

To: Councillor Brock (Chair)
Councillors Page, Barnett-Ward, Duveen,
Emberson, Ennis, Hoskin, McElroy, McEwan,
Pearce, Robinson, Rowland, Skeats,
Stanford-Beale, Stevens, Terry and White

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4 June 2021

Your contact is: **Simon Hill - Committee Services (simon.hill@reading.gov.uk)**

NOTICE OF MEETING - POLICY COMMITTEE 14 JUNE 2021

A meeting of the Policy Committee will be held on Monday, 14 June 2021 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Reading, RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTES

5 - 10

4. PETITIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

5. DECISION BOOKS

BOROUGH 11 - 12

6. DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINSTER QUARTER

WIDE

ABBEY 13 - 24

This report seeks approval for the approach to the development of the Minster Quarter, including a proposal to prepare the site for sale by way of a Development Agreement and a bid to the Brownfield Land Release Fund to support the delivery of the Council's ambitions for the Minster Quarter.

7. CEMETERY POLICY

**BOROUGH 25 - 74
WIDE**

This report sets out new draft Cemetery & Crematorium Regulations for public consultation.

CIVIC OFFICES EMERGENCY EVACUATION: If an alarm sounds, leave by the nearest fire exit quickly and calmly and assemble on the corner of Bridge Street and Fobney Street. You will be advised when it is safe to re-enter the building.

8.	ALLOCATION OF THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY 15% LOCAL CONTRIBUTION	BOROUGH WIDE	75 - 110
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This report summarises the results of consultation on the provisional allocation of 15% local Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and future priorities, and proposes a final allocation of CIL collected up to 31 March 2020 as well as changes to the previously agreed allocation.

9.	SPECIALIST VEHICLE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT	BOROUGH WIDE	111 - 120
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This report highlights progress with the renewal of the specialist vehicles maintenance contract and seeks approval to award a new contract in June 2021 to avoid service disruption.

10.	APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES	BOROUGH WIDE	121 - 122
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This report asks the Committee to make appointments or nominations to outside bodies for the Municipal Year 2021/22, or longer where required.

ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE ACTING AS SHAREHOLDER OF READING TRANSPORT LIMITED

11.	READING TRANSPORT LIMITED SHAREHOLDER REPORT	BOROUGH WIDE	123 - 134
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This report sets out the proposed actions and next steps arising from an independent review of Reading Transport Limited's governance arrangements.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN CLOSED SESSION

12.	EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC
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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"

13.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FOR CLOSED SESSION ITEMS
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14.	2-4 DARWIN CLOSE - DISPOSAL	WHITLEY	135 - 150
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ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE ACTING AS SHAREHOLDER OF READING TRANSPORT LIMITED

15.	READING TRANSPORT LIMITED SHAREHOLDER REPORT	BOROUGH WIDE	151 - 164
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Members of the public seated in the public gallery will not ordinarily be filmed by the automated camera system. However, please be aware that by moving forward of the pillar, or in the unlikely event of a technical malfunction or other unforeseen circumstances, your image may be captured. **Therefore, by entering the meeting room, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting and/or training purposes.**

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Agenda Item 3

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 12 APRIL 2021

Present: Councillor Brock (Chair);

Councillors Page (Vice-Chair), Barnett-Ward, Ennis, Duveen, Emberson, Hoskin, Pearce, Robinson, Rowland, Skeats, Stanford-Beale, Stevens, Terry and White

Apologies: Councillor Jones

108. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair asked all taking part in the meeting to join in a minute's silence in memory of His Royal Highness The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

109. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chair.

110. QUESTIONS

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

	<u>Questioner</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Reply</u>
1.	James Denny	Neurodivergent Conditions	Cllr Hoskin
2.	Alison May	Moratorium on Incinerators	Cllr Barnett-Ward

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

111. DECISION BOOKS

The Assistant Director of Legal & Democratic Services submitted a report listing the Decision Books that had been published since the report to the meeting of the Committee held on 8 March 2021.

Resolved -

That Decision Book Nos 624-627 be noted.

112. HOUSEHOLD WASTE - UPDATE ON THE INTRODUCTION OF KERBSIDE FOOD WASTE COLLECTION AND 140L RESIDUAL WASTE BINS

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report providing an update on the roll out of the kerbside food waste collection service and the change to 140 litre residual waste bins. Attached to the report at Appendix 1

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 12 APRIL 2021

was a summary of the Communications Campaign and at Appendix 2 a table of Monitoring data for Early Adopter areas.

The report explained that an early adopter initiative had encompassed over 3,000 households for 17 weeks and provided useful operational and communications insights which had helped inform the main roll out of the project in February 2021. Appendix 2 summarised the results of the early adopters and included the specific changes and learning outcomes which were applied to the main roll out.

For the main rollout 56,000 food waste bins, caddies, liners and leaflets had been delivered in January 2021 and the five new food waste collection rounds had begun on 1 February 2021 as planned. The swap out of the 240l residual waste bins for the new 140l bins had begun as scheduled on 1 February 2021 and completed within the planned 10-week timetable. The Service had received 963 requests for additional waste capacity between 1 and 26 February 2021, of which 582 had been approved, and had agreed to issue 641 additional recycling bins in accordance with the Waste Collection Service Standard policy. In general, the swap out and replacement of residual bins had gone according to plan however, there had been some minor issues with bins being removed ahead of time before the replacement had been delivered as well as with 240l bins being removed when they should have been left, for example for clinical waste reasons. The waste operations team was monitoring and resolving issues quickly as they arose and the Recycling and Enforcement team had supported the roll-out dealing with requests for additional waste capacity, additional recycling bins and ensuring residents had food waste bins, caddies and liners.

The final phase of the project was to roll out the introduction of a food waste collection service to the remaining 14,000 households living in high and low-rise flats in the borough. This was programmed to start in July 2021 and to be completed by the end of March 2022. Individual internal caddies and caddy liners would still be provided to each household, however, rather than an external caddy per household, the required number of 240 litre communal food waste bins would be provided in the bin storage areas. Each of the block of flats would have the capacity needed for communal residual and recycling waste bins reassessed during this roll out.

The report also set out information on the revised project timetable, governance arrangements and communications campaign and reported that the provisional recycling rate following the first month of the new waste collection service was 45.78%, compared to a third quarter 2020/21 recycling rate of 33%.

Resolved -

- (1) That the progress to date of the project be noted;**
- (2) That the proposed Phase 2 roll out timetable be agreed;**
- (3) That a further update, including the results of the Phase 2 roll out be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.**

113. SCHOOL ESTATE FABRIC CONDITION PROGRAMME

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report seeking approval for the release of £6m of designated capital programme funding to carry out a three-year programme of works following surveys carried out across the Council's community schools and nurseries to ascertain the current fabric condition of the buildings. The report also sought authority for the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services to enter into the contracts required to deliver the works.

The report noted that in 2020 Hampshire County Council's building surveyors had carried out a borough wide survey of the Council's school estate to establish the condition of the fabric of the buildings. The survey had identified 1300 items of work totalling approximately £15m across all community schools and nurseries. The requested funding of £6m aimed to cover the items identified as requiring urgent action or action within the next three years.

The report explained that the programme would benefit from the recently successful bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund which had been reported to Policy Committee on 18 January 2021 (Minute 85 refers). The offer of an additional Decarbonisation Grant of £1.293m, to be spent on school window replacements by the end of September 2021, would enable a marked acceleration of the windows replacement programme.

Resolved -

- (1) That the release of designated capital programme funding of £6m to deliver a three-year programme of works across Reading Council's Community schools and nurseries, up to 31 March 2024 be approved;
- (2) That the Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services be authorised to enter into the contracts required to deliver the works.

114. DIGITAL FUTURES FOUNDATIONS (ICT FUTURE OPERATING MODEL) UPDATE

Further to Minute 73 of the meeting held on 14 December 2020, the Executive Director of Resources submitted a report summarising the progress of 'Digital Futures Foundations' the project to implement a new ICT Future Operating Model (FOM) following the end of the contract with Northgate Public Services on 31 March 2021.

The report noted that the five elements of the FOM were a hosting provider, a Unified Communications provider, a Network Management provider, an End User Workspace provider and an enhanced internal ICT organisation. It summarised progress with the transition to new arrangements for each of these workstreams and explained that since the report to Policy Committee on 14 December 2020 the final procurement, of a Network Management provider, had been completed and a contract awarded to North (formerly Pinacl Solutions). The other elements were now provided by Agilisys (hosting and end user workspace) and Virgin Media Business (Unified Communications).

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES - 12 APRIL 2021

The report explained that significant social value commitments had been made by the suppliers as part of the procurement, and that officers were currently working with the suppliers and developing governance arrangements to ensure that maximum value was realised from these. Proposals would be reported to the September 2021 Policy Committee as part of a post project completion report.

The report set out information on how the current estimated costs of ICT services in the Final Business Case varied from the Outline Business Case and sought approval from the Committee to carry forward a capital underspend from 2020/21 to 2021/22. The shift of spend reflected the fact that some work that was to have been delivered by Northgate had been moved to Agilisys to avoid conflict with transition, and that the Managed Network procurement had identified the need to upgrade some infrastructure elements after the transition. The cost of these latter changes had been offset by savings in transition costs elsewhere.

Resolved -

- (1) That the progress made by the project to date be noted;
- (2) That a post project completion report on the outcome of the transition and benefits realisation arising from the implementation of the new operating model, including suppliers' social value commitments, be submitted to Policy Committee in September 2021;
- (3) That the carry forward of the capital underspend into 2021/22 be approved, noting that this funding would be needed to complete planned work that was intentionally deferred to avoid conflict with the transition to the new model and to upgrade infrastructure in areas where the transition project had identified issues, as set out in the report.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.24 pm)

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 26 MAY 2021

Present: Councillor Brock (Chair)
Councillors Barnett-Ward, Duveen, Emberson, Ennis, Hoskin, McElroy, McEwan, Page, Pearce, Robinson, Rowland, Skeats, Stevens, Terry, and White.

