

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 21 September 2021

A meeting of the above Committee will be held in the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa on Tuesday 21 September 2021, at 6.00pm and available for the public to watch via the Warwick District Council [YouTube channel](#).

Councillor Milton (Chair)

Councillor G Cullinan

Councillor V Leigh-Hunt

Councillor A Dearing

Councillor R Margrave

Councillor J Dearing

Councillor T Morris

Councillor O Jacques

Councillor P Redford

Councillor P Kohler

Councillor D Russell

Emergency Procedure

At the commencement of the meeting, the emergency procedure for the Town Hall will be announced

Agenda

1. Apologies & Substitutes

- (a) to receive apologies for absence from any Councillor who is unable to attend; and
- (b) to receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, notice of which has been given to the Chief Executive, together with the name of the Councillor for whom they are acting.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare the existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

Declarations should be disclosed during this item. However, the existence and nature of any interest that subsequently becomes apparent during the course of the meeting must be disclosed immediately. If the interest is not registered, Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

Members are also reminded of the need to declare predetermination on any matter.

If Members are unsure about whether or not they have an interest, or about its nature, they are strongly advised to seek advice from officers prior to the meeting.

3. Minutes

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 10 August 2021. **(Pages 1 to 4)**

4. Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Cabinet

To consider a report from Democratic Services.
(Pages 1 to 3 and Appendices 1 & 2)

5. Briefing Note on the Park Exercise Policy and Permit Scheme

To consider a briefing note from Cultural Services. **(Pages 1 to 6)**

6. HMO Licensing & Planning Permission Effectiveness Review

To consider a report from Housing Services. **(Pages 1 to 5)**

7. Update on Joint Work with SDC

To consider a report from the Chief Executive. **(Pages 1 to 5)**

8. Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential Items and Reports) – Thursday 23 September 2021

To consider the non-confidential items on the Cabinet agenda which fall within the remit of this Committee. The only items to be considered are those which Committee Services have received notice of by 9.00am on the morning after Group meetings.
(Circulated Separately)

9. Public & Press

To consider resolving that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs 1,2 & 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

10. Cabinet Agenda (Confidential Items and Reports) – Thursday 23 September 2021

To consider the confidential items on the Cabinet agenda which fall within the remit of this Committee. The only items to be considered are those which Committee Services have received notice of by 9.00am on the morning after Group meetings.
(Circulated separately)

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456114

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 August 2021 in the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillor Milton (Chair); Councillors Jacques, Kennedy, Kohler, Leigh-Hunt, Morris, Nicholls, Redford and Russell.

Also Present: Councillor Cooke.

14. **Apologies and Substitutes**

- (a) apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Dearing and Margrave; and
- (b) Councillor Kennedy substituted for Councillor A Dearing and Councillor Nicholls substituted for Councillor Cullinan.

15. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

16. **Minutes**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 6 July 2021 were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

17. **Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential items and reports) – Thursday 12 August 2021**

The Committee considered the following item which would be discussed at the meeting of the Cabinet on Thursday 8 August 2021.

Item 12 – Proposed Compulsory Purchase Order – Land at Kenilworth Wardens, Glasshouse Lane, Kenilworth

This report was called in to Overview & Scrutiny Committee to trigger debate on the wider policy situation of assessing deliverability of sites when they are allocated in the Local Plan, rather than making comment on the specific contents of the report in respect of the Land at Kenilworth Wardens.

Councillor Cooke, Portfolio Holder – Place & Economy and the Deputy Chief Executive, Andrew Jones answered questions and at the end of the debate, the Committee made the following recommendation to Cabinet in respect of the wider issue of deliverability:

That a report be produced identifying learning points from work on previous Local Plans and our current experience, and that this be fed into the ongoing work on the South Warwickshire Local Plan. Main areas of focus should be:

- Site deliverability
- Viability of development
- Resources available both at the District and County Councils

- Sustainability and how this addresses climate change

(Councillor Cooke left the meeting.)

18. **Update on Joint Work with SDC**

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive which set out the progress of the work being done to enable effective scrutiny of the proposals to achieve joint working with Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

Both WDC and SDC had agreed a vision to create a single statutory South Warwickshire Council covering all of the activities currently carried out by Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwick District Council by 1 April 2024.

Appendix 1 to the report detailed in diagrammatic format the arrangements for the programme organisation and governance. Appendix 2 to the report was a timetable detailing the steps and dates planned for the consultation up until 13 December in readiness for the meetings of both Councils that day to decide whether to submit a final business case to the Government for the authorisation to proceed with the merger of both Councils into a single authority.

In response to questions from Members, the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) explained that:

- The two Councils were currently focussing on merging services. The ICT implications of ensuring this would run smoothly was critical and complicated. Currently both Councils had their own systems in place. There would be changes in hardware and software required to pull all data into one place and for staff to be able to process business as one entity. Complications that could arise might be that each Council had different contractual arrangements in place for the systems it used and that would need to be sorted and this would have influence over when the merger in service could take place or if a workaround had to be found in the interim. These issues were expected but they were not necessarily easy to resolve.
- To minimise the expense of operating on one system, it was anticipated that when the licence/contract ended on one Council's system but the other Council's continued, it was anticipated that the data would all be migrated to the continuing system and therefore the only major additional cost would be the cost of migrating the data to the one system and that cost had already been anticipated in the Deloitte report. However, savings would then be made by using one system to offset the initial investment costs to bring the two Councils' systems together. Costs involved would form part of the business case Members would be asked to consider in December.
- There was an evolving Risk Register being collated by the Programme Manager and that would be provided to the Committee in future reports.
- Both Councils outsourced the management of their leisure centres to Everyone Active, but these were separate contracts. However, there would eventually be a single Head of Service overseeing the management of both of these contracts.

At 7.08pm the meeting was adjourned for seven minutes for safety reasons whilst some participants in the meeting moved seat. A technical hitch occurred on the Council's PA system and this meant the remainder of the meeting was not streamed to YouTube or recorded internally.

Members sought assurances that in moving towards service area mergers, there would not be a loss in service for residents and asked for briefings for all Councillors on how services would be measured and how SDC currently measured its service delivery so that the future monitoring methods could be discussed. There were concerns raised that a political merger might mean democratic dilution and Members asked for a programme of briefings on the political merger implications.

