

To: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)
Councillors Brock, Ennis, Hacker, Hoskin,
James, Jones, O’Connell, Page, Pearce,
Skeats, Stevens, Terry, Vickers, Warman
and White

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1 June 2018

Your contact is: **Simon Hill - Committee Services**

NOTICE OF MEETING - POLICY COMMITTEE - 11 JUNE 2018

A meeting of the Policy Committee will be held on Monday 11 June 2018 at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Reading. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

Please Note - the Committee will first consider items in closed session. Members of the press and public will be asked to leave the Chamber for a few minutes.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN CLOSED SESSION

The following motion will be moved by the Chair:

“That, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following items on the agenda, as it is likely that there would be disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of that Act”

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>WARDS AFFECTED</u>	<u>PAGE NO</u>
1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR CLOSED SESSION ITEMS	-	-
2. CENTRAL POOL DEMOLITION AND RESTORATION WORKS TOWARDS REGENERATING THE SITE Councillor Lovelock / Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services	ABBEY	A1
3. SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES - LEGAL AND PROPERTY MATTERS Councillors Pearce & Lovelock / Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services & Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services	BOROUGHWIDE	A6

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ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PUBLIC SESSION

4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors to declare any interests they may have in relation to the items for consideration in public session.

6. MINUTES

B1

To confirm the Minutes of the Policy Committee meetings on 9 April 2018 and 23 May 2018.

7. PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS

To receive any petitions from the public and any questions from the public and Councillors.

8. DECISION BOOK REFERENCES

9. SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES

BOROUGHWIDE

C1

Councillors Pearce & Lovelock / Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services & Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services

This report outlines the future need for additional secondary school places and seeks approval to commence the required process to develop a new secondary school.

10. CONSULTATION ON GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION

ABBNEY/
BOROUGHWIDE

D1

Councillor Page / Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services

This report sets out the results of a consultation on provision for gypsies and travellers; the report also considers new issues that have come forward since the consultation and recommends not proceeding with a proposal for a traveller transit site at Cow Lane.

- | | | | |
|-----|--|--------------------|-----------|
| 11. | DYNAMIC PURCHASING SYSTEM FOR PROCUREMENT OF EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION | BOROUGHWIDE | E1 |
| | <p>Councillor Ennis / Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>This report recommends the establishment of a Dynamic Purchasing System to deliver and manage emergency accommodation for families and vulnerable people to whom the Council owes a housing duty; this will replace existing processes and formalise arrangements between the Council and providers.</p> | | |
| 12. | CONTRACT AWARD - ASBESTOS REMOVAL AND REMEDIATION CONTRACT FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT | BOROUGHWIDE | F1 |
| | <p>Councillor Ennis / Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>This report seeks approval for the award of the Asbestos Removal and Remediation contracts relating to asbestos removal works throughout the Council's housing stock and also for works to corporate properties, schools, commercial properties and public facilities.</p> | | |
| 13. | CONTRACT AWARD - MINOR WORKS BUILDING CONTRACT FOR EXTERNAL MAINTENANCE 2018 TO RBC LEASEHOLD HOUSING BLOCKS | BOROUGHWIDE | G1 |
| | <p>Councillor Ennis / Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>The report seeks approval for the award of a Minor Works Building Contract for the provision of external maintenance to the Council's leasehold housing blocks.</p> | | |
| 14. | CONTRACT AWARD - SMOKE DETECTORS IN DWELLINGS AND COMMUNAL AREAS AND FIRE ALARM INSTALLATIONS TO COMMUNAL AREAS | BOROUGHWIDE | H1 |
| | <p>Councillor Ennis / Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services</p> <p>The report seeks approval for the award of a 'measured term' contract for the provision of smoke detectors within dwellings and communal areas in Council housing blocks and a measured term contract for fire alarm installations to communal areas.</p> | | |

Councillor Lovelock / Chief Executive

This report asks the Committee to make appointments or nominations to outside bodies for the Municipal Year 2018/19, or longer where required.

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Members of the public who participate in the meeting will be able to speak at an on-camera or off-camera microphone, according to their preference.

Please speak to a member of staff if you have any queries or concerns.

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 9 APRIL 2018

Present: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)

Councillors Duveen, Eden, Ennis, Gavin, Hacker, Hopper, Hoskin, Jones, Page, Skeats, Stevens, Terry and White.

85. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved -

That pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), members of the press and public be excluded during consideration of item 86 below as it was likely that there would be a disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs specified in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to that Act.

86. HOUSING BENEFITS/COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME - RISK BASED VERIFICATION POLICY 2018/19

The Chief Executive submitted a report proposing to continue the use of a Risk Based Verification process in 2018/19 to verify evidence requirements to support claims for both Housing Benefit payments and Council Tax Support awards, as recommended by the Department of Works and Pensions. The Risk Based Verification Policy 2018/19 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report noted that the principles of the Council's risk based verification policy principles remained unchanged and that guidance to staff had been updated to reflect changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme.

Resolved -

That the Council continue using a Risk Based Verification approach to evidence for Housing Benefit and Council Tax support for 2018/19.

(Exempt information as defined in paragraph 7).

87. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

88. QUESTIONS

Questions on the following matters were submitted by members of the public:

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reply</u>
1.	Roger Lightfoot	Capital Programme - new swimming pools	Cllr Lovelock

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 9 APRIL 2018

2.	Peter Burt	Bids for Arthur Hill Pool	Cllr Lovelock
3.	Luke Coltman	Student Housing	Cllr Ennis

(The full text of the questions and responses was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

89. THE HEIGHTS SCHOOL TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

The Director of Children's Services, Education and Early Help submitted a report setting out a proposal to purchase additional temporary accommodation for The Heights School, currently based at Gosbrook Road. A site plan of the proposed development was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that the current age range at The Heights School was Reception to Year 4, and that as the school grew to incorporate Years 5 and 6 the existing accommodation would be insufficient to accept future intake of Reception pupils. It was therefore proposed to provide new two-storey accommodation for 100 primary aged pupils, together with associated administrative and specialist small teaching (breakout) spaces and toilets, to allow a further two years of pupil intake (50 per annum). Officers had secured agreement from the Birmingham Catholic Diocese and the governors at St Anne's Primary School for the proposed location on part of the St Anne's school playing field, which was owned by the Council. To restrict the impact on St Anne's school the footprint of the new building and land for circulation and informal play would be kept to the minimum required.

The report noted that the ESFA were continuing to seek to develop a site for The Heights School at Mapledurham Playing Fields, but the process to secure a suitable agreement and planning permission had been protracted and a permanent school was unlikely to be available within the next two years. The ESFA had agreed to part fund the cost of the new temporary building, estimated at £1.266m, with a capital grant of £450,000, payable on the signing of a lease at the point of the building being completed in August 2018.

The report proposed that the Council enter into a contract with REDS10 (UK) Ltd, who had built the existing temporary building, to design and build the additional temporary block. The company had the advantage of having detailed knowledge of the site including relevant surveys, and had agreed to provide the new building at costs equivalent to those originally charged to the ESFA. It would be necessary to gain planning permission in respect of both the continued siting of the existing temporary accommodation, and for the additional new temporary building.

The report explained that the lease agreement would not restrain the Council in re-using the accommodation elsewhere after the expiry of the lease period, and that on completion of use by The Heights School the building could be used for further temporary usage, relocated or sold on, depending on the Council's need for temporary accommodation at that time. Likely uses for the building would include the provision of temporary secondary school capacity ahead of the completion of a

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 9 APRIL 2018

new permanent secondary school, or additional SEND or primary school capacity.

Resolved -

- (1) That the proposal to work with the Education Skills Funding Authority (ESFA) to deliver additional temporary accommodation for The Heights School be approved;
- (2) That the proposal to enter a contract with REDS10 (UK) Ltd to carry out the design, build, and supply of temporary modular accommodation for The Heights School be approved in the estimated sum of £1.266 million including fees, abnormal costs, in accordance with contract procedure rule 4 (2) (a), noting that the development was subject to gaining planning permission;
- (3) That the proposal for the Council to enter into a lease agreement with the ESFA to occupy the modular accommodation be approved;
- (4) That approval be given to making an application to the Secretary of State for Education for a General Consent to temporary change of use for part of the Playing Field at St Anne's to accommodate the new building.

(Councillors Duveen, Gavin, Hopper and Page declared an interest in this item, left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision. Nature of interest: the Councillors were members of the Planning Applications Committee which had considered an application for a permanent site for the school. Councillor Hoskin declared an interest in this item, left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision. Nature of interest: Councillor Hoskin was a member of The Mapledurham Playing Fields Trustees Sub-Committee. Chris Brooks, Head of Legal and Democratic Services declared an interest in this item, left the meeting and took no part in advising the Committee. Nature of interest: Chris Brooks had advised The Mapledurham Playing Fields Trustees Sub-Committee.)

90. PUBLIC HEALTH BUDGET 2018/19

The Director of Adult Care and Health Services submitted a report setting out for approval the proposed Public Health budget for 2018/19. A detailed budget position for programmes funded from the Public Health Grant was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that the proposed budget took into account the national grant reduction of 2.5% and the action the Council would take to manage the reduced allocation in funding. In addition it included savings agreed in previous years and those arising from the 2018-19 to 2020-21 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), which had been agreed by full Council on 28 February 2018 (Minute 34 refers). The savings would not result in reduced spend on Public Health in absolute terms, though

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there would be a re-allocation of Public Health funding to Council directorates to meet public health outcomes in different ways. It was intended to refocus the use of Public Health funding by relying less on services historically funded through Public Health, and funding services in other directorates to impact positively on Public Health in the broader context. The proposals were also targeted to at least maintain the Council's position in terms of key public health indicators.

Resolved -

- (1) That the reduction in national grant of 2.5% for the Public Health budget and the action the Council was taking to manage the reduced funding allocation be noted;
- (2) That the list of savings from the Public Health budget as set out in the table be agreed;
- (3) That the programmes to be funded from the Public Health Grant for 2018/19 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved, whilst noting that the services detailed in the table at paragraph 4.5 would be negatively impacted to deliver the services within the reduced Public Health budget;
- (4) That the Director of Adult Care & Health Services, in consultation with the Director of Public Health and the Lead Councillor for Health (and other relevant Lead Councillors as appropriate) be authorised to re-allocate funding and savings from within the Public Health Budget grant for health-related services, where doing so would be in line with the corporate priorities of the Council.

91. RESILIENCE CONTRACT FOR REVENUES AND BENEFITS SERVICES

The Chief Executive submitted a report setting out proposals to enter into a contract for the provision of ongoing resilience and quality checking services for the Revenues and Benefits Service.

The report explained that the resilience and quality checking services were currently provided by Capita, and supported the delivery of the overall workload in the Revenues and Benefits service, particularly related to the assessment of Housing Benefit entitlement and ongoing amendments such as change of circumstances. Current and future projected workloads meant that there would be an ongoing requirement for the provision of these services, to ensure that residents received Housing Benefits entitlement in a timely and efficient manner.

Resolved -

That the Council enter into contract with Capita Business Services Ltd for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019, with a value that not exceeding

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 9 APRIL 2018

£181,302, to provide Revenues and Benefits resilience and quality checking services.

(Councillors Hacker and Hoskin declared an interest in this item, left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision. Nature of interest: the Councillors were employed by Capita.)

(The meeting started at 6.30pm and closed at 7.18pm).

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 23 MAY 2018

Present: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)
Councillors Brock, Ennis, Hacker, Hoskin, James, Jones,
O'Connell, Page, Pearce, Terry, Vickers and Warman.
Apologies: Councillors Skeats, Stevens and White.

RESOLVED ITEMS

1. ESTABLISH A MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS TRUSTEES SUB-COMMITTEE,
APPOINT THE CHAIR AND MEMBERS AND AGREE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Resolved:

- (1) That, under the provisions of Sections 101 and 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, The Heights Free School Sub-Committee be established for the Municipal Year 2018/19 and the following Councillors be appointed to serve on the Sub-Committee:

The Mapledurham Playing Fields Trustees Sub-Committee (5:2)

Labour
Councillors

Ayub
D Edwards
K Edwards
James
Woodward

Conservative Councillors

Warman
To be confirmed

- (2) That the following Councillors be appointed as Chair/Vice-Chair of The Mapledurham Playing Fields Trustees Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year 2018/19:

Chair

Councillor D Edwards

Vice-Chair

Councillor Woodward

- (3) That the Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committees be as set out in Appendix B to the Monitoring Officer's report to Council of 23 May 2018.

2. APPOINTMENTS/NOMINATIONS TO OTHER BODIES FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018-19

Resolved:

That the following appointments (or nominations, where indicated) be made for the Municipal Year 2018-19:

- (a) Berkshire Local Transport Body

1 Representative
Standing Deputy

Councillor Page
Councillor Debs Absolom

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 23 MAY 2018

(b) Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee & Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London Adjudication Joint Committee

1 Representative	Councillor Page
Standing Deputy	Councillor Debs Absolom

(c) Improvement and Efficiency South-East (Nomination)

Director	Deputy Leader of the Council
AGM Representative	Leader of the Council

(d) Joint Waste Disposal Board

2 Representatives	Councillor Page Councillor James
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(e) Local Enterprise Partnership (Nomination)

1 Representative	Deputy Leader of the Council
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(f) Local Government Association

General Assembly (1 Representative)	Councillor Page
Annual Conference and Exhibition	Councillor Page and Skeats

(g) Local Strategic Partnership Board

2 Representatives	Leader of the Council Chief Executive
2 Standing Deputies	Lead Councillor for Corporate and Consumer Services Head of Customer Care & Transformation

(h) Mid and West Berkshire Local Access Forum (Nomination)

1 Representative	Councillor Hacker
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(i) Reading Climate Change Partnership

2 Representatives	Councillor Page Sustainability Manager
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READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES & DIRECTOR OF CHILDRENS SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 JUNE 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	9
TITLE:	SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACES		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR PEARCE CLLR LOVELOCK	PORTFOLIO:	EDUCATION / LEADERSHIP
SERVICE:	EDUCATION/ PLANNING DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATORY SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICERS:	PAUL WAGSTAFF GIORGIO FRAMALICCO	TEL:	0118 9374717 0118 9372604
JOB TITLE:	HEAD OF EDUCATION HEAD OF PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT AND REG SERVICES	E-MAIL:	paul.wagstaff@reading.gov.uk giorgio.framallicco@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report outlines the future needs for additional secondary school places and the approach to securing sufficient spaces to meet need.
- 1.2 The report also seeks approval to commence the required process to develop a new secondary school in response to projected increased demand for places from September 2021 and seeks to confirm a site at Richfield Avenue as a preferred site for a new 6 form entry secondary school.
- 1.3 A Part 2 confidential report setting out legal and property matters accompanies this report. The Part 2 report also provides a high level risk log.

Appendices

- Appendix A - Site Location Plan
- Appendix B - Equalities Impact Assessment.
- Appendix C - Potential Site Layout Options (extracts from Feasibility Study).

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To note the data on pupil forecasts and the proposed number of bulge classes to accommodate needs.
- 2.2 Agree that the Council begins to consult formally to gather local views on the plans to develop a new secondary school as a first step towards identifying a provider for a new school.