Apologies: Councillor Stanford-Beale.

RESOLVED ITEMS

1. ESTABLISH A MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS TRUSTEES SUB-COMMITTEE AND THE READING COVID-19 OUTBREAK ENGAGEMENT BOARD, APPOINT THE CHAIRS 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 Mapledurham Playing Fields Trustees Sub-Committee be established for the Municipal Year 2021/22 and the following Councillors be appointed to serve on the Sub-Committee:

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

<u>Labour Councillors</u>	<u>Conservative Councillors</u>
Ayub	Rynn
Eden	R Singh
Edwards	
Gittings	
Leng	

- (2) That the following Councillors be appointed as Chair/Vice-Chair of The Mapledurham Playing Fields Trustees Sub-Committee for the Municipal Year 2021/22:

<u>Chair</u>	<u>Vice-Chair</u>
Councillor Edwards	Councillor Ayub

- (3) That the Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee be as set out in Appendix B to the Monitoring Officer's report to Council of 26 May 2021.

- (4) That the Reading Covid 19 Outbreak Engagement Board be set up for the Municipal Year 2021/22 and the following Councillors be appointed to serve on the Sub-Committee:

The Reading Covid 19 Outbreak Engagement Board (6:2:1:1)

<u>Labour Councillors</u>	<u>Conservative Councillors</u>	<u>Liberal Democrat</u>	<u>Green Councillor</u>
Brock	Robinson	O'Connell	McGonigle

POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES - 26 MAY 2021

Ennis	Stanford-Beale
Gittings	
Hoskin	
James	
Terry	

- (5) That the following Councillors be appointed as Chair/Vice-Chair of The Reading Covid 19 Outbreak Engagement Board for the Municipal Year 2021/22:

<u>Chair</u>	<u>Vice-Chair</u>
Councillor Hoskin	Councillor Brock

- (6) That the Terms of Reference of the Board be as set out in Appendix B to the Monitoring Officer's report to Council of 26 May 2021.

- (7) That the following appointments (or nominations, where indicated) be made for the Municipal Year 2021-22:

- (a) Joint Waste Disposal Board

2 Representatives	Councillor Barnett-Ward
	Councillor Page

- (b) Royal Berkshire Fire Authority

3 Representatives	Councillor Gittings
	Councillor Lovelock
	Councillor Stanford-Beale

Agenda Item 5

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 JUNE 2021		
TITLE:	DECISION BOOKS		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR BROCK	PORTFOLIO:	LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
SERVICE:	LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	MICHAEL GRAHAM	TEL:	0118 937 3470
JOB TITLE:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	E-MAIL:	michael.graham@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Decision Book process was amended on 25 March 2020 to disapply the previous councillors' call-in arrangements within the 10-day period after its publication and replace it with the ability to seek a review of the decision retrospectively, and to keep the changes in force temporarily during the ongoing Covid-19 situation.
- 1.2 To complement the amended process the list of Decision Books published will be reported to Policy Committee as a standing item on the agenda.
- 1.3 The following Decision Book reports have been published since the previous report to Policy Committee:

Title	Date
632 North Whitley Housing PFI - Transfer of Engagements	07/05/2021
631 - Covid Winter Grant Scheme - Extra Funding Update	27/04/2021
630 - Appointment of School Governor	20/04/2021
629 - Holiday Activity Fund	15/04/2021
628 - Town Centre Strategy - Appointment of Consultant	01/04/2021
628 - Replacement of Hammer Throw Cage at Palmer Park Stadium	01/04/2021

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Decision Book Reports be noted.

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Agenda Item 6

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 JUNE 2021		
TITLE:	DEVELOPMENT OF THE MINSTER QUARTER		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLRS BROCK/PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	LEADERSHIP
SERVICE:	DEGNS	WARDS:	ABBEY
LEAD OFFICER:	FRANCES MARTIN/ CHARAN DHILLON	TEL:	07841 253880 07817 085309
JOB TITLE:	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/ ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ASSETS & PROPERTY	E-MAIL:	frances.martin@reading.gov.uk charan.dhillon@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Committee approval for the approach set out to the development of the Minster Quarter, and specifically the proposal to proceed to prepare the site for sale by way of a Development Agreement as the preferred delivery vehicle and to appoint a professional team to support and lead this process, and gives details of a bid to be submitted to the Brownfield Land Release Fund which, if successful, would support the delivery of the Council's ambitions for the Minster Quarter.
- 1.2 Appendices to this report are:
 - Appendix 1: Minster Quarter: History of the Site.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

That the Committee:

- (i) Gives officers authority to tender for a professional advisory team to take Minster Quarter to market for sale by way of a Development Agreement.
- (ii) Notes the submission of a bid to the Brownfield Land Release Fund, submitted by the deadline of 2nd June 2021 under delegated authority by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, Leader and Deputy Leader as per the Council's constitution clause 9.3.1 (3)
- (iii) Delegates authority to submit bids for other relevant funding streams, including The Levelling Up Fund, to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer, Leader and Deputy Leader
- (iv) Delegates authority to the Chief Executive to spend up to £250,000 from approved regeneration capital budgets for preparation of the site for market, procurement of professional services and other costs associated with the development.
- (v) Delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services to appoint the commercial and legal advisors for the project
- (vi) Notes that progress will be reported into the Civic Board.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The Minster Quarter Development

- 3.1.1 The Minster Quarter represents one of Reading's major town centre development opportunities. Successful redevelopment has the potential to deliver a number of the Council's aspirations for the town centre and wider borough, particularly in view of the Council's land holdings in the area, the levelling up agenda and Covid recovery.
- 3.1.2 RBC relocated to the current Civic Offices in 2014 and demolished the former Civic Offices in 2016. The podium structure was retained to facilitate access and rights of way across the site, linking Reading Police Station, Magistrates Court, The Hexagon and Broad Street Mall. RBC formally adopted the Minster Quarter Development Framework (12 December 2018) as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This set out a high-level vision for the site and provides the framework against which the Planning Authority (RBC) will test any development proposals.
- 3.1.3 The pandemic has highlighted the need for a flexible, versatile town centre offer based on a mix of uses in an attractive public realm with generous access to public open space. The renewal of the Minster Quarter offers the opportunity to deliver this for Reading, based on a vision for high quality, high density, mixed use development which leverages the historical associations of the area to enhance new residential, retail, commercial, cultural and environmental opportunities
- 3.1.4 While the pandemic stalled progress considerably, soft market testing was undertaken, and a high-level appraisal undertaken in November 2020. This concluded that the viability gap was 'manageable' and that the project should therefore proceed to the next stage.
- 3.1.5 Development Appraisals and technical feasibilities carried out by the Council's consultants have demonstrated that a viable scheme can be delivered in the context of key assumptions
- 3.1.6 To further test the key assumptions against scheme viability the Council will look to adopt a hierarchy of need approach in relation to such fundaments as:
- Divesting long term liability
 - High quality public realm (including seeking to address the impact of the Inner Distribution Ring road [IDR] in the context of the Minster Quarter SPD)
 - Zero carbon development
 - Masterplan solution across the wider Minster Quarter area
 - Affordable Housing
- 3.1.7 In the context of the Adopted Minster Quarter Area Outline Development Framework the Council has continued aspirations to deliver new enhanced quality public realm across the Minster site including seeking to address the permeability, visual, noise and pollution issues associated with the Inner Distribution Ring road (IDR).
- 3.1.8 Whilst Developers will be expected to address these issues as part of the overall development process the Council will further consider the option of dedicating CIL charges generated from the Minster Quarter area back into supporting enhanced public realm solutions in line with policy objectives and the Councils' aspirations of the Framework.
- 3.1.9 The Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy approved in February 2021 included capital funding of £1m, spread over the three years, to take forward key regeneration projects, including Minster Quarter. An interim Regeneration Project Manager was

appointed in January 2021 to develop the initial financial appraisal work and establish the best route to securing a development partner. A more detailed history of Minster Quarter is included at Appendix 1.

3.2 The Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF)

- 3.2.1** The Government announced in January 2021 its intention to launch a new Brownfield Land Release fund to support brownfield development, estates regeneration and development on public sector land in coming forward. The BLRF is offering up to £75 million of capital grant funding to unlock and accelerate the release of these site. The BLRF is primarily targeted at small sites below 250 homes, although proposals for larger sites will be considered by exception (this would include Minster Quarter). The Fund criteria were published, and the application process opened on 20 April 2021, with a tight deadline for submission of bids by 2 June 2021.
- 3.2.2** The aims of BLRF are to release local authority housing land by March 2024, encourage use of public assets to drive innovative delivery, demonstrate a return for government through investment in small sites and schemes that can deliver within a funding timescale. The funding will provide upfront capital to address viability issues arising from abnormal costs of proposed developments such as site levelling, groundworks and demolition, provision of small-scale infrastructure, highways works and access challenges, addressing environmental constraints and providing services to plots.
- 3.2.3** Applications to BLRF have to be coordinated by the One Public Estate (OPE) partnership and submitted via Cabinet Office, the designated accountable body.
- 3.2.4** Proposals for a future application to the Levelling Up Fund are set out in Paragraph 4.2.4 of this report.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Current Position:

- 4.1.1** In April and early May, an update was presented to senior officers and Members outlining the work that had been done to address the viability questions and the further work needed to take the scheme forward. An Options Appraisal Report was prepared, and legal advice sought to establish whether a joint venture or development agreement would be the more appropriate route to delivery. Officers recommended that the site be taken to market for sale incorporating a Development Agreement due to a combination of factors but most notably to minimise the Council's risk in the process and limit the Council's investment in the project to the value of the land and cost of the tender process.