19. Review of the Work Programme, Forward Plan and Comments from the Cabinet

The Committee considered its work programme for 2021/2022 as detailed at Appendix 1 to the report.

It was noted that the Task & Finish Group – Race & Equality report would be considered at Cabinet on 12 August.

Councillor Kohler had been asked to review the data available on the Dashboard in respect of reviewing the performance of the Climate Emergency Action Plan against its targets for carbon reduction. He explained that there were technical issues accessing the Dashboard from an iPad. Once these were resolved, he would then address the issues about how the data on the Dashboard was delivered on an iPad because currently it was unsatisfactory. Councillor Milton would liaise with the Programme Director for Climate Change on what data was required on the Dashboard.

At the July Committee meeting, the Committee had made the following recommendation to Cabinet on the A46 Link Road Next Steps report:

“any sustainability analysis that comes to this Council as part of the OBC and subsequent FBC submissions, is presented to the Climate PAB more than 30 days prior to the FBC submission so that the PAB may inform Cabinet of its views before cabinet decides whether to endorse the submission”

The Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) informed Councillor Kohler, who chaired the July meeting, that the Cabinet did not have the delegated authority to undertake the recommendation and he therefore advised that Councillor Kohler liaised with the Chairman of the Climate Emergency PAB to ask the PAB to undertake this action. Councillor Kohler reported that he had spoken to the PAB Chairman.

Members noted that the Cabinet had not accepted the recommendation for the wording of the letter to be sent to WCC (identified in point 3.46 in the report) to be amended and had agreed the report as laid out but with the amendment Councillor Cooke had detailed at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's meeting in July.

It was noted that there was a slight delay on the half yearly CEAP report and that this would now be going to Cabinet in November. The item on

the Work Programme would therefore be moved to that month but as a reminder that the Cabinet report would be called in for scrutiny.

Resolved that

- (1) appendices 1 and 2 to the Work Programme report be noted;
- (2) outstanding business not yet completed from this meeting's Work Programme be carried forward to the meeting in September; and
- (3) the CEAP report has been delayed and will now be considered by Cabinet in November and will be called in by the Committee for scrutiny.

(The meeting ended at 7.32pm)

CHAIR
21 September 2021

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
10 August 2021

Title: Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Cabinet

Lead Officer: Lesley Dury, Committee Services Officer

(E. committee@warwickdc.gov.uk; T. 01926 456114)

Portfolio Holder: Not applicable

Public report

Wards of the District directly affected: Not applicable

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report informs the Committee of its work programme for 2021/2022 (Appendix 1) and the current [Forward Plan](#).
- 1.2. In addition, it provides the Committee with the response that Cabinet gave to its comments regarding the reports on 12 August 2021 (Appendix 2).
- 1.3. Appendix 2 details the decisions Cabinet & Employment Committee made in respect of the Task & Finish Group – Race & Equality recommendations. Part of these amended the recommendations made by the Task & Finish Group considerably.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Members consider the work programme (Appendix 1) and agree any changes as appropriate.
- 2.2. The Committee to; identify any Cabinet items on the Forward Plan on which it wishes to have an input before the Cabinet makes its decision; and to nominate a Member to investigate that future decision and report back to the Committee.
- 2.3. Members note the responses made by the Cabinet on the Comments from the Cabinet report (Appendix 2).
- 2.4. Members note the decisions made by Cabinet and Employment Committee in respect of the Task & Finish Group (Appendix 2).
- 2.5. Members decide the course of action to be taken in respect of the decisions made by Cabinet on the Task & Finish Group's report (Appendix 2).

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1. The work programme should be updated at each meeting to accurately reflect the workload of the Committee.
- 3.2. The proposed plan at Appendix 1 has been developed in order for the Committee to focus on the four agreed core themes (Covid 19, Climate Change, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Business Plan). While this Committee will

not have as much focus on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, it will have to spend significant times looking at the other areas in detail.

- 3.3. Two of the five main roles of overview and scrutiny in local government are to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions and to feed into policy development.
- 3.4. If the Committee has an interest in a future decision to be made by the Cabinet, or policy to be implemented, it is within the Committee's remit to feed into the process.
- 3.5. The Forward Plan is actually the future work programme for the Cabinet. If a non-cabinet member highlighted a decision(s) which is to be taken by the Cabinet which they would like to be involved in, that member(s) could then provide useful background to the Committee when the report is submitted to the Cabinet and they are passing comment on it.
- 3.6. Appendix 2, Comments from Cabinet, is produced to create a dialogue between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It ensures that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is formally made aware of the Cabinet's responses.
- 3.7. Where Overview and Scrutiny Committee has made a recommendation as opposed to a comment, the Cabinet is required to respond to the recommendation(s) made, including whether or not it accepts the recommendation(s).
- 3.8. Both the Cabinet and Employment Committee took the same decision in respect of the Task & Finish Group's report. This referred all the work undertake so far to the Transformation Programme Advisory Board (PAB) for them to progress and asked the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider ceasing the work on the second stage of the work and also passing this to the Transformation PAB.

4. Background

- 4.1. The five main roles of overview and scrutiny in local government are: holding to account; performance management; policy review; policy development; and external scrutiny.
- 4.2. The pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions falls within the role of 'holding to account'. To feed into the pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions, the Committee needs to examine the Council's Forward Plan and identify items which it would like to have an impact upon.
- 4.3. The Council's Forward Plan is published on a monthly basis and sets out the key decisions to be taken by the Council in the next twelve months. The Council only has a statutory duty to publish key decisions to be taken in the next four months. However, the Forward Plan was expanded to a twelve-month period to give a clearer picture of how and when the Council will be making important decisions.
- 4.4. A key decision is a decision which has a significant impact or effect on two or more wards and / or a budgetary effect of £50,000 or more.