- 2.3 Delegate responsibility to the Head of Education in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Education to;
- (i) progress the publication of a due diligence specification for the new school and an invitation to sponsor and that the specification is considered at a future meeting of the Adults Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee.
 - (ii) identify a preferred sponsor to be recommended to the DfE.
- 2.4 To note the equalities impact assessment attached as Appendix B and to take into account the outcomes of the assessment in determining the recommendations set out in this report.
- 2.5 To agree that the site at Richfield Avenue be the Council's preferred site for a new 6 form entry secondary school.
- 2.6 To delegate responsibility to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council to commence and thereafter complete appropriate actions related to the appropriation of the land for education purposes in order to override title issues and subsequent disposal.
- 2.7 Agree that £240k of project management costs be allocated to the project from capital noting the financial risks set out in this report.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2016 - 2019 sets out the Council's priorities. These priorities include 'providing the best life through education, early help and healthy living'. The Plan sets out that 2,550 new schools places have been provided as part of the Council's £61m Primary School Expansion Programme.
- 3.2 Ensuring sufficient, quality school places in the right locations will help to ensure that school age children achieve their full potential, and support rising attainment levels across the Borough.
- 3.3 Improving attainment and outcomes for students and young people in Reading is a key priority. Secondary school attainment is sound but not outstanding at key stage 4. It is very strong at the end of key stage 5 and well above national averages. There are many measures of key stage four (GCSE) performance - the baccalaureate, progress and performance 8, and 5 A*-C - for example. The attainment of Reading 16 years olds is improving significantly when measured against all English Local Authorities (LAs), and was above the average for Statistical Neighbours and English LAs in 2017. In considering achievement in the Baccalaureate, Reading pupils' performance was good in 2016 - much better than that of pupils in all English LAs, and improving at a faster rate. Reading pupils are first quartile performers measured against those in Statistical Neighbours and English LAs.
- 3.4 Attainment across our secondary schools show outstanding key stage 5 performance as measured by level 3 points scores (level 3 is A level and equivalents) by students attending Reading post-16 education institutions. Outcomes are first rate. The caution here is that student movement between LA areas is significant and some pupils attending our sixth form provision may also be out of borough. The percentage of students achieving 3 very good A levels is extremely high, and far out-performs students in Statistical Neighbours and all English LAs where we perform first in both cases.

- 3.5 Despite high standards and outcomes overall, we are acutely aware of differences in the achievement and progress of particular groups. Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils do not always make the progress they need to make through the secondary education system to catch up and gain the skills and qualifications they need to secure further education, employment or training when they leave school. The DfE's Social Mobility Index in 2016 indicated Reading to be in the bottom quartile nationally, based on the proportion of disadvantaged pupils gaining the expected standard in reading, writing and in mathematics at the end of Year 6, and the proportion of disadvantaged pupils gaining 5 A*-C GCSEs at the end of key stage 4. We are committed to ensuring that any new secondary school has a curriculum which will address these issues and that opportunities for our most vulnerable of pupils to achieve well are taken fully with the education provided for them meeting their future employment needs. This is a key driver for ensuring we reduce the proportion of students missing education, employment and training, and also that provision and teaching engages pupils and reduces the risk of exclusion, particularly for those students with SEND.
- 3.6 Our commitment is for the new secondary school to be a non-selective and inclusive secondary school able to offer appropriate provision for pupils within moderate SEND within an mainstream setting. Separately, the LA is pursuing a SEND strategy which is currently reviewing specialist SEND provision and working to ensure that there are sufficient specialist places to meet the LA's future needs through a mix of specialist schools, along with resourced units attached to mainstream schools.

4. THE PROPOSAL

Pupils need information and Demand

- 4.1 The growth in demand for secondary school places makes a strong case for a new secondary school along with increased enrolment of Reading pupils at Chiltern Edge, South Oxfordshire. The case is recognised by the DfE and, from a national analysis of need from 1-6, 6 being of the greatest need for additional school places, Reading Borough is considered a 6 which means it is a local authority of priority need.

Academic year	Secondary							
	7	8	9	10	11	Total Yr7-11	12	13
2017/18	1375	1247	1247	1078	1052	5,999	848	755
2018/19	1504	1351	1240	1297	1068	6,460	789	727
2019/20	1754	1477	1343	1289	1285	7,148	801	676
2020/21	1722	1723	1468	1396	1277	7,586	964	687
2021/22	1782	1691	1712	1526	1383	8,094	958	827
2022/23	1772	1750	1681	1780	1513	8,496	1037	821
2023/24	1791	1740	1739	1747	1764	8,781	1134	890

Fig 1: SCAP data provided to the DfE on secondary school capacity required (2017)

- 4.2 The above table outlines the need for secondary school places year by year and by year group between 2017 to 2023. By 2023-24, the third year of the new school operation, the local authority will require 8,781 secondary school places for pupils Yr7 - Yr11. Currently, Reading's secondary schools provide 7,945 places*. By 2021, the

secondary school system will be 836 places short. By the time the new school admits Y11 students in 2025-26, based on current capacity, the borough will be close to 1000 places short in the system if the school is not built.

* This does not include numbers for the UTC which does not take pupils until the age of 14 yrs.

- 4.3 Currently, planned admissions to secondary schools are within the context of Reading borough being considered as a single admission area. Although each school has its own catchment area upon which to allocate places based on parental choice, it also allows for pupils to be diverted across the borough to schools with spare places where parents' own choices are full. In planning for secondary places in the future, the DfE is willing to consider three distinct secondary school planning regions within the borough for north, west-central and east-south. The borough's selective schools will be viewed as a distinct group on their own, drawing students from a wider area. This change will enable the local authority to pinpoint local need for additional student places and funding from basic needs grants.
- 4.4 The Borough will continue to grow in population and has an ambitious housing growth plan to meet rising needs as set out in its emerging Local Plan. New housing planned for the town is not the only factor which will increase demand for school places with the way in which the existing housing stock is used factoring heavily. Accurately forecasting pupil needs arising from the current and future population of the Borough is an important aspect of pupil number forecasting.

Meeting Needs - Capacity at existing schools

- 4.5 In response to increased demands for primary school places the Council embarked on a significant primary school expansion project, much of which is now complete. Places have been provided by utilising capital funding (basic needs funding) provided by the Government to this Council as well as additional resources including the extensive use of borrowing. As the larger primary cohorts are beginning to feed through to secondary schools, the Council now needs to agree how such needs can be met.
- 4.6 Following analysis of forecasted pupil numbers it is currently envisaged that seven bulge classes will be required in September 2019 and a further six bulge classes in 2020. Meetings have been held with local schools to discuss this and written confirmation that pupil numbers can be accommodated has been obtained from those schools that can accommodate additional places.
- 4.7 It is anticipated that in most cases the bulge classes required can be accommodated within each schools' existing accommodation. It should be noted that some of the Schools may need extra space towards the end of the bulge years around 2025 but this has yet to be fully investigated.
- 4.8 Dialogue with Chiltern Edge, which is situated out of the Borough in Sonning Common Oxfordshire, has been positive. This follows the campaign to overturn the County Council's intention to close the school. The school will critically provide two additional forms of entry from 2019. The school forms part of the Maiden Erleigh Trust. It is important to note that dialogue with schools is on-going and the final location of the bulge classes required to meet needs may change.
- 4.9 By far the most economic means of providing additional secondary school places on the scale involved here is to develop a single new school. Expanding existing schools was an option explored and discounted as in each case it would be necessary to provide new classrooms but also expand, where physically possible, other essential

elements of an individual school's infrastructure. Multiply this by up to seven schools and the costs are excessive when compared to a new school.

New Secondary school

- 4.10 In addition to the additional forms of entry provided at existing schools, the scale of the need requires the development of a new secondary school to serve Borough residents.
- 4.11 Given the needs set out above the Council will wish to procure a new build 900-place secondary school (6 form entry) with a separate sports hall, car parking, external social areas and playing fields which is to be operational by September 2021. Building Bulletin 103 (BB103) recommends a minimum building area gross internal floor area (GIFA) of 6,720m² for a new build secondary school of this size and a three storey main school block is envisaged. The intention is to meet Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Design standards, supplemented with RBC planning policy requirements and costs are to be as the ESFA model with abnormal site costs identified.
- 4.12 BB103 sets out area guidelines for mainstream schools and while non-statutory the document aims to assist those involved in the designing and creation of a new school. The guidelines will not necessarily have to be met and should always be applied flexibly in light of particular circumstances.

6th Form needs

- 4.13 The information and data available confirm that there is no need for additional sixth form places to be provided in the proposed school. There are currently sufficient 6th form places to meet the needs of the student population with the current 6th form and 16-19 year old provision in local schools and at Reading College. However, the site being proposed is of the size that would allow for expansion into a 6th form at some point in the future should this be required.
- 4.14 Inclusion of a 6th form can sometimes provide an added attraction to parents and also prospective teachers who enjoy teaching key stage 5 pupils in addition to key stage 4. However, operating 6th forms can be expensive and extremely costly if the provision operates below student capacity. By leaving sufficient space for this decision to be made in the future allows the flexibility should the situation and need change at some point in the future, for example if schools with current 6th Form provision reduce their capacity or close their 6th forms altogether.

year	PAN	total capacity	total numbers	VI form capacity	year 12	year 13	VI form total	surplus / deficit
19-20	1,506	9,109	7,077	1,847	787	629	1,416	-154
20-21	1,506	9,109	7,219	1,819	786	633	1,419	-124
21-22	1,506	9,109	7,222	1,821	816	636	1,452	-93
22-23	1,506	9,109	7,221	1,821	816	636	1,452	-92
23-24	1,506	9,109	7,298	1,821	815	636	1,451	-93
24-25	1,506	9,109	7,185	1,850	869	636	1,505	-68
25-26	1,506	9,109	7,053	1,879	869	668	1,537	-65
26-27	1,506	9,109	7,053	1,879	816	668	1,484	-118

- 4.15 The data on 6th form capacity covers schools only. Reading College provides 16-19 provision and currently 27% of Reading's 16 yr olds progress into either Reading College or other further education institutions or 6th Form Colleges outside of borough. Where the above data shows a surplus in current provision within our school 6th Forms, considering the proportion of 16-18 year olds who also attend further education, the case for building further capacity at 6th Form is currently unwarranted.

Special Educational Needs and Disability:

- 4.16 The Council has a Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy which is currently aiming to improve the provision of specialist places to meet the increasing needs of pupils with SEND in the borough rather than to educate them out of borough. The SEND strategy covers 4 separate strands; Strands 1 and 3 are pertinent to this report. Strand 1 is focusing on ensuring better collection of data to plan future specialist needs to meet changing demand within the borough. Strand 3 focuses on improving specialist provision within the borough as a means of reducing the need for high cost out of borough and independent school placements. Both Strands are progressing well. Current inclusion and learning support units in mainstream schools are being reviewed to ensure that they are providing appropriate provision for current and future specialist needs. The Avenue Special School is expanding the number of places. Blessed Hugh Farringdon is increasing its specialist provision for Autistic Spectrum Condition and the future of Phoenix Special School is being reviewed given increasing demands. The new secondary school will be part of the strategy by ensuring that SEND pupils identified and supported in mainstream through the school's education strategy is secure. It is not, at this stage, considered to be the most appropriate route to include a specialist SEND unit at the new secondary school.

Process to deliver a new Free School

- 4.17 The Wave 13 Free School process is determined by the DfE and involves applications being made by schools, Trusts or independent bodies to bid for funding to open a new school. The process involves making a strong case for the need for a new school, and also the provision of a suitable proof of concept for the school along with proven capacity to deliver and successfully operate the school once opened.
- 4.18 The DfE already have data indicating their priority areas to support the opening of a new school, and have funding to support the building of a number of new Free Schools across the country. The funding available is perceived to be sufficient to fund

approximately 30 new schools nationally. Bids and proposals are made from operators, academies or Trusts.

- 4.19 However, it is essential that any bid has been developed in close liaison with the local authorities within which the schools will be sited. The DfE need to know that any commitment to fund a new Free School will meet local demand, fill to capacity, and therefore be commercially and educationally viable. It is essential that any proposal is able to demonstrate mitigation of any risks that may conspire to challenge the building and opening of any new school. These would typically involve the availability of appropriate land that is not bound by complex planning and development issues, a clear rationale for the need to meet increasing school rolls, thereby not leading to other local schools becoming financially at risk, and also that consideration has been given to interim and temporary arrangements to manage students in case the permanent building is delayed.
- 4.20 The local authority has a strong case for the need for additional school places. It will be able to provide appropriate information to bidders so that the school concept, data and site is understood and persuasive. Several bidders can put forward proposals and the local authority can provide endorsement of a particular Trust or Academy operator as their 'preferred partner.' Although this does not guarantee that the preferred partner will be successful in securing the funding, this endorsement will be important.
- 4.21 The Wave 13 Free Schools programme was released on 11 May 2018. Interest in the programme must be registered between 18 June and 6 September 2018. A full application must be submitted by midday on Monday 17 September 2018. The Government is looking to approve approximately 35 new mainstream primary and secondary and 'all through' 16-19 free schools in total.
- 4.22 The Government will be looking for applications which are in areas of demonstrable basic need and Reading is one of the targeted districts identified by the department. The rationale for Reading's inclusion includes the increasing demand for secondary school places in the borough over the next 5 years. Consideration has also been given to Reading's position on the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission's Social Mobility Index (2016) which ranks Reading as 225 out of 324 local authorities, and 290 out of 324 with respect to schools. This looks at the percentage of children eligible for a free school meal attaining at least a level 4 in reading, writing and maths at the end of key stage 2 and 5 good GCSEs at the end of key stage 4. It also considers the percentage of children eligible for a free school meal attending secondary schools graded good or outstanding by Ofsted. In both these areas, Reading is in the bottom quartile of all local authorities in England.
- 4.23 The process of apply to open a free school involves operators or Multi Academy Trusts registering an interest from 18 June 2018 and then working with the respective local authorities to determine the land availability, the data and demand, and to submit a proposal. Each proposal is evaluated against key criteria indicated below:
- Evidence of need for a school and how this Free School will fill a shortfall of secondary school places in the borough;
 - Evidence of how the proposal targets the pockets of low standards in the borough;
 - The quality of the vision and how this really meets the needs of pupils in the area, particularly the disadvantaged and how the proposal will help them close the attainment gap;
 - Evidence of support for the proposal from parents and the local community;

- The strength of the education plan for the school opening and continued development, including the curriculum plan, staffing, and integration and community cohesion;
- Evidence of the capacity and capability of the Trust to deliver a successful school;
- Financial viability;
- Appropriateness and availability of a proposed site; and
- Suitability and due diligence of the applicants;

4.24 Once proposals have been submitted in early September, they will be scrutinised by a panel in the DfE / ESFA, and interviews undertaken with shortlisted bidders. It is likely that an outcome will be known by the beginning of 2019. The funding secured through the project will essentially cover the capital build. Although the cost of the land would not normally be included, there have been cases where the cost of purchasing land to build a school has also been included, particularly where there are significant additional costs associated in securing the land. The project and construction can be led, either directly by the DfE and its commissioned capital building contractor, or by external or local authority services. This will need negotiation once the bid has been successful.

