough Council**

## **Covert Surveillance and Investigative Powers Policy and Procedure**

### **Document Information**

Version: 1.0

This document replaces: All previous policies and procedural guides from Waverley Borough Council

Service Policy Owner: Waverley Borough Council Legal and Democratic Services

Governance: Audit and Risk Committee

Date of approval: TBC

Next review date: October 2024

Target Audience: All staff

Covert Surveillance and Investigative Powers Policy and Procedure .....	1
Document Information .....	1
PART 1 – Definitions & Policy .....	3
Executive Summary .....	9
Commitment of the Council .....	10
Scope of this policy and procedural document .....	10
Governance roles, responsibilities and communication .....	11
Review of this policy and procedure .....	15
Part 2 – Procedure .....	16
Summary of the authorisation procedure .....	16
Authorisation of surveillance .....	17
Duration, reviews, renewals and cancellation of authorisations .....	21
Reporting Errors .....	23
The central record .....	24
Records retention and destruction .....	25
Part 3 - Appendices .....	27
Appendix A: Authorising officers .....	27
Appendix B: .....	28
Appendix C: Examples to help you decide whether your activities are covered by this policy .....	34
Appendix D: Forms .....	38

# PART 1 – Definitions & Policy

## Definitions:

### “Article 8 – Right to respect for private and family life”

Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence.

There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

### “Collateral Intrusion”

The risk of intrusion into the privacy of persons other than those who are directly the subjects of the investigation or operation

### “Communications Data”

This covers the obtaining of Communications Data and disclosure to any person of such data. Communications Data relates to the use of a postal service or telecommunications system but does not include the contents of the communication itself, content of emails or interaction with websites.

### “Confidential Journalistic Material”

This relates to material acquired or created for journalism purposes and subject to an undertaking to hold it in confidence, as well as communications resulting in information acquired for the purposes of journalism and held subject to such an undertaking.

### “Confidential Material”

This is information where the subject of the operation may reasonably expect a high degree of privacy, or where confidential information is involved - including matters subject to legal privilege, confidential personal information - e.g., medical records or journalistic material.

### “Confidential Personal Information”

This is information held in confidence relating to the physical or mental health of any identifiable individual (living or dead). This may include oral or written communications subject to an express or implied undertaking to hold the information in confidence. The definition above applies only in the context of covert surveillance and differs from the definitions of sensitive personal data used in guidance on data protection matters.

### “Covert”

In general, covert is defined as something carried out in a manner calculated to ensure that the subject of the surveillance is unaware of it.

If activities are not hidden from the subjects of your investigation, you are not within the RIPA Legislation framework at all.

Similarly, surveillance is overt if the subject has been told it will happen

#### “Covert Human Intelligence Source (CHIS)”

Under the 2000 Act, a person is a CHIS if: they establish or maintain a personal or other relationship with a person for the covert purpose of facilitating the doing of anything falling within Section 26(8)(b) or (c); they covertly use such a relationship to obtain information or to provide access to any information to another person; or they covertly disclose information obtained by the use of such a relationship or as a consequence of the existence of such a relationship.

A relationship is established or maintained for a covert purpose if and only if it is conducted in a manner that is calculated to ensure that one of the parties to the relationship is unaware of the purpose. A relationship is used covertly, and information obtained is disclosed covertly, if and only if the relationship is used or the information is disclosed in a manner that is calculated to ensure that one of the parties to the relationship is unaware of the use or disclosure in question. This can therefore include undercover officers, public informants and, in some circumstances, people who make test purchases.

#### “Covert Surveillance”

This includes the three covert surveillance techniques that councils have the power to use: Directed Surveillance, the use of a CHIS and the obtaining of Communications Data

#### “Data Protection Legislation”

Means all applicable data protection and privacy legislation in force from time to time in the UK including the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Privacy and Electronic Communications Directive 2002/58/EC (as updated by Directive 2009/136/EC) and the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2426) as amended.

#### “Directed Surveillance”

As defined by the Home Office’s [Covert Surveillance Code of Practice](#) (2018) this is surveillance which is covert (i.e. the subject does not know they are under surveillance), but not Intrusive, and is undertaken:

- For the purposes of a specific investigation or operation
- In a way likely to result in obtaining private information about a person (whether or not specifically identified for the purposes of the investigation)
- Not as an immediate response to events of such a nature that it would be unreasonable and impracticable for an authorisation under RIPA Legislation to be sought

### “Entity Data”

This data is about entities or links between them and describes or identifies the entity but does not include information about individual events. Entities could be individuals, groups and objects (such as mobile phones or other communications devices).

Entity Data covers information about a person or thing, and about links between a telecommunications service, part of a telecommunication system and a person or thing, that identify or describe the person or thing. This means that individual communication devices such as phones, tablets and computers are entities. The links between a person and their phone are therefore Entity Data but the fact of or information about communications between devices on a network at a specific time and for a specified duration would be Events Data.

Examples of Entity Data include:

- ‘Subscriber checks’ such as “who is the subscriber of phone number 01234 567 890?”, “who is the account holder of e-mail account example@example.co.uk?” or “who is entitled to post to web space?”;
- ‘Subscribers’ or account holders’ account information, including names and addresses for installation, and billing including payment method(s), details of payments;
- Information about the connection, disconnection and reconnection of services to which the subscriber or account holder is allocated or has subscribed (or may have subscribed) including conference calling, call messaging, call waiting and call barring telecommunications services;
- Information about apparatus or devices used by, or made available to, the subscriber or account holder, including the manufacturer, model, serial numbers and apparatus codes; and
- Information about selection of preferential numbers or discount calls.

### “Events Data”

Events Data identifies or describes events in relation to a telecommunication system which consist of one or more entities engaging in an activity at a specific point, or points, in time.

Events Data covers information about time-bound events taking place across a telecommunication system at a time interval. Communications Data is limited to communication events describing the transmission of information between two or more entities over a telecommunications service. This will include information which identifies, or appears to identify, any person, apparatus or location to or from which a communication is transmitted. It does not include non-communication events such as a change in address or telephone number for a customer.

Examples of Events Data include, but are not limited to:

- Information tracing the origin or destination of a communication that is, or has been, in transmission (including incoming call records);
- Information identifying the location of apparatus when a communication is, has been or may be made or received (such as the location of a mobile phone);
- Information identifying the sender or recipient (including copy recipients) of a communication from data comprised in or attached to the communication;
- Routing information identifying apparatus through which a communication is or has been transmitted (for example, file transfer logs and e-mail headers – to the extent that content of a communication, such as the subject line of an e-mail, is not disclosed); itemised telephone call records (numbers called);
- Itemised internet connection records;
- Itemised timing and duration of service usage (calls and/or connections);
- Information about amounts of data downloaded and/or uploaded;
- Information about the use made of services which the user is allocated or has subscribed to (or may have subscribed to) including conference calling, call messaging, call waiting and call barring telecommunications services.<sup>1</sup>

*“Intrusive Surveillance”:*

Directed Surveillance becomes Intrusive if carried out involving anything that occurs on residential premises or any private vehicle and involves the presence of someone on the premises or in the vehicle or is carried out by means of a surveillance device.

If the device is not on the premises or in the vehicle, it is only Intrusive surveillance if it consistently produces information of the same quality as if it were.

Where surveillance is carried out by a device designed mainly for providing information about a vehicle’s location, the activity is Directed Surveillance.

Surveillance involving commercial premises and commercial vehicles does not fall within the definition of Intrusive surveillance. (Unless legally privileged instructions/advice are likely to be given on the premises)

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<sup>1</sup> Definition taken from Communications Data Codes of Practise

Please note Local Authorities are not allowed to carry out Intrusive Surveillance.

#### “Necessary”

*The exercise is deemed “necessary” if it passes the necessary authorisation criteria (i.e., the detection or prevention of crimes – different seriousness levels depending on which technique you are using) – See Section below “The Necessity Test”. The applicant and AOs must also be able to demonstrate that there were no other means of obtaining the same information in a less intrusive or overt method (e.g., obtaining statements from witnesses where possible) and should evidence as far as reasonably practicable what other methods were considered and why they were not implemented.*

#### “Proportionate”

The exercise is not “Proportionate” if it is excessive in relation to the case. Consideration should be given into the scale of the operation, the methods used and the impact on privacy would be excessive in relation to the allegation.

The proposed methods used in the operation must meet required objective and must not be arbitrary or unfair nor must the impact on any individuals/groups be too severe.

Methods used should be the least invasive needed to achieve the investigation’s aims.

#### “RIPA Legislation”:

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), Protection of Freedoms Act 2012(POFA) , the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (IPA) and other related legislation set out the process to be followed when using covert investigatory techniques.

RIPA Codes of Practise have also been published which must be read and followed.

#### “Serious Crime Threshold”–

The offence being investigated must pass this threshold is Events Data is sought:

- S263(1) of the IPA 2016

“Serious crime” means crime where—

(a) the offence, or one of the offences, which is or would be constituted by the conduct concerned is an offence for which a person who has reached the age of 18 (or, in relation to Scotland or Northern Ireland, 21) and has no previous convictions could reasonably be expected to be sentenced to imprisonment for a term of 3 years or more, or

(b) the conduct involves the use of violence, results in substantial financial gain or is conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose.

#### “Surveillance”:

Surveillance includes:

Monitoring, observing or listening to persons, their movements, conversations or other activities or communication.

Recording anything monitored, observed or listened to.

Surveillance by or with the assistance of a surveillance device

*“The Necessity Test”*

Directed Surveillance: the exercise is deemed Necessary if it is to prevent or detect a crime that would attract a maximum prison sentence of at least six months (or underage sale of alcohol or tobacco products)<sup>2</sup>

CHIS: the exercise will be deemed Necessary if it is for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or preventing disorder

Communications Data: where “Events Data” is sought, it must be Necessary to prevent or detect a “Serious Crime”, where “Entity Data” is sought it must be for the purpose of detecting or preventing crime or preventing disorder<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Section 7A The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010

<sup>3</sup> Section 60A 8 (b) Investigatory Powers Act 2016

# Policy

## Executive Summary

This policy is designed to give guidance to officers who use or authorise the use of Covert Surveillance in a lawful, Necessary, Proportionate and authorised manner. This will ensure that any evidence gained during an operation is lawful and admissible in Court and meets the aims of the investigation.

The use of investigatory powers by the local authority is governed by Legislation.

The Legislation allows the Council to interfere with the right to private and family life under article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (“Article 8 rights” – see definitions) in limited circumstances that amount to covert surveillance. The use of covert surveillance must be Necessary and Proportionate to the alleged offence.

The Council is committed to implementing the provisions of the Legislation to ensure that any covert surveillance is undertaken properly and lawfully.

RIPA Legislation limits local authorities to using three covert investigation techniques, collectively referred to as Covert Surveillance. The use of Directed Surveillance and CHIS techniques must be authorised internally by an Authorising Officer (AO) and then by a Magistrate.

Directed Surveillance can only be used where Necessary to investigate a suspected crime or disorder with a maximum prison sentence of at least six months or offences related to underage sale of alcohol/tobacco<sup>4</sup> and Proportionate, balancing the seriousness of the intrusion into privacy against the seriousness of the offence and whether the information can be obtained by other means.

Communications Data can only be obtained where Necessary and Proportionate, and Events Data is subject to the “Serious Crime Threshold”.

In the case of Communication Data, the application must be made to the Office of Communications Data Authorisation (OCDA) through an accredited Single Point of Contact (SPoC). The Council accesses these services through NAFN (National anti-fraud network).

Where unauthorised evidence-gathering interferes with Article 8 rights, and where there is no other lawful authority for it, the consequence may be that the evidence was gathered unlawfully. Courts may therefore disallow the evidence, a complaint of maladministration could be made to the Ombudsman or Investigatory Powers Tribunal, and the Council may have to pay compensation.

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<sup>4</sup> offences under—(i) section 146, 147, 147A of the Licensing Act 2003 (re sale of alcohol to children) ;(ii) section 7 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (sale of tobacco, etc, to persons under eighteen) (iii) section 91 & 92 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (purchase of tobacco, nicotine products etc. on behalf of persons under 18, prohibition of sale of nicotine products).

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 also introduced new offences in relation to unlawfully obtaining and unlawfully disclosing Communications Data.

The Legislation presents some difficult judgments which must be made from time to time. Whilst individual services can and do operate their own procedures, this is an issue which affects the Council corporately and staff will never be criticised for seeking advice. Legal Services wish to stress that they welcome the opportunity to discuss scenarios with officers, as this is an area in which matters must be decided on a case-by-case basis and scenarios are not static and thus advice and solutions must be kept under review.

## Commitment of the Council

The Council will:

1. Obtain judicial authorisation and ensure that any the action is carried out lawfully
2. Put in stringent safeguards against abuse
3. Comply with Legislation and any relevant statutory guidance issued.
4. Provide training for all staff that may use Covert Surveillance, as identified by the relevant Executive Heads of Service
5. Ensure all AOs are suitably trained and that this training is refreshed on an annual basis
6. Monitor its own working practice on a regular basis and review this policy
7. Welcome scrutiny from the Investigatory Powers Tribunal (IPT) and periodic inspections from the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO).
8. Cooperate fully with the IPT and IPCO and implement any proposals or changes which may be suggested.

## Scope of this policy and procedural document

This Policy applies to all employees working for the Council, including those working from home or at non-Council locations. It also applies to councillors, consultants, agency staff and contractors working for the Council and external organisations working with the Council, whilst engaged on Council business. If or where this policy conflicts with any statute, regulation or Code of Practice, those documents take priority over this policy.

This policy applies to the authorisations of Directed Surveillance, sources (CHIS) and acquisition of Communications Data.

Authorisations under RIPA Legislation should be made **where relevant** and will only be relevant where the **criteria** listed on the authorisation forms are fully met.

In particular, RIPA Legislation is not relevant to the following activities:

- Covert surveillance by way of an immediate response to events
- Covert surveillance as part of general observation

- Covert surveillance not related to core functions
- Overt use of CCTV and ANPR systems, which are regulated by Data Protection Legislation (includes body-worn cameras<sup>5</sup>)

Where RIPA Legislation is not relevant, the Data Protection Legislation is likely to regulate the use and obtaining of any evidence relating to any living individual. In these cases, the officer responsible must carry out a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) and seek advice from the Data Protection Officer (DPO).

## **Governance roles, responsibilities and communication**

### ***Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)***

The Executive Head of Legal & Democratic Services is the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) who is responsible for:

- Integrity of processes for management of CHISs and Directed Surveillance and applications for Communications Data
- Compliance with Part 2 of RIPA 2000 and the associated Codes
- Oversight of the reporting of errors to the relevant Commissioner and identification of both the cause(s) of errors and the implementation of processes to minimise the repetition of errors
- Engagement with IPCO inspectors when they conduct inspections
- Engaging with Members - who in accordance with the Code of Practise should review/consider internal reports on use to ensure this is consistent with policy and that the policy remains fit for purpose
- Where necessary, oversight of the implementation of post-inspection action plans approved by the relevant oversight Commissioner
- Ensuring appropriate training is available for AOs or relevant staff
- Ensuring that policies are fit for purpose and that AOs are competent.

### ***RIPA Coordinating Officer***

Legal Services - Litigation is the RIPA Coordinating Officer. The RIPA Coordinating Officer will:

- Provide a Unique Reference Number (URN) to the Investigating Officer (IO)
- Monitor and keep the central record of authorisations and refusals
- Record the date, time and local of Judicial approval
- Record all renewals and cancellations

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<sup>5</sup> Unless specifically directed/targeted to a person - in a planned manner - as part of an investigation then would become Directed Surveillance (if not immediate response)– see example in the Appendices

- Provide advice on the use of covert surveillance
- Provide governance support to the SRO as required or directed
- Maintain a central register of all equipment capable of being used for Directed Surveillance
- Maintain a central register of all training
- Maintain a record and keep copies of agent agreement forms
- Keep a database for identifying and monitoring expiry dates and renewal dates
- Along with AOs and the IOs must ensure that any electronic and paper records relating to a RIPA Legislation investigation are used, retained or destroyed in line with the Council's Information Management policies, departmental retention schedules and the Data Protection Legislation.
- Monitor each department's compliance and act on any cases of non-compliance.

### ***Single Point of Contact (SPoC) for Communications Data***

The Council will use the SPoC service provided by the National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) each council will have an officer who manages the account.

#### **The SPoC:**

- Assesses whether access to the Communications Data is reasonably practical for the postal or telecommunications operator
- Advises applicants and AOs on the practicalities of accessing different types of communications data from different postal or telecommunications operators
- Provides safeguards for authentication
- Assesses cost and resource implications to both the authorisation and postal or telecommunications operator
- Provide quality assurance checks to ensure that applications consistently comply with IPA standards and to a sufficient level to meet OCDA and IPCO scrutiny;
- Monitor those applications which are returned for rework or rejected by OCDA and determine the reasons why;
- Provide organisational and/or individual training as and where necessary sharing best practice advice and support;
- Be the point of contact between public authorities and OCDA; (NOTE: Applicants will not be able to contact OCDA).
- Sends application on to the OCDA for approval

#### ***Authorising Officers (AOs)***

- The role of the AOs is to authorise, review, renew and cancel Directed Surveillance or use of a CHIS.
- AOs should not be responsible for authorising investigations or operations in which they are directly involved. If this does happen, if urgency requires

it, the Central Record of Authorisations should highlight this, and it should be brought to the attention of a Commissioner or Inspector during their next inspection.

- The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010 prescribes that for local authorities the AO shall be a Director, Head of Service, Service Manager or equivalent as distinct from the officer responsible for the conduct of an investigation.
- A designated AO must qualify both by rank and by competence. Officers who wish to be designated must have been trained to an appropriate level so as to have an understanding of the Act and the requirements that must be satisfied before an authorisation can be granted.
- The forms to be utilised by AOs can be found in Appendix D
- AO must complete the relevant section on the application form and explain exactly what they are authorising (what is within the application or less), against who, in what circumstances, where etc. It is important that this is very clear as the surveillance operatives are only allowed to carry out what is authorised. This will assist with avoiding errors. They must explain why the surveillance is Necessary and Proportionate to what it seeks to achieve, taking into account the Collateral Intrusion issues, and that the level of the surveillance is appropriate to achieve the objectives.
- If any equipment such as covert cameras, video cameras is to be used, the AO should know the capability of the equipment before authorising its use. This will have an impact on Collateral Intrusion, necessity, and proportionality. They should not rubber-stamp a request.
- AOs are also responsible for carrying out regular and meaningful reviews of applications which they have authorised and also for the cancellation of authorisations –authorisations should be cancelled when no longer Necessary or renewed in good time and should not be allowed to expire or lapse. AOs should record and retain notes of all decisions
- AOs must acquaint themselves with the relevant Codes of Practice issued by the Home Office and the latest updates in RIPA Legislation. See link in Appendix D (these are the current versions as of June 2023)
- AOs must demonstrate that the proposed activity is Necessary for the prevention or detection of a crime which either carries a maximum sentence of at least six months' imprisonment or is an offence relating to the sale of alcohol or tobacco products to minors, when authorising Directed Surveillance. (As to the definition of "detecting crime", see RIPA 2000 section 81(5).)
- AOs also need to consider if confidential information will be gained, (see definitions section) in which case the matter must be referred to the Chief Executive
- AOs must also satisfy themselves that the application is Necessary and Proportionate in the particular circumstances – taking into account Article 8 Rights and Collateral Intrusion. (See definitions section)

- The ICPO envisages that the AO will make the judicial application (although this may not always be possible, and can be delegated to IO or Legal Services)

### ***Investigating Officers (IOs)***

- IOs should think about the need to undertake Directed Surveillance or CHIS before they seek legal advice with a view to authorisation. IOs need to consider whether they can obtain the information by using techniques other than covert surveillance. There is nothing that prevents an IO discussing the issue of surveillance beforehand and this policy requires officers to discuss with Legal Services.
- IOs may need to:
  1. Identify the objective(s)
  2. Describe the nature of the surveillance and identities (if known)
  3. Provide supporting information and intelligence
  4. Conduct location research and feasibility study
  5. Identify Collateral Intrusion and detail how to manage this
  6. Consider who, what why where when and how
  7. Detail why the activity is Necessary and Proportionate
  8. Prepare risk assessments
- IOs must ensure a feasibility study has been conducted as this may be required to be seen by Legal Services and the AO. The person seeking the authorisation should then complete the application form having regard to the guidance given in this policy and the statutory Codes of Practice.
- The form should then be submitted to the AO for authorisation who must also take advice from Legal Services.

### ***Training***

The SRO is responsible for ensuring relevant members of staff are suitably trained as AOs and IOs so as to avoid common mistakes appearing on forms for RIPA Legislation authorisations.

Training will be given, and completed, before AOs are certified to sign any authorisation forms. A certificate of training will be provided to the individual and a central register of all those individuals who have had training, will be kept by the RIPA Coordinating Officer.

This training must be refreshed annually.

### ***Activities by other Authorities***

Care is needed to ensure that there is no conflict between the activities of this Council and other public authorities. The IO should make enquiries of other authorities (such as the police) to find out whether they are carrying out similar activities if he/she considers that there is such a possibility.

### ***Joint Investigations (collaborative working)***

When some other agency has been instructed on behalf of the Council to undertake any action under RIPA Legislation, this document and the forms in it,

must be used (as for the normal procedure) and the agency advised or kept informed of the various requirements. They must be made aware explicitly of what they are authorised to do.

They must also fill out the Agent's agreement form, found in the Appendices, a copy of which should be passed to the RIPA Coordinating Officer.

When another agency (e.g., the Police, HM Revenue & Customs) wishes to use the Council's resources or premises, that agency must use their own Covert Surveillance procedure and forms and a copy should be passed to the RIPA Coordinating Officer.

If the police or other agency wish to use Council resources for general surveillance (as opposed to specific covert investigations), they must request this in writing. This must include remit, duration, details of who will be undertaking the general surveillance and the purpose of it before any Council resources are made available.

A copy of the letter must be sent to the RIPA Coordinating Officer for the central record.

## **Complaints**

Complaints about Covert Surveillance should be made under the Council's Corporate Complaints Policy.

The SRO may review the conduct of particular operations at any time.

## **Review of this policy and procedure**

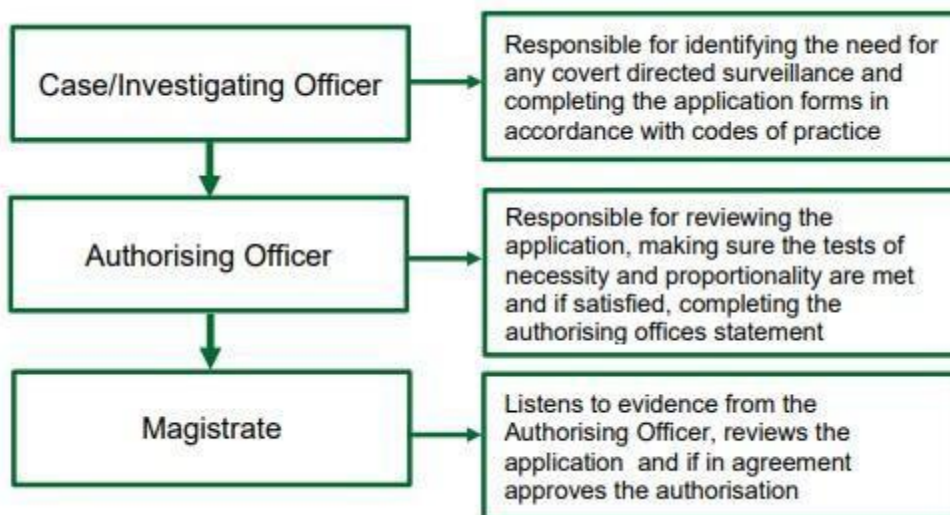
RIPA Legislation and this document are important for effective and efficient operation of the Council's actions on surveillance. Therefore, the SRO will keep this document under review. AOs must bring any suggestions for continuous improvement of this document to the attention of the SRO at the earliest possible opportunity.

The SRO will review the policy every year in consultation with the Audit and Risk Committee.

# Part 2 – Procedure

## Summary of the authorisation procedure

Three individuals are involved in granting authorisation for covert **Directed Surveillance and the use of a CHIS**:



The following is an overview of the authorisation procedure.

IOs must obtain a unique reference number from the RIPA Coordinating Officer (Legal Services) for any planned, covert operation for which they intend to apply for authorisation.

### **Directed surveillance**

For Directed Surveillance and use of CHIS, IOs must submit the application form for Directed Surveillance (latest version found on the internet) to a designated AO – There is a list of those eligible to act as AOs at Appendix A, but as eligibility will also depend on having completed the training, please contact the Legal Team for a list of AOs when needed.

Where a likely consequence of surveillance is the acquisition of Confidential Material<sup>6</sup>, the IO must, always seek authority from the Chief Executive.

Applications for the renewals and cancellations of surveillance must be authorised by the same AO where possible.

Once authorised, the AO will ensure that the administration at the [Magistrates Court](#) is contacted (email: [SurreySussexMC@justice.gov.uk](mailto:SurreySussexMC@justice.gov.uk)) to arrange a hearing for judicial approval. The current application for judicial approval form as published by the Home Office, must be used for this purpose.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> See definitions section

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix D

## Authorisation of surveillance

*Activity requiring authorisation*

<b>INTRUSIVE SURVEILLANCE</b> <b>Council cannot authorise</b>	<b>DIRECTED SURVEILLANCE</b> <b>Authorisation needed</b>	<b>COVERT HUMAN INTELLIGENCE SOURCE</b> <b>Authorisation needed</b>
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Authorisation is required for the following activities:

- Directed Surveillance
- Use of sources (CHIS)
- The acquisition or disclosure of Communications Data

Officers conducting investigations on the Council's behalf must seek authorisation in writing for Directed Surveillance and use of CHISs. In the case of Communications Data, they must make a colleague of AO Level or above aware when submitting the application through the NAFN.

The authorisations must be set out on the latest forms : [RIPA forms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk) [Home Office forms](#) which should not be adapted or modified unless authorised by the SRO.

### ***Unique Reference Numbers (URNs)***

Each application for authorisation must have a Unique Reference Number (URN). The officer applying for authorisation must first obtain the next available URN from the RIPA Coordinating Officer. Rejected forms will therefore also have URNs.

### ***Authorising Officers (AOs) – roles and responsibilities***

Once an application in relation to Covert Surveillance has been received, the AO should consider the form and undertake the Necessity Test. The AO must complete the relevant section of the form explaining why in his/her opinion the surveillance is Necessary and Proportionate and that any Collateral Intrusion has been considered. They should also detail the exact activity being authorised, who against etc. in the relevant authorisation section on the form.

### ***Authorising the acquisition of Confidential Material***

If the application is for Confidential Material, the IO must seek authority from the Chief Executive. The fullest consideration must be given to any cases where the subject of the Surveillance might reasonably expect a high degree of privacy.

Applications where the Surveillance could result in the acquisition of Confidential Material will be considered only in exceptional and compelling circumstances. The IO and the Chief Executive must have full regard to the proportionality issues this raises.

### ***Authorising the acquisition of Directed Surveillance***

Surveillance is only covert if it carried out in a way calculated to ensure the subject specific investigation is unaware of it. RIPA authorisation is required for Covert Surveillance undertaken in a way likely to result in private information being obtained. It is not Directed Surveillance if it is in immediate response to events.

The AO must ensure that the Directed Surveillance has passed the Necessity test. The exercise is deemed Necessary if it is to prevent or detect a crime that would attract a maximum prison sentence of at least six months (or underage sale of alcohol or tobacco products).<sup>8</sup>

The AO must also consider if the Directed Surveillance is Proportionate and any associated Collateral Intrusion.

Local Authorities are not permitted to undertake Intrusive Surveillance (see definitions section). Operatives will have to take particular care when using surveillance devices that Directed Surveillance does not become Intrusive (i.e., if device can see inside a property or car with the detail and quality that would be expected were the device present inside these places)

### ***Authorisation for the use of sources (CHIS)***

Prior to authorising the use of a CHIS, the AO must be satisfied that the operation is Necessary for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or preventing disorder. They must then consider the use to be Proportionate and any associated Collateral Intrusion.

A source may include those referred to as agents, informants and officers working undercover.

Whilst the council is not in the practise of using CHISs, arrangements must be in place and Legal Services should be consulted should the event arise. There may also be situations where a person who is not originally a CHIS becomes one, so officers need to be alert to this fact.

The AO shall ensure that arrangements are in place for the proper oversight and management of sources, including appointing individual officers for each source. The AO shall carry out a risk assessment **before** authorising the source. The assessment should include provisions for the source's safety and welfare, and as such should be updated throughout the duration of the authorisation.

The person responsible for the day-to-day contact between the public authority and the source should be named in the application

Officers using a source shall consider the safety and welfare of that source (even after cancellation of the authorisation), and the foreseeable consequences to others of the tasks they are asked to carry out.

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<sup>8</sup> Section 7A The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Directed Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources) Order 2010

The use of a CHIS may only be authorised if arrangements are in place including the following:

- That there will at all times be an officer within the council who will have day to day responsibility for dealing with the source on behalf of the authority, and for the source's security, (the handler).
- That there will at all times be another officer within the council who will have general oversight of the use made of the source; (controller).
- That there will at all times be an officer within the council who has responsibility for maintaining a record of the use made of the source; and
- That the records relating to the source maintained by the council will always contain particulars as laid down by the CHIS codes of practice

Only the Chief Executive can authorise the use of vulnerable individuals and juvenile sources. The Chief Executive shall consider the special safeguards or provisions applying to vulnerable individuals and juvenile sources, as set out in Cover Human Intelligence Sources revised Code of Practice, which sets out that:

- (a) security and welfare should be taken into account when carrying out actions in relation to an authorisation or tasking including foreseeable consequences to others
- (b) a risk assessment should be carried out before authorised to determine risk to source of tasking consequences should their role become known
- (c) the person responsible for the source's welfare and security should bring to the AO's attention any concerns. Where appropriate concerns about security / welfare matters should be considered by the AO and a decision made on whether the authorisation should continue.

If a source is under 16 years, please seek advice from Legal Services as different and more stringent provisions apply

If instructing an agent to be the CHIS, the agent must complete and sign the form marked "Agent's Agreement Form" contained in Appendices. The agent will be subject to RIPA Legislation and this policy in the same way as any employee of the Council would be. They may also be inspected by the IPCO in respect of each particular operation. This should be pointed out during the instruction and contract stage. Advice should be sought from Legal Services.

Once authorised by the AO any application for use of a CHIS will need judicial approval.

### ***Communications Data***

Procedural guidance for obtaining authorisation from the OCDA is available here: [NAFN Investigatory Powers Act Guidance Booklet.pdf \(local.gov.uk\)](#)

The application forms are now completed electronically via the CycComms portal. The IO completes the application on the CycComms Portal. Prior to an IO submitting an application for Communications Data they will discuss the investigation and the necessity / proportionality for the request with

an AO or the Chief Executive. Thereafter the application will be scrutinised by the SPOC before being submitted to OCDA for approval. Anyone completing these forms can be given guidance.

An AO or Chief Executive must be made aware of the application and must endorse the form to this effect.

There is no longer need for judicial approval, except in cases where journalistic source materials are sought -where the application will be referred to a Judicial Commissioner within the IPCO.

Where cases are novel or contentious an officer of at least the rank of SRO must be aware of the application.

Local authorities are now only allowed to seek Entity and Events Data. Where Events Data is being sought to detect crime, that crime must meet the Serious Crime Threshold. The application must also pass the Necessity Test and be deemed Proportionate as well as giving consideration to any possible Collateral Intrusion.

NAFN will provide an annual return to the SRO so that they can comply with their reporting and submission duties.

IOs must keep records of their investigation in line with established retention periods. This includes copies of any Communications Data applications that have been made electronically.

Forms will remain on the central record for six years from date of cancellation.

### ***Acquisition of Communications Data***

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 ('IPA') allows for the Council to acquire Communications Data from telecoms and postal operators via an authorisation procedure. Communications Data can include Entity Data or Event Data.

It does not include the content of the communications. The Council has no right to listen in to phone conversations without permission or read post or electronic communications before they have been received.

A local authority may not make an application that requires the processing or disclosure of internet connection records for any purpose.

Where "Events Data" is sought, it must be Necessary to prevent or detect a "Serious Crime", where "Entity Data" is sought it must be for the purpose of detecting or preventing crime or preventing disorder<sup>9</sup>

Communications Data, and all copies, extracts and summaries of it must be handled and stored securely.

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<sup>9</sup> Section 60A 8 (b) Investigatory Powers Act 2016

Officers must observe the requirements of the Data Protection Legislation and the principles of the [Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996](#). Officers must seek advice from the Data Protection Officer (DPO) when they have questions about information security and integrity.

The Home Office has issued guidance to support the Communications Data codes of practice, both can be accessed here: [Investigatory Powers Act 2016 – codes of practice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) This policy must be read in conjunction with the Code and all staff involved in the acquisition of Communications Data must have regard to the provisions.

Applications must be made through NAFN. The local authority making the application must ensure someone of at least the rank of AO in the local authority is aware the application is being made before it is submitted to an authorising officer in OCDA.

NAFN will be responsible for submitting the application to OCDA on behalf of the local authority.

Please contact the RIPA Coordinating Officer, DPO or an AO for more information.

### ***Social Media***

In some investigations, social media sites can form a useful source of intelligence. Usually, a review of open-source sites will not need authorisation. However, if reviews are carried out on the same individual with some regularity, this may amount to Directed Surveillance and authorisation should be obtained.

**Please see Appendix B “Use of Social Media in Investigations – Procedure and guidance note” for more detail and information on what permitted**

## **Duration, reviews, renewals and cancellation of authorisations**

### ***Duration***

Authorisations last for:

- Three months from date of grant or latest renewal for Directed Surveillance
- Twelve months from date of written grant for the conduct or use of a source (NB: Juvenile Sources (CHIS) 1 Month)
- One month from date of written notice or authorisation for Communications Data, or earlier if cancelled

Officers should note that the authorised period starts from the date authorisation is granted, not from the date the surveillance begins.

Authorisations must not expire. They must be kept under review, and then renewed or cancelled if no longer required.

## **Reviews**

AOs must review the operation by the date he/she has entered on the authorisation form (or latest renewal, if applicable). The review's purpose is to assess the need for the surveillance to continue, considering the specific circumstances and sensitivities of the investigation. They must cancel the authorisation if no longer needed.

AOs should record review results on the standard review form and add a copy to the central authorisations record held by the RIPA Coordinating Officer.

Where the Surveillance provides access to Confidential or sensitive Information or involves Collateral Intrusion the officer should conduct reviews more frequently.

## **Cancellations**

An AO must cancel an authorisation as soon as it is no longer Necessary, or no longer Proportionate to the objective. The duty to cancel a notice falls on the AO who issued it.

This applies to both original applications and renewals.

Authorisations must also be cancelled if the Surveillance has been carried out and the original aim has been achieved.

A copy of the original cancellation form must also be sent to the RIPA Coordinating Officer. The standard Home Office cancellation forms should be used and is available here:

[RIPA forms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

## **Renewals**

Authorisations may be renewed more than once, if necessary, and the renewal should be kept and recorded as part of the central record of authorisations.

Authorisations can be renewed shortly before the maximum period has expired. The renewal will begin on the day the authorisation would have expired. Where renewals are timetabled to fall outside of court hours, it is the AO's responsibility to ensure the renewal is completed ahead of the deadline. (Not more than 7 working days before)

An AO must still consider all of the issues that are required for a first application before a renewal can be granted. Each renewal will need the approval of a Magistrate.

If the reason for requiring authorisation has changed from its original purpose it will not be appropriate to treat the application as a renewal. The original authorisation should be cancelled, and a new authorisation should be granted.

The AO and applicant should retain a copy of the renewal and the judicial application/order form. A copy of the original renewal form and the judicial

application/order form must also be sent to the RIPA Coordinating Officer for the central register.