- 4.5. The Forward Plan also identifies non-key decisions to be made by the Council in the next twelve months, and the Committee, if it wishes, may also pre-scrutinise these decisions.
- 4.6. There may also be policies identified on the Forward Plan, either as key or non-key decisions, which the Committee could pre-scrutinise and have an impact upon how these are formulated.
- 4.7. The Committee should be mindful that any work it wishes to undertake would need to be undertaken without the need to change the timescales as set out within the Forward Plan.
- 4.8. At each meeting, the Committee will consider their work programme and make amendments where necessary, and also make comments on specific Cabinet items, where notice has been given by 9am on the morning after Group meetings. The Committee will also receive a report detailing the response from the Cabinet, on the comments the Committee made on the Cabinet agenda in the previous cycle.
- 4.9. The Forward Plan is considered at each meeting and allows the Committee to look at future items and become involved in those Cabinet decisions to be taken, if members so wish.
- 4.10. As part of the new scrutiny process, the Committee is no longer considering the whole of the Cabinet agenda.
- 4.11. On the day of publication of the Cabinet agenda all Councillors are sent an e-mail asking them to contact Committee Services, by 09.00am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to advise which Cabinet items they would like the Committee to consider.
- 4.12. As a result, the Committee considered the items detailed in appendix 2. The response the Cabinet gave on each item is also shown.
- 4.13. In reviewing these responses, the Committee can identify any issues for which they would like a progress report. A future report, for example on how the decision has been implemented, would then be submitted to the Committee at an agreed date which would then be incorporated within the work programme.

Meeting Date: 21 September 2021

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Park Exercise Permits – review of the scheme once it has been in operation for six months	August 2020	Written report	Padraig Herlihy		
HMO Licensing and Planning Permission Policy effectiveness review	March 2021	Written report	Paul Hughes/Lisa Barker		
Effectiveness of HMO planning enforcement in meeting the requirement that a planning licence be in place within two months of an HMO licence being issued.	March 2021	Written report	Paul Hughes/Gary Fisher		
Task & Finish Group – Equality & Diversity Timetable for the review of service delivery, as set out within its scope, including details of community engagement and including the officer and other resources needed to support this process	O&S July 2021	Written report	Councillor Mangat	Every meeting until completed	
SDC/WDC merger:	O&S July 2021	TBA	Scrutiny Chairs (with Councillor		

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Update on discussions with Chairman Joint Arrangements Steering Group about the 2 Scrutiny Committees being involved with the questions to go on the questionnaire prior to its use and asking the Steering Group to come up with a process to involve the Scrutiny Committees			Kohler since he chaired the O&S meeting when this was decided) / Chris Elliott?		
Approach to the Scrutiny of the proposed Merger of Warwick District Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council – Progress through the PI	O&S April 2021	Written report	Chris Elliott	Every meeting until submission completed which is expected December 2021	
Service Area Dashboard: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring Members are using this effectively and that it provides the information required / moving forwards. - The Council's Sustainability and Climate Change – 	O&S May 2021	Verbal Update	Councillors Kohler, Cullinan and Jacques and Councillor Milton re discussion of Climate change information on Service Area Dashboard	Metrics on the Climate Change in 3 months' time	

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
reviewing the performance of the CEAP against its targets for carbon reduction: Metrics available to all Cllrs on the Dashboard (provided quarterly, with the first set planned to be available in Sept 2021)					

Meeting Date: 2 November 2021

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Current Arrangements for the South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership.	This is a mandatory report.	Written report	Marianne Rolfe.	Late October / Early November 2022.	This is an annual report.
A report on the Stratford Street Scene Team and on how its fly tipping enforcement service differs from the one operated currently at Warwick District Council.	February 2021	Written report	Zoe Court		The service is estimated to recommence in April 2021, so see if it has been operating for 6 month for a report October 2021. If not, move to a date when it will have.
HEART Shared Service update including the implementation of the new IT system	April 2021	Written report	Lisa Barker / Mark Lingard	TBA	
Approach to the Scrutiny of the proposed Merger of Warwick District Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council – Progress through the PI	O&S April 2021	Report or Update as part of the O&S Work Programme report	Chris Elliott	Every meeting until submission completed which is expected December 2021	
The Council's Sustainability and Climate Change –		Written report	Dave Barber	Every 6 months	

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
reviewing the performance of the CEAP against its targets for carbon reduction: Scrutiny on the progress of the Plan every 6 months					

Reminder for December 2021:

Governance Review of Warwick District Council – At Executive 29 July 2020, and action was placed on officers to liaise with both Chairs of Scrutiny Committees to bring back to Executive, an outline proposal for the independent assessment and proposed funding arrangements which would be undertaken in February 2022.

Meeting Date: 14 December 2021

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Approach to the Scrutiny of the proposed Merger of Warwick District Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council – Progress through the PI	O&S April 2021	Report or Update as part of the O&S Work Programme report	Chris Elliott	Every meeting until submission completed which is expected December 2021	

Meeting Date: 8 February 2022

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Meeting Date: 8 March 2022

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Annual update from Shakespeare's England.	Committee meeting 29 August 2018	Written report.	Martin O'Neill and Councillor Hales.	March 2022.	This is an annual report.

Meeting Date: 12 April 2022

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Overview & Scrutiny End of Term report.	Standing Annual Item.	Written report.	Committee Services Officer.	April 2023.	This is an annual report.

Briefing Notes to All Councillors – April 2022: Not for O&S Agenda

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Children's and Adults' Safeguarding Champions: End of Term Report.	Standing Annual Item.	Briefing note to all Councillors with a paragraph explaining that if they have any concerns that they feel require scrutiny, to raise these for consideration as part of the work programme.	Lisa Barker.	April 2023.	This is an briefing note to all Councillors.

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Members' Annual Feedback on Outside Appointments / Annual review of membership/participation of Outside Bodies (Includes a short synopsis on Champions)	Standing Annual Items	Briefing note to all Councillors with a paragraph explaining that if they have any concerns that they feel requires scrutiny, to raise these for consideration as part of the work programme and if any are to be considered to be ceased, the Deputy Chief Executive will discuss these with the LCG	Andrew Jones	April 2023	This is an briefing note to all Councillors.

Meeting Date: To Be Advised

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
Decide if an update is required on the Catering and Events Concessions Contract – Royal Pump Rooms and Jephson Gardens Glasshouse.	Committee meeting 26 September 2019.	Informal update.	Dave Guilding / Philip Clarke.	TBA	D Guilding and P Clarke were asked when they can give an informal update considering the impact of Covid-19 on this service. A response from them is awaited.
<p>**Update on plans to improve accessibility to, and the condition / cleanliness of, toilets for people living with disabilities subsequent to the presentation of the plans at the September 2019 Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting.</p> <p>**There is no new information on plans to improve</p>	Committee meeting 26 September 2019 and briefing note 8 December 2020.	Briefing Note	Zoë Court	To be advised if applicable.	No officer will attend the Committee meeting unless there is a request. If there is a request, Members should send their questions to the report author before the meeting.

