



GUILD FORD
B O R O U G H

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Contact:

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Tom Horwood

Joint Chief Executive
of Guildford and Waverley
Borough Councils

25 May 2022

Dear Councillor,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held in the Council Chamber, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey GU2 4BB on **TUESDAY, 7 JUNE 2022 at 7.00 pm.**

Yours faithfully,

Tom Horwood
Joint Chief Executive

MEMBERS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Chairman: Councillor Paul Spooner
Vice-Chairman: Councillor James Walsh

Councillor Chris Blow
Councillor Guida Esteves
Councillor Angela Goodwin
Councillor Jan Harwood
Councillor George Potter

Councillor Maddy Redpath
Councillor Tony Rooth
Councillor Will Salmon
Councillor Deborah Seabrook
Councillor Fiona White

Authorised Substitute Members

For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, there is no limit on the number of substitute members for each political group on the Council.

QUORUM: 4

WEBCASTING NOTICE

This meeting will be recorded for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website in accordance with the Council's capacity in performing a task in the public interest and in line with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except where there are confidential or exempt items, and the footage will be on the website for six months.

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THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK (2021-25)

Our Vision:

A green, thriving town and villages where people have the homes they need, access to quality employment, with strong and safe communities that come together to support those needing help.

Our Mission:

A trusted, efficient, innovative, and transparent Council that listens and responds quickly to the needs of our community.

Our Values:

- We will put the interests of our community first.
- We will listen to the views of residents and be open and accountable in our decision-making.
- We will deliver excellent customer service.
- We will spend money carefully and deliver good value for money services.
- We will put the environment at the heart of our actions and decisions to deliver on our commitment to the climate change emergency.
- We will support the most vulnerable members of our community as we believe that every person matters.
- We will support our local economy.
- We will work constructively with other councils, partners, businesses, and communities to achieve the best outcomes for all.
- We will ensure that our councillors and staff uphold the highest standards of conduct.

Our strategic priorities:

Homes and Jobs

- Revive Guildford town centre to unlock its full potential
- Provide and facilitate housing that people can afford
- Create employment opportunities through regeneration
- Support high quality development of strategic sites
- Support our business community and attract new inward investment
- Maximise opportunities for digital infrastructure improvements and smart places technology

Environment

- Provide leadership in our own operations by reducing carbon emissions, energy consumption and waste
- Engage with residents and businesses to encourage them to act in more environmentally sustainable ways through their waste, travel, and energy choices
- Work with partners to make travel more sustainable and reduce congestion
- Make every effort to protect and enhance our biodiversity and natural environment.

Community

- Tackling inequality in our communities
- Work with communities to support those in need
- Support the unemployed back into the workplace and facilitate opportunities for residents to enhance their skills
- Prevent homelessness and rough-sleeping in the borough

A G E N D A

ITEM NO.

- 1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**
- 2 **LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

In accordance with the local Code of Conduct, a councillor is required to disclose at the meeting any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) that they may have in respect of any matter for consideration on this agenda. Any councillor with a DPI must not participate in any discussion or vote regarding that matter and they must withdraw from the meeting immediately before consideration of the matter.

If that DPI has not been registered, the councillor must notify the Monitoring Officer of the details of the DPI within 28 days of the date of the meeting.

Councillors are further invited to disclose any non-pecuniary interest which may be relevant to any matter on this agenda, in the interests of transparency, and to confirm that it will not affect their objectivity in relation to that matter.

- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 5 - 14)
To confirm the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 25 April 2022.
- 4 **LEAD COUNCILLOR QUESTION SESSION**
A question session with the Lead Councillor for Climate Change. Councillor Cait Taylor's areas of responsibility are Climate Change, Air Quality, and Sustainable Transport.
- 5 **GUILDFORD AND WAVERLEY COLLABORATION – UPDATE**
- 6 **REVIEW OF VISITOR STRATEGY** (Pages 15 - 48)
- 7 **UPDATE REPORT: SPEND ON CONSULTANTS AND AGENCY WORKERS** (Pages 49 - 60)
- 8 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 61 - 70)
To agree the draft Overview and Scrutiny work programme.

**Please contact us to request this document in an
alternative format**

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25 April 2022

- * Councillor Paul Spooner (Chairman)
- * Councillor James Walsh (Vice-Chairman)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Councillor Chris Blow | * Councillor Maddy Redpath |
| * Councillor Guida Esteves | * Councillor Tony Rooth |
| * Councillor Angela Goodwin | * Councillor Will Salmon |
| Councillor Jan Harwood | * Councillor Deborah Seabrook |
| * Councillor George Potter | * Councillor Fiona White |

*Present

Councillor John Redpath (Lead Councillor for Economy) was in attendance, with Councillors Colin Cross and Cait Taylor (Lead Councillor for Climate Change) in remote attendance.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 23(i), Councillor Graham Eyre attended as a substitute for Councillor Jan Harwood.

OS67 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The Committee was advised of apologies for absence from Councillors Chris Blow and Jan Harwood and a substitution as detailed above.

OS68 LOCAL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

In relation to item 5, Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH) Service – Update, Councillors Fiona White, Angela Goodwin, and George Potter disclosed a non-pecuniary interest as Surrey County Councillors.

OS69 MINUTES

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 1 March 2022 were agreed.

OS70 COVID-19 RESPONSE – UPDATE

The Senior Specialist Public Health gave a presentation on the current COVID-19 situation and the Council's response. She reminded the meeting that the Government's Living with COVID plan had been introduced on 1 April and the changes in testing arrangements meant it was no longer possible to report community rates of infection. The Senior Specialist Public Health advised the Committee that the Office for National Statistics did estimate the percentage of the population with COVID at a national and regional level, and that these estimated rates were reducing.

The Committee was informed that Covid testing was still available to a number of different groups: NHS patients in hospital; people on COVID anti-viral and other treatments; NHS staff; and adult social care staff in care homes. The Senior Specialist Public Health advised that the main focus of vaccinations was the 5–11-year-old age group and that pop up vaccination sites would continue in the Borough. She stated that the vaccination rates in Guildford were in line with the average across Surrey and England.

In response to a query from Committee members shared prior to the meeting, the Head of Environmental and Regulatory Services informed the Committee that information on obtaining Covid vaccinations was provided to Ukrainian refugees and their sponsors.

The Senior Specialist Public Health indicated that hospital admissions were decreasing and that as at 25 April there were 360 registered Covid-related deaths in Guildford.

The Senior Specialist Public Health advised that the presumption was now for COVID-19 to be treated like any other infectious disease and for employers and employees to act accordingly. She confirmed that the Council was reviewing its risk assessments for vulnerable clients or staff.

The meeting was informed that service leads were being asked to consider work bubbles and training additional officers to ensure that key services and activities were maintained. The Senior Specialist Public Health advised that the Council would redeploy staff if necessary. The Committee was informed that test availability would be maintained for staff carrying out health or social care activities.

The Senior Specialist Public Health advised that if staff had coronavirus symptoms but are well enough to work then, if possible, they would work from home. She indicated that for staff were working from home was not an option then managers would make appropriate arrangements on a case-by-case basis.

In response to a question, the Senior Specialist Public Health confirmed that the pop up vaccination sites would cater for all residents. The Senior Specialist Public Health undertook to provide details to Committee members on the take-up of the latest vaccination dose and plans for the next tranche in the autumn.

RESOLVED: That the updates to the Committee on the response to COVID-19 be discontinued.

OS71 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH (EWMH) SERVICE – UPDATE

The Executive Director for Children's Community Services, Surrey and Borders NHS Foundation Trust (SABP), the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, the Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, and the Chief Executive, Surrey Wellbeing Partnership, updated the Committee on Mindworks Surrey.

With the aid of presentation slides circulated in advance with the agenda papers, the Committee was advised of the partnership approach of Mindworks and the iThrive framework being used since April 2021. The meeting was informed that the Mindworks contract was for seven years, with an option to extend for a further three years. The meeting was informed that the iThrive framework was replacing the traditional delivery of children and adolescent mental health services.

The Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, outlined the organisations and partners delivering Mindworks and the role of the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust in the development of the framework for Surrey. The meeting was advised that the main Mindworks services were based around seven areas: access and advice; school-based needs; building resilience; intensive interventions (including the children and young people's eating disorder services); crisis admission avoidance; reaching out; and neurodevelopmental services.

The Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, informed the meeting of the ongoing challenge of recruiting staff to the Mindworks service across Surrey, but

indicated that all seven new service areas were being delivered. The Committee was advised of an out-of-hours phone line providing advice to parents and carers of children with neurodevelopmental need, such as autism or ADHD.

The Committee was advised of the school-based needs offer in Surrey, including multiple teams working collectively. The Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, indicated that every district or borough within Surrey had a named primary mental health worker and a community wellbeing lead, and would have a mental health support team. The meeting was advised that the mental health support team for Guildford would be in place in September 2022.

The Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, informed the Committee of the Amplify participation group, designed by young people and led by a young person with expert by experience. The meeting was advised of the Mindworks launch event organised by Amplify and to be held on 14 May 2022 at Sandown Racecourse, Esher.

The Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, confirmed that demand for Mindworks services was increasing and partners were working collectively to reduce waiting times for services.

During the ensuing discussion a number of questions were asked, and clarifications offered:

- In reply to a question from a member of the Committee about the impact of the pandemic, the Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, confirmed an increase in both the number of children presenting in crisis and the complexity of their conditions. She stated that improved collaboration with Mindworks partners meant that children were able to access help much earlier than under the previous CAMHS (children and adolescent mental health services). The Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, outlined the school-based offer of Mindworks in Surrey and the improvements in early intervention. In addition, the Committee was advised of the introduction of more transparent and collaborative governance arrangements.
- In response to questions, the Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, indicated that the Mindworks contract was overspent, and a decision had been taken not to manage financial risk ahead of clinical risk.
- In reply to a question about funding, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, advised that children's eating disorders had seen a threefold increase in referrals during the pandemic. The Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, informed the meeting that there was an ongoing national and regional response to the increase in mental health illness and referred to the flexible response possible under the Mindworks partnership in Surrey. The Chief Executive, Surrey Wellbeing Partnership, advised the Committee that involvement of the voluntary sector through the Mindworks Surrey offer facilitated increased agility and workload sharing between organisations.
- In reply to a question, the Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, stated that waiting times had improved significantly compared with rates from two years previous. The Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, advised that children waiting for diagnosis of a neurodevelopmental disorder were currently waiting too long due to the demand for the service. She expressed confidence that children in a crisis were being seen in a timely way and that children requiring assessment were able to access the broader Mindworks Surrey offer

immediately. In addition, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, informed the meeting that the urgent care and short-term treatment teams had been stepped up during the pandemic.

- A member of the Committee questioned the current vacancy rate and was informed by the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, that staff turnover was approximately 17 percent, compared to a figure of 14 percent for SABP. The Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, stated that the workforce as specified in the Mindworks contract was almost fully recruited but indicated that recruitment was an ongoing challenge.
- The Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, advised the meeting of the opening of a twelve-bed inpatient unit in Surrey at April Cottage, Horley, in the spring of 2023.
- In response to a query, the Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, updated the Committee on discussions at recently introduced regional meetings.
- A member of the Committee noted that the information submitted on the referrals received into Mindworks Surrey from GP practices did not include surgeries in the west of the Borough in Ash and Tongham. The Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, stated that the Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, would look into the matter.
- With reference to the information submitted to the Committee on referrals received into Mindworks Surrey from GP practices, a member of the Committee asked what had been learnt from such data. The Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, indicated that a breakdown of referral information, not based on geographical areas, or a data pack illustrating trends could be provided to Committee members. The Committee was advised that data was usually collated and analysed by service area rather than by GP practice.
- In reply to a question about service challenges, the Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, informed the Committee of the increase since 2020 in the number of young children referred to services, resourcing the expansion of school-based services to primary schools and, following the loss of the universal offer for all families at children's centres across Surrey, long-term investment in prevention services.
- In response to a member of the Committee suggesting the value in apprenticeships, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, advised the meeting that there were a range of roles within the mental health in schools teams that were designed to grow skill and expertise for the future in a manner similar to apprenticeships.
- In reply to questions, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, confirmed that the move from primary to senior school was viewed as significant and acknowledged that strengthening support for children and their families at such a transition was a priority. The Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, stated that information on Mindworks Surrey was updated regularly online and available at www.mindworks-surrey.org.uk.

- In response to a query from a Committee member, the Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, confirmed that references to parents and families included all carers and looked after children.
- With reference to a question about early years intervention and prevention, the Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, indicated that she could circulate the Better Start Programme strategy to Committee members.
- The Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, outlined efforts in Surrey to aid refugee families and children from Ukraine and elsewhere.
- In reply to questions, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, outlined the processes on the pathway to diagnosis of a neurodevelopmental condition and advised that such a diagnosis would ideally take no more than 6-12 months. She indicated the need to take away a request for details of the average wait from referral to neurodevelopmental diagnosis. The Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, confirmed that support was available along the pathway and diagnosis was not the route to support.
- The Committee was informed that cognitive behaviour therapy was one of a range of interventions available to children.
- With reference to every district or borough within Surrey having a named primary mental health worker and a community wellbeing lead, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, confirmed that the primary mental health worker was a point of contact for every school in the cluster and had a role in upskilling and consultation with those in the school system.
- In reply to a question about the transition from children's to adult's services, the Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, indicated the measures in place, including governance and other links with adult mental health services, and the transition service team. The Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, suggested that a future update for the Committee could focus on the 18–25-year-old age group.
- In reply to a question, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, advised the meeting that progress with the adult eating disorder service was on track and suggested that a future update for the Committee could include neurodevelopmental pathway advances.
- In reply to a question on the mental health education of schoolchildren, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, reminded the meeting of the Amplify participation group and its work, especially on social media.
- In reply to a question, the meeting was advised by the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, of professional referral routes and that parents and carers using the contact information on the Mindworks Surrey website would receive a response. In addition, she informed the meeting that sixty-four percent of requests for support came from GP practices.
- In response to a question about information within the presentation submitted to the Committee over video or face-to-face appointments, the Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, indicated that an evaluation of the video and telephone appointments between young people and their child wellbeing practitioners

was in progress. She advised that feedback from Healthwatch Surrey suggested that young people with autism often preferred video meetings.

The Chair thanked the Executive Director for Children's Community Services, SABP, the Director of Children and Young People's Services, SABP, the Children's Emotional Health Alliance Programme Director, SABP, and the Chief Executive, Surrey Wellbeing Partnership, and confirmed that the Committee would welcome a further update in future.

OS72 GUILDFORD AND WAVERLEY COLLABORATION – UPDATE

The Joint Chief Executive of Guildford and Waverley Councils updated the Committee on the two strands of work being undertaken on the collaboration programme: the Inter Authority Agreement (IAA) and the joint shared management team. The Committee was reminded that the heads of terms for the IAA had been agreed recently by full Council and were to be considered by Waverley Borough Council on 26 April 2022. The Joint Chief Executive indicated that if the heads of terms of the IAA were approved by Waverley Borough Council then consultation would begin with senior managers over the future structure of the joint shared management team.

In reply to a question, the Joint Chief Executive indicated that details of options and proposals for the shared management team could not be discussed in a public meeting while the formal HR consultations with employees were underway.

A member of the Committee asked for an indicative timetable for the creation of a joint executive and the appearance of business cases for potential mergers of services or operations. In response, the Joint Chief Executive advised that he expected a joint management team in place by October 2022 and that it would be tasked with prioritisation and presentation of such business cases.