An authorisation cannot be renewed after the authorised period has expired. In this case the AO must cancel the authorisation and consider the matter afresh.

Renewal forms are available here: [RIPA forms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

## Judicial Approval

Judicial Approval is required for Directed Surveillance and the use of a CHIS.

The AO should contact [HM Courts & Tribunals Service](http://www.gov.uk) at the Magistrates' court to arrange a hearing and may delegate this to the IO or Legal Services.

The hearing is a legal proceeding, so officers must be formally designated to attend, be sworn in and present evidence or information as required. It is envisaged that the AO will usually attend as they will have the detailed knowledge of why the application was deemed Necessary and Proportionate, but it is understood that sometimes the IO will attend. However, it is important to note that the forms and supporting papers must, by themselves, make the case for authorisation. Legal Services are happy to assist if necessary.

The Magistrate should have sight of the authorisation form and the supporting documents setting out the case – including all information the authorisation relied on. The Council must retain the original documentation.

The Magistrate must be sent a partially completed judicial application form and will complete the form's order section, which will then be the official record of the Magistrate's decision.

The hearing will take in private (closed to public) and can be conducted by one Magistrate

## Reporting Errors

There is a requirement to conduct regular reviews and report all covert activity that was not properly authorised to the (IPCO) in writing as soon as the error is recognised. An "error" includes activity which should have been authorised but wasn't or which was conducted beyond the directions provided by the AO. It is therefore important that when an error has been identified it is brought to the attention of the SRO in order to comply and the notification should be made as soon as practicable.

This will require a report detailing any remedial action taken, including details of the cause, material obtained, unintended Collateral Intrusion, whether material destroyed or retained, and summary of steps taken to prevent recurrence. The Council also has a responsibility to report to the Inspector at the commencement of an inspection all activity which should have been authorised but wasn't. This is

to confirm that any direction provided by the IPCO has been followed. This will also assist with the oversight provisions of the Council's RIPA Legislation activity.

'The Reporting Errors Form' in Appendix D should be used for this purpose.

This does not apply to Covert activity which is deliberately not authorised because an AO considers that it does not meet the legislative criteria but allows it to continue. This would be surveillance outside of RIPA Legislation and should be recorded by the AO on a Sub-RIPA form.

## **The central record**

The RIPA Coordinating Officer will maintain a central register of Covert Surveillance and use of sources in order to comply with legal requirements and for quality assurance.

AOs must ensure that copies of the following are included in the Council's central record:

- Authorisation Forms (whether or not the authorisation is granted or refused)
- Review forms/Renewal forms
- Cancellation forms

The central record shall contain the following information for each case:

- The type of authorisation or notice
- The date the authorisation or notice was given
- Name and rank/grade of the AO
- The unique reference number (URN) of the investigation or operation
- Title of operation, including brief description and names of subjects, if known
- If the authorisation or notice is renewed, when it was renewed and who authorised renewal, including name and rank/grade of the AO
- Whether the operation is likely to result in obtaining confidential information
- The date the authorisation or notice was cancelled
- Where and when a Justice of the Peace or Magistrate has granted authorisation

These records will be retained for at least six years from the ending of the cancellation. A record will be kept of the dates on which the authorisation notice is started and cancelled.

AOs must provide the relevant forms to the RIPA Coordinating Officer within one week of the authorisation, review, renewal, cancellation or rejection.

AOs must ensure that any forms, sent through internal post, are in sealed envelopes using the security measures required for documents classified as “Official-Sensitive”.

This record will be monitored, and appropriate advice given from time to time. It will also be made available to the relevant Commissioner or an Inspector from the IPCO.

IOs must retain the original form with the investigation’s working file.

## **Records retention and destruction**

### ***Retention of material obtained through surveillance***

Arrangements must be in place for handling, storage and destruction of material obtained using Directed Surveillance, a CHIS or Communications Data. The AO must make the following arrangements to protect the material:

- A named officer responsible for retaining the data and disposing of it securely.
- Physical, technical/organisational measures must be in place to prevent unauthorised access to, and use of the data obtained by the surveillance.
- Physical, technical/organisational measures must be in place to prevent accidental/unauthorised loss of data obtained by the surveillance exercise.
- AOs must ensure compliance with data protection and local documented working procedures relating to the handling and storage of material.
- Material obtained from properly authorised surveillance, or a source may be used in other investigations. Where the product of surveillance could be relevant to pending or future proceedings, it should be retained in accordance with established disclosure requirements for a suitable period and subject to review.
- This applies to material which points towards or away from the suspect and the fact that the subject of the investigation may see the documents on later date should be borne in mind in the drafting of applications/findings
- Communications Data may only be held for as long as the relevant public authority is satisfied that it is still necessary for a statutory purpose. When it is no longer Necessary or Proportionate to hold such data, all copies of relevant data held by the public authority must be destroyed. Data must be deleted such that it is impossible to access at the end of the period for which it is required.
- Information obtained through Directed Surveillance or a CHIS, and all copies, extracts and summaries which contain such material, should be scheduled for deletion or destruction and securely destroyed as soon as they are no longer needed for an

authorised purpose (as outlined in relevant code of practise). If such information is retained, it should be reviewed at appropriate intervals to confirm that the justification for its retention is still valid. In this context, destroying material means taking such steps as might be necessary to make access to the data impossible.

- The AO must review whether the information should be disposed of or kept for a further length of time.
- The AO should take into consideration the status of any legal proceedings connected to the operation and the likelihood of any future legal action (including action taken by the subject(s) of the surveillance).
- The justification for any decision to keep the information must be documented and kept with the file.

The following documents must be kept, but need not form part of the central record:

- Supplementary documentation and notification of AO's approval
- Supporting documentation submitted when a renewal is requested
- Date and time when any instruction is given by the AO

### ***Covert Human Intelligence Source Records (CHIS)***

IOs must keep proper records of the authorisation and use of a source. Please see the Code of Practise for more details: [Covert Human Intelligence Sources code of practice 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106222/Covert_Human_Intelligence_Sources_code_of_practice_2022_-_GOV.UK.pdf)

The records must contain information as to identity, security and welfare, risk assessments, recruitment information, handlers and controllers, tasks allocated, communications and all information given to or obtained from the source.

**If any officer is unsure about the provisions of the Legislation or have questions about the use of Covert Surveillance techniques, please contact Legal Services**

# Part 3 - Appendices

## Appendix A: Authorising officers

Please check with the Legal Department for the most up to date list of AOs.

**Table 1: Names of SRO and Authorising Officers (subject to training being completed)**

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Name</b>
Joint Chief Executive	Must authorise any operations using juveniles and any operations where confidential information is likely to be obtained
Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)	Joint Executive Head of Legal & Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)
Authorising Officer 1	Joint Strategic Director, Community Wellbeing
Authorising Officer 2	Joint Strategic Director, Place
Authorising Officer 3	Joint Strategic Director, Transformation & Governance
Authorising Officer 4	Joint Executive Head Community Services
Authorising Officer 5	Joint Executive Head, Housing Services
Authorising Officer 6	Joint Executive Head, Planning Development
Authorising Officer 7	Joint Executive Head, Regulatory Services
RIPA Coordinating Officer	Legal Services – Litigation Lawyer

## **Appendix B:**

### **Use of Social Media in Investigations - Procedure and guidance note**

A guide to the Council's approach to the use of social media in relation to Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 investigations.

#### **Social Media guidance**

This guidance sets the framework on which the Council may utilise Social Media when conducting investigations into alleged offences. Whilst the use of Social Media to investigate is not automatically considered Covert Surveillance, its misuse when conducting investigations can mean that it crosses over into the realms of Covert and/or targeted surveillance, even when that misuse is inadvertent. It is therefore crucial that the provisions of the RIPA 2000, as it relates to Directed Surveillance and use of a CHIS, are followed at all times when using Social Media information in investigations. Otherwise, any evidence obtained may become inadmissible

It is recognised that the use of the internet and, in particular, social networking sites such as Facebook, can provide useful information for council staff carrying out investigations or gathering evidence when dealing with service users. However, accessing an individual's or company's internet and social networking sites may potentially fall within the definition of Covert Directed Surveillance, which would require authorisation to be sought from a Magistrates Court.

Failure to seek authorisation, when necessary, could result in the Council breaching Article 8 Rights. It is therefore important that officers adhere to the Council's policy and this guidance when considering accessing internet and social networking sites as part of an investigation or to gather evidence.

#### **Process to be followed when considering using Social Media or Social Networking Sites in Investigations**

Where an officer considers it necessary to view a social networking site to investigate an allegation or an individual, the process to be followed is:

1. Before viewing any social networking site, the officer must seek the approval of their direct line manager.
2. Officers must not use their own personal or private account when accessing social networking sites for investigations/evidence gathering, only Council accounts should be used.
3. Officers may access the main page of an individual's profile to take an initial view as to whether there is any substance to the allegation of the matter being investigated. The initial viewing must be reasonable, for example, it would not be reasonable to spend any significant amount of time searching through various pages of an individual's profile or to print out several pages just in case they may reveal something useful.

4. The DPO maintains a log recording when social networking sites are viewed for investigations/evidence gathering. Each single viewing of a company or individual's social networking site must be recorded on the log This is to enable the Council to monitor the use of these sites for investigations/evidence gathering and use this information to review policies and guidance.
5. If it is considered that there is a need to monitor a company's or individual's social networking site, then the officer must refer the matter back to their line manager for consideration as to whether the activity constitutes Covert Surveillance. If officers are in any doubt as to whether an authorisation is required, they should seek advice from Legal Services before continuing to access a social networking site.
6. If the offence being investigated falls under RIPA Legislation, a formal Covert Surveillance application must be completed, authorised by one of the Council's AOs and then approved by a Magistrate.
7. If the offence being investigated falls outside of RIPA Legislation, a 'Sub-RIPA form must be completed and forwarded to the RIPA Coordinating Officer to be added to the log.

**What is meant by 'Social Media' for the purposes of this guidance note:**

Social Media, sometimes also referred to as a Social Network, can take many forms. Therefore, it can be difficult to provide a definitive list of sites.

Social Media will always be a web-based service that allows individuals and/or businesses to construct a public or semi-public profile. Beyond this, Social Media can be diverse, but will often have some, or all, of the following characteristics:

- An ability to show a list of other users with whom they share a connection; often termed "friends" or "followers".
- An ability to view and browse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.
- Host capabilities allowing users to post audio, photographs and/or video content that is
- viewable by others.
- Social Media can include community-based web sites, online discussions forums, chatrooms and other social spaces online.

Current examples of the popular forms of Social Media include (this list is not exhaustive and new forms can be created and others may vary or wain in popularity):

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Pinterest
- Tumblr

- Reddit
- Flickr
- Instagram
- Tiktok
- Snapchat
- Online dating websites

The definition of ‘private information’ under RIPA 2000 includes:  
 “any information relating to a person’s private or family life and should be taken generally to include any aspect of a person’s private or personal relationship with others, including family and professional or business relationships.”

**Privacy settings**

The majority of Social Media services will allow its users to decide who can view their activity, and to what degree, through the use of privacy settings. Whilst some users are happy, or otherwise indifferent about who is able to view their information, others prefer to maintain a level of privacy.

Depending on their intentions, many users will purposely use Social Media with no privacy setting applied whatsoever. This could be due to the fact that they are actively promoting something, such as a business or event, and therefore require as many people as possible to be able to view their Social Media profile at all times; others may do so for reasons of self-promotion.

The information publicly available is known as an individual’s public profile and the information is “open source”.

Persons who operate public profiles on Social Media without any, or only limited, forms of privacy settings do so at their own risk.

Whilst the content or information shared by individuals on Social Media remains the property of that individual, it is nonetheless considered to be in the public domain.

A private profile is one set up on Social Media where an individual sets privacy settings to limit their content, information or interactions according to their requirements.

By setting their profile to private, a user does not allow everyone to access and use their content, and respect should be shown to that person’s right to privacy under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act.

**What activity is permitted under this policy**

For individuals who do have a presence on Social Media, a lot of what is permitted under this policy for use in investigations will depend on whether they have a public or private profile.

In practice, this means that photographs, video content or any other relevant information posted by individuals and businesses to a public profile on any Social Media platform can be viewed, recorded and ultimately used as evidence in legal proceedings, subject to the usual rules of evidence.

When considering what is available on an individual's public Social Media profile, those investigating an offence, or potential offence, should always keep in mind what relevance it has to that investigation. Only information that is relevant to the investigation at hand, and goes some way toward proving the offence, should be gathered. If there is any doubt as to whether something is relevant, then advice should be sought from Legal Services.

**What is not permitted under this policy**

When it is discovered that an individual under investigation has set their Social Media account to private, Officers should not attempt to circumvent those settings under any circumstances. Such attempts would include, but are not limited to:

- sending "friend" or "follow" requests to the individual
- setting up or using bogus Social Media profiles in an attempt to gain access to the individual's private profile
- contacting the individual through any form of instant messaging or chat function requesting access or information
- asking family, friends, colleagues or any other third party to gain access on their behalf, or otherwise using the Social Media accounts of such people to gain access, or
- any other method which relies on the use of subterfuge or deception

Officers must not use their own personal or private account when accessing social media sites for investigation and evidence gathering purposes. Only Council accounts should be used. Interaction and conversations of any kind should be avoided.

Officers should keep in mind that simply using profiles belonging to others, or indeed fake profiles, in order to carry out investigations does not provide them with any form of true anonymity. The location and identity of an officer carrying out a search can be traced through tracking of IP Addresses, and other electronic identifying markers.

One off visits or infrequent visits to an individual's Social Media profile spread over time cannot be considered "Directed Surveillance" for the purposes of RIPA Legislation. Repeated or frequent visits may cross over into "Directed Surveillance" requiring RIPA Legislation authorisation.

A person's Social Media profile should not, be routinely monitored on a daily or weekly basis, as this will require RIPA Legislation authorisation. If an officer requires more advice on this, they should contact Legal Services for advice.

Each viewing of a company or individual's social media profile for the purpose of

investigation or evidence gathering must be recorded on the case log.

### **Capturing evidence**

Once content available from an individual's Social Media profile has been identified as relevant to the investigation being undertaken, it needs to be recorded and captured for the purposes of producing as evidence at any potential prosecution.

Where evidence takes the form of readable or otherwise observable content, such as text, status updates or photographs, it is acceptable for this to be copied directly from the site, or captured via a screenshot, onto a hard drive or other form of storage device, and subsequently printed to a hard copy. The hard copy evidence should then be exhibited to a suitably prepared witness statement in the normal way.

Where evidence takes the form of audio or video content, then efforts should be made to download onto a hard drive or some other storage device such as a CD or DVD. Those should then be exhibited to a suitably prepared witness statement in the normal way. Any difficulties in downloading this kind of evidence should be brought to the attention of the Council's IT Team.

When capturing evidence from an individual's public Social Media profile, steps should be taken to ensure that all relevant aspects of that evidence are recorded effectively. For example, when taking a screenshot of a person's Social Media profile, the Council Officer doing so should make sure that the time and date are visible on the screenshot in order to prove when the evidence was captured. Likewise, in relation to a specific status update or post published on the individual's profile, steps should be taken to make sure that the date and time of that status update or post is visible within the screenshot. Without this information, the effectiveness of the evidence is potentially lost as it may not be admissible in court.

When capturing evidence from a Social Media profile, steps should be taken to minimise Collateral Intrusion of inadvertently capturing third party information - either before capturing the evidence, or subsequently through redaction. This might be particularly prevalent on Social Media profiles promoting certain events, where users interact with each other by posting messages or photographs where they may make comments.

### **Retention and destruction of information**

Where recorded material (in any form or media) is obtained during the course of an investigation which might be relevant to that investigation, or another investigation, or to pending or future civil or criminal proceedings, then it should not be destroyed, but retained in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, CPIA and any other legal requirements, including those of confidentiality, and the Council's policies and procedures on document retention. Advice should be sought from the Data Protection Officer or Legal Services.

Personal data gathered by the Council is subject to the Data Protection Legislation. When considering whether to retain the data, the Council should:

- review the length of time it keeps personal data;
- consider the purpose(s) it holds the information for in deciding whether (and for how long) to retain it;
- securely delete information no longer needed for these purposes; and
- update, archive or securely delete information if it goes out of date

Due to the nature of Social Media, it is important to remember that when information produced as a hard copy is destroyed in line with this paragraph, that all digital copies of that evidence is likewise destroyed.

## Appendix C: Examples to help you decide whether your activities are covered by this policy

Firstly, consider:

- Is it necessary for the operation to be Covert? Could you obtain the evidence without Covert Surveillance? AOs should consider this very seriously because, if found that there was no need for Covert surveillance, the invasion of privacy may be deemed disproportionate to the investigation.
- Overt investigations (i.e., not done in a way calculated to ensure the subject is unaware of the operation) is not subject to the authorisation procedures in this policy. Overt activity includes (but is not limited to) routine patrols, observation at trouble spots, immediate response to events and overt use of CCTV.

*Examples:*

*Does the investigation involve the collection of private information?*

### **Example 1:**

***Two people talking on the street or in a bus may have a reasonable expectation of privacy over the contents of that conversation even though they are associating in public. The conversation should be considered as private information.***

The offence under investigation would need to meet the minimum penalty criteria and a Directed Surveillance authorisation would be necessary to listen in to or record the conversation as part of a specific investigation or authorisation.

(Source: [Covert Surveillance & Property Interference Revised Code of Practice 2018](#))

### **Example 2:**

***A surveillance officer intends to record a specific person giving their name and phone number to a shop assistant, in order to confirm their identity, as part of a criminal investigation.***

Although the person has disclosed these details in a public place, there is reasonable expectation that the details are not being recorded separately for another purpose. Before proceeding, the IO should make sure the alleged offence meets the minimum penalty criteria and seek a Directed Surveillance authorisation. (Source: *Covert Surveillance and Property Interference Revised Code of Practice 2018*).

*Planning Enforcement*

### **Example 3:**

***Routine activities such as Enforcement Officers looking at new building work, which has not been granted planning permission.***

This is not Directed Surveillance but falls under normal enforcement duties. RIPA 2000, section 80 provides a general saving for collecting information by lawful means such as this. However, such routine activities should not develop into Directed Surveillance.

**Example 4:**

***Officers wish to drive past a café to obtain a photo of the exterior.***

This is unlikely to require a Directed Surveillance authorisation. However, if the exercise was to establish a pattern of occupancy of the premises by someone, the accumulation of information is likely to result in private information. In the latter case, a Directed Surveillance authorisation would be required, and the offence would need to meet the minimum penalty requirements. ([Covert Surveillance Revised Code of Practice 2018](#)).

**Example 5:**

**You are conducting a site visit in response to a report from a member of the public who suspects a change of use of land, which is likely to involve criminal activity. The circumstances suggest you will need to monitor the site covertly and are likely to obtain private information about the owner and/or collateral information about other users of the site such as workers.**

This activity appears to fall within the Directed Surveillance. However, it is not legal to use Covert Surveillance to investigate crimes that would attract a custodial sentence with a minimum term of under six months (unless related to underage sale of alcohol or tobacco). You must therefore find an overt method of dealing with the offence.

**Example 6:**

**You are unable to gather conclusive evidence that illegal activity is taking place on site, but you still suspect that it is. Therefore, you decide to observe the site by driving past it periodically over the next fortnight. If you see unauthorised work taking place you will take a photo – but not covertly.**

This does not appear to fall within the definition of either Directed or Covert Human Intelligence Sources. This low-level activity is not subject to the authorisation procedures set out in this policy.

***Benefit Fraud***

**Example 7:**

**You are investigating an allegation that Mr X is claiming housing and council tax benefit even though he has been working full time for some years. Mr X did not declare on his benefit application that he had been working. You therefore intend to covertly observe him at his alleged employer's address in order to establish if he is working there. The observation will be from a vehicle and will cover a number of days.**

This appears to involve systematic surveillance of an individual and falls within the definition of Directed Surveillance, as set out in Appendix B, for the following reasons:

- The surveillance is being carried out for the purposes of a specific investigation into Mr X's alleged benefit fraud.
- The surveillance is of Mr X's personal activities and is therefore likely to produce private information about him.
- The exercise is not an immediate response to events but has been planned in respect of timing and the way in which the surveillance is to be carried out.
- It is likely that collateral material will be gathered

### *Employer Responsibilities*

#### **Example 8:**

**Recurrent thefts from staff are taking place and after considering the options, it has been suggested that the only recourse is to set up a secret camera covering the work area to catch the culprit "in the act".**

Normal business practice (i.e., the responsibilities that all employers would have in relation to staff) are outside of the RIPA Legislation controls. Therefore, the operation would need to be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation and the Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) provisions. Use the PIA template available on the Intranet.

You must consider all of the circumstances of the case. But where the aim is to stop the offending behaviour, overt measures (e.g., overt CCTV) may be more Proportionate.

Please note that if a crime on Council premises were being investigated by the police and they are conducting the surveillance, they would be required to authorise the surveillance, not the Council.

#### **Example 9:**

**A manager has received a report from employee A that employee B is spending hours surfing the internet. The manager requests a printout of employee B's websites visited and times spent on the internet to check whether the allegations are true.**

As with the scenario above, this investigation would fall outside RIPA Legislation provisions. The Council has arrangements to ensure any staff investigations involving ICT equipment are necessary and Proportionate. Please use the Council's Privacy Impact Assessment form.

Please note that automatic, untargeted central monitoring of internet/email use carried out by ICT software, which would highlight infringements of the Council's Acceptable Use Policy is allowed under the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000.

### *Housing Management*

#### **Example 10:**

A member of the public reports that their neighbour's garden is a health hazard. You visit the site, which contains excessive rubbish and materials clearly likely to be an environmental hazard to the community. As the tenant is not at home, you

photograph the view of the garden from the road. You have not deliberately planned the photo to be taken without the tenant's knowledge and any future surveillance of the site will not be carried out in a manner calculated to ensure that the tenant is unaware of it.

This does not appear to fall within the definition of either Directed Surveillance or Covert Human Intelligence Sources as set out in Appendix A and is therefore not subject to the authorisation procedures in this policy. However, care will be required if photos are taken whilst on the premises as this may in some cases become "Intrusive Surveillance", which the Council does not have the authority to carry out.

If you gather personal data (i.e., that can be used to identify someone), this will be subject to the Data Protection Legislation and would be subject to a Privacy Impact Assessment.

#### **Example 11:**

***You have received an application for housing by someone claiming to be homeless. However, you have grounds to believe that the claim is fraudulent, so you wish to carry out surveillance of the claimant's suspected residence to establish the truth.***

This appears to fall within the definition of Directed Surveillance, as set out in Appendix B, for the following reasons:

- The surveillance is for the purposes of a specific investigation into a fraudulent application.
- The surveillance is likely to produce private information on the applicant as well as collateral information about third parties.
- The exercise is not an immediate response to circumstances but has been planned in respect of timing and the way the surveillance is to be carried out.

However, you would need to consider whether the offence is listed on the statute book as attracting a minimum custodial sentence of six months or more before proceeding with the covert elements of the investigation and applying for authorisation.

#### *Use of CCTV*

#### **Example 12:**

**An officer receives information that an individual suspected of Benefit Fraud will be going to their workplace, in the High Street and within an area monitored by CCTV. The officer wishes to use the CCTV to obtain evidence that the suspect is working.**

This is targeted use of the town centre's overt CCTV system, to conduct surveillance against that individual without his knowledge. The IO would need to apply for an authorisation for Directed Surveillance.

If you are investigating a serious criminal matter and you are unsure if your surveillance activity falls under RIPA Legislation, you should apply for authorisation in order to avoid any claim that the Council has infringed anyone's Human Rights, which could disqualify the evidence from being permitted in court.

## Appendix D: Forms

**Please check you are using the correct forms. The latest versions of the forms listed below should be downloaded from the Home Office.**

RIPA forms: [RIPA forms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Application for use of Directed Surveillance - [application-directed-surveillanc.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Review of use of Directed Surveillance - [review-directed-surveillance.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Renewal form for Directed Surveillance - [renewal-directed-surveillance.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Cancellation of use of Directed Surveillance - [cancellation-directed-surveillan.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Application for the use of covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) - [chis-application.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Reviewing the use of covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) - [chis-review.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Renewal of authorisation to use covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) - [chis-renewal.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Cancellation of covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) - [chis-cancellation.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Application to Magistrates: [approval-order-form.doc \(live.com\)](#)

Coded of Practice can be accessed here :[RIPA codes - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Error reporting form can be accessed through IPCO or here :[IPCO Error Report Form.pdf](#)

NAFN website can be accessed here: [NAFN - National Anti-Fraud Network](#)

Agents Agreement Form - Please see Page 39

REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000

AGENT'S AGREEMENT FORM

I..... (insert Agent's name)

of

..... (address)

confirm that in relation to

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....(name or description of the surveillance)

I agree to comply with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, with all statutory provisions, statutory Codes of Practice and with Waverley and Guildford Borough Council's Policy and Social Media Guidance when undertaking any and all surveillance authorised by Waverley or Guildford Borough Council under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the Council's Authorisation Form reference number .....dated the.....

and I agree not to carry out any surveillance that is contrary to this authorisation.

Signed.....Dated.....  
.....

Covert Surveillance and Investigative Powers Policy and Procedure agreed and signed by:

**Executive Head of Legal & Democratic Services Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils**

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# Waverley Borough Council

**Report to:** Executive

**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Ward(s) affected:** All.

**Report of Director: Annie Righton: Community Wellbeing**

**Author:** Katie Webb, Community Services Manager

**Tel:** 01483 523340

**Email:** [katie.webb@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:katie.webb@waverley.gov.uk)

**Executive Portfolio Holder responsible:** Cllr Kika Mirylees

**Email:** [kika.mirylees@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:kika.mirylees@waverley.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Open

**Key Decision:** No

## Safeguarding Operational Lead

### 1. Executive Summary

Safeguarding is a legal responsibility for any local authority to undertake so that we exercise due care and diligence to our most vulnerable residents in collaboration with our statutory county council partners.

We comply with a variety of legislation and statutory guidance to ensure our responsibilities to our communities are met and to ensure correct governance we have an [internal policy](#) around safeguarding and have commissioned an internal audit of our current work practice.

The internal audit identified key areas for development that we want to implement especially in light of all local authorities in Surrey seeing a significant increase in safeguarding concerns presenting amongst communities. This is a result of a number of factors that include

- The covid 19 pandemic and its aftermath.
- The cost-of-living crisis.
- Increased pressure on our statutory partners leading to higher thresholds of need to warrant partner involvement.

These factors mean that safeguarding risks are held at local borough level without statutory intervention.

To help the council with this increased pressure, a safeguarding coordinator role is requested to ensure clear reporting lines, governance of care and management of risk to the individual and the council are adequately met.

There is no current budget for this role, but the Executive is asked to support the implementation of this role and request for supplementary budget in 2023/24 that will become part of the establishment budget from 2024/25.

## **2. Recommendation to Executive**

That the Executive approves:

1. The establishment a dedicated safeguarding coordinator to act as a safeguarding operational lead to support all officers in the management of safeguarding referrals.
2. The supplementary budget for 2023/24 to recruit to the role in this financial year.
3. Adding the post to the establishment budget from 2024/25 onwards.

### **3. Reason(s) for the recommendations**

Due to the increase in safeguarding concerns for our most vulnerable residents and the and the increased thresholds of need to evoke statutory partner involvement, there is a need for a dedicated resource to help the council manage the associated risk.

The role will support officers in coordinating safeguarding concerns and enquiries to ensure that there is a clear audit trail of key decisions and actions that demonstrates sound management at local level and referral of cases with increasing complexity for multi-agency intervention.

The role will help reinforce and embed our safeguarding culture to be at the heart of all that we do when working with our communities.

### **4. Exemption from publication**

This report is not exempt from publication.

### **5. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Executive of the need for a growth item to the establishment so that a safeguarding coordinator can be recruited to support the increasing safeguarding demands placed on the council.

### **6. Priorities**

Safeguarding of our most vulnerable and at-risk residents is key to the council's commitment to tackle inequality and support those in need.

As a local authority we also have a duty to ensure we safeguard children and adults including those with care and support needs.

## 7. Background

Waverley Borough Council has a legal responsibility to fulfil its statutory duties set out in the legislation and statutory guidance below.

- [The Childrens Act 1984](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)
- [The Care Act 2014 to safeguard children, and adults with care and support needs.](#)

Additionally, the Council's roles and responsibilities are articulated through the [Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy 2020](#) where the aims and objectives for safeguarding for Waverley is set in the context of both the Surrey Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards to increase awareness, provide clarity on roles and responsibilities and support decision making within our safeguarding framework.

The Policy also sets out how our staff will contribute to delivering our safeguarding duties and is reviewed six monthly to ensure it is compliant with changes in legislation and regional policies.

The policy is due a refresh in 2024 and will come to the Executive and Full Council for approval.

To comply with best practice under the framework for the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and The Care Act 2014, the council reports annually through a Section 11 audit and Quality Assurance Questionnaire which is reviewed by the Surrey Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board.

As part of the council's Internal Audit Plan, we also commission Southern Internal Audit Partnership to undertake a review of the council's safeguarding policy and practice. This happens in alternate years to ensure there are robust processes and procedures in place to manage safeguarding and the risk to the council. The audit recommended that the Internal Safeguarding Board take an Annual Safeguarding Report to Corporate Management Board (CMB)

A report for April 2021 to October 2022 was submitted to CMB that highlighted 3 key areas of potential risk to the council.

### **7.1 Area 1 - Safeguarding referrals and monitoring**

During this period there were some anomalies in relation to the monitoring information we hold. Our central referral and monitoring data did not include every safeguarding case that frontline services are managing due to certain teams noting their safeguarding concerns as part of business as usual within their case management systems Orchard or Jigsaw.

It was highlighted that some officers have struggled to understand the need for a central record of safeguarding referrals and hence the council's data is not complete.

This presents a risk to the council acutely demonstrated through the numerous Summary of Involvement requests received from the Surrey Safeguarding Adult Board regarding possible Safeguarding Case Reviews and the current Safer Waverley Partnership joint Domestic Homicide / Adult Safeguarding Case review workstream.

### **7.2 Area 2 - Responding to increasing demand.**

Following the first internal safeguarding audit in 2018, the role of the Safeguarding Champion was introduced. The purpose of the role was to provide a consistent approach to safeguarding concerns raised by staff across all service areas. Safeguarding Champions were recruited across council services where there are safeguarding responsibilities.

Initially the safeguarding champions worked well, however there were discrepancies in reporting standards and risk management, hence the role was not working as well as it should.

The audit report highlighted that since the pandemic, the pressure around safeguarding vulnerable children and adults has increased. This combined with stretched services at Surrey County Council has resulted in many cases no longer meeting their adopted threshold of intervention. We are seeing many level 4 cases now being deemed level

3 cases and therefore left with the local authority to manage and hold the risk.

The report also found that due to the increased complexity of safeguarding cases it had not been realistic to ensure all Safeguarding Champions were trained to the appropriate level to deal with these cases therefore this function was perceived to be the responsibility of the Community Services Team - which is not sustainable, nor correct.

### **7.3 Area 3 - Develop safeguarding knowledge, expertise and risk management.**

Evaluating the council's safeguarding protocol and practice within a specific period identified the need for a dedicated officer who can lead and focus on developing officers to understand the changing approach to safeguarding thresholds at Surrey County Council and

- support officers in coordinating safeguarding concerns and enquiries to ensure that there is a clear audit trail of key decisions and actions that demonstrates sound management and referral of cases with increasing complexity.
- identify the skills gaps, knowledge and expertise within services and work with the Training and Development Manager to provide an annual learning and development programme in relation to safeguarding.
- ensure front line officers have safeguarding at the heart of their role and are supported in coordinating multi-agency interventions where necessary.

## **8. Consultations**

There are no consultations associated to this report.

## **9. Key Risks**

As a council it is vital we improve our culture around safeguarding. Recent DHRs and SARs have highlighted a lack of ownership around safeguarding within the organisation.

This role will help support officers in managing safeguarding responsibilities through accurate record keeping, audit trails and instigating case conferences when other agencies feel they do not have the lead role. If we do not agree this proposal or defer it there is a risk of:

- Failure to recognise individuals / families with safeguarding concerns and failure to take appropriate action that results in a serious incident or death.
- Reputational harm to the council if a Safeguarding Case Review occurs following a serious incident or death of a resident who has established safeguarding concerns.
- Reputational risk to the council if there is not a clear audit trail of key decisions and actions in response to safeguarding concerns.
- Inability to deliver Outcome 8 of the Community Service rolling Service Plan 2023-26 - Waverley Borough Council fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.

## **10. Financial Implications**

There are financial implications associated with this report as it is requesting a growth item through the implementation of a Safeguarding Coordinator Post to the establishment.

Proposal - grade 7

Post	Grade	Hours	Cost
Operational Safeguarding Coordinator	07D	37	44,187

This can be funded from vacancy savings within the team; and, approval to add the post to the establishment budget will need to be included in the budget setting process for from 2024/25. Over the next two years there is an available budget of £22.5k for Health and Wellbeing resources which is backfilling the Leisure Manager whilst the work on Cranleigh Leisure Centre. This can be used to offset the above cost which brings the growth requirement for 24/25 down to £21,687. From 26/27 the full growth of £44,187 will be required.

This growth request needs to be considered against the growing pressures facing the General Fun MTFP over the next 4 years. The forecast budget gap for 2024/25 is £1.7m and a number of growth items have already been approved which is going to inflate this number. At the current time savings have not been identified to cover the budget gap, this will be done as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process.

## **11. Legal Implications**

The Council has statutory duties in relation to safeguarding. This post seeks to ensure adequate resource to sufficiently discharge that duty.

Approval of the Council's budget is reserved to Full Council.

## **12. Human Resource Implications**

The post would be job evaluated and advertised in accordance with our Job Evaluation and Recruitment policies.

There are no other HR implications.

## **13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

Safeguarding is an essential component on ensuring our responsibilities to those who may be less advantaged or vulnerable are met and that we work to ensure our communities have equal access to services, care and wider opportunities regardless of any financial status or protected characteristic.

## **14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

There are no climate implications associated to this report.

## **15. Conclusion**

Many of our communities are facing greater challenges to their wellbeing than ever before.

The landscape for safeguarding has changed particularly since the pandemic and the challenges faced with Surrey County Council adult and children's services.

The pressure for this council around safeguarding vulnerable children and adults has increased due to increased thresholds of intervention adopted by our statutory partners and we are seeing many more complex cases including level 4 cases that are now deemed level 3 cases and therefore with the council to manage and hold the risk.

The recommendations of the internal audit alongside the changing landscape means we must improve our culture around safeguarding and ensure it is the focus of our front-line services.

The establishment of a Safeguarding Coordinator is essential to ensure the council delivers its safeguarding duties and will help address the wider need for a change in culture towards safeguarding concerns.

## **16. Appendices**

Appendix A - Annual Safeguarding Report 2021 to October 2022

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report.  
Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	1 November 23
Legal / Governance	6 November 23
HR	18 October 23
Equalities	2 November 23
Lead Councillor	3 November 23
CMB	19 September 23
Executive Briefing/Liaison	14 November 23
Committee Services	15 November 23

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## Waverley Borough Council: Annual Safeguarding Report

**Subject:** Annual Safeguarding Report: April 2021 – October 2022

**Author:** Samantha Hutchison and Katie Webb

**Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023

### 1. Background

Waverley Borough Council has a responsibility to adhere to safeguarding legislation set out in the Working Together To Safeguard Children 2018 framework and The Care Act 2014 for vulnerable adults.

Best Practice under the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 framework suggests borough and district councils report every 12 months on their safeguarding practice towards children. The Care Act 2014 section 42 places the responsibility of an annual adult safeguarding report with the local safeguarding adults board – which for Waverley, the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board publishes.

### 2. Purpose of this report

At Waverley, we have a joint safeguarding policy for both children and vulnerable adults and this report will evaluate safeguarding protocol and practice within the council from April 2021 – 30 September 2022. The report will also inform on the audit performed on internal safeguarding this year by Southern Internal Audit Partnership as part of our internal audit programme. Annex 1 provides key findings from the internal audit.