4.25 The new school will be a Free School. Free schools are funded by the government but are not run by the local council. They have more control over how they do things.

4.26 They are ‘all-ability’ schools, so cannot use academic selection processes like a grammar school. Free schools can:

- set their own pay and conditions for staff
- change the length of school terms and the school day

4.27 Free Schools do not have to follow the National Curriculum.

The process of selecting a partner to support in the process

4.28 Initial briefings have been provided to local Trust sponsors who would be interested in being involved in the development of a new Free School. Three Trusts have indicated initial interest directly with the local authority and are exploring the project further.

4.29 In identifying a preferred partner, the local authority is completing a due diligence exercise on potential Trust operators in order to provide recommendations for the Council to decide which organisation to support as its preferred partner. The due diligence process is to cover the following key areas:

- Reputation and Quality
- Leadership and Capacity
- Financial Security
- Quality of Provision and of Teaching and Learning
- School to School Support
- Partnership working

4.30 Officers are progressing the publication of a due diligence for the new school in consultation with the lead Councillor for Education and delegated approval is set out in the above recommendation. Notwithstanding the intention is to secure member engagement and oversight on the due diligence proposals via a future Adults Social Care, Children’s Services and Education Committee paper.

4.31 Work is currently taking place with those schools and Trusts that have indicated an interest in working with the local authority on this project. The council will work closely with the preferred partner/s to support the bid process and to ensure that the bid closely aligns to the Council's needs.

Site options

4.32 Finding a suitable site which can be delivered in time for September 2021 is a challenging prospect not least in a tight and developed environment such as Reading. Strategically it is desirable to locate new provision where needs arise with growth planned in the central area of the town. Whilst this is the case the location of any new school may impact and extend the distance travelled for pupils to school.

4.33 A site selection study has been carried out analysing the suitability of a number of sites in Reading.

4.34 The full study is appended to the Part 2 report accompanying this report. In summary through a site selection process, six sites were analysed in detail against set criteria:

- Site provides a opportunity for civic presence and sense of place;
- Meets recommended site area set out in (set out in BB103)
- Availability of access and public transport links
- Ease if vehicular access
- Ease of access for pedestrian / cycle
- Absence of acoustic (or olfactory) constraints
- Minimises loss of public amenity
- Building massing contributes to the adjacent streetscape/ landscape
- Absence of planning obstacles (Draft Local Plan)
- Offers access to a variety of outdoor spaces
- Ease of access to sports pitches
- Ability to deliver unencumbered site for lowest legal cost and timescale
- Absence of 3rd party issues / users
- Potential for expansion
- Absence of Floor Risk (EA Zones 2 and 3).

4.35 By scoring each site against the above criteria an overall score was concluded:

Site (numbered)	Total Score
1	7
2	9.5
3	9
4 (Richfield Avenue)	11
5	6.5
6	10

Richfield Avenue

4.36 Following the completion of the site selection process, Richfield Avenue, a site in north central Reading with views towards the adjacent Thameside Promenade and the River Thames is considered to be the preferred site for a new secondary school. A site location plan is attached as Appendix A. The site comprises a former golf driving range and open land bordering Richfield Avenue (the 'southern triangle') with a combined site area of approximately 55,264m² (thus meeting the BB103 minimum site

area recommendation for a school of this size of 53,350m² min). Rivermead Leisure Centre is situated immediately east of the site.

- 4.37 The River Thames is located to the north and a small drainage ditch borders the site before crossing the site. The southern triangular area of the site fronting Richfield Avenue is within Flood Zone 2 (higher risk) although the actual driving range site is within Flood Zone 3. The site is a former landfill site and the potential for poor quality ground conditions, settlement and contamination issues are being investigated. Access to the site by users is adequately served by a range of sustainable transport modes including public transport (buses), footpaths and cycleways.
- 4.38 The leisure procurement process has commenced in order to find a partner to manage the Council's leisure estate, including the development of a new competition standard swimming pool with diving provision at the Rivermead site. It is not envisaged that the end use of the school at this location will cause a conflict with the adjacent leisure centre. In fact the two uses may be compatible in terms of the option to provide formal leisure provision to the school including a swimming pool. However there are some risks related to the use and especially the timing and impact of the construction programme for the school that will coincide with either a major redevelopment of the existing leisure centre or a new-build leisure facility on adjacent land. Logistically this will need careful management and will need to avoid imposing additional costs on the leisure facility construction. At this stage it is considered that this is manageable via separate site access requirements.
- 4.39 Reading Festival is major annual music festival attended by up to 100,000 people held on land immediately west of the site during the August bank holiday weekend. Festival Republic, organisers of the festival, make ancillary use of all parts of the site during the festival period and consultation with them on the implications of site development have commenced. The Cow Lane entrance is the main access for supplies and construction materials for the festival site, and is the only vehicular access point capable of accommodating the high vehicles required. The current access through the proposed school site to the Festival site is used as a direct exit for up to 20,000 day visitors, which operates in conjunction with road closures and police operations. The operation of the festival, albeit taking into account that the setting up of the festival would mainly take place in the summer holidays, needs careful consideration as detailed design options are developed. Early engagement with Festival Republic will be vital to ensure opportunities to maximise the use of the site are taken fully.
- 4.40 The site is located within an area designated as Local Green Space in the draft Local Plan. Under the Plan areas designated in this way are to be protected from development and dialogue with the planning authority will be required. The draft Local Plan also identifies this area as part of a major landscape feature, where development should not detract from the character or appearance of the Thames valley. Also under the Local Plan part of the southern triangle of land south of the watercourse was considered as potential traveller transit accommodation area. A report on this matter is on the same agenda as this report. The attached Equalities Impact Assessment (Appendix B) assesses the implications of the recommendations set out in this report. Essentially the use of the land for this purpose is one of a number of factors which would prohibit the use of the land for a traveller transit site. The site would also need to be appropriated for an educational use from its current leisure use.
- 4.41 The Caversham Bridge Garden Centre is located on the south east corner of the site. Whilst customer access is from the east via the linear car park south of the leisure

centre, the garden centre has a right of way for vehicular deliveries from the west, across the southern triangle of land.

- 4.42 All mains services are on or near to the site. Drainage solutions are being reviewed.
- 4.43 The Committee are asked to endorse the site as the Council's preferred location for a new secondary school noting the information and impacts set out in the Equalities Impact Assessment. A number of property and legal matters are set out in the accompanying Part 2 report attached to this agenda. The formal endorsement of a preferred site for the provision of a new secondary school will support the Wave 13 bid process.

Preferred site design options

- 4.44 A number of sketch development options have been prepared and are included within a feasibility study report by Hampshire County Council Property Services. Extracts of the study are appended (Appendix C) to this report. The full study is appended to the Part 2 report. In each case a three storey main school building with separate sports hall have been considered. Options have looked at potential arrangements of both traditional grass sports pitch provision and also synthetic turf pitches. In each case, consideration has also been given to the possible location of a future expansion block and this is considered achievable, subject to further study. A total of four options have been considered with various configurations of buildings and external spaces. Following engagement with festival operators/ review of current site configuration - water course/ flood plain/ legal arrangements the preferred proposal to form a forecourt area to the road including parking and with the buildings located on the driving range site.
- 4.45 The emerging design options begin to take into account the use of the land at Cow Lane by Festival Republic for the Reading Festival with potential parking areas to serve the school and the Festival during the summer holiday. Different to the proposed use of the land at Cow Lane for a gypsy and traveller site, the school and festival use of the land to the south appear compatible. Nonetheless securing a functional design remains a risk for the project.
- 4.46 The full traffic, highways and other environmental implications would need to be considered as part of a full planning appraisal and assessment. The school would be required to operate a travel plan to reduce car borne commutes and to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use.
- 4.47 Careful design and layout options will be required to manage flood risk risks on the site and a planning application will need to be accompanied by information demonstrating compliance with a sequential approach to site selection and flood risk assessment work.
- 4.48 The landscape and visual amenity matters need to be carefully assessed as the design options are developed. The impact on the Thames Valley major landscape feature will need to be considered as part of any planning application. The tallest building on the site will be no more than three storeys and defined landscape planting around the site will reduce it and other structures' impact from the Thames Valley.

Next stages and timeline

- 4.49 The next steps following the formal ratification of the Richfield Avenue school site includes confirmation of the due diligence process and the appointment of the free school sponsor as well as sign off a feasibility study and submission to ESFA as part of the funding application.

4.50 A draft development programme showing how the school would be operational by September 2021 has been prepared with actions required by Reading Borough Council and the free school governance group which indicates:

- ESFA feasibility study completed (August 2018)
- Heads of terms agreed (October 2018)
- Free School sponsor appointed (October 2018)
- ESFA contractors bidders day (October / November 2018)
- Appoint Contractor (January 2019)
- Planning application (April 2019)
- Contractor Award (October 2019)
- Construction start on site (November 2019)
- School Opens (September 2021)

4.51 A Project delivery programme is to be developed in detail but will need to include a strategy for contingency should a new school not be delivered by September 2021. Consideration will need to be given for either a phased occupation of the school as in 2021 there will be intake from Year 7 only, or the provision of temporary accommodation, preferably on site. The Council, along with the ESFA will prefer to avoid temporary accommodation where possible but a funding request may be required based on pupil demand, programme and timing of ESFA approval/ funding.

Options Considered

4.52 The pupil placement needs set out in this report are unequivocal in relation to the need for new secondary school places from 2019. Given the Council's statutory responsibility to provide school places there are in effect no alternative options open to the Council other than to deliver new secondary school places from 2019.

4.53 An assessment of current secondary school accommodation was undertaken in order to ensure existing capacity is utilised fully. Provision within existing schools and out of Borough placements are being maximised to meet needs in 2019 and 2020. Expanding existing schools was an option explored and discounted as in each case it would be necessary to provide additional infrastructure. It is therefore recommended that new secondary school is provided to meet needs from September 2021.

4.54 Options are relevant in relation to a preferred site for a new Secondary School. Richfield Avenue is not free from legal, property and planning constraints but the same applies to all site options assessed as part of the site appraisal exercise (Appended to the Part 2 report). It is important that the site put forward as part of the Wave 13 programme is as deliverable and achievable as possible in order to put the best case to the ESFA / DfE.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The proposal to deliver additional schools places including a new 6 form entry secondary school primarily contributes to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan:

- Providing the best start in life through education, early help and healthy living;
- Providing infrastructure to support the economy.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Local schools have been made aware of the proposals and comments from head teachers will be sought through relevant forums. Parents and other interested parties can also make comments on the proposals and consultations on the layout of the proposed schools will be undertaken before seeking formal planning approval.
- 6.2 Discussions with key stakeholders have commenced including Festival Republic, Caversham Bridge Garden Centre and prospective bidders involved in the leisure procurement process. Further discussions will take place with key stakeholders to ensure that the site is deliverable and that opportunities to maximise the use of the land are taken as the design for the school is developed. Whilst the land identified for the school is owned by the Council it has a number of third party rights crossing it. As the land is public open space advertisement of the proposed appropriation and subsequent disposal will need to be advertised and the Council will need to consider any responses before a decision is taken. This report seeks authority to delegate that process to the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council.
- 6.3 As the due diligence process is completed to agree a preferred partner for the secondary school it is likely that the Leisure Procurement Exercise will also be reaching its conclusion. The timing of these projects provides a unique opportunity to assess the scope for the possibility of the cross use of facilities, to review development programmes and to ensure a joined up approach to how the sites are developed.
- 6.4 It is best practice to consult neighbours and stake holders prior to the formal submission of a planning application in order to ensure the final design is the best fit. A pre application consultation will be undertaken. The formal planning application process will also seek comments from neighbours and statutory and non-statutory consultees.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2 It is considered that that an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is relevant to the decision to use the site for educational purposes which would mean the site is no longer available for recreational purposes and in part means that land to the south of the site cannot be used as a traveller transit site. An EIA is attached as Appendix B to this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Detailed legal matters are set out in the Part 2 report which accompanies this report.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Council approved Capital Programme (February 2018) has set aside an amount to support the delivery of bulge classes. As set out in this report, the majority of bulge

classes would be provided in existing schools which have the necessary capacity to accommodate an additional form(s) of entry. Discussions with local schools continue and some capital expenditure may be required depending on which schools are used to accommodate additional places.

- 9.2 The cost of a new 6th form entry school could be in the order of £19m+. The statutory responsibility of providing school places rests with the Council. The DfE provides Basic Need capital funding to support Councils in achieving this responsibility and the DfE can also provide places through the Free School programme which they operate.
- 9.3 The value of the land, which would not normally be included in any ESFA grant award, is reported in the Part 2 report. It is acknowledged that there have been cases where the cost of purchasing land to build a school has also been included, particularly where there are significant additional costs associated in securing the land. Options to recover the land value will be explored as part of the Wave 13 process and subsequent dialogue with the ESFA.
- 9.4 In developing the site appraisal information potential abortive project management costs have been occurred of approximately £40k. An estimated cost of £200k based on supporting bid, feasibility and allowance for surveys are likely to be incurred, which may not be recoverable. These funds will be funded by the Capital Programme but should the process fail to progress, any abortive costs may have to be found from revenue budgets.