In response to a question from a member of the Committee about arrangements in the period between the departure of the Director of Resources and the establishment of a shared management team, the Joint Chief Executive advised the meeting that discussions were proceeding about possible interim arrangements for a Section 151 Officer for the Council.

The Chair thanked the Joint Chief Executive for his update.

OS73 LEAD COUNCILLOR QUESTION SESSION

The Chair welcomed the Lead Councillor for Economy and reminded the meeting of Councillor John Redpath's areas of responsibility: Economic Development; Social Enterprise; Rural Economy; Heritage and Community Assets; and Customer Service including Web Services. The Chair indicated that customer service would likely be the focus of questions for the Lead Councillor for Economy.

During the ensuing discussion with the Lead Councillor a number of points were made, and responses offered:

- In reply to a request for the priorities for each area of his portfolio, the Lead Councillor for Economy outlined the achievements of the Council's Economic Development team over the past year, including the distribution of several government grant schemes. The Lead Councillor for Economy stated that the connection of rural homes and businesses to highspeed broadband was a priority. With reference to the heritage and community assets element of his portfolio, the Lead Councillor for Economy indicated that options for the future of the heritage service were being prepared. The Lead Councillor for Economy advised the

Committee that he favoured an accessible museum located in one of Guildford's new town centre developments.

- The Committee was informed by the Lead Councillor for Economy that customer services was the most challenging area of his portfolio. He linked the deterioration in the customer service at the Council to cuts to the Council's funding by government and advised that the Future Guildford transformation programme had introduced a single team of twenty-one staff to handle customer enquiries to the organisation, with seventy-five percent of queries handled online. The Lead Councillor for Economy indicated that difficulties staffing the customer service team and insufficient options online were responsible for a shortfall in customer service at the Council. He advised that key performance indicators for the Council's customer service were made available to the public and discussed at the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee.
- The Lead Councillor for Economy indicated he had somewhat limited involvement in social enterprise projects.
- A member of the Committee suggested that, even accepting funding issues and the changes introduced by the Future Guildford transformation programme, there had been a rapid deterioration of Guildford's customer service, to such an extent that the Council was now ranked very low in terms of its customer service. Councillors advised the Lead Councillor for Economy that they were using their own MyGuildford accounts to report constituents' issues and questioned whether there were plans for a version of the MyGuildford portal for Councillors. In reply, the Lead Councillor for Economy suggested the value in Councillors helping residents to use the Council website and register for a MyGuildford account.
- With reference to the Council encouraging the transferral of service demand online, members of the Committee questioned whether the Council could do more to aid the provision of sustainable and reliable broadband. Suggestions were put forward by a member of the Committee that the Local Planning Authority should require provision of broadband to new properties and that the Council should consider involvement in the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme. In addition, another member of the Committee suggested the establishment of a social enterprise company to help solve issues around the provision of broadband. In reply, the Lead Councillor for Economy indicated he would explore the suggestion.
- With reference to the Future Guildford transformation programme, Councillors suggested that Ignite, and consultants in general, had an optimism bias in relation to the public's willingness and keenness to go online, and that household budgeting cuts might lead to less take-up of broadband, especially by vulnerable residents.
- Councillors questioned how written enquiries, both electronic and paper, were dealt with by the Council's customer services, and suggested they were handled differently from phone calls. A member of the Committee asked if residents' email queries were forwarded on or sent direct to services which no longer had dedicated customer service staff and the quality and timeliness of responses therefore varied. In reply, the Lead Councillor for Economy indicated that publication of analytics to inform the public of the best times to call customer services was planned. He indicated that the aim was for customer service staff to answer ninety percent of enquiries themselves. In addition, the Lead Councillor for Economy offered to update Committee members on how email enquiries were handled by individual services.

- The Lead Councillor for Economy advised the Committee that when customer service became part of his portfolio the customer service team had about ten staff, many not fully trained.
- In response to a question, the Lead Councillor for Economy indicated he hoped that Guildford town centre businesses would support the continuation of the Experience Guildford Business Improvement District in the upcoming ballot.
- A member of the Committee advised the meeting that the Council responded to queries on Twitter and Facebook quicker than those made by phone or email.
- With reference to an unanswered online enquiry from a resident about a missed food waste collection, a member of the Committee asked if there were Service Level Agreements for responding to such online forms and enquiries. In response, the Lead Councillor for Economy requested the customer reference number be forwarded to him and asked all Councillors to advise him of such issues.
- With reference to the request from the Lead Councillor for Economy to be advised of customer service issues experienced by residents, members of the Committee questioned why there was need to advise the Lead Councillor for Economy; they suggested the Council should have a process in place to identify any gaps or patterns of failure in customer service. A member of the Committee proposed that the Lead Councillor for Economy ensure officers embed processes to seek out and identify customer service issues.
- The Joint Chief Executive confirmed customer service team recruitment was an issue and advised the meeting of the importance of data to progress improvements.
- Several members of the Committee questioned the need for an opt in tick box to get feedback on an issue reported by residents online. Some Councillors suggested that an opt-in should be the default, while others advised that residents could be legitimately re-contacted with updates on specific enquiries. The Lead Councillor for Economy confirmed he would progress the matter with officers.
- A member of the Committee questioned whether the customer call centre and online methods were suitable for reporting urgent or emergency issues.
- In response to a member of the Committee asking if the Council analysed customer demand at its call centre and reception to help identify customer service gaps online, the Lead Councillor for Economy agreed the importance of such an approach and advocated changes to the Council's online customer service to better identify service demand and further develop the online menu of customer service options.
- Councillors advocated improving the marketing of MyGuildford, the possible value of a targeted direct mail campaign to increase registrations, and banner advertising of MyGuildford on the Council website.
- In response to a query, the Lead Councillor for Economy explained that residents did not need to be on MyGuildford to use the Council website to report an issue.

The Chair thanked the Lead Councillor for Economy for attending and answering questions.

OS74 REVIEW OF VISITOR STRATEGY

The Chair reminded members of the Committee that the item had been deferred because the Lead Councillor for Environment was unable to attend the meeting.

The Committee was advised that the item would be re-scheduled for its next meeting, on 7 June 2022.

OS75 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Senior Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) advised the meeting that since the publication of the agenda two items had been scheduled: the Review of the Council's ownership of Liongate House to July 2022 and the Monitoring of the Council's Air Quality Strategy to November 2022. In addition, the Committee was advised that the quarterly corporate performance monitoring reports currently considered by the Corporate Governance and Standards Committee might be moved across to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme.

The meeting was advised that a report on the Borough's response to refugees (not just those from Ukraine, but Syria, Afghanistan and elsewhere) had been requested by Councillors.

A member of the Committee questioned the advancement of the unscheduled items on the Overview and Scrutiny work programme and was advised that all items were being progressed.

The Committee agreed to add a review of the Dogbusters stray dog service and contract to the Overview and Scrutiny work programme.

The meeting finished at 10.03 pm

Signed

Date

Chairman

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Overview and Scrutiny Report

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Strategic Services Director

Author: Steve Benbough, Strategy and Communications Manager

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Date: 7 June 2022

Review of Visitor Strategy

Executive Summary

The Executive approved a Visitor Strategy 2014-2020 in October 2014. As requested by the Committee, this report presents the strategy and invites comment on its delivery. The report also discusses the next steps to develop a framework for supporting the visitor economy, including the production of a new economic strategy to direct our future approach.

Recommendation to Committee

That the Committee be invited to comment on this report.

Reason(s) for Recommendation:

The Committee has asked to review the Visitor Strategy 2014-2020 as part of its work programme.

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? (delete as appropriate)

No

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides an opportunity to review the former Visitor Strategy 2014-2020 and action plan and consider future support for the visitor economy.

2. Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 Guildford draws in a broad spectrum of leisure and retail visitors, all contributing to the borough's economic vibrance and vitality. Prior to the pandemic, with around three million visitors each year, the visitor economy generated an estimated £340 million income, whilst also supporting around 6,300 jobs for local people.

- 2.2 The visitor economy, therefore, contributes to our objective of ensuring that residents have access to the jobs they need. Our corporate priorities also state that we will support our business community and attract new inward investment.

3. Visitor Strategy 2014-2020

- 3.1 Guildford's beautiful countryside and heritage, together with its extensive retail cultural, sporting and leisure opportunities all help to attract visitors. This makes the visitor sector an important part of the local economy in terms of income, jobs and potential for growth.
- 3.2 In October 2014, the Executive approved a new Visitor Strategy 2014-2020 (attached as Appendix 1) to maximise the positive impacts of the visitor economy and increase visitor expenditure. The overall aim was to identify distinctive selling points for Guildford, build a clear brand and work with stakeholders and partners to deliver a co-ordinated marketing approach.
- 3.3 The strategy set out the following priorities:
- Improve the visitor experience to Guildford.
 - Develop a Guildford visitor economy that is cost effective, long-lasting, potentially self-financing and beneficial to the borough.
 - Raise the profile of Guildford to local, domestic and international visitors to attract a larger share of the tourism market.
 - Celebrate a Guildford festival culture by developing a coordinated programme of events that strengthens the visitor economy.
 - Ensure Guildford's visitor businesses are influencing other organisations' plans to attract investment and enhance the borough visitor economy.
 - Develop the Council and town's heritage offer including development of the castle and museum site and creation of a heritage quarter.
- 3.4 During most of the timeframe of the strategy (2014-2020), the Council had dedicated tourism and economic development teams. Following various staffing reorganisations, these services are no longer provided in the same way and none of the staff involved with developing and implementing the strategy remain. An update on progress against the action plan was produced, but this was some time ago in 2016. However, the main activities in delivering the strategy and other achievements are noted below:
- (a) Development of "Visit Guildford" brand and website.
 - (b) Production of regular promotional publications, including Visit Guildford Destination Guide, Venues Guide, Attractions Guide and Guildford Summer Festival Brochure.
 - (c) Operation of the Tourist Information Centre.

- (d) Delivery, support and promotion of a wide range of events.
 - (e) Improvements to town centre signage.
 - (f) Support for local food producers, including through Farmers' Markets.
 - (g) Continued support for Guildford's Town Centre Guides.
 - (h) Maintaining Purple Flag accreditation and Green Flags for parks.
 - (i) Organising and hosting trips by group travel organisers and overseas delegations.
 - (j) Promotional advertising in many national and international travel publications and attendance at trade shows and forums.
- 3.5 From March 2020, the focus of our support for the local economy and businesses very much centred on our emergency response to the Coronavirus pandemic. This primarily involved promoting and administering several mandatory and discretionary business grant schemes. Having been most severely impacted by the pandemic, the leisure, entertainment, retail and catering sectors would have been amongst the most significant beneficiaries.
- 3.6 As lockdowns eased, we also implemented a wide range of safety and other measures to encourage visitors and shoppers back through government funded programmes such as the Reopening High Street Safely Fund and Welcome Back Fund. Practical measures and events were supported by communication campaigns, including Eat Out to Help Out, # I Support Guildford and Christmas 2020 and 2021. Working in partnership with Experience Guildford, the latest campaign to support the visitor economy, Celebrate Guildford, is running until September 2022 and promotes the wide range of events and activities taking place in the borough through the summer months.
- 4. Future Support for the Visitor Economy**
- 4.1 During the lifetime of the former Visitor Strategy, the Visit Guildford brand has been promoted through several printed publications and advertisements. The most common requests received face-to-face at the Tourist Information Centre are for bus timetables and maps. There are opportunities to reach a wider audience in a more cost-effective way by providing improved support online.
- 4.2 Visitor economies have evolved and we need to change to support our own local sector. The internet boom from 2000 and then social media means that venues can market themselves cheaply online. Anyone with internet access can search a vast amount of information to help them make choices. People increasingly use smart phones to inform their purchases, they trust their peers with websites such as TripAdvisor and they navigate around with Google maps or equivalent.
- 4.3 There have also been changes in the way support to the visitor economy is provided by the Council. As part of Phase B of the Future Guildford

transformation programme, the tourism marketing function transferred to the Strategy and Communications Team. Operational management of the Tourist Information Centre became the responsibility of the Customer and Case Team. A new approach will be needed to provide a modern, digital and online visitor communications and marketing service and we will work closely with partners such as Experience Guildford, Visit Surrey and Surrey Hills Enterprises.

- 4.4 Work is progressing to commission a new longer-term economic strategy for Guildford. This will include chapters to cover important local issues, such as support for gaming and high-tech clusters, rural economy, training and skills and the visitor economy. This will provide the framework for our support of the visitor sector in the coming years. We are aiming for the strategy to be adopted before the end of 2022.
- 4.5 In the shorter-term, we are aligning more closely with Visit Surrey to capitalise on the visitor economy at county level as 'the jewel in Surrey's crown'. Our historic Visit Guildford website is now outdated and unfit for purpose. A new standalone website would cost around £25,000 to set up with further annual support costs. Therefore, we are developing a "site within a site" on the Visit Surrey website to provide greater exposure at reduced cost. The Visit Guildford brand will not be compromised.
- 4.6 Access for visitors, reduced congestion, improved public spaces and better signage will also be important for the future success of our visitor economy. The work on Shaping Guildford's Future will be crucial to supporting the town as a destination that people want to visit in the medium to longer term.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 The Lead Councillors for Environment and Economy have been consulted on this report and approved its submission to the Committee.

6. Key Risks

- 6.1 The visitor economy contributes towards providing residents with the jobs they need and our corporate priorities commit us to supporting our business community and attracting inward investment. Without effective support for the sector, there is a risk that its positive impact will not be maximised.
- 6.2 The internet, social media, smart phones and other technological advances have changed the way people access information. There is a risk that our support and promotion of the visitor economy does not adapt to complement these changes. We intend to outline our approach in a new economic strategy to ensure that we provide a modern, effective and efficient service.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

9. Human Resource Implications

- 9.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report. Any future changes to the service will have regard to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) and may be subject to an equalities impact assessment.

11. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 11.1 There are no climate change or sustainability implications arising from this report.

12. Suggested issues for overview and scrutiny

- 12.1 As requested as part of its work programme, this report gives the Committee the opportunity to comment on the delivery of the Visitor Strategy 2014-2020 and support for the visitor economy in future.

13. Summary of Options

- 13.1 None.

14. Conclusion

- 14.1 Visitors make an important contribution to our local economy and support a significant number of jobs for residents. The Visitor Strategy 2014-2020 set out our framework for building a clear brand for Guildford and working with stakeholders and partners to deliver a co-ordinated marketing approach.
- 14.2 There have been significant changes to the staffing structure at the Council in recent years. There have also been many technological changes impacting on the way people find information. Whilst building on the work of the previous strategy, we need to adapt to reach a wider audience by providing a modernised, improved service with alternative digital and online communications.