4.2 Option Proposed

4.2.1 Appointment of a Professional Team

In order to take the scheme forward, officers recommend that a professional team be appointed to lead the sale of Minster Quarter by way of a development agreement. Due to lack of inhouse resources and skills, an external professional team will be required to take Minster Quarter to market. The professional team will be procured line with RBC procurement and financial procedures. The appointed professional team will be managed by RBC in-house regeneration, estates, finance and legal teams all of whom will report to the Chief Executive.

4.2.2 Proceed to Market Minster Quarter by way of a Development Agreement.

In view of the balance to be struck between RBC retaining influence over the nature of Minster Quarter's redevelopment, and the limited resources available to the Council to invest beyond the value of the land, officers have started work to prepare the site for sale, based on a Development Agreement model as the preferred delivery vehicle. The professional team will provide a detailed delivery strategy with recommendations to take the site to market alongside viability assessments to support the Council's hierarchy of need decision making process. The appointed consultants will prepare all relevant marketing material, technical reports and tender documentation and agreement of budgets and timescales. Approval to proceed will be delegated to the Chief Executive in conjunction with the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services reporting to the Civic Board.

4.2.3 Bid for Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF)

- 4.2.3.1 In respect of Minster Quarter, a successful BLRF fund application will support some of the site demolition and servicing costs which are currently affecting the site's viability. Aecom provided a detailed cost appraisal for a number of schemes, a significant proportion of which were focussed on the demolition or re-use of the existing podium structure which ranged from £6-8 million for complete demolition and re-servicing, £14 million to reinforce and extend or £20 million to demolish and replace with a new structure.
- 4.2.3.2 At the time of writing, OPE have confirmed provisional eligibility of RBC's initial proposals based on the following Gateway Criteria:

Brownfield Land Release Fund Gateway Criteria

No	Criteria	Comments
1)	Capital works proposed on local authority brownfield land.	Yes
2)	Land Released by March 2024.	Yes. On the assumption that a development partner can be selected by the end of 2022 and a planning consent being achieved by the end of 2023.
3)	Application demonstrates clear market failure.	The site currently demonstrates negative viability due to existing site constraints.
4)	A Benefits Cost Ratio of 1.0 or more and a score of 1.5 for BCR + non monetised benefits must be reached	Initial indications are that Phase 1 of Minster Quarter score a BCR of greater than 4 prior to non-monetised benefits being calculated.

- 4.2.3.3 The precise scope of a bid to BLRF is being determined, subject to agreement with local OPE representatives, that a contribution towards the £6 million cost to demolish the podium, re-level and re-service the site might be included within a bid. The initial proposals are based on supporting delivery of Phase 1 of the scheme, being the land adjacent to Hosier Street. Phase 1 has capacity to provide approx. 175 new homes and so falls below the threshold of 250 homes set by the Cabinet Office within the BLRF Prospectus.
- 4.2.3.4 The proposed works would include a contribution towards part demolition of the existing podium, provision of new services, utilities and improved access points. OPE have advised that the bid should be based on a contribution amounting to approximately £10,000 per home and no more than £15,000 per home.

4.2.3.5 The Council's constitution states 'where the timescale and deadline for the bid mean that it would not be practical to submit a report to the relevant Committee, the bid may be submitted following consultation with the Strategic Finance Director, Lead Councillor and Leader or Deputy Leader, and reported to the next meeting of the Committee by the lead Head of Service'. In this case, the tight deadline for responses made it impractical to submit a report to the relevant Committee prior to submission of a bid, so a bid has been prepared and submitted in line with this, and the fact of the bid is summarised here to satisfy the requirements of the Constitution. Costs associated with bidding have been drawn down from the regeneration budget in the order of £12,000. Proposals are due to be submitted prior to midnight on 2nd June 2021.

4.2.4 The Levelling Up Fund

4.2.4.1 The Levelling Up Fund is a further central government funding initiative focussed on providing improved infrastructure and connectivity across all regions. It brings together the Department for Transport, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Treasury to invest £4.8 billion in high-value local infrastructure.

4.2.4.2 Officers previously considered making a bid to the Levelling Up Fund to support the acquisition and delivery of Reading Gaol. However, in May 2021, The Ministry of Justice rejected the Council's proposals to acquire The Gaol. Officers will now consider a Levelling Up bid to support the delivery of Minster Quarter. Reading features within Priority Category Two (Category One being local authorities deemed in need of most support). The current bidding round is more appropriate for Category One authorities given the timescales and detail required to submit a bid. Officers have been advised that there will be a second bidding round later this year which will be more appropriate for Reading. Officers will review the infrastructure and connectivity requirements for the wider Minster Quarter area and report back to the Civic Board when more detail is made available. Officers will also open discussions with surrounding landowners to establish whether a combined bid will have a greater chance of success.

4.3 Other Options Considered

4.3.1 The Joint Venture option, as the main alternative to the Development Agreement delivery model, is not proposed as it would expose the Council to a greater level of risk compared to a development agreement and would require the Council to invest in the project beyond the value of the land. However, as it is prudent to leave open the prospect of an agreement with adjoining landowners, some form of joint venture to achieve that could still be considered as part of the Delivery Strategy.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The successful redevelopment of Minster Quarter would directly support the key themes within Reading's Corporate Plan:

- **Healthy Environment:** the regeneration of this site will significantly improve the public realm in this area and in so doing create a vibrant, safe environment for residents, workers and visitors. The proposals will improve pedestrian access to key assets including the Hexagon Theatre, and reconnect the area with Reading Town Centre, whilst respecting the historic character of The Minster, and delivering an exemplar of low carbon development to align with RBC's climate change policy commitments. The project team will look at options for spanning the IDR to help increase public open space and density on site and report back to the Civic Board with option appraisals, feasibility costs and funding proposals so these can be referenced within future tender documentation.

- **Thriving communities: Improving access to housing to meet local needs:** RBC's ownership has the potential to provide between 450 and 475 new residential units within Reading Borough Councils land ownership. (The wider Minster quarter area has capacity for c1,100 new homes across three land ownerships). At present the Project Team have not provided a detailed breakdown of housing typology and tenure. Subject to further viability testing the project team will be targeting policy compliant levels of affordable housing with a perceived need for key worker housing within this important central location. This will be tested once consultants are appointed at the next stage. Officers will report back to the Civic Board prior to taking the opportunity to market to seek a development partner.
- **Inclusive Economy:** redevelopment of the Minster Quarter will support Reading's ambitions for post pandemic economic recovery, providing employment opportunities in construction and associated sectors in the medium term and new employment opportunities in other sectors when completed.

5.2 The proposals will also support the efficient operation of the Council: whilst the site is largely vacant, there are costs and risks to RBC arising from its ownership and ongoing management of the site. It is envisaged that the proposals will help transfer the future management of public realm and associated costs to the owners and occupiers of Minster Quarter by way of a recoverable estate service charge.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). Any major development proposal has the potential to generate significant environmental impacts and carbon emissions, and compliance with national standards and local plan policies as a minimum will be a pre-requisite of any development proposal. Over and above this the Council has aspirations for the Minster Quarter to be an exemplar of low carbon development. The Disposal Strategy and subsequent stages of project development for Minster Quarter will therefore take full account of the Council's climate change policy commitments as set out in the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25, the Council's Carbon Plan 2020-25 and the Reading Local Plan, particularly the 'Zero Carbon Homes' policy in the latter.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 Section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on local authorities to involve local representatives when carrying out "any of its functions" by providing information, consulting or "involving in another way".

7.2 The key statements of Council policy in relation to the Minster Quarter are contained within the Reading Local Plan and associated Supplementary Planning Document which were subject to extensive public consultation in line with the statutory requirements for spatial planning. The development management process will provide further opportunities for community engagement and consultation in relation to specific development proposals.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 It is not considered that the decision will have a differential impact on: racial groups; gender; people with disabilities; people of a particular sexual orientation; people due to their age; people due to their religious belief and therefore no Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is relevant to the decision. The principle of improving economic opportunities for all sections of the community does, however, inform the Council's objectives for the Minster Quarter and EqIA may be necessary at appropriate stages of specific development proposals as they come forward.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Local government has wide powers to affect regeneration in its area including powers to acquire and dispose of land, borrow, construct works enter partnerships etc. The proposals within this report are therefore within the Council's powers. All disposals of land by a local authority need to satisfy the best value requirements of the s123 of the Local Government Act 1972. Where a council wishes to dispose of land on a conditional basis to see works constructed then the Court of Appeal has confirmed that such projects are covered by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and must be advertised as a public procurement.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The capital programme approved in February 2021 as part of the Budget and MTFs included £1m (£250k p.a. for each of the next four years) to help fund the initial work to progress regeneration sites including Minster Quarter. To April 2021, £95,898 (£51,610 in 19/20 and £44,288 - 20/21) had been spent on progressing the scheme.
- 10.2 The report seeks approval to spend up to £250,000 from the approved capital budget to enable preparation of the site for market without further recourse to Committee approvals. This will include procurement of a professional team and preparation of procurement, legal, technical and commercial documentation to support the tender. This expenditure can only be classified as capital expenditure if a scheme is delivered. If a scheme is not delivered, then it will need to be charged to revenue expenditure. No provision has currently been made for this within the revenue budget.
- 10.3 In order to make this scheme more attractive and viable to the market the council will look to maximize the use of CIL receipts generated from the Minster Quarter area in support of delivering the aspirations and policy objectives for improved public realm and infrastructure as set out in the Local Plan and Minster Quarter adopted SPD.
- 10.4 Funding for bid development costs to support preparation of a bid to the Brownfield Land Release Fund total to £12,000.
- 10.5 Feasibility work required to investigate spanning the IDR falls outside these proposed budgets and Officers will report back on studies required and associated costs prior to appointing a commercial and legal advisor to market the scheme.
- 10.6 Beyond this, RBC has both revenue and capital constraints which will impact on its ability to take the project forward. Revenue budgets are under severe pressure and there are limits to the capital it can invest to de-risk the scheme. External funding sources are therefore being actively explored - not just the Brown Field Land Release Fund (as described above in this report) to provide revenue funding for additional capacity, but also Homes England for capital investment in infrastructure.
- 10.7 A bid will be considered for the second round of the Levelling Up Fund (capital funding) when this becomes available. Officers will consider the merits of making a joint bid with surrounding landowners to help deliver the wider Minster Quarter area.
- 10.8 RBC also faces significant resourcing and staffing constraints, not least as the ongoing impact of the pandemic on the Assets & Property service is significant, and the Council has ambitions to deliver a number of complex and resource intensive projects including the Local Authority New Build Programme and the Modern Workplace programme. It is therefore envisaged that this project will be delivered using a combination of in-house, interim and external resourcing, details and costs for which will be agreed by the Chief Executive, Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Director of Legal And Democratic Services.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 There are none