### 3. Safeguarding practices from April 2021 – September 2023

#### I. Key activities

During this period the council has:

- Started to deliver on the Action Plan which is now monitored through the Internal Safeguarding Board and Audit Committee.
- Held four internal safeguarding board meetings - one focussed specifically on safeguarding protocol for the Homes for Ukraine scheme.
- Held four internal safeguarding monitoring meetings to review all referrals to Surrey County Council services, action taken and any follow up required.
- Held four safeguarding champion meetings.
- Performed an internal management review on a specific safeguarding case – including officer involvement, action taken as well as identifying future learning. This case is now subject to a Surrey Adult Safeguarding Case Review.
- Included a Safeguarding Action in the Corporate Compliance area of the Council's Service Plan 2022-25

*(HDC13.9 - HoS to ensure that all staff within the service are aware of the current Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults-updated2020.docx process and procedures including the Safeguarding referral process and that any issues are dealt with in a prompt manner. Where required make sure that key members of staff complete appropriate training recommended by Waverley's Safeguarding Board.)*

## Waverley Borough Council: Annual Safeguarding Report

- Ensured the annual PAM process identifies safeguarding training requirements.
- Delivered a safeguarding training session for Managers who report directly to EHoS, EHoS, Strategic Directors and the Chief Executive.
- Delivered bespoke safeguarding awareness sessions to Careline, Customer Services, Housing Rents Account Team, Housing Maintenance staff and external contractor Ian Williams.
- Provided Suicide Prevention Training to the Housing Management Team
- Ensured Waverley Training Services staff completed; Level - 2 Advanced Safeguarding Children, Safer Recruitment Training, Level 3 - Safeguarding Adults Training and Level 3 -Designated Safeguarding Lead Training.
- Facilitated new starter E-learning for all councillors on safeguarding – however the take up from councillors has been low.
- Used 2 articles in Cascade to raise awareness of the council's safeguarding reporting and recording process.
- In partnership with Guildford Borough Council delivered two South West Surrey 'Ask Me' Domestic Abuse Webinars to staff, partners and local businesses.
- Provided annual funding to support the work of the Surrey Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Surrey Safeguarding Adult Board.
- Attended the Surrey Safeguarding Children's Partnership Annual Conference

### II. Data for April 2021 – September 2022

During this period, we have had 97 staff monitoring forms where the cases feature the following safeguarding concerns

#### Adult Safeguarding

- 47 cases featuring mental health – including suicide
- 11 cases featuring adult self-neglect
- 5 cases featuring adult exploitation
- 47cases featuring domestic abuse / coercive control
- 3 cases featuring financial abuse
- 3 cases featuring modern slavery
- 2 cases featuring substance misuse
- 1 case featuring physical abuse
- 3 cases did not fall into a specific category

#### Child Safeguarding

- 8 cases featuring child neglect
- 3 cases featured young people presenting themselves at being at risk of being homeless at the council offices
- 3 cases featuring child exploitation
- 1 case of possible honour-based violence

The table below indicates the services areas where the referrals originated

## Waverley Borough Council: Annual Safeguarding Report

Service area	Number of concerns raised
Audit	1
Careline	1
Communities	4
Corporate	1
Customer Services	9
Environmental Health / services	8
Finance	6
Homes for Ukraine	6
Home Choice	10
Rents team	1
Senior Living	2
Housing management	25
Housing Development	1
Housing Options	12
HR	1
Legal	2
Licensing	1
Parking	1
Parks and Countryside	1
Planning	2
WTS	2

Additionally, the council has

- Responded to 25 MASH enquiries relating to children– where 20 of these enquiries had some interaction with council services.13 of these 20 were WBC tenants.
- Not received any MASH for adults which does not correlate with the safeguarding monitoring data
- Provided a Summary of Involvement request to the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board for a possible Safeguarding Case Review.
- Provided a Summary of Involvement request, senior officer panel representative and independent management review from the Safer Waverley Partnership in relation to a joint Domestic Homicide / Adult Safeguarding Case review.

### III. Safeguarding referrals and monitoring

The Internal Safeguarding Audit highlighted the two areas below as particular areas of concern.

- There is no regular monitoring of concerns recorded in ECINS for compliance with the safeguarding policy.
- Although the Internal Safeguarding Board was introduced following the last audit to provide leadership and co-ordination of the council's approach to safeguarding, there

## Waverley Borough Council: Annual Safeguarding Report

is no established reporting framework to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are discharged.

In response to these points,

- The Internal Safeguarding Board decided to hold a separate meeting quarterly to review and monitor safeguarding cases and referrals.
- ECINS was replaced with a Safeguarding Monitoring Form for officers to record safeguarding cases, referrals and action taken. These cases are to be compiled on an excel spreadsheet for review at the safeguarding monitoring meeting. All safeguarding cases are stored in a restricted folder. We are working on the safeguarding monitoring form to be transferred to an online form via the liberty create work programme.

Throughout this year, there are some anomalies in relation to the monitoring information we hold. Our central referral and monitoring data does not include every safeguarding case that frontline services are managing due to certain teams noting their safeguarding concerns as part of business as usual within their case management systems Orchard or Jigsaw.

Some officers have struggled to understand the need for a central record of safeguarding referrals and hence our data is not complete. This presents a risk to the council acutely demonstrated through the Summary of Involvement request from Surrey Safeguarding Adult Board for a possible Safeguarding Case Review and the current Safer Waverley Partnership joint Domestic Homicide / Adult Safeguarding Case review.

#### **4. Aims and Objectives October 2022 onwards**

##### **I. Respond to increasing demand**

There is no doubt that since the pandemic the pressure around safeguarding vulnerable children and adults has increased. This combined with stretched services at Surrey County Council has resulted in many cases no longer meeting their adopted threshold of intervention.

We are seeing many level 4 cases now being deemed level 3 cases and therefore left with us to manage.

In response to this, we will

- Establish a central safeguarding operational group for frontline staff whose primary role will be to review all safeguarding cases across the council on a monthly basis and ensure necessary support from other agencies is in place
- Establish a mechanism to receive feedback from children and Adult MASH referrals.
- Facilitate training for staff on note taking and recording for safeguarding records.
- Include in our Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults at Risk Policy a protocol on the corporate safeguarding monitoring process.
- Establish a mechanism to receive feedback from children and Adult MASH referrals.

### ii: Develop safeguarding knowledge, expertise and risk management.

#### Safeguarding Champions

Following the 2018 internal safeguarding audit, the role of the safeguarding champion was introduced. The purpose of the role being to provide a consistent approach to safeguarding concerns raised by staff across all service areas.

The discrepancies experienced in reporting and risk management highlight that the role of the safeguarding champion is not working as well as it could.

The report also found that in addition, that due to the increased complexity of safeguarding cases it had not been realistic to ensure all Safeguarding Champions were trained to the appropriate level to deal with these cases when safeguarding was not the primary function of their role therefore this function has fallen Community Services Manager and Communities Support Officer which is not sustainable.

#### Developing Knowledge and Facilitate Key Training

It has been identified that amongst our staff there is confusion as to who manages the safeguarding risk and consequently there is a need to reiterate that multi- agency forums such as the Safer Waverley Partnership Community Harm and Risk Management Meeting (CHaRMM), Surrey Police Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) for high-risk domestic abuse cases and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) **do not** replace the council's risk management processes for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

These forums should be part of a safeguarding plan for our safeguarding cases.

We can also see via a review of the data that risk assessments and safeguarding plans are not routinely used in high risk safeguarding cases

The internal independent management review for the current Safer Waverley Partnership and Surrey Safeguarding Adult / Domestic Homicide Review has also identified the need for specific mental health and suicide prevention training, particularly in relation to domestic abuse.

In response to these issues, we recommend that

- The role of the safeguarding champion is removed as it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure safeguarding is a priority.
- All staff where safeguarding responsibilities are a key part of their role undertake advance level safeguarding children and / or vulnerable adult training.
- All staff where safeguarding responsibilities are a key part of their role to complete mental health and suicide prevention training.
- Mandatory Safeguarding training for all councillors as part of their induction following elections in 2023.

## **Waverley Borough Council: Annual Safeguarding Report**

- We continue to work with partners to provide learning opportunities following serious case reviews
- We make risk assessments and safeguarding plans part of the safeguarding process on high-risk cases.
- A dedicated safeguarding role sits within community services to support all council officers in the management of safeguarding cases.

### **5. Conclusion**

This annual report covers the period 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2022 and provides key insights to the council's approach to safeguarding children and adults.

It is evident that high risk safeguarding cases are becoming more prevalent to frontline services and it is important that we strive to achieve best safeguarding practices in our management of these issues.

In response to some of the challenges we face, we have adapted an Action Plan that will be monitored by the Internal Safeguarding Board (Annex 2). This plan includes actions to

- Establish a central safeguarding operational group whose primary role will be to review all safeguarding cases across the council on a monthly basis.
- Ensure appropriate safeguarding training – that includes risk management/record keeping and safeguarding plans is available to all staff in frontline roles and is managed through Performance Agreement Meetings.
- Revise The Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults at Risk Policy to reflect the outcomes and recommendations of this report

### **6. Actions for Corporate Management Board**

The Internal Safeguarding Board requests that Corporate Management Board

- Consider this Annual Safeguarding Report for 2021/2022
- Approve the Action Plan (Annex 2)
- Approve the creation of a dedicated safeguarding role to support all officers in the management of safeguarding cases.

### Internal Safeguarding Audit 2020/21

As part of the council's Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21, Southern Internal Audit Partnership undertook a review of the council's internal safeguarding processes.

The audit report was received on 18 July 2021.

The review focused on safeguarding policy and how compliance with policy is ensured, monitored and reported.

The review also looked at arrangements for managing concerns and referrals - including the sharing of information with partner agencies.

The findings of this audit mirror the findings from the 2020 Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership Section 11 Self-Assessment Audit.

#### Summary Finding of the Safeguarding Audit

Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

#### Key Observations

##### Areas assessed to be working well/controls are effective:

- a. There is a safeguarding policy setting out how the Council will meet its obligations to safeguard children and adults at risk; the policy is dated January 2020 and has a review date of January 2022.
- b. Safeguarding information, including access to the policy and processes, is available to staff from a link on the homepage of the intranet; members of the public can access safeguarding information via the website.
- c. The safeguarding policy includes a clear framework for dealing with safeguarding concerns.
- d. An Internal Safeguarding Board was introduced following the previous internal audit in 2018 with responsibility for overseeing the Council's safeguarding responsibilities, outcomes of the Section 11 Audit, delivering the actions of the audit and monitoring and evaluation of all safeguarding referrals.
- e. There are safeguarding champions across the council to provide a consistent approach to dealing with and recording safeguarding concerns raised by staff and elected members.
- f. Waverley Borough Council is represented at key safeguarding meetings and forums including Surrey Safeguarding Leads Meeting (Children and Adults at Risk), Surrey Safeguarding Children's Partnership Executive and Surrey Safeguarding Children Executive Group.

## Waverley Borough Council: Annual Safeguarding Report

- g. Measures are in place to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding training; we found that a course evaluation form was sent to attendees for safeguarding training carried out via zoom in October 2020.

### **Areas where the framework of governance, risk management and control could be improved**

1. There is no regular monitoring of concerns recorded in ECINS for compliance with the safeguarding policy.
2. Although the Internal Safeguarding Board was introduced following the last audit to provide leadership and co-ordination of the Council's approach to safeguarding there is no established reporting framework to ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are discharged.
3. Portfolio Holder information in the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Corporate Safeguarding Board Terms of Reference are out of date; The Corporate Strategy does not set out the Council's role in safeguarding, and it is not included as a Portfolio Holder responsibility on the Council website.
4. Roles, responsibilities and targets for Safeguarding Champions are not included in performance agreements.
5. The Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk states that Safeguarding is referenced in the general conditions of contract for suppliers, however further discussion showed this is not the case.
6. Members do not have access to the safeguarding policy online. There have been no recent or regular communications to staff or members to promote the policy.
7. From a sample of five new starters, two had not completed safeguarding induction training within one month of appointment. Outstanding training has not been followed up recently due to other operational priorities.

Safeguarding Annual Report 2021-22

Action Plan

Safeguarding Annual Report 2021/22 Action Plan			
Action	Responsible Officer	Target Date	Priority (RAG)
1. Review the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults at Risk Policy	Sam Hutchison / Katie Webb	31 May 24	Medium – policy is reviewed 6 monthly
2. Include in protocol / policy. If there hasn't been a referral on the central system for risk management then need to know why.	Sam Hutchison / Katie Webb	31 May 24	High
3. Establish a central safeguarding operational group whose primary role will be to review all safeguarding cases across the council on a monthly basis.	Sam Hutchison / Katie Webb	First meeting 12 Dec 22	Complete
Agree Terms of Reference for the safeguarding operational group	Sam Hutchison / Katie Webb	17 January 23	
4. Ensure risk assessments and safeguarding plans part of the safeguarding process on high-risk cases.	Sam Hutchison / Katie Webb	Started to implement	Established SG case conference or complex cases
5. Training for staff on how to accurate note taking and recording.	Katie Webb / Paul Stevens	31 March 24	High

## Waverley Borough Council: Annual Safeguarding Report

6.	Mandatory Safeguarding training for all councillors as part of their induction following elections in 2023.	Fiona Cameron Katie Webb	May 2023	Complete
7.	Establish a mechanism to receive feedback from children and Adult MASH referrals.	Sam Hutchison / Katie Webb	Ongoing as feedback is patchy – would like a consistent approach	Complete – feedback from SSAB on process for feedback
8.	Continue to develop and implement an online <b>report it</b> and a <b>recording and monitoring report with Liberty Create Forms</b> for the Internal safeguarding to review quarterly	Cecilia Beck – IT Programmer, Katie Webb, Community Services Manager & Clare Arnold, Community Support Officer	CB / CA testing form to allow for updates on cases to be recorded	Medium – current process is working well
9.	Review the role of the safeguarding champion	Sam Hutchison and Katie Webb	Complete – Create SG Coordinator Role	SG Role going to Executive Nov 23
10.	All staff where safeguarding responsibilities are a key part of their role staff to complete mental health and suicide prevention training.	Kate Ferguson / Sam Hutchison and Katie Webb	31 March 24	High
11.	All staff where safeguarding responsibilities are a key part of their role to undertake advance level safeguarding children and / or vulnerable adult training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surrey Children/Adults thresholds for a safeguarding response</li> <li>• Staff ownership of safeguarding cases</li> </ul>	Kate Ferguson / Sam Hutchison and Katie Webb	31 March 24	High
12.	All staff where safeguarding responsibilities are a key part of their role to undertake Domestic Abuse Awareness Training	Katie Webb / Southwest Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service	31 Dec 23	Training scheduled for 13 Dec 23
13.	Work with partners to provide learning opportunities following serious case reviews, including domestic abuse in older residents	Sam Hutchison and Katie Webb	Ongoing – as each review is concluded	Medium

# Waverley Borough Council

**Report to:** Executive

**Date:** 28 November 2023

Ward(s) affected: All

**Report of Director:** Community Wellbeing

**Author:** Michael Rivers, Housing Needs Manager

**Tel:** 01483 523013

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**Executive Portfolio Holder/ Lead Councillor responsible:** Cllr Nick Palmer

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**Report Status:** Open

**Key Decision:** Yes

## Waverley's Homelessness Strategy 2023-2028

### 1. Executive Summary

Councils are legally required under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by Homelessness Act 2002 and Homelessness Reduction Act 2017) to have a Homelessness Strategy detailing their plans to prevent and relieve homelessness. The Strategy is required to have an Action Plan that is kept under review and a Strategy that is based on a Review of homelessness in its area and the services available to help prevent and relieve it.

### 2. Recommendation to Executive

That the Executive resolves to recommend to Council:

2.1 The adoption and publication of the Homelessness Strategy

### 3. Reason(s) for Recommendation:

3.1 To comply with legislation.

3.2 To mitigate the challenges outlined in the report and as far as possible, to build on the Council's success in preventing and relieving homelessness.

## **4. Exemption from publication**

4.1 No

## **5. Purpose of Report**

5.1 To highlight the successes and challenges faced by Waverley in preventing and relieving homelessness and plans to help mitigate the challenges and build on the successes.

## **6. Strategic Priorities**

6.1 Good quality housing for all income levels and age group

6.2 Improving health and well-being of residents and communities

## **7. Background**

7.1 The Council has a statutory duty to produce a strategy outlining how the Council and its partners will work to prevent and relieve homelessness.

7.2 The Council's previous strategy was adopted in 2018 and runs from 2018 to 2023.

## **8. Consultations**

8.1 Statutory and Voluntary partners were consulted by email in September 2023 and in partnership meetings.

8.2 Partners include: Adult Social Care, Childrens Services, Domestic Abuse Outreach, Citizens Advice South West Surrey, Supported Housing Providers, Probation, Mental Health Services, Ethical Lettings

## **9. Key Risks**

9.1 Sufficient staffing capacity

9.2 Financial challenges as a result of reduction in Government grant in 25-26.

9.3 Challenges in securing sufficient private rented and supported housing options for homelessness clients.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1 The report highlights the risks faced by Waverley under a revised homelessness formula that will nearly halve its Government Grant in the year 2025-2026. In the current financial year all of the Homelessness Prevention grant allocation of £617k will be spent. Going forward if the same level of service is upheld then the General Fund will need to provide the funding for up to half this costs. This will result in a growth in the MTFP of approximately £300k. Given the current forecast gap in the MTFP over the next 4 years a full review will be required to ensure costs are kept down where possible to minimise the impact on the General Fund.

## **11. Legal Implications**

- 11.1 Section 1(1) of the 2002 Act gives housing authorities the power to carry out a homelessness review for their district and formulate and publish a homelessness strategy based on the results of the review. Section 1(4) requires housing authorities to publish a new homelessness strategy, based on the results of a further homelessness review, within the period of 5 years beginning with the day on which their last homelessness strategy was published.

In conducting a review of homelessness and to formulate a new strategy, housing authorities will need to take into account the additional duties introduced through the 2017 Act. Authorities are encouraged to take the opportunity to involve all relevant partners in developing a strategy that involves them in earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness.

## **12. Human Resource Implications**

- 12.1 The report outlines the need to have sufficient staff capacity and resilience to tackle the rise in homelessness approaches to Waverley (and the complexity of many of these approaches), in the context of a likely reduction in Government Grant in 2025-26.

## **13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 13.1 The Government requires the Council to obtain detailed Equality and Diversity information from all applicants and anonymised data is reported to Government on a quarterly basis.
- 13.2 The Council's services, including its homelessness services, must be available and accessible for all household groups.
- 13.3 See EQIA – Appendix 2

## **14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

- 14.1 The report highlights that increasingly Waverley is delivering its homelessness services by phone and online, reducing (but not removing) the need for face to face contact, travel costs and Office use

## **17. Summary of Options**

- 17.1 If Waverley does not have an up to date Homelessness Strategy, statutory homelessness decisions, that are required to take the Strategy into account, would be open to legal challenge.

## **18. Conclusion**

- 18.1 Waverley has for many years been very successful in preventing and relieving homelessness and in doing so, the Council has kept the number of households having to be placed into temporary accommodation to a minimum.
- 18.2 The rise in homelessness approaches, challenging economic conditions and likely cut in Government funding means this success is under threat. The Strategy and Action Plan outline the Council's proposed actions to try to mitigate these risks and build on previous successes.

## **19. Background Papers**

- 19.1 Homelessness Strategy, Action Plan, Homelessness Review (Appendix 1), EQIA (Appendix 2)

## 20. Appendices

- 20.1 The Homelessness Review document is contained as Appendix 1 and the EQIA as Appendix 2

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report.  
Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	02.11.23
Legal / Governance	31.10.23
HR	09.11.23
Equalities	31.10.23
Lead Councillor	02.11.23
CMB	07.11.23
Executive Briefing/Liaison	14.11.23
Committee Services	16/11

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Waverley Borough Council  
**Homelessness Strategy**  
**2023-2028**

**Latest version number: 5**  
**Latest publication date: December 2023**  
**Lead Officer / Team: Housing Needs Manager**

## Document Information & Governance

### Approval & Publication:

Approving Body	Approval route requirement	Publication Type	Publication requirement	Review frequency	Document owner	Next Review Date
<i>e.g. Executive, Council,</i>		<i>Internal/ external</i>	<i>Required by x legislation</i>	<i>5 yearly</i>	Michael Rivers	April 2028
<i>E.g. Management Board</i>	<i>There are no legal or constitutional requirements for approval</i>	<i>Internal</i>	<i>There are no legal or constitutional requirements for publication</i>			

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V1	Published	July 2003	Approved by Council	MR
V2	Published	July 2008	Approved by Council	MR
V3	Published	July 2013	Approved by Council	MR
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Impact Assessment Type	Required / Not Required	Date Completed	Impact Assessments and Considerations Comment	Assessment Owner
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Data Protection Impact Assessment				
Climate Change				

## Contents

Document Information & Governance .....	2
Approval & Publication: .....	2
Version Control Information: .....	2
Impact Assessments and Consideration: .....	2
Contents.....	3
Foreword.....	4
1. Introduction .....	6
2. Waverley’s Homelessness Strategy.....	7
2.1 Progress / achievements since the last Strategy .....	7
2.1.1 Prevention .....	7
2.1.2 Successful implementation of Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 .....	7
2.1.3 Successful interventions to help rough sleepers during the pandemic under ‘Everyone In’ .....	8
2.1.4 Successful Rough Sleeper Initiative bids (RSI) .....	9
2.1.5 Innovative use of ‘Guardian properties’ for rough sleepers/single homeless .....	10
2.1.6 Successful NSAP bid.....	10
2.1.7 Successful RSAP bid.....	10
2.1.8 Surrey County Council Grant.....	11
2.1.9 Successful adjustment to delivering the Council’s homelessness service primarily by phone and online .....	11
2.1.10 Forging new partnerships and developing existing ones.....	11
2.1.11 Successful completion of previous Homelessness Strategy targets .....	12
2.2 Principles behind Waverley’s Homelessness Strategy.....	12
2.3 Challenges, Risks and Opportunities .....	13
2.4 Priorities for Waverley’s Homelessness Strategy.....	15
2.5 Conclusion .....	15
3.0 Action Plan .....	16
Appendix – Review of Homelessness	
Appendix 2 - EQIA	

## Foreword

The publication of Waverley's fifth Homelessness Strategy comes after a very challenging period as the country recovers from the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic and seeks to chart its way through the global political, financial and climate challenges.

A major change in homelessness legislation (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 – HRA 2017) came into force shortly before the publication of the previous strategy in 2018. Despite the challenge of this and the additional impacts of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine; Waverley's innovative and dedicated approach in preventing homelessness has led to the Council continuing to maintain some of the lowest numbers of homeless households in temporary accommodation in the South-East. In addition, the Council has also launched a responsive and effective rough sleeping outreach service with the help of additional Government funding. Waverley's excellent work in helping rough sleepers under 'Everyone In' during the pandemic resulted in a Waverley case study being included in a Local Government Association good practice report titled: 'Voice of the sector: supporting rough sleepers at a time of national crisis'. ([Voice of the sector: supporting rough sleepers at a time of national crisis | Local Government Association](#)).

Despite the above successes, the next few years are likely to bring considerable challenges to the Council. The pandemic has had a seismic impact globally, nationally and inevitably, locally. With the ability to continue to deliver services remotely the Council has reduced its office footprint and moved to a hybrid model of service delivery and staffing. As a result of the ever-increasing financial challenges, the Council has implemented a joint senior management structure across services serving both Waverley and its neighbouring Council, Guildford.

The conflict in Ukraine continues to have significant impacts, not just in regard to demand on the Council's services from those fleeing the conflict but also due to the knock-on impacts on utility costs, interest rates and cost of living.

Waverley's other challenges are well established and longer term. Whilst residents enjoy the benefits of Waverley's beautiful location and facilities, the borough's attractiveness means property prices to rent or buy are beyond the reach of many. This creates increased demand for more affordable housing which far outstrips supply. The lack of supply means households either have to find accommodation in less expensive areas outside of Waverley or have to live in far from ideal circumstances in the homes of friends or relatives. Such situations inevitably trigger tensions in homes that in some cases can lead to homelessness. This can particularly be exacerbated for households with additional needs due to their vulnerability and/or complex and difficult life experiences.

This Strategy outlines both the successes in tackling homelessness over the last few years as well as the challenges ahead and proposed actions to meet these challenges.

The Council is indebted to the many people and organisations that have helped the Council in preventing and relieving homelessness in Waverley and that assisted in producing this strategy.

I am very pleased to commend this Strategy and hope it will help the Council and its partners build on the good work that has already taken place.

Cllr Nick Palmer

Portfolio Holder for Housing

## **1. Introduction**

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires that Local Authorities publish a Homelessness Strategy at least every 5 years. Waverley's last Strategy was published in July 2018. The Strategy should be the result of consultation and partnership working with Waverley's statutory and voluntary partners. It should include a review of the current levels of homelessness in Waverley and the services and accommodation available to meet the needs of those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

It should also take into account Government priorities in terms of tackling homelessness as well as link in with the Council's own strategies and the strategies of its partner agencies. The Strategy must set out the local authority's plans to prevent homelessness and for securing sufficient accommodation and support are or will be available for people who become homeless or who are at risk of becoming so.

This Strategy includes two main sections with an appendix (the Homelessness Review) giving background context and statistical information:

### **Waverley's Homelessness Strategy**

The Strategy highlights the progress and achievements made in tackling homelessness since the last strategy. It then outlines the principles behind the strategy, the risks, challenges and opportunities ahead and the priority areas for the Action Plan (Section 2).

### **Action Plan**

The Action Plan outlines the steps the Council and its partners will take over the next 5 years to meet the challenge of preventing homelessness. As the Strategy will be reviewed annually the Action Plan mainly focuses on actions for the first year.

### **Appendix – Waverley's Homelessness Review**

The Homelessness Review sets out in greater detail the background context, including statistical information, case studies and details of the services in and around Waverley for homeless people.

Whilst the Council has taken the lead in coordinating and producing the strategy, thanks are also due to service users and representatives from statutory and voluntary agencies for their invaluable contribution to the Strategy through the consultation process and through day to day partnership working to address homelessness.

## 2. Waverley's Homelessness Strategy

### 2.1 Progress / achievements since the last Strategy

#### 2.1.1 Prevention

The Council has continued to tackle homelessness by embedding a proactive, preventative approach within its Housing Options Service and its wider work with its statutory and voluntary partners.

This means that resources are targeted at preventative housing advice and support to help people remain in suitable accommodation.

Where prevention is not appropriate or achievable, the Council has worked very hard at helping people access alternative housing options such as accommodation in the private sector or supported accommodation.

This approach has meant that despite the extra challenges of fulfilling its statutory homeless duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the Council has continued to maintain its success in having to place very few homeless households into temporary accommodation. This not only provides increased stability and certainty for homeless households, but also reduces the costs to the Council in discharging its homelessness duties.

The low number of households having to be placed in temporary accommodation compared with other Surrey Boroughs, is shown in the table below:

	Surrey	Surrey Average	Waverley
Homeless households living in temporary accommodation as at 31 March 2023.	935	85	8

#### 2.1.2 Successful implementation of Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

One of the considerable challenges highlighted in the previous strategy was the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA 2017) in 2018.

The new legislation represented the biggest change in homelessness assessment in 40 years. Whereas the previous legislation required the Council to assess whether a narrow range of household types were homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days, the new legislation placed a duty to assess whether all household types are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days. Additionally, the legislation placed a duty for officers to try to prevent a household's homelessness over a 56-day period and if this was unsuccessful, a further duty to relieve the household's homelessness over a further 56 days. If these efforts were unsuccessful the Council would then assess its main homelessness duties, as existed under the previous legislation.

The requirements of the HRA 2017 also gave applicants many more rights of review of any decisions the Council made, as well as a requirement to collect very detailed household information to input onto a specialist IT system that could then report statistical information to the Government.

In summary the legislation required the housing options officers to work with more customers, over a longer period and with an additional administrative burden.

An understandable concern with the new legislation was the impact on staffing, IT, temporary accommodation numbers and the associated cost on the Council.

Staff caseload has been a considerable challenge and continues to be, particularly with additional pressures brought on by other factors such as the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. Implementing a new IT system was not without its challenges but the system is now embedded in the work processes. As noted in i) above, the team have worked tirelessly to ensure that Waverley's successful approach in preventing homelessness prior to the new legislation has been maintained under the new legislation meaning TA numbers continue to remain low, though pressures to maintain this are increasing.

In regard to costs, the Council receives a Homelessness Prevention Grant from central Government to assist it in fulfilling its statutory homelessness duties. For 23-24 this grant is £616,834. This grant has been vital in enabling the Housing Options Team to commission additional supported housing bed spaces and to fund increased staffing within the team to enable them to deal with the increased duties under the HRA 2017.

### **2.1.3 Successful interventions to help rough sleepers during the pandemic under 'Everyone In'**

At the start of the pandemic in March 2020 the Government launched the 'Everyone In' programme. Under this initiative local authorities were required to provide an emergency accommodation offer for all rough sleepers or those under threat of rough sleeping to help contain the spread of Covid and to protect vulnerable adults at the margins of society.

Waverley assisted over 30 households and through creative case management and help from its statutory and voluntary partners, was able to secure longer term accommodation for many of these

households. One case that Waverley assisted featured as a good practice study in a Local Government Association report titled: “Voice of the sector: supporting rough sleepers at a time of national crisis”. ([Voice of the sector: supporting rough sleepers at a time of national crisis | Local Government Association](#))

#### 2.1.4 Successful Rough Sleeper Initiative bids (RSI)

Whilst in comparison to many other areas Waverley’s rough sleeping figures are modest (1-6 in annual rough sleeping counts), the pandemic showed that there are many more people on the cusp of rough sleeping as a result of ‘sofa surfing’ between friends and relatives. It is also the case that Waverley rough sleepers tend to gravitate to other areas with better accommodation and support structures in place for rough sleepers, such as Guildford and Woking and therefore will not be included in annual estimates of rough sleeping in Waverley.

Due to this and to build on its success in helping rough sleepers during the pandemic, Officers submitted a successful Rough Sleeping Initiative bid in February 2021. This secured a sum of £105,000 from the Government for 21-22. This funded:

- A full time Rough Sleeper Outreach Worker based at York Road Project in Woking
- A full-time Rough Sleeper Support Worker employed by Waverley and managed by the Waverley’s Homechoice Manager.
- An additional supported housing bed space at York Road Project
- Two complex needs supported housing bedspaces in Farnham with Transform Housing
- An emergency accommodation fund to secure Bed and Breakfast or hotel accommodation for clients when supported bedspaces are not available.
- A fund to assist in rough sleeper awareness raising and to help in buying furniture and white good for clients moving to new accommodation placements

Waverley’s Rough Sleeping Initiative has been transformative in how the Council can respond to reports of rough sleeping and in providing support and assistance to rough sleepers.

Due to the success of these initiatives, Officers made a further successful bid of £102,000 a year under a new round of RSI funding, to continue the majority of these services for 2022-2025. Funding constraints under the bidding round meant the awareness raising and the furniture fund were not bid for.

### **2.1.5 Innovative use of ‘Guardian properties’ for rough sleepers/single homeless**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the Council had been exploring ways to manage the challenge of having properties subject to future demolition standing empty and resulting in loss of rental income. A solution being developed was the introduction of a ‘Guardian Property Scheme’ where some council employees who were struggling with accommodation issues could potentially act as property guardians.

With the onset of COVID-19 and ‘Everyone In’, Officers decided to adapt this model to see if some rough sleepers who were engaging positively with the Housing Options Team during ‘Everyone In’, would be suitable to be offered guardian licences. In some ways this was a bit like a ‘Housing First’ model with support from the rough sleeping outreach officer. Since the pandemic 12 homeless clients have been assisted in this way and have sustained their accommodation. The value of the scheme is it gives a further period for a client to demonstrate that they can sustain accommodation and start to rebuild their lives.

### **2.1.6 Successful NSAP bid**

One of the positives to come out of the pandemic and the ‘Everyone In’ programme was the fact that so many single households, who were previously excluded from accommodation assistance under the homelessness legislation, were able to be assisted with longer term accommodation. Due to this and to help meet its goal of eliminating rough sleeping by 2024, the Government announced a funding programme called the Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP).

Waverley submitted a bid for 6 modular units under the NSAP programme. Whilst only two units were approved in this bidding round, these units have now been delivered in Farncombe and the first residents with a background of rough sleeping moved in in October 2021.

These units, along with the guardian properties, have provided an opportunity for Waverley to pilot a ‘Housing First’ type housing model where intensive housing support means clients with very complex needs can be housed. This helps break the cycle of revolving door, repeat homelessness. Support is primarily provided by Waverley’s Rough Sleeping Support Officer and the Rough Sleeping Outreach Officer. Additionally, very high need clients can also benefit from support through Surrey County Council’s ‘Changing Futures’ programme, along with specialist services such as i-access drug / alcohol services.

### **2.1.7 Successful RSAP bid**

In September 2021 Waverley submitted another successful bid under the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) to provide two self-contained units of accommodation in Farnham for rough sleepers. Due to planning constraints these units will now be developed in Godalming.

### **2.1.8 Surrey County Council Grant**

In recognition that providing floating support can help vulnerable clients maintain their tenancies and prevent homelessness, Waverley has benefited from a grant from Surrey CC to help fund a floating support worker within its Specialist Housing Options Team. The team work alongside the Housing Options Team and help the more vulnerable clients, such as those homeless as a result of fleeing domestic abuse or with mental health needs. In recent years this Surrey funding has run from year to year but Surrey have confirmed that funding will be in place for 3 years from April 2022 to 31 March 2025, with the potential of 2 further years on top.

### **2.1.9 Successful adjustment to delivering the Council's homelessness service primarily by phone and online**

The pandemic has had a profound effect on how public and private sector organisations deliver their services. Waverley had always planned to maximise opportunities for remote working and digital services in order to deliver budget savings. The pandemic brought the time frame for such changes ahead of schedule.

Waverley's Offices have been remodelled over a smaller footprint and the Housing Options and Homechoice Teams have adapted to a hybrid way of working as a result. This is not without its challenges, particular in regard to training new staff and ensuring sufficient Office presence to respond to clients presenting without an appointment and refusing to engage by phone or online.

There is also the impact of individual officers sometimes taking very challenging phone calls in their home environments and not having the support of colleagues at the end of such calls, that they would have had in an office environment. Recognising the impact this can have on staff, some Government grant is used to commission a Systemic Psychotherapist to have monthly 121 sessions with individual members of staff, should they want it, to talk through work or non-work issues/pressures.

There have, however, been benefits from hybrid working. These include better work/life balance for staff, time and money saved on commuting, reduced carbon footprint and greater participation and engagement from other statutory and voluntary services at case conferences and online meetings that would not have been the case in the past.

### **2.1.10 Forging new partnerships and developing existing ones**

Fundamental to Waverley's success in preventing and relieving homelessness over the last 5 years is the fact that over many years Officers have forged invaluable partnership arrangements with statutory,

voluntary and private organisations. These include Surrey County Council, other Surrey Borough and District Councils, Surrey Police, Health Services, Public Health, York Road Project, Transform Housing, A2 Dominion, Ethical Lettings, Probation, Guildford Action, Citizens Advice South West Surrey, South-West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach service, local refuges, Riverside Housing, Move to Independence, Catalyst, I-Access, faith groups, Forward Trust, lettings agents and local landlords. These partnerships help maximise resources and open-up additional rehousing and support opportunities to customers that would otherwise not be available.

### 2.1.11 Successful completion of previous Homelessness Strategy targets

Of the 44 actions in the 2018 -2023 Strategy Action Plan, 39 actions were achieved and 5 were partially achieved.