15. Background Papers

None

16. Appendices

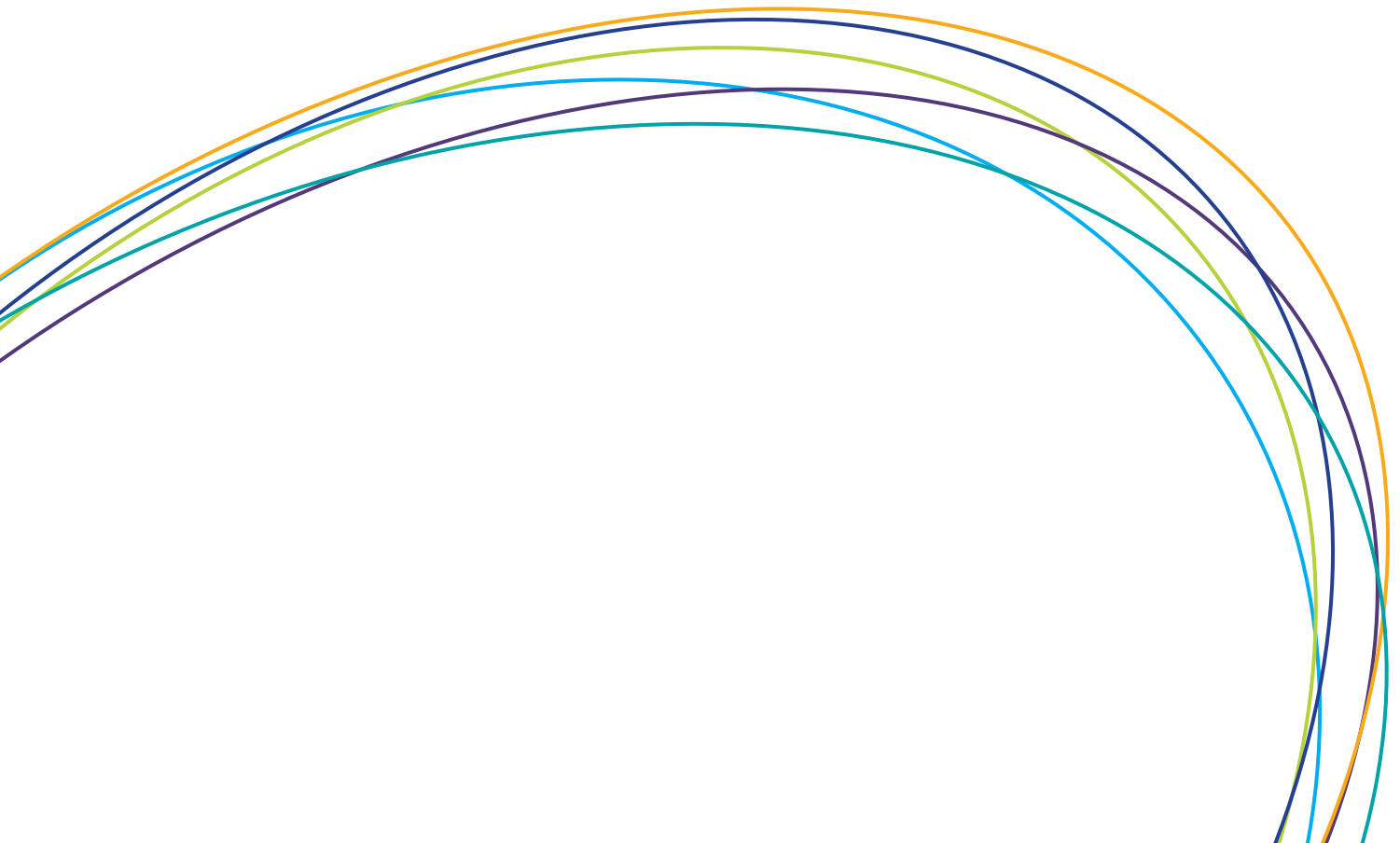
Guildford Borough Visitor Strategy 2014-2020

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GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

Visitor Strategy 2014-2020



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

1.1 Contents

1. Contents and Foreword
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4. Purpose of the Strategy, explaining why we decided to undertake a visitor strategy
5. Context, showing the local, regional and national context in which our visitor economy operates
6. Guildford's Current Position, focusing on the visitor experience we offer across Guildford Borough through our attractions, our rural tourist offer, town centre retail offer and our heritage, sports provision and arts
7. Research Methodology, outlining the background research we reviewed and the new research we commissioned and key findings
8. Monitoring arrangements
9. Delivery Plan, presenting actions that will help deliver the aims of the strategy

1.2 Foreword

Foreword by Cllr Gordon Jackson, Lead member for economic development and tourism.

In developing our Visitor Strategy we have sought to bring together all those with an active interest in the visitor economy to share their thoughts and ideas on how to encourage people to regularly visit Guildford and to ensure that they enjoy the best possible experience.

This Visitor Strategy celebrates what makes Guildford borough a successful and dynamic place to live, work and visit and presents a vision building upon our strengths, making the most of the opportunities offered and tackling the challenges to deliver a sustainable future. Nestling in the heart of the Surrey Hills and close to the Thames Basin Heaths, Guildford, with its rich cultural heritage, and bustling historic town centre, has achieved much success as a visitor destination. The town is one of the top retail destinations outside London, has a regular farmers market, important heritage assets and a large variety of cafes, pubs and restaurants. Nearly 90% of Guildford borough is designated Greenbelt and there are a large number of popular visitor attractions, many of them world class, both within the borough boundaries and a short drive away. There is a vibrant and varied arts and festivals culture for visitors to enjoy. The borough has a rich offering of sports for all ages and abilities as well as outdoor activities such as walking, cycling, golf and many more.

Our strategic aim is to **work together with key stakeholders and the local community to:**

- Actively promote and sustainably develop the visitor economy of the town and the borough emphasising:
 - the wide variety of retail, cultural, leisure and heritage offerings; and
 - the close proximity of a number of world class visitor attractions
- Whilst capitalising upon Guildford's position as:
 - a gateway to the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and
 - an historic, riverside, county town and rural borough, with excellent links to London

I would like to thank everyone who has helped to develop the strategy – the sub groups of the Guildford Business Forum, the University of Surrey, Experience Guildford, Visit Surrey, Surrey County Council and Enterprise M3 LEP. We are also especially grateful to our local interest groups, all of whom have contributed to the strategy.



Gordon Jackson
Lead Councilor for
Business and Tourism

2. Introduction

2.1 Introduction to the Visitor Strategy

This Guildford Visitor Strategy is primarily concerned to ensure that the town and surrounding area grows and flourishes as a visitor destination. It is not a tourism marketing plan although it does touch on marketing issues. Its rationale lies in a recognition that it is the quality of the total visitor experience that makes for a successful visitor destination - the welcome afforded to visitors, good customer service and well trained staff, ease of access, quality of accommodation, appeal of attractions, ambience and character, safety, maintenance of environment and supporting infrastructure.

Delivering the best possible visitor experience requires the active engagement and co-operation of a wide range of individuals and businesses. It is not something that can be done in isolation by Guildford Borough Council acting alone. The visitor strategy needs to link to other initiatives underway and also win the support of the various stakeholders involved including the tourism industry and the local community. This strategy is about establishing an agreed framework for working in partnership to achieve our strategic aim.

2.2 The Strategy is based on information drawn from the following sources:

- An analysis and review of available statistics and research on visitors to Guildford and the surrounding area
- A review of relevant strategies and policy papers pertaining to the area
- A series of workshops with different groups of stakeholders discussing visitor issues, sustainability and the branding of Guildford as a destination
- An online questionnaire survey of residents and visitors to the area
- A customer survey of 150 respondents on the High Street and at the Spectrum Leisure Centre
- A series of one to one interviews with key stakeholders in the tourism sector, local authorities and other agencies
- Feedback sessions at the Attractions and Conferencing sub-groups of the Guildford Business Forum

2.3 Links to Council and other partner strategies

The strategy is informed by and builds on a number of other studies and strategies including:

- The Guildford Economic Strategy (2013)
- Guildford Borough Councils Corporate Plan 2013-2016
- Guildford's Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2026, October 2009
- Guildford Heritage Forward Plan (2013)
- The evidence base supporting the emerging Local Plan
- Visit Surrey – Cambridge Impact Studies
- The Surrey Strategic Partnership Plan (2010) and Surrey's Rural Strategy 2010-2015
- Guildford's Cultural Strategy, 2008-2012
- Enterprise M3 LEP's Strategic Economic Plan, 2014
- Guildford Retail and Leisure Strategy 2011
- Tourism South East Report the Value of Tourism in Guildford Borough 2012



3. Executive Summary

The visitor economy is a sector with great potential and we have set ourselves an objective of increasing visitor spend by 50% by 2020. This strategy is intended to be a road map to unite all those working to support the local visitor economy to ensure that Guildford keeps pace with and indeed exceeds national growth. We want to increase the number of visitors coming to the borough, encourage them to stay longer and to spend more when they are here. To deliver this increase we will need a step change in the way the public, private and not for profit sectors work and plan together. We will need to maximise investment from all available sources and ensure that the overall return in investment benefits businesses dependent on the visitor economy and achieves this growth in a way that balances the needs of residents and the environment.

The visitor economy is a wider and more inclusive concept than tourism, embracing the total visitor experience and recognising that many visitors may be relatively local. It is not just about individual experiences and tourist businesses such as accommodation and attractions, although these are important aspects. The visitor economy is also about countryside, culture, heritage, sport and retail. It is about creating and maintaining a sense of place, delivering good service and communicating clear messages about the borough and the special experience we have to offer.

People visit Guildford for many reasons. While visitors are traditionally defined as short-stay, day visitors, or business or conference delegates, we also see local residents, students and their visiting friends and families as contributors.

Much consultation was undertaken for this strategy (section 7 research methodology) and it was generally recognised that Guildford's current visitor offer is wide and varied. Key stakeholders are very proud of the range and quality of what is on offer for visitors. Guildford's top USPs (Unique Selling Points) were identified as being:

- A rich heritage offer
- Great shopping
- Beautiful surrounding countryside with areas of outstanding natural beauty
- The river & canals
- The wide leisure offer (sports, arts and culture).

Many of those interviewed for the strategy, suggested that what is lacking is a coordinated programme of events to maximise the offer, along with a coordinated marketing strategy to focus attention on the areas that need more promotion.

Our Priorities

Our priorities are to:

- Improve the visitor experience to Guildford
- Develop a Guildford visitor economy that is cost effective, long-lasting, potentially self-financing and beneficial to the Borough
- Raise the profile of Guildford to local, domestic and international visitors to attract a larger share of the tourism market
- Celebrate a Guildford festival culture by developing a coordinated programme of events that strengthens the visitor economy
- Ensure Guildford's visitor businesses are influencing other organisation's plans to attract investment and enhance the borough visitor economy
- Develop the Council and town's heritage offer including development of the castle and museum site and creation of a heritage quarter

The Local Plan

Guildford's businesses have been keen to point out the importance of reflecting the needs of the visitor economy at a strategic level. They want the Council's emerging Local Plan to address spatial needs and the Draft Local Plan contains policies that seek to support the rural and visitor sectors. They want Guildford Borough Council to recognise the unique mix of retail, heritage and environment needed to grow the visitor economy, and want their development needs for diversification and alternative use of premises to be considered favourably where there is a good case to justify it.

Key Focus Points

- Take a lead to develop a shared long term marketing strategy for the Borough, with a strong brand and programme of events promoting the town and rural hinterland, taking more advantage of what is already on offer through attractions and festivals. This will help raise our profile in to a higher league.
- Give greater emphasis to the benefits of the visitor economy in the Council's planning process when considering applications from visitor businesses in the town and in the countryside.
- Better and more joined up branding and dedicated website for Guildford complementing that of Visit Surrey.
- Better signage in the town and on surrounding highways.

How will we get there?

Our key actions for the first year will be to:

Join up our marketing offer, developing a Guildford brand through the 'Visit Guildford' concept but working closely with Visit Surrey, capitalising on our well-developed and mature tourism product and giving consideration to our festival and event programme.

Develop a 'Visit Guildford' website that reflects a visitor brand and not that of a local authority, along with a good and reliable IT booking service and expanding the social media offer to reach new audiences

Find a mechanism to fund overall research and marketing material, gaining a more accurate profile of who visits Guildford and what they do when here, a better understanding of trend information on the sector, explore options on a new destination management organisation, one that will deliver real results in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations involved in the visitor economy.

Develop the outline project and grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the museum and castle development and heritage hub project.

Work with Surrey County Council to improve signage on major routes into the borough from the A3 and in the town itself.

**Visit
Guildford**
In the Heart of Surrey



4. The Purpose of the Guildford Visitor Strategy

4.1 Why develop a Visitor Strategy?

This strategy is being developed because the visitor economy is one of the fastest growing sectors in the borough and it is able to create new jobs quickly, meeting one of our key objectives of the current economic strategy. In addition, there is considerable pressure on Council budgets, and we need to be clear about our priorities and look at how we help to grow and develop our visitor economy through access to funding so that it strengthens Guildford's performance as a visitor destination, delivers economic impact, and enriches the quality of life that borough residents experience.

4.2 Reflecting the national picture

Nationally the visitor economy in England is worth £127bn and is the third largest employer in the UK supporting 2.7million jobs (or 9.1 % of total employment). Domestic and inbound visitors spent over £84bn in England in 2012, a 10 % increase on 2011 . Over the past two years since 2010, year on year growth has averaged 8.7 %, against a projected target of 5 %, and well ahead of performance in the wider economy. It is expected to grow by a further £12bn by 2020 and support an additional 225,000 jobs.

Tourism is a very important sector for Guildford's economy employing over 5,000 people and generating £305 million for local businesses in 2012. Total tourism related expenditure supports 6.3% of total employment in Guildford. Increasing our visitor offer and improving their experience is likely to bring additional wealth to the borough and help create more jobs for local people.

We want to mirror Visit England's compelling arguments about supporting the sector which are that:

- A thriving visitor economy generates visitor spend from outside the area on accommodation, retail, transport, food and drink and attractions.
- Visitor spend generated also helps to maintain an environment that people want to visit, live and work in. It can help build a strong sense of place and local identity making an area attractive for businesses to locate and invest in.
- Visitor spending supports future growth and preserving heritage and sustaining local communities, which is particularly important in rural areas.
- The Visitor economy can boost exports. International tourism is effectively about international sales activity.
- It is a misconception that the Visitor Economy is about 'holidays'. It is about businesses, employment, communities and the quality of life of local people.

4.3 Visitor statistics for Guildford

The last survey of detailed tourism spend in Guildford Borough was carried out by Tourism South East as part of its paper 'The Economic Impact of Tourism Guildford 2011, which showed that overnight visitors created 32 per cent of tourism spend and day visitors brought in 68 per cent. Although the data needs revision to 2012/3, there was some indication of a decline in the number of visitors, but with a higher spend per head, although this needs to be measured across a much wider timescale. Variables such as weather conditions (there have been a run of poor summers) and the overall economic environment would have an impact on this data.

The new Luxury Goods Survey (2013) identified Guildford as the premier location of luxury retail outside London with retail contributing £900 million to the Borough economy in 2012 (Experian).

Guildford Borough has an enviable range of assets for the visitor, without having one specific high profile attraction (with the exception of Wisley RHS gardens which attracted over 1m visitors last year (2013) and was ranked 14th most visited in the UK), but much more is possible with the right promotion, development and co-ordination. The table below provides a guide to some of the statistics collected by the sector, representing some, but not all, of the visitor attractions on offer across Guildford Borough.