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TEMPLATE

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The council has previously approved a capital budget of £1.0m spread over four years for regeneration projects. The expenditure of £0.250m proposed in this paper will be met from this budget. There is a risk with any expenditure like this that, should it not ultimately result in a capital asset being created, then it will become chargeable to revenue, where it would be unbudgeted.

These financial implications were reviewed by a strategic business partner on 15/5/21.

3. Value for Money (VFM)

Details of competitive tenders for consultants' services requested will be provided and linked to benchmarking data.

4. Risk Assessment

There is a risk with any expenditure like this that, should it not ultimately result in a capital asset being created, then it will become chargeable to revenue, where it would be unbudgeted.

Appendix 1

Minster Quarter: History of the site

May 2021

The Minster Quarter occupies a unique position in the history of the town as an important ecclesiastical and commercial centre. The wider site was the epicentre of the town's development with the old Saxon Borough of Reading centred on St Mary's Butts where the two main roads (Oxford to Winchester and London to Bath) crossed the lowest bridging point of the River Kennet around which the town grew. Some of Reading's oldest surviving buildings are visible features of this legacy. More recently the area was the site of Reading Borough Council's former offices, developed in the 1970's alongside The Hexagon Theatre, Broad Street Mall Shopping Centre, a Headquarters Building for Thames Valley Police and Reading Magistrates Courts. By 2014 the Civic Offices were deemed unsuitable for occupation and the Council relocated to new premises on Bridge Street.

The foundation of Reading Abbey to the east of the town in 1121, resulted in a shift of economic balance from the area round St Mary's Butts to the gates of the Abbey. In some ways its importance has been obscured ever since. The regeneration of the Minster Quarter area has the potential to rediscover the areas thriving past, provide a focus for a revitalised public realm and the creation of a new townscape to reinstate the Reading's historic urban structure, respecting and re-linking the surrounding heritage streets and neighbourhoods.

Project Overview:

The pandemic has highlighted the need for a flexible, versatile town centre offer based on a mix of uses in an attractive public realm with generous access to public open space. The renewal of the Minster Quarter offers the opportunity to deliver this for Reading, based on a vision for high quality, high density, mixed use development which leverages the historical associations of the area to enhance new residential, retail, commercial, cultural and environmental opportunities.

The Opportunity:

Reading is one of the UK's most prosperous towns but also one of the most unequal as this prosperity has not been evenly shared. Development of the Minster Quarter offers potential to:

- Deliver inclusive growth by improving housing supply with up to 1,100 new homes across the wider Minster Quarter area currently comprising three separate landowners including Reading Borough Council (RBC 450-475 homes, Broad Street Mall approx. 450 homes and Thames Valley Police approx. 200 homes). Minster Quarter will include a high level of affordable housing to meet local need, stimulating local employment and skills development
- Deliver green growth through development in line with the Council's zero carbon homes framework, green and open space enhancements, and car-free development opportunities
- Develop Reading's cultural economy by incorporating heritage assets and landmark buildings into the masterplan to reconnect Reading's past with its vibrant, smart and sustainable future

Project Status/next steps:

- An Outline Development Framework for the Minster Quarter was published by the Council in December 2018 <https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/>
- The Reading Local Plan, adopted in November 2019, identified the Reading Central Area (which includes the Minster Quarter) as Major Opportunity Area within the borough

- Discussions are underway between Thames Valley Police and Reading Borough Council about the future of the Policy HQ site as a key site within the Minster Quarter Development Framework

In the same year, Kier were appointed as the preferred development partner to deliver a mixed-use regeneration with the Council and potential to include the Thames Valley Police site.

In 2016 the RBC demolished the former Civic Offices and building/podium links.

In 2018 due to a combination of scheme related challenges, timescales and specific business-related matters the Council and Kier decided not to progress and the Council decided to review the site in a planning policy context and the technical constraints of the site.

The Minster Quarter Development Framework SPD was adopted in December 2018 which set out the planning policies and the Council's vision for the area in respect of uses, building height, massing and public realm. The document also focussed on connectivity needs across the town centre and public realm improvements to Hosier Street, St Mary Butts and the Minster to help transform and regenerate this quarter of Reading town centre.

At about the same time, Thames Valley Police announced they would be moving to new premises on the edge of Reading by March 2022.

In 2019 the Council as landowner prepared a Strategic Delivery Framework working from the adopted SPD into greater masterplan detail and involving wider market input, with design iteration and cost/value analysis on viability and scheme delivery options.

In 2020 the Council further refined its Delivery Framework to address viability issues through design changes and associated appraisals and also undertook a soft market test exercise to gauge market opinion and interest in the site, procurement and partner options and the prevailing market.

Over this period the Council continued negotiations with Thames Valley Police over the potential purchase of their site and in January 2021 Reading Borough Council made a further offer to acquire the Thames Valley Police Site. This was rejected and the site was placed on the market to sell.

Since January 2021, the Council have been working on proposals to bring forward their land holding in isolation accepting that there are still some technical constraints which need to be addressed. An interim Regeneration Manager was appointed to help bring the site forward for delivery and to date has been working on the following:

- High level options appraisal in conjunction with legal advice to make recommendations for delivery options to be tested.
- High level project and marketing budgets and timescales.
- Recommendations for establishment of a Project Board to oversee the project and developer selection process.
- Preparation of information and consultant input for bid submissions for central government funding and liaison with Cabinet Office, One Public Estate, Hants CC Asset Services and Homes England regarding future bids and support.
- Briefing RBC legal team in respect of current site issues which need to be addressed.
- Preparation of a technical, market and legal risk registers.
- Preparing presentations and briefing relevant Boards, Members and the Executive regarding progress and recommendations.
- Liaison with existing and prospective meanwhile occupiers
- Reviewing high level masterplans and costs appraisals with consultant support team to help improve viability and deliverability.
- Further soft market testing with prospective developers.

- Drafting requirements for consultant tender documentation.
- Preparing schedule of requirements and budgets to tender for consultant support.
- Reviewing comparable schemes to advise on delivery options, mechanisms and requirements.

In addition, the Council are working with the owners of Broad Street Mall shopping centre to help deliver their scheme in the context of the Council's long leasehold interest in the car park and ensure a coherent scheme across the wider masterplan area.

Agenda Item 7

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 JUNE 2021		
TITLE:	CEMETERY POLICY		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	RUTH MCEWAN	PORTFOLIO:	CORPORATE AND CONSUMER SERVICES BOROUGHWIDE
SERVICE:	CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT AND CUSTOMER SERVICES	WARDS:	
LEAD OFFICER:	ISABEL EDGAR	TEL:	
JOB TITLE:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT AND CUSTOMER SERVICES	E-MAIL:	Isabel.edgar@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To present the new draft Cemetery & Crematorium Regulations (Regulations) for public consultation.
- 1.2 Under the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO) legislation, Local Authorities are required to prepare and adopt Regulations that set out the Council's policy and procedures for the operation of the cemetery. The last time the Regulations were updated and adopted by the Council was in 2011. The Regulations apply to Henley Road Cemetery, Reading Cemetery and Caversham Cemetery only. They also apply to Reading Crematorium and Gardens of Remembrance based at Henley Road Cemetery.
- 1.3 In October 2020, representations were made to the Council stating that the Bereavement Service the Council currently provides does not fully meet the needs of the Muslim community. In consultation with the Lead Councillor for Corporate and Consumer Services and the then Executive Director for Resources, temporary changes to the service were made, primarily the Council offered the opportunity for the families to retrospectively upgrade to a traditional grave (these changes related to the 5th Muslim section of the cemetery in the area known as 'Park' only. See appendix 3). The Council also committed to review the current Regulations and consult on the revised proposals.
- 1.4 Appendix 1 - Draft Cemetery & Crematorium Regulations 2021
Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix 3 - Cemetery Plan and Grave Types

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 To approve the Draft Cemetery & Crematorium Regulations for public consultation as set out in Appendix 1**
- 2.2 To note a further report will be brought to Policy Committee in September 2021 following the outcome of the consultation process; and**
- 2.3 To approve the Council's holding position as set out in section 4.2.6 prior to agreement of the new Regulations.**

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Local Authorities are required to publish Regulations that set out their service offer for burials within Council owned cemeteries. The Council operates 3 cemeteries and has adopted a further 5 closed churchyards. The Regulations only apply to 3 cemeteries as these are under our full control. They also apply to the Reading Crematorium and Gardens of Remembrance based in Henley Road Cemetery.**
- 3.2 In September 2010 the Council adopted the Charter for the Bereaved which sets out a best practice model for cemeteries operations and an inclusive service provision for all faiths, where possible. In summary the Charter:**
 - seeks to generate interest in and educate people about bereavement. It also helps to influence the expansion of services and clarify the various roles and responsibilities of those involved.
 - is a commitment to improving the service by confronting rather than disguising or ignoring death.
 - is intended to define the rights of every individual who experiences bereavement. In achieving this aim, it also sets standards of service related to burial, cremation, and funerals. It is a written statement of what can be expected and enables people to judge the quality of the service received.
 - seeks to increase the range of choice and options available to the bereaved.
 - seeks to enable the bereaved to arrange a meaningful funeral service with a content that meets with their own specific needs and requirements.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Current Position:

4.1.2 Background:

In 2016 the Council approved a change of use for recreational land located within the Henley Cemetery boundaries to be converted to burial land to extend the longevity of the cemetery. Although the original land had been purchased for the purpose of burial land in 1927, since this time the land had been used as recreational ground. Due to the lack of capacity at the Henley Road Cemetery, it was agreed in November 2015 this land become the new area for burials.