## 2.2 Principles behind Waverley's Homelessness Strategy

**Proactive** – One of the reasons the Council has been successful in tackling homelessness over a number of years is it has taken a proactive and innovative approach. It has done this by anticipating trends and changes and embracing alternative options. Examples of innovation include commissioning homeless prevention units, sourcing/setting up move-on accommodation to free up supported housing, securing shared houses to assist homeless clients under the age of 35, successfully bidding for capital and revenue funds from the Government, radio advertising to attract private landlords and working with a social lettings agent (Ethical Lettings).

**Partnership Approach** – Waverley's Strategy aims to build upon the partnership working that has already contributed to the effectiveness of the current service. As noted above, the Council works with a range of statutory and voluntary agencies and private sector organisations to deliver housing and support to our homeless clients.

**Personal responsibility - not incentivising homelessness** — Before embracing a preventative approach to homelessness, the way Councils dealt with homelessness was frequently perceived to incentivise homelessness. Some applicants saw being accepted as homeless as the first step to becoming a Council tenant. To address this issue Waverley's Allocation Scheme was amended in 2007 to give equal Housing Register priority to those with a local connection to Waverley whether they are homeless, living with friends or relatives, or in private rented accommodation. This in turn means that those who are under threat of homelessness are incentivised to help themselves find alternative accommodation, often in the private sector, and not see homelessness as a means to a Council tenancy. Waverley's strategy aims to maintain this approach which has been instrumental in ensuring the number of households having to be placed in temporary accommodation is kept to a minimum.

**Continuous improvement** – despite Waverley's success to date, there are a number of challenges ahead including a national rise in homelessness numbers and those having to be placed in temporary

accommodation, a challenging post Covid economic outlook and the cost of living crisis, further exacerbated by the Ukrainian war. Despite these challenges, Waverley's Strategy aims to build on its past and recent successes by striving for continuous improvement to deliver the best possible housing options services to its customers.

**Ensuring sufficient staffing capacity** – Whilst Officers anticipated an increase in homeless applications following the introduction of the HRA 2017 in 2018, it was decided that rather than recruit additional staff immediately, it would be prudent to monitor the number of applications first. In this way any need for additional staffing could be targeted in the correct areas across the team e.g. admin, case work etc. Having worked under the new legislative regime for 5 years it has already been necessary to bring in additional fixed term posts - primarily case workers (Housing Options Officers). However, the team members have not felt the benefit of the additional resources due to the steady increase in the applications and the complexity of the presenting needs from homeless households. This strategy recommends a staffing review in the light of the increased demand and the fact that a larger number of roles are now on shorter term contracts. This will be challenging given that the Council only has certainty as to its Government Homelessness Grant until 31 March 2025 and unless there is a change in the Governments grant formula, Waverley grant will be nearly halved in 25-26.

**Increase accommodation options** – What has also become clear from the implementation of the HRA 2017 legislation is the need to provide additional accommodation to prevent and relieve homelessness, particularly for single people. As a result, Officers have continued to negotiate with statutory and voluntary partners to commission additional accommodation options where possible. This helps minimise emergency accommodation costs and the increased staffing costs that occur from prolonged customer engagement when a suitable housing solution is not available.

### 2.3 Challenges, Risks and Opportunities

Following the consultation and review of services, certain challenges, risks and opportunities have been identified – these include:

- i) The fact that homelessness numbers for all household groups nationally, in Surrey and Waverley are on an upward trend and the challenge this represents.

20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24 to date (30 Sept 23)
622	695	744	412

- ii) The challenge of recruiting, training and retaining enough staff in order to manage the increased work-load, complexity of cases and expectations from customers.

- iii) The challenge that the relatively generous Government funding stream given to Waverley to help it meet the new HRA 2017 duties, is only guaranteed until 31 March 2025. This funding has been crucial in helping the Council with staffing costs, commissioning additional supported housing bedspaces and to fund initiatives to maximise access to the private rented sector such as the partnership with Ethical Lettings and radio advertising. On available information this grant could be cut from £622,744 In 24-25 to £346,380 in 25-26, unless the national formula is adjusted.
- iv) The risk that as a result of higher interest rates, the already shrinking private rented sector will become even smaller as private landlord's face mortgage increases that make the continued letting of their properties unviable.
- v) The challenge of steadily rising private rent levels coupled, with frozen Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates meaning benefit dependent households are priced out of accommodation. This affects both existing tenants facing unaffordable rent increases as well as the Council's ability to help those needing to access private rented accommodation to avoid homelessness and having to be housed in emergency accommodation. If the LHA rate remains frozen there is inevitably a smaller pool of affordable private rented properties available for housing benefit/UC dependent clients.
- vi) The challenge that whilst Councils, including Waverley, have adjusted their Housing Options Services to maximise the benefits of remote working, the Government are concerned that some homeless households may be disadvantaged by such an approach. Any Government directive to change to increased face to face contact will inevitably have an impact on service/staffing capacity and, potentially office capacity. Staff who have benefited from the flexibility to work more from home may be less motivated to adjust to an increased Office attendance, even though contractually they may be obliged to do so. This could then impact staff retention, particularly if staff already live some distance from Waverley.
- vii) The continuing risk of increased numbers of homeless households being placed in private rented accommodation in Waverley by neighbouring boroughs and by London Boroughs. We are already we are aware of households being placed in Waverley by a London Borough and given the extra pressures on all Councils, the competition to secure affordable private rented properties will increase. It is a sobering thought that a Surrey Borough on the outskirts of London that previously had very similar low numbers in temporary accommodation to Waverley in 2011, now has numbers above 100. This will partly be the result of London Boroughs widening their search to secure private rented properties in neighbouring Surrey Boroughs. This makes it much more difficult for the Surrey Boroughs and Districts to secure accommodation and drives up prices and costs of trying to incentivise private landlords to continue to let to welfare benefit dependent tenants.
- viii) The challenge that as a result of higher thresholds for clients to access support from social services and mental health services and the funding and staffing challenges these services have, Officers routinely face situations where safeguarding concerns are very evident when they are trying to assist applicants. This increasingly means more and more time is taken in reporting and trying to mitigate these concerns, resulting in reduced staffing capacity to effectively prevent and relieve homelessness. This also has an impact on the wellbeing of staff given the emotional impact of dealing with safeguarding concerns.

- ix) The ongoing impact of the Ukrainian war. This affects not only the number of Ukrainian households potentially approaching Waverley as homeless following their stay with sponsors ending but also economic impacts in regard to the cost of living and peoples' ability to sustain their current housing. Other conflicts have also increased demand on Waverley's (and other Councils') housing services such as the Syrian and Afghan crises.
- x) The opportunities the Council has in developing new affordable housing and building on its success in this area to date.
- xi) The opportunities to work collaboratively and innovatively with other Councils and statutory and voluntary partners as we all seek sustainable solutions to meet the increased demand on homelessness services. The collaboration with Guildford may provide opportunities to jointly commission services and share best practice.

## **2.4 Priorities for Waverley's Homelessness Strategy**

Following feedback from stakeholders (statutory and voluntary partners and staff), Waverley's Homelessness Review and analysis of the challenges, risks and opportunities outlined above; five priorities have been identified to inform the Action Plan for Waverley's Homelessness Strategy:

- Rough Sleeping Interventions
- Prevention
- Accommodation
- Support
- Partnership Working

Although the Strategy covers a five-year period, the intention is to review it annually, so the majority of the actions relate to the first year.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

Waverley and its statutory and voluntary partners have demonstrated an excellent track record in preventing homelessness in the Borough over the last five years – particularly taking into account the challenges of Covid, the cost of living crisis and the Ukrainian war. The Action Plan in Section 3 of the Strategy aims to build and improve on this success and mitigate some of the challenges ahead by continuing the homeless prevention / housing options / partnership approach and focusing resources on a variety of measures to ensure the good work is continued.

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# Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2023 - 2028

## Strategic Priority One: Rough Sleeping Interventions

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
1.1	<p><b>Year 1-</b> Continue to embed the Rough Sleeping Outreach and Support Service</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Keep under review and explore alternative funding options ahead of RSI funding ending in 2025</p>	<p>Timely response to reports of rough sleeping.</p> <p>Ongoing follow up to those who do not initially engage with offers of help.</p> <p>Support to those placed in short term housing to help them sustain tenancies and engage with statutory and voluntary services.</p>	<p>Homechoice &amp; RSI Manager</p> <p>Rough Sleeping Support Officer</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>York Road Project</p>	<p>Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding 22-25</p> <p>Rough Sleeping Accommodation programme (RSAP) revenue funding</p> <p>Staffing</p>	
1.2	<p><b>Year 1-</b> Explore options to increase short-term accommodation options for rough sleepers e.g. new build, short life properties, supported housing</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – keep under review</p>	<p>Increase in accommodation options for clients – particularly for those with complex needs who struggle to stay in current emergency provision.</p>	<p>Homechoice and RSI Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Development Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Supported housing providers</p>	<p>RSAP Capital Funding</p> <p>Short life Waverley owned accommodation identified for future development.</p> <p>Homelessness Prevention Grant</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
1.3	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Co-ordinate Waverley’s annual rough sleeping estimate in the autumn of 2023</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Continue for 2024-2027 - subject to Government requirements</p>	<p>An accurate estimate of those sleeping rough in the Waverley area to gauge the effectiveness of Waverley’s homelessness prevention approach.</p> <p>Statistical information for the Government</p>	<p>Homechoice and RSI Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Homeless Link</p> <p>Police</p> <p>York Road Project, Woking</p> <p>Probation</p> <p>Faith forum/groups</p> <p>Citizens Advice South West Surrey</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Statutory and Voluntary agency time</p>	
1.4	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Co-ordinate Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) arrangements as required.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> - Keep under review.</p>	<p>Rough sleepers provided with emergency accommodation and support during extreme weather events.</p> <p>Reduce the health and wellbeing risks for rough sleeping clients when there are weather extremes. This can also encourage re-engagement from clients.</p>	<p>Homechoice &amp; RSI Manager</p> <p>Rough Sleeping Support Officer</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>York Road Project, Woking</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>RSI 5 funding</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
1.6	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Fund Rough Sleeping Outreach Worker</p> <p><b>Year 2-5</b> Monitor and review as needed</p>	<p>Early follow up on Streetlink rough sleeping referrals in Waverley</p> <p>Rough sleeping client's circumstances assessed and accommodation options advice, support and sign posting provided.</p>	<p>Homechoice and RSI Manager</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p>	Waverley Borough Council	<p>RSI 5 funding</p> <p>Homeless prevention grant</p>	
1.7	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Fund 2 x complex needs bedspaces with Transform Housing.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – monitor and review arrangements as RSI funding ends March 2025</p>	<p>Homeless clients with more complex needs assisted with accommodation that otherwise would not be available.</p> <p>Provision of additional support helps increase chances of tenancy sustainment and engagement with support and health services</p>	<p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Homechoice &amp; RSI Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Transform Housing</p>	<p>RSI5 funding</p> <p>Homelessness budget</p>	
1.8	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Fund additional bedspace at York Road Project using RSI 5 funding.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Monitor and review - funding ends March 2025.</p>	<p>Emergency first stage supported accommodation.</p> <p>Experienced support staff help clients progress to longer term accommodation options</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Homechioce &amp; RSI Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>York Road Project, Woking</p>	<p>RSI 5 Funding</p> <p>Staff time</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
1.9	<p><b>Year 1</b> -Monitor effectiveness of all the rough sleeper interventions (outreach, support, accommodation) and adapt the interventions to maximise resources and effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5 –</b> Ongoing monitoring and adjustment of service as needed</p>	<p>Reduction in number of entrenched rough sleepers</p> <p>Maximising/targeting resources where most needed</p>	<p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Homechoice and RSI Manager</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>DLUHC RSI rep</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>RSI and Homeless prevention grant funding</p>	

## Strategic Priority Two: Prevention

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
2.1	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Maintain good quality housing options advice, casework and other interventions through the Council's Housing Options Team</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Monitor and review and explore capturing customer feedback</p>	<p>Customers homelessness prevented and temporary accommodation numbers kept to a minimum.</p> <p>Staff receive required training and supervision.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Private landlords</p> <p>Letting agents</p> <p>Supported housing providers.</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Training</p> <p>Partnership working</p>	
2.2	<p><b>Year 1</b> - Continue to use the homelessness budget flexibly to help prevent homelessness e.g. spend to save payments, paying rent in advance, etc.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Monitor and review.</p>	<p>Prevention of homelessness and minimising the upheaval for customers.</p> <p>Value for Money by targeting resources at the most cost-effective solution to prevent homelessness.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Private landlords</p> <p>Letting agents</p>	<p>Homelessness budget</p> <p>Staff time</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
2.3	<p><b>Year 1</b> –Recruit to vacant Housing Options Officer roles and review staffing structure to ensure it has the capacity and resilience to meet demand/caseload</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Monitor and review.</p>	<p>Well trained staff team with sufficient capacity to assist clients approaching the Council as homeless.</p> <p>Clients given timely advice and support to prevent and relieve their homelessness</p> <p>Officers have manageable caseloads so they can correctly and fairly discharge the Council’s homelessness duties and keep the number of households having to be placed into emergency accommodation to a minimum</p>	<p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p>	Waverley	<p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant</p>	
2.4	<p><b>Years 1-5</b> – Provide updated two-year spending plan for homelessness grant and RSI funding to management board and Exec in Feb of each year.</p>	<p>Senior management and Executive aware of the challenges and opportunities in preventing homelessness and effective targeting of resources to tackle homelessness.</p> <p>Outline implications of potential for reduced Govt. funding in 25-26, proposed mitigations and impact on Waverley’s own budgets</p>	<p>Executive Head of Housing Services</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley</p> <p>DLUHC</p>	<p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
2.5	<p><b>Year 1</b> –Continue to support Ukrainian households and their hosts to help ensure the stability of placements and / or rematching to other hosts or referral to private landlords.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Monitor &amp; review</p>	<p>Prevention of homelessness and minimising the upheaval for customers</p> <p>Value for Money by targeting resources at the most cost effective solution to prevent homelessness.</p>	Resettlement Manager – Homes for Ukraine	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Surrey County Council</p> <p>Local charities and support groups</p>	Government grants	
2.6	<p><b>Year 1</b> -Embed new working arrangements for the Sanctuary Scheme managed by the South-West Surrey DA Outreach Service to help victims of domestic violence safely remain in their homes.</p> <p><b>Year 2-5</b> - Monitor &amp; review</p>	<p>Victims of domestic abuse made safe &amp; able to avoid the upheaval of moving away from support networks.</p> <p>Reduced costs in providing emergency temporary accommodation.</p>	Specialist Housing Options Manager	<p>South-West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service</p> <p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Waverley’s Building Contractor – Ian Williams</p> <p>Police</p> <p>Fire Service</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account for Council homes needing security measures.</p> <p>DLUHC Domestic abuse grant passported to South-West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
2.7	<p><b>Year 1</b> - Monitor impact of affordability crisis and refer households in need to the Housing Support Fund, Citizens Advice Waverley and other interventions.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b></p> <p>Monitor &amp; review.</p>	To ensure that households receive timely help with food, energy costs and debts so that they can continue to meet their housing costs	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Community Services Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Surrey County Council</p> <p>Citizens Advice South-West Surrey</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>DLUHC grant</p> <p>Council grant to Citizens Advice South-West Surrey.</p>	
2.8	<p><b>Years 1 - 5</b> – Monitor data from Government returns.</p>	Local authority homelessness data uploaded to Government Portal (Delta), highlights primary causes of homelessness in Waverley & outcomes from prevention actions a so resources can be targeted effectively	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Specialist Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Statutory and Voluntary Partners</p>	<p>MRI (Jigsaw) IT database – yearly revenue cost</p> <p>Staff time</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
2.9	<p><b>Year 1 –</b> Continue to invest in staff training and well-being.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5 -</b> Monitor and review</p>	<p>Staff supported through regular 121s and given relevant training on emerging priorities and changes in legislation.</p> <p>Continued funding of Systemic Psychotherapist so staff have the voluntary option of monthly confidential supervision and wellbeing support.</p> <p>Refresh Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse training</p>	<p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Training organisations</p> <p>Freelance Systemic Psychotherapist</p> <p>South West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach service</p> <p>Surrey County Council</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Homelessness prevention grant</p>	
2.10	<p><b>Years 1-5</b> Ensure that online information regarding the Housing Options Service is up to date and is helping clients self-serve where possible</p>	<p>Customers able to self serve where possible so that telephone and in person interactions with the Housing Options team are maximised.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Website Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
2.11	<p><b>Years 1-5 –</b> Ensure that as many housing options clients as are eligible are registered on the Council's Housing Register</p>	<p>Ensures that households who the Council has helped into private rented accommodation to prevent their homelessness, have maximised their chances of future social housing.</p> <p>This means that in the event of future threatened homelessness households may be able to resolve their difficulties by bidding successful for social housing.</p> <p>Reduced costs to the council in preventing homelessness.</p>	Housing Options Manager	Waverley Borough Council	Staff time	
2.12	<p><b>Year 1 –</b> Urgently review the impacts of the potential Government funding shortfall for 25-26 and devise plans to ensure continuity and improved resilience of service (staffing and accommodation)</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> Monitor &amp; Review</p>	Housing Options Service is sufficiently funded and staffed to provide an effective homeless prevention and relief service so the number of households having to be placed into emergency B&B/Hotel accommodation is kept to a minimum	<p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Senior Accountant</p> <p>Financial Services Manager</p> <p>HR Business Partner</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities</p>	Staff time	

### Strategic Priority Three: Accommodation

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
3.1	<p><b>Year 1 –</b></p> <p>Encourage households under occupying social housing to downsize e.g. Transfer incentive scheme, mutual exchanges, high banding priority.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5 –</b></p> <p>Monitor &amp; Review outcomes.</p>	<p>Family sized properties released for those who need them.</p> <p>Smaller households and those who are elderly or have disabilities helped into accommodation that is more suitable for their needs</p> <p>Social housing stock maximised</p> <p>Reduced use of Discretionary Housing Payment budget for under occupiers will mean budget can be targeted at those in greatest need.</p>	<p>Homechoice Manager</p> <p>Transfer/ Easy Move Officer</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	Waverley Borough Council	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Promotion of the Council's Easy Move scheme through tenant publications/ website</p> <p>Transfer incentive payment budget</p>	
3.2	<p><b>Year 1-</b> Continue to fund three bed spaces at York Road Project, Woking</p> <p><b>Years 2-5 –</b></p> <p>Monitor &amp; Review</p>	<p>Emergency first stage supported accommodation.</p> <p>Experienced support staff help clients progress to longer term accommodation options.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Homechoice &amp; Rough Sleeping Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>York Road Project, Woking</p>	Homelessness Budget	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
3.3	<p><b>Year 1</b> -Develop new Waverley owned affordable housing.</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b></p> <p>Development of new Waverley owned affordable housing</p>	<p>New Council-owned homes for Housing Register applicants</p> <p>(8 new units expected 23-24, 67 in 24-25)</p>	<p>Housing Development Manager</p> <p>Executive Head of Planning Services</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Building Contractors</p>	<p>:</p> <p>Housing revenue account development budget</p> <p>Staff time</p>	
3.4	<p><b>Year 1</b> - Support and enable development of more affordable and supported housing developed by housing associations / voluntary groups</p> <p><b>Years 2-5 –</b></p> <p>Monitor &amp; review</p>	<p>Increase in supported and affordable housing for Housing Register applicants and customers facing homelessness.</p> <p>(72 Housing association affordable rent / Social rent units expected 23-24)</p>	<p>Executive Head of Housing Services</p> <p>Housing Strategy &amp; Enabling Manager</p> <p>Executive Head of Planning Services</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Housing Associations</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
3.5	<p><b>Year 1-</b> Continue to fund 5 supported housing bed spaces at - Pilgrim Court, Milford - A2 Dominion</p> <p><b>Years 2-5 –</b> Monitor and review</p>	<p>Supported housing provision for singles and small families.</p> <p>Clients receive support to help them develop independent living skills.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>A2 Dominion</p>	<p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2023-2024 £616,834</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2024-25 £622,744</p>	
3.6	<p><b>Year 1 –</b> Continue to fund 2 x bed spaces at Simmonds Court, Farnham – Transform Housing</p> <p><b>Years 2-5 –</b> Monitor and review</p>	<p>Supported housing provision for single homeless clients.</p> <p>Clients receive support to help them develop independent living skills.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Transform Housing</p>	<p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2023-2024 £616,834</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2024-25 £622,744</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
3.7	<p><b>Year 1</b> - Increase supply of private rented accommodation for all household groups, but particularly for single homeless households. e.g. :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Monitor and review shared houses scheme with Ethical Lettings</li> <li>-Radio advertising to attract new landlords</li> <li>- Explore and trial landlord incentives</li> <li>-Liaison with agents/Landlords</li> </ul> <p><b>Year 2-5</b> -</p> <p>Monitor and review</p>	<p>Housing Options team have a range of accommodation options that can be offered to those to whom a homelessness prevention or relief duty is owed.</p> <p>Reduced use of &amp; cost of emergency B&amp;B accommodation</p> <p>Waverley's deposit scheme remains attractive to landlords and is competitive compared with others.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Ethical Lettings</p> <p>Woking Borough Council</p> <p>Letting Agents</p> <p>Private landlords</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2023-2024 £616,834</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2024-25 £622,744</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
3.8	<p><b>Year 1</b> - Explore opportunities to purchase additional bed spaces in supported housing schemes</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b></p> <p>Monitor and review</p>	<p>Increase in number and variety of units for single vulnerable clients</p> <p>Reduced use of &amp; cost of emergency B&amp;B accommodation</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Supported Housing Providers e.g. York Road Project Woking, Transform Housing, A2 Dominion etc.</p>	<p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2023-2024 £616,834</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2024-25 £622,744</p>	
3.8	<p>Explore opportunities that may arise for capital investment in housing schemes (within or outside Waverley) in return for nomination rights to bed spaces</p>	<p>Increase in supply of emergency and short to medium term accommodation for homeless households.</p> <p>Reduced costs of emergency B&amp;B accommodation</p> <p>Reduced rough sleeping.</p>	<p>Executive Head of Housing Services</p> <p>Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Housing Providers</p> <p>Other Borough / District Councils</p>	<p>Capital funding</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
3.9	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Monitor / review lease arrangements for unused / harder to let Council properties to assess effectiveness in preventing homelessness and providing move on accommodation from supported housing</p> <p><b>Years 1-5</b> – assess whether other Council owned units can be used similarly</p>	<p>Reducing void loss and maximising rental income to the HRA on harder to let properties</p> <p>Move on accommodation for supported housing schemes provides much needed turnover in higher support schemes to help prevent homelessness</p> <p>Use of harder to let stock to prevent or relieve homelessness</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Executive Head of Housing Services</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Legal Services Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>York Road Project</p> <p>Riverside Housing</p> <p>Ethical Lettings</p> <p>A2 Dominion</p>	<p>Staff Time</p> <p>Hard to let / under used Council accommodation</p>	
3.10	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Fund 7 supported housing bed-spaces at The Crescent, Woking</p> <p><b>Years 1-3</b> Review and monitor</p>	<p>Additional supported housing for vulnerable clients – scheme particularly suited to younger age group</p> <p>Enables vulnerable clients to receive support to help them develop independent living skills</p>	<p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Transform Housing &amp; Support</p>	<p>Homelessness Budget</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2023-2024 £616,834</p> <p>DLUHC Homelessness Grant 2024-25 £622,744</p>	

### Strategic Priority Four: Support

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
4.1	<p><b>Year 1</b> -Maintain and develop the Specialist Housing Options Service</p> <p><b>Years 2-5-</b> Monitor and review</p>	<p>Assessment of the needs and homelessness duties owed to vulnerable housing options clients.</p> <p>Tenancy and welfare support to vulnerable clients living in all tenures to help ensure accommodation sustained and homelessness prevented.</p> <p>Co-ordination with other statutory and voluntary agencies e.g. Social Services, Domestic Abuse Outreach Service, Police, Health</p>	<p>Specialist Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	Waverley Borough Council	Staff time	
4.2	<p><b>Year 1</b> –Continue to use SCC funding to fund an additional Specialist Housing Options Officer role</p> <p><b>Year 2- 5</b> Monitor and review – SCC funding until 2025 with additional 2 year option</p>	<p>Additional resource to help the Council fulfil its HRA 2017 duties</p> <p>Tenancy and welfare support to prevent homelessness and promoted health and well being of clients</p>	<p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Specialist Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Adult Social Care Surrey</p>	<p>Staff time</p> <p>Surrey County Council Housing Related Support Funding</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
4.3	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Rough Sleeper Support Officer to continue to support rough sleepers recently placed in emergency accommodation.</p> <p><b>Year 2- 5</b> Monitor and review</p>	<p>Helps clients engage with health and welfare services</p> <p>Clients supported in setting up utilities and applying for the benefits they are entitled to.</p> <p>Clients develop independent living skills to enable them to sustain accommodation</p> <p>Clients encouraged to explore to volunteering opportunities and / or train for future employment</p>	<p>Homechoice and RSI Manager</p> <p>RSI support Officer</p>	Waverley Borough Council	Staff time and RSI 5 and RSAP funding	
4.4	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Refer complex need clients to Surrey Adults Matter/Bridge the Gap/Changing futures team.</p> <p><b>Year 2- 5</b> Monitor and review</p>	<p>Clients receive additional support hours from specialist services.</p> <p>Clients more likely to be able to address behavioural issues linked to mental health and drug/alcohol dependency.</p>	<p>Homechoice and RSI Manager</p> <p>RSI Support Officer</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Surrey County Council</p>	Staff time	

## Strategic Priority Five: Partnership Work

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
5.1	<p><b>Years 1-5 -</b>            Maintain Housing Service representation and participation at multi agency meetings e.g. Surrey Housing Needs Managers Meeting, MARAC, MAPPA, Social Services case conferences, Housing Association Forum, CHarMM.</p>	<p>Partnership working to achieve best possible outcomes for clients, avoid duplication and maximise/share resources</p>	<p>Housing Needs Manager             Housing Options Manager             Specialist Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council             Surrey Boroughs / Districts             Surrey County Council             Surrey Police             Health             Housing Associations             Probation             Community Mental Health Recovery Service (CMHRS)             South-West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
5.2	<p><b>Year 1</b> - Continue to manage and coordinate Waverley's Single Housing Panel</p> <p><b>Years 2 – 5</b> Monitor and review</p>	<p>Housing and support needs of vulnerable clients assessed and suitable housing and support options identified.</p> <p>Partnership working to achieve best possible outcomes for clients, avoid duplication and maximise/share resources.</p>	Housing Options Manager	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Supported housing providers</p> <p>Floating Support Services</p> <p>Health</p> <p>CMHRS</p> <p>Social Services</p> <p>Probation</p>	Staff time	
5.3	<p><b>Year 1-</b> Explore opportunities to share best practice and work jointly with Guildford Borough Council on new initiatives / projects</p> <p><b>Years 2-5 -</b> Monitor and review</p>	<p>Service improvement</p> <p>Economies of scale and value for money</p>	<p>Housing Needs Manager</p> <p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Homechoice and Rough Sleeping Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Guildford Borough Council</p>	Staff time	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
5.4	<p><b>Year 1</b> – Attend regular care-leaver update meetings</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Monitor and review</p>	<p>To assess the needs of careleavers with a Waverley connection so that longer term housing pathways can be agreed to minimise risk of homelessness.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	
5.5	<p><b>Year 1</b> Continue to support the work of Citizens Advice Waverley and monitor performance through Service Level Agreement</p> <p><b>Years 2-5</b> – Monitor and review</p>	<p>Waverley residents receive independent, free advice in regard to debt, welfare benefits, employment and housing rights and responsibilities etc.</p> <p>Maximisation of income &amp; welfare benefits, social inclusion and prevention of homelessness.</p>	<p>Community Services Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council Citizens Advice South West Surrey</p>	<p>Waverley Grant Staff time</p>	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
5.6	<b>Years 1 – 5 –</b> Arrange and co-ordinate regular private landlord forums	To engage with private sector landlords and letting agents to promote best practice and maximise opportunities to help homeless clients access private rented homes	Private Sector Housing Manager	Ethical Lettings  Letting agents and private landlords	Staff time	
5.7	<b>Years 1 – 5 –</b> Arrange and co-ordinate annual Homelessness Strategy Conference / update meeting	To review the Council and its partners' progress in preventing homelessness and delivering the 23-28 homelessness strategy priorities.  Identify and celebrate successes  Identify emerging challenges and agree partnership actions to meet the challenges.	Housing Options Manager  Housing Needs Manager	Waverley Borough Council  Adult Social Care  Children's Services  Citizens Advice Waverley  CMHRS  Supported Housing Providers  SW Surrey DA Outreach  Health  Probation  Letting Agents / Private landlords  Ethical Lettings  Neighbouring Boroughs/Districts	Staff time  Homelessness budget for refreshments and any printing	

No.	Action	Aims / Outcomes	Lead Officers	Partner Agencies	Resources	Status / Comments
5.8	<p><b>Years 1-5</b> Offer opportunities to statutory and voluntary partners for senior housing options managers/team leaders to attend partner team meetings. to explain housing options customer journey and to better understand remits and challenges of partner services</p>	<p>Help partner agencies set realistic expectations for their customers about the help available from the Housing Options Team</p> <p>Mutual understanding from the Council and its partners as to challenges and constraints our organisations share.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to work collaboratively for the benefit of customers, particularly in regard to safeguarding.</p>	<p>Housing Options Manager</p> <p>Housing Needs Manager</p>	<p>Waverley Borough Council</p> <p>Adult Social Care</p> <p>Children's Services</p> <p>Citizens Advice Waverley</p> <p>CMHRS</p> <p>Supported Housing Providers</p> <p>Health</p> <p>Probation</p> <p>South-West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	



**Appendix**  
***Waverley's Homelessness Review***  
**2023 – 2028**  
***Contents***

	Page
1. Introduction	2
2. Geography and Demography of Waverley	3
3. Homelessness - National Context	7
4. Funding and Data	13
5. Housing Register, stock and lettings	16
6. Homelessness in Waverley	24
7. Housing Options Service	30
8. Accommodation	36
9. Advice and Support	44
10. Case Studies	48
11. Consultation	54
12. Challenges, Risks and Opportunities	56

# Waverley's Homelessness Review

## ***1. Introduction***

Under the Homelessness Act 2002, the Council is required to produce a Homelessness Strategy for its area at least every 5 years. The previous Strategy was published in July 2018. The Strategy must be based on the results of a Homelessness Review.

The purpose of the Homelessness Review is to:

1. Set the scene as to the current and likely future levels of homelessness and housing need.
2. Identify what is currently being done and by whom to prevent and tackle homelessness.
3. Identify the resources available to the Council and its statutory and voluntary partners to prevent homeless and to provide accommodation and support to those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The following document updates some of the information gathered as part of the previous homelessness reviews and provides additional information where necessary and relevant.

The gaps and areas to improve are then highlighted and these form the key areas to address in Waverley's Homelessness Strategy.

The first section of the review contains an overview of the Geography and Demography of Waverley.

## **2. Geography and Demography of Waverley**

Waverley is one of 11 local authorities in Surrey. The borough covers 133 square miles and approximately 92% of this area is rural with 61% lying within the Metropolitan Green Belt.<sup>1</sup> The designation of land as part of the Green Belt is intended to prevent urban sprawl encroaching on the countryside and preserve the character of historic towns. This means that the borough has a strongly rural character as each of the urban areas is separated by dense woodland so even when relatively close to urban areas the sightline is predominantly rural.

Waverley has a population of 125,118; three quarters of which live in the four largest towns: Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere, and Cranleigh (in descending population size order).<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that the population of Waverley will increase by 2% over the lifetime of this strategy.<sup>3</sup> Waverley is less ethnically diverse when compared to Surrey and England as a whole. In the 2021 census 93.7% of Waverley residents described themselves as white, whereas across Surrey this was 85.5% and across England it was 81.7%.<sup>4</sup>

Like the rest of the UK, Waverley has an ageing population. In the 2021 census, 22% of the population was aged over 65 and this is predicted to increase to 25% over the course of this strategy (2021 census, 2018 population estimates).<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, 3.7% of the population of Waverley are over 85, which is the highest proportion in Surrey.<sup>6</sup> This means that within Waverley there is high and rising demand for housing that caters for the specific needs of elderly people such as extra care and specialist dementia care accommodation. Furthermore, in the 2021 census 26.7% of households stated that they included one or more people with a disability which further increases demand for accessible and supported housing.<sup>7</sup>

Relative to the rest of the UK, Waverley has very low levels of economic deprivation. Its unemployment rate is 2.4% compared to an average of 3.7% across Great Britain (ONS NOMIS statistics 2022).<sup>8</sup> It was ranked as the 5th least deprived area out of the 317 local authority areas in England in the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Waverley Borough Council. (2012). Core Strategy Pre- Submission, p.15.

<sup>2</sup> ONS. (2020). Mid-Year Parish Population Estimates 2019. Available at: [Parish population estimates for mid-2001 to mid-2019 based on best-fitting of output areas to parishes - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/population-demography/population/population-estimates/articles/mid-year-parish-population-estimates-2019) [Accessed 17/01/23].

<sup>3</sup> ONS. (2020). Population Predictions Local Authorities. Available at: [Population projections – local authorities: SNPP Z1 - Office for National Statistics](https://www.ons.gov.uk/population-demography/population/population-projections/articles/population-projections-local-authorities-snp-z1). [Accessed: 17/02/23].

<sup>4</sup> ONS. (2022). Ethnic Group Data from 2021 Census. Available at: [Ethnic group, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/people-population/ethnicity/articles/ethnic-group-england-wales) [Accessed: 19/01/23].

<sup>5</sup> ONS. (2022). Age Structure of the Population. [Population and household estimates, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/people-population/age-structure/articles/population-and-household-estimates-england-wales) [Accessed: 17/01/23]. ONS (2020). Population Predictions Local Authorities.

<sup>6</sup> ONS. (2022). Age Structure of the Population.

<sup>7</sup> ONS. (2023). Disability Data from 2021 Census. Available at: [Disability, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/people-population/disability/articles/disability-england-wales) [Accessed: 26/01/23].

<sup>8</sup> ONS NOMIS. (2021). Labour Market Profile – Waverley. Available at: [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/lmp/waverley) [Accessed: 27/01/23].

<sup>9</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government. (2019). English Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Available at: [English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/424222/English-indices-of-deprivation-2019.pdf) [Accessed: 26/01/23].

This measure uses seven indicators to give each area a comparable deprivation score. Waverley ranked above 38 on six of the indicators demonstrating that residents enjoy above average incomes and life expectancy, and below average vulnerability to crime. The indicator that Waverley was ranked lowest on was the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services, in which it was ranked 111th. This is because while there is relatively little deprivation within Waverley, accessing services such as healthcare can be difficult for those living in isolated rural communities and housing is often inaccessible due to the high cost.

The median annual gross pay for full time workers resident in Waverley in 2022 was £44,657 which is significantly higher than the national median which was £33,197. However, it is also significantly higher than the median annual gross pay for those that work in Waverley which was £30,797 in 2022.<sup>10</sup> This is because the location of Waverley means that many residents commute out to higher paying jobs in London and the surrounding areas, while other people commute in to fill the lower income jobs within the borough.

### ***Waverley Housing Stock***

There are currently 52,448 households in Waverley.<sup>11</sup> In line with the concentration of the population within Waverley, the housing is concentrated around the four main urban areas: Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere, and Cranleigh. Of these 52,488 households, 73% own their home, 12% live in social rented housing, and 15% rent privately or live rent free.<sup>12</sup> Compared to national averages Waverley has a relatively high rate of home ownership as nationally 63% of households own their home.<sup>13</sup> This restricts access to social and private rented housing by limiting supply, increasing competition, and driving up prices.