Attractions - Visitor Numbers and Entry Fee							
Local Authority: Guildford							
		Number of Visitors					Entry Fee (£)
Description	Type	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2011
RHS Garden Wisley	Gardens	802,179	814,220	964,212	803,986	1,032,872	9.50
Clandon Park	Historic Houses / Castles	46,769	43,013	50,703	47,855	49,359	7.70
Hatchlands Park	Historic Houses / Castles	50,014	50,550	57,723	55,893	59,463	6.30
Shalford Mill	Historic Houses / Castles	-	2,582	2,834	2,917	3,005	2.50
Army Medical Services Museum	Museums / Art Galleries	9,818	13,521	8,390	12,207	11,972	-
Dapdune Wharf	Visitor / Heritage Centre	-	15,633	16,900	17,211	19,769	3.50
The Spike Guildford	Visitor / Heritage Centre	-	-	1,020	-	1,152	3.50
Source: Visit England Annual Survey of Visits to Visitor Attractions							
*The Watts Gallery was closed for renovation for part of 2008 until 2011 with limited visitor access							
Watts Gallery*	Museum / Art Galleries	22,402	12,950	6,443	6,992	40,406	6.50
Local Authority: Guildford Heritage Buildings							
		Number of Visitors					Entry Fee (£)
Description	Type	2009 - 2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	
Museum	Museums / Art Galleries	10329	9780	13843	12662	12346	Free
Undercroft	Historic Houses / Castles	1921	1885	2319	3142	3176	Free
Castle	Historic Houses / Castles	7806	7218	10108	9674	10421	3.50 or £1.50 child/concession
Wanborough Barns	Visitor / Heritage Centre	No Information this year	2490	2000	3800	3800	Free
Guildford House	Visitor / Heritage Centre	102823	68044	135787	136473	127006	Free

4.3 Visitor statistics for Guildford (Cont.)

Overall, an estimated 315,000 staying trips were spent in Guildford in 2012, of which around 223,000 were made by domestic visitors (70 %) and 92,000 by overseas visitors (30 %). Compared to 2011, domestic overnight trips increased by 8.3 % and inbound overnight trips increased by 2.2 %.

Despite a growth in the volume of overnight trips spent in Guildford, the average duration of those trips shortened, leading to a fall in the number of actual visitor nights spent in Guildford. Staying trips resulted in an estimated 1,195,000 visitor nights in Guildford, a decrease of 1.5 % compared to 2011. The average trip duration for a domestic overnight visitor reduced from 2.87 nights in 2011 to 2.65 nights in 2012. The average trip duration for a visitor from overseas reduced from 6.91 nights in 2011 to 6.58 nights in 2012.

Domestic overnight visitors spent more on their trip in 2012 than in 2011 leading to a 15.6 % increase in trip expenditure (from an average of £163.30 per person per trip to £174.41 per person per trip). Overseas visitor expenditure increased by a smaller margin, up 2 %. Overall staying visitors spent in total £84.6 million on their trip, up by 7.8 % compared to 2011.

New data from the Great Britain Day Visitor Survey (GBDVS) and our own analysis suggest that approximately 4,470,000 tourism day trips were made to Guildford (lasting more than 3 hours and taken on an irregular basis) in 2012, 15.3 % higher than the volume estimated for 2011.

4.4 How the Visitor Strategy supports other council strategies

The new visitor strategy supports several existing council strategies and those of other partners, including:

- Guildford's Community strategy
- Guildford's Economic Strategy and Corporate Plan
- Guildford's Local Plan
- EM3 Local Enterprise Partnership's Economic Strategic Plan

5. The Context for the Visitor Economy

It is important to understand the context in which the Guildford visitor economy operates. This section offers county, regional and national context for Guildford Borough's own position.

5.1 Surrey as a Visitor Destination

Surrey County Council commissioned some research on the visitor economy of the county in 2012 and is currently preparing a strategy to address the findings. The research points to the conclusion that Surrey is not perceived as a holiday destination because of its proximity to the London conurbation and historic perceptions of being 'suburbia'.

It suggests that three 'products' form the core of Surrey's leisure visitor offer. North Surrey has a strong product centred around the River Thames; South Surrey is dominated by the Surrey Hills AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and extensive AGLV (Area of Great Landscape Value) that border it. It is encouraging to note that the research shows the third product to be 'The County Town of Guildford'.

The research also notes the strong National Trust 'cluster' of stately homes and iconic open spaces, many of which are fortunately situated in Guildford Borough, plus a significant number of conference venues which have established Surrey as a venue of choice for many corporate events and functions and suggests these strong tourism products need to be thoughtfully differentiated and matched to the relevant consumer segments. They recommend a focused piece of consumer research testing product knowledge and interest to inform targeted marketing promotions in the future. Our delivery plan recognises this point and our plans for a marketing strategy include research into the needs of different interest groups including overseas visitors, business visitors etc. and designing and delivering specific campaigns to maximise opportunities.

5.2 Background and opportunities for Guildford's visitor industry within the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)

The LEP's main focus for the visitor economy is the provision of a Major Events Space to support business tourism. This resulted from its gap analysis within the Enterprise M3 area. Such venues can act as a key attractor to the region, bringing local, regional, national and international delegates to the area, ultimately generating a wide range of outputs and impacts beneficial to the area. It is unlikely that Guildford Borough will be able to host such a venue, but its existence will offer further opportunities for Guildford's visitor facilities to attract business visitors to the Borough and enjoy all it has to offer and local visitor businesses should be planning for its arrival. This is being tested by a LEP sponsored research study on demand and accommodation capacity that is due to be completed by December 2014.

5.3 Enterprise M3 and the rural visitor economy

However, there is another strand to the LEP's rural and visitor economy agenda that is ideal for Guildford Borough's visitor businesses. Enterprise M3 as part of its £43 million of European Structural Funds Allocation has been allocated £4.3 million of European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) funding for the area from 2014-2020. EAFRD is aimed at developing business and skills in rural areas and can be used to contribute to four main areas of activity:

- Building knowledge and skills in rural areas
- Funding new, and developing non-agricultural, micro, small and medium sized rural Business
- Funding small scale renewable and broadband investments in rural areas; and
- Supporting tourism activities in rural areas.

There are opportunities that businesses in the visitor sector might want to explore. An evidence based bid to the LEPs' local growth fund, demonstrating how it can support rural regeneration and provide further jobs focusing on some or all of the four areas of activity listed above should be considered. This is included in the strategy's delivery plan.



Albury Organic Vineyard

5.4 The value of heritage attractions to the visitor economy nationally

Research by Visit England shows that 40% of overseas leisure visitors cite heritage as the primary motivation for their trip to the UK – more than any other single factor. Figures show that £12.4bn is spent not just at heritage attractions (e.g. entrance fees, gifts and retail etc.) but also broader spending ‘motivated’ by those visits (e.g. eating out or accommodation). Of that figure, £7.3bn is based on visits to the ‘built’ heritage attractions and museums and £5.1bn based on visits to natural heritage, including parks and the countryside. With its attractive built and rural heritage offer, Guildford Borough is ideally placed to increase its share of this market.

Guildford has a very strong heritage offer that drives economic growth in its own right and makes an active contribution to the visitor economy. In addition to regular public openings of heritage attractions, the borough runs a highly successful heritage open days event each year, with over 100 events in 2013.

Guildford Borough Council is developing a heritage quarter, centred on the castle and museum and stretching between Racks Close, the High Street, Quarry Street and Tunsgate. The concept plays a key role in the Guildford Town Centre Vision and includes the development of the castle and museum site, the subject of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. This will create a combined attraction, entered through the Castle gardens, that will tell the town’s story and signpost visitors to other heritage attractions. In time, the river offer could also be included. A broader compelling promotion of wider heritage and historical associations within the borough will be a key component of our overall destination marketing plan



5.5 Development and Planning considerations

This strategy is being produced at a very opportune time as Guildford Borough Council is developing its Local Plan that will consider the spatial needs of the borough for the coming years. The National Policy Planning Framework that guides the development of the Local Plan recommends that key players in the visitor economy seek a constructive dialogue with their local planning authority during the development of the Local Plan.

Guildford’s visitor economy businesses have been keen to point out the importance of reflecting the needs of the visitor economy at a strategic level. They want the emerging Local Plan to address the spatial needs of the visitor economy and the Draft Local Plan does contain policies that seek to support the rural and visitor sectors. They want Guildford Borough Council to recognise the unique mix of retail, heritage and environment needed to grow the visitor economy, and want their development needs for diversification and alternative use of premises to be considered favourably where there is a good visitor economic case to justify it. This is included in the strategy’s delivery plan.



6. Guildford's current visitor offer

What does Guildford have to offer?

Guildford is the Historic County Town of Surrey and is 27 miles southwest of central London on the A 3 trunk road, mid-way between London and Portsmouth. The town has Saxon roots and historians attribute its location to the existence of a gap in the North Downs where the River Wey was forded by the Harrow Way. The building of the Wey Navigation and the Basingstoke Canal connected Guildford to a network of waterways that aided its prosperity. In the 20th century, the development of University of Surrey and Guildford Cathedral were added to the town's attractiveness as a visitor destination.

In the 21st century Guildford is a bustling English town, with a High Street paved with granite setts often referred to as cobbles.

Guildford has a general street market on North Street held on Fridays and Saturdays. A farmers' market is usually held on the first Tuesday of each month on the High Street. The town has the only remaining Tourist Information Centre in Surrey. It is a Visit England Partner offering a full service.

Over 90% of Guildford Borough lies within the greenbelt including the Surrey Hills AONB and significant areas of lowland heath with Special Protection Status (SPA). This provides excellent opportunities for walkers, cyclists and eco-tourism. Guildford Borough has staged both the Tour of Britain and Ride London events and in the University of Surrey Sports Park has outstanding sporting and leisure facilities



Guildford House, Tourist Information Centre and Art Gallery



Guildford Tourist Information Centre strikes Gold

The Guildford Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is celebrating after recently winning Gold for Destination of the Year from the Tourist Network in spring 2014.

The Tourist Network Awards recognise attractions and destinations that are committed to providing the best service and hospitality and, of course, a fantastic experience for visitors.

Guildford House has achieved VAQAS accreditation, under Visit England's Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme.



Newlands Corner in the Surrey Hills

6.2 Guildford borough attractions within and around Guildford town centre

Of Guildford's many attractions the following are of particular note.

- Dapdune Wharf (National Trust) with museum, visitor centre and half hour boat trips along the River Wey.
- Guildford Castle – restored in 2004 with the installation of a first floor – rooftop viewing platform. Managed by Guildford Heritage.
- Guildford Cathedral.
- Guildford Museum – managed by Guildford Heritage.
- The Guildhall – ICONIC 16th and 17th century building of great historic interest. Formally a courtroom and council chamber available for private hire.
- Guildford House Art Gallery – the home of the Borough art collection and with a constantly changing programme of temporary exhibitions – craft shop, café and TIC.
- Guildford Spectrum and Lido one of the most important leisure centres in the southeast with 1.7 visitors last year. Owned by Guildford Borough Council and managed by Freedom Leisure.
- G Live – Less than 3 years old, the entertainment centre can hold 1000 seated, and 1700 seated/standing. The flexible space is also perfect for exhibitions and available for corporate hire. G live attracts national and international artists to the area and covers music of all genre, comedy and musical shows.
- Yvonne Arnaud Theatre – an eclectic mix of drama including their own renowned productions and touring shows (many pre-west end) with leading names and quality theatre.
- The Electric Theatre owned and managed by Guildford Borough Council is a vibrant community venue on the riverside, with a varied programme of theatre, film, music, comedy and family events.



Guildford Cathedral consecrated in 1961 and is important location for arts and music events



6.3 Guildford borough attractions outside Guildford town centre

The rural hinterland surrounding the town also has a wide range of attractions to entice visitors. These include:

- RHS Wisley – key national attraction with over 1 million visitors a year.
- Wey & Arun Canal – part of a project to re-connect the Wey and Arun Canal – Starts with the Wey-South Path by the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre and joins with the River Arun in Sussex.
- Watts Gallery – a unique gallery built by G F Watts for his own work – a collection of international renown (Obama used Watts' HOPE in this election campaign), also café, gift shop, Watts Cemetery Chapel and now mid-project to return Limnerslease to its former glory (George Watt's former home).
- Clandon Park – National Trust – Palladian Mansion once the home of the Onslow Family
- Hatchlands Park – National Trust – houses the Cobbe Collection of rare musical instruments
- Loseley Park – privately owned mansion built in the reign of Elizabeth I, café, gift shop and rose garden



The RHS Wisley gardens is the second most visited paid entry garden in the UK

6.4 Other key attractions, outside Guildford Borough in neighbouring boroughs

Guildford is very fortunate with its location. As well as being close to London and enjoying easy access to attractions in the Capital, there are a number of other venues close by that attract visitors. Many of these visitors are also attracted by a trip to Guildford and more could be encouraged to do so in the future. The key attractions located close-by include:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| • Hampton Court | • Thorpe Park |
| • Virginia Water | • Chessington World of Adventures |
| • Windsor Castle | • Epsom Downs, Sandown Park, and Ascot Racecourses |
| • Legoland | |
| • Polesden Lacey | |
| • The Lightbox – Woking | |



Polesden Lacey, a beautiful Edwardian house based in Surrey Hills surrounded by wonderful views and acres of countryside. Known for glittering Gold Room used to amaze kings and queens.



6.5 Culture, Festivals and Major Events

Guildford Borough boasts a wide range of festivals and events. The Tourist Information Centre runs a Box Office service for events large and small within Guildford Borough and the surrounding county, including the following:

- The biennial International Music Festival (held in 2013, and again in 2015)
- Guildford Spring Music Festival
- The International Surrey Hills Music Festival
- Guildford Summer Festival (runs from the end of June to early August)
- Guildford Fringe Festival (run since 2013)
- Surrey County Show
- Music festivals in Stoke Park
- Guildford Beer Festival
- Guildford Cricket Festival
- Guildford Book Festival – October
- Surrey Hills Wood Fair



6.6 Sporting attractions

There are a number of major sporting events on Guildford Borough's annual calendar, including:

- Surrey Half Marathon (Mar)
- Prudential Ride London – Surrey Classic
- Shere Hill Climb
- Womens Rugby World Cup in 2013
- Racketophon World Championship in 2015
- World Lacrosse Championships in 2017

6.7 Performances -amateur and professional

The area has a large number of professional and amateur groups of musicians, actors and choirs providing a rich choice of events. In addition to the main entertainment venues (G Live, Yvonne Arnaud and The Electric Theatre), Guildford Cathedral and Holy Trinity Church are frequently used for choirs and orchestras (and occasionally drama). The Boileroom and The Star Inn as well as other pubs and clubs have regular live music events. The borough has excellent outdoor settings for theatre such as Castle Grounds, Clandon, Hatchlands, Loseley House, Guildford Cathedral, The Law College and the town centre itself.

6.8 Hotels

Guildford has a good range of accommodation and is particularly strong in supplying the business market. However, capacity is quite stretched at peak times

Guildford Urban Area	Radisson Blue	183 rooms	4*
	Mandolay Hotel	72 rooms	4*
	Angel Hotel	19 rooms	4*
	YMCA	116 rooms	4*
	Holiday Inn	168 rooms	4*
	Asperion	4 rooms	4*
	Premier Inn	114 Doubles/ family rooms	Budget
	Travelodge	8 DB disabled 79 Double 65 Family rooms Total 152 rooms	Budget
Elsewhere in the Borough	Legacy Hogs Back	65 rooms	4*
	Legacy Thatchers	87 rooms	4*
	Asperion Hillside	15 rooms	4*
	Manor House Newlands Corner	50 rooms	3*

The University of Surrey has 1500 rooms available but only during university holiday times and not at term times. This allows venues such as Surrey Sports Park to hold big events out of term time as they have this accommodation on their doorstep for teams, and use the nearby Holiday Inn for VIPs. There are a number of Bed & Breakfast (B&B) options in the area too.