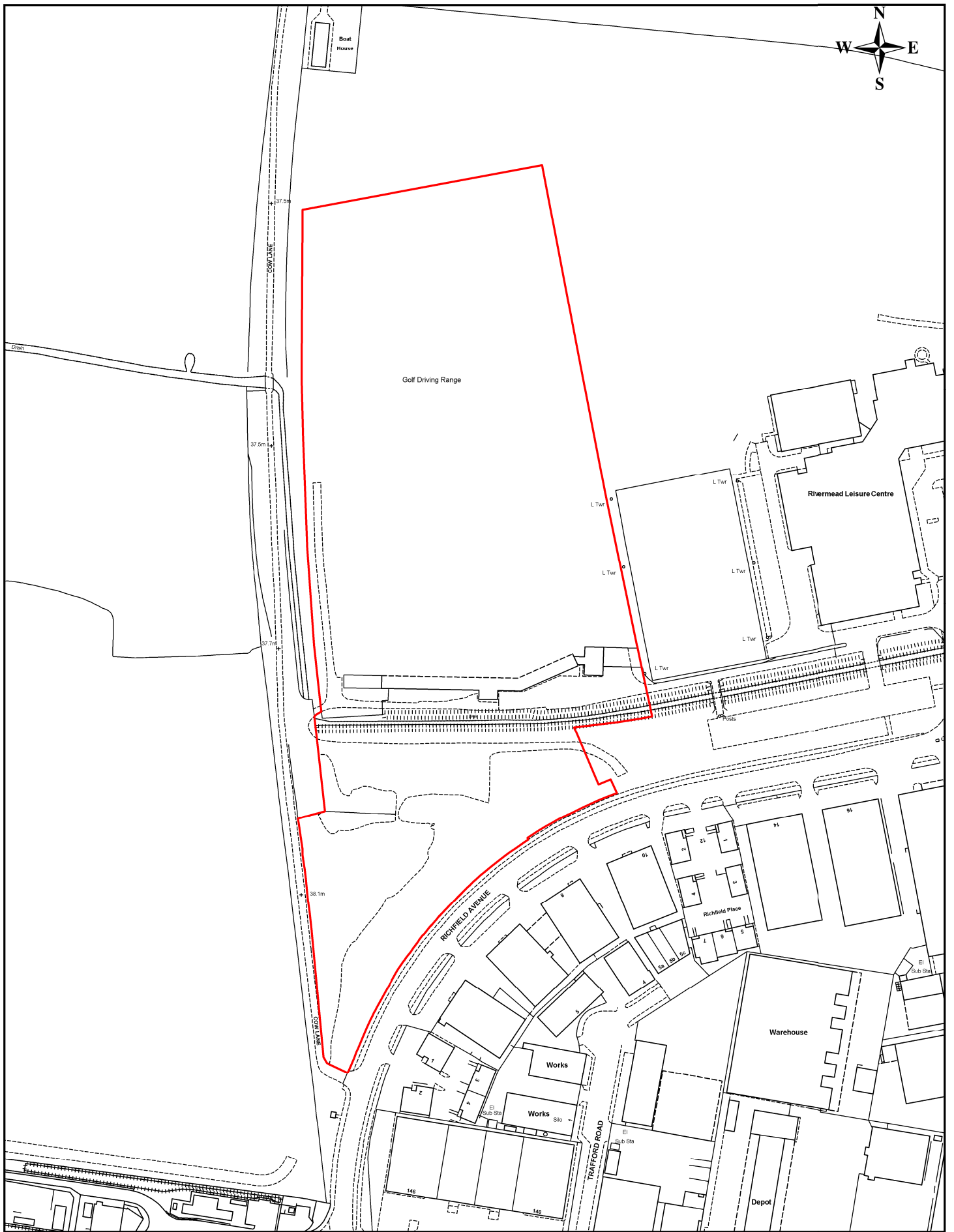
Capital Implications (bulge classes)

Capital Programme reference from budget book: page line	2018/19 £,000
Proposed Capital Expenditure	500
Grant / Section 106 (specify)	500
Total Funding	500

Capital Programme reference from budget book: page line	2018/19 £,000
Project Management	240
Borrowing	240*
Total Funding	240

* Abortive costs cannot be capitalised and will have a revenue impact.

- 9.5 The Council will need to consider the most appropriate option to deliver the new school should it receive Free School Wave 13 funding. Options relate to the Council building out the school through 'self delivery' where the Council effectively project manages the development or the ESFA delivering the full project.
- 9.6 In relation to either option the ESFA will wish to see the school delivered via the ESFA Construction Framework. The process and time lines will be set by the ESFA and the project would be design and build using an ESFA Design & Build Contract. The Brief for the project and costs will be defined by the ESFA - compliance with ESFA specification and area schedules.
- 9.7 Either option presents opportunities and an assessment of the best way forward will need to be made in due course.



Title: Richfield Avenue

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Produced by Valuation Section

Date: 27/04/2018 Scale at A4: 1:2500
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Provide basic details

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed

The selection of the land at Richfield Avenue as the preferred site for a new secondary school. The decision has an impact on other alternative uses of the land including the use of the land for recreational purposes and a traveller transit site.

Directorate:

Children, Education & Early Help Services / Environment and Neighbourhood Services

Service: Education / Planning Development and Regulatory Services

Name: Giorgio Framallicco

Job Title: Head of Planning Development and Regulatory Services

Date of assessment: May 2018

Scope your proposal

What is the aim of your policy or new service/what changes are you proposing?

Given local needs for additional secondary school places the report seeks to reach a decision on a preferred site for a new secondary school site in order to support a robust submission for funding as part of the Government's Wave 13 Free School funding process.

Who will benefit from this proposal and how?

School age children. Without further secondary school place provision the Borough will have a short fall in places. A successful Wave 13 award will secure funding for a new secondary school.

What outcomes does the change aim to achieve and for whom?

Increase the number of secondary school places in the Borough to meet needs. The site is currently used for leisure purposes. The use of the land for education is one of a number of factors which would prohibit the use of the land for a traveller transit site.

Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?

School age children, parents, teachers, ESFA, DfE. Those using the site for recreational purposes. Gypsy and traveller community.

Assess whether an EqIA is Relevant

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; promoting equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some (racial, disability, gender, sexuality, age and religious belief) groups may be affected differently than others? (Think about your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc.)

Yes / ~~No~~ (delete as appropriate)

Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Think about your complaints, consultation, and feedback.

Yes / ~~No~~ (delete as appropriate)

If the answer is Yes to any of the above you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment.

If No you **MUST** complete this statement

An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant because: n /a

Assess the Impact of the Proposal

Your assessment must include:

- Consultation
- Collection and Assessment of Data
- Judgement about whether the impact is negative or positive

Consultation

Relevant groups/experts	How were/will the views of these groups be obtained	Date when contacted

<p><i>School age children, parents, teachers, ESFA, DfE.</i> <i>Recreational uses of the land.</i></p>	<p>Local schools have been made aware of the proposals and comments from head teachers will be sought through relevant forums. Parents and other interested parties can also make comments on the proposals and consultations on the layout of the proposed schools will be undertaken before seeking formal planning approval. Consultation will be undertaken on the appropriation of the land for educational purposes.</p>	<p>June and on going</p>
<p>Gypsy and traveller communities, police, Council members and officers, health and education professionals</p>	<p>Stakeholder involvement, including interviews with travellers, was carried out as part of preparing the GTAA and led to the conclusions set out in the Consultation on Gypsy and Traveller Provision (11 June Policy Committee report). The Gypsy and Traveller Consultation Document was also subject to consultation during September and October 2017.</p>	<p>Late 2016-early 2017 September/October 2017</p>

Collect and Assess your Data

Describe how this proposal could impact on Racial groups

The use of the land for this purpose is one of a number of factors which would prohibit the use of the land for a traveller transit site.

Romany gypsies and Irish travellers are considered to be ethnic groups under the Equalities Act. The traveller community housed in bricks and mortar in Reading is generally of Irish traveller origin, but unauthorised encampments involve a range of groups. Considering provision to meet the identified needs therefore has a potential impact on racial groups.

The effect of the recommended action would be that the Council would not be able to provide for the identified transit accommodation needs for gypsies and travellers. This would therefore be likely to have a continuing negative impact on ethnic groups.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact on Gender/transgender (cover pregnancy and maternity, marriage)

No impact.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability

The proposal set out in this report seeks to secure a preferred site for additional school places. The new secondary school will be part of the strategy by ensuring that SEND pupils identified and supported in mainstream through the school's education strategy is secure.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)

No impact.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact on Age

No impact

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how this proposal could impact on Religious belief?

No impact.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Make a Decision

Tick which applies (Please delete relevant ticks)

1. ~~No negative impact identified~~
2. Negative impact identified but there is a justifiable reason

Reason

The negative impact relates to the proposal to not provide for transit provision for gypsies and travellers and the recreational use of the land ceasing. While the decision to make the site at Richfield Avenue the preferred site for a secondary school is not the only reason why the site cannot be used for a traveller transit site it is a key factor. The recommendations set out in the report are informed by the need for additional secondary school places and follows a Borough wide appraisal of potential sites. This site was considered the most deliverable given relevant constraints and opportunities when compared to other options. The Council continues to undertake work to identify a site to meet traveller transit needs in Reading.

The school will have a number of sporting facilities on the site to meet pupil needs. It may be possible that the facilities can be made available to the wider community out of school hours. The leisure procurement process has commenced in order to find a partner to manage the Council's leisure estate, including the development of a new competition standard swimming pool with diving provision at the Rivermead site. There is an option to provide formal leisure provision to the school including a swimming pool. Equally the use of the facilities by the school may increase the leisure offer to the public outside of the school's use.

3. ~~Negative impact identified or uncertain~~

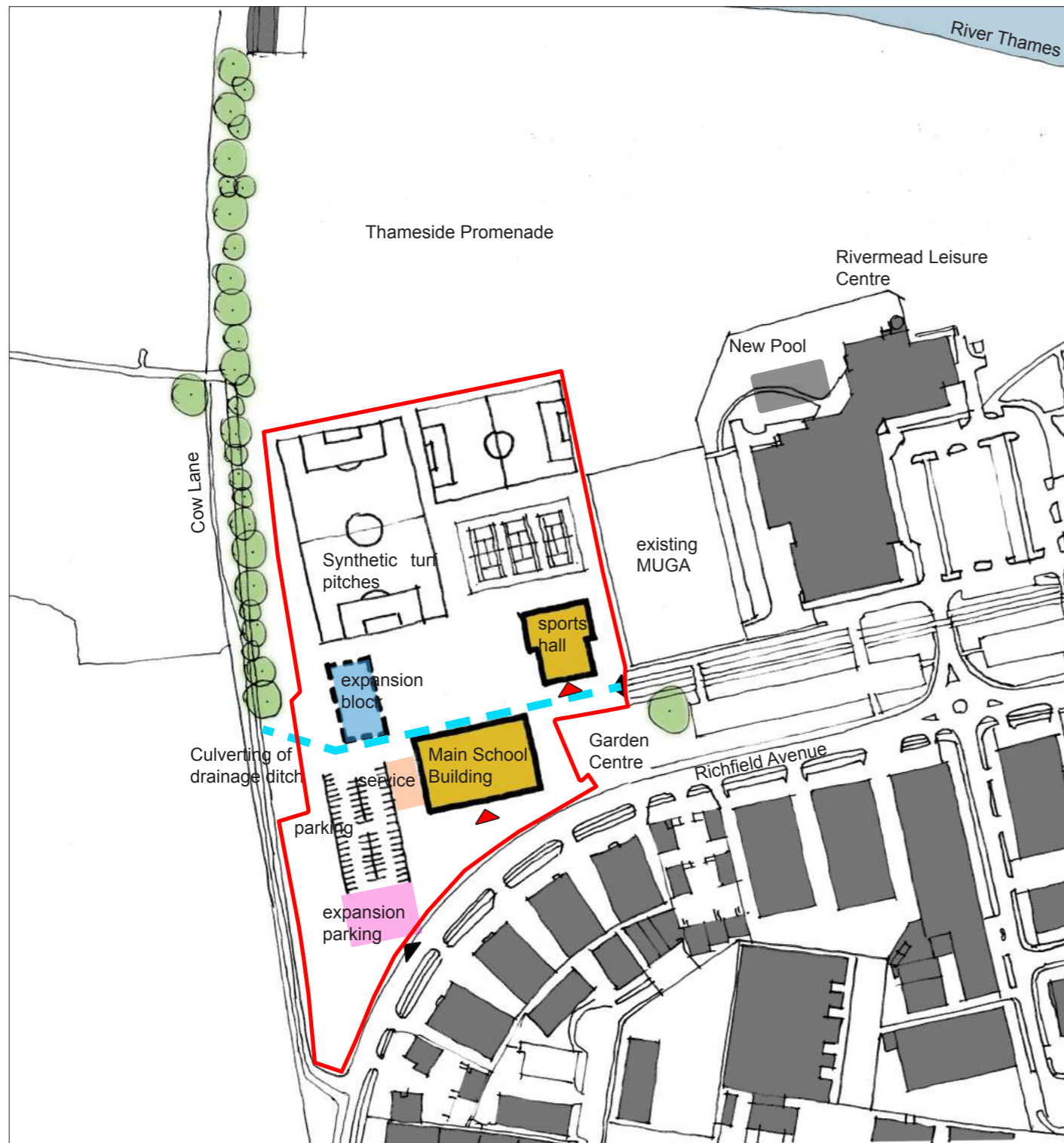
How will you monitor for adverse impact in the future?

As set out within the Gypsy and Traveller Provision report (11 June Policy Committee report) the Council will continue to assess sites to meet transit traveller needs. Through the Leisure Procurement process and the Wave 13 process (and beyond) the Council will explore opportunities with shortlisted parties to maximise joint use of facilities and wider community use.

Signed (completing officer) Giorgio Framallicco Date May 2018

Signed (Lead Officer) Giorgio Framallicco Date May 2018

Option II



Option Plan



Aerial view from south east



Aerial view from north west



Aerial view from west

Features

- Main building addresses Richfield Avenue
- 6FE school building with separate 4-court Sports Hall & changing
- Parking provision accessed via Richfield Avenue
- Explore potential for shared use of Rivermead Leisure Centre facilities
- Provision of synthetic turf pitches substantially reduces site area (approx 33,000 m²) and thus requirement of local green space

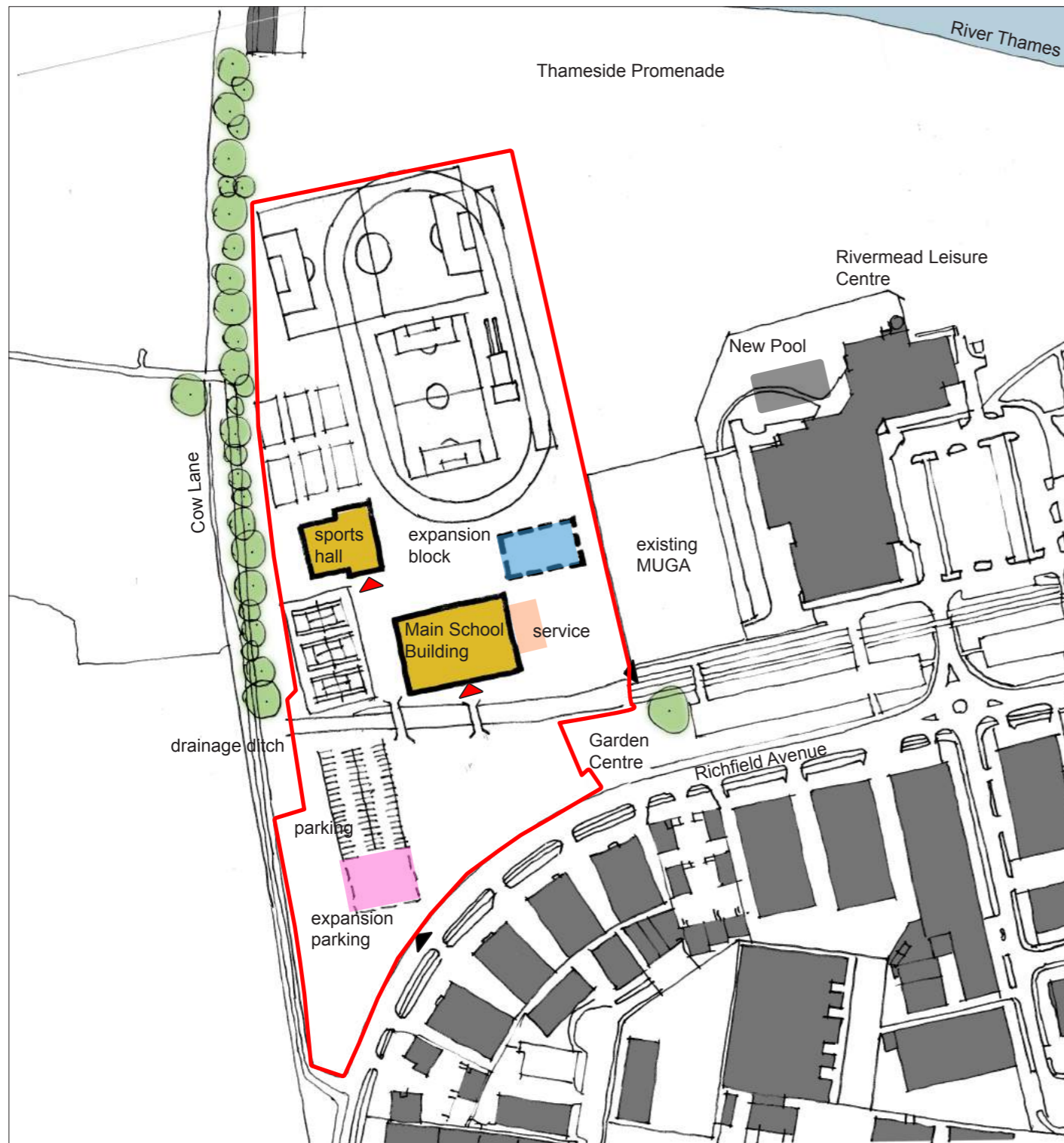
Benefits

- School building prominent to Richfield Avenue creating civic presence
- Scale of adjacent Rivermead Leisure Centre supports three storey school building
- Future expansion of school building and car parking considered achievable
- Reduced development of local green space
- Reduced site extent northwards allows camping areas during Reading Festival period (August bank holiday weekend) Note vehicular access required