- 4.1.3 The land extension, now known as Westfield, was originally designated for Lawn Grave burials only, with a stipulation that all graves should be double depth. This allowed for a further provision of 9.5 years of Lawn burials, in addition to around 4.75 years in Mayfield (Traditional and Lawn Graves).
- 4.1.4 In July 2018, an initial consultation was held with Mosque Leaders on the proposals for burials within Westfield. Westfield is a multi-faith burial area of the cemetery however, Muslim burials were planned to happen on one side of the cemetery and all other burials at the opposite side, with grave plots eventually meeting in the middle.
- 4.1.5 There were some concerns raised by the Mosque leaders at the time of the consultation and a further meeting was held in 2019 with agreement that a community meeting should be arranged to consult on the proposals more broadly. The concerns raised were around the types of graves being offered in the new Muslim section of Westfield. However, the community meeting did not subsequently take place.
- 4.1.6 When the first burial took place in Westfield, the Service applied the general Lawn Grave burial rules to this area of the cemetery, with the addition that families needed to be offered a double depth burial plot. Families were also offered a Traditional Grave in the Mayfield area of the cemetery.
- 4.1.7 In October 2020 the Council received a complaint relating to the provision of service for Muslim faith burials at the cemetery. This related to the 5th Muslim section in the cemetery located in the Park area (see appendix 3). In response to the complaint the Service made some temporary changes to the service to better meet the needs of the community; primarily the Council offered the opportunity for the families to retrospectively upgrade to a Traditional Grave. These changes were made in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Corporate and Consumer Services and the then Executive Director for Resources. The service committed to review the current Regulations and consult on proposals. The primary areas of concern were:
- The original consultation had not been fully concluded.
 - There was lack of clarity for Muslim families about the differences between a Lawn Grave and a Traditional Grave.
 - There were concerns that double depth and Lawn Graves were not in keeping with the requirements for Muslim Burials.
 - Concerns that Lawn Graves could be walked over or driven over by maintenance vehicles (grass cutters).
- 4.1.8 In March 2021, the Council held two community meetings with the Muslim community (one with Mosque leaders and one with the wider community). Around 70 residents and all mosque leaders in Reading attended the meetings. Although the Council has been providing Muslim Burials since the 1980's, it has become clear the Muslim community feel the Bereavement Service is not meeting the changing needs of Muslim residents.

4.1.9 Operating Practices:

There have been numerous additions and changes to operating practices across the cemetery over the past 40 years. Both in response to customer need/request, as well as changes to Regulations. This has resulted in many

areas of the cemetery that were intended to be Lawn Graves, having been mounded or marked out with fences over time.

4.1.10 The enforcement of the Regulations has not been routinely applied for several years. Enforcing our policies is a sensitive issue for families that wish to adorn or mark out graves with items that contravene the Regulations. Prior to taking any action (e.g the removal of adornments) the Bereavement Service contact the grave owner to notify them of the contraventions. On occasion, and as a last resort, grounds maintenance teams will need to take action, for example where grave adornments encroach on neighbouring graves, are dangerous or where plants are overgrown etc.

4.1.11 These changes and lack of enforcement activity have had operational implications for the way the cemetery has been managed. Namely areas of the cemetery that could have been maintained with drive on grass mowers, now need to be maintained using hand mowers and strimmer's. This has increased maintenance costs, as maintaining a Traditional Grave takes around 3 times longer than a Lawn Grave. The current budget for grass mowing and grave digging across our cemetery's is £275,000 per annum.

4.1.12 Cemetery Longevity:

Changes to the Regulations will have longer term implications for the longevity of Henley Road Cemetery as a burial ground for the community. There is a national shortage of burial land and Henley Road Cemetery is the only landholding the Council currently has that is suitable for burials.

4.1.13 The predicted lifespan of Westfield was 9.5 years using an average of 125 new full body burials a year (figures 2016-2019). Although double-depth graves are dug, it is not an enforceable policy to insist a grave owner gives permission for another family member to be buried in the plot. Therefore, due to a reluctance by families to utilise the double depth graves, the lifespan of Westfield is again significantly reduced. Furthermore, the above figures do not reflect the true burial activity over the last 3 years or the increased burial activity in 2020 due to the Pandemic. In 2018 there were 203 burials, 2019 - 207 burials and in 2020, there were 287 burials. All three years showing a significantly higher number than the average predicted. It is accepted these burials were split between Mayfield and Westfield, however the increase particularly impacted on Westfield, due to the high number of Muslim Burials.

4.1.14 The newly revised projections (considering the proposals and the change in calculation) for the lifespan of Westfield is approximately 5 years and Mayfield is 3 years.

4.1.15 Second interments can still take place throughout the rest of the cemetery where there is only one coffin/cremated remains within the grave.

4.1.16 Currently RBC offer burials to customers outside of the Reading Borough Council Boundary. Over the past 3.5 years (Jan 2018 - Apr 2021) the number of burials for out of area residents is 112 (out of 799 total). Out of area burials incur additional charges. For example, a Lawn Grave would cost a Reading resident £1075 compared to £3225 for someone who lived out of the Borough. This excludes the interment fee which is the same regardless of residency. Further information is provided in the Section 10 - Financial Implications.

4.1.17 The person purchasing the exclusive rights to a grave space acquires only the right of burial in the grave for a period granted for 75 years. The ownership of the land and responsibilities remain the property of RBC. The owner is eligible to apply for a permit to place and maintain a memorial on the grave space if they wish.

4.1.18 There are circa 670 burial plots for cremated remains, with scope to increase this number considerably. It is estimated that there are 14 years' worth of capacity for this type of burial, currently planned for.

4.1.19 There are limited opportunities to expand Henley Road Cemetery any further for full body burials. In 2015 three land options were considered: BBC land to the rear of the cemetery, allotments land (originally purchased as burial ground) adjoining the cemetery and the recreation ground (now Westfield). At this time only the recreation ground was considered a viable option for expansion, although the report noted that the non-statutory allotment land should be retained for future consideration of burial ground.

4.1.20 Originally the options for the BBC land were based on a land swap and this is no longer viable, due to temporary housing being sited on the piece of land the Council had intended to swap. However, there are currently no active applications or pre-applications within the BBC land site. Therefore, there may be opportunities to enter into negotiations.

4.1.21 Another option would be to explore out of area or cross border land with a neighbouring authority. A further report will be brought forward to Policy Committee in September 2021 with proposals on future provision of burial land. In the meantime, the options set out below may impact on the longevity of the cemetery as outlined in section 4.1.13. Where this is the case, it is highlighted with the potential impact.

4.2 Options Proposed

4.2.1 The proposed operations and service provision are set out within Appendix 1 "Draft Cemetery & Crematorium Regulations". The proposed changes are within the context of a national burial land shortage, and a predicted burial provision in Reading for a further 8 years (Westfield 5 years, Mayfield 3 years) should these proposed changes be adopted. This is a reduction of 3 years in the overall longevity of the burial space compared to when the recommendations to extend the land into Westfield were adopted in 2015 and taking into account 6 years have already passed.

4.2.2 The proposals have been developed to ensure the changing needs of communities within Reading, are met where reasonable and practicable to do so, specifically considering faith burial needs, and ensuring our operations are cost effective and efficient.