There is a distinct shortage of rooms within the town centre that would provide accommodation within walking distance of the larger conference facilities i.e. G Live and Mandolay (the latter can accommodate 500 delegates for a conference but only have 72 rooms). This shortage has been identified as an issue by stakeholders and is something they would like to see addressed through the Local Plan process. It is highlighted as a priority area in our action plan.

Theatres

Yvonne Arnaud seats: Maximum seats in theatre 600

Electric Theatre: Maximum seats 210. (Usually 180 then can provide another 30 if open up the band stand pit)

7. Research Methodology

Guildford borough's Visitor Strategy has been developed in close consultation with key stakeholders. The Council has worked hard to ensure that the voices of the local community, industry sectors, and businesses are heard and considered.

Existing information on Guildford's visitor economy was reviewed and studied. Local, regional and national reports and consultation material have informed the strategy and where there were gaps, new information was commissioned.

The Strategy was compiled taking account of both qualitative and quantitative research and the following research and key consultation exercises:

7.1 Our Research

Existing information from a wide range of relevant reports and research was reviewed including reports from Visit England, Enterprise M3 LEP, Surrey County Council, The Cambridge model analysis for Guildford (2012), and Guildford's Economic Strategy (2013). This national, regional and local information helped inform the context of the strategy.

The Marketing Guildford Benchmarking Survey (Feb 2006) was also revisited.

A visitor economy questionnaire was devised and used for 150 visitor interviews in the town centre and at the Spectrum leisure centre to gauge resident and visitor experience of the current Guildford offer. This helped us to see how perceptions and experiences of visitors had changed and to understand if new significant issues have arisen since the last study.

A further online survey was created and undertaken using the online tool, Survey Monkey. This was used to consult to a wider audience, including local residents. Links to the survey were also sent to Parish Councils, residents groups, housing associations and other local organisations.

7. Research Methodology and Findings Cont.

7.2 The findings from the new research in 2014

Most of those surveyed came from the local area. Recurring themes from the previous survey in 2006 were that shopping was seen as good and often the reason for a visit to the town centre. Things that people valued about Guildford in 2006 and still do today include the excellent range of things to do in Guildford borough from leisure activities to arts and culture events. The main issues in need of improvement in 2006 were parking and congestion and they remained the top priorities in 2014. The countryside seems to be of higher importance in 2014 than it was in 2006 – but as the surveys are not directly comparable, it is not possible to draw definitive conclusions on this point.

Location of 134 respondents

67 Guildford Borough

48 Surrey

6 International

13 Outside Surrey



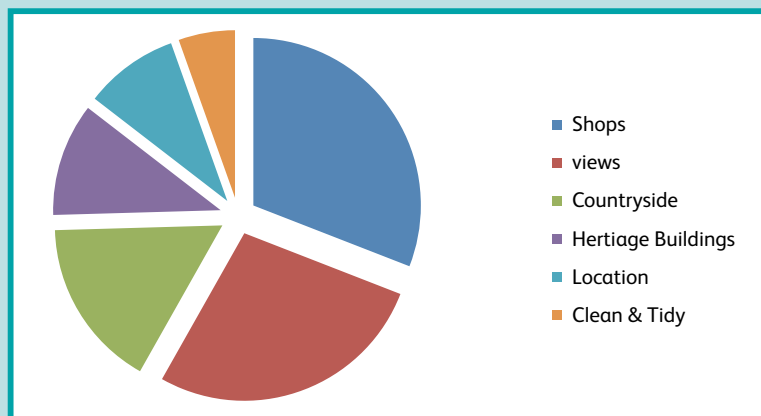
Respondents were asked about the best and worst things about Guildford and the findings were as outlined below:

The best things about Guildford:

Shops 17 %
Scenery 15 %
Countryside 9 %
Heritage buildings 6 %
Location/access to London 5 %
Clean & tidy 3 %

Other positive comments:

Cobbles (setts), Cathedral, Pretty town, Mix of attractions, Nice place to live, Arts & culture

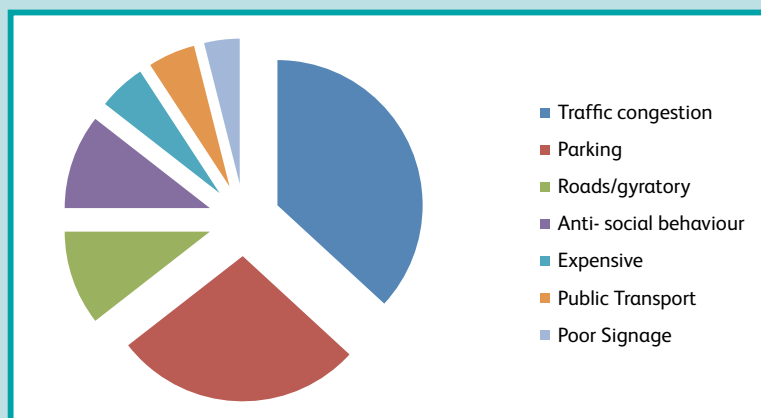


The worst things about Guildford:

Traffic congestion 28 %
Parking 21 %
Roads/gyratory 8 %
Anti-Social Behaviour 8 %
Expensive 4 %
Public Transport 4 %
Poor Signage 3 %

Other comments:

Policies of the council such as planning or licensing, Too hilly, cleanliness, No John Lewis, Needs more open spaces.



Poor access into and around Guildford has been an issue for many years and Guildford Borough Council recognises this issue and is working with the authorities responsible for transport on projects to reduce congestion in the town and on the A3. Funds have already been secured through the LEP's 'Growth Deal'. Our priority is to ensure that the needs of this sector are made known to Surrey County Council, Enterprise M3 LEP, and the Highways Agency. The negative impact of poor transport on the visitor economy is evident and Guildford Borough Council will reflect the importance of this issue to the visitor economy sector to responsible agencies in a bid to secure resources to improve transport infrastructure.

7.3 Consultation

A consultation event was held with key stakeholders at the Guildhall in April 2014 to gather their views. The group did a SWOT analysis of the sector in Guildford, an exploration of the USP of the borough and a critique of the key barriers to future success. 60 attended representing the public, private and voluntary sector.

Results of the SWOT analysis

Strengths identified: Countryside, heritage offer, shopping offer, safe clean town, the river, good transport links with London,

Weaknesses identified: Traffic congestion, confusing signage - especially for long-term parking and brown signs on A3, lack of strong branding/mixed brandings, poor image (commuterville),

Opportunities include: More joined up /professional branding project, better information about countryside offer, work with Travel Smart on better signage project, open up opportunities on the river, more/improve festivals and arts offer, more strategic approach to monitoring research/stats for Guildford's visitor economy, better use of the university and Sports Park for sporting events.

Threats include: Perceived as expensive, lack of budget accommodation bed space, lack of resources, poor perception of visitor economy by residents, lack of understanding/support of visitor economy in planning policies

Guildford's top USP (Unique Selling Points) were identified at the Consultation Event in April as being:

- Rich heritage and history offer
- A great shopping offer
- Beautiful surrounding countryside with areas of outstanding natural beauty
- The river
- The wide leisure offer (sports, arts and culture mentioned)

There were group discussions at the event. In answer to how can all stakeholders boost visitor numbers and spend, the following ideas were offered:

- Joining up our marketing offer, developing a Guildford brand through the 'Visit Guildford' concept, capitalising on our well developed and mature tourism product that is not always replicated in other UK areas – but the joining up of some areas and sectors (such as heritage offering and accommodation and retail) to enhance its effectiveness in terms of marketing. Finding a mechanism to fund overall research and marketing material, gaining a more accurate profile of who visits Guildford and what they do when here, develop trend information on the sector, oversee the sector in partnership with public, private and voluntary organisations involved in the visitor economy
- Developing a 'Visit Guildford' website that reflects a visitor brand and not that of a local authority, along with a good and reliable IT booking service and expanding the social media offer to reach new audiences
- Improving signage on major routes into the borough from the A3 and in the town itself
- Getting local residents to be ambassadors for the town, surrounding countryside and all its varied visitor offers. Encouraging people to be proud of Guildford and tell visitors about it
- Improving the visitor experience (areas mentioned included Festivals, contemporary culture, capitalising on major sporting events) and expand the audience that Guildford appeals and reaches to – providing an all year round, sustainable and high quality customer base, benefitting more of our partners

Several of the points raised have been reflected in the delivery plan including the need to work in partnership on a Guildford Brand, and organise a combined marketing strategy with all partners. Exploring the options for a jointly funded visitor management structure for Guildford also features in the delivery plan and models discussed include a Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) a 'T' BID or a community interest company. Actions have also been included to provide a more joined up offer for the visitor through ICT, website and social media.

7.4 One to One interviews with key stakeholders

A series of one to one interviews led by the lead councillor was conducted with key stakeholders (16 businesses and organisations in total) during the period April to June 2014 to gather their inputs. These interviews were designed to learn more about their businesses, understand their priorities and any barriers to growth and testing our assumptions on what should be in our delivery plan.

The key findings from the one to one interviews are that businesses:

- Are feeling more optimistic about the future
- Are complimentary about Guildford Borough Council's support for the visitor economy
- Highlighted the impact of internet /mobile technology on their businesses

The barriers to growth identified by these businesses are:

- Difficulties with the planning system – some think the response is too slow and that officers do not understand their issues
- The lack of funding and support for small and medium sized visitor businesses , as well as the tourist industry in general
- Confusion over who is responsible for what and the remit of different organisations
- An increase in competition – some competitors are using the internet more aggressively and promoting themselves better than local attractions

The key requirements visitor economy businesses are seeking from Surrey County Council include:

- Better leadership on Rural and Visitor economy
- Better 'brown' directional signage (recognising that a review is underway)
- More investment and support for the visitor economy

The top priorities visitor economy businesses have for Guildford Borough Council are:

- Better branding and website for Guildford and Surrey
- Better signage for roads in the town and on surrounding highways
- Recognition of the importance of the Visitor Economy in the Local Plan

Several of the points raised have been reflected in the delivery plan including the need for all parties to be clear about their role in a marketing strategy to avoid duplication. Raising the profile of Guildford's rural food and wine producers to local and domestic customers has also been included in the delivery plan, as has preparing an evidence based business case for the Local Enterprise Partnership, the LEADER programme, and Surrey County Council to attract funding to support Guildford's growing visitor economy.

7.5 Presentations to Sub-Groups of the Guildford Business Forum

A number of presentations were given to relevant sub-groups of the Guildford Business Forum in May and June 2014 (Attractions and Conferences) to test the emerging vision and priorities, and seek their help in developing an action plan. The top four priorities identified at these meetings were:

- Improved 'brown signs' for Guildford (and signage generally)
- Create an overarching 'Brand' for Guildford Borough
- Improve infrastructure – especially the Gyratory around town and A3 traffic issues
- Work together to support and develop the arts, festival and events' offer of Guildford borough

Guildford Borough Council's Economic Development team is very keen to work more closely with all council departments to streamline Council efforts to increase visitor numbers in the borough. A steering committee will be set up to monitor and progress the actions in the delivery plan and drive improvement to increase visitor spend by 100 %.

7.6 Discussions on the Strategy's vision, priorities and action points with stakeholders

A further stakeholder event took place in in July 2014. This was an opportunity for the lead Councillor to share the strategic aims and priorities, the results of our research and to review our outline Delivery Plan. As a result of group discussions changes were made to the vision to include the importance of the riverside to the borough and the fact that people see Guildford as a gateway – to London, to the surrounding countryside, and to the south coast.

Stakeholders supported the priorities and offered suggestions for the delivery plan which have been included. Many were keen to see a stronger relationship with the University of Surrey on visitor matters and they were particularly keen to understand the profile of our visitors and use this information to target additional visitors.

8. Monitoring arrangements

The next section of the Visitor Strategy provides the delivery plan, showing what is required of all the relevant players to meet the needs of the Visitor Economy over the life of the strategy. It is suggested that many of the actions will be achieved within existing resources; however, this will depend on help and co-operation from many agencies and partners. Where additional resources are required they will need to be prioritised alongside other strategic aims of Guildford Borough Council and other partners.

It is likely when applying for funding from outside bodies that due to the pressures on the particular funds and the criteria set, not all the schemes will be successful during the early years of this strategy. Every effort will be made however to support and maximise the success of every application.

Monitoring and review will be continuous throughout the life of the Strategy. At the end of each year an update report will be produced and considered by a new informal body drawn from key local partners and the Council's Scrutiny Committees to see how far the targets set for the previous twelve months have been achieved. This report will be a public document, available to partners, stakeholders, clubs, organisations and the general public.



Delivery Plan



Priority 1 – Improve the visitor experience to Guildford

Objective	Strategic Action	Short term project (2014-15)	Medium term project (2016 -2020)	Output & Target	Lead Responsibility, with others in brackets	Cost
1.1 Make access into Guildford easier by car, public transport, cycling, walking, access for all	Work with SCC Highways and EM3 LEP on allocation of LEP Growth Deal funding and Woking: Guildford Connectivity Project on identifying the economic impact of government investment into the A3 and key M25 Junctions	Local Economy Manager to input into Sustainable Transport Projects, GTAMS, and Town Centre Vision and the Council's Business Plan any other relevant documents to reflect importance to Visitor Economy	Delivery of projects and additional business cases developed for further rounds of funding. A specific proposal to improve cycling routes across Guildford's urban area and implementation of High Street setts replacement have been identified	Details included in Local Plan Secure funding for cycling route projects by March 2015 and substantial delivery 2015/16.	GBC Planning with Econ Dev and other key stakeholders including SCC and Highways Agency	A proposal has been submitted to the LEP for the new and enhanced cycle routes which will cost circa £700k with a local contribution of 25% identified from SANG budgets. This needs to be approved by councilors as part of the 15/16 to 18-19 business planning process. Replacement/ refurbishment of setts will be part of a SCC phased capital programme with local contribution all of which will require approval
	Achieve two major brown signs on the A3 to accurately reflect Guildford's visitor offer.	Create working party to develop project to implement two major brown signs on the A3 that accurately signpost the town's offer	Scope practicalities, costs and funding solutions for this project	Report outlining the project with costs and funding options Fully completed project by end of 2016	Brown Sign working party/ SCC Highways and Surrey Guildford Partnership Board and Highways.	Funding sources or requirements uncertain at present, but would need to be considered as part of Council's on-going business planning process.
	Improved signage for long term car parks and Park and Ride in town. Utilise new technologies such as payment or top up by Mobile to improve the visitor experience	Local Economy Manager to work with Parking Manager as part of Parking Service Review Board to scope out and implement improvements including pay by phone and other technology proposals		Depending on the outcome of the parking review deliver outcomes that support visitors by December 2015	Economic Development and parking teams /SCC	Costs (if any) will be identified by Parking Team. More strategic projects are linked to this such as the Town Centre Vision which are dealt with elsewhere
	Research the need for further Coach Parking, comfort facilities for users of coach park, info point at coach parking	Ensure the concept of having coach parking in the town is included in the Local Plan		Short report to be produced on needs analysis and benefits of coach parking by December 2015	GBC, SCC	Internal resource only

Priority 1 – Improve the visitor experience to Guildford cont.