Challenges

- Location of school buildings restrict use of 'southern triangle' of site during Reading Festival period (August bank holiday weekend)
- Culverting of drainage ditch which crosses site east to west
- Relatively constricted school site
- Additional capital cost of synthetic turf pitch provision
- Impact to Garden Centre access

Option III



Option Plan



Aerial view from south east



Aerial view from north west



Aerial view from west

Features

- 6FE school building with separate 4-court Sports Hall & changing
- Parking provision accessed via Richfield Avenue
- All buildings sited on former driving range
- Pedestrian bridges span retained drainage ditch crosses site east to west (via partial culverting)
- Explore potential for shared use of Rivermead Leisure Centre facilities
- Service access (eg to school kitchens) potentially via Leisure centre access road

Benefits

- Scale of adjacent Rivermead Leisure Centre supports scale of three storey school building
- Future expansion of school building and car parking considered achievable
- Location of school buildings allows use of 'southern triangle' and possibly sports pitches during Reading Festival period (August bank holiday weekend)
- Potential to retain Garden Centre access

Challenges

- School building not as prominent from Richfield Avenue

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 JUNE 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	10
TITLE:	CONSULTATION ON GYPSY AND TRAVELLER PROVISION		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	ABBNEY/BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	MARK WORRINGHAM	TEL:	0118 9373337
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING POLICY TEAM LEADER	E-MAIL:	mark.worringham@reading.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers the issue of provision for gypsy and traveller accommodation within Reading. It provides a summary of the results of the consultation on provision for gypsies and travellers undertaken during September and October 2017, including on a proposal for a traveller transit site at Cow Lane. It considers the points raised in consultation, as well as new issues which have come forward since the original report to Policy Committee in September 2017, including the proposal for a new secondary school, and recommends a decision on whether to proceed with the transit site proposal.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee note the results of consultation on gypsy and traveller provision in September and October 2017;
- 2.2 That the Committee agree that the proposal for traveller transit use of the site at Cow Lane not be progressed further; and
- 2.3 That the Committee note that the Council will continue to undertake work to identify a site to meet traveller transit needs in Reading.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Periodically assessing the housing needs of people living in caravans or houseboats is a requirement for local housing authorities under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 (124). At the same time, examining the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers and seeking to accommodate

those needs is an expectation of national planning policy in preparing Local Plans (Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, 2015). The Council has prepared a Local Plan for Reading, which was submitted to the Secretary of State on 29th March 2018. The preparation of this Local Plan has meant a need to assess the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers, and give consideration to how and where those needs can be met.

4. THE PROPOSAL

(a) Current Position

- 4.1 A Gypsy and Traveller, Travelling Showpeople and Houseboat Dweller Accommodation Assessment was carried out in 2017 to assess the needs for those living in caravans and houseboats. In summary, it identified needs of 10-17 permanent pitches and 5 transit pitches for gypsies and travellers up to 2036. At the same time, there are current issues with unauthorised encampments within Reading, with 87 unauthorised encampments in Reading between April 2016 and March 2017, the majority of which were on Council land. This has significant financial costs in terms of legal, bailiff and clean-up costs as well as officer time. Powers under the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to seize vehicles of those who have failed to comply with a direction to leave land rely upon a suitable pitch being available on a caravan site within a local authority area, which means that the ability to use these powers in Reading is currently restricted by the lack of sites. These matters were reported to Policy Committee on 25th September 2017.
- 4.2 Over the course of summer 2017, the Council undertook a site search to identify potential sites to accommodate that need. This resulted in only one potential site being identified, namely land at the junction of Cow Lane and Richfield Avenue, for transit provision. This is shown in Appendix 2. No other sites were considered available or suitable for this use.
- 4.3 At Policy Committee on 25th September 2017, it was agreed that the Council should consult on the potential transit use of this site, as well as on the work that had been undertaken to get to that point (Minute 29 refers). A Gypsy and Traveller Provision Consultation Document dealing with these matters was published for consultation on 26th September, and consultation lasted for a four-week period, until 24th October.
- 4.4 The consultation included sending information to all contacts on the Council's planning consultation lists, a press release and publication on the website. Information was also sent to every address within 400 metres of the proposed Cow Lane site. During the consultation, it also became apparent that an anonymous flyer had been circulated highlighting the proposal.
- 4.5 A total of 222 responses were received to the consultation. The large majority of these (164) constituted objections to the proposed site at Cow Lane. A smaller number of representations in support were received (31), whilst the remainder asked for additional information or raised other issues. As well as members of the public, there was a large response from businesses operating from the Richfield Avenue and Portman Road areas,

and particularly strong concerns were raised by Festival Republic with regard to the Reading Festival, and from the Council's own Leisure and Recreation section. Appendix 3 summarises the main points made.

- 4.6 The Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan was published for consultation on 30th November 2017, and this identified the Cow Lane site as a potential location for traveller transit use (policy WR4), albeit that it was clear that this work was still ongoing and that a decision was yet to be made. Consultation on this version of the Local Plan took place up until 26th January 2018, and several responses were also received to the identification of the Cow Lane site, often from the same respondents re-iterating their concerns. No significant changes were made to policy WR4, and the Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on 29th March, which marks the beginning of a public examination involving likely hearings in September.
- 4.7 The Council is also in the process of considering how the identified need for new secondary school places in Reading should be met. A report on secondary school places is on the agenda for this meeting of Policy Committee (Item 9). The report on secondary school places recommends that an area of land at Richfield Avenue be identified as the preferred site for a new 6 form entry secondary school, which includes the land that was proposed for traveller transit use in the September 2017 consultation. The implications are discussed in paragraphs 4.14 and 4.15.

(b) Option Proposed

Consideration of consultation responses

- 4.8 A summary of consultation responses received during September and October 2017 is included as Appendix 3. The following section discusses the main issues raised and considers how they would affect the potential for traveller transit use of the site.

- **Anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping, theft, safety**
Comments made under these headings raise related issues. Ultimately, there is a risk in establishing a transit site that it will result in localised increases in these issues, wherever that site happens to be. However, this must be considered in the context of issues that are already arising where there are unauthorised encampments within the Borough. It may be possible that a well-managed transit site would result in an overall reduction in instances of anti-social behaviour and related issues, and in the long run improve the relationship between travellers and the settled community, compared to a series of ad hoc illegal incursions.
- **Cost to taxpayers**
This issue was dealt with in the Policy Committee report from 25th September. There are potentially substantial savings to be made from reducing the Council's enforcement and clear-up costs, and a proposal for a transit site, were a suitable and available site to be found, would continue to represent value for money.
- **Reading Festival**
The concerns raised by Festival Republic are significant and wide-ranging. The site is a key part of the centre of operations for the

festival, being strategically located at the main goods vehicle entrance and directly behind the main stage and backstage area.

The Cow Lane entrance is the main access for supplies and construction materials for the festival site, and is the only vehicular access point capable of accommodating the high vehicles required. Festival Republic requires absolute control of this access for a period of up to eight weeks.

As the main vehicular entrance, the site is also used for a variety of activities, including security and counter-terrorism checks, staff catering, broadcasting and communications and the stationing of emergency vehicles. The location of the site close to both the main stage and the highway network makes it the optimal location for these uses.

The northern strip of the site is used as a direct exit for up to 20,000 day visitors, which operates in conjunction with road closures and police operations. A reduced site that retained the existing access route (see Figure 3) could address this to some extent (although there would still be likely concerns about the implications of directing so many people so close to a transit site), but would not resolve the other issues around the festival.

Appendix 4 shows in summary how the site is used during the festival.

Officers have met with Festival Republic to explore their objections and to understand the extent to which there are issues that can be overcome. In doing so, it has become clear that these issues are insurmountable, and that the use of the land for traveller transit would fundamentally affect the operation of the festival.

- **Effects on nearby businesses and trading**
The concerns of businesses around the area, which relate particularly to potential theft and the need to take security measures to protect their premises, and potential customers being deterred from using the business, are understandable, and should be taken seriously. In many cases, businesses have noted an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour when there have been previous incursions. However, it should be noted that it is quite common for traveller sites to be located in commercial and industrial areas. When officers examined the location of other sites in Southern England, 39% of the 160 sites identified were adjacent to commercial or industrial premises. It is also worth bearing in mind that the transit site is a response to illegal encampments elsewhere in the Borough, and any crime and anti-social behaviour associated with this use may well already be occurring elsewhere. There are no locations within Reading where there are not businesses or residences in close proximity, so if a transit site is provided anywhere within the Borough this is a potential risk.

Although there is no data to support this, it is conceivable that, where travellers are located on an official site, and have needed to pay a deposit and give contact details to secure a temporary pitch, there is

less likelihood of these issues arising. However, part of taking any proposals forward would have been to consider how management arrangements can be set up to ensure that there is as little impact on surrounding operations as possible.

- **Traffic and highways**

Should any proposal proceed to planning application stage, there would need to be full assessment of the effects on the road network. However, with space on site for only up to ten caravans, staying for up to 2-3 months at a time, it is unlikely that the movements generated on the road network would be particularly significant, particularly in the context of being located adjacent to an employment area with significant movement of HGVs.

Access considerations would need to be looked at in more detail in developing any proposal. Cow Lane is a public right of way, and provides access to other properties, and there would be a need to ensure that caravan movements would not result in adverse effects on the access. However, this is considered to be an issue which is capable of resolution.

- **Landscape and visual amenity**

This is considered to be capable of resolution. The nature of such a site is that it would be low-rise and easy to screen from Richfield Avenue, Cow Lane and the Thames meadows. There is already a strong vegetated buffer to Richfield Avenue, and there is enough space for adequate landscaping to be introduced. The overall commercial nature of the surrounding uses means that there will not be a significant visual impact on the meadows from the use itself.

- **Effects on Rivermead Leisure Centre**

The concerns related to effects on the leisure centre were mainly related to the issues outlined above, i.e. theft, anti-social behaviour etc, potentially deterring visitors. The comments on this are therefore broadly the same as set out under that heading above, with the addition that unauthorised encampments elsewhere in the Borough already have the effect of deterring use of leisure facilities, and the provision of a transit site might at least give some greater ability to manage the situation. The leisure procurement process has commenced in order to find a partner to manage the Council's leisure estate, including the development of a new competition standard swimming pool with diving provision at the Rivermead site. The use of the site to accommodate gypsy and traveller needs is unlikely to materially impact on the Council's ambitions for the site currently being sought through the procurement process.

- **Flooding**

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 has been carried out for the site, which considers that the site could be developed safely for the proposed use, subject to a number of detailed recommendations:

1. *Pitches should be located outside of the present day 1 in 100 annual probability flood extent [Flood Zone 3] to minimise residual risk;*

2. *The proposed use of the site will not introduce permanent building footprint, and therefore flood storage during the 1 in 100 annual probability +35% climate change design event;*
3. *Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be incorporated into the site to address any changes in impermeable surfacing, aiming to achieve greenfield runoff rates, if feasible. It is important that SUDS are designed with due consideration to soil and groundwater conditions. Infiltration techniques should be sought wherever possible, however are likely to be unsuitable in areas of shallow groundwater and/or impermeable soils. Landscaping should be designed within the site to avoid locking overland flow routes;*
4. *The impacts on the safe access route should be assessed for the 1 in 100 annual probability +35% climate change allowance as part of a 'Flood Management and Evacuation Plan'. Future users of the site should be made aware of the potential risks of flooding, and the site operators should be registered with the EA's Flood Information Service to receive flood alerts, flood warnings and severe flood warnings well in advance of an event.*

The first recommendation, in terms of ensuring that caravans are not located within Flood Zone 3, could be addressed in Local Plan policy WR4. This would slightly restrict the available space as shown in Figure 2, but there would still be adequate space to incorporate the proposed use alongside landscaping etc. The remainder of the above recommendations would feed into a more detailed Flood Risk Assessment to accompany any planning application.

Figure 2: Flood Zone 3 on Cow Lane site



- **Noise**
In the context of surrounding busy industrial areas, there is no inherent reason why a small transit site should necessarily result in high levels of noise affecting the tranquillity of the meadows, any more than the nearby leisure uses or the railway do. However, this would require further investigation at planning application stage were the Council to decide to take this proposal further.
- **Wildlife**
Should the proposal proceed to planning application stage, there would need to be full assessment of the effects on biodiversity of the site. However, at this stage, there is no known particular biodiversity significance nor is there any reason why biodiversity interest could not be incorporated into the site. Development on site would be limited to

provision of hardstanding and potentially low-key facilities such as toilet blocks, and effects would be likely to be capable of mitigation.

- **Education and healthcare infrastructure**
There would be likely to be some additional requirements in terms of education and healthcare. However, in the context of the number of new homes proposed within and around the centre up to 2036, the effect of a maximum of ten caravans will be negligible.
- **Privacy**
These comments related to concerns about the privacy of the occupants of the site. However, with sufficient landscaping, this should not be a significant issue.

4.9 There were strong objections to the proposal from the Council's Leisure and Recreation sections. Some of the issues raised are dealt with above, but there are some specific issues, namely:

- The need to maintain an access for the adjacent Caversham Plant Centre, which takes in the northern strip of the site; and
- Potential negative effects on the proposed Outpost Childrens Activity Centre on the site to the north.

4.10 In terms of the need to maintain access across the northern strip, the site, even after it is reduced to account for the location of Flood Zone 3, may still be large enough to meet the transit needs without affecting the access across the north of the site. Figure 3 shows an illustrative reduction of the site (shown with dotted yellow line) retaining an access across the north to Caversham Plant Centre (which may also satisfy the day visitor exit referred to by Festival Republic). This reduces the size of the site to 0.39ha, but the original minimum size for identifying sites was 0.15ha, so provision of a site may still be possible.