4.2.3 Several non-material changes have been made to the Regulations document, these include layout, showing both metric and imperial measurements and updates to legislation. The proposed new, changed or discarded policies to current operational practices are as follows:

Service		Description of Change/New rules
Double Depth Graves Graves dug to a depth of 6ft 6'(1.98m) to accommodate 2 standard depth coffins no more than 18' (457mm) each.	Change	<p>While the longevity of the extension land (Westfield) was based on 9.5 years (now predicted to be 5 years), this had been based on graves being Lawn and double depth. Although double-depth graves are dug, it is not an enforceable policy to insist a grave owner gives permission for another family member to be buried in the plot.</p> <p>Double depth graves will still be dug and offered, but the Council cannot mandate this in our cemetery regulations.</p> <p>Continuing to dig double depth graves provides the option for families to have a second burial in the plot at a later date, without having to undertake the legal exhumation process when disturbing a grave.</p>
Adjacent Plot Graves Occasionally a family will purchase two plots side by side. Typically, these graves are Traditional. In the period Jan 2018 to date, 62 such graves have been purchased. Some of these adjacent graves did have one, double sized kerb set, and one memorial stone placed centrally over both graves known as Double Grave Sets . These were only allowed as a concession for a limited time.	Change	<p>In late 2015/early 2016, the Council stopped the pre-purchase of Muslim Graves as ground in these dedicated areas was scarce. Burials were to happen sequentially from that point forward, so demand for burial space could be managed on a first come first service basis.</p> <p>It is still possible to purchase 2 plots adjacent to each other (at the time of first death) in Mayfield.</p> <p>To preserve burial space, this will no longer be an option in either Mayfield or Westfield for any residents.</p> <p>A family will still be able to bury loved ones together in a double depth grave or, upon request treble-depth. Treble depth graves are usually requested when a child has died, and the parents want to be buried with them in the future. This will help to extend the number of burials being offered to residents.</p> <p>Double size Traditional Grave kerb sets are currently not permitted in either Mayfield or Westfield. The new Regulations have been updated to confirm this.</p>
Out of hours services Currently we provide weekend burials for	Change	Standard Opening hours will now be extended to include Saturdays as shown below:

Service		Description of Change/New rules
<p>Muslim Faith Burials only. Provision for this is made on the basis of an out of hours service. Two members of staff need to be working for a burial to take place. Therefore, the Council provide 'licensee' options, whereby a member of the public is licensed to operate as a member of the burial staff.</p>		<p>Office - 10am - 4pm Burial Services in Chapel: First Service 10.45 - Last Service 1pm Burial Services at Graveside: First 11.15am - Last 2.15pm</p> <p>In addition, a late night on a Thursday in the Summer Season (May-Aug inclusive) will also be provided.</p> <p>Office - 9am - 7pm Burial Services in Chapel: First Service 9.45 - Last Service 3.45pm Burial Services at Graveside: First 9.45am - Last 4.30pm</p> <p>This addresses resilience for the service on Saturdays and provides a regular service provision for anyone that wishes to bury on a Saturday. This also removes the requirements for Licensees.</p>
<p>Grave Types Currently the Council offer two types of graves for burial of a coffin: Traditional and Lawn Grave depending on the area of the cemetery. Like graves are clustered together to ensure maintenance costs are kept low. (See layouts in appendix 3)</p>	Change	<p>A new type of grave will be offered in areas of the cemetery that are currently set aside for Muslim graves. This policy should be retrospectively applied to Westfield and families offered the opportunity to convert a lawn grave to a mounded grave (subject to fees).</p> <p>Mounded graves: These graves will be mounded to a maximum height of 300mm.</p> <p>A Mounded grave can have either a Memorial stone (a headstone or a footstone depending on the location with cemetery) or a name plaque (size to be determined). This grave type will be charged at the same price as a Traditional grave to reflect the overall increase in maintenance costs. The cost of the memorial or plaque remains the responsibility of the family.</p>
<p>Cemetery Areas Each area of the cemetery allows for certain types of graves to be purchased.</p> <p>This section lists only those where changes are proposed to the layout/operation.</p> <p>NB: Mayfield Is multi-faith throughout (with no dedicated faith areas) and</p>	Change	<p>Westfield: Is multi-faith with the Muslim section starting at one end (multi or non-faith burials will start at the opposite end)</p> <p>All sections of Westfield to be allocated as Lawn or Mounded graves only. They will be grouped with like graves where possible.</p> <p>The introduction of Mounded graves will ensure the space is maximised while still addressing the concerns of the Muslim</p>

Service		Description of Change/New rules
<p>is split into 4 separate sections. 3 sections are allocated for Lawn Graves only and 1 section is Traditional Graves only.</p> <p>Park:</p> <p>This is a multi-faith area with 5 areas dedicated to Muslim burials. The Park section has no capacity for new burials except for 2nd interments into existing grave plots.</p>		<p>community about the walking over of lawn graves. Furthermore, the aesthetic of the burial ground is maintained, and the maintenance will be kept simple.</p>
<p>Grave Orientation</p> <p>Traditionally the cemetery has oriented graves facing east. However, depending on the area of the cemetery orientation will differ slightly.</p> <p>(See layouts in appendix 3)</p>	Change	<p>Mayfield: East</p> <p>Westfield: East - All graves will be placed in rows, with a plinth for a headstone only (if selected.) This will avoid any confusion around headstones or footstones</p> <p>Park: East</p>
<p>Access</p> <p>Some older areas of the cemetery do not allow for wheelchair access. It is not feasible to make these accessible to wheelchairs due to the size and positioning of burial plots.</p>	New	All new burial areas will allow a 900mm grassed walkway between rows to allow access for a wheelchair.
<p>Quran Graves</p> <p>This is a standard size grave which has wooden shoring. The dig fee is shared between Reading Mosques.</p> <p>The grave is then securely covered, and families request a key as an when required to place sacred scripts in the grave.</p> <p>Generally, this is dug to 7ft long x 2ft 6' wide (2133mm x 762mm) and to double depth although the most recent was dug to treble depth.</p>	Change	<p>Quran Graves will still be provided. However due to recent concerns around the types of items placed in the grave (non-scriptures) that may have environmental impacts and for safety issues, access to the grave will be by appointment only. A member of the cemetery team will discreetly escort the family to the grave to open and lock the grave.</p> <p>Quran graves are not located in the same place as other graves. The location of these graves is at the discretion of the Cemetery.</p>

- 4.2.4 It is important to note the only areas of Henley Road Cemetery that can accept first burials is Mayfield and Westfield. All other areas of the cemetery can accept second interments where an appropriate grave depth has been purchased or the second interment is for cremated remains.
- 4.2.5 The new Regulations will be consulted upon prior to their adoption. In the meantime, a holding position is recommended for all new interments in Westfield.
- 4.2.6 **Holding position:** Families will be offered a **Lawn Grave only** in the Westfield area of the cemetery. When the new Regulations have been consulted upon and adopted, the new rules applying to this area can be retrospectively applied. Other areas such as Park section could also have the rules retrospectively applied, however this would increase maintenance costs as outlined. Where customers wish to change their grave type, they can do so by paying the appropriate fee for a new permit.

4.3 Other Options Considered

Service		Reason
No Change to current cemetery regulations	Discarded	The current cemetery regulations no longer reflect the needs of our community.
Stop Burials for out of Area Residents. Residents that do not live in Reading Borough are charged an additional fee to use Henley Cemetery.	Discarded	<p>Due to restricted land capacity all residents that live outside the Reading Borough Council Boundary are charged an additional fee.</p> <p>In the past 3.5 years 799 burials have taken place at Henley Road Cemetery (of which 112 were out of area)</p> <p>Based on income data over the last 3 years, the projected loss of income over the next 3-year period could be approximately £240,000 per annum.</p> <p>Not allowing out of area residents to use Henley Road Cemetery will only extend the longevity of Henley Road Cemetery by a further 12 months.</p> <p>Therefore, on balance the loss of income to support the maintenance of the cemetery would have too great an impact.</p>
Out of hours services Continue to operate as an emergency out of hours service.	Discarded	<p>Due to Muslim burials needing to be arranged as soon as possible after the death, Saturday burials will always need to be offered. This change provides resilience for the service, reduces the need for licensees, and allows bookings to be made on a Saturday for Monday burials.</p> <p>Changes will need to be made to working hours, as currently staff are only working</p>

		<p>voluntarily on a Saturday to meet the needs of families. This will be subject to a formal employee consultation.</p> <p>Offering a burial service on a Sunday is not proposed as this will increase the overall number of staff required by the service and is unlikely to be cost effective.</p>
Grave Types Currently the Council offer two types of burial grave: Traditional and Lawn Grave depending on the area of the cemetery. Like graves are clustered together to ensure maintenance cost are kept low. (See layouts in appendix 3)	Discarded	Continuing to only provide Lawn and Traditional graves would not meet the needs of the Muslim Faith or address concerns raised through initial consultation.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The purpose of this section is to ensure that proposals contained in reports are in line with the overall direction of the Council by meeting at least one of the Corporate Plan priorities:
- Healthy Environment
 - Thriving Communities
 - Inclusive Economy
- 5.2 The proposals within this report support the Council's priority of Thriving Communities:
- Committed to tackling inequality in our society, to ensure everyone has an equal chance to thrive whatever their economic, social, cultural, ethnic, or religious background.
 - Prioritising the needs of the most marginalised groups and the most vulnerable adults and children in our communities.
 - To promote equality and social inclusion for all.
- 5.3 Throughout the pandemic and more than ever before our citizens have felt the impact of losing loved ones. The Council has been able to respond to the needs of our community through this period and prior, however the current Regulations do not fully reflect our commitment to promoting an equal and inclusive community. The draft Regulations set out an inclusive service offer for bereaved families in Reading; balancing faith, non-faith, and accessibility needs, with the ongoing management of a cemetery for at least 75 years.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). There are no climate change or environmental impacts to this report.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 In March 2021 a Reading Mosque leaders meeting was convened to begin setting out the Council's position in relation to Muslim Burials. Following this a Muslim community meeting was held with around 70 Reading residents in attendance. The purpose of the meetings was to provide the Muslim community with an opportunity to comment on current Regulations and the impacts they had in relation to Muslim faith burials. The Council committed to undertake a full review of the Regulations to address the concerns of the community.
- 7.2 The primary concerns set out by the community were:
- The limited types of graves available
 - Cost of memorial stones and kerb sets
 - Pre-build of vaulted graves
 - Burials on Saturdays, in relation to ensuring their loved one could be buried as soon as possible after their death, and no later than 3 days.
- 7.3 The draft Regulations are specifically informed by the issues raised at the meetings and an updated equality impact assessment has been completed.
- 7.4 The draft Regulations will need further consultation to ensure that the proposals address and balance the needs of the wider community as well. Therefore, a consultation will be run (via our consultation portal) for 45 days where residents will be able to comment on the Regulations.
- 7.5 To encourage participation from all our communities and customers, signs will be placed around the grounds about the consultation. It will also be promoted on social media, and through our Voluntary and Community sector networks as well. These include:
- The Mosque Burials Working Group (set up specifically to represent members of the Muslim community on these matters)
 - Access and Disabilities Working Group
 - ACRE: Alliance for Cohesion and Racial Equality
 - Religious and Faith groups
 - Cultural Identity groups
 - Bereavement Support services
 - Comprehensive list of other voluntary and community sector organisations

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 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.