The rural and predominantly wealthy nature of the borough mean that detached homes are the most prevalent form of housing, comprising 41.5% of the housing stock and nearly 31% of homes in Waverley have four or more bedrooms.<sup>14</sup> This prevalence of large homes, combined with an ageing population, means that 79.2% homes in Waverley are under-occupied. Under-occupation can place pressure on the housing stock as it means that households with multiple people such as families with children can struggle to find housing that meets their needs. However, only 2.3% of households were recorded as overcrowded compared to a national average of 4.3%.<sup>15</sup> So, in Waverley this reduced supply drives up prices, but it has not led to high levels of overcrowding.

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<sup>10</sup> ONS NOMIS (2022). Annual Survey of Earnings and Hours Worked. Available at: [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings - Data Sources - home - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/data/sources/annual-survey-of-earnings-and-hours-worked) [Accessed 01/02/23].

<sup>11</sup> ONS. (2023). Tenure Type Data from 2021 Census. Available at: [Housing, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/housing) [Accessed 27/01/23].

<sup>12</sup> ONS. (2023). Tenure Type Data from 2021 Census.

<sup>13</sup> ONS. (2023). Tenure Type Data from 2021 Census.

<sup>14</sup> ONS NOMIS. (2011). Accommodation Type by Household Spaces. Available at: [Your Data - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/data/sources/your-data-nomis-official-census-and-labour-market-statistics) [Accessed: 27/01/23].

<sup>15</sup> ONS (2023). Occupancy Data from 2021 Census. Available at: [Housing, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/housing) [Accessed 27/01/23].

## ***Waverley Housing Affordability***

The provision of housing that is accessible to those who work within the borough has both social and economic value. Being able to live in the area in which you work, in housing with long term security allows you to become an integrated part of the community bringing social value. Furthermore, essential workers in services such as education and healthcare that are typically on lower incomes will struggle to find secure and affordable housing when housing costs remain this high. This means that it is harder for these services to recruit and retain staff, impacting service delivery. As the population ages the demand for care workers and healthcare services is only set to increase, worsening this problem.

As described above, Waverley has very low levels of economic deprivation relative to the rest of the country but does face challenges in terms of the accessibility of housing and local services. This inaccessibility of housing is largely determined by the high housing costs. In November 2022 the average house price in Waverley was £580,965 which is almost double the national average of £315,073.<sup>16</sup> More importantly in terms of affordability, this means that the average house price is approximately 18 times the median salary of those that work within the borough. This is the 8th highest ratio of all local authorities within England and Wales. Using these figures and assuming the mortgage will be 90% of the value of the property and four times the household income, an annual household income of £130,717 is necessary to purchase a home that costs the median price within Waverley. Even when using the lower quartile house price, £377,500, under the same assumptions, a household income of £84,937.50 is necessary. Given the median salary of those that work within Waverley is £30,797, home ownership within the borough is inaccessible to most.

For these households finding rented housing is their only option. However, the cost of renting in Waverley is high, relative to both local incomes and the cost of renting in the rest of the country. The median private rent in Waverley in the 12 months leading up to September 2022 was £1,155 which is 44% higher than the national median of £800 (Private Rental Market Statistics). Assuming that rented housing is affordable when the monthly rent is no more than 30% of the household income, households require an annual income of £46,200 to access the median private rented home in Waverley. In comparison, as the average monthly rent for social rented housing in Waverley in the 12 months leading up to April 2022 was £499.56, an annual income of £21,647 is necessary to access social rented housing.<sup>17</sup> As lower quartile earnings in September 2021 were £21,047 this demonstrates that even social rented housing is not affordable to those on the lowest incomes, without accessing some kind of financial support.

Affordability analysis carried out in 2021 demonstrated that based on lower quartile housing costs around two-fifths of households have an income below the level necessary to afford private rented housing. It is these households that rely on affordable housing. Affordable housing is defined by the National Planning Policy Framework as “housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the

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<sup>16</sup> UK House Price Index. (2023). House Price Statistics Waverley. Available at: [UK House Price Index \(data.gov.uk\)](https://www.data.gov.uk) [Accessed: 02/02/23].

<sup>17</sup> WBC and RP stock data.

market.”<sup>18</sup> This includes social (typically 55-60% of market rent) or affordable (80% of market rent) rented housing, discounted market sale housing, and shared ownership. When this housing is built, it is safeguarded as affordable housing in perpetuity by a legal agreement that ensures that upon re-let or re-sale, it is again available at a discounted rate to those whose needs are not met by the market. Exceptions apply to this such as properties purchased through Right to Buy or shared ownership staircasing.

There are currently 7,304 affordable homes in Waverley, of which 89% are social rented homes and 10% are shared ownership. The remaining 1% is made up of equity loan, leasehold, and shared equity housing. Of these 7,304 homes, 34% are provided by Private Registered Providers of Social Housing and the rest are provided by Waverley Borough Council. Most of the shared ownership homes, 93%, are provided by the Private Registered Providers, as all but 100 of the 4,820 homes provided by Waverley Borough Council are let at social rent.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities. (2012). National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: [National Planning Policy Framework - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/262402/nppf-2012.pdf) [Accessed: 02/02/23].

<sup>19</sup> WBC and RP stock data

### 3. Homelessness - National Context

#### Homelessness Assessments: January to March 2019 - 2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>England – Assessments</b>	76,520	78,890	71,960	76,880	83,240
<b>England - prevention or relief duty owed</b>	71,980	75,140	68,250	74,230	79,840
<b>South East – Assessments</b>	10,680	11,440	10,320	10,150	11,860
<b>South East – prevention or relief duty owed</b>	10,020	10,740	9,570	9,590	10,930

#### Households in temporary accommodation – 31 March 2023

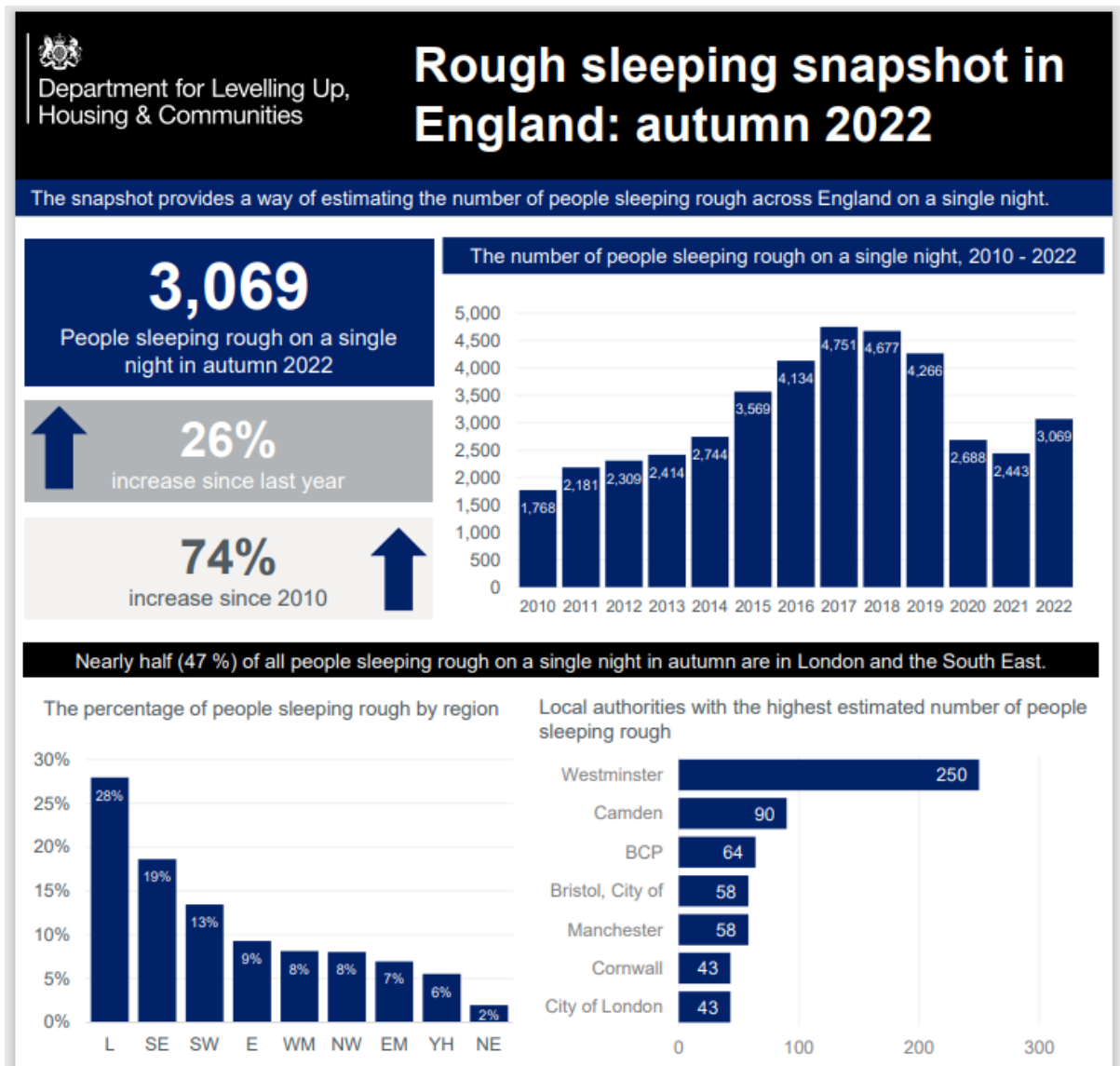
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>England</b>	85,040	92,190	95,450	95,060	104,510
<b>South East</b>	8,870	9,640	10,370	10,930	12,320
<b>Surrey</b>	832	949	797	784	935

#### Analysis

The tables show a worrying increase in homelessness demand and the need for households to be placed into emergency accommodation. The spike in assessments and temporary accommodation in March 2020 reflects the impact of Covid pandemic and the 'Everyone In' initiative whereby all rough sleepers were required to be offered emergency accommodation. Worryingly, homelessness numbers and households being placed in temporary accommodation are now higher than in the pandemic, reflecting the economic challenges caused by the pandemic in addition to other factors such as the 'cost of living crisis', Ukrainian war, Afghan resettlement scheme etc.

# Rough Sleeping

Estimated number of people sleeping rough on a single night in autumn in England since 2010.



Area	2021	2022	Difference	% Change
Yorkshire and The Humber	166	170	4	2
North East	48	61	13	27
East Midlands	175	213	38	22
East of England	241	285	44	18
North West	200	247	47	24
West Midlands	194	250	56	29
South West	334	413	79	24
<b>South East</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>572</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>29</b>
London	640	858	218	34
<b>Rest of England</b>	<b>1,803</b>	<b>2,211</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>England</b>	<b>2,443</b>	<b>3,069</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>26</b>

Nearly half (47%) of all people sleeping rough on a single night in autumn are in London and the South East.

Rough sleeping increased in every region compared to the previous year, with London increasing the most (34%), followed by the South East (29%) and the West Midlands (29%)

The Government's *Rough Sleeping Strategy* was published on 3 September 2022. [Ending Rough Sleeping for Good \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

The strategy outlined a £2bn funding commitment over three years to intensify efforts to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. The goal of the strategy is that by 2025 'rough sleeping is to be prevented wherever possible but when it does occur, it must be rare, brief and non-recurring'.

### **Crisis Homelessness Monitor 2023**

[homelessness-monitor-england\\_report-2023\\_v11.pdf \(crisis.org.uk\)](https://www.crisis.org.uk/homelessness-monitor-england-report-2023-v11.pdf)

'The Crisis homelessness monitor is a longitudinal study providing an independent analysis of the homelessness impacts of recent economic and policy developments across Great Britain. Separate reports are produced for England, Scotland and Wales. This eleventh annual report updates our account of how homelessness stands in England in 2023, or as close to 2023 as data availability allows. It also

highlights emerging trends and forecasts some of the likely future changes, identifying the developments likely to have the most significant impacts on homelessness’.

The key findings section is as follows:

### **Key Findings**

These findings come from research methods including a survey of local authorities, interviews with key informants in the public and voluntary sectors, and a statistical modelling exercise that estimates levels of 'core' homelessness and projects trends in these forms of homelessness into the future.

- Some 290,000 eligible households sought help from local authorities on grounds of homelessness in 2021/22. While those judged at risk of homelessness within 56 days increased by 10% over the year, applicants assessed as actually homeless fell by 4%. Nonetheless a large majority of local authority survey respondents (85%) perceived that homelessness service ‘footfall’ had increased in the preceding year - the highest number to say this in any year since the Homelessness Monitor: England local authority survey began. 88% of councils reported an increase in requests for support from those evicted from the private rented sector while 93% anticipated a further increase over the coming year.
- Since bottoming out in 2010/11, total temporary accommodation placements had more than doubled to over 100,000 households by 31st December 2022. Within this, Bed and Breakfast hotel placements have risen more than five-fold since their 2009 nadir. Having increased sharply during the early part of the pandemic, Bed and Breakfast placements once again climbed steeply during 2022, up by 32% in the year to Q4 2022.
- Key informants reported that opportunities for upstream homelessness prevention are contracting because of sustained cuts to public services, a reduction in the supply of affordable rental properties, and a squeeze on household budgets. Deep cuts to Discretionary Housing Payments have further constrained the ability of local authorities to prevent homelessness.
- Following several years of decline, the number of people seen sleeping rough in England grew in 2022. At 3,069 in November of that year, recorded rough sleeping was 26% up on the equivalent figure twelve months earlier. London-specific data also indicates rising rough sleeping since 2021, with around half of those sleeping on the streets of the capital non-UK nationals, many of whom will have No Recourse to Public Funds or other restricted eligibility for statutory support.
- The launch of a refreshed Rough Sleeping Strategy in September 2022 was welcomed by key informants, particularly with regard to its confirmation of sustained investment in the Rough Sleeping Initiative. However, acute concerns remain about addressing rough sleeping amongst people with No Recourse to Public Funds or other restricted eligibility to statutory support, as

pandemic-associated emergency accommodation options for this group have contracted sharply after the ending of specialist public health funding in April 2022.

- 'Core homelessness' in England – a concept which captures the most acute forms of homelessness – is estimated to have totalled 242,000 in 2022, compared to 206,000 people affected a decade ago. This means that on a given night, 1 in 100 households in England are experiencing the worst forms of homelessness.
- Baseline forecasts show core homelessness rising significantly in the immediate future, with overall core homelessness in 2024 one fifth higher than 2020 levels. Current drivers of these increases relate primarily to inflation squeezing real incomes and increasing poverty and destitution, alongside rising private rents and evictions, and declining social rented lettings.
- In the shorter term, the most effective policies for reducing core homelessness would be allocation of a significant proportion of social lettings to core homeless households, increasing the level of the Local Housing Allowance, and maximising prevention activity to the level of the higher performing local authorities.

[Homelessness Monitor 2023 | England | Crisis UK](#)

## **Afghan Resettlement**

As at end of June 2023 the total number of arrivals to the UK as a result of the Afghanistan withdrawal was 24,600. Of these 12,788 individuals have been granted indefinite leave to remain.

At the end of June 2023, 6,575 people were housed in temporary accommodation – bridging hotels or serviced accommodation and 10,983 moved to a home with a further 409 matched to a home and waiting to move in.

In May 2023 the Home Office introduced a new one offer accommodation matching process. If households choose to refuse an offer they are required to leave the bridging hotel and make their own accommodation arrangements. In such instances they can approach a local authority as homeless.

## **Ukraine Resettlement**

As at 10 October 2023, 242,300 Ukrainian Scheme visas holders had been issued - 70,400 under the Ukraine family scheme and 171,800 under the Ukraine sponsorship Scheme.

Inevitably, arrangements to join family or to stay with volunteer host families can break down and this can result in households applying as homeless to local authorities.

As at 31 Aug 2023, local authorities had accepted a homelessness prevention or relief duty to 7760 Ukrainian households, of which 5080 were families with children. 730 households were in temporary accommodation and 3690 had had an offer of settled accommodation.

## 4. Funding and Data

Extra Government funding has been crucial in enabling Waverley being to implement the HRA 2017 legislation from 2018 and maintaining its efforts to keep the number of households being placed into temporary accommodation to a minimum. The sums awarded are outlined below:

### **New burdens funding**

To cover the additional administrative costs of implementing the new prevention and relief framework in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA 2017).

Waverley's allocation:

2017-18	£22,396
2018-19	£20,514
2019-20	£21,685
IT Funding	£9,202

Total: £73,797

### **Homelessness Prevention Grant (previously known as Flexible Homelessness Grant)**

Waverley's allocation:

2017-18 -	£131,383
2018-19 -	£151,169
2019-20 -	£479,932
2020-21 -	£479,932
2021-22 -	£603,670
2022-23 -	£603,670
2023-24 -	£616,834

Total: £3,066,590

In addition to the above payments, Waverley has also received a number of one-off or top-up payments relating to specific funding challenges. These have primarily been linked to the impact of the COVID pandemic but more recently they have been to do with the Afghan and Ukrainian crises.

The funding has primarily been used to procure additional supported housing bedspaces in addition to funding additional staffing and the costs in helping clients secure private accommodation.

A potential very significant risk for Waverley is that following a consultation exercise, DLUHC have amended the formula for the grant. Under the revised formula there is the potential for Waverley's grant to reduce from £622,744 24-25 to £346,380 in 25-26. **This 44.4% reduction, unless subsequently revised, represents a very**

## significant threat to Waverley’s ability to continue to prevent and relieve homelessness.

### Homelessness data

One of the key changes brought about under the Homelessness Reduction Act is the requirement for Waverley to collect a considerable amount of data from each applicant and then submit anonymised data on a quarterly basis to the Government (Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - DLUHC). This enables the Government to analyse and publish the data and monitor trends in homelessness.

Below is a screen grab from 2023 showing Waverley’s performance in both submitting reliable data and performance in completing cases.

Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

1) Please select a local authority  
Waverley

The overall quality RAG rating is determined by the lowest RAG rating of the four measures:

1. Upload date - shows whether the local authority submitted their data on time. This is Green if data was submitted on time; Red otherwise.
2. Cases Submitted with errors - gives percentage of cases in their submission that contained errors. This is Green if 99% or more of cases were submitted without errors; Amber if between 85-98% of cases were submitted without errors; Red otherwise.
3. Duties Ending - gives an indication of whether a local authority is closing and recording their cases by looking at the ratio of duties ending in the quarter to duties owed in the latest two quarters. This is Green if the number of duties ending is more than 50% of those owed; Amber if the number of duties ending is between 35-50% of those owed; Red otherwise.
4. Published data - shows whether the local authority provided data they signed off as

Overall Quality of Data Submission	
Green	
Upload Date	This local authority uploaded data on time
Cases Submitted with Errors	This local authority submitted all or more than 99% of their cases without errors.
Duties Ending	This local authority is submitting data which indicates that they are completing cases
Published data	This local authority provided data which is accurate and has been published

[Click here to return to the summary page](#)

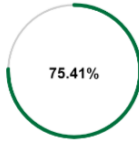


## Percentage of duties ending in Accommodation

1) Please select a local authority

Waverley

Percentage of prevention and relief  
duties owed that ended in  
accommodation secured



This measure shows the percentage of prevention and relief duties that ended with accommodation secured for at least 6 months. The measure uses the number of duties that ended in accommodation secured as a proportion of the number of prevention and relief duties owed this quarter. This gives an indication of performance with ending a prevention or relief duty with a positive outcome.

This measure shows red for local authorities in the bottom 25%, green for authorities in the top 25% and amber otherwise.

**Prevention duties** include any activities aimed at preventing a household threatened with homelessness within 56 days from becoming homeless. This would involve activities to enable an applicant to remain in their current home or find alternative accommodation in order to prevent them from becoming homeless. The duty lasts for 56 days but may be extended if the local authority is continuing with efforts to prevent homelessness.

**Relief duties** are owed to households that are already homeless and require help to secure settled accommodation. This would involve activities to find accommodation to relieve their homelessness. The duty lasts 56 days and can only be extended by a local authority if the households would not be owed the main homelessness duty.

[Click here to return to the summary page](#)

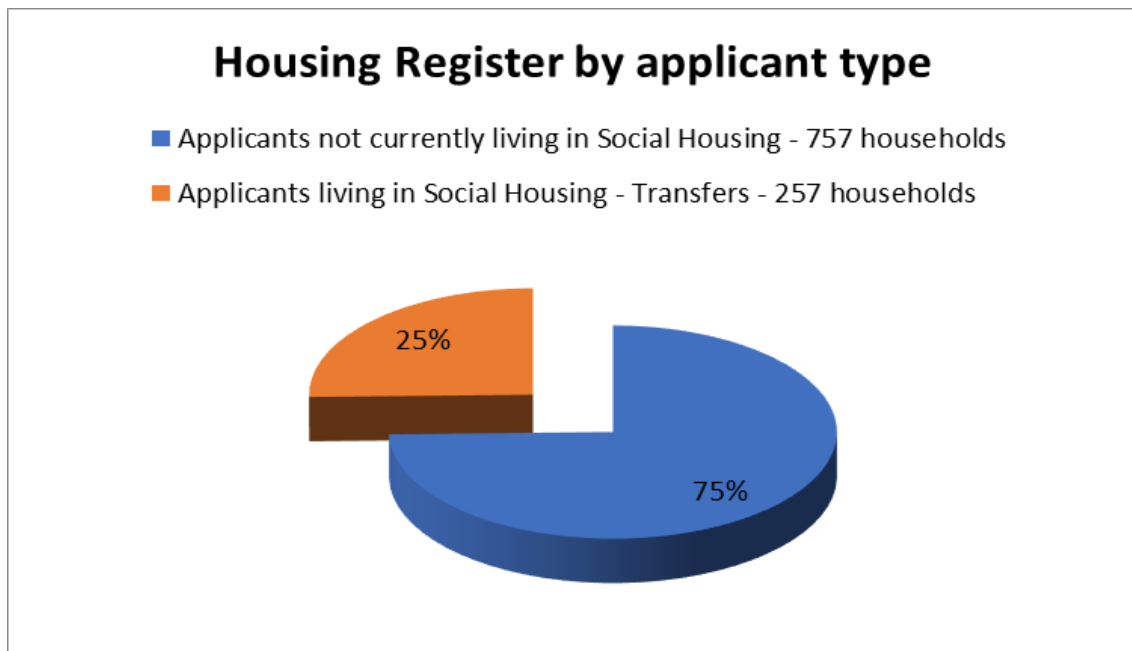
## 5. Housing Register, Stock and Lettings information for Waverley

### a) New housing applications registered each year

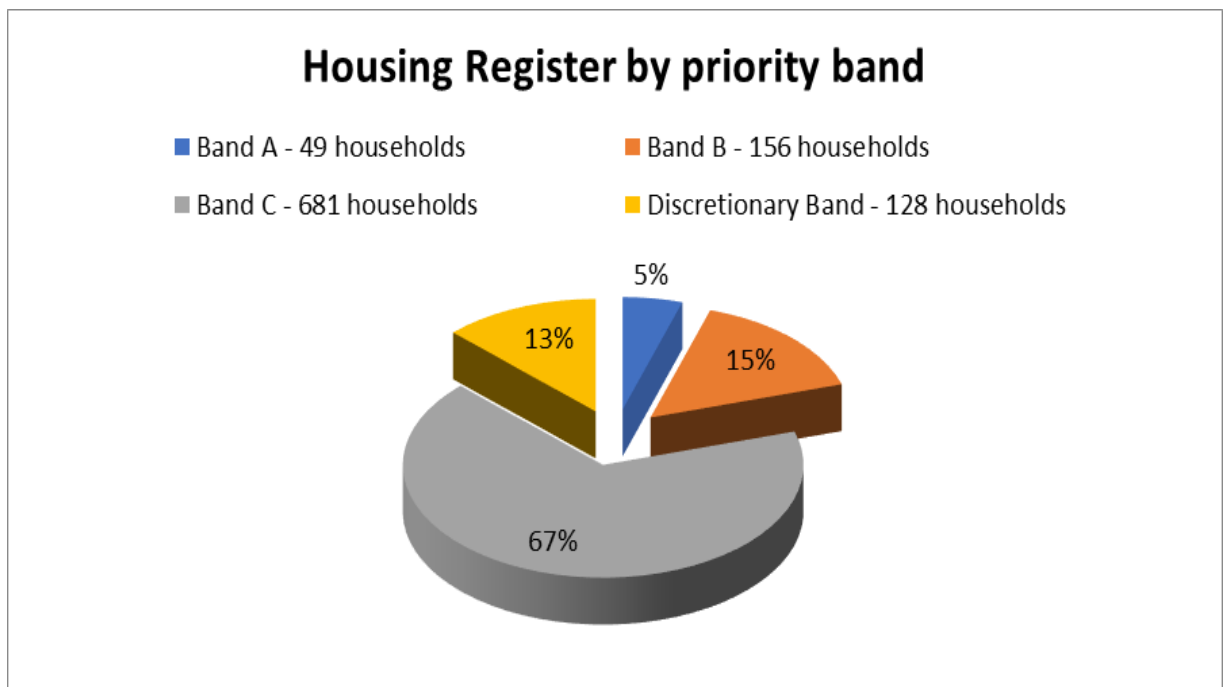
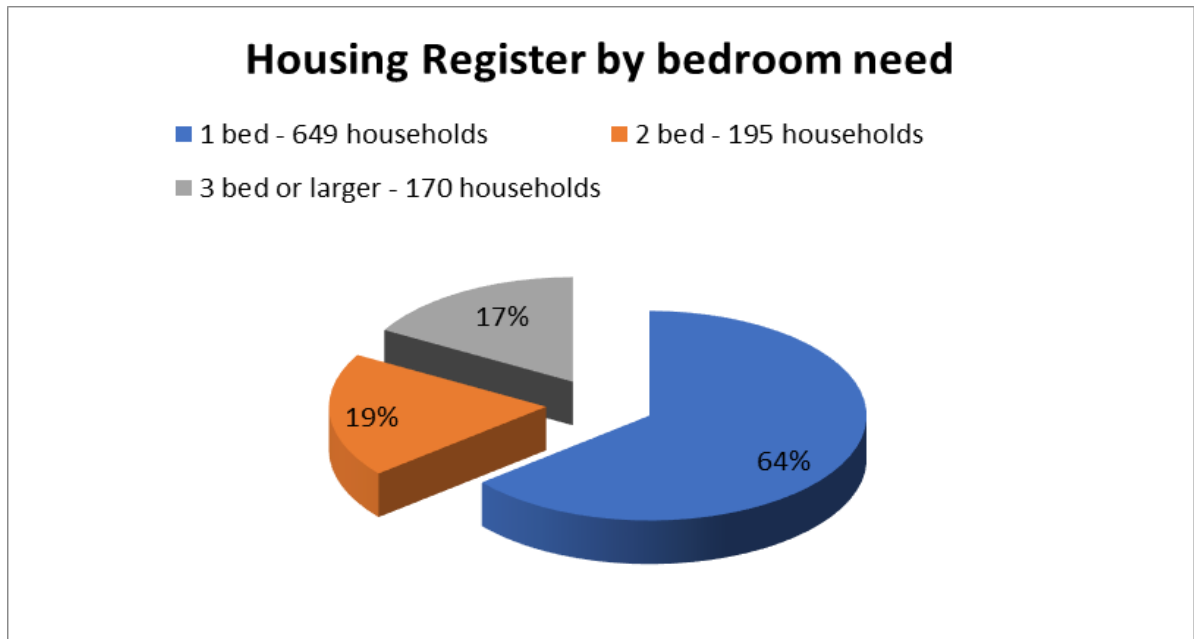
	14-15	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
	503	520	561	499	423	441	566	561	585
<b>Of which transfers</b>	134 27%	136 26%	152 27%	144 29%	148 35%	140 32%	181 32%	166 30%	181 31%

### b) Housing Register applicants as at 1 April 2023

The Housing Register shows the number of households in housing need and eligible to be considered for social housing in Waverley.



## Housing Register applicants as at 1 April 2023 Cont.



Over 50% of households on the Housing Register (529 households) are either living in private rented accommodation or living with friends or relatives. This means that they are potentially at risk of being made homeless between 28 and 56 days.

## c) Waverley Housing Stock information

### Social rented housing stock in Waverley as at 1 April 2023 – Council

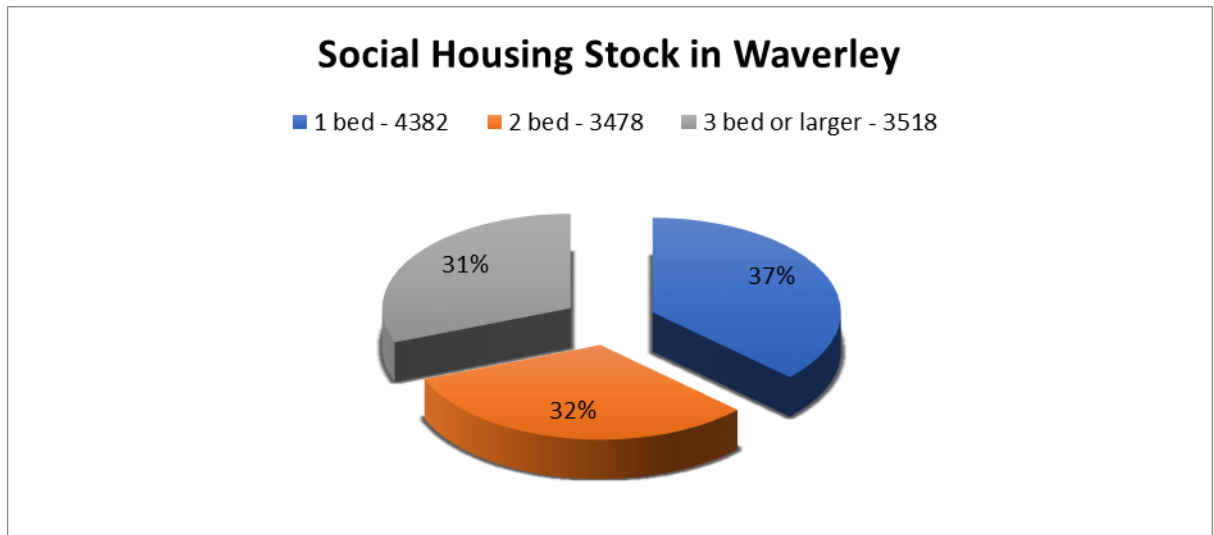
Area	Senior Living 1 bed	Senior Living 2 bed	General Needs 1 Bed	General Needs 2 Bed	General Needs 3+ Bed	Total
Alfold	0	0	8	5	13	26
Badshot Lea	0	0	28	3	13	44
Beacon Hill	0	0	25	0	17	42
Bourne	0	0	10	3	20	33
Bramley	25	3	71	33	55	187
Brook	0	0	0	0	2	2
Chiddingfold	0	0	46	39	43	128
Churt	0	0	46	7	19	72
Cranleigh	26	6	172	86	106	396
Dockenfield	0	0	0	1	12	13
Dunsfold	0	0	33	3	11	47
Ellens Green	0	0	5	0	0	5
Elstead	0	0	73	26	50	149
Ewhurst	0	0	41	18	17	76
Farncombe	32	1	226	213	208	680
Farnham Town	57	4	160	155	174	550
Folly Hill	0	0	4	25	37	66
Frensham	0	0	24	5	15	44
Godalming	0	0	123	177	109	409
Grayswood	0	0	0	6	2	8
Hambledon	0	0	13	5	4	22
Hascombe	0	0	6	4	4	14
Haslemere	0	0	73	126	95	294
Heath End	0	0	18	20	35	73
Hindhead	0	0	17	12	10	39
Milford	21	10	72	74	51	228
Rowley	0	0	0	0	4	4
Shamley Green	0	0	32	34	22	88
Shottermill	30	0	92	53	80	255
Thursley	0	0	4	3	3	10
Tilford	0	0	1	2	1	4
Upper Hale	0	0	22	0	13	35
Weybourne	0	0	24	1	16	41
Witley	0	0	56	47	59	162
Wonersh	0	0	15	16	8	39
Woolmer Hill	0	0	22	13	38	73
Wrecclesham	31	1	79	177	170	458
<b>Total</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1641</b>	<b>1392</b>	<b>1536</b>	<b>4816</b>

### c) Waverley Housing Stock information cont.

#### Social/affordable rented housing stock in Waverley - Housing Association

	Bedsit / 1 bed	2 bed	3+ bed	Total
Housing Association	2519	2061	1982	6562

#### Total Social Rented Housing Stock in Waverley – Council and Housing Association - by number of bedrooms



#### New Social rented housing supply and loss through Right to Buy (RTB) –

	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	Total
New Build (HA)	112	147	93	187	283	822
New Build (Council)	45	3	37	5	21	111
Loss through RTB	14	14	15	28	17	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>845</b>

## d) Lettings - Who was rehoused 2022-2023?

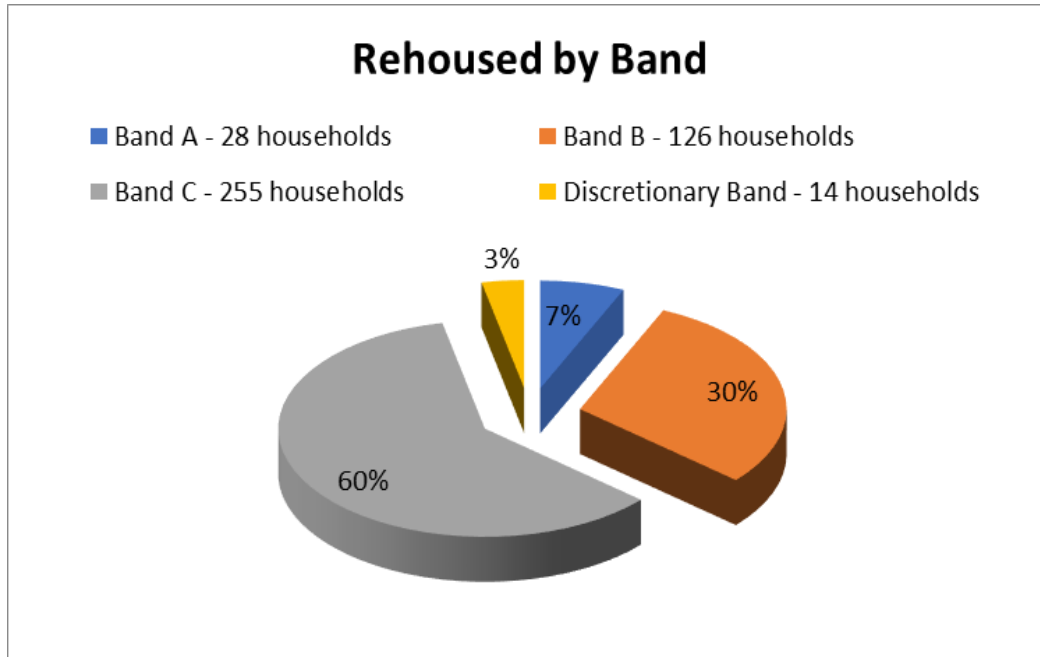
### Council homes let

Area	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed or larger	Total
Alfold	0	0	0	0
Badshot Lea	3	0	1	1
Beacon Hill	3	0	1	4
Bourne	0	0	0	0
Bramley	16	3	1	20
Chiddingfold	2	3	1	6
Churt	2	0	0	2
Cranleigh	18	3	3	24
Dockenfield	0	1	1	2
Dunsfold	3	0	0	3
Ellens Green	0	0	0	0
Elstead	2	1	1	4
Ewhurst	5	2	2	9
Farncombe	27	14	5	46
Farnham Town	19	5	4	28
Folly Hill	0	0	0	0
Frensham	1	0	0	1
Godalming	11	18	2	31
Grayswood	0	0	0	0
Hambledon	0	0	0	0
Hascombe	0	0	0	0
Haslemere	5	3	7	15
Heath End	0	1	0	1
Hindhead	3	0	0	3
Milford	15	1	2	18
Shamley Green	3	0	0	3
Shottermill	6	6	1	13
Thursley	0	0	0	0
Tilford	0	0	0	0
Upper Hale	0	0	0	0
Weybourne	2	0	0	2
Witley	5	4	0	9
Wonersh	1	2	0	3
Woolmer Hill	3	1	0	4
Wrecclesham	11	6	6	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>275</b>

**d) Lettings - Who was rehoused 2022-2023? – cont.**

**Housing association homes let 2022-2023**

	1bed	2bed	3+bed	Total
<b>Housing Association</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>148</b>

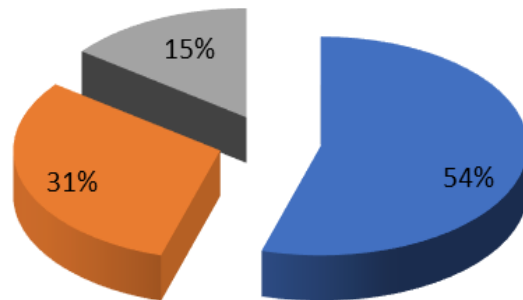


The majority of homes (60%) were let to applicants in band C.