Figure 3: Possible reduction of Cow Lane site to retain northern access



4.11 In terms of the impacts on the proposed Outpost Children's Activity Centre, this has now been overtaken by events, with this site now being

recommended as the preferred site for a new secondary school. This is discussed further in paragraphs 4.14 to 4.15.

4.12 Finally, a number of other sites were suggested for consideration. Of those that were not already considered as part of the site selection process, none are considered suitable, for the reasons set out below.

- Site of Murdoch's Pub at the bottom on Langley Hill on the Bath Road In West Berkshire, so would offer no benefits to Reading in terms of using enhanced enforcement powers.
- 20 Scours Lane/ Beneath the railway off Portman Road
These sites are largely within Flood Zone 3 and partly in the functional floodplain, and would not be suitable for caravans.
- Near the A33/M4 interchange
Not clear which site is referred to in the comment. Much of the area immediately around the junction is used for balancing ponds, and there is no prospect of allowing additional accesses that would interfere with the operation of the junction. There is a part of a field within Reading Borough to the south west of the junction that the Local Plan has earmarked to potentially be part of any Grazeley proposal. However, there is no road access to this within Reading Borough, and any development here would require a larger development with land in Wokingham to come forward to realise this.
- Rear of 107-109 Castle Hill
This is a very small site which, at 0.08 ha is well below the 0.15ha needed.
- Site of the old Civic Centre, to the rear of the Police Station
The Council is actively working with development partners to bring this site forward for a major mixed use development.

4.13 In summary, many of the issues raised during consultation would have been potentially capable of resolution as part of a proposal on the Cow Lane site. However, the effects on Reading Festival would be severe, and would potentially constrain the operation of the Festival to such an extent that it could not continue in its current location. The Festival makes a very significant contribution to both the economy and the cultural life of Reading, and detrimental effects on its operation would not be acceptable.

Proposal for a secondary school

4.14 Since both the Gypsy and Traveller Consultation Document and the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan have been subject to consultation, a process undertaken by the Council to identify a site for a new 6 form entry secondary school has resulted in a recommendation to confirm a site at Richfield Avenue as the preferred option. The Cow Lane site that was subject to consultation for transit use forms a part of this site, which also includes the adjacent former Leaderboard driving range. A report to this meeting of Policy Committee sets out more detail about secondary school place needs and the requirement for a new 6th form entry school to be available from September 2021 (see item 9). The process for selecting a preferred site has examined a number of options in the Borough and

concludes that the Richfield Avenue site is deliverable; this being essential in terms of seeking Free School funding via the recently launched Wave 13 programme.

- 4.15 Even if the secondary school and traveller transit use were compatible, which is unlikely to be the case, the site is not capable of accommodating both of these uses, as it is already close to the minimum size required to meet secondary school needs. In terms of weighing up these competing demands, the Council as local education authority has a statutory duty under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to secure that sufficient schools are available for their area, whereas the expectation that local authorities identify sufficient land to meet traveller accommodation needs is in policy rather than legislation. As such, the selection of the Richfield Avenue site as the preferred site for a secondary school would mean that the proposal for transit use could not be progressed.

Conclusion

- 4.16 Due to the significant adverse effects on Reading Festival, as well as the proposals for use of a site including this land for a secondary school, it is recommended that the proposal for a traveller transit site at Cow Lane not be proceeded with.
- 4.17 The work undertaken in assessing sites for potential gypsy and traveller use in Reading shows that there are no likely alternative sites that are suitable and available. A criteria-based policy in the Local Plan will enable any proposals that do come forward to be considered on their merits, but it is not considered likely that sites will be proposed in the foreseeable future. This would mean that Reading does not provide a transit site. The Council will continue to work with its neighbours to identify whether its needs for gypsy and traveller provision can be met in adjoining authorities, and this will include transit needs. However, it should be recognised that, whilst a transit site close to Reading in an adjoining authority could help to prevent some unauthorised encampments arising in the first place, an out-of-Borough site would not allow use of the enhanced enforcement powers referred to in paragraph 8.4.
- 4.18 Should Committee resolve to not proceed with the site, the Council will need to prepare an update for the Local Plan Inspector, which recommends the deletion of policy WR4 of the Local Plan. It will be for the Inspector to decide whether the policy should be removed in order to make the Plan sound.

(c) Other Options Considered

- 4.19 The main alternative option to the recommended action is to continue with the proposal for a transit site in this location. However, as set out above, this would have significant negative impacts on the operation of the Reading Festival, which could threaten its future in Reading, and would also prevent the use of this and neighbouring land as a secondary school.
- 4.20 In terms of options for alternative sites, the September 2017 consultation document as well as the supporting background paper identifies the alternative sites and why they are not suitable or available.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 Making provision for gypsies and travellers to meet identified need would have contributed to the following priorities in the Corporate Plan 2015-18:
- Providing homes for those in most need; and
 - Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Consultation on the Gypsy and Traveller Provision Consultation Document took place for a four week period between 26th September and 24th October 2017. This was not a statutory consultation under planning regulations, but was handled in a similar way. The Council's consultation process for planning policy is set out in the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (adopted March 2014). The results of consultation are summarised in this report.
- 6.2 After consultation closed, the potential transit site was included within the Pre-Submission Draft Local Plan. The Local Plan was approved for consultation at Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee on 22nd November 2017 (Minute 14 refers), and it was then subject to consultation between 30th November 2017 and 26th January 2018. There were also a number of comments received on this site to the Local Plan consultation, but in many of these were from some of the same respondents as the September/October consultation.

7. EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Detail on Equality Impact Assessment is set out in Appendix 1. An adverse impact on racial groups as a result of any decision to not provide for transit needs is identified. However, it is considered that there is a justifiable reason for this position, specifically that there are not suitable and available sites in Reading to meet these needs.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 is the main legal context for enforcement powers relating to unauthorised gypsy and traveler encampments. Section 61 is the direction to leave the land and S62 is the power to seize vehicles if the direction is not complied with.
- 8.2 Should trespassers refuse to adhere to a request to leave the land when asked to do so by the landowner or anyone acting on behalf of the landowner then sections 61- 62 of Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 gives the police discretionary powers to direct trespassers to leave and remove any property or vehicles they have with them. The power applies where the senior police officer reasonably believes that two or more people are trespassing on land with the purpose of residing there, that the occupier has taken reasonable steps to ask them to leave, and any of the following:
- a) that any of the trespassers have caused damage to land or property;

- b) that any of the trespassers have used threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards the occupier, a member of the occupier's family or an employee or agent of the occupier; or
 - c) that the trespassers have between them six or more vehicles on the land.
- 8.3 Failure to comply with the direction by leaving the land as soon as reasonably practicable is an offence. Similarly it is an offence for a trespasser who has left the land in compliance with an order to re-enter it as a trespasser within three months of the direction being given.
- 8.4 Police have powers (as above these are discretionary) under sections 62 A-E of Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 to direct both trespassers and travellers to leave land and remove any vehicle and property from the land where the senior police officer reasonably believes that two or more people are trespassing on land with the purpose of residing there, that the occupier has taken reasonable steps to ask them to leave and there is a suitable pitch available on a caravan site elsewhere in the local authority area. The site must have a relevant site manager (Local authority, Social Landlord or Private registered provider of social housing). Provision of a transit site within Reading's boundaries would therefore enable use of these enhanced enforcement powers.
- 8.5 Not providing a site would mean no change to the current range of enforcement powers available.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct financial implications of this report. The report to Policy Committee on 25th September 2017 contained considerable detail on the potential financial costs and savings associated with provision of a transit site, but as the recommendation is to not take this proposal forward, there are no further financial implications.

Risk Assessment

- 9.12 There are no direct financial risks associated with the report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Reading Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment 2016
- Housing and Planning Act 2016
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Gypsy and Traveller Provision Consultation Document
- Gypsy and Traveller Provision Background Document
- Pre-Submission Draft Reading Borough Local Plan

APPENDIX 1: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Provide basic details

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed:

Recommendation to not take proposal for traveller transit site forward

Directorate: Environment and Neighbourhood Services

Service: Planning and Building Control

Name: Mark Worringham

Job Title: Planning Policy Team Leader

Date of assessment: 15/05/2018

Scope your proposal

What is the aim of your policy or new service?

Initial aim was to consider the provision of a site to accommodate transit needs for gypsy and traveller provision, but this report recommends not taking this proposal forward.

Who will benefit from this proposal and how?

The travelling community would have benefitted from any provision through the identification of a specific site. The Reading community as a whole would potentially have benefitted through reductions in unauthorised encampments. The Council, and other landowners, would have benefitted from greater ability to use legal enforcement powers. As the proposal is not recommended to be taken forward, these benefits would not be realised.

What outcomes will the change achieve and for whom?

As the recommendation is not to continue with the proposal, there would be no change to the current situation.

Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?

The existing gypsy and traveller community in Reading were considered as part of the GTAA, and identified a need for both permanent and transit accommodation. The Council are the landowners of the one identified site, and are required to address the issue in Local Plan production and would benefit from greater use of enforcement powers.

Assess whether an EIA is Relevant

How does your proposal relate to eliminating discrimination; promoting equality of opportunity; promoting good community relations?

Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some (racial, disability, gender, sexuality, age and religious belief) groups may be affected differently than others? (Think about your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc)

Yes No

Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Think about your complaints, consultation, feedback.

Yes No

If the answer is Yes to any of the above you need to do an Equality Impact Assessment.

If No you **MUST** complete this statement

An Equality Impact Assessment is not relevant because:

N/A

Assess the Impact of the Proposal

Your assessment must include:

- Consultation
- Collection and Assessment of Data
- Judgement about whether the impact is negative or positive

Consultation

Relevant groups/experts	How were/will the views of these groups be obtained	Date when contacted
Gypsy and traveller communities, police, Council members and officers, health and education professionals	Stakeholder involvement, including interviews with travellers, was carried out as part of preparing the GTAA and led to the conclusions of the document. The Gypsy and Traveller Consultation Document was also subject to consultation during September and October 2017.	Late 2016-early 2017 September/October 2017

Collect and Assess your Data

Describe how could this proposal impact on Racial groups
 Romany gypsies and Irish travellers are considered to be ethnic groups under the Equalities Act. The traveller community housed in bricks and mortar in Reading is generally of Irish traveller origin, but unauthorised encampments involve a range of groups. Considering provision to meet the identified needs therefore has a potential impact on racial groups.

The effect of the recommended action would be that the Council would not be able to provide for the identified transit accommodation needs for gypsies and travellers. This would therefore be likely to have a continuing negative impact on ethnic groups.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how could this proposal impact on Gender/transgender (cover pregnancy and maternity, marriage)

No impact.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how could this proposal impact on Disability

No impact.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how could this proposal impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)

No impact.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how could this proposal impact on Age

No impact.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how could this proposal impact on Religious belief?

No impact.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Make a Decision

Tick which applies

1. No negative impact identified Go to sign off
2. Negative impact identified but there is a justifiable reason
You must give due regard or weight but this does not necessarily mean that the equality duty overrides other clearly conflicting statutory duties that you must comply with.
Reason
The negative impact relates to the proposal to not provide for transit provision for gypsies and travellers. However, this results from the fact that there are not any suitable and available sites to meet these needs, and this includes that provision of land in a number of locations would have a negative effect on those groups through matters such as contamination and flood risk. The Council has thoroughly assessed potential sites, as set out in the Gypsy and Traveller Provision Background Document, but does not consider that it is possible to meet the identified transit needs.
3. Negative impact identified or uncertain
What action will you take to eliminate or reduce the impact? Set out your actions and timescale?

How will you monitor for adverse impact in the future?

The Council is obliged by the Housing and Planning Act to periodically review the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers. Policies to be included in the Local Plan (which includes a proposed policy on accommodation for gypsies and travellers) will include their own monitoring measures. The Council will continue to keep the potential to provide for accommodation needs within the Borough under review. Where Reading's needs will not be met within the Borough (particularly for permanent accommodation needs), the Council will monitor the provision within other authorities to consider whether needs are adequately met elsewhere.

Signed (completing officer)	Mark Worringham	Date: 15 th May 2018
Signed (Lead Officer)	Mark Worringham	Date: 15 th May 2018

APPENDIX 2: SITE LOCATION PLAN



APPENDIX 3: SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES ON GYSPY AND TRAVELLER PROVISION CONSULTATION DOCUMENT, SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2017

Consultation took place between 26th September and 24th October 2017 and a total of 222 responses were received. Of these, 164 (74%) objected to the proposal for a transit site at Cow Lane and Richfield Avenue. 31 (14%) supported the site if it is appropriately managed, 15 (7%) requested additional information and 12 (5%) raised other issues (had no comments or proposed an alternative site).

The following issues were raised in the representations to the Gypsy and Traveller Provision Consultation Document (in order of the most frequently mentioned to the least frequently mentioned):

- **Anti-social behaviour** (raised in 46% of objections)—Residents near illegal encampments have frequently reported anti-social behaviour and many representors expressed concerns that a transit site at Cow Lane would increase incidences of anti-social behaviour.
- **Fly-tipping** (raised in 40% of objections)—Representors expressed concerns about fly-tipping and improper waste disposal. Individuals emphasised the importance of rubbish pick-up and recycling, as well as strong enforcement for incidences of fly-tipping.
- **Theft** (raised in 35% of objections)—Some individuals and nearby businesses blamed travellers for incidences of theft, including fuel, scrap metal and break-ins. These representors fear that they will be unable to secure their properties if a site at Cow Lane is approved.
- **Cost to taxpayers** (raised in 35% of objections)—Many representors did not want Council monies spent on providing sites and services for the travelling community. Many requested that Travellers using the transit site be required to pay council tax, waste collection fees, water, sewerage, gas and rent.
- **Safety** (raised in 29% of objections)—Representations included concerns that increasing the population so close to the town centre would place strain on already limited policing resources. The presence of a transit site may deter residents from using the Thames Promenade and Rivermead Leisure Centre because of concerns about personal safety.
- **Reading Festival** (raised in 26% of objections)—Representors, particularly Festival Republic Limited, expressed concern that the transit site would disrupt the safe and efficient operation of the Festival and cited Reading Festival's major economic and cultural contributions to the town. The site is used for 7 weeks in the preparation and take down of the festival and functions as the principal exit point for 20,000 day-ticket holders, as well as for security, on-site communication, loading equipment, catering and induction of staff.
- **Effects on nearby businesses and trading** (raised in 23% of objections)—Representors stated that unauthorised encampments on this site had previously deterred customers from supporting nearby businesses. This resulted in a loss of revenue.
- **Traffic and highways** (raised in 21% of objections)—The site is on a busy road and increased traffic may worsen air quality and road safety, as well as exacerbate traffic congestion.