- 8.2 An equality impact assessment (EIA) has been undertaken and the Draft Cemetery & Crematorium Regulations set out in Appendix 1 reflect the findings of the assessment. The EIA specifically considers:
- Faith Burials (Muslim, Christian, Hindu, and Sikh)
 - Traveller and Gypsy Burials
 - BAME
 - Access to the cemetery

- 8.3 The EIA has identified that current service provision and operational practices at the cemetery do not fully meet the needs of our Muslim or Disabled communities. In summary this includes:
- Operating hours during weekends
 - Grave types (Traditional, Lawn and Mounded graves, double depth, adjacent plots)
 - Speed of burial service
 - Accessibility on site (specifically for wheelchair users)

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Under the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO) Legislation the Council must set out its Regulations and publish them.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Implementation of some of the following proposals will have an impact on costs and income generation:

- Traditional Grave areas and Mounded grave areas of the cemetery will result in an increased cost of maintenance. Typically, a Mounded or Traditional grave costs around 3 times more to maintain than a Lawn grave area. This is because grass cutting for Lawn graves areas can be done with drive on grass cutters, whereas traditional or mounded graves require a hand pushed mower and strimmer. In addition to the mowing, mounded graves will require a 'shell' or covering to ensure the mound remains in place. It is anticipated a sedum mat would be used for this purpose. These mats cost approximately £35 each. Manual weeding & tending of the mats will be required.
- Currently the cost of burials is held artificially low. The cost does not currently reflect the cost for maintenance of a grave over the 75-year lease period. Depending on the type of full body burial it can cost between £1075 to £3225. This cost covers: the grave digging fee, the dressing of the grave (e.g, grass matting, shoring, shovels for families to fill if they wish), admin costs such as staff salaries, concrete plinths on which the memorial stone is placed, memorial testing every 5 years (this would occur 15 times for a 75-year lease), and general maintenance of the grounds over the 75 years.
- To offset these additional costs the Council will explore additional service offers such as additional graveside maintenance services, memorialisation, and extension of gardens of remembrance.

- 10.2 The impacts proposed in this report therefore will increase the maintenance costs over the life of the cemetery. Although this cannot yet be fully costed. A

review of the current ground's maintenance costs will be undertaken to identify opportunities to control costs. If appropriate a revenue growth bid may have to be submitted if we cannot offset costs against income.

10.3 Furthermore, when we are no longer able to offer new full body burials, income will also decrease (although we can still undertake second interments and burials for cremated remains.)

10.4 The table below shows the rationale for continuing to provide an out of area burials service.

	Actual Income Received Out of Borough Burials	What the income would have been if these had been in Borough burials only
Income received 2018/2019	£113,014.00	£38,010.00
Income received 2019/2020	£68,470.00	£23,160.00
Income received 2020/2021	£169,292.00	£60,430.00
Income received April 2021 to 05.05.2021	£15,645.00	£5,150.00
TOTAL	£366,421	£126,750

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1

- ICCM Charter for the Bereaved
- Guide for Burial Ground Managers (Department for Constitutional Affairs)
- GardensofPeace.org Website
- Cemeteries and Burial Culture and Traditions for people from the Traveller communities

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Cemeteries and Crematorium Regulations

For the management, regulation and control of:

Henley Road Cemetery

Reading Crematorium and Gardens of Remembrance

Reading Cemetery (London Road)

Caversham Cemetery (Victoria Road)

Amended and Updated - Month 2021

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FOREWORD

CEMETERIES REGULATIONS (including Gardens of Remembrance)

Reading Borough Council welcomes all visitors to our cemeteries in Reading and asks that visitors respect the peace, dignity and reverence of these facilities as well as other users. We thank you in advance for your consideration.

The regulations in the following pages have been drawn up by Reading Borough Council to ensure the Cemeteries and Gardens of Remembrance are managed and used in a sensitive and appropriate way for everybody. These are communal spaces for quiet reflection and remembering our loved ones.

Although these regulations are a requirement for the management of the Cemeteries and Gardens, every effort has been made to avoid restricting the rights and choices of the individual. Therefore, these regulations have been prepared with a balance between individual rights, an inclusive approach and the need to regulate for safe and tidy grounds.

The Council has adopted, where possible, the principles of the Charter for the Bereaved and is committed to giving individuals the rights as provided by the Charter. For further information, contact the Cemetery Office or see the “Information” section of the Institute for Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) website, <http://www.iccm-uk.com/iccm/>

Reading Borough Council, under the Local Authorities’ Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO), is responsible for regulating three Cemeteries in the town. It is required by that Order, to set out regulations to provide a safe and dignified environment for all visitors and can do anything considered necessary for the proper management of these Cemeteries. The cemeteries for which the Council is responsible under these regulations are:

- Henley Road Cemetery, All Hallows Road, Caversham.
- Reading Cemetery, London Road, Reading.
- Caversham Cemetery, Victoria Road, Caversham.

The office for all three Cemeteries is located just inside the main entrance gates at Henley Road Cemetery. The Bereavement Services Manager can be contacted at this location.

LEGISLATION

There are several Acts of Parliament and Government Regulations which apply to burials and cremations and to the way cemeteries are maintained. If there is any conflict between any legislation and the Cemetery Regulations, then the legislation shall apply.

The legislation that some of the rules are based upon includes the following:

- Cremation Acts 1902 and 1952
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 SI 1977/204 (as amended)
- Cremation (England & Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2017

- Environmental Protection Act 1990

SECTION 1 - CONTACT DETAILS & OPENING HOURS

Contact Details:

Bereavement Services
 Reading Borough Council
 Henley Road Cemetery / Reading Crematorium
 All Hallows Road
 Reading
 RG4 5LP

Tel. 0118 937 2200

Email: cem.crem@reading.gov.uk

Opening Hours:

Cemeteries Grounds: **1st October - 31st March:** Every day 9am -5pm
1st April 30th September: Every day 9am - 8pm

Please Note: The seasonal periods for access to the Cemeteries grounds (above) are different to the operational seasonal periods (below) to provide extended access opportunities to the Public.

Cemetery Office: **1st September - 30th April.**
 Mon, Tues, Thurs & Fri - 9am -5pm
 Wednesday - 10am - 5pm
 Saturday - 10am - 4pm
 Sunday - Closed.

1st May - 31st August.
 Mon, Tues, & Fri - 9am -5pm
 Wednesday - 10am - 5pm
 Thursday - 9am - 7pm
 Saturday - 10am - 4pm
 Sunday - Closed.

Services in the Chapel: **1st September - 30th April.**
 Mon-Fri: First 9am - Last 3.15pm (Last Burial Service - 2.30pm)
 Saturday: First 10.45am - Last 1pm (Last Burial Service -1pm)
 Sunday: Closed

1st May - 31st August.
 Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri:
 First 9am - Last 3.15pm (Last Burial Service - 2.30pm)
 Thursday: First 10am - Last 4.45pm (Last Burial Service -3.45pm)
 Saturday: First 10.45am - Last 1pm

Burial Services: **1st September - 30th April.**
At the Graveside Mon - Fri: First 9.45am - Last 3pm
Saturday: First 11.15am - Last 2.15pm
Sunday: Closed

1st May - 31st August.
Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri: First 9.45am - Last 3pm
Thursday: First 9.45am - Last 4.30pm
Saturday: First 11.15am - Last 2.15pm
Sunday: Closed

Please Note:

The Cemetery Office is closed every Sunday & Bank Holidays

No Burials can take place on a Sunday or Bank Holiday

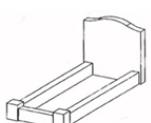
Burials at any other time are strictly at the discretion of the Bereavement Services Manager and subject to available resources.

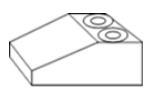
* Gates to the cemeteries are locked at the closing times shown and there is no facility to unlock them outside of these hours. Vehicles must not be left on the premises after closing time, as access to retrieve them will not be available until the following morning. Vehicles parked at any time are done so at the owners' risk.

SECTION 2 - GRAVE TYPES (including graves for cremated remains)

- 2.1 There are different types of grave available in different sections of the Henley Road Cemetery and these are shown in the table at paragraph 2.3 below. The location of these graves is marked on plans available at the Cemeteries office. The Exclusive Right of Burial is purchased through the Cemetery office. (See Section 7).
- 2.2 Memorial stones and kerb sets are not provided and should be purchased through a registered memorial stonemason (see Section 12). Plaques can be purchased through the Cemetery Office or memorial stonemason. All memorial stones, kerb sets, and plaques must be approved by Reading Borough Council prior to purchase.