#### d) Lettings - Who was rehoused 2022-2023? - cont.

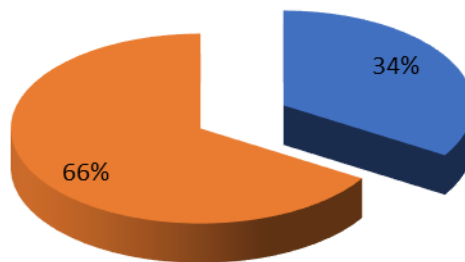
##### Rehoused by bedroom number

- One bed - 231 households
- Two bed - 130 households
- Three bed or larger - 62 households



##### Rehoused by applicant type

- Applicants in Social Housing - Transfers - 143 households
- Applicants not previously living in Social Housing - 280 households



## d) Lettings - Who was rehoused 2022-2023? - cont.

### Housing Register applicants rehoused into stock type

	15-16	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	Average per year
<b>Council</b>	298	278	269	276	225	260	250	275	266 (75%)
<b>Housing Association</b>	70	49	36	85	120	83	139	148	91 (25%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>Total as a % of Housing Register applicants</b>	24%	22%	22%	35%	35%	32%	38%	42%	31%

### How long does it take to bid successfully for a new home?

The time that applicants wait on the Housing Register depends on their priority band and how flexible they are in regard to where they want to live. The average number of days that applicants had to wait before being re-housed during 2018-2023 was:

Averages	Band A	Band B	Band C	Discretionary Pool	Average by bed size
<b>1 bedroom</b>	513	585	579	326	567
<b>2 bedroom</b>	510	542	751	25	702
<b>3+ bedrooms</b>	459	547	877	329	646
<b>Average by band</b>	500	562	666	309	622

## 6. Homelessness in Waverley

### Rough Sleeping in Waverley (annual autumn estimate)

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
0	3	0	2	4	1	2	4	3	2	6	?

The Council is required by the Government to carry out a rough sleeping estimate each autumn. It does this with the help of our statutory and voluntary partners such as the Police, Citizens Advice Waverley, faith groups, Probation and the Council's park rangers. It is important to stress that the relatively low numbers of estimated rough sleeping in Waverley does not necessarily tell the whole story. Rough sleepers sometimes gravitate to areas where there is night-shelter provision. Given that Guildford and Woking have night shelter/homeless hostel provision, it is reasonable to conclude that some rough sleepers with a connection to Waverley sleep rough in the Guildford and Woking area and would be included in their rough sleeping counts/estimates. Anecdotal evidence from statutory and voluntary partners in Guildford and Woking bears this out. Waverley commissions bedspaces at the York Road Project, Woking for Waverley clients and experience has shown that when some of these clients unfortunately have to be evicted due to behavioural issues, they can sometimes remain in the Woking area.

### Households contacting the Housing Options Team regarding homelessness 2018 - 2023

18-19	19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23
729	672	622	695	744

## 6. Homelessness in Waverley – cont.

### Homeless households in temporary accommodation as at 31 March 2008 - 2023

09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
5	7	2	2	1	4	5	1	1	0	2	5	3	1	8

### Homeless households in temporary accommodation in Surrey as at 31 March 2015 – 2023

	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
EBC	38	46	43	26	38	67	49	70	99
EEBC	156	156	155	166	161	219	242	240	224
GBC	34	46	61	57	48	44	41	39	44
MVDC	39	39	48	37	33	49	35	48	55
RBBC	136	142	130	139	153	159	148	151	169
RBC	62	68	101	76	81	78	72	48	47
SBC	113	117	103	108	97	110	114	103	123
SHBC	44	48	49	39	31	39	29	29	23
TDC	25	42	27	35	32	29	20	21	54
<b>Wav</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>
WBC	55	83	112	151	156	150	45	34	112
<b>Total</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>788</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>949</b>	<b>797</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>935</b>

## 6. Homelessness in Waverley – cont.

**149**

Prevention duties accepted 22-23

**97**

Relief duties accepted 22-23

**51**

Households helped into private rented accommodation to prevent or relieve their homelessness in 22-23

**66**

Duty to Refer referrals 22-23

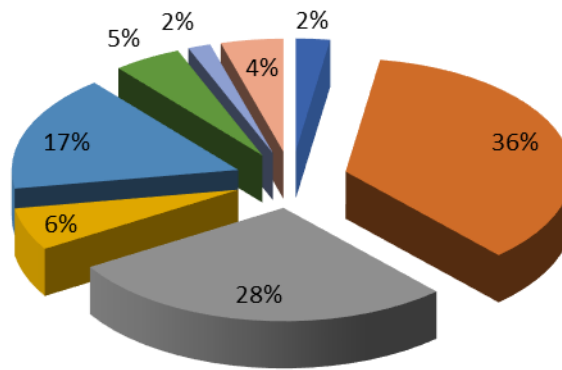
24 of which from probation or prisons

Duty to Refer places a duty on public bodies in England to refer service users they consider may be homeless or threatened with homelessness, to local housing authorities in England. Before making a referral they are required to have consent from the individual, including consent to share their contact details, and allow the individual to identify the housing authority in England which they would like the notification to be made to.

## 6. Homelessness in Waverley – cont.

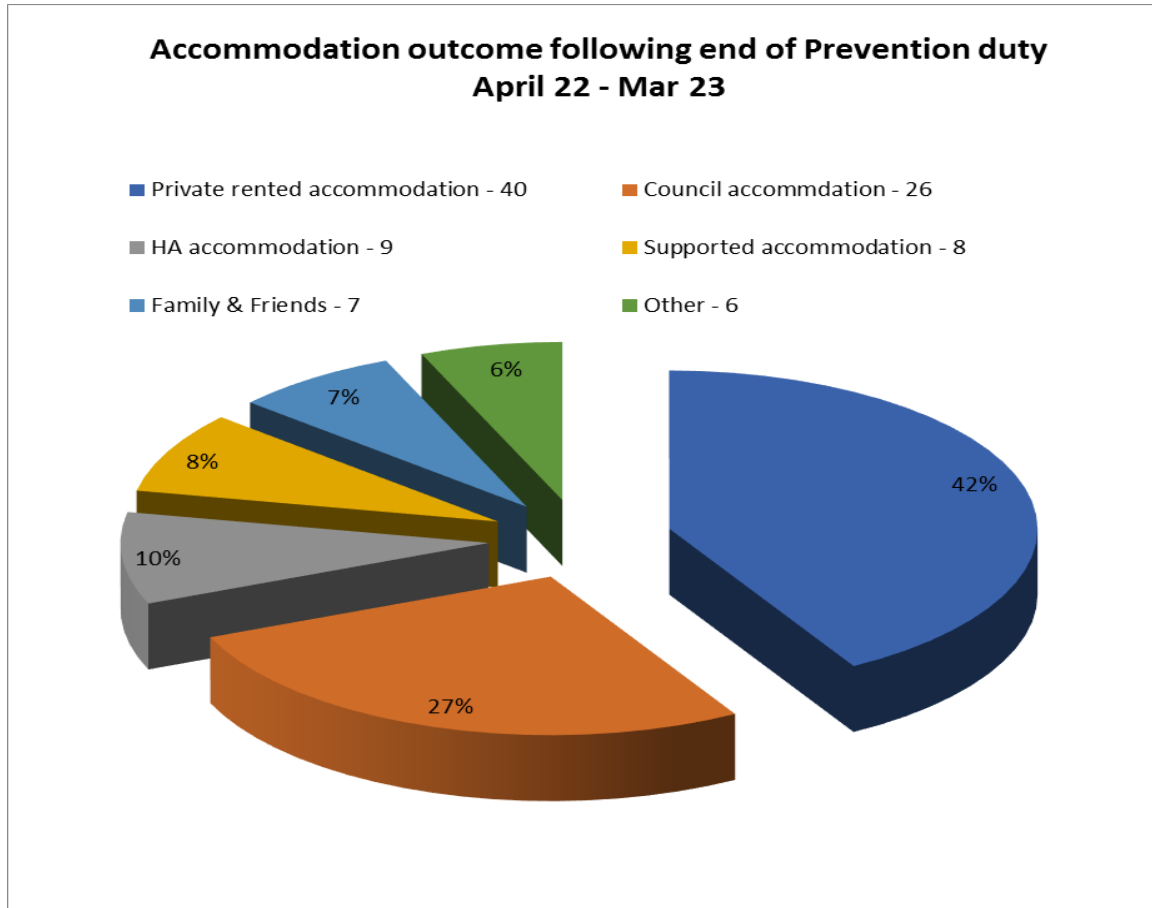
### Reasons for Homelessness - April 22 - Mar 23

- Loss of supported accommodation - 6
- Loss of private rented/tied accommodation - 88
- Family no longer willing/able to accommodate - 69
- Other/Not known - 15
- Domestic abuse - 41
- Non violent relationship breakdown - 12
- Loss of Social Housing - 4
- Left institution/home office asylum - 11

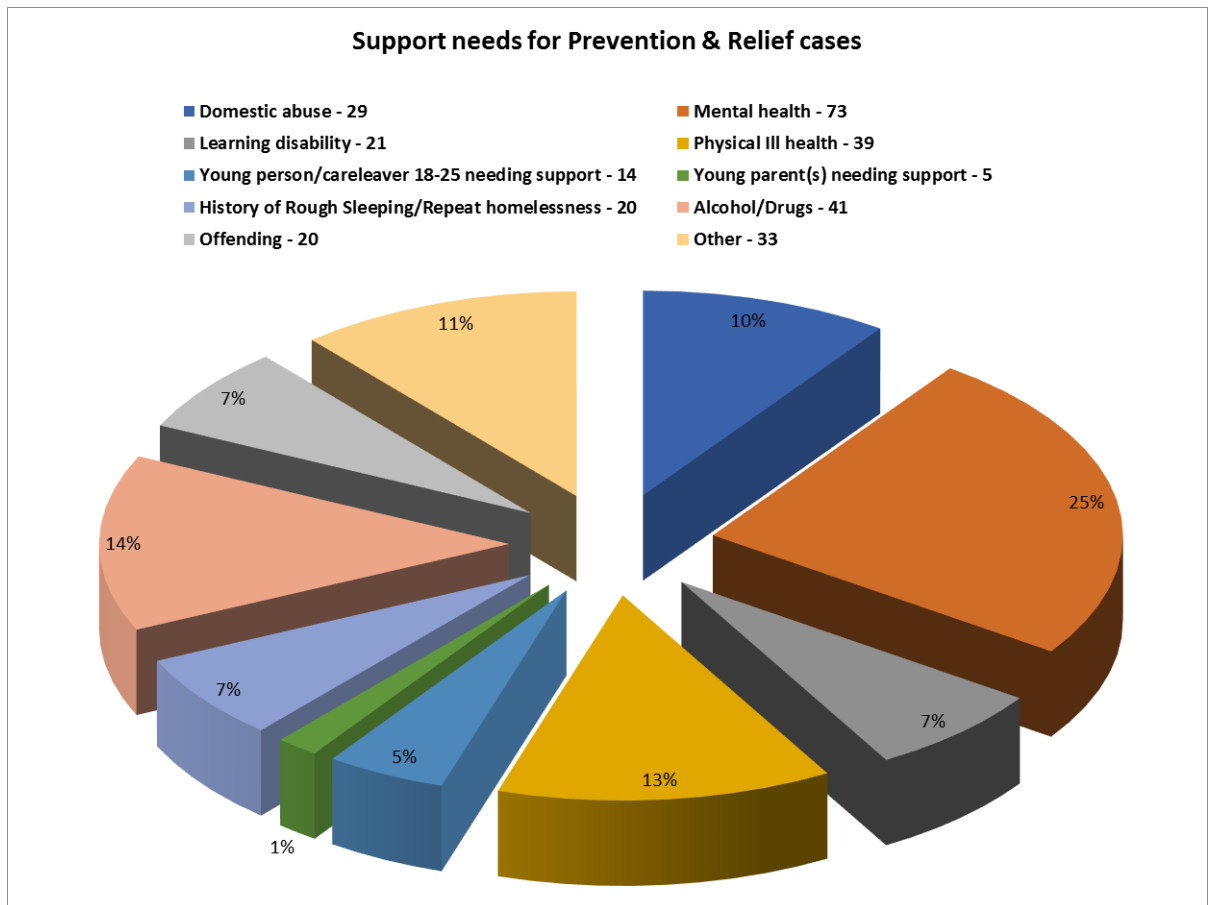


The most common causes of homelessness in Waverley is the loss of private rented accommodation followed by friends/family no longer willing/able to assist and then domestic abuse. This reflects the national picture.

## 6. Homelessness in Waverley – cont.



## 6. Homelessness in Waverley – cont.



## 7. The Council's Housing Options Service

Waverley's Housing Options Service is divided into 3 main teams:

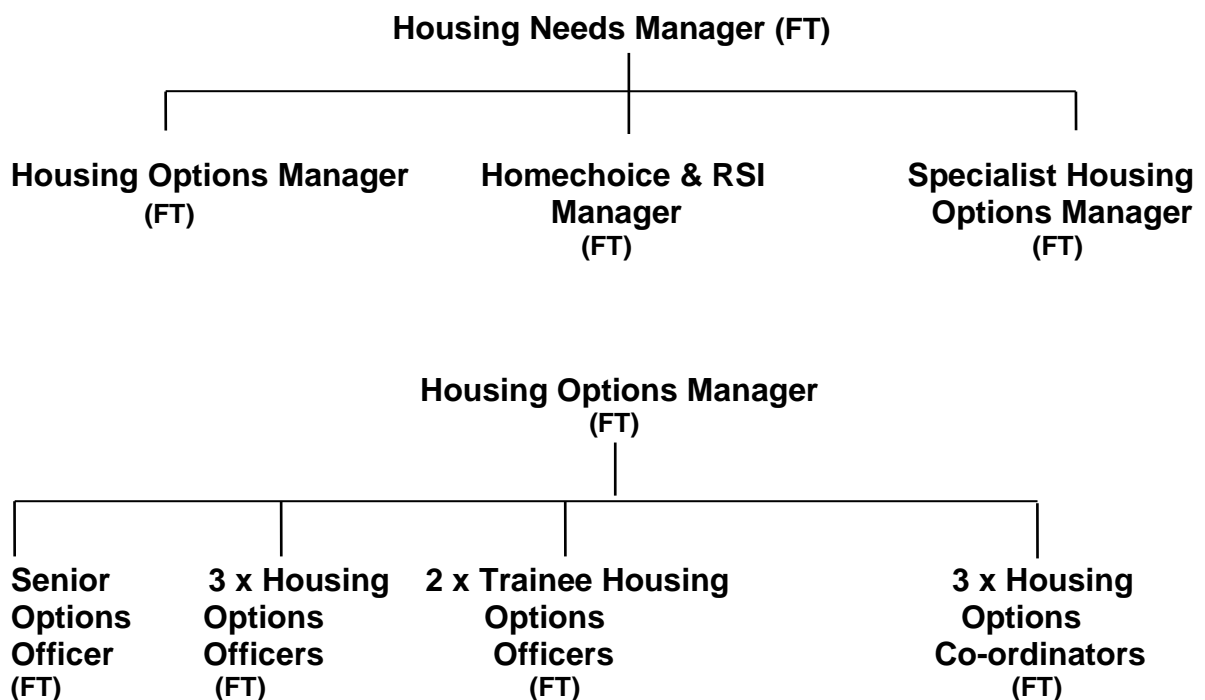
**Housing Options Team** - deal with homelessness, housing advice and the management of the majority of the Council's Housing Register.

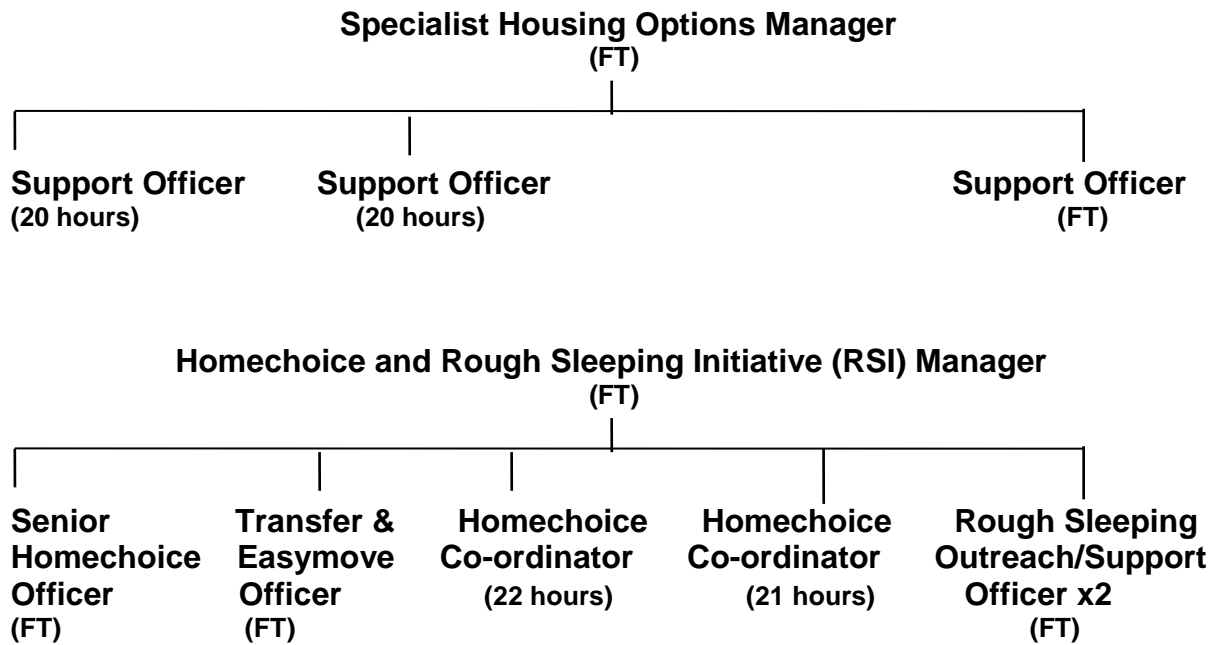
**Specialist Housing Options Team** - provide advice and housing support to vulnerable homeless clients (e.g. victims of domestic abuse).

**Homechoice & Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Team** - responsible for the letting of Council and housing associations properties, managing the Council's Housing Register for applicants already living in social housing and managing the Council's Rough Sleeping Outreach Service.

The management of the Rough Sleeping Outreach and Support Service by the Homechoice Team is a fairly recent development that followed Waverley's successful Rough Sleeping Initiative bid in February 2021.

The Housing Options Service structure is as follows:





### **Housing Options Team and customer journey**

This team has the main responsibility for assessing the Council’s homelessness duties to customers presenting as homeless. Following the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA 2017) the Council invested in a comprehensive IT package (Housing Jigsaw) that enables Officers to record the key details regarding an applicant’s situation, as well as storing documents and issuing decision letters edited from stored templates. Crucially the system also enables the Council to capture the large amount of case the key statistical case data (HCLIC data) required by Government that is submitted on a quarterly basis.

Customers can contact the Council in person, by phone or by email. Following the Covid Pandemic the team had to quickly adapt to delivering the service primarily by phone and email. Following the opening up of the Council Offices with a reduced footprint, the Housing Options Team have continued to mainly assist customers by phone and email though in person unscheduled presentations are catered for, in addition to in person appointments when needed.

The team operate a duty system whereby each weekday a different Housing Options Officer is the lead contact for new homelessness enquiries. Other Officers field queries when the duty Officer has reached capacity in triaging the daily approaches (usually 4-5 cases). Each triage can take anything between 20 – 50 minutes and occasionally depending on the complexity and communication challenges sometimes much longer. The key task for officers is to determine whether a client is or isn’t homeless or threatened with homelessness in 56 days and then to tailor the advice accordingly. Where an applicant is homeless on that day and cannot stay temporarily elsewhere, the Officer will also have to determine whether the Council has a duty to provide emergency accommodation and if so, make arrangements for this.

If a homelessness prevention duty is owed, the Council has a duty to try to prevent the homelessness (e.g. through negotiating with the person / landlord giving the notice as to whether they will be prepared to withdraw or extend any Notice). If the homelessness cannot be prevented in this way, then clients are encouraged to be proactive in looking for alternative accommodation themselves and are given advice about how to do this, as well as advice about housing benefit/Universal Credit rent levels that they may be entitled to.

Applicants will have a follow up Full Housing Assessment, where more detailed information is discussed so a Personal Housing Plan can be agreed and shared.

Applicants are required to provide documentary evidence to verify their homelessness and circumstances such as ID, proof of residence and any Notice to leave, financial circumstances such as income and savings. Additionally, the triage and full housing assessment will capture additional information such as support and medical needs can be discussed and where necessary referrals to other services are made.

Officers will explore with applicants the likely best route to address their housing need which could be supported housing, private rented and in cases where the applicant may have been on the Council's Housing Register for a while, social housing. Officers will exercise a 'professional curiosity' to ascertain the true circumstances in order to best navigate to a realistic homelessness solution.

Solutions could include a negotiation with the landlord, friend or family member who is asking the homeless applicant to leave, to see if the person being made homeless can change anything that will result in the homeless threat being removed. This could be abiding by house or tenancy rules or paying any owed rent. In some instances, it can be cost effective for the Council to offer to pay off rent arrears on behalf of the applicant, particularly if going forward, the applicant is able to cover future payments through benefits or employment.

Whilst applicants are encouraged to help themselves, Officers will also explore other possible housing solutions through the Council's partnerships with supported housing providers, Ethical Lettings and private rented landlords.

Housing options for clients with complex needs can be much harder to secure, particularly if the applicant has a history of being evicted from previous accommodation due to poor behaviour or rent arrears. This inevitably limits options and the Council cannot risk jeopardising its relationships with landlords or other housing providers by making referrals that will inevitably set the client up to fail or would adversely impact the safeguarding of existing residents. As a result of these challenges Waverley has used its homelessness prevention grant and Rough Sleeping Initiative monies to fund additional bedspaces in supported housing schemes. The Council has also benefited from Surrey County Council's bids to secure funding from or the Changing Futures Programme for the Bridge the Gap and Surrey Adults Matters schemes that can provide additional support for complex needs clients to help them sustain accommodation and encourage them to engage in drug/alcohol and mental health support services.

Sadly, the reality of a highly constrained housing market in Waverley means that the available homelessness solutions for all applicants can be very limited. This can often mean that the solutions presented to clients may be far from what they ideally want. For example, accommodation that is not as near as they would like to where they previously lived and where they have established social, educational, employment and support networks. This can lead to difficult conversations that are challenging for both clients and officers. Whilst the Council is very appreciative of the fact that homeless households understandably want to minimise disruption to their lives, the reality is that assistance to prevent or relieve homelessness is more likely to be a safety net solution rather than an ideal solution. This means that if a client is offered what the Council considers is a suitable property to end its prevention or relief duty which is refused (and there are rights to seek a review), then no further offer of accommodation will usually be made. What is explained though is that by registering on the Council's Housing Register (if they have not already done so) does mean that in the medium to long term, applicants can bid for accommodation more suited to their favoured requirements.

In addition to purchasing additional supported housing bedspaces, another key to Waverley's success in preventing and relieving homelessness over the years has been its ability to place clients into private sector accommodation. This has led to the Council's success in reducing the number of households having to be placed in temporary accommodation from 107 in 2004 to 8 in March 2023. To achieve this the Council has cultivated positive relationships with local lettings agents and landlords and has entered into a successful partnership with a Social Letting company called Ethical Lettings. The approach has also included innovation to try to increase supply of available properties such as a local radio advertising campaign. Helping people into private rented accommodation has also involved developing the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme. Under the scheme households who do not have savings can be given an interest free rent deposit loan and help with rent in advance. Some landlords accept the Council's rent deposit bond instead of a cash payment. This is a legal undertaking that the Council will honour a valid and assessed claim for rent arrears or property damage at the end of a tenancy, against the value of the bond. Any claims against the bond are then chargeable to the outgoing tenant. Given that help under the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme involves the tenant accruing a debt to Waverley, in the first instance Housing Options Officers will encourage welfare dependent applicants to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) for the upfront housing costs. DHPs are non-repayable grants rather than loans and are Government funded. Claims are assessed by the Council's Benefits team. Waverley's DHP allocation for 22-23 was £113,643 but it is important to note that assistance with rent deposits is just one a number of categories that DHPs can be issued for e.g. short term under-occupation charge assistance, Benefit Cap assistance etc.

Even with the above help, the increasingly challenging economic position means the Council's ability to secure such private rents is much more constrained, particularly as the Local Housing Allowance rates (LHA - the maximum amount payable by housing Benefit/Universal credit for housing costs) have remained frozen since 2019. This has had an inevitable knock-on effect in causing homelessness for those who are already in private rented accommodation and on the Council's ability to source affordable private rented accommodation for those that are homeless. This will inevitably mean that less clients will be prevented from becoming homeless

which in turn leads to increased use of emergency accommodation and greater lengths in stay (and resulting cost for the Council), for those placed into emergency accommodation. Whilst Waverley's temporary accommodation numbers are still modest compared with other Surrey Boroughs and Districts, we did have 8 households in temporary accommodation in March 2023. A salutary fact is that prior to 2012 Spelthorne Borough Council had similar low numbers in temporary accommodation to Waverley but as at 31 March 2023, the Council had 123 households in temporary accommodation.

### **Specialist Housing Options Team**

Within the Housing Options Team is a specialist team of Specialist Housing Options Officers. These Officers take the lead in dealing more vulnerable homeless clients such as those with complex needs or poor coping skills. Such clients may be victims of domestic abuse, those suffering from mental health or learning difficulties or those with drug or alcohol dependencies or a combination of such circumstances. Domestic abuse is the third most common cause of homelessness in Waverley and nationally. Waverley's housing team has long had expertise in the area of domestic abuse resulting from the fact that in past the Council actually ran the local Domestic Abuse Outreach Service in Waverley. (see further below regarding domestic abuse).

The Specialist Housing Options Team also provide tenancy support to clients newly placed in private rented or other accommodation to ensure that clients have applied for the welfare benefits that they need and have linked in with other support structures such as registering with GP's, enrolling children in school and registering on the Council's Housing Register for future long-term housing. The value of this floating support has been recognised by the fact that Surrey County Council contribute towards the costs of employing one of the Officers. The extent of the team's help and support is very evident from case study 2 further below.

Members of the Specialist Housing Options team represent Waverley at the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences that are held for high-risk domestic abuse cases. The meetings are arranged by the Police with other agencies such as Social Services, Health and Education also attend.

Team members will also attend Waverley's regular Community Harm and Risk Reduction Meetings (CHARRM) and they take the lead in advocating for clients applying to the Council's Benefits team for Discretionary Housing Payments to help prevent or relieve homelessness.

### **Homechoice Team and Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) Team**

The Homechoice Team take the lead in managing housing applications from social housing tenants in Waverley and in advertising and letting social housing in Waverley through the Council's Choice Based Lettings scheme – Waverley Homechoice. Whilst the Housing Register is rarely a solution to homelessness, in some cases it can be, particularly if a client who is threatened with homelessness has been registered for a few years.

The Homechoice Team also operate the Council's Easy Move Scheme that seeks to encourage those social housing tenants under-occupying family sized to downsize to smaller accommodation. This helps free up much needed family sized homes and thereby maximises such a precious resource.

The RSI team is a relative new team that was formed following a successful bid under the Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative in 2021. The funding enables Waverley to employ two full time Officers who are able to respond to Streetlink referrals (a nationwide service that enables members of the public to report instances of possible rough sleeping) as well as direct reports to the team from the community or local agencies.

The two RSI Officers also provide much needed support to rough sleepers placed in emergency accommodation such as B&Bs, the York Road Project (see further below) or the Council's own accommodation. Additionally, one of the officers will take the lead in progressing homeless applications from rough sleepers.

The RSI team also take the lead in co-ordinating Waverley's Severe Weather Emergency protocol. Under this protocol Councils are required to provide additional support, that can include accommodation, to rough sleepers during periods of extreme weather. In winter this is triggered when there is a forecast of 3 consecutive days of temperatures of zero or below or in summer during heatwaves or other severe weather events.

## 8. Accommodation

Among the contributory factors for homelessness is a lack of affordable housing for those living in Waverley. Waverley is one of the most sought after and therefore expensive places to live in the UK. This means house prices and private rent levels are often beyond the reach of many people. As a result people have to live with relatives and friends far longer than either party would wish and this in turn can create tensions in households that leads to homelessness. The development of a range of affordable and supported housing and making best use of existing housing can therefore play a key role in reducing homelessness and providing accommodation for those who are under threat of homelessness.

### Temporary accommodation

The Council's excellent performance in preventing homelessness has led to a dramatic reduction in the use of and need for temporary accommodation.

Since the early 2000's and in line with Government policy, Waverley has embraced a homeless prevention approach in order to minimise the need for placing homeless households in temporary accommodation. This has been achieved through either providing advice to help applicants retain their current accommodation when threatened with homeless or, when this is not possible, helping applicants secure alternative medium to long term accommodation, usually in the private sector. As a result of this approach Waverley's dependence of temporary accommodation has significantly reduced as shown by the following tables showing homeless households needing to be placed into temporary accommodation under the Council's homelessness duties:

#### Homeless households in temporary accommodation in Waverley

31 March 2004	31 March 2005	31 March 2006	31 March 2007	31 March 2008	31 March 2009	31 March 2010	31 March 2011	31 March 2012	31 March 2013
107	80	53	28	17	5	7	2	2	1

31 March 2014	31 March 2015	31 March 2016	31 March 2017	31 March 2018	31 March 2019	31 March 2020	31 March 2021	31 March 2022	31 March 2023
4	5	1	1	0	2	5	2	1	8

**Surrey Temporary accommodation numbers (homeless households living in temporary accommodation).**

	<b>30 June 22</b>	<b>30 Sept 22</b>	<b>31 Dec 22</b>	<b>31 Mar 23</b>
EBC	70	83	86	99
EEBC	235	232	237	224
GBC	50	41	40	44
MVDC	50	48	48	55
RBBC	165	159	152	169
RBC	46	48	42	47
SBC	102	111	115	123
SHBC	38	31	28	23
TDC	26	32	45	54
<b>Wav</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
WBC	39	40	107	112
<b>Total</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>935</b>

As a result of its successful homelessness prevention, the Council was able to end its reliance on leasing around 50 private sector homes to supplement its own temporary accommodation, around the years 2004-2005. Since then the Council has gradually been able to decommission some of its own, unused temporary accommodation schemes and either sell the land for housing development or use the land to develop its own social housing or Housing Association homes. This made sense strategically as it reduced rent loss on empty, unused units, as well as increasing much needed, longer term social housing supply.

***Thanks for the temporary accommodation figure, it sounds like you guys are doing really well on prevention, please pass my congratulations on to the team.***

***Tracy Hendren  
Specialist Advisor (South West and South East)  
Homelessness, Overcrowding and Worklessness Division - Communities and Local Government  
4 July 2008***

More recently the Council has leased its remaining units of temporary accommodation in the borough to a housing association to provide supported housing for homeless households as increasingly we are seeing more homeless clients with support needs.

Given the Council's record of having low numbers of households having to be placed into temporary accommodation has been sustained for many years, it does not make sense to commission additional temporary accommodation units when the Council is usually able to assist clients with longer term housing in the private sector or in supported housing schemes. However, the Council will need to monitor future developing trends and pressures and review matters based on service demand and the Council's ability to continue to source suitable private sector accommodation.

In terms of emergency presentations, the Council makes use of short-term placements in hotels – either specialist B&Bs that cater for homeless households and provide food preparation facilities or in main-stream hotels such as Travelodge or Premier Inn. The Council acknowledges that such placements are usually far from ideal, particularly for families with children. However, it has to balance this against the considerable costs of maintaining a portfolio of temporary accommodation with units standing empty for the majority of the time, due to the effectiveness of its homelessness prevention work. Given the Council is a stockholding authority it retains the flexibility in using its permanent stock on a temporary basis, if absolutely needed.

## **Accommodation for Rough Sleepers**

### **Guardian properties**

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the Council had been exploring ways to manage the challenge of having properties subject to future demolition standing empty and resulting in loss of rental income. A solution being developed was the introduction of a 'Guardian Property Scheme' where some council employees who were struggling with accommodation issues could potentially act as property guardians.

With the onset of COVID-19 and the 'Everyone In' initiative, Officers decided to adapt this model to see if some rough sleepers who were engaging positively with the Housing Options Team during 'Everyone In', would be suitable to be offered guardian licences. In some ways this was a bit like a 'Housing First' model with support from the rough sleeping outreach officer. Since the pandemic 12 homeless clients have been assisted in this way and have sustained their accommodation. The value of the scheme is it gives a further period for a client to demonstrate that they can sustain accommodation and start to rebuild their lives.

### **Next Step Accommodation Programme (NSAP) and Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP)**

One of the positives to come out of the pandemic and the 'Everyone In' programme was the fact that so many single households, who were previously excluded from

accommodation assistance under the homelessness legislation, were able to be assisted with longer term accommodation. Due to this and to help meet its goal of eliminating rough sleeping by 2024, the Government announced a funding programme called the Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP).

Waverley submitted a bid for 6 modular units under the NSAP programme. Whilst only two units were approved in this bidding round, these units have now been delivered in Farncombe and the first residents with a background of rough sleeping moved in in October 2021.

These units, along with the guardian properties, have provided an opportunity for Waverley to pilot a 'Housing First' type housing model where intensive housing support means clients with very complex needs can be housed. This helps break the cycle of revolving door, repeat homelessness. Support is primarily provided by Waverley's Rough Sleeping Support Officer and the Rough Sleeping Outreach Officer. Additionally, very high need clients can also benefit from support through Surrey County Council's 'Changing Futures' programme, along with specialist services such as i-access drug / alcohol services.

In September 2021 Waverley submitted another successful bid under the Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) to provide two self-contained units of accommodation in Farnham for rough sleepers. Due to planning constraints these units will now be developed in Godalming.

## **Supported Accommodation**

Waverley has a range of supported housing schemes in its area but does not have the ability to nominate to all the vacancies in the schemes. It is also very reliant of supported housing schemes outside of Waverley, particularly for single homeless clients. A few services are outlined below as examples but these are not exhaustive:

### **York Road Project, Woking**

Significant progress has been made during the course of the previous and current Homelessness Strategies in improving housing options for single homeless clients. Much of this progress has been achieved by working in partnership with the York Road Project, Woking, (YRP).

YRP operate a 10-bed hostel in Woking plus move on accommodation. The accommodation is more than a roof over clients' heads. YRP staff and volunteers offer assistance with medical and dental referrals, benefits and housing advice and further referrals to specialist services, such as mental health and well-being and drug and alcohol services.

Using its Government homelessness grant, Waverley has purchased bed spaces in the YRP hostel for a number of years. This is often the first step in assisting single

homeless clients whilst the Housing Options Team assess the Council's homelessness duties and, where appropriate, plan longer term accommodation.

Between 20-21 and 22-23 YRP has assisted 61 Waverley clients with an average length of stay of 43 days. The majority of the clients were male (88%).