- Landscape and visual amenity (raised in 21% of objections)—Respondents recognised the nearby stretch of the Thames and surrounding area as one of the most beautiful landscapes in Reading. Residents fear that a transit site would degrade the visual quality of the area.
- Effects on Rivermead Leisure Centre (raised in 19% of objections)—The Rivermead Leisure Centre and surrounding area provides a range of leisure and recreation activities for the general public and schools. The site could harm the commercial and strategic objectives of the Leisure Centre and the Outpost Centre (opening autumn 2018).
- Flooding (raised in 15% of objections)—Some residents expressed concern that Cow Lane floods frequently and that the site is bordered on three sides by Flood Zone 3. This many create access and safety issues.
- Noise (raised in 13% of objections)—Respondents claimed that occupants of the site may cause noise and disturbance in the area. Occupants of the site will also be exposed to noise caused by heavy traffic (including HGVs), Reading Festival and the railway.
- Wildlife (raised in 12% of objections)—Some respondents stated that the site and surrounding area is home to wildlife, including bats and owls. Residents also expressed concern that the Thames would be contaminated and aquatic wildlife harmed.
- Education and healthcare infrastructure (raised in 4% of objections)—Some respondents raised concerns that nearby schools and surgeries are operating at capacity and are not well-suited to serve transient residents of the site who may be vulnerable.
- Privacy (raised in 1% of objections)—A few objectors stated that the site would not provide adequate privacy for transient residents who may be vulnerable, particularly children.

In addition, many respondents expressed doubt that this approach would reduce the number of unauthorised encampments in the town.

Those who supported the site if properly managed (14%) noted that these individuals are vulnerable and subject to discrimination and should be given a safe and clean place to live with access to services.

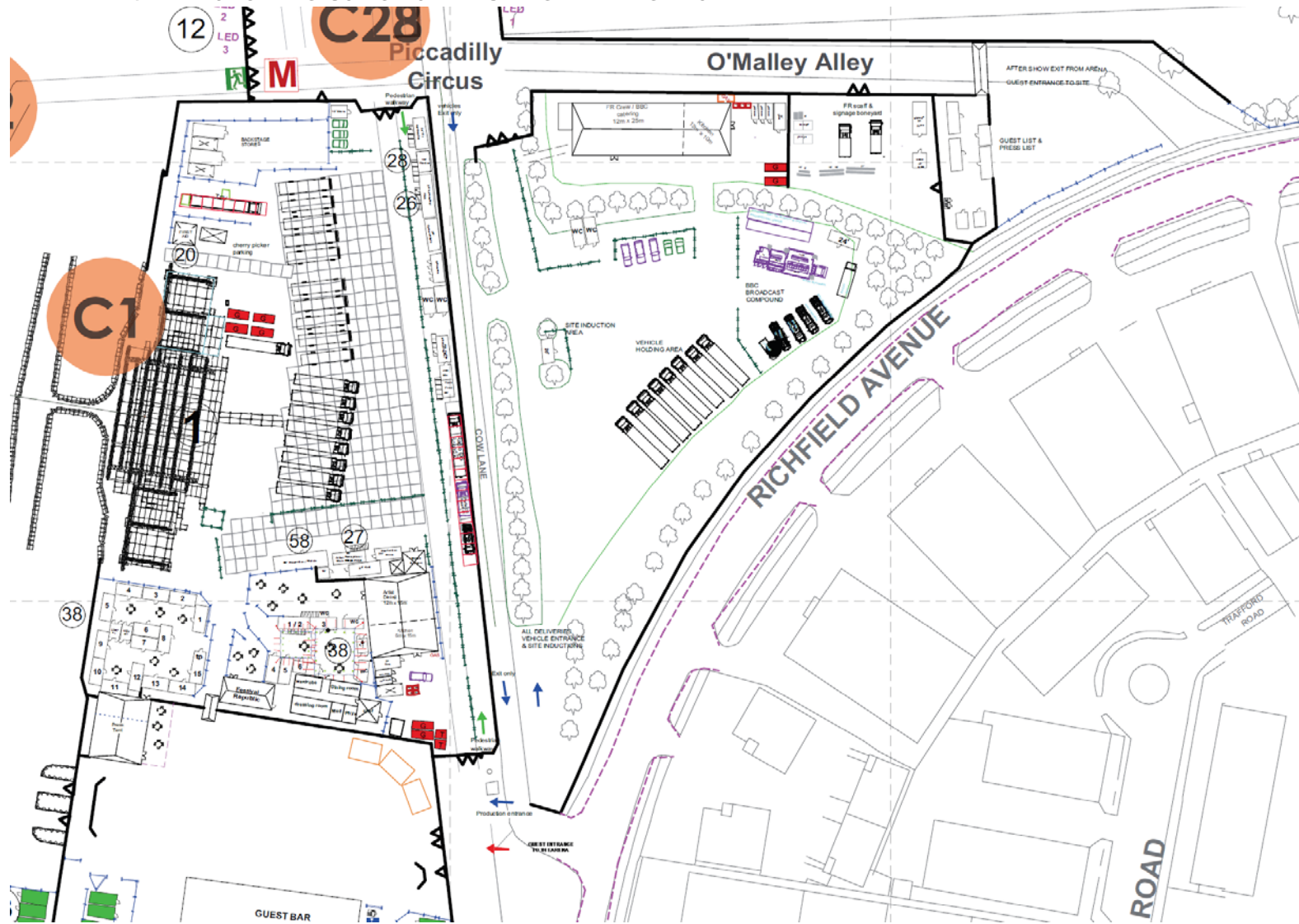
The majority of individuals who requested more information were concerned about the site being funded with taxpayer monies and wanted to ensure that Travellers would pay for waste collection, water, sewerage and council tax.

A number of respondents endorsed sites already considered during the site assessment process and listed in the Consultation Document. The following additional sites were ignored:

- Site of Murdoch's Pub at the bottom on Langley Hill on the Bath Road
- 20 Scours Lane
- Beneath the railway off Portman Road
- Near the A33/M4 interchange
- Rear of 107-109 Castle Hill
- Site of the old Civic Centre, to the rear of the Police Station

One response was received that was considered to be wholly abusive or racist in nature, and is not included above.

APPENDIX 4: MAP SHOWING USE OF SITE DURING READING FESTIVAL



READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 JUNE 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	11
TITLE:	DYNAMIC PURCHASING SYSTEM FOR PROCUREMENT OF EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR JOHN ENNIS	PORTFOLIO:	HOUSING
SERVICE:	HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	BRYONY HALL	TEL:	0118 937 2631
JOB TITLE:	HOUSING NEEDS MANAGER	E-MAIL:	Bryony.hall@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report recommends the establishment of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to deliver and manage emergency accommodation for families and vulnerable people to whom the Council owes a housing duty. This will replace existing processes and formalise arrangements between the Council and Providers.
- 1.2 The aim of the DPS is to ensure a continuity of supply of good quality privately managed properties for homeless applicants, whilst guaranteeing that the Council is meeting its legal requirements in the procurement of its services and delivery of value for money.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing, the Head of Finance and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services be given delegated authority to approve the establishment of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the provision of emergency accommodation for an initial period of 4 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years one year at a time.
- 2.2 That the Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services is authorised to enter into call-off contracts with the successful providers during the lifetime of the DPS for the provision of emergency accommodation.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 sets out a Local Authority's responsibilities in respect of homeless households who approach the Local Authority for assistance. The legislation specifies that all Local Authorities have a duty to provide interim accommodation to certain households whilst investigating their circumstances and

temporary accommodation to applicants who are homeless, eligible for assistance, in priority need and not intentionally homeless.

- 3.2 The Council currently uses a range of accommodation to meet both the interim and temporary accommodation needs for homeless households, including designated blocks of flats, purpose constructed modular units, permanent stock and paid nightly emergency (often Bed and Breakfast) accommodation.
- 3.3 Wherever possible the Council avoids the use of paid nightly accommodation provided by an external landlord, including Bed and Breakfast (B&B), however, due to significant demand it has been more widely used in Reading as emergency accommodation for homeless households in the last 4 years.
- 3.4 The Council has achieved a sustained reduction in the use of B&B since July 2016 and aims to move away from the use of this accommodation as far as possible, especially for families or where the accommodation has shared facilities. However, there is a recognition that there is likely to be an ongoing requirement for some nightly paid emergency accommodation for short term placements and to help manage fluctuations in demand.
- 3.5 Wherever the Housing department uses externally sourced accommodation it is subject to a programme of initial checks by the Environmental Health teams and the Housing Department to provide assurances for the safety and wellbeing of tenants, however, there are currently no formal contractual arrangements in place between the Council and providers to manage the procurement and monitoring of the accommodation.

4. THE PROPOSAL

(a) Current Position

- 4.1 Arrangements for procuring and managing emergency accommodation have emerged over time and whilst they are robust, they have not been subject to formal procurement processes. The Council considers that formalising the process of procurement of accommodation is important for the following reasons:

Standards of accommodation

- 4.2 A formal procurement arrangement will allow the Council to more easily approve a cohort of landlords who are competent to provide accommodation to meet minimum standards in regards to property condition, maintenance and management. The arrangement will ensure that providers are contractually required to provide initial and ongoing assessments against a range of standards, including health and safety, management criteria and supply of services, providing a framework for monitoring rectification of any areas of concern. This arrangement will also allow the Council to better shape the market to increase access to self-contained accommodation, supporting the drive to move away from placing households in emergency accommodation with shared facilities.

Supply of accommodation

- 4.3 Currently the Council sources accommodation on an ad-hoc basis as required. The proposed procurement process will allow the Council to establish a pool of providers who are able to provide accommodation as demand dictates, there will be no limit on the number of providers joining the framework and no obligation on the Council to use any unrequired accommodation. This will allow the Council to manage

fluctuations in demand providing flexibility in sourcing and reducing the use of accommodation as required.

- 4.4 In addition, a formal system will allow the Council to direct the market in terms of type and location of accommodation and provide greater clarity to providers regarding projected need.

Legal Requirement

- 4.5 This procurement process will replace and formalise current arrangements, ensuring that the Council is in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, EU regulations for the procurement of services and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

Value for Money

- 4.6 Currently there is no formal framework for the pricing of individual placements; costs of placements are negotiated on an individual basis. The arrangement will provide a prescribed pricing schedule that will act as a guide for providers to encourage them to set their rates competitively and in line with other landlords. This will set expectations for providers in terms of charges and will ensure that the market remains more stable if there are times of increased demand.

- 4.7 Currently processes relating to the procurement, management and monitoring of B&B accommodation are time consuming. It is intended that this system will also improve operational processes and efficiency, saving officer time and making better use of Council resources.

(b) Options Proposed

- 4.8 For the reasons outlined above it is proposed that the Council seeks to procure accommodation via a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS), allowing for the sourcing and management of emergency accommodation placements in line with all relevant regulations.

- 4.9 The DPS will ensure that all providers have met minimum standards in relation to accommodation and facilities provided, ensuring that there is consistency in the quality of accommodation secured for households placed in emergency accommodation. The DPS will provide a mechanism for any providers that fall short of the expected standards to be suspended whilst quality issues are addressed.

- 4.10 It is proposed that the DPS is established and run for the initial period of 4 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years one year at a time, allowing the Council to call-off from the DPS over this time based on a range of determined criteria.

- 4.11 It is proposed that the DPS is established by September 2018 to allow for the purchasing of placements through this method from that time. The DPS operates by running a fully compliant open tender procedure to accredit and enrol Providers on to the DPS to ensure that only Providers that meet the Council's standards can join.

- 4.12 New Providers can apply and be enrolled at any time during the DPS' period of operation providing they can meet the required standards. During this process, the Council will retain the ultimate decision as to which Providers to secure accommodation from for individual placements, based on individual homeless household's needs, taking into account price, suitability and location.

4.13 There will be a transition period of to 6 months providing time for existing placements to be moved onto providers within the new Scheme.

(c) Other Options Considered

4.11 The options to continue securing accommodation in the current way is not recommended. The Council needs to move to a formalised and transparent method of securing emergency accommodation placements to improve value, standards and to ensure that it is compliant with EU procurement regulations.

5 CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The proposal will contribute to the Council's strategic aim:

- To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all

5.2 The proposal will contribute to the service priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2015 - 18:

- To protect and enhance the lives of vulnerable adults and children

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 Views have been sought from current providers of emergency accommodation regarding a move to a formalised procurement process. Respondents were in favour of a move to a DPS and welcomed the consistency in terms of property standards and oversight that the new process would bring.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.2 Consideration has been given as to whether there are implications of this activity and it has been determined that there is no requirement to produce an impact assessment for this decision.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Homelessness Legislation

8.1 Under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996, as amended, local authorities have a statutory responsibility to secure accommodation for homeless households in priority need who are unintentionally homeless and to whom a homelessness duty has been accepted i.e. a 'main homelessness duty'. This main homelessness duty continues until a settled housing solution is found for the homeless household or until the duty otherwise ends.

8.2 Properties procured through the DPS will meet property standards as set out in the Homelessness Code of Guidance and the Housing Act 2004.

Procurement

8.3 A DPS will be established in accordance with Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

8.4 It will be necessary to enter into contract with all successful providers.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Revenue Implications: Projected Lifetime Value of DPS

9.1 The anticipated Council spend for paid nightly accommodation over the next 4 years is shown in the table below. These values are indicative and may vary based on demand for services through the DPS.

	2018-19	2019-20	2019-20	2020-21
Gross Spend (£)	950,000	920,000	645,000	678,000
Cumulative (£)	950,000	1,870,000	2,515,000	3,193,000

Value for Money

9.2 Currently is no formal framework for the pricing of individual placements. Costs of placements are negotiated on an individual basis. The new arrangement will provide a pricing schedule that will act as a guide to providers setting expectations for providers to set their rates competitively and in line with other landlords, supporting the market to remain more stable at times of increased demand.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 *'Homelessness Strategy 2015-2020 and Reducing the Use of Bed And Breakfast Accommodation'* to HNL Committee in November 2015.

11.2 *'Homelessness Strategy 2016 - 2021'* to HNL Committee in July 2016.

11.3 *'Homelessness: Update on Demand Pressure and Actions to Mitigate'* to HNL Committee in November 2016.

11.4 *'Policy Change to Meet Housing Need'* to Policy Committee in November 2017.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 JUNE 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	12
TITLE:	CONTRACT AWARD - ASBESTOS REMOVAL AND REMEDIATION CONTRACT FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR ENNIS	PORTFOLIO:	HOUSING
SERVICE:	HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	TIMMY ONABAJO	TEL:	0118 9374296 / 74296
JOB TITLE:	ASBESTOS OFFICER	E-MAIL:	Taiwo.onabajo@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the award of the Asbestos Removal and Remediation contracts through the London Housing Consortium (LHC) Framework, following a mini-competitive tendering exercise. It is recommended that two contractors be appointed to ensure suitable cover for the likely volume of work at any one time. These contracts relate to asbestos removal works throughout the Council's housing stock, but can also be utilised for works to corporate properties, schools, commercial properties and public facilities.
- 1.2 No volume of expenditure is guaranteed under these contracts, as annual expenditure will depend on the actual level of work that is required to be sub-contracted during the course of the year. However, based on past records, typically the total expenditure on the contract is projected to be circa £400,000 per annum including corporate works. This work can at times come in batches requiring the need to use more than one contractor.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Policy Committee provide delegated authority to the Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Housing, to award the Asbestos Removal and Remediation Contracts through the LHC Framework Agreement for a period of 4 years.