1.2 Make it easy to move around Guildford Borough	Continue to improve 'way finding' signs in the town centre and seek initial funding for public realm improvements that will benefit the visitor experience.	Delivery of new signage and map by the end of 2015. Growth Bid for Public Realm improvement budget		Improved Signage and town centre fabric	Travel Smart SCC (GBC Planning/Econ Development)	Costs will fall under SCC's remit, but further investment will be sought from BID team. Some budget will be submitted as part of Council's business planning process 2015/16
Objective	Strategic Action	Short term project (2014-15)	Medium term project (2016 -2020)	Output & Target	Lead Responsibility, with others in brackets	Cost
	Involve Guildford BC's Access Forum in the visitor strategy	Ask the Access Forum to comment on accessibility of visitor attractions and the town	Work with 'Disabled Go' or 'Tourism for All'	Identification of issues and plan for rectification with where budgets and resources allow Make contact with accessibility group by Sept	Access Group and Econ Dev	
	Work with local train and coach companies to enhance the Guildford offer to their customers	Scope a project with Great Western/ South West Trains to promote circular walks from stations	Identify Guildford rep to work with SCREF on Rail to Ramble/SCREF project	Scope project and seek funding for new Rail to Ramble set of leaflets and associated publicity Successful delivery of project by end of 2016	SCREF/Surrey Hills AONB project and Economic Development	TBC following scoping project
1.3 Help people to feel safe in Guildford	Achieve and promote the Purple Flag accreditation	Assessment August 2014	On-going monitoring of key indicators to maintain status	Purple flag document Successful bid for purple flag status	Experience Guildford GBC Economic Development	Small budget identified in current 2015/15 budgets for Purple Flag week in October 2014
	Continue to maintain Green Flag accreditation for key parks in Guildford	Monitor key indicators to ensure Green Flag status will be maintained. In addition identify other potential sites where a Green Flag status could be applied	On-going monitoring of key indicators to maintain status.	Green flag documentation Successful rebid for Green Flag status as they become due.	Parks and Countryside	Costs to be identified by Parks and Countryside Team in GBC

Priority 1 – Improve the visitor experience to Guildford cont.

1.4 Improve opportunities for residents to be ambassadors for the Visitor Economy.	Develop an ambassador scheme and ask other volunteer groups if they would support this initiative	Provide information to local people on the value of the visitor economy, and the role they can play	Recruit local people as ambassadors with defined projects and roles	Number of ambassadors and volunteers and numbers of hours contributed in volunteer time Ambassador Scheme delivered by the end of 2015	Economic Development/ TIC	Internal resources
1.5 further develop the use of the TIC to improve the visitor experience	Local Economy Manager to work with Tourism Manager and on outline plan	Forward Plan developed by March 2015		Forward Plan delivered March 2016	GBC Economic Development Team	Internal resources

Priority 2 – Develop a Guildford visitor economy that is cost effective, long-lasting, potentially self financing and beneficial to the Borough

Objective	Strategic Action	Short term project (2014-15)	Medium term project (2016-2020)	Output & Target	Lead Responsibility, with others in brackets	Cost
2.1 Explore the idea of a DMO or a Tourism BID for the visitor economy or other method of stakeholder involvement.	Explore and evaluate ideas from other parts of the country that have experience of DMOs, or CICs for visitor economy	Work with partners to identify the pros and cons of a variety of management arrangements for visitor economies		Report on pros and cons of a T Bid for Guildford Borough or expansion of Experience Guildford Bid	GBC with representatives from visitor economy sectors	A growth bid proposal as part of the Council's business planning process has been submitted for consultancy cost to review this scenario
2.2 Attract LEP/ funding to further develop rural tourism in Guildford	Local Area Group(s) will develop project proposals in partnership with SCREF and GBC	Identify rural projects that are ready to start in 2016 that will attract LEP or LEADER funding	On going proposals for LEP and LEADER to be reviewed on an annual basis	Outline targets will be agreed with funders by Local Action Group covering number of successful projects, business start-ups etc. This will be confirmed	GBC in partnership with LEP, SCC and the Surrey Countryside and Rural Enterprise Forum	Officer time. Some match funding may be required but not involving GBC
2.3 Raise the profile of Guildford food and wine producers to local and domestic customers.	Support local food producers to grow their businesses through improved marketing & training opportunities	Support Surrey Hills Enterprise/SCREF Food and Drink project	Attract funding for rural initiatives in partnership with SCREF	Surrey Hills Enterprises Business Plan	Surrey Countryside and Rural Enterprise Forum (SCREF)	Officer Time

SCC - Surrey County Council
GBC - Guildford Borough Council
LEP - Local Enterprise Partnership

VS - Visit Surrey
SCREF - Surrey Countryside and Rural Enterprise Forum
TIC - Tourist Information Centre

AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CIC - Community Interest Company

Priority 3 – Raise the profile of Guildford to local, domestic and international visitors to attract a larger share of the tourism market.

Objective	Strategic Action	Short term project (2014-15)	Medium term project (2016-2020)	Output & Target	Lead Responsibility, with others in brackets	Cost
3.1 Understand why people visit Guildford, and who they are	Develop a new sustainable strategy to monitor the visitor experience and capture target audience trends	Refresh a Town centre visitor survey along with one at Spectrum Leisure Centre, Jun 2014		Visitor survey findings to be included in the visitor strategy 120 responses from visitors	Visit Surrey	VS and Blue cap time
3.2 Develop a marketing strategy for Guildford's economy	A marketing plan focussed on key target groups and sectors with input from Attractions and Conferencing working groups. Regular quarterly liaison meeting with Visit Surrey	Marketing Plan in place by March 2015	Annual Review of Marketing Strategy against key targets and outputs	Marketing strategy to which key partners have signed up to and funded.	GBC (support from EG, SCC, hotels, attractions...) Corp Development Communications and Visit Surrey	Officer time and time from partners.
3.3 Provide a new mobile responsive website that visitors can access easily	To scope out and procure web-based solution			New website pages by 2015	GBC and Visit Surrey	A Growth bid has been submitted for £20k to cover development of the web-site that might include a separate business resource page.
3.4 Ensure all council attractions are contributing in a more joined up way to the visitor strategy	Work with GBC lead officers to maximise the councils offer on these services			Ensure all Service Plans have integrated outputs linked to our Strategy Clear GBC Marketing strategy for all departments with identified and measurable targets	GBC Economic Development , Heritage Services	Officer Time
3.5 Make it easy for people to book events in Guildford	Procure a new e-ticketing system	New System in place by February 2015 ensuring it is fully integrated with internal systems and communications		Improved efficiencies, but also increase surplus from ticket sales up to £60k	GBC Economic Development (Tourism Team)	£50k approx from IT Renewals Fund and small growth bid

Priority 3 – Raise the profile of Guildford to local, domestic and international visitors to attract a larger share of the tourism market cont.

3.6 Influence new wider branding for Surrey with more effective suite of branded literature/website	Promote Guildford as a key brand through a Surrey wide initiative	New 'Visit Guildford' has been identified and this to be integrated into wider marketing plans		Brand supports overall aims of the Strategy, but will be tested more fully with stakeholders and partners	Visit Surrey, SCREF/ GBC Economic Development, EG	Officer Time
3.7 Increase visitor opportunities from domestic and international students	Work with the university to maximise opportunities for mutual benefit such as University Purple Flag and other initiatives	Continue to attend Freshers Fair	Work on campaign for visiting friends and family		TIC manager with head of Marketing at University of Surrey	

Priority 4 – Celebrate a Guildford Festival Culture by developing a coordinated programme of events that strengthens the visitor economy

Objective	Strategic Action	Short term project (2014-15)	Medium term project (2016-2020)	Output & Target	Lead Responsibility, with others in brackets	Costs
4.1 Improve the range of events/ content of events in Guildford	Work together to set up an Arts and Festival Forum to drive all the actions in this section	Identify types of events, costs and places to hold them	Linked to development of a Cultural Hub in town as a showcase for events (in Master Vision)	BI annual arts forum established to support cultural hub and platform for securing arts funding	GBC Economic Development and Parks and Countryside, University of Surrey	Officer Time
4.2 Understand the contribution Arts make to the visitor economy	Set up a regular arts link with the development of a regular economic reporting tool for the Borough.	Set up two pilot research projects to access the benefits of investment in key festival/attraction for the borough			Arts Team and Economic Development	Case studies to be identified. Officer time required

Priority 5 – Ensure Guildford's Visitor businesses are influencing other organisations' plans to attract investment and enhance the borough's visitor economy and identify and work with funding providers to secure capital and revenue for on-going projects

Objective	Strategic Action	Short term project (2014-15)	Medium term project (2016-2020)	Output & Target	Lead Responsibility, with others in brackets	Costs
5.1 Ensure Local Plan and Topic & Policy Papers take sufficient account of this Strategy & the needs of the industry	Review Draft Local Plan	Review town and rural policies are adequately considered in the Local Plan		Business Team to have established a mechanism for reviewing and supporting planning applications to support visitor businesses	GBC Economic Development (Business Team and Lead portfolio holder for Economic Development and Tourism)	Officer Time
5.2 Ensure Guildford visitor businesses influence Visit Surrey strategy	Be a key player in this social enterprise created to benefit the visitor economy sector in Surrey	Econ Dev team to offer ideas & actions for the New Strategic Plan for Visit Surrey that benefit GBC		Approved new Business Plan by March 2015	Visit Surrey CIC/ GBC and other LAs	Officer Time Annual £5k financial contribution is made to Visit Surrey to support their web-site
5.3 Ensure Guildford visitor Economy businesses influence SCC Tourism Strategy	Ensure the Guildford is a key partner in the development of Surrey CC Tourism Strategy	Offer relevant GBC tourism priorities to SCC		GBC strategy and action plan sent to key SCC officers and members and used by SCREF to develop SCREF Action Plan All GBC actions are included in SCC strategy when it is finalised. Date still to be confirmed by SCC	Lead officer at GBC for Economy and Tourism and SCC Lead for Countryside and Environment	Officer Time
5.4 GBC to maximise opportunities identified in SCC Accommodation study.	GBC to work with M3 LEP/ SCC to identify best opportunities to develop accommodation sector in the borough	Identify lead officer to work with M3 LEP/SCC on Business Tourism Group.		Identified accommodation projects for M3 LEP if relevant for the borough. Delivery to agreed M3 LEP Action Plan - TBC.	GBC Economic Development (Tourism Team)	Officer Time

SCC - Surrey County Council
GBC - Guildford Borough Council
LEP - Local Enterprise Partnership

VS - Visit Surrey
SCREF - Surrey Countryside and Rural Enterprise Forum
TIC - Tourist Information Centre

AONB - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CIC - Community Interest Company



GUILDFORD
BOROUGH

Priority 6 – Develop the Council and town's heritage offer including development of the castle and museum site and creation of a heritage quarter.

Objective	Strategic Action	Short term project (2014-15)	Medium term project (2016-2020)	Output & Target	Lead Responsibility, with others in brackets	Costs
6.1	Implement the castle and museum development project	Submit a first-round HLF bid	Undertake the project development phase	Combined and enlivened heritage attraction. HLF and other external funding secured Project completed	Heritage Services	£6m
6.2	Progress establishment of a town centre heritage quarter	Scope heritage quarter	Establish town centre heritage group and define combined offer and support		Heritage Services	
6.3	Increase the prestige and quality of programming at Guildford House Gallery and other Heritage venues	Secure the Sunday Times Watercolour competition exhibition	Establish the Gallery as a venue for national touring exhibitions and display of prestigious works	An arts programme that draws a regional audience Increased visits to Guildford House Gallery	Heritage Services	

Guildford Borough Council
Millmead House
Guildford
Surrey GU2 4BB
www.guildford.gov.uk

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Report to Overview and Scrutiny

Ward(s) affected: All wards

Report of Director of Resources

Author: Adrian Swift, Interim Senior Specialist – Procurement

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Lead Councillor responsible: Cllr Tim Anderson

Tel: 07710 328560

Email: tim.anderson@guildford.gov.uk

Date: 7 June 2022

Update Report: Spend on Consultants and Agency Workers

Executive Summary

This report is the third report providing an update on the historical spend position in relation to Consultants and Agency workers, updated to include the financial year end 2021/22.

The report was first presented in October 2020, with an update report on 13 July 2021 assessing the impact of the recommendations implemented from the first report.

Over the last Financial Year (FY) (2021/22) Business World is reporting that the Council has spent a combined total of £13 million allocated to consultants and agency workers spend across revenue and capital budgets compared to £14.8 million in FY20/21. This is broken down as:

Category of spend	2020/21	2021/22
Agency Worker (Revenue)	£3,431,274	£2,864,802
Agency Worker (Capital)	£399,261	£1,006,408
TOTAL Agency Worker spend	£3,830,535	£3,871,210
Consultants (Revenue)	£3,730,306	£2,145,900
Consultants (Capital)	£7,263,672	£7,007,200
TOTAL Consultants spend	£10,993,978	£9,153,100
Total spend	£14,824,513	£13,024,310
Capacity funding (Revenue)	£nil	(£250,000)
Homes England Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) capital grants for Ash Road Bridge and Weyside Urban Village projects	No Grants received in this FY	Grants received for professional fees total £7,713,733
NET COST TO COUNCIL	£14,824,513	£5,060,577 (net)

During FY21/22 £9.1 million was allocated to consultants spend and £3.9 million was allocated to agency worker spend. Agency worker spend remained stable during FY20/21-FY21/22 whereas Consultants spend reduced by 16.8% between FY20/21 and FY21/22. This will mainly be due to the completion of the Future Guildford Transformation Programme during the year.

Para 3 shows £9.1 million relates to corporate programme and the larger capital schemes. The Council was successful in gaining grant funding (HIF and LEP) towards scheme costs, which includes consultants and agency worker fees. We have also been able to claim capacity funding for certain schemes specifically towards additional agency worker resources in the procurement and legal teams to support project delivery.

Recommendation to Committee

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- (I) note the 2021/22 spend position
- (II) confirm whether the committee would still like to receive this report on an annual basis

Reason for Recommendation: To monitor spend in this area and to note the impact of the recommendations implemented.

Is the report (or part of it) exempt from publication? No

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive an update on the spend on consultants and agency workers for the 2021/22 financial year.

- 1.2 An update report was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13 July 2021 and the outcomes were:

(I) The future reporting of the Council's spend on consultants should include the outcomes expected and those delivered.

(II) That the amalgamation of revenue and capital spending was misleading and could lead to misinterpretations.

(II) That the 2021/22 spend position and the update on the recommendations which have been implemented since be noted.

2 Strategic Priorities

- 2.1 Consultants and agency staff comprise key resource to deliver projects and programmes across the organisation, supporting all the Council's Strategic Framework: placemaking, community and innovation. Both consultants and agency staff are placed where there is a lack of capacity (resource gap) or capability (skills gap).
- 2.2 Consultants in the Corporate Programmes work area in particular are delivering the Council's placemaking objectives and significant regeneration and infrastructure projects set out in the corporate plan.