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer / Councillor	Next report date if applicable	Completion Date / Notes
accessibility to, and the condition / cleanliness of, toilets for people living with disabilities – Officers request that this update is postponed until such time as budget figures 2021/22 for improvements are known.					
Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Enforcement Process – Private Sector Housing	O&S August 2020	Written Report	Mark Lingard		A review was requested once the scheme had been operation for 12 months. Covid Lockdown has meant that the 12 months has not been achieved yet.
The Progress and Impact of the Equality & Diversity Task & Finish Group's Recommendations in the report that was presented to O&S 6 July 2021	O&S 6 July 2021	Written Report	Tracy Dolphin/Graham Leach	July / August 2022	

**Response from the meeting of the Cabinet on the
O&S Committee's Comments – 12 August 2021**

Item Number: 12 – Proposed Compulsory Purchase Order – Land at Kenilworth
Wardens, Glasshouse Lane, Kenilworth

Requested by: Chair, O&S

Reasons Considered: To consider the principle of deliverability. This report was called in to look at the broader policy situation of assessing deliverability of sites when they are allocated in the Local Plan, rather than the specifics of the Wardens in the report.

Scrutiny Comment:

This report was called in to Overview & Scrutiny Committee to trigger debate on the wider policy situation of assessing deliverability of sites when they are allocated in the Local Plan, rather than making comment on the specific contents of the report in respect of the Land at Kenilworth Wardens.

Councillor Cooke, Portfolio Holder – Place & Economy and the Deputy Chief Executive, Andrew Jones answered questions and at the end of the debate, the Committee made the following recommendation to Cabinet in respect of the wider issue of deliverability:

That a report be produced identifying learning points from work on previous Local Plans and our current experience, and that this be fed into the ongoing work on the South Warwickshire Local Plan. Main areas of focus should be:

- Site deliverability
- Viability of development
- Resources available both at the District and County Councils
- Sustainability and how this addresses climate change

**The Cabinet is required to vote on this because it forms a
recommendation to it.**

Cabinet Response:

The Cabinet agreed too the recommendation made by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and approved the recommendations as set out in the report subject to the inclusion of the recommendation made by O&S.

Decisions from the meeting of the Cabinet & Employment

Cabinet

Item Number 6 – Equality & Diversity Task & Finish Group

The Cabinet considered a report which set out the recommendations from the Task & Finish Group, supported by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in respect of equalities issues relating to the internal practice and policies, and the experiences by employees of WDC with a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background. The recommendations made by the Task & Finish Group and approved by Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting 6 July 2021 were:

"2.1 The Cabinet notes the progress WDC has made with regard to adopting positive equality and diversity policies with tangible outcomes, and commit to do more and make the District and the Council an exemplar of best practice in equality, diversity and inclusion, especially with regard to racial equality.

2.2 The Cabinet:

- (i) approach Stratford-on-Avon District Council to similarly endorse these recommendations that owing to the proposals to bring together staff as part of the consideration of a merger proposal;*
- (ii) that they endorse the use of the Race Equality Code 2020 and Race at Work Charter, as set out at Appendices 4 and 5 of the report, to underpin the equality, diversity and inclusion action plan each year. This will require the setting of agreed indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, so success can be measured against the action plan;*
- (iii) that the Chief Executive appoints a senior manager to be a champion for Race Equality within the organisation;*
- (iv) that they note that the current ethnicity data is based on the 2011 Census but will be updated following the publication of 2021 census data; and that this be used as the basis for the Council better reflecting the communities it serves;*
- (v) that they welcome the publication of the first data on the ethnicity pay gap in November 2020 and the commitment from this Council to produce this information annually;*
- (vi) that they endorse the intention, within the next five years, to increase the diversity in senior managers across the Council so that it is more reflective of the racial and ethnic diversity of the local community in the District;*
- (vii) that they endorse the intention, within the next three years, to increase the racial and ethnic diversity within the posts of Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, Programme Director for Climate Change and Heads of Service, with a minimal expectation equivalent to one post, so that it is at least reflective of the racial and ethnic diversity of the local community in the District;*
- (viii) that they endorse the adoption of the Rooney Rule (as explained in paragraph 3.13 of this report) for all recruitment processes by Warwick District Council for vacancies at Service Manager, Head of Service, Deputy Chief Executive or Chief Executive position, and the Employment Committee is asked to identify how the current recruitment process for these roles should be revised to accommodate this approach;*
- (ix) that they endorse the approach that, subject to computer software changes being possible, from 1 April 2022, all applications for positions in*

the Council will be anonymised prior to short listing by the recruiting manager;

- (x) *that to support the delivery of the above recommendations, Officers are tasked to bring forward proposals for the introduction of a specialist role, for a given time period, and to address the need for other necessary supporting resources.*

2.3 *The Cabinet notes the progress and impact of the recommendations are to be reported to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 12 months from the date of the consideration of this report.*

2.4 *That the Cabinet notes the Overview & Scrutiny Committee have asked the Task & Finish Group to produce a timetable to the September meeting for the review of service delivery, as set out within its scope, including details of community engagement and including the officer and other resources needed to support this process."*

Cabinet Response:

Councillor Hales proposed the report as laid out, and that the Transformation PAB take the work forward from the Group with partners at Stratford-on-Avon District Council. The proposal was amended so that in respect of recommendation 2.4, the Cabinet asked the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider moving the proposed work on the second part of the Task & Finish Group to the Transformation PAB for consistency reasons. When put to a vote, the proposal was approved.

Councillor Day was grateful for the hard work of the Task & Finish Group and looked forward to the working with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee going forward.

Resolved that

- (1) the Transformation PAB take the work forward from the Group with our partners at Stratford-on-Avon District Council; and
- (2) the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider moving the proposed work on the second part of the Task & Finish Group to the Transformation PAB for consistency reasons.

Employment Committee

The Committee considered a report, on 8 September, which set out the recommendations from the Task & Finish Group, supported by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in respect of equalities issues relating to the internal practice and policies, and the experiences by employees of WDC with a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background. The recommendations made by the Task & Finish Group and approved by Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting 6 July 2021 were set out in the report.