## **Transform Housing and Support**

Transform Housing operate a number of supported housing schemes across Surrey including Waverley. Some schemes were developed in partnership with Waverley and other local Councils contributing capital funding. Other properties are owned or leased by Transform and the funding for the support for clients is funded either by Surrey County Council or by Waverley directly. The schemes support a range of clients including those with mental health needs, ex-offenders, young people/care leavers, clients recovering from drug or alcohol addictions as well as homeless people who need support to get their lives back on track.

When Surrey County Council stopped funding bed spaces in certain schemes a few years ago, Waverley took the opportunity to fund the bed spaces using its Government homelessness grant or Rough Sleeping Initiative funding, in return for nomination rights to the vacancies. This has been vital in enabling Housing Options Team to provide a housing pathway for those with support needs. Clients are encouraged to register on the Council's Housing Register and when they are ready to move on to live more independently, they can often receive additional priority to do so, thus releasing a much needed vacancy for another homeless person.

Waverley is currently exploring the possibility of providing a move-on house for a Transform Housing Scheme based in Godalming for clients who need mental health support. If this can be achieved, then it will free up valuable vacancies in the may scheme for homeless clients with mental health challenges. As noted in section 5. above, mental health is the most common support need for customers seeking homelessness assistance.

## **A2 Dominion**

A2 Dominion (A2D) are a large housing association operating in London and the South of England. A2D run a number of supported housing schemes in Waverley that assist homeless clients referred by the Council. This includes accommodation for young families and single people. Recognising the need for households to have support to help them sustain their tenancy, the Council has leased units of accommodation previously used as temporary accommodation by the Council, to A2D, to increase the range of supported housing options for homeless households.

## **Vaughan House, Guildford – Riverside Group**

Vaughan House offers supported housing to those who are single, homeless or at risk of homelessness. Residents may have complex support needs such as substance abuse, mental health issues or offending behaviour. Residents have their own room with access to communal bathrooms and kitchens. The scheme is managed by Riverside Housing and whilst it primarily assists those from the

Guildford area or referred by Guildford Borough Council, other Surrey Districts and Boroughs, including Waverley, are often successful in being able to refer clients.

One of the key areas to ensure the availability and turnover of supported housing beds space in schemes such as Vaughan House, is for there to be a move pathway for clients. This is achieved by the referring Council accepting responsibility for clients and when they are ready to move on, sourcing alternative accommodation. This can be moving to lower support schemes, receiving additional priority on the Housing Register or move on to private rented accommodation.

To assist with move on for its referrals to Vaughan House, Waverley has leased a three-bedroom house to Riverside Housing so Waverley clients can start their journey to greater independence, whilst still receiving some support.

### **Move to Independence (MTI)**

MTI provide access to supported housing for people with mental health needs. As previously noted, mental health is the most common support need for clients approaching Waverley as homeless. The support provided by MTI aims to develop daily living skills and helps clients access the community and links them to other services.

One of the successes during the last Strategy was achieved when the Council was able to provide a shared house for MTI when another property used for the service in Waverley was being sold by the housing association that owned it. This helped ensure that a valuable accommodation and support resource was retained in Waverley.

### **Private rented accommodation**

Key to Waverley's partnership approach in tackling homelessness has been the way the Council has forged links with private sector landlords and lettings agents. This has enabled the Council, through its deposit bond scheme, to place households threatened with homeless into suitable private rented accommodation. The Council will continue to work with private landlords and given it is very much a 'landlords' market' it will need to be adaptable in how it can further incentivise private landlords to look favourably on potential tenants referred by the Council. In recent years, just to help households secure private rented properties, the Housing Options Team have had to use larger up-front rent in advance payments to ensure landlords accept referred households. To help maintain accessibility to the private sector the Council will need to keep its current service to private landlords, that already includes free check in and check out inventories for Council referrals, under review. Having the flexibility to offer one off 'golden hello' payments to landlords letting to a Council referral or offering other help and support, can all help, depending on the developing market conditions. Welfare reform changes and increased homelessness demand have already led to London boroughs placing households outside of London into Surrey and Waverley itself, so the Council continues to look at how it can gain a competitive edge to maintain accommodation options.

## **Ethical Lettings**

For a number of years now Waverley has worked in partnership with a social lettings company called Ethical Lettings. Ethical Lettings is a not for profit organisation that specialises in sourcing and managing private rented properties for local authorities.

This partnership has enabled Waverley to have access to more private rented properties both within and outside Waverley than it otherwise would be able to, as the landlords receive guaranteed rent payments and a management service from Ethical Lettings. The properties are let to Waverley clients at or close to the Local Housing Allowance rates. The partnership has added value in that if a landlord of a property wishes to end a tenancy, Ethical lettings can search its portfolio for alternative accommodation thus minimising chances of a new housing options approach to the Council. Ethical lettings also have a small furniture store to help clients furnish properties.

One strategy that has proved effective in attracting additional landlords to the scheme is a radio advertising campaign jointly funded by the Council and Ethical Lettings.

## **Homeless prevention units**

Despite the success of using the private sector to help households threatened with homelessness, it does not provide a suitable solution in all cases. Some clients have a chequered history in regard to managing their finances and successfully maintaining private rented or other previous accommodation. As a result, they are a harder client group to 'sell' to a prospective private landlord. In addition, sourcing private rented accommodation in an area where the client already has support, work or educational networks is not always possible within the timescale of their impending homelessness. Aware of such difficulties some housing association schemes that have been developed in Waverley have a certain number of units set aside to help households under threat of homelessness. This innovative approach has provided a useful additional source of accommodation to help prevent homelessness. To date there are two such units in a housing association scheme in Godalming and nine in Farnham. Provision of these units contributes to the Council maintaining the low number of households in temporary accommodation, despite the challenging economic climate. What has been less successful, is for clients in these units to successfully maintain their tenancies so they can bid to move-on to longer term social housing tenancies through the Council's Housing Register. The Council is continuing to liaise with its housing association partners to improve in this area so there can be a regular flow of vacancies for new homeless clients.

## **Affordable housing**

### **Developing new affordable housing**

Development of new good quality affordable housing in Waverley is always welcome and helps compensate for the loss of social units through the Right to Buy. One welcome development in recent years been that the Council has been able to invest

its rental income in the development of new Council homes. Over the last five years the Council has developed 111 new Council homes and housing associations have developed 822 new homes in Waverley. In 23-24 it is predicted that 72 new association homes for rent (social and affordable) will be developed in Waverley.

### **Maximising affordable housing stock**

One of Waverley's challenges is to maximise its existing stock by reducing under-occupation. Welfare Reform measures introduced in April 2013 mean that any welfare benefit dependent social housing tenants, under pensionable age who are under occupying their homes, are not be entitled to full benefit payments. If the tenants cannot make up the required rent payments, then they have a financial incentive to downsize to smaller accommodation.

The Council's Allocation Scheme has for a long time prioritised the housing applications from social housing tenants who wish to down-size and the Council provides incentive payments to those who wish to do so. In the last couple of years, the Council has built on this by having a Transfer Officer who takes the lead in assisting tenants who need additional help in moving, such as arranging removal companies. Additionally, the Council has been arranging tenancy audits of larger, family sized homes to confirm the current household occupation, and, where appropriate, discuss and encourage the benefits of downsizing.

Since September 2021 the Council has helped 50 households to downsize releasing 28 x 2 bed homes, 21 x 3 bed homes and 1 x 4 bed home.

## **9. Advice & Support**

Waverley benefits from having a number of advice and support providers.

### **Citizens Advice – South West Surrey**

The Council funds the services of Citizens Advice Waverley which has recently merged with Guildford and Ash CAB to form Citizens Advice -South West Surrey. Citizens Advice have a presence in each of the 4 main settlements in Waverley (Godalming, Farnham, Cranleigh and Haslemere). Citizens advice help prevent homelessness by ensuring that clients receive their benefit entitlements, maximise their income, prioritise their debts and negotiate realistic repayment arrangements with landlords and creditors.

The Citizens Advice Bureau network (Woking CAB) also provides help in preventing homelessness through their work at the Court desk at Guildford County Court. The Court desk service provides independent advice to the full range of possession actions such as those facing eviction from social housing, private rented housing as well as from mortgaged properties.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Local Authorities play a vital role in tackling domestic abuse through their community safety role and through funding and co-ordinating services with other partner organisations. Partners include the South-West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service, Surrey County Council, Salvation Army Housing Association, Your Sanctuary, I Choose Freedom, Community Harm and Risk Management Meetings (CHarMM), Surrey Police (who co-ordinate the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences - MARAC), Social Services and Registered Social Landlords.

A welcome development in recent years has been the expansion of refuge provision in Surrey and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 that among other things, updated the homelessness legislation and accompanying Code of Guidance in regard to managing homelessness applications from victims of domestic abuse. Additionally, the Act requires Waverley, along other public bodies, to assist Surrey County Council in meeting the support needs of victims of domestic abuse.

Extra Government funding was given to local Government Councils to implement the requirements of the Act. These monies have been used to commission additional refuge accommodation, including self-contained accommodation better suited to meet the needs of a wider range of victims e.g. men, LGBTQ+, transgender etc.

The funding has also been used to ensure a consistent Sanctuary Scheme offer across all Surrey Boroughs and Districts coordinated in the first instance by Domestic Abuse Outreach Services. Sanctuary schemes offer additional security features in a home in situations where the perpetrator no longer has a right to reside and it is considered safe for the family to remain and not move home. These features can range from a video doorbell, change of locks, fire-proof letter box, panic alarm to a safe room. The advantage of these measures for the victim and their

children is that their education, support and employment links can be maintained, which is very rarely possible in situations where a victim has to flee to a refuge.

Waverley helps fund the South-West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service to co-ordinate the Sanctuary Scheme in Waverley using Government monies awarded under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to Waverley, to improve support to victims of domestic abuse.

Waverley represents the Surrey District and Borough Housing Needs managers on the Surrey-wide Domestic Abuse Task and Finish Group and the Surrey Domestic Abuse Management Board.

### **Ukraine, Afghanistan and Syria crises**

Over recent years Waverley has played its part in the UK's assistance to households displaced as a result of conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan and more recently, Ukraine.

In regard to Ukraine, help was first offered by local Waverley households volunteering to accept Ukrainian nationals into their homes. However, as the crisis has continued, it has not always been possible for Ukrainian households to continue to remain with their local hosts. To respond to this, Waverley set up a Resettlement Team to either match households to alternative host families or to try secure private rented accommodation using Government funding for upfront costs.

In a number of instances where Notice periods are tight or where there has been a total and irretrievable breakdown in the hosting arrangements, emergency hotel accommodation has been provided.

The work of the Resettlement Team has been crucial in providing a first preventative response for Ukrainian household faced with threatened with homelessness.

The Resettlement Team also supports Syrian households previously assisted with accommodation by Waverley and is currently helping with the resettlement of some Afghan households who are being required to leave bridging hotels.

To help with Afghan and Ukrainian resettlement, Waverley has successfully bid for monies under the Government's Local Authority Housing Fund to purchase 11 properties to add to its stock. This helps ensure that Waverley's help to Ukrainian and Afghan families does not disadvantage local households who already face long waits for scarce social housing and additionally helps prevent homelessness and the demands placed on the over-stretched Housing Options Services

### **Household Support Fund**

With the challenge of the cost of living crisis the Government announced that it will continue to support households across England by providing an additional £842 million in funding. These funds were allocated to individual local authorities to be distributed in line with Government guidance.

The Household Support Fund helps eligible households with the cost of essentials such as food, energy and water bills and wider essentials such as clothing and white

goods. Applications are limited to one per household and the applications can be made to Waverley's communities team or other partners such as Citizens Advice South West Surrey. By helping households with day to day living costs the Household Support Fund indirectly helps prevent homeless by enabling households to have a greater chance of continuing meet their rental or mortgage obligations.

### **Discretionary Housing Payments**

Each year Waverley receives from the Government a grant to award Discretionary housing payments to help assist households eligible for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit, meet their housing costs. The payment requests from resident are assessed by Waverley's Housing Benefit Team. As noted earlier, Waverley Housing Options Team will advise clients to apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment if they need help to secure a deposit for private rented accommodation or to make up shortfall in rent between what they are entitled to through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit and the actual rent chargeable by their landlord. In 22-23 Waverley made 152 awards spending £107,476 – 95% of its Government grant of £113,643.

### **Private Sector Housing Team**

The Council's private sector housing team play an important role in preventing homelessness and ensuring that private sector landlords fulfil their obligations to provide a safe home for their tenants. The team can intervene when tenants report disrepair issues that are not properly addressed by their landlords, as well as in instances of landlord harassment or illegal eviction.

### **Surrey Adults Matter and Bridge the Gap**

Surrey Adults Matter (SAM) is a team set up by Surrey County Council with the aim of improving the lives of adults with severe multiple dis-advantage. Multiple dis-advantage is defined as someone dealing with 3 of the following: Contact with the criminal justice system, mental health issues, substance misuse (drugs or alcohol) homelessness/at risk of homelessness and domestic abuse/violence.

The SAM team liaise with partners such as housing, the police, health, social care, probation and the charity and voluntary sector. Clients accepted onto the programme are supported by multi agency group of professionals a 'Team around the Person'. Regular meetings with the client and their chosen advocate look at what is going well, what is not going well and what needs to change or improve, and an action plan is developed.

The SAM support has been supplemented by the Bridge the Gap service following a successful £3 million bid by Surrey County Council from the national Changing Futures fund. Under Bridge the Gap local third sector providers such as Guildford Action and Catalyst provide clients with support regarding physical and mental care, substance use and harm reduction, help with benefit application and form filling and referrals to other pertinent services.

Whilst SAM/Bridge the gap clients are not always homeless or threatened with homeless often they can be as a result of the their behaviours or addictions negatively impacting their ability to retain accommodation. Working with Waverley's

Rough Sleeper outreach and support officers the services can mean the difference between clients retaining or losing their accommodation.

Whilst recognising the value of this more intensive support, the significant challenge is the services are over-subscribed meaning new referrals cannot benefit from the service until other cases can be closed. A review is taking place of the current case load to ensure that current cases still need the level of support and explore what cases can be closed without jeopardising clients' health and wellbeing and successful sustainment of tenancies.

### **Other services**

The above are just a few of the advice and support services available to customers who are homeless or threatened with homeless in Waverley and Surrey. Others will include statutory services such as Adult Social Care, Childrens Services, hospitals, Drug/Alcohol services (i-Access) Community Mental Health Services, GP services, probation and the police.

Voluntary or charitable services include Guildford Action, Catalyst Support, SSAFA, food banks, furniture recycling services, faith groups, Domestic Abuse Outreach and Refuge services etc.

Help for homeless households is also maximised by partnerships and agreed protocols between Waverley and other Surrey districts and boroughs with each other and with other services. These include: the Mental Health and Housing Protocol, 16-17 year-old Joint Housing Protocol and the Care-Leavers Joint Housing Protocol. Waverley's representation at the bi monthly Surrey Housing Needs Managers meetings not only contributes to the negotiation of these Surrey wide agreements but also provide opportunities for partnership working and bids for targeted Government funding. One fairly recent example of the latter is the successful Surrey-wide bid for Government monies to help rehouse ex-offenders under the Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (AFEO) Scheme.

## 10. Case Studies

Whilst the statistics and facts and figures help give an idea of trends and demand on services it is vital not to lose sight of the human element and of the interventions that need to be made before homelessness can be prevented or crisis situations stabilised. The following case studies give a flavour of the work carried out by the Housing Options Service to prevent homelessness:

### Case Study 1

This first case study was published in 'Voice of the sector: supporting rough sleepers at a time of national crisis'. ([Voice of the sector: supporting rough sleepers at a time of national crisis | Local Government Association](#)).

Prior to COVID-19 Waverley had been exploring ways to manage the challenge of having properties subject to future demolition standing empty and resulting in loss of rental income. A solution we developed was the introduction of a 'Guardian Property Scheme' where some council employees who were struggling with accommodation issues could potentially act as property guardians.

With the onset of COVID-19 and 'Everyone In' we decided to adapt this model to see if some rough sleepers who were engaging positively with the housing options team during 'Everyone In', would be suitable to be offered guardian licences. In some ways this was a bit like a 'housing first' model with support from the local housing officer. Since the pandemic four homeless clients have been assisted in this way and have sustained their accommodation. The value of the scheme is it gives a further period for a client to demonstrate that they can sustain accommodation and start to rebuild their lives.

The following is the case study of one such client (referred to as 'X'):

X has been street homeless for many years and has an addiction to drugs. At the beginning of the pandemic, he was helped into a local hotel as part of 'Everyone In' alongside his pet dog. As the hotel was around 60 miles from Waverley, X left the accommodation after a few weeks, partly due to his addiction. However, he did continue to engage with the housing team and was up front and honest about his challenges.

Given X's engagement we agreed to move him and his dog into a guardian property in May 2020. X has never had to deal with bills and Housing Benefit, so the housing team helped set him up with Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit and a referral to the local drug treatment service.

The local housing officer has helped support X to manage important post and deal with bills including gas and electric meter readings. X has struggled to set aside money for bills and the housing officer is now helping to set up direct payments from his benefits to help him.

X engages well with his neighbours and the community, including putting elderly neighbours' bins out for them. He has a part time job as a gardener and has reduced

his drug use (he did try a medical substitute, but this didn't work for him). He has applied for a bank account and passport now that he has an address.

The property has been kept in good condition and X has proven that although he has an addiction, he can maintain a tenancy/licence with the right support in place.

As a result of the above and given his current property is due to be demolished, we have agreed to offer X another property in the same area. He will move on a 12-month licence and if all is good after the 12 months, we will offer him an 'introductory tenancy' with ongoing support from the housing officer.

X has been made aware of this move and said:

**“I am very excited to be able to move across to the other property. I will be forever grateful for the help and support I received. This time last year I was on the streets and out in the cold; Waverley Borough Council have saved my life and given me and my dog a home. I feel very grateful for the council giving me the opportunity and believing in me.”**

## **Case study 2**

Y called Housing Options for advice on how to complete a Housing Register form. However, it became apparent that Y needed a lot of advice regarding income, accommodation, and employment.

Y was 69 years old and lived in tied accommodation link to his job. He had not worked for over 2 years having developed a debilitating medical condition that severely affected his mobility.

His Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) had ended 18 months earlier and had been living off savings since then. Y had very little money left and had not sought any advice regarding this, believing that he was not entitled to anything.

His employers had been going through a process to terminate his employment and had now given him notice that he would be 'dismissed', a short time in the future.

Y had been told that he would be informed separately about when he would need to leave his tied accommodation, but every indication was that they would let him stay there a short time following his employment termination.

During lengthy discussions with the Specialist Housing Options Officers, Y was advised about benefit entitlement, housing processes and how he urgently needed to be making applications to secure an income which was crucial for his future housing. Y was not digitally knowledgeable and had no access to the internet.

An urgent appointment was made for him to attend CAB to start the process of applying for Universal Credit and Pension Credits.

Y received regular progress calls from the team and he engaged with the CAB in making benefit applications and obtained necessary paperwork from his employers.

However, as time went on, it was apparent that Y was prone to procrastination and struggled to motivate himself to complete very important tasks. He advised that he had not gone to his next appointment with CAB, seemingly making excuses for not having all the evidence required.

Y was offered home visits to assist which were declined. The team suspected this was due to embarrassment about the condition of his home and it was also becoming apparent that he had an alcohol issue. The team were concerned that they had stopped getting responses to phone calls and when Y did pick up, he procrastinated about his actions.

On a support visit arranged to collect the medical form and housing registration forms, the forms had still not been completed. Y explained that he had been in a residential alcohol treatment setting previously which he was reluctant to disclose on the forms. He was reassured that this was nothing new for the team to deal with – the important thing being that the Council had all the information we needed to assist a client in the best way. This conversation also enabled greater understanding of Y's erratic communication and the situation regarding his job.

When asked about his current drinking, Y said that he had reduced his consumption considerably but that he drank when things were difficult and he was stressed.

CAB had established that Y was eligible for state pension and that he would be getting a letter to confirm this. Once he received the letter, the CAB advisor had told him to go back to them for more assistance.

Y advised the team that he had almost finished the housing and medical application forms and said he had envelopes and stamps ready.

As the forms were not received a further visit was made. Y said that he had had a few bad days of feeling low, was in pain with his legs and the delay in planned surgery really seemed to be affecting him. Asked whether had finished completing the housing application form and the medical form he said he was still struggling to complete it, pledging to do so that week.

For the next two weeks the team were unable to get through to Y and his phone was always switched off. A further visit to the property was made and Y answered the door. He apologised for his unkempt appearance. Asked again for the housing application form he said he had got a neighbour to put it in the post for him before the weekend. He said his phone was in the mobile phone shop being fixed because it was broken and that he was due to go and collect it.

He said he lacked motivation and was getting ulcers on his feet - he had been to the GP, and they had suggested some medication.

Further calls were made as the forms had still not been received. Y said that the neighbour he had given them to post had left them in his car and forgotten about them. Y assured the team that he now had the forms back and was going out to post them though the team suspected he may have had the forms all along but was embarrassed to admit that he had still not completed them.

In a further call Y confirmed he had seen his consultant who had looked at his ulcers and pushed for surgery in a couple of weeks. The consultant told him that the surgery would require someone to look after him afterwards and that while in hospital they would be making a Social Services referral. Unfortunately, they then also discovered a more serious medical issue which now required surgery more urgently than his legs.

Y called to let the team know that his surgery had been brought forward to that week - and that he would be in hospital for at least 5 days. He again assured the team that he had put the housing forms in the post, and it was agreed to catch up with him when he came out of hospital. The application forms were finally received and immediately processed.

Y called to say he had had his surgery and had already been sent home. He was distressed about this and felt that he was not ready to leave and could not walk properly. After being told that he would be seen by an OT and other clinical professionals, he was given a pair of crutches and sent home in a hospital car. Y also said that surgery for the more serious medical condition was deemed too much of a risk and they decided not to go ahead. Y had not been instructed about when to take the various medications he had been given and generally did not know what to do. Fortunately, his neighbours realised that he was home and had offered to go and get him food.

The team advised Y that he must phone his GP urgently, insist on an urgent appointment, and request a home visit or for a District Nurse or Paramedic to see him. He did as advised, and the GP gave him an urgent face to face appointment to which his neighbour had given him a lift. The GP apparently stated that their disappointment with the discharge from hospital and that no adult social care referral had been. The GP made a social care referral, tended to his ulcerated feet and arranged for the District Nurses to see him at home and to instruct him around his medication.

Permission was obtained from Y for the team to bid for social housing on his behalf each week and the team liaised with the Council's Homechoice team to give advanced notice of any suitable properties that would become available for him. Whilst an Adult Social Care referral had been made and Y had had an assessment, Y was confused as to what he had been told. The team contacted the social worker and it was confirmed that they did not consider Y to have social care needs and that he was able to meet his own needs according to their core assessment processes. When asked about assistance for Y to relocate when the time came for him to move and for assistance with the mobility to do so, the team were told that they did not have a remit for this.

A suitable ground floor Council property was sourced for Y and a specialist housing options officer attended the viewing along with Y and the Tenancy and Estates Officer. Y accepted the property but was very daunted by the prospect of moving and all that this entailed and was overwhelmed by this. The team outlined to Y the tasks that needed to be done and helped him work through these to enable him to move. The team helped source removals with a reliable company that was used to dealing with vulnerable people. They assisted with a Surrey Crisis loan application for furniture and white goods, liaised with the Council's Tenancy and Estates, Rents

and Council tax teams and the DWP to ensure that Y's financial situation was secure and his rent would be paid.

Once settled, further enquiries were made regarding aids and adaptations to the property for grab rails and a hard standing for the mobility scooter that Y had acquired.

Y is now settled in secure long-term accommodation that meets his needs in the community in which he is familiar and with the relevant benefits in place. He is now able to continue to have his ongoing medical needs addressed with his local surgery and is in a positive place. The team have stepped back but he calls occasionally to let us know how he doing.

### **Case study 3**

Z was one of Waverley's long standing rough sleepers due numerous evictions from supported accommodation over the years brought about by behaviour issues. Following another homeless application and a number of initial refusals to move to the York Road Project in Woking (YRP), Z finally agreed to do so. However, despite an initial positive start at YRP, his behaviour resulted in his eviction. Z was then placed in emergency B&B by drug/alcohol services. However, his presenting needs and history meant there was a strong possibility that supported housing providers the Council has access to would be unwilling to assist again. There was also a strong likelihood that his stay at emergency B&B could end prematurely. Whilst Z had approached Waverley as homeless, given the circumstances surrounding him losing his last settled address with another supported housing provider, there was a strong possibility that following assessment, he would be considered to be intentionally homelessness.

Z's case was referred to the multi-agency Surrey Adult Matters/Bridge the Gap service for those suffering multiple dis-advantage. He was accepted by the service and support was provided to Z by Guildford Action, whilst Waverley assessed his homeless application and looked, with Surrey CC, for alternative accommodation options. After three months, during which Z cooperated with the support from Guildford Action, Waverley was able to refer him to a purpose built, self-contained rough sleeper support accommodation, with additional support provided by Waverley's Rough Sleeper Support worker. This new accommodation was provided as a result of Waverley's successful bid under the Government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme.

Despite a finding of intentional homelessness, upheld following a statutory review, Waverley exercised its discretion to allow Z to continue to live in the accommodation as he was positively engaging with the support provided. Following Z successfully sustaining his tenancy for a year, Waverley was able to prioritise his housing application to move on to long term Council accommodation through its Housing Register. Z bid successfully and has moved to a Council tenancy. Such an outcome would have been impossible without the extra support given to Z that helped him develop the necessary skills and confidence to live independently and the availability

of new accommodation developed specifically for rough sleepers or those under threat of rough sleeping.

These cases give flavour of the work carried out by Waverley's Housing Options Service to prevent homelessness and highlight the extent of Officer engagement to ensure a successful homelessness prevention or relief outcome. It can be the case that despite officers' and partner agencies' best efforts; interventions fail due to chaotic behaviour, mental health difficulties, drug/alcohol or an unwillingness from customers to co-operate. Sometimes it takes a number of interventions from Housing Options Officers and other agencies before customers fully engage and co-operate with the help that is on offer.

## 11. Consultation

Waverley has consulted on its homelessness strategy with a number of statutory and voluntary partners including the following:

- Adult Social Care
- Surrey Childrens Services
- Citizens Advice South-West Surrey
- Supported housing providers
- Probation
- Mental Health Services
- Ethical Lettings
- South West Surrey Domestic Abuse Outreach Service
- Single Housing Panel
- Housing and Housing Options Service staff

In previous years Officers have arranged an annual homelessness forum to consult on the strategy and update on homelessness trends. Sadly, the service demands on Waverley's team and the staff from other organisations, has meant thus has not be possible for a few years. Hopefully the forum can be revived in future years.

Since the new homelessness legislation introduced in 2018, the Council has not been issuing customer surveys. This is partly due to the fact that these surveys were rarely completed and returned by customers but also due to the fact that the whole process and time of engagement between customers and officers under the new legislation is now so much greater. This means that the administrative burden on both customers and Officers, such as in to regard verification of documents, is also considerably greater.

However, one of the benefits of this increased engagement between officers and customers, in addition to looking at the reasons for homelessness decision review requests and complaints and compliments; is the ability to still capture customer feedback and concerns.

The themes that are apparent do reflect the concerns raised by customers in the last strategy e.g. the need for more social housing to help reduce the time waiting to bid successfully for social homes and the challenges in securing and sustaining private rented accommodation within the housing allowance rates, which means households often cannot be assisted with accommodation in locations in Waverley that they would ideally like. The Strategy highlights the Council's commitment to continue to develop additional social housing itself, as well as working in partnership with housing associations to help enable the development of more homes. The Strategy highlights the benefits of the Council's partnership with local lettings agencies and with Ethical Lettings to try to maximise access to affordable private rented accommodation. The Action Plan also recommends exploring the possibility of re-introducing customer surveys if this can be done in a manner that can effectively be managed by both customers and the Council, within financial and time constraints.

**Outcomes from Consultation and issues raised at regularly partnership and staff meetings:**

1. Concern in regard to the national rise in homelessness and within Surrey and the budget and service challenges faced by statutory and voluntary services.
2. The need for more social housing and supported housing.
3. Concern regarding the freezing of Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates and the particular challenge faced by people reliant on benefits seeking to privately rent in Farnham, due to Farnham being included in the lower Blackwater Valley LHA rate.
4. The difficulties in accessing suitable supported accommodation for those with higher support needs but who don't meet the eligibility criteria for statutory help from Adult Social Care or the CMRHS.
5. Concern in regard to the reduction in Waverley's Government Homelessness Grant from the year 25-26 onwards.
6. Faced with the upturn in approaches and complexity of cases, the need for additional Housing Options Officers so cases can be effectively managed and homelessness prevented.
7. The need for different agencies to have an improved understanding of the remits and thresholds of each other's services so clients are not given unrealistic expectations as to the help that can be provided.
8. The need to maintain training for staff on important issues such as safeguarding and domestic abuse.
9. The value of working collaboratively and in partnership and explore the possibility of having an annual partnership event to discuss homelessness in Waverley, in addition to the regular liaison meetings.

When dealing with a complaint submitted by an advocate for a homeless client in 2023, concern was raised by the fact that Waverley no longer has temporary accommodation in the Borough. This concern was taken into account when drafting the temporary accommodation section of the Homelessness review.

The following chapter highlights in greater detail some of the Risks, Challenges and Opportunities highlighted following the consultation and review process.

## 12. Challenges, Risks and Opportunities

Following the consultation and review of services, the following challenges, risks and opportunities have been identified:

- a) The fact that homelessness numbers for all household groups nationally and in Surrey and Waverley are on an upward trend and the challenge this represents. Waverley is on course to have the highest number of homeless presentations in 23-24 since the change in legislation in 2018. The previous highest number was 22-23.
- b) The challenge of having sufficient staff and the difficulties in recruiting, training and retaining enough staff in order to manage the increased work-load, complexity of cases and expectations from customers.
- c) The challenge of providing the necessary well-being support to staff who can adversely impacted in trying to help clients who struggle to engage in a reasonable manner as a result of their own difficult or traumatic circumstances. Dealing with verbal aggression and safeguarding concerns in addition to an increased workload, inevitably takes its toll on staff wellbeing.
- d) The very significant risk that unless the Government homelessness grant formula is changed, Waverley's Homelessness grant will reduce from £622,744 in 24-25 to £346,380. If the amount is not amended or replaced with funding by Waverley, the Council will face a massive impact on staffing and provision of accommodation that will inevitably mean numbers having to be placed into emergency accommodation will increase with the resulting cost and reputational impact on the Council. Waverley is disadvantaged by the fact that Councils with already high temporary accommodation numbers and expenditure may be able to re-invest any savings from any increased homelessness prevention success into their Housing Options Services. However, relative to the majority of Councils, Waverley has very low numbers and expenditure in regard on emergency accommodation costs and this means the Council's ability to fund on going staffing and accommodation costs will be much more challenging.
- e) The risk that as a result of higher interest rates, the already shrinking private rented sector will become even smaller as private landlord's face mortgage increases that make the continued letting of their properties unviable.
- f) The challenge of steadily rising private rent levels coupled, with frozen Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates meaning benefit dependent households are priced out of accommodation. This affects both existing tenants facing unaffordable rent increases as well as the Council's ability to help those needing to access private rented accommodation to avoid homelessness and having to be housed in emergency accommodation. If the LHA rate remains frozen there is inevitably a smaller pool of affordable private rented properties available for housing benefit/UC dependent clients.

- g) The continued challenge faced by people reliant on benefits seeking to privately rent in Farnham, due to Farnham being included in the lower Blackwater Valley LHA rate.
- h) The challenge that as a result of higher thresholds for clients to access support from social services and mental health services and the funding and staffing challenges these services have, Officers routinely face situations where safeguarding concerns are very evident when they are trying to assist applicants. This increasingly means more and more time is taken in reporting and trying to mitigate these concerns, resulting in reduced staffing capacity to effectively prevent and relieve homelessness. This also has an impact on the wellbeing of staff given the emotional impact of dealing with safeguarding concerns.
- i) The ongoing impact of the Ukrainian war. This affects not only the number of Ukrainian households potentially approaching Waverley as homeless following their stay with sponsors ending but also economic impacts in regard to the cost of living and peoples' ability to sustain their current housing. Other conflicts have also increased demand on Waverley's (and other Councils') housing services such as the Syrian and Afghan crises.
- j) The ongoing risk of increased numbers of homeless households being placed in private rented accommodation in Waverley by neighbouring boroughs and by London Boroughs. We are already aware of households being placed in Waverley by a London Borough and given the extra pressures London Boroughs continue to face, the competition to secure affordable private rented properties will increase. It is a sobering thought that a Surrey Borough on the outskirts of London had very similar low numbers in temporary accommodation to Waverley in 2011. Now this Council has numbers above 100. This will partly be the result of London Boroughs widening their search to secure private rented properties in neighbouring Surrey Boroughs. This makes it much more difficult for the Surrey Boroughs and Districts to secure accommodation and drives up prices and costs of trying to incentivise private landlords to continue to let to welfare benefit dependent tenants.
- k) The opportunities the Council has in developing new affordable housing and building on its success in this area to date.
- l) The opportunities to work collaboratively and innovatively with other Councils and statutory and voluntary partners as we all seek sustainable solutions to meet the increased demand on homelessness services. The collaboration with Guildford may provide opportunities to jointly commission services and share best practice.

Following feedback from Waverley's consultation with partners and staff and the Review of homeless services in Waverley, five priorities have been identified to form the basis of Waverley's Homelessness Strategy Action Plan:

- Rough Sleeping Interventions
- Prevention

- Accommodation
- Support
- Partnership Working

## **1. Rough Sleeping interventions**

The successful for bids for Government Rough Sleeping Initiative funding has had a transformative effect on Waverley's engagement with, and support of rough sleepers. The action plan outlines a range of measures to build on this positive work.

## **2. Homeless Prevention**

Successful homelessness prevention has been the cornerstone of the Waverley's housing options approach and success in keeping number having to be laced in temporary accommodation to a minimum. The Action Plan therefore recommends maintaining and building on previous successes in this area. This includes developing our partnership approach in tackling homelessness and continuing to use budgets flexibly on a 'spend to save' basis to prevent homelessness where it is in the Council's and the applicant's interests to do so. Key to ensuring homeless prevention will be to ensure sufficient funding to employ and train enough staff and to commission accommodation options.

## **3. Accommodation**

Among the contributory factors for homelessness is a lack of affordable housing in Waverley. As noted above, Waverley is one of the most sought after and expensive places to live in the UK, which means that house prices and private rent levels are often beyond the reach of many people, particularly those reliant on welfare benefits. Waverley has an excellent track record in pioneering new initiatives to maximise access to private rented accommodation on behalf its customers. The Action Plan therefore recommends that such a proactive approach is continued. In addition, the Council will continue to work with its partners to maximise the availability of existing social and supported housing and also work to develop or commission/enable additional units of such accommodation.

## **4. Support**

One of the key ways to prevent homelessness is to ensure that households receive the necessary support to enable them to maintain their tenancy. This can range from help with filling in forms to claim benefits or setting up utility bills to negotiation and advocacy to engage with landlords and social care and health professionals. Support to help customers retain existing accommodation avoids additional expense for households and the Council in finding and securing alternative accommodation and it also prevents disruption to social, education and employment networks. However, even if retaining existing accommodation is not possible, it is crucial that any alternative private rented accommodation starts on the right footing, particularly as the loss of private rented accommodation is the main cause of homelessness locally and nationally.

Good housing support is key to this particularly given the complexities and vulnerabilities of many homeless customers. Support can take many forms such as expertise and guidance on welfare benefits and debt to outreach support to rough sleepers and families.