Background

For the purposes of this report, consultants have been defined as 'engaged by the Council to deliver a specific piece of work'. Agency workers have been defined as 'working to cover a substantive or ongoing post within the organisation'.

3 Spend Position including 2021/22

- 3.1 Expenditure in 2021/22 is a combined total of £13 million which was allocated to consultants and agency workers spend across revenue and capital budgets, split as 70%/30% between consultants spend and agency worker spend respectively.

Figure 1 – Revenue expenditure (FY16-17 to 21-22)

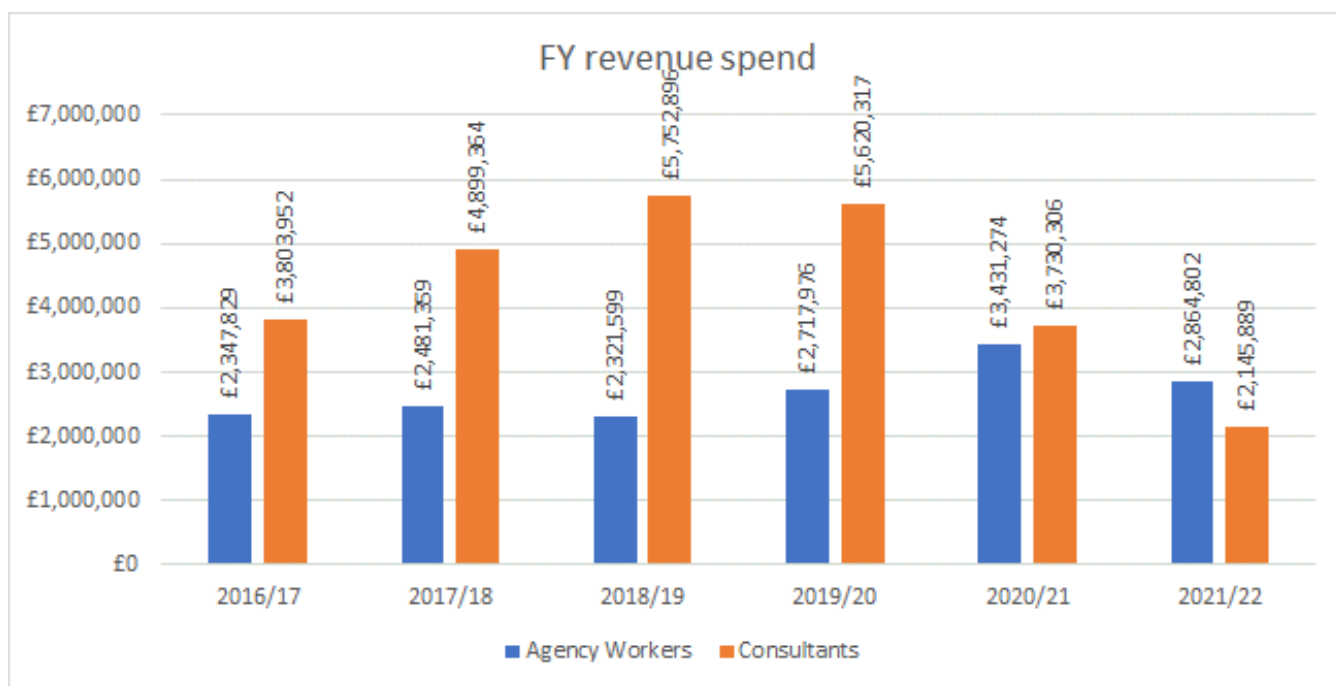
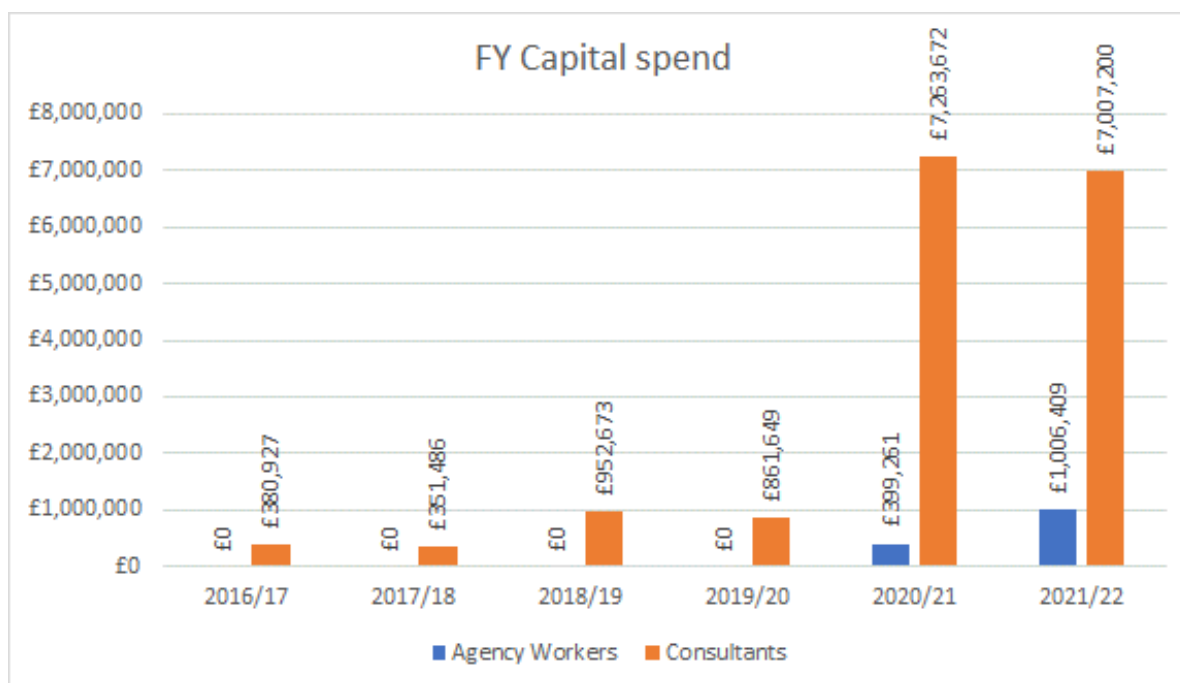


Figure 2 Capital expenditure (FY16-17 to 21-22)



- 3.2 When comparing FY20/21 spend to FY21/22 there has been a decrease of 16.8% on consultants spend.

Corporate Programmes

- 3.3 Corporate Programme spend is broken down by project in Table 1 below. Corporate Programme spend in FY 2021/22 accounts for about 25% of agency workers spend and about 78% of consultants spend in FY 2021/22, compared to 10% and 66% 2020/21 respectively.

Table 1 – Project spend and progress allocation in Corporate Programmes for 2021/22

Top Corp Prog Project spend	Agency	Consultants	Total	Progress in year
Weyside Urban Village	£386,248	£5,165,377	£5,551,625	Grant of hybrid planning permission
Ash Road Bridge	£118,872	£937,882	£1,056,754	Detailed design
Shaping Guildford's Future	£320,291	£542,361	£862,652	Feasibility & outline design
Guildford Park Road	£80,795	£275,508	£356,303	Feasibility & outline design
Walnut Tree Bridge Replacement	£45,949	£111,480	£157,429	Feasibility and design stages
SMC (West) Phase 1	£5,397	£89,321	£94,719	Completion of project design
Bright Hill	£12,181	£0	£12,181	Feasibility
Total	£969,734	£7,121,929	£8,091,663	

- 3.4 This high-level expenditure is a direct result of Capital projects moving forward. We have been successful in getting £250,000 of capacity funding to offset these costs. Grants from HIF and LEP have allowed £7,713,733 of the total Capital expenditure to be funded.

Analysis of expenditure

- 3.5 Tables 2a-2d Top Consultants and Agency worker spend across revenue and capital by supplier for 2021/22.

Table 2a – Consultants spend (Capital)

Top Supplier Consultants spend (Capital)	Total
Perfect Circle JV Ltd	£4,660,355
Stantec UK Ltd	£349,252
Delta-Simons Environmental Consultants Ltd	£281,640
Leonard Design Architects	£204,969
John Thompson & Partners LLP	£199,465
Aecom Infrastructure & Environment UK Ltd	£146,740
Savills (L&P) Limited	£131,457
Gleeds Advisory Ltd	£129,605
Chess Engage	£113,872
Vision Survey Ltd	£113,135
Total	£6,330,492

- 3.6 The highest allocated capital spend for consultants is for Perfect Circle (SCAPE) with about 36% of the total Consultants and Agency worker spend. The majority of the Perfect Circle costs relate to Weyside Urban Village at £3.8 million, with most of the remainder relating to Ash Road Bridge. As such, although they are defined as consultants, they are a key part of the professional services team who are delivering these strategically important projects. The Council does not have the relevant expertise in house to deliver these complex projects.

Table 2b – Consultants spend (Revenue)

Top Supplier Consultants spend (Revenue)	Total
Ignite Consulting Limited T/A Ignite	£725,441
NimbusPoint Consulting Ltd	£171,823
Artelia Projects UK Limited	£110,130
Comensura Ltd	£75,762
Francis Taylor Building	£64,043
Paul Fineberg Architect Ltd	£52,022
APSE	£47,891
LSO Consulting Limited	£45,200
Perfect Circle JV Ltd	£37,910
Arlingclose Ltd	£36,685
Total	£1,366,908

- 3.7 The highest allocated revenue spend for consultants relates to Ignite (Future Guildford) costs with about 6% of the total Consultants and Agency worker spend.

Table 2c Agency worker spend (Capital)

Top Supplier Agency worker spend (Capital)	Total
Comensura Ltd	£421,655
The Oyster Partnership Ltd	£361,086
Insight Executive Group Limited	£118,800
Hays Specialist Recruitment Limited	£40,777
Vivid Resourcing Limited	£8,960
Penna Plc	£6,070
H T P Consulting Limited	£3,916
Unknown	£1,951
Total	£963,215

- 3.8 The highest allocated Capital spend for Agency workers relates to Comensura with about 3% of the total Consultants and Agency worker spend of £13 million. Capital schemes generally require specialist resources which are not usually available via the usual supplier routes.

Table 2d Agency worker spend (Revenue)

Top Supplier Agency worker spend (Revenue)	Total
Comensura Ltd	£1,311,500
Hays Specialist Recruitment Limited	£344,570
Vivid Resourcing Limited	£258,952
Systems Accountants Limited	£195,791
G2 Recruitment Solutions	£195,223
Penna Plc	£173,535
Morgan Hunt UK Limited	£92,434
3R Finance Ltd	£54,623
Eden Brown Ltd	£48,510
Carrington West Limited	£35,490
Total	£2,710,628

- 3.9 The highest allocated revenue spend for Agency workers relates to Comensura with about 10% of the total Consultants and Agency worker spend. Comensura spend accounts for about 46% of the revenue spend which indicates that, GBC are sourcing agency workers via the recommended suppliers (where possible). Anecdotal evidence indicates that Comensura are unable to source planning and other specialist roles within the Council.

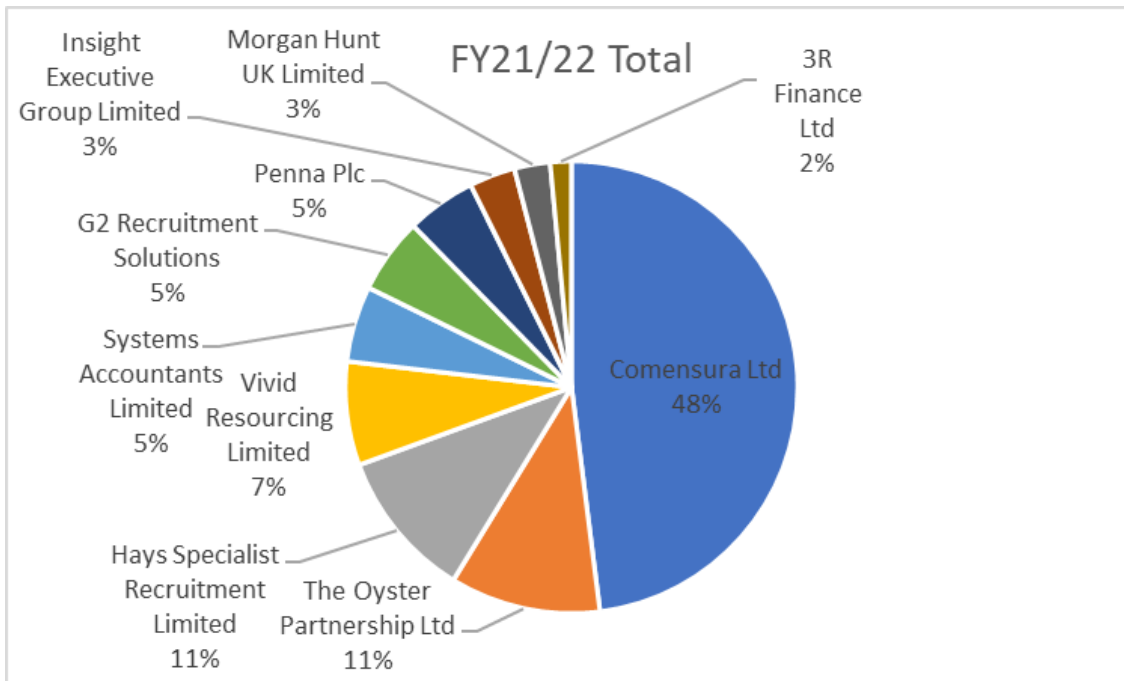
Agency expenditure

Table 3 – Top 10 Spend by Agency worker category

Top 10 spend	FY20/21 Total	FY21/22 Total	Service or Project	Comments
Comensura Ltd	£489,094	£1,733,155	Various	Agency worker charges
The Oyster Partnership Ltd	£502,251	£388,710	Corporate Programmes	Charges for specialist project team
Hays Specialist Recruitment Limited	£417,218	£385,347	Finance & Procurement	Interim staff where recruitment not possible
Vivid Resourcing Limited	£176,623	£267,912	Housing	Planning Enforcement resources
Systems Accountants Limited	£13,625	£195,791	ICT	Cover of post and development of business world
G2 Recruitment Solutions	£0	£195,223	Future Guildford	Finance resource charges
Penna Plc	£6,210	£179,605	Corporate Programmes	GPR resources
Insight Executive Group Limited	£80,550	£118,800	Revs & Bens	Resources
Morgan Hunt UK Limited	£68,574	£92,434	Building Control	Building Control Officer
3R Finance Ltd	£0	£54,623	Future Guildford	ICT consultancy
Total	£1,754,145*	£3,611,600		

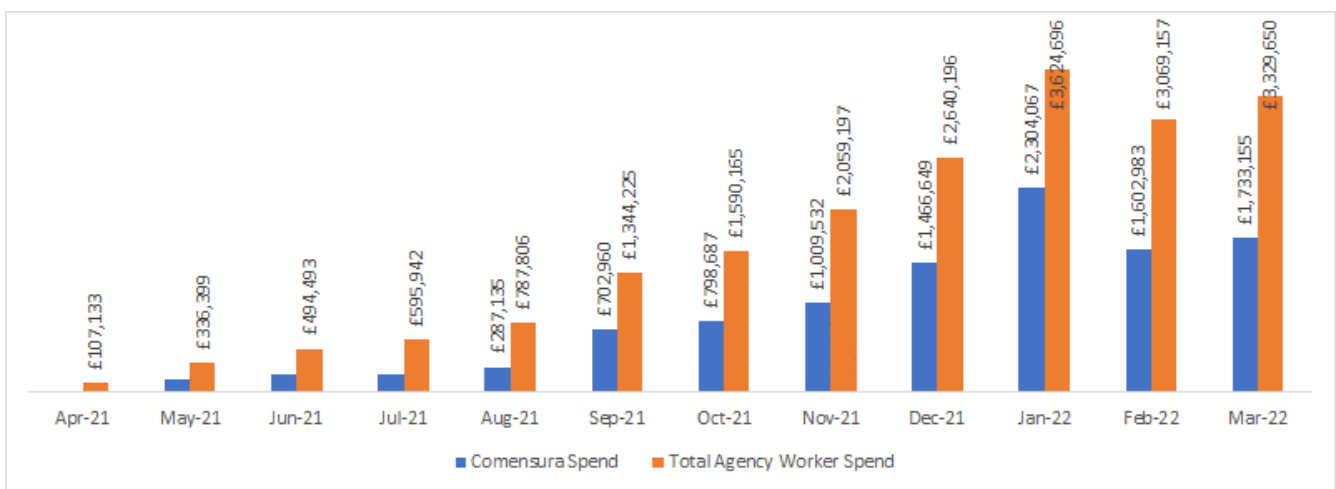
*Top 10 FY20/21 total was £2,062,689 some suppliers are no longer in the top 10 list for comparison with FY21/22.