It unanimously resolved that:

- (1) the Transformation PAB take the work forward from the Group with our partners at Stratford-on-Avon District Council; and
- (2) the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider moving the proposed work on the second part of the Task & Finish Group to the Transformation PAB for consistency reasons.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
21st September 2021

Title: Briefing Note on the Park Exercise Policy and Permit Scheme

Lead Officer: Paddy Herlihy

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Liam Bartlett

Public briefing note

Wards of the District directly affected: District-wide

Contrary to the policy framework: No

Contrary to the budgetary framework: No

Key Decision: No

Included within the Forward Plan: Yes

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No

Consultation & Community Engagement: Engagement with stakeholders and members of the public that have contacted WDC on this matter.

Final Decision: No

Accessibility checked: No

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	23/08/21	Chris Elliott/Andy Jones
Head of Service	23/08/21	Rose Winship
CMT	31/08/21	All members of CMT
Section 151 Officer	23/08/21	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	23/08/21	Phil Grafton
Finance	31/08/21	Tony Sidhu
Portfolio Holder(s)	31/08/21	Councillor Liam Bartlett

1. Background

- 1.1 The Park Exercise Policy was formally introduced into Warwick District Council on 24th August 2020 with a report to the Executive recommending the introduction of the scheme. An informal scheme had been in place from 2018 to help the Council monitor the use of parks and open spaces by organisations and individuals such as fitness groups and personal trainers.
- 1.2 The Policy introduced on 24th August 2020 was based on similar policies and charges set by other Councils around the UK. It allows the Council to monitor the usage of its parks and open spaces as well as making some income when issuing the permits.

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- 1.3 Recommendation 2.3 of the report on 24th August 2020 was "That Members instruct officers to review the Park Exercise Policy and charges on an annual basis as part of the annual review of fees and charges".
- 1.4 Following the Scrutiny meetings held on 18 and 19 August 2020 this recommendation was amended to read "That Members instruct officers to review the Park Exercise Policy after the first 6 months of operation and then on an annual basis, with charges being included as part of the annual review of fees and charges.
- 1.5 The workload in managing outdoor sport during the various changes in Government regulations in connection to the Covid 19 pandemic prevented the initial 6-month review of the Policy.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present the first annual review of the Park Exercise Policy and the accompanying Park Exercise Permit scheme. It has been decided that this should be presented as a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at this time as it is one year since the Policy was introduced and because the annual review of fees and charges process is getting under way for the forthcoming year.

3. Review

- 3.1 The Park Exercise Policy was announced on the Council's website, following the meeting on 24th August 2020. Those organisations that were already in the earlier, informal scheme mentioned in paragraph 1.1 above were contacted to ensure that they transferred to the new scheme with new permits.
- 3.2 The organisations that currently hold a Park Exercise Permit are as shown in Table One.

Table One – organisations that hold a currently Park Exercise Permit

Location	Organisation	Max in group	No per week
All Parks	Group Walx	15	20
Abbey Fields	Yoga	8	2
Castle Farm	Circle Dance	6	3
Eagle Rec	Change your life, put down your knife*	20	1
Jephson Gardens	Lifewithamandaj	10	3
Newbold Comyn	Volleyball	30	22
Newbold Comyn	Battle Bootcamp	20	7
Newbold Comyn	Sunset Yoga	6	3
Newbold Comyn	Everyone Health*	10	1
Newbold Comyn	Peddlamaniacs Cycle Club*	25	1
Newbold Comyn	Lifewithamandaj	10	3
Newbold Comyn	Be Military Fit (BMF)	30	6
Pump Room Gardens	Lifewithamandaj	10	3

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Victoria Park	Physical Formula Ltd	20	17
Victoria Park	Volleyball	30	22
St Nicholas Park	Be Military Fit (BMF)	30	5
St Nicholas Park	Battle Bootcamp	20	7
St Nicholas Park	Warwick Touch Rugby Club*	20	1
St Nicholas Park	Junior Parkrun*	100	1
	* = Charity or not-for-profit=no charge		

- 3.3 Organisations that can demonstrate that they are charities or not-for-profit organisations are not charged for their Park Exercise Permit. These are indicated with an asterisk in Table One.
- 3.4 Organisations that are trialling the use of the Council's parks are given a three-month trial period for free. This is in accordance with amended recommendation 2.2 of the report on 24th August 2020, which gave "a delegation to the Portfolio Holder for Culture and Head of Cultural Services to apply discount prices as deemed appropriate for the purpose of launching the scheme". Please note that these posts are now referred to as the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Leisure and the Head of Culture, Tourism and Leisure. This facility was particularly used to encourage new organisations to set up operations as the country emerged from lockdown, in order to ensure additional sport and physical activity activities were available for residents. These organisations then begin to pay if they wish to continue beyond their first three months. Organisations were given payment 'holidays' if they were not permitted to operate due to Government restrictions during the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 3.5 Early uptake in the first year of the scheme has therefore been good, with significantly more Permit holders than under the earlier, informal scheme. This was partly due to advertising the scheme on the Council website, but also because of the increase in public interest in exercising outdoors, due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

4. Current issues

- 4.1 As might be expected with a new scheme, a number of issues have arisen during the first full year of operation.
- 4.2 One of the main issues with the new Policy is enforcement. Within Culture, Tourism and Leisure the Sports Assistant is responsible for outdoor sport, but this includes many duties and enforcement of the Park Exercise Policy is only one of them. The Council's Ranger Service has a great many responsibilities across the entire District but is the only specific resource outside Cultural Services able to enforce the Policy.
- 4.3 It is clear that a number of other organisations are operating sport and exercise classes in the Council's Parks and Open Spaces without permits, but it is hard to enforce the Policy by asking them to leave when they could simply move venue or return at another time. This is leading to

frustration by some holders of Park Exercise Permits as they are paying for a service that they can see others are obtaining for free.

- 4.4 In order to tackle this issue Cultural Services colleagues intend to search social media for adverts concerning sport and exercise classes in the Council's Parks and Open Spaces, as this is more time efficient than patrolling the spaces themselves. When adverts are found the organisers will be contacted and instructed to apply for a Park Exercise Permit. Rangers will also be asked to redouble their efforts to inspect sport and exercise classes in the Council's Parks and Open Spaces to verify that operators are in possession of Park Exercise Permits.