## **5. Partnership Work**

In the context of a very challenging financial climate for statutory and voluntary services, it has become even more important to look creatively at how the Council and its partners can maximise diminishing resources by working together. Waverley's success in maintaining its excellent homeless prevention performance over the previous 5 years has been based on building on existing partnership work and developing new partnerships. The Council's partnership with Ethical Lettings, letting agents and private landlords has been key to providing as wide a possible access to affordable private sector properties. Developing a partnership with the York Road Project in Woking has also been key in improving its assistance to single people and rough sleepers.

The Council continues to fund Citizens Advice Waverley (Now South West Surrey CAB) in its work in providing independent advocacy and advice on the full range of issues facing Waverley residents such as welfare benefits, debts, housing, relationship breakdown, employment issues etc.

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# Appendix 2

## Equality Impact Assessment Form



<b>Section 1 - What is the policy or activity trying to achieve?</b>	
Describe the policy/strategy/procedure/function which is the subject of this impact assessment.	Waverley's Homelessness strategy 2023-2028
Name and telephone number of officer completing assessment	Michael Rivers 01482 523013
Date completed	31/10/23
What outcomes are wanted from this policy/activity, what are you trying to achieve?	
The Homeless strategy outlines the steps the Council will take (with the help of its statutory and voluntary partners) and its partners, to fulfil its statutory duty to prevent and relieve homelessness	
Who is affected by this policy/activity?	Primarily Households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness within 56 days and those who may become homeless in the future.
Who are the main people involved in this activity?	Housing Options Service
Is the responsibility for the proposed policy/activity shared with another department, authority or organisation? If so, what responsibility and with whom is it shared?	Primarily housing options service but other services in Waverley are also involved e.g. benefits, other Waverley housing services, private rented sector team, community safety, finance, children's services, adult social care, citizens advice, supported housing providers.

<b>Section 2 - Information Gathering and Consulting Stakeholders</b>	
Do you have any monitoring data available on the number of people (from protected characteristic groups) who are using or are potentially impacted upon by your policy/activity?	<p>Yes</p> <p>The Council submits detail homelessness data to the Government through Delta each quarter and this is collated by DLUHC and includes details in regard to household type, employment status, ethnicity, reasons/causes of homelessness and support needs. This data is captured in the Review and Strategy documents and have been shared with stakeholders.</p> <p>All Waverley residents have the potential to be impacted by this strategy. Evidence shows that people from certain protected characteristic groups are statistically more likely to be at risk of</p>

	homelessness e.g. women are much more likely to be victims of domestic abuse and at risk of homelessness as a result.
If monitoring has NOT been undertaken or information is not available, specify the arrangement you intend to make; if not please give a reason for your decision.	
What research or consultation has been undertaken to understand the impacts of the strategy/policy/procedure/project/function?	The Council has shared the draft strategy with statutory and voluntary partners and relevant staff. One example of consultation feedback is the need for continued regular training on domestic abuse given it is the third highest cause of homelessness. Another is for different services to liaise with each other more in order to better understand each other's pressures and remits and so customer expectations can be realistically set and joint working maximised.

**Section 3 – Assess the Impact on Protected Characteristic Groups – if Louise was still here she would be asking why against each point, I don't know how they will be looked at now...**

<b>Sex</b>				
	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Women	x			Refuge accom for domestic abuse victims (men can be victims of domestic abuse but it remains that women are disproportionately affected).
	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Men		x		
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>				
	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Transgendered Men/Women	x			Additional self-contained refuge accommodation in Surrey better suited to meet needs of men and LGBTQ+ domestic abuse victims
<b>Race - The categories used in the Race section are those used in the 2001 census. Consideration should be given to the needs of specific communities within the broad categories.</b>				
	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact (it could disadvantage)</b>	Additional Comments
Asian		x		
Black		x		
Mixed race		x		
White		x		
Chinese		x		

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller		x		
Other racial or ethnic groups - specify		x		
<b>Disability</b> - Long term health impairment could include, mental health problems, asthma, heart conditions, chronic fatigue etc.				
	<b>Positive impact</b> (it could benefit)	Neutral	<b>Negative impact</b> (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Physical	x			People with disabilities are statistically less likely to maintain stable employment and as a result can be under increased threat of homelessness. Ongoing partnership meetings to discuss needs and safeguarding of vulnerable client groups.
Sensory	x			Ongoing partnership meetings to discuss needs and safeguarding of vulnerable client groups
Learning	x			Ongoing partnership meetings to discuss needs and safeguarding of vulnerable client groups
Long Term Health Impairment	x			Ongoing partnership meetings to discuss needs and safeguarding of vulnerable client groups
Mental health	x			Ongoing partnership meetings to discuss needs and safeguarding

				of vulnerable clients. Exploring options for increased accommodation provision.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>				
	<b>Positive impact (it could benefit)</b>	Neutral	<b>Negative impact (it could disadvantage)</b>	Additional Comments
Heterosexuals, lesbians, gay men and bisexuals	x			Additional self-contained refuge accommodation in Surrey better suited to meet needs of men and LGBTQ+ domestic abuse victims
<b>Age</b>				
	<b>Positive impact (it could benefit)</b>	Neutral	<b>Negative impact (it could disadvantage)</b>	Additional Comments
Older people		x		
Younger people and children	x			Whilst the Council has a duty to prevent homelessness for all household groups, the legislation places increased duties to provide emergency accommodation to certain groups, including households with dependent with children, care-leavers etc. Ongoing partnership meetings to discuss needs and safeguarding of vulnerable client groups.

**Religion or belief** – Faith or belief groups cover a wide range of groupings, the most common of which are Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and Sikhs. Consider faith or belief categories individually and collectively when considering positive and negative impacts.

Faith or belief groups	Positive impact (it could benefit)	Neutral	Negative impact (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
		x		

**Pregnancy and Maternity**

Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive impact (it could benefit)	Neutral	Negative impact (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
	x			Whilst the Council has a duty to prevent homelessness for all household groups, the legislation places increased duties to provide emergency accommodation to certain groups, including pregnant women.

**Marriage and Civil Partnership**

Marriage and Civil Partnership	Positive impact (it could benefit)	Neutral	Negative impact (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
		x		

**Other groups**

	Positive impact (it could benefit)	Neutral	Negative impact (it could disadvantage)	Additional Comments
Carers		x		
Socio-economic disadvantage	x			Household support fund/Discretionary housing payments/housing support
Veterans?	x			The triage process for homelessness specifically asks questions in regard to serving in the armed forces.

If you have indicated there is a potential negative impact on any group, are these intentional and of a high impact?  
**Intended** – i.e. can be justified in terms of legislation  
 e.g. concessionary fares for over 60s                      Yes       No  

Page 298



- [Government Equality Office: Equality Act guidance](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission; Public Sector Duty](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission: \*Protected Characteristics\*](#)

# Waverley Borough Council

**Report to:** Executive

**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Ward(s) affected:** Elstead and Pepper Harrow/ Godalming Central & Ockford

**Report of Director:** Place

**Author:** Louisa Blundell – Housing Development Manager

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**Executive Portfolio Holder/ Lead Councillor responsible:** Councillor Nick Palmer

**Email:** [nick.palmer@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:nick.palmer@waverley.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Part Exempt

**Key Decision:** Yes

## HRA New Build Housing Delivery – Elstead & Ockford Ridge

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an overview of the proposed new build housing schemes which are in a position to bring forward to planning and procurement of a build contractor with a view to enter into contract to deliver the new sustainable homes.
- 1.2 Seek member approval to the recommendations made for each project as set out in the business cases within Exempt Annexe 1 a & b) of this report and 2.2 and 2.3 below using the financial strategy approved by Full Council on 13 December 2022.

## **2. Recommendation to Executive**

2.1 It is recommended that the Executive consider this report, the information in Exempt Annexes 1 (a & b) and Appendices, and the recommendation made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Resources) as set out at 8.2 below and approve the recommendations as set out in the business cases in Exempt Annex 1 (a & b) of this report and 2.2 and 2.3 below.

### **2.2 Recommendations – Springfield, Elstead**

1. Progression with Option 4 to demolish the existing accommodation and re-develop a scheme that incorporates a variety of homes of varying sizes and tenures that can accommodate different individual and local housing need.
2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing (Delivery), to submit a planning application, including demolition to facilitate delivery of 26 new affordable homes.
3. Approve the sale of shared ownership homes to be delivered on the site at Springfield with the Executive Head of Housing Services in consultation with Portfolio Holders for Housing (Delivery and Operations) to approve the final terms of such sales having regard to market value and giving the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services authority to approve the final form of the sale agreements and any ancillary related legal agreement.
4. Delegate authority for Executive Head of Housing Services in consultation with Portfolio Holders for Housing (Delivery and Operations) to approve the future sale of percentage shares of shared ownership homes.
5. Delegate authority for the Executive Head of Housing Services in consultation with the Executive Head of Finance to review and change the tenure of an affordable shared ownership home to affordable rented should the housing market negatively impact the sale of these homes (subject to provision of full financial information and appraisal and that there is not a negative net revenue impact to the business plan for the scheme)

6. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Place to:
  - i. Approve the commencement of the tender process for the demolition and construction contracts
  - ii. Approve the appointment of contractors following the appropriate procurement subject to the appointment being within the identified budget
  - iii. Approve the use of pre contract agreements with the preferred contractor to enable the development of the project and authorise spend in accordance with the budget.
  - iv. Approve enter into the JCT Contracts (Works/Design and Build) for both demolition and delivery of new homes.
  - v. Approve the entering into any related contractual documentation (including collateral warranties, novation agreements, easements other ancillary agreements) relating to the delivery of the project
  - vi. Approve the entering into any agreement (including paying any necessary sums provided they are within the project budget) with any utility or related provider to ensure the connection, moving, management of any services to facilitate or deliver the project
  - vii. Approve entering into an agreement with Homes England should grant funding be secured from the Affordable Homes Delivery Programme (provided there is not a negative net revenue impact to the business plan for the scheme.)
7. Delegate authority to the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services to approve the final form of any legal agreements including those with utility companies and other statutory authorities.

It is recommended that Executive recommends to Full Council:

1. The approval of a project budget allocation of £10,074,928m, with the delegation to Executive to approve the final budget once tender returns for the construction contract have been received.

### 2.3 Recommendations – Ockford Ridge (Site F)

1. Progression with Option 2 to demolish the existing accommodation and re-develop a scheme that incorporates a variety of homes of varying sizes and tenures that can accommodate different individual and local housing need.
2. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing (Delivery), to submit a planning application, including demolition to facilitate delivery of 20 new affordable homes.
3. Approve the sale of shared ownership homes to be delivered on the site at Site F, Ockford Ridge with the Executive Head of Housing Services in consultation with Portfolio Holders for Housing (Delivery and Operations) to approve the final terms of such sales having regard to market value and giving the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services authority to approve the final form of the sale agreements and any ancillary related legal agreement.
4. Delegate authority for Executive Head of Housing Services in consultation with Portfolio Holders for Housing (Delivery and Operations) to approve the future sale of percentage shares of shared ownership homes.
5. Delegate authority for the Executive Head of Housing Services in consultation with the Executive Head of Finance to review and change the tenure of an affordable shared ownership home to affordable rented should the housing market negatively impact the sale of these homes (subject to provision of full financial information and appraisal and provided there is not a negative net revenue impact to the business plan for the scheme)
6. Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Place to:
  - a. Approve the commencement of the tender process for the demolition and construction contracts
  - b. Approve the appointment of contractors following the appropriate procurement subject to the appointment being within the identified budget
  - c. Approve the use of pre contract agreements with the preferred contractor to enable the development of the project and authorise spend in accordance with the budget

- d. Approve entering into the JCT Contracts (Works/Design and Build) for both demolition and delivery of new homes.
  - e. Approve the entering into any related contractual documentation (including collateral warranties, novation agreements, easements other ancillary agreements) relating to the delivery of the project.
  - f. Approve the entering into any agreement (including paying any necessary sums provided they are within the project budget) with any utility or related provider to ensure the connection, moving, management of any services to facilitate or deliver the project.
  - g. Approve entering into an agreement with Homes England should grant funding be secured from the Affordable Homes Delivery Programme (provided there is not a negative net revenue impact to the business plan for the scheme.)
7. Delegate authority to the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services to approve the final form of any legal agreements including those with Homes England, utility companies and other statutory authorities.

It is recommended that Executive recommends to Full Council:

- 1. The approval of a Site F project budget allocation of £7,270,379m, with the delegation to Executive to approve the final budget once tender returns for the construction contract have been received.
- 2. The approval of an additional and specific budget of £150k to facilitate the design of Site E Ockford Ridge by the appointed contractor for Site F.

**3. Reason(s) for Recommendation:**

- 3.1 The Waverley Corporate Strategy 2020-2025 sets out the Vision and Strategic Priorities for the Council. One of the strategic priorities is to 'provide good quality housing for all income levels.'
- 3.2 Build More, Build Better, Build for Life Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy 2022 – 2025 sets out the Council's commitment to build

homes to buy or rent for households from all income levels. The strategy has been supported by evidence studies including the Waverley Housing Affordability Study 2021.

- 3.4 To seek ensure that the committee is up to date with the progress made with the next phase of delivery of affordable homes and request support for the development projects described in this report and Exempt Annexe 1 a – b as part of the council’s new affordable homes programme financed in compliance with the HRA Business Plan Strategic Review report and recommendations approved in December 2022.

#### **4. Exemption from publication**

- 4.1 Yes Part Exempt – Open Report / Exempt Annexe  
The content of the Annexes of this report is to be treated as exempt from Access to Information publication rules because information relating to financial or business affairs of any particular person (including authority holding that information) and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### **5. Purpose of Report**

- 5.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with an overview of the proposed new build housing schemes which are in a position to bring forward with business cases and support the delivery of new affordable homes to meet the local housing need.
- 5.2 The business case for each scheme is set out in Exempt Annexe 1 (a – b)
- 5.3 This report also seeks the relevant authorities and associated budgets required to progress with the delivery of these schemes, including submission of planning applications, detailed design and to enable the procurement of a build contractor.
- 5.4 A summary of budget requested for each scheme can be found in Exempt Annexe 2.

## **6. Strategic Priorities**

- 6.1 Affordable housing is central to community well-being. It is consistent with the Council's [Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2025](#), strategic priority to deliver 'good quality housing for all income levels and age groups' and 'effective strategic planning and development management to meet the needs of our communities.'
- 6.2 As set out in the Build More, Build Better, Build for Life, Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy 2022-2025, the Council is committed to build homes to buy or rent for households from all income levels. The Strategy sets out priorities and objectives for the development of new affordable homes by the Council and our partners for the next 3 years.
- 6.3 One of the actions within the Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy Action Plan is to deliver 15% of the new homes, 60 over the life of the strategy with the remaining 85% delivered by other registered providers. Another action is to introduce a rent cap for affordable rents set at 70% of market rent for 1 and 2 bed homes and 65% for 3 bed homes to reflect local income levels and affordability. The delivery of the new homes programme will increase the number of affordable homes available for those that are in housing need and registered on the Council's housing register or seeking to own their own home through purchase of a percentage share of a shared ownership home.
- 6.4 The schemes as set out in the business cases in Exempt Annexe 1 (a-b) aim to increase the number of affordable homes available for those that are in housing need and registered on the Council's housing register for homes for affordable and social rent together with those who are considering purchase of an initial share of a shared ownership home.

## **7. Background**

- 7.1 On 13 December 2022, Full Council considered and approved the HRA Business Plan Strategic Review Report and recommendations. At the same meeting officers proposed business cases for schemes

ready for Full Council approval under the new strategy. Continuing with the delivery of new homes through regeneration, this report proposes two schemes ready for Full Council approval to proceed under the adopted strategy. The detailed business case for each proposed scheme is set out in Exempt Annexes 1 (a-b) of this report.

## **8. Consultations**

- 8.1 Portfolio Holders for Housing (Delivery and Operations) and other members of the Executive have been briefed.
- 8.2 On 14 November 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Resources) considered and approved the recommendations set out in this report and following a vote the following recommendation was carried:

‘The Committee resolved to express concern as to whether this project is employing the correct methods of market valuation, whether a greater financial contingency is required, how cost overruns will be prevented and adequate value for money is being obtained.’

## **9. Key Risks**

- 9.1 Risk will be managed in accordance with the Council Risk Management Framework with consideration of the Council’s Risk Appetite Statement and risk domains.
- 9.2 Identification, assessment, and management of site-specific risks will be undertaken using the project risk register and management practice, including appropriate internal reporting should risks become issues.
- 9.3 The risk that a preferred contractor goes into administration either when in a pre-contract services agreement or in JCT Contract became an issue in one project. The risk of this can be assessed through thorough due diligence and financial assessment and mitigation

- actions should this happen when in contract through seeking a parent company guarantee and / or bond.
- 9.4 The cost over the Business Plan and over the life of the asset rent, maintenance and management cost increases, actual experience may be different to these assumptions and the impact will be on the net revenue position and mitigated where possible through the New Development Impact Reserve.
  - 9.5 Risk of the Right to Buy sale and loss of income to the business plan. Where the council has financed the property through borrowing, the asset could be lost before the debt is cleared. A debt repayment allowance is included within the Right to Buy retention calculation and the net debt impact will be managed through the New Development Impact Reserve.
  - 9.6 When a main contractor is appointed, they will be responsible for paying the sub-contractors, there is a risk that this may not happen. Mitigation measures implemented through the monitoring of work completed by the sub-contractors by the project quantity surveyor and a requirement for the main contractor to evidence payment.

## **10. Financial Implications**

- 10.1 Decisions made regarding budget to deliver the new build housing delivery programme will impact on the Council's financial resources as set out in this report. The details of the proposed financing of these schemes are detailed in Exempt Annexe 2 of the report. The impact on HRA business plan, NPV and payback period have all been considered in the viability assessments of these schemes, the details of this are also contained with Exempt Annexe 2.
- 10.2 Procurement of further consultancy services and contractor will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy, Contract Procedure Rules and approved delegations.

10.3 The Council commissioned Haverly Consulting Limited to undertake a development appraisal, value for money and benchmarking assessment of both schemes which concluded that the Council are using robust development assumptions that are in line with the sector comparison and market levels. This assessment can be found at Exempt Annexe 3 to this report.

## **11. Legal Implications**

11.1 The Council has functions to provide social housing and to build and develop these schemes. The individual projects are at various stages of the development cycle and accordingly the legal risks and elements with these projects is kept under review to ensure the Council's position is protected and appropriate advice and support is sought. The decision to approve the development of sites in this programme does not prejudice or determine the proper functions of the Council as Planning Authority or in any other regulatory function and appropriate approval and consideration under the relevant frameworks must be considered in light of those frameworks.

## **12. Human Resource Implications**

12.1 The projects within the next phase of the delivery programme can be delivered with staffing resource of the Housing Development Team and other council service areas who support the delivery together with the external specialist consultant teams.

## **13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

13.1 There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report. Equality impact assessments are carried out, when necessary, across the council to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

## **14. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

- 14.1 The New Build contribution to the Council's environmental and sustainability objectives include working with consultants to develop climate positive design and carbon off-set opportunities in materials used in construction.
- 14.2 The consultant and contractor shortlisting / tender process supports the Council's ambition of being carbon neutral by 2030. Tender criteria are used to enable the Council to take account of the qualitative, technical and sustainability aspects of the tender as well as price when evaluating and reaching a contract award decision.
- 14.3 Demolition contractors are required to operate in an environmentally responsible manner with a firm commitment to recycle and reclaim the maximum materials recovered during demolition and dismantling process.
- 14.4 Our build contractor appointment includes an assessment of responses in relation to minimise the carbon impact on delivery of the schemes with specific references to addressing their environmental impact, pre-construction activity, build and post construction phases and management of their supply chain.
- 14.5 Contractors are required to demonstrate areas of innovation that they have developed or suggest products and advise how they might be used in projects delivered with the council, having regard to the council's current Design Standards and Employers Requirements to deliver energy efficient and sustainable homes for existing and future tenants.
- 14.6 The Waverley Borough Council Housing Design Standards were reviewed by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Working Group and the resulting recommendations were formally adopted by the Executive in September 2021. The focus of the review was on opportunities and methods of delivery of carbon neutral / Passivhaus

homes and value for money. The homes included in the Council New Build Housing Delivery Programme will be net zero carbon in operation.

- 14.7 The Housing Development Team work with other teams to identify ways the delivery of the Council's new build and regeneration programme can support delivery of other elements of the Council's Climate Change and Sustainability Strategy and Strategic Carbon Neutrality Action Plan

## **15.0 Summary of Options**

- 15.1 Cease delivery of the pipeline of new build homes by the Council, however delivery of good quality affordable homes for local people in housing need is a strategic priority within the Council's Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2025 and commitment within the Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy 2022 – 2025 to deliver 60 new homes over the life of the strategy. Options for each of the schemes are set out in the individual business case for each scheme in Exempt Annexe 1a–b.

## **16. Conclusion**

- 16.1 The Executive are asked to consider report, and the recommendations made and exempt annexes to facilitate the delivery of 46 new homes and ensure that the Council continues to meet the strategic priorities of its Corporate Strategy 2020-2025 and commitments within the Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy 2022 - 2025.

## **Background Papers**

- 17.1 None

## **Exempt Annexes and Appendices**

- 18.1 Exempt Annexe 1a – Business Case, Springfield, Elstead and Appendix 1a Valuation Report & Appendix 2a Financial Viability Review
- 18.2 Exempt Annexe 1b – Business Case, Site F, Ockford Ridge, Godalming and Appendix 1b Valuation Report & Appendix 2b Financial Viability Review
- 18.3 Exempt Annexe 2 – Scheme Financial Analysis
- 18.4 Exempt Annexe 3 – Development Appraisal, Value for Money and Benchmarking Report

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Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	CK 25/10/23
Legal / Governance	RT 03/11/23
HR	-
Equalities	-
Lead Councillor	NP 26/10/23
CMB	17/10/23
Executive Briefing/Liaison	31/10/23
Committee Services	17/11

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# Waverley Borough Council

**Report to:** Executive

**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Ward(s) affected:** Godalming Central and Ockford

**Report of Director:** Place

**Author:** Louisa Blundell

**Tel:** 01483 523205

**Email:** [louisa.blundell@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:louisa.blundell@waverley.gov.uk)

**Executive Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Nick Palmer

**Email:** [nick.palmer@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:nick.palmer@waverley.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Part Exempt

**Key Decision:** Yes

## New Build Housing Delivery - Catteshall Lane, Godalming

### 1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek formal approval to enter into a legal agreements with the developer for the acquisition of the land and delivery of 12 new homes in Catteshall Lane, Godalming.
- 1.2 Members have already considered and approved the business cases for and delivery of these homes and full project budget at a meeting of Full Council on 13 December 2022. However, due to the time delay in securing the planning consent for the development the developer has sought an additional sum to reflect build cost inflation and

market conditions since the Council expressed an interest in this opportunity. Due to this an additional budget is required to ensure that the contingency is in place when we enter into legal agreement for the land and build of the 12 new homes. The scheme remains financially viable.

## **2.0 Recommendation to Executive**

2.1 It is recommended that the Executive consider the report and information within the Exempt Annexes and approves the recommendations below 2.2 (i-v)

### **2.2 Recommendations**

- i. Give delegated authority to the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services to approve the final form of any legal agreements and to Strategic Director (Place) to enter into these agreements with the developer.
- ii. Give delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Place) to approve pre legal agreements with the developer to enable the development of the project and authorise spend in accordance with the budget.
- iii. Give delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Place) to enter into any related contractual documentation (including collateral warranties or agreements) relating to the project.
- iv. Give delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Place) to enter into any ancillary agreements related to the project provided that these are within the project budget.
- v. Executive is asked to recommend to Full Council the approval of the allocation of an additional £276,342 budget to be met through a combination of capital receipts and borrowing.

## **3.0 Reason for Recommendations:**

3.1 The Executive and Full Council have previously approved the Business Case for this site and the recommended authority is required to enter into the legal agreements with the developer and approve additional

budget to facilitate delivery of the new homes on this site through these agreements. Through delivery of the project there may be a requirement to enter into project related contractual documents or ancillary agreements for example with utility companies and other statutory authorities.

- 3.2 The Waverley Corporate Strategy 2020-2025 sets out the Vision and Strategic Priorities for the Council. One of the strategic priorities is to 'provide good quality housing for all income levels.'
- 3.3 Build More, Build Better, Build for Life Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy 2022 – 2025 sets out the Council's commitment to build homes to buy or rent for households from all income levels. The strategy has been supported by evidence studies including the Waverley Housing Affordability Study 2021.
- 3.4 Delivery of 12 homes at Catteshall Lane, will support meeting these priorities and commitments.

#### **4.0 Exemption from publication**

- 4.1 Yes Part Exempt – Open Report / Exempt Annexe

#### **Note pursuant to Section 100B(5) of the Local Government Act 1972**

This report contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

#### **5.0 Purpose of Report**

- 5.1 To provide members with an update on the progress made with the acquisition of the 12 homes, the request for additional budget and

other recommendations including to enter into legal agreements to facilitate delivery of the 12 new homes.

## **6.0 Strategic Priorities**

- 6.1 Affordable housing is central to community well-being. It is consistent with the Council’s [Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2025](#), strategic priority to deliver ‘good quality housing for all income levels and age groups’ and ‘effective strategic planning and development management to meet the needs of our communities.’
- 6.2 This project aims to increase the number of affordable homes available for those that are in housing need and registered on the Council’s housing register.

## **7.0 Background**

- 7.1 Members have already considered the business case and supporting appendix for twelve new homes and approved the delivery of the homes and full project budget at a meeting of Full Council on 13 December 2022 however a summary of proposals for the scheme is set out below with further financial information in Exempt Annexe 1.

## **8.0 Housing tenure**

- 8.1 The affordable homes on the sites will be for rent at Waverley rent levels.

Property size	% Open market rent
6 x 1 bed	70
6 x 2 bed	70

## **9.0 Consultations**

- 9.1 The Portfolio Holders for Housing Operations and Delivery together with members of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee have considered the business case for the site prior to its consideration by Executive on 29 November 2022 and by full Council on 13 December 2022.
- 9.2 Portfolio Holders Housing (Delivery and Operations) and other members of the Executive have been briefed on the proposals within this report.
- 9.3 On 14 November 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Resources) considered and approved the recommendations set out in this report.

## **10.0 Key Risks**

- 10.1 If the Executive do not approve the recommendations made in this report, then the development of twelve homes will not be acquired by the Council and the developer would need to seek alternative expressions of interest from a registered provider and as a result delay delivery of these homes for those in housing need.
- 10.2 Delaying a decision to approve the recommendations will have additional cost implications as the developer is ready to mobilise subject to entry into legal agreement. It is therefore imperative that the agreements are signed as soon as we have the authorities in place.

## **11.0 Financial Implications**

- 11.1 The total budget approved for this development at full Council on 13 December 2022 was £2,845,500. The costs have now increased and a budget of £3,121,842 will be required. This is an increase of £276,342 which will be funded through a mixture of capital receipts and borrowing. Though the costs have gone up on this scheme overall viability has improved. We have reworked the viability assessments to take account of a change in the borrowing assumptions

considering the current market forecasts. This results in a favourable change in the viability of these schemes with NPV improving across the board as well as the revenue impact improving. This information can be found in Exempt Annexe 1.

- 11.2 The gross development value for the twelve homes has reduced slightly reflecting the current housing market conditions £3.877m.

## **12.0 Legal Implications**

- 12.1 Members have already considered the business case and approved the recommendations made at the meeting of the Council of 13 December 2022 however formal approval is needed to enter into the legal (land and build) agreements with the developer.
- 12.3 The delegations included in the report enable the delivery of these homes to be managed in an effective and coordinated way, having regard to the budget and strategic business case.

## **13.0 Human Resource Implications**

- 13.1 There are no significant human resource implications. Officers in the Housing Development Team have and will continue to liaise with the internal stakeholders including Home Choice and Property Services Teams prior to handover of the new flats.

## **14.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 14.1 There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report. Equality impact assessments are carried out, when necessary, across the council to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Service Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

## **15.0 Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

- 15.1 The construction of the new homes will take a fabric first approach which will be complemented through the installation of air-source heat pumps and potentially photo voltaic (PV) panels as bolt-on

technologies, to complement enhanced insulation (doors, windows, wall) measures, the fabric-first elements.

## **16.0 Summary of Options**

16.1 The options were proposed within the business case and covering report presented to members at Executive in November and Full Council in December 2022.

## **17.0 Conclusion**

17.1 The Executive and Full Council have previously approved the business case and budget for delivery of 12 homes at Catteshall Lane, Godalming. It is recommended that the Executive approve delegation to the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services approve the final form of legal agreements and to the Strategic Director (Place) to enter into these agreements for the delivery of these homes and other delegations as set out in 1 (i –v) of this report.

## **18.0 Annexes**

18.1 Exempt Annexe 1 – Housing Delivery Catteshall Lane Financial Analysis

18.2 Exempt Appendix 1 to Exempt Annexe 1 – Valuation Report

## **19.0 Background Papers**

19.1 HRA Business Plan Strategic Review Housing Delivery - Executive 29 November 2022

HRA Business Plan Strategic Review Housing Delivery - Full Council 13 December 2022

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<b>Service</b>	<b>Sign off date</b>
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Legal / Governance	RT 03/11/23
HR	-
Equalities	-
Lead Councillor	26/10/23
CMB	15/08/23
Executive Briefing/Liaison	31/10/23
Committee Services	17/11/23

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# Waverley Borough Council

**Report to:** Executive

**Date:** 28 November 2023

**Ward(s) affected:** Wheeler Street, Witley

**Report of Director:** Place

**Author:** Louisa Blundell

**Tel:** 01483 523205

**Email:** [louisa.blundell@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:louisa.blundell@waverley.gov.uk)

**Executive Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Nick Palmer

**Email:** [nick.palmer@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:nick.palmer@waverley.gov.uk)

**Report Status:** Part Exempt

**Key Decision:** Yes

## New Build Housing Delivery - Witley

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with details of and seek member approval to the acquisition of three new affordable homes through the S106 on a developer site at Wheeler Street, Witley.

### 2. Recommendation to Executive

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Executive consider this report, the information within the Exempt Annexe 1, and Appendices and approves the recommendations (2.1 i-iii & 2.2) made below.

- i. Give delegated authority to the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services to approve the final form of any legal agreements and to Strategic Director (Place) to enter the land and build agreements with the developer.
- ii. Give delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Place) to enter into any related contractual documentation (including collateral warranties or other agreements) relating to the project.
- iii. Give delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Place) to enter into any ancillary agreements related to the project provided that these are within the project budget.

2.2 It is recommended that Executive recommends to Full Council the approval of the allocation of a project budget of £818,253 to be met through a combination of capital receipts and borrowing.

### **3. Reason for Recommendations:**

3.1 The Waverley Corporate Strategy 2020-2025 sets out the Vision and Strategic Priorities for the Council. One of the strategic priorities is to 'provide good quality housing for all income levels.'

3.2 Build More, Build Better, Build for Life Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy 2022 – 2025 sets out the Council's commitment to build homes to buy or rent for households from all income levels. The strategy has been supported by evidence studies including the Waverley Housing Affordability Study 2021.

3.4 Delivery of 3 homes on the developer site at Wheeler Street, Witley will help meet local housing need and allocation of a budget by Full Council is required to achieve this.

### **4. Exemption from publication**

4.1 Yes Part Exempt – Open Report / Exempt Annex  
The content of the Annexes of this report is to be treated as exempt from Access to Information publication rules because information relating to financial or business affairs of any particular person

(including authority holding that information) and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **5.0 Purpose of Report**

5.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with details of and seek formal approval to the acquisition of three new homes through, S106 agreement on a developer site at Wheeler Street, Witley and as set out in the recommendations delegation of relevant associated authorities required to do this.

## **6.0 Strategic Priorities**

6.1 Affordable housing is central to community well-being. It is consistent with the Council's [Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2025](#), strategic priority to deliver 'good quality housing for all income levels and age groups' and 'effective strategic planning and development management to meet the needs of our communities.'

6.2 As set out in the Build More, Build Better, Build for Life, Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy 2022-2025, the Council is committed to build homes to buy or rent for households from all income levels. The Strategy sets out priorities and objectives for the development of new affordable homes by the Council and our partners for the next 3 years.

6.3 This project aims to increase the number of affordable homes available for those that are in housing need and registered on the Council's housing register.

## **7.0 Background**

7.1 The Council have acquired land and three new homes on a previous phase of the development of homes at Wheeler Street, Witley. The

homes delivered were well designed and finish at handover by Langham Homes.

- 7.2 Planning permission is in place for the second phase and an expression of interest made to the developer for the acquisition of land and delivery of three further homes in the second phase of this development was accepted by the developer.
- 7.3 The expression of interest was made by Waverley Borough Council subject to a number of conditions which are set out in the Business Case which is attached as Exempt Annexe 1 to this report.
- 7.4 The affordable homes on the site will be for rent at Waverley rent, 70% open market rent.

## **8.0 Consultations**

- 8.1 Portfolio Holders Housing (Delivery and Operations) and other members of the Executive have been briefed.
- 8.2 On 14 November 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Resources) considered and approved the recommendations set out in this report.

## **11.0 Financial Implications**

- 11.1 Decisions made regarding budget to acquire the land and new homes will impact on the Council's financial resources. Details of the proposed financing of this scheme and the impact on the HRA Business Plan, NPV and payback period are detailed in the business case attached as Exempt Annexe 1 of the report. All been considered in the financial viability assessment of the scheme and details of this are contained in Exempt Annexe 2 and also included in the Exempt Annexe 3 Development Appraisal, Value for Money Benchmarking Review.

11.2 Procurement of consultancy services will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and potential use of delegations.

11.3 The gross development value for the three homes is £1,080,000.

## **12.0 Legal Implications**

12.1 The Council's internal legal and procurement officers are providing support to the project in relation to procurement of consultancy services to ensure compliance with the Council's legal duties, applicable procurement law and the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules and review of the Heads of Terms and Land and Build agreements which were used for the previous acquisition of the three homes in Phase 1 of the Wheeler Street Development.

12.2 The delegations included in the report enable the project to be managed in an effective and coordinated way, having regard to the budget and strategic business case.

## **13.0 Human Resource Implications**

13.1 There are no significant human resource implications. Officers in the Housing Development Team have and will continue to liaise with the internal stakeholders including Home Choice and Property Services Teams prior to handover of the new flats.

## **14.0 Equality and Diversity Implications**

14.1 There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report. Equality impact assessments are carried out, when necessary, across the council to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Service Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

## **15.0 Climate Change/Sustainability Implications**

15.1 The developer has provided a copy of the Sustainability Plan for the development which covers sourcing of local materials and reduction of waste from material delivery; design including use of U-value

targets to reach human comfort and MVHR; construction including site waste segregation and target setting and tracking of water, electricity usage; primary heat source remains A rated boilers with heating and cooling MVHR, enhanced airtightness and insulation which will deliver a EPC A rated building.

## **16.0 Summary of Options**

16.1 The Council could have considered and declined the opportunity to acquire the three homes. Another registered provider could acquire, own and manage the homes, but as the Council already owns the other three affordable rented homes on the first phase of this development, does not currently have any developments in its programme and there is a local need for affordable housing in this area it was considered an opportunity worth expressing an interest in, subject to planning and the developer securing the land for delivery of the development.

## **17.0 Conclusion**

17.1 The Executive are asked to consider this report, exempt annexes and approve the recommendations made to facilitate the acquisition and delivery of 3 new homes.

## **18.0 Background Papers**

18.1 None

## **19.0 Annexes**

19.1 Exempt Annexe 1 – Business case Wheeler Street, Witley and Appendix 1 Valuation Report

19.2 Exempt Annexe 2 – Financial viability assessment (Haverly Consulting)

19.3 Exempt Annexe 3 – Development Appraisal, Value For Money Benchmarking Review (Haverly Consulting)

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Finance / S.151 Officer	18.09.23
Legal / Governance	03.11.23
HR	-
Equalities	-
Lead Councillor	26.10.23
CMB	19.09.23
Executive Briefing/Liaison	31.10.23
Committee Services	

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