Figure 3 Top 10 spend distribution by supplier



3.10 Comensura accounts for 48% of the top 10 Agency Workers spend and about 12% of the total spend for Agency workers (see Table/Figure 3).

Figure 4 – Spend profile for Comensura vs total spend (Not including Corporate Programmes)



3.11 Comensura recorded spend increased from approximately 24% of the total agency worker allocated spend in FY 2020/21 to 52% in FY21/22. The new control measures were put in place in October 2020, subsequent data indicates a trend of increasing spend with Comensura since more robust governance was introduced.

4 Governance

Consultants

- 4.1 Requirements are kept where possible in-house where skills allow.
- 4.2 Services are aware that all consultant engagement is subject to Procurement advice and quotes being sought. The updated Procurement Procedure Rules which were adopted by Full Council on 19 May 2021 include a specific reference to the inclusion of consultants in tendering practices.
- 4.2 The new Programme and Project Governance arrangements which are in place involve a controlled start through a mandate process, a common lifecycle aligned to robust business case development and approvals through central governance gates. This allows identification of any consultant requirements at the outset and set budgets.
- 4.4 The Programme and Project Governance is working towards reducing over-runs and delay, as historically, there has been the lack of common understanding of what projects are trying to deliver, lack of clear strategic direction or consensus which has inflated project costs, including those of the consultants trying to deliver. The new mandate and business case templates add more rigour to the options evaluation, and both include cost breakdowns for the whole life cost of a project (not just delivery costs) and staged costs for business case development and feasibility. This approach and approval of consultancy costs (and internal resource costs) can be understood, and approved, as part of the appropriate gate and consultancy deliverables can be explicitly agreed and monitored through the business case as part of the gate approval and project reporting process
- 4.5 A knowledge transfer programme (where appropriate) is in development so that the valuable skills are transferred into the Council where possible.

Agency Workers:

- 4.6 A Governance procedure has been implemented around off contract spend on Agency Staff; all Hiring Managers are directed to the Corporate Temporary Staffing contract with Comensura as a default and a Procurement exemption to Corporate Procurement Board is required if the commission is off contract and another recruitment agency engaged.
- 4.7 The figures in Figures 3 and 4 are a positive reflection this is making an impact. FY21/22 data indicates 65% of exemptions for consultant or agency worker spend approval involve sourcing attempts via Comensura which proved unsuccessful, and candidates had to be sourced via alternative routes.
- 4.8 The Corporate Temporary Staffing contract was re-launched on 11 January 2021 following detailed planning and this involved identifying all Hiring Managers and engaging them for refresher training sessions on c-net, which is Comensura's portal. These training sessions took place on 22 and 27 January 2021.

- 4.9 This has had a positive impact on off contract spend which has reduced in the year.
- 4.10 Part of the re-launch also requested that Service Leads with any Temporary workers being supplied outside of Comensura advised immediately in order for assessment to be made and steps put in place for Comensura to engage with the agency and transition the worker assignments to c.net5 Bookings for timesheet and invoice purposes.

5 Key Risks

- 5.1 As a result of the recommendations having been implemented the risks around lack of best value and off contract spend have reduced and compliance has increased. However, the level of consultancy expenditure has increased significantly over 2020/21 and this is directly related to the volume of projects, particularly in the Corporate Programmes Team as this is where the majority of the spend on consultants is.
- 5.2 Lack of knowledge transfer may continue on those projects where the Consultants advice is so specialist or technical it is not possible to transfer skills to the organisation.

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 £9.1 million was spent on consultants and £3.9 million on agency workers in 2021/22.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council as a public body has a duty of achieving 'Best Value' and ensuring continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999.
- 7.2 The Council must comply with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's own Procurement Procedure Rules when procuring goods, services and works, this includes consultants.
- 7.3 The Local Government Transparency Code 2015 Rule 31 provides that all contracts over £5,000 should be published in a way which is accessible to the general public, this applies to consultancy contracts.

8 Human Resource Implications

- 8.1 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no HR implications arising directly from this report

9 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 9.1 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report

10 Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 10.1 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no climate change and sustainability implications arising directly from this report

11 Summary of Options

- 11.1 To note the update spend position on consultants and agency workers for 2021/22 and to continue to implement the recommendations already agreed by the October 2020 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

12 Conclusion

- 12.1 This update report shows that agency worker spend has been compliant by going through Comensura, and there has been a shift from consultants towards the capital programme as we are moving ahead with delivering projects.
- 12.2 Action to develop some more coding within Business World to enable a clearer breakdown and to promote further transparency within the Council will also be taken forward.

Background Papers

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report – 20 October 2020
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Update Report – 13 July 2021.

Appendices None

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report

Report of Director of Strategic Services

Author: James Dearling

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Date: 7 June 2022

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Recommendation

That the Committee consider the overview and scrutiny work programme attached at Appendix 1 and determine its work plan.

Reason for Recommendation

To enable the Committee to review and agree its work programme for the coming months.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 As approved by Council, the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) includes the specific responsibility to approve the overview and scrutiny work programme to ensure that the Committee's time is used effectively and efficiently.
- 1.2 A well-planned overview and scrutiny function will help both officers and members plan their workloads as well as providing a clear picture to the public of planned activity. An effective work programme is the foundation for a successful overview and scrutiny function.
- 1.3 This report sets out the overview and scrutiny work programme as developed thus far for 2022-23.

2. Work Programme Meetings

- 2.1 In addition, Council has agreed that the OSC is responsible for setting its own work programme in accordance with the following procedure:

The chairmen and vice-chairmen of the OSC and the Executive Advisory Boards and relevant officers shall normally meet at least bi-monthly to exchange, discuss and agree proposed rolling 12-18 month work programmes for submission periodically to the OSC (in respect of the OSC work programme) and to the Executive Advisory Boards (in respect of the EAB work programmes) for approval. The proposed work programme for the OSC will be determined with reference to the P.A.P.E.R. selection tool, attached as Appendix 2 to these procedure rules [and as Appendix 2 to this report].

The chairman and vice-chairman of the OSC will ensure that all councillors are able to submit requests for alterations to the work programme for consideration at each of these work programme meetings.

- 2.2 At the time of publication of this report, the work programme meetings of the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the OSC and the EABs are unscheduled.
- 2.3 Councillors are encouraged to attend a work programme meeting to explain in more detail their proposal, including how it fulfils the criteria outlined in the mnemonic P.A.P.E.R. (Public interest; Ability to change; Performance; Extent; and Replication).
- 2.4 In addition to the work programme meetings in section 2.2 above, Councillors can discuss and submit proposals to the OSC Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.
- 3.2 The Council's governance arrangements review of 2015 led to the introduction of a discretionary budget for overview and scrutiny, set at £5,000 per annum. It is envisaged that the work programme, as drafted, is achievable within the existing financial resource.

4. Human Resource Implications

- 4.1 There are no specific human resources implications. It is envisaged that the work programme, as drafted, is achievable within the existing resources.
- 4.2 Overview and scrutiny will call on relevant officers during the conduct of its reviews. Individual scoping reports will seek to take additional resource requirements into account when drafted.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which provides that a public authority must, in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- 5.2 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report. Future overview and scrutiny reviews will consider equality implications on a case-by-case basis.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications.

7. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 There are no specific climate change / sustainability implications.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 Developing a work programme for the overview and scrutiny function is an essential stage in the scrutiny process. An effective overview and scrutiny work programme identifies the

key topics to be considered over the coming months. In addition, it is suggested that a well-developed programme ensures that the views of councillors, partners, the public, and external organisations are represented effectively in the process.

- 8.2 The Committee is requested to consider the work programme attached at Appendix 1 and determine its work plan.
- 8.3 For information, attached at Appendix 3 is the procedure which task and finish groups are expected to operate and report their findings in accordance with.

9. Background papers

None

10. Appendices

- 1. Overview and scrutiny work programme, May 2022
- 2. P.A.P.E.R. selection tool
- 3. Task group procedure [Appendix 4 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution].

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Overview & Scrutiny work programme, 2022-23

Overview & Scrutiny Committee items
<p>12 July 2022 meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session – Councillor Julia McShane, Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Councillor for Community and Housing • Guildford & Waverley Councils Collaboration: update • Update on Mental Health Improvement Programme • Review of the Council’s ownership of Liongate House • Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report, 2021-22
<p>13 September 2022 meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session – Councillor Joss Bigmore, Leader of the Council • Guildford & Waverley Councils Collaboration: update • Safer Guildford Partnership Annual Report 2022 • Procurement Annual Report (inc. annual reporting on Charter Against Modern Slavery) • Review of Council’s Communications • Review of Council’s Customer Services
<p>8 November 2022 meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session – Councillor James Steel, Lead Councillor for Environment • Guildford & Waverley Councils Collaboration: update • Guildford’s Air Quality Strategy • Operation of the Leisure Management contract, 2021-22
<p>17 January 2023 meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session – Councillor Tim Anderson, Lead Councillor for Resources • Guildford & Waverley Councils Collaboration: update • Annual report and monitoring arrangements for operation of the G-Live contract, 2021-22
<p>28 February 2023 meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Councillor Question Session – Councillor John Rigg, Lead Councillor for Regeneration • Lead Councillor Question Session – Councillor Tom Hunt, Lead Councillor for Development Management • Guildford & Waverley Councils Collaboration: update

Currently unscheduled items

- Management of community assets
- Visibility and transparency of asset disposals by the Council, including green spaces
- Borough's response to refugees
- Older People's Services
- Regeneration [focus to be identified by Cllrs]
- Review of Dogbusters stray dog contract

Task and finish group

Title	Update
Affordable Housing	Membership: Cllrs Angela Gunning, Tony Rooth (Chair), Jo Randall, Ruth Brothwell, and Ramsey Nagaty. (Councillor George Potter has resigned.) Evidence gathering sessions to be arranged with NDH Ltd and Lead Councillors.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

P.A.P.E.R. selection tool

Public interest: concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen

Ability to change: priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence

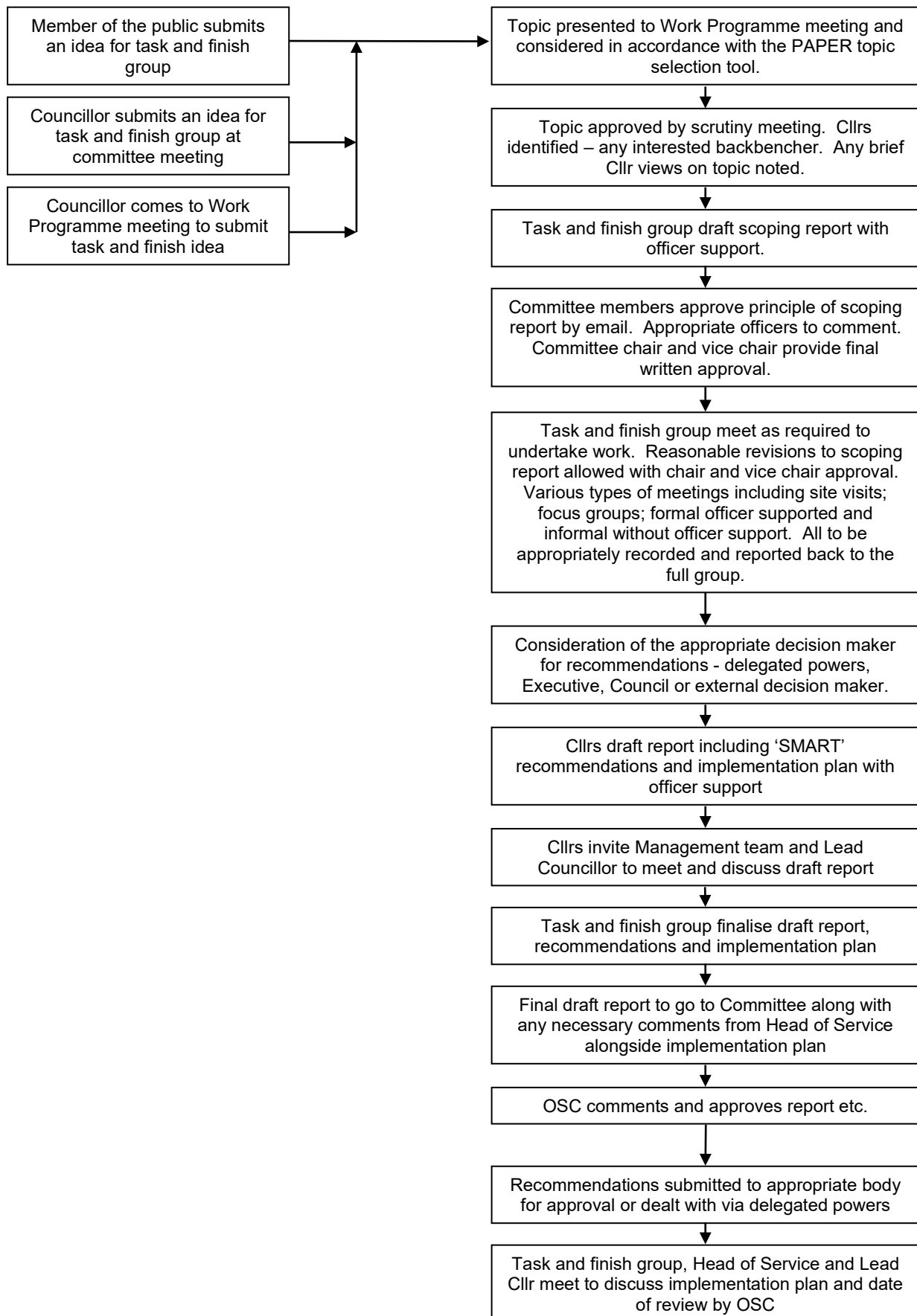
Performance: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well

Extent: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the Borough

Replication: work programme must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication or wasted effort

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TASK AND FINISH GROUP FLOWCHART



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