3. READING BOROUGH COUNCIL ASBESTOS REMOVAL AND REMEDIATION CONTRACT THROUGH the LHC FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT

- 3.1 The Council wishes to appoint two specialist asbestos removal contractors to undertake asbestos removal and remediation works throughout Reading Borough Council's portfolio of housing stock and non-housing properties. The housing stock comprises of approximately 6,000 tenanted homes and communal areas in approximately 300 blocks of flats. Non-housing properties includes RBC corporate/office buildings, schools, commercial properties, approximately 2,000 garages and public facilities managed by the Council.
- 3.2 This contract is to be procured through the existing LHC Framework and is priced against an RBC asbestos work schedule of rates. Tenderers will be invited to submit their price in a mini-competition in the form of a percentage increase or decrease against the published rates for work items. Two specialist asbestos removal contractors will be awarded the contract.
- 3.3 LHC have conducted an expression of interest stage amongst the six appointed companies within their framework to ensure that RBC have a viable option through this framework. Five out of six firms invited have responded positively.
- 3.4 The LHC framework appears to be the most suitable as other existing frameworks within close proximity to Reading are either expired or not designed to address our needs:
- Procurement for All Framework, has only 2 contractors for works above £150,000.
 - Fusion 21 framework is for asbestos surveys only, no removal works.
 - ESPO Framework has expired.
- 3.5 The Council has no established internal team for dealing with asbestos removal, the levels of training, resources, certification and insurances required do not make the use of an in-house team a viable option.
- 3.6 This proposed Framework Agreement will be for a fixed 4-year period. The current arrangements with existing contractors have now expired or are shortly about to expire.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 The contract will support the achievement of the Council's strategic aims of 'providing safe homes for its tenants' and 'remaining financially sustainable to deliver service priorities' by using a cost effective means of delivering improvements to the Council's Housing Stock and Corporate Buildings.
- 4.2 Utilisation of existing frameworks provides the most cost effective way of delivering this service; these have been market tested using agreed rates based on a far larger demand than the Council can muster as a single local

authority. This is a highly specialised area and the option for delivery through an in-house service is not viable. Utilisation of an agreed framework, used across the Council will remove duplication and establish a unified approach with common methods of engagements and most importantly, demonstrate best value for money.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 5.1 Due to the nature of the work, there is no opportunity for community engagement, however, it is acknowledged that the use of airlocks, decontamination units and PPE can be disconcerting for local residents or employees and therefore the contractors will be expected to fully engage with local residents, tenants and employees to ensure that suitable advice is presented and communication and reassurance is maintained, before, during and after any works.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 There is no Equalities Impact Assessment required for these contracts.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Asbestos Removal and Remediation Framework Agreement will be awarded using the Joint Contracts Tribunal Standard Form of “Measured Term Contract - 2011”.
- 7.2 There is a legal requirement for the Council to maintain its buildings in a safe condition free from hazards that are likely to cause harm. The Control of Asbestos Regulation 2012 (CAR2012) places specific duties and obligations on landlords and duty holders (including landlord agents), to identify, manage and prevent/reduce the risk of exposure to asbestos in a premises. The proposed contracts are required to ensure that the Council can comply with these duties.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 No volume of expenditure is guaranteed under these contracts as annual expenditure will depend on the actual level of work that is required to be undertaken during the course of the year. However, based on expenditure records, typically the total expenditure across a 4-year lifespan is expected to be circa £1,600,000 (£400,000p.a)
- 8.2 The budget for these contracts is included within the existing Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Repairs and Maintenance budgets, as agreed in the Council’s annual budget setting process, as well as relevant corporate maintenance budgets.

8.3 Tenderers are advised that the Council's current Low Wage policy expects the payment of the Living Wage rate set independently by the Living Wage Foundation and updated annually in the first week of November each year. All providers appointed are expected to pay a Living Wage in accordance with this policy, to all staff working on Reading Borough Council contracts.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None applicable.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 JUNE 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	13
TITLE:	CONTRACT AWARD - MINOR WORKS BUILDING CONTRACT FOR EXTERNAL MAINTENANCE 2018 TO RBC LEASEHOLD HOUSING BLOCKS		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR ENNIS	PORTFOLIO:	HOUSING
SERVICE:	HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS	WARDS:	MINSTER & ABBEY
LEAD OFFICER:	JO FULLER	TEL:	0118 9373811 / 73811
JOB TITLE:	HOUSING SURVEYOR	E-MAIL:	Joanna.fuller@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report seeks approval for the award of a Minor Works Building Contract for the provision of external maintenance to RBC leasehold housing blocks for the year 2018. This contract relates to the repair and maintenance of the Council's Housing Stock.
- 1.2 No volume of expenditure is guaranteed under this contract as this will depend on the extent of works that are required. Based on expenditure records and previous contracts for the areas included in this years' work however, the total expenditure is expected to be £190,000.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Policy Committee provides delegated authority to the Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services to award the Minor Works Building Contract (2018) for the External Maintenance to RBC leasehold housing blocks.

3. MINOR BUILDING WORKS CONTRACTS FOR WORKS TO COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK

- 3.1 Housing Property Services propose to invite tenders for a 'Minor Building Works' contract covering the repairs and decoration to leasehold housing blocks.

- 3.2 The Minor Building Works Contract will be tendered on a fixed price per scheduled item basis.
- 3.3 Reading Borough Council's Housing Property Services manage the day to day repairs, planned maintenance and voids repair works to approximately 5,600 Council properties which are let throughout the Borough. Housing Property Services carry out programmed external maintenance works each year to dwellings and blocks that do not contain leaseholders.
- 3.4 However, under the Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act 2002, section 151, RBC is required to obtain quotations for any works over £250 per property where there are leaseholders resident in the property and therefore, a formal advertised tender process is undertaken to obtain competitive tenders for the works. The RBC internal planned maintenance department will be invited to tender for these works.
- 3.5 Tendering is only required when there is work on leasehold blocks due in the programme (which is not every year) therefore we do not have a multi year contract.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 The contract will support the achievement of the Council's strategic aims of 'providing homes for those in most need' and 'remaining financially sustainable to deliver service priorities' by using a cost effective means of delivering improvements to the Council's Housing Stock.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 5.1 It is intended as far as possible to ensure that the successful tenderers pay the living wage to all employees working on Reading Borough Council properties. Tenderers are advised that the Council's current Low Wage policy expects the payment of the Living Wage rate set independently by the Living Wage Foundation and updated annually in the first week of November each year. All providers appointed are expected to pay a living wage in accordance with this policy to all staff working on Reading Borough Council contracts. The UK Living Wage for employees outside of London is currently (November 2017) £8.75 per hour.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 There is no Equalities Impact Assessment required for these contracts.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Works Contract will be awarded using the Joint Contracts Tribunal "Minor Works Building Contract - 2016".

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Council has a responsibility for ensuring that it maintains its homes to a decent standard and provides for this within the 30 year Housing Revenue Account Business Plan. The budget for this contract is included within the existing Housing Revenue Account repairs and maintenance budget agreed by Council in February 2018.

8.2 No volume of expenditure is guaranteed under this contract as this will depend on the full extent of work that is required. Based on expenditure records and previous contracts for the areas included in this years' work however, the total expenditure is expected to be £190,000.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None applicable.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 JUNE 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	14
TITLE:	CONTRACT AWARD - MEASURED TERM CONTRACTS FOR SMOKE DETECTORS IN DWELLINGS AND COMMUNAL AREAS IN RBC HOUSING BLOCKS & FIRE ALARM INSTALLATIONS TO COMMUNAL AREAS		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR ENNIS	PORTFOLIO:	HOUSING
SERVICE:	HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOODS	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	JAMES CURNOW	TEL:	0118 9373967 / 73967
JOB TITLE:	SENIOR ELECTRICAL ENGINEER	E-MAIL:	James.curnow@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The report seeks approval for the award of a 'measured term' contract (MTC) for the provision of smoke detectors within dwellings and communal areas in Council housing blocks and a measured term contract for fire alarm installations to communal areas. These contracts relate to the repair and maintenance of the Council's Housing Stock and will further improve fire safety in Council blocks of flats, installing measures which exceed statutory requirements.
- 1.2 No volume of expenditure is guaranteed under these contracts as annual expenditure will depend on the actual level of work that is required during the course of the year. However, based on expenditure records, typically the total expenditure on the contracts is estimated to be circa £650,000 and £350,000 respectively per annum.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Policy Committee provide delegated authority to the Head of Housing and Neighbourhood Services to award the Measured Term Contracts for Smoke Detectors in dwellings and communal areas in RBC housing blocks and Fire alarm installations to communal areas.

3. MEASURED TERM CONTRACTS FOR WORKS TO COUNCIL HOUSING STOCK

Background

- 3.1 Despite the Council's blocks differing in design to Grenfell Tower, in 2017 the Council appointed an external qualified Fire Engineer (Fireskills) to carry out a review of practice in the areas of management, fire safety measures and safety advice to tenants in high rise and some other flatted blocks. This reported to Housing, Neighbourhoods and Leisure Committee in March 2018.
- 3.2 FireSkills were asked to provide a professional view on whether additional fire precautions were advised in any of the building types surveyed, to improve the fire safety standard in the context of recent incidents nationally and the learning from those. Overall FireSkills noted that the Council's Housing Service has a 'forward facing and proactive fire safety strategy' and whilst the Council is fully compliant with current legislation, FireSkills have recommended that the Council consider implementing a number of additional measures. These include range of measures including:
- a. Additional smoke and/or heat detectors for some block types, for example where access/exit is via a lounge and in properties with 'stacked windows'.
 - b. In blocks where the flat front doors open directly onto the enclosed escape staircase, installation of communal smoke detector systems is advised at each landing level.
 - c. In sheltered accommodation, ensuring that a smoke detector or heat detector is allowed in all habitable rooms as well as the main exit corridor of the flat

Contract for Works

- 3.3 Housing Property Services proposes to invite tenders for 1 'measured term' contract (MTC) covering smoke detectors in dwellings and communal areas in housing blocks and 1 'measured term' contract (MTC) covering communal fire alarm installations. There is no existing contract in place - currently a low volume of installations of smoke detectors have been managed in-house linked to annual gas servicing. However, this is a major programme of upgrading systems following an external review of fire safety in Council housing.
- 3.4 The MTC for the smoke detectors will be tendered on the basis of a fixed price installation per smoke detector and against the Housing Property Services Schedule of Rates for additional electrical works. Contractors will be invited to provide an inclusive price per detector as well as a percentage increase or decrease against the published Schedule of Rates for additional

electrical work. The MTC for Fire alarm installations to communal areas will be tendered via a framework.

- 3.5 Reading Borough Council's Housing Property Services manage the day to day repairs, planned maintenance and voids repair works for approximately 5,600 Council properties which are let throughout the Borough. Elements of this work are sometimes sub-contracted out through the use of MTC's which are put in place to manage peaks in workload at times when there is not enough capacity within the in-house teams or to provide specialist services.
- 3.6 In each case the ability to carry out the work covered in the MTC using existing resources, or employment of additional staff to carry out the work has been examined and found to be either uneconomic due to the level of spend and nature of the work, or the capacity/specialist skills not being available internally. Therefore it is more efficient and cost effective for the service to sub contract the work in this way rather than employing additional staff who would be surplus to requirements outside of peak times.
- 3.7 Where it is feasible to do so, work is allocated to other RBC internal teams. Internal teams will always be offered relevant work before approaching specialist framework contractors.
- 3.8 MTC's are normally put in place for a 4 year period, however, these works are intended to be carried out within a 2 period. The proposed works are not included in the scope of any current arrangement.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 The contract will support the achievement of the Council's strategic aims of 'providing homes for those in most need' and 'remaining financially sustainable to deliver service priorities' by using a cost effective means of delivering improvements to the Council's Housing Stock.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 5.1 It is intended as far as possible to ensure that the successful tenderers pay the living wage to all employees working on Reading Borough Council properties. Tenderers are advised that the Council's current Low Wage policy expects the payment of the Living Wage rate set independently by the Living Wage Foundation and updated annually in the first week of November each year. All providers appointed are expected to pay a living wage in accordance with this policy to all staff working on Reading Borough Council contracts. The UK Living Wage for employees outside of London is currently (November 2016) £8.45 per hour.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 There is no Equalities Impact Assessment required for these contracts.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Measured Term Contracts will be awarded using the Joint Contracts Tribunal “Measured Term Contract - 2011”.

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 No volume of expenditure is guaranteed under these contracts as annual expenditure will depend on the actual level of work that is required to be sub contracted during the course of the year. However, based on expenditure records, typically the total expenditure on each contract across its 2 year lifespan is expected to be as follows:

- Smoke Detectors in dwellings and communal areas in RBC housing blocks £1,300,000 (£650,000 per annum).
- Fire alarm systems to communal areas £700,000 (£350,000 per annum)

8.2 The budget for these contracts is included within the existing Housing Revenue Account repairs and maintenance budget as agreed by Council.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None applicable.

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	11 JUNE 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	15
TITLE:	APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES		
LEAD CLLR:	COUNCILLOR LOVELOCK	PORTFOLIO:	LEADERSHIP
SERVICE:	LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
AUTHOR:	SIMON HILL	TEL:	0118 937 2303/ Internal 72303
JOB TITLE:	PRINCIPAL COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATOR	E-MAIL:	simon.a.hill@reading.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report asks the Policy Committee to make appointments or nominations to outside bodies for the Municipal Year 2018/19, or longer where required. A schedule of outside body appointments showing the Group Leaders' recommendations will be circulated once all the nominations have been confirmed.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee make appointments or nominations to the listed outside body appointments;
- 2.2 That the appointments or nominations be made on an "or nominee" basis where the organisation in question is willing to accept this arrangement.

3. OUTSIDE BODIES

- 3.1 No new appointments have been added to the register in 2017/18.
- 3.2 The Girl's Trust for Educational Excellence and Enterprise was dissolved in February 2018 and has therefore been removed from the register.
- 3.3 There are a number of other appointments not listed in the schedule, because they have a longer term of appointment and are therefore not becoming vacant in 2018.
- 3.4 Appointments to Joint Committees, Regional Bodies, Partnerships and Companies were made by the Policy Committee motion at the Council AGM on 23 May 2018 - see the Minutes on pages B6-B8 of the agenda for details.

5. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Attendance by Councillors appointed to the above bodies will be an approved duty for the purposes of the Council's scheme made in accordance with the provisions of the

Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 1991. This means that travel and subsistence claims may be made in respect of expenses incurred in attending meetings.

- 5.2 The Council cannot legally provide personal liability cover for representatives serving on outside bodies (*Burgoine v Waltham LBC 1996*) and it is the responsibility of the outside body to secure the appropriate insurance and personal liability cover for people on it. Local authorities do not have a legal power to extend their insurance policies to cover the liabilities of third parties.
- 5.3 All Councillors, officers and other people appointed by Reading - and any other local authority - are therefore advised of the need to check directly with the outside body about its insurance cover, and how far it protects them.
- 5.4 Non-Councillors who are appointed to represent the Borough on outside bodies may claim financial loss allowance and travel and subsistence, if applicable.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 6.1 Representation on joint committees and outside bodies gives the Council an opportunity, through its representatives, to work with partner organisations to achieve the vision and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 Representation on outside bodies gives the Council an opportunity, through its representatives, to engage with the community on matters that affect the Borough.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Outside Bodies correspondence and questionnaires.