- 4.5 The initial Policy identified a number of key parks and open spaces where the Park Exercise Permits would be required. These were identified as –

• Harbury Lane Recreation Ground • Newbold Comyn • Castle Farm Recreation Ground • St Mary's Lands • St Nicholas Park • Victoria Park • Jephson Gardens • Pump Room Gardens • Abbey Fields • Priory Park

However, Culture Business Support Team staff have received applications from organisation wanting to carry out sport and physical activity sessions in other parks and open spaces. They have also received complaints from Councillors and members of the public relating to such activities taking place in parks and open spaces other than those listed here. Some of these requests or complaints relate to smaller parks in the District, such as Bates Memorial Park, and others relate to informal areas of open space.

- 4.6 One of the two Addenda to the report of 24th August 2020 provided an additional recommendation 2.4 that "Members delegate to the Portfolio Holder for Culture and the Head of Cultural Services the decision as to the future inclusion of new areas of the Council's Parks and Open Spaces within the remit of this policy".

- 4.7 Adding new areas to the Policy has the potential to offer more opportunities to local residents to take part in activities near their home, which reduces the amount of travelling undertaken, which is a sustainable solution. It also reduces car parking if residents choose to walk or cycle to their local class. It increases the income received from the Council for permits issued. However, it does also increase the number of opportunities for such activities to cause nuisance to local residents or other park users. It could also be that some locations are not suited to activities – perhaps because of a lack of parking or adequate toilet facilities. Increasing the number of areas covered by the Park Exercise Policy increases the problem of enforcement described in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4 above.

- 4.8 It is proposed that this issue is debated at the Culture, Tourism and Leisure Programme Advisory Board in order to establish what, if any, new geographical areas should be added to the Park Exercise Policy.

- 4.9 The first year of operation of the Policy has identified that there may need to be some changes to the pricing policy. The initial pricing policy was based on prices charged by other Local Authorities and on the charges made during the earlier, informal scheme. The current prices appear to disadvantage the smaller groups applying for Park Exercise Permits. There has been some resistance to the charges made by the Council by those organisations with Park Exercise Permits, on the basis that they object to paying for their permits when others are avoiding the charge by not applying for a permit. However, this is an issue of enforcement, and not a reason to reduce charges.
- 4.10 The issue of equity in the pricing policy between larger and smaller operators will be addressed as part of the annual review of fees and charges and recommendations for the coming year will be made to Councillors as part of that process.
- 4.11 The activities covered by the Park Exercise Policy has also been reviewed during the first year of operation. A number of additional activities have been considered for inclusion in the Park Exercise Policy but it has been decided for now that the Policy will not be expanded to include any activities outside of the current list.
- 4.12 One of the purposes of the Park Exercise Policy is to regulate the number of sport and physical activity activities that are taking place in the Council's Parks and Open Spaces, in order to ensure that these activities do not come to dominate the Parks and Open Spaces and also wear out the fabric of the Parks and Open Spaces with over-use or concentrated use of specific areas. However, this does also mean that the Council is selling a service to the operators of these sessions and so it is important that the areas used are kept in a fit state to be used by the groups.
- 4.13 Close liaison between colleagues in Cultural Services and Green Spaces will continue, in order to ensure that areas used by Permit holders are not being damaged with over-use, and also that the areas are managed in a way to keep them suitable for the activities booked.
- 4.14 Table Two – summary of issues and proposed mitigation

Paragraphs	Issue	Proposed mitigation
4.2 to 4.4	Enforcement	Social media searches/ Ranger patrols
4.5 to 4.8	Parks and Open Spaces to be included in Policy	Discussion at Cultural Services Programme Advisory Board
4.9 to 4.10	Charges	Reviewed as part of annual review of fees and charges
4.11 to 4.12	Activities included	Review regularly
4.13 to 4.14	Maintenance of areas used by permit holders	Liaison between officers to ensure correct maintenance

5. Financial matters

- 5.1 Income from the sale of Parks Exercise Permits in the last financial year was affected by the Covid 19 pandemic, and the fact that this was the first year of the scheme. Existing users were given payment 'holidays' during periods when they were unable to operate due to Government restrictions or advice relating to the pandemic. New organisations joining the scheme in its first year were given introductory 3-month trial periods for free, in order to encourage them to begin or recommence their activities after restrictions were lifted in full or in part. Charities or not-for-profit organisations do not have to pay for their Park Exercise Permit.
- 5.2 £2,500 was received from the sale of permits in the period from 1st April 2021 to 30th September 2021. More income will be received for the remainder of the year. It is expected that this annual sum will increase for the financial year 2022/23 if organisations can operate throughout the year and if those organisations given free trial periods in the first year of the scheme decide to continue with their activities and therefore pay for a full year.

6. Summary

- 6.1 The Park Exercise Policy was introduced by a report to Executive on 24th August 2021.
- 6.2 In the first year of the Policy a number of issues have been identified and mitigations for these issues have been proposed
- 6.3 Income in the first year of the scheme was reduced by the Covid 19 pandemic and the use of 3-month free trial periods to encourage new operators into the scheme.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
21 September 2021

Title: HMO Licensing & Planning Permission Policy Effectiveness Review

Lead Officer: Paul Hughes, Private Sector Housing Manager

Portfolio Holder: Jan Matecki

Public report / Confidential report: Public

Wards of the District directly affected: All

Contrary to the policy framework: No

Contrary to the budgetary framework: No

Key Decision: N/A

Included within the Forward Plan: Yes – Ref 1,179

Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: N/A

Consultation & Community Engagement: N/A

Final Decision: N/A

Accessibility checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	13/9/21	Chris Elliott
Head of Service	24/8/21	Lisa Barker
CMT	13/9/21	Chris Elliot
Monitoring Officer	13/9/21	Phil Grafton
Finance	25/8/21	Victoria Bamber
Portfolio Holder(s)	13/9/21	Councillor Jan Matecki

1. Summary

- 1.1. A new policy linking HMO Licensing with Planning Permission was introduced on 1st April 2021.
- 1.2. The policy aims to ensure that landlords of licensable HMO's who require planning permission for HMO use, apply for and obtain planning permission before they are granted a licence:
 - Landlords making an HMO licence application for the first time where there are no current residents will be advised to obtain planning permission before their licence can be issued.
 - Landlords making an HMO licence application for the first time where residents are currently in occupation to be given two months to submit a valid planning application before enforcement action is taken.
 - Landlords making an HMO licence application who submit a planning application within the required time but then who fail to provide any required documentation within a two-month period will be subject to enforcement action.
 - Landlords of properties where an HMO licence needs to be renewed, must submit a valid planning application in time for this to be considered before the current licence expires. A new licence will not be issued without planning permission being in place.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. It is recommended that this report is noted.

3. Reasons for the Recommendation

- 3.1. To enable the effectiveness of the new policy to be considered.
- 3.2. The new HMO licensing and Planning Permission Policy has only been in place for less than 6 months. It has not been necessary to take enforcement action in respect of any of the licence applications which have been submitted since 1st April 2021.
- 3.3. Early indications suggest there is strong awareness of the new policy amongst landlords, and it is encouraging to note that no HMO licence applications have been received since 1st April where the HMO does not have the required planning permission or established use.
- 3.4. Since 1st April 2021, there have been 13 applications for HMO licences, comprising 8 new applications and 5 renewals.
- 3.5. Of the 13 HMO's concerned, 10 of these are in Leamington Spa, 8 of which would qualify for Lawful Development Certificates. The other 2 in Leamington Spa were invalid licence applications because they did not require an HMO licence.

- 3.6. The remaining 3 are in Warwick and Kenilworth and do not require planning permission as they fall under permitted development (C4 use class and not within the Article 4 Direction area).
- 3.7. There are no non-compliant HMO's due for re-licensing until September 2023.
- 3.8. Some landlords who may otherwise have created new licensed HMOs may be deterred from doing so because the policy is now in place.
- 3.9. 9 licensed HMO's have been identified by Planning Enforcement as not having planning permission and would not qualify for a Lawful Development Certificate.
- 3.10. The Planning Officer is writing to all these licensable HMO landlords in advance of their HMO licence expiry dates. One Planning Enforcement Notice has been served to date in respect of one of the HMOs listed.

4. Policy Framework

4.1. Fit for the Future (FFF)

- 4.1.1. The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.
- 4.1.2. The FFF Strategy has 3 strands, People, Services and Money, and each has an external and internal element to it. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.
- 4.1.3. Under each heading below, you should use auto-numbering for your paragraphs, and they should look like below (4.2.1, 4.2.2 etc.)

4.2. FFF Strands

4.2.1 External impacts of proposal(s)

People - Health, Homes, Communities – Helping ensure that licensed HMOs are compliant with planning policy

Services - Green, Clean, Safe - None

Money- Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment - None

4.2.2. Internal impacts of the proposal(s)

People - Effective Staff – None

Services - Maintain or Improve Services – Taking the opportunity to link HMO licensing and planning permission

Money - Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term - None

4.3. Supporting Strategies

- 4.3.1. Each strand of the FFF Strategy has several supporting strategies. Improving housing standards in residents' homes directly and positively contributes to the Housing and Health and Wellbeing priorities. It also contributes to the Housing and Homelessness Strategy objective of improving the management and maintenance of existing housing.

4.4. Changes to Existing Policies

- 4.4.1. This is a new policy that links HMO licensing with the Council's existing Article 4 Direction and Section H6 of the Warwick District Local Plan.

4.5. Impact Assessments

- 4.5.1. The HMO Licensing & Planning Permission Policy helps to enforce existing Council planning policies, so no impact assessment has been undertaken.

5. Budgetary Framework

- 5.1. There are 9 licensed HMOs that will no longer be able to operate at licence expiry if they are unable to obtain the relevant planning permission.
- 5.2. HMO Fees for new applications and renewals range from £665 to £1,339 depending on the number of occupants, in a worst-case scenario a reduction of 9 HMOs for new application fees at the highest level of £1,339 would equate to an income loss of £12,051 over a 5-year term.
- 5.3. Considering a realistic position, the fee income reduction arising from the new policy is not likely to result in a loss as per the reasons noted in paragraph 9.2 below stating that no HMO licence applications have been received since 1st April where the HMO does not have the required planning permission or established use.

6. Risks

- 6.1. This report only seeks to review the effectiveness of the policy since implementation, hence there are no risks as such.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

- 7.1. Not reviewing the effectiveness of the policy would seem perverse, since it is important to know whether the new policy is effective in achieving its objective.

8. Background

- 8.1. An HMO licence is required where an HMO is occupied by 5 or more unrelated people, typically sharing kitchen or bathroom facilities. Planning permission is required when a new HMO is created where there are 3 or more people living as 2 or more households in the Leamington Spa wards,

or 7 or more people living as 2 or more households elsewhere in the district.

- 8.2. HMO Licensing and planning permission have always been two separate processes, each subject to separate legal enforcement. An HMO licence application would be approved if it satisfied all the criteria under Part 2 Housing Act 2004, even if it did not have the benefit of planning permission.
- 8.3. The Council has an Article 4 Direction and H6 planning policy so there has been criticism that the Council did not have a joined-up approach between departments, when issuing HMO licences.
- 8.4. A consultation exercise with key stakeholders over a policy change was undertaken between November 2020 and January 2021.
- 8.5. The combination of Government guidance, case law and specialist Counsel opinion led to the Council to adopt a new policy from April 1st, 2021.
- 8.6. The new policy intends to ensure that landlords obtain planning permission before they are granted an HMO licence. Landlords applying for an HMO licence for the first time are given two months in which to submit a valid planning application if the property is occupied. Landlords needing to renew HMO licences must submit a valid planning application before their HMO licence expires.
- 8.7. Landlords who fail to make valid planning applications within the appropriate timescales will not have their HMO licence applications processed. They will not be considered as 'duly made' and they will be subject to prosecution or civil penalty under Part 2 Housing Act 2004.
- 8.8. HMO licence applications will not be considered for approval until such time as any planning applications have been determined. In the event of planning permission being refused by the Council or on appeal, enforcement action will be led by Planning Enforcement.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
21 September 2021

Title: Update on Joint Work with SDC
Lead: Chris Elliott
Portfolio Holder: Andrew Day
Public report
Wards of the District directly affected: All

Contrary to the policy framework: No
 Contrary to the budgetary framework: No
 Key Decision: No
 Included within the Forward Plan: No
 Equality Impact Assessment Undertaken: No
 Consultation & Community Engagement: No
 Final Decision: No
 Accessibility checked: Yes

Officer/Councillor Approval

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive	13/9/2021	Chris Elliott
Transformation Programme Manager	13/9/2021	Tim Oruye
CMT	13/9/2021	Chris Elliott, Andrew Jones, Dave Barber, Tony Perks
Section 151 Officer	13/9/2021	Mike Snow
Monitoring Officer	13/9/2021	Phil Grafton
Finance	13/9/2021	Andrew Rollins
Portfolio Holder(s)	13/9/2021	Andrew Day

1. Summary

- 1.1. It was agreed at a previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and of the Finance and Audit Committee that a report would be brought to each meeting to set out the progress of the work being done to enable effective Scrutiny of the proposals.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the contents of the report and appendices are noted and any comments arising are presented to the Cabinets of both Councils and the Joint Advisory Steering Group (JASG).

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1. This report re iterates the vision agreed by both Councils and the reasons for undertaking this approach; sets out work done to date; the next steps; the key benefits; and the key milestones and intended overall outcome.
- 3.2. Vision – both SDC and WDC at their respective Full Councils agreed the following vision:

To create a single statutory South Warwickshire Council covering all of the activities currently carried out by Stratford on Avon District Council and Warwick District Council by 1st April 2024.

- 3.3. Reasons for undertaking this approach:

- Both Councils have significant financial pressures
- Both Councils wish to continue to provide valued services to residents/businesses/local communities and improve them if we can
- The two Councils have a good track record of partnership
- There is a shared economic geography between the two Councils
- There is a shared sense of community between the two Councils' areas
- There is a very strong political relationship in place
- The two Councils are within the same County Council area.

- 3.4. Work done to date (including ongoing work) includes:

- Deloitte Report commissioned and agreed by both setting out the high level business case for the creation of a single South Warwickshire Council
- Vision stated above (para 3.2) agreed by both Councils
- The Cabinet portfolios for both Councils are fully aligned
- Jointly Tendering for the Refuse and Recycling Contracts
- Developing jointly a South Warwickshire Local Plan
- Developing a joint Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy
- Developing a South Warwickshire Economic Strategy
- Agreed a shared set of ambitions regarding the Climate Emergency
- Joint Staff/HR policies agreed
- Agreed and have appointed a Transformation Programme Manager and Programme Support Officer
- Established a governance regime via the creation of an officer Programme Board (which meets weekly) and the Councillor led Joint

Arrangements Steering Group (Reports and Notes of meeting available on the South Warwickshire Together Hub)

- Work on due diligence financially undertaken by LGA consultant and reported to JASG
- Regular meetings with Unison (both branches) on a fortnightly basis
- Communication Hub for all Staff and Councillors of both Councils established – South Warwickshire Together Hub
- Leaders and CEOs meet fortnightly
- Joint Management Team meets weekly (started from 2nd August with Head of Place and Economy appointed on 4th August – (2 vacancies immediately saved)
- Discussions have started with the Government regarding the creation of a single South Warwickshire Council
- Agreed paper for public consultation proposals
- Sharing experience and likewise gaining experience from joint work of other Councils including those who have merged and those who are also considering the same step
- Update presentations given to Councillors, members of staff and Service Managers
- Scrutiny Chairs of SDC/WDC have met
- Start of public consultation on proposal from 6th September to 24th October – 600 representatives of the community directly surveyed; open form available for all to make their comments; stakeholders notified and asked for comments; focus groups for local residents; parish/town council; community/voluntary; business.

3.5. The next steps include the following:

- Programme of Service Integration is subject to a separate report that will be considered by WDC's Cabinet on 23rd September and SDC's Cabinet in early October.
- Business Case for Joint Legal Service integration is subject to a separate report that will be considered by WDC's Cabinet on 23rd September and SDC's Cabinet in early October.
- Joint Policy for Enforcement and Business Regulation is subject to a separate report that will be considered by WDC's Cabinet on 23rd September and SDC's Cabinet in early October.
- Both Councils to consider the decision to make a formal application to merge the two organisations to create a single South Warwickshire Council – on Monday 13th December

3.6. The expected benefits include:

- Delivery of significant net savings as envisaged in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy
- Enhanced partnership working
- Increased presence, influence, and strategic voice
- Increased service resilience
- Improved customer experience – residents and business
- Strengthened workforce opportunities arising from a larger workforce

3.7. The key milestones are:

- Agreement to the business case to be submitted to Government on 13th December 2021
- Approval granted by the Secretary of State within a year of the submission date
- Shadow Council in existence from April 2023 – elections inc. those of Parish deferred for a year
- All services merged by March 2024 having started the process in November 2021
- New Council comes into life on 1st April 2024
- Elections to new Council in May 2024

3.8. The overall outcome will be that a new South Warwickshire Council which has a sustainable financial foundation and so is able to deliver better, transformed, and relevant services for the residents, businesses, and communities of the area.

4. Policy Framework

4.1. Fit for the Future (FFF)

4.1.1. The Council's FFF Strategy is designed to deliver the Vision for the District of making it a Great Place to Live, Work and Visit. To that end amongst other things the FFF Strategy contains several Key projects.

4.1.2. The FFF Strategy has 3 strands, People, Services and Money, and each has an external and internal element to it, the details of which can be found on the Council's website. The table below illustrates the impact of this proposal if any in relation to the Council's FFF Strategy.

4.2. FFF Strands

4.2.1 External impacts of proposal(s)

People - Health, Homes, Communities - The report will have no direct impact for the community at this stage, but the overall programme will assist with the ability to continue to provide services.

Services - Green, Clean, Safe – As above.

Money- Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment – As above.

4.2.2. Internal impacts of the proposal(s)

People - Effective Staff – The joint work will offer better protection to staff than the alternatives and by being part of a larger workforce it will offer more opportunities for training and progress.

Services - Maintain or Improve Services – The joint work is intended to enable the two Councils to maintain or improve their services.

Money - Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term – It is intended that the work does provide for a firm financial footing over the longer term.

- 4.3. **Supporting Strategies& Changes to Existing Policies** – The joint work will impact on the two Council's policies across the piece. Part of the Programme of work will be to bring the policies of the two Councils into line over the period to 2024 and in some cases beyond that.

4.4. **Impact Assessments**

High level impact statement prepared in conjunction with public consultation. Can be seen on the consultation website and will also be published on the South Warwickshire Together Hub.

5. Budgetary Framework

- 5.1. This report does not impact on the budgetary framework or budget, but the subject matter of the report will have an impact.

6. Risks

- 6.1. A risk register for the joint work is being developed.

7. Alternative Option(s) considered

- 7.1. Strategic options were evaluated as part of the work done for the public consultation and can be seen at the hub.