2.3

	<p>Traditional Grave</p> <p>This is a grave with a memorial stone and a kerb set that forms an edging around the grave area.</p> <p>The memorial stone could be a headstone or footstone. This will be determined by the location and position of the individual grave within the cemetery.</p>
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	Monuments, gravestones, tablets, inscribed vases or kerb railings may all be erected, subject to approval by the Bereavement Services Manager
Lawn Grave 	<p>This is a grave with a memorial stone, a small area for planting seasonal flowers immediately in front of the memorial stone and a grassed area level with the ground.</p> <p>The memorial stone will be either a headstone or footstone. This will be determined by the location and position of the individual grave.</p>
Mounded Graves	<p>This is a grave which has soil neatly piled on top of the grave at ground level and formed into a mound, no more than 300mm high. The mound will have a natural, slow growing sedum mat to protect and stabilise it. No further planting around or on the mound is permissible.</p> <p>The grave can have a memorial stone, which will be either a headstone or footstone. This will be determined by the location and position of the individual grave.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>A plaque placed at the head or foot of the grave depending on the location and position of the grave.</p>
Quran Grave	<p>This is a standard size grave lined with wooden shoring. The grave is securely covered, and a key is provided as and when families wish to place sacred scripts in the grave.</p> <p>These graves are available, but for Community purchase only. They are not available for individual purchase.</p>
Walled or Vaulted Grave	<p>This grave type is lined with bricks and slabs.</p> <p>These graves are only available on request and a minimum of 10 days' notice prior to the burial date is required. Please note that due to specific requirements for Muslim burials a small number of vault graves will be prebuilt.</p> <p>Due to the building work required, availability is also dependent on the weather being suitable, to ensure stability of the grave.</p>
Cremated Remains Flat Tablet Grave	<p>This type of grave is only for cremated remains.</p> <p>It has a flat memorial stone within the kerb (not a headstone/footstone) and a small area for planting seasonal flowers behind the stone.</p>
Cremated Remains Wedge Tablet Grave 	<p>This type of grave is only for cremated remains.</p> <p>It has a memorial in the shape of a wedge tablet, and it can contain up to two sunken flower vases.</p> <p>No other memorial items may be left on this type of grave.</p>
Unmarked Graves	In keeping with legislation, Reading Borough Council makes provision for public or "common" graves at Henley Road Cemetery.

	Cremated remains cannot be buried in public graves. They will be scattered in the Gardens of Remembrance, and the location recorded. No memorial may be placed on any public grave.
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SECTION 3 - GRAVE MEASUREMENTS & DEPTHS

- 3.1 Industry standards use both Metric & Imperial units depending on the use, therefore, to assist with understanding, both units of measurement have been included but please note:

Only measurements shown in **BOLD** are the official measurements and MUST be used for the purchase or use of a grave or memorial. Any other measurement is an approximate guide only.

- 3.2 Reading Borough Council cannot be held liable for any costs incurred or errors made when ordering memorial stones, kerb sets or plaques.
- 3.3 **Please note: The measurements below refer to the grave space and not the permitted memorial size.**

Grave Type	Measurement (Imperial)	Measurement (Metric)
Traditional, Lawn and mounded. graves	8 feet long x 4 feet wide 4 feet 6 inches deep for 1 burial* 6 feet 6 inches deep for 2 burials* *This allows for standard size coffin depths, maximum 17 inches.	2400mm long x 1200mm wide 1300mm deep for 1 burial* 1900mm deep for 2 burials* *This allows for standard size coffin depths, maximum 430mm.
Cremated remains: flat tablet graves.	35 inches long x 47 inches wide x 18 inches deep	900mm long x 1200mm wide x 450mm deep
Cremated remains: wedge tablet graves.	24 inches long x 18 inches wide x 18 inches deep	600mm long x 450mm wide x 450mm deep
Reading Borough Council reserves the right to change the maximum excavation depth if deemed necessary.		

SECTION 4 - ORIENTATION AND LOCATION OF GRAVES

- 4.1 Traditionally, Reading Borough Council carries out burials so that all deceased face east. This does mean, on some lawn style grave sections, the memorial will be placed at the foot end of the grave, not at the head.
- 4.2 Lawn Graves for Cremated Remains face East and West in alternate rows.
- 4.3 There are three separate areas in Henley Road Cemetery which accommodate coffin burials: Park, Mayfield and Westfield. Each area is designed to accommodate the following grave types:
- **Park:** This area is no longer open to new burials except for additional interments to existing graves.

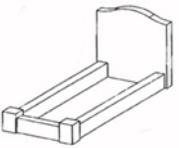
- **Mayfield:** This area is split into 4 sections. One for traditional graves and three for lawn graves. Please Note: Double size memorial stones and kerb sets are not permitted in this area.
 - **Westfield:** This area allows Lawn or Mounded graves only. No traditional graves are permitted in this area. This area is for multi-faith/non-faith burials, however there is a section allocated for Muslim burials at one end.
- 4.4 All areas are for multi-faith/non-faith burials, however in Park and Westfield, some sections are allocated for Muslim burials.
- 4.5 Please note, new graves in these areas are double depth to allow up to 2 loved ones to be buried in the same plot should the grave owner request this.

SECTION 5 - GRAVE PREPARATION AND BACKFILLING OF GRAVES

- 5.1 All excavation works, and backfilling will only be undertaken by staff or contractors appointed by Reading Borough Council who are trained to a recognised and accredited standard.
- 5.2 Where safe and possible to do so, Reading Borough Council will allow family backfilling to take place under supervision of Cemetery staff or representatives, subject to the family complying fully with instructions.
- 5.3 In the event of a family wishing to backfill the grave after the service, details must be included on the original notice of interment or at least with three full days' notice before the burial for the Risk Assessments and Health and Safety assessments to take place.
- 5.4 Without exception, no-one under the age of 18 years old is permitted to backfill.

SECTION 6 - DEFINED MEMORIAL AREAS, SIZE & OTHER SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS

- 6.1 The Defined Memorial Area is the area provided in which memorials, personal planting and memorabilia may be placed. This area differs depending on grave or memorial type. See Section 15 for General Regulations applicable including memorabilia and planting.

Grave	Memorial Area, Size & Other Specific Restrictions
Traditional Graves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Defined Memorial Area 7 feet long x 3 feet wide (2100mm long x 900mm wide) • Monuments on Traditional graves must be within the following measurements. All measurements shown are the maximum allowed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kerb set/Memorial slab: 7 feet long x 3 feet wide (2100mm x 900mm) ○ Kerb Height including cover slab: Maximum 8 inches (200mm) from ground level. ○ Memorial height: 4 feet (1200mm) from ground level

Traditional Graves Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Memorial depth/thickness: 1 foot (300mm) ◦ Memorial width: 3 feet (900mm) <p style="text-align: right;">Continued overleaf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marble or other natural stone chippings, laid on a solid foundation, can only be used where there are memorial kerbs. • Personal planting (seasonal flowers only) or items of memorabilia are permitted within the dimensions of the Defined Memorial Area. • Items placed within the Defined Memorial Area may not exceed a height of 12 inches (300 mm). • Trees and shrubs are not permitted and will be removed at the discretion of the Bereavement Services Manager. • Only full kerb sets approved by Reading Borough Council are allowed. Borders or fencing of any other kind are not allowed.
Lawn Graves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only memorial stones are permitted in lawn grave sections. The location and position of the individual grave will determine if this is a headstone or footstone. This must be placed on the foundation plinth provided by the Council. • Memorial stones on lawn graves should be within the following measurements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Memorial height 3 feet (900mm) from ground level ◦ Memorial depth/thickness 1 foot (300mm) ◦ Memorial width 3 feet (900mm) • Personal planting (seasonal flowers only) or items of memorabilia are permitted in a small area in front of the memorial stone but must not exceed a height of 12 inches (300mm). • The personal planting memorabilia area must be no wider than the base of the memorial stone and a maximum of 2 feet (600mm) long, measured from the edge of the upright headstone (not the foundation stone). • If the personal planting/memorabilia area is not tended, Reading Borough Council reserves the right to seed or turf the area. • As soon as possible after the funeral, usually within a 12-month period, Reading Borough Council will either sow grass seed or turf over the grave.
Mounded Graves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Defined Memorial Area 7 feet long x 3 feet wide (2100mm long x 900mm wide) • Mounds must not exceed 300mm high. Only soil provided by Reading Borough Council is to be used.

Mounded Graves Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mound is created with a natural living cover, no further planting is allowed. <p style="text-align: right;">Continued overleaf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grave can have a memorial stone, which will be either a headstone or footstone. This will be determined by the location and position of the individual grave. Memorial stones on mounded graves should be within the following measurements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memorial height 3 feet (900mm) from ground level Memorial depth/thickness 1 foot (300mm) Memorial width 3 feet (900mm) A plaque, rather than a memorial stone, may be placed at the head or foot of the grave depending on the location and position of the grave. The plaque must not exceed 12 inches long x 6 inches wide (300mm long x 150mm wide) and approval of the plaque material must be obtained from the Bereavement Services Manager.
Cremated Remains: Wedge Tablet Grave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision is made for the interment of two standard size caskets of Cremated Remains. A maximum of 12 x 9 x 6½ inches. (300mm x 228mm x 165mm). If larger caskets are used there may only be space for one interment. Only memorials in the shape of a Wedge Tablet may be installed. The tablet shall be of natural quarried stone, with facilities for one or two sunken flower vases at the thicker end. Tablet measurements must not exceed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wedge tablet maximum length - 18 inches (457mm) Wedge tablet maximum width - 15 inches (381mm) Wedge tablet maximum height (thick end) - 6 inches (152mm) Wedge tablet maximum height (thin end) 3 inches (76mm) The tablet must be placed on the foundation stone provided by the Council, set at ground level, measuring a minimum of: 24 inches length x 18 inches wide x 2 inches thick (600mm x 457mm x 50mm) The memorial is placed 3 inches (76mm) from the rear of the foundation stone and at equal distance at both sides. A double row of memorials will be placed 'back to back' with grass pathways separating each double row. Only fresh cut and artificial flowers can be placed in the vase(s) in the memorial. No other memorial item may be left on or near these graves.

Cremated Remains Flat Tablet Grave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Flat Tablet memorial may be installed. • The tablet can be two different widths depending on whether a vase section (supplied by Reading Borough Council) is required. • The tablet should measure exactly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Flat tablet length 300mm (12 inches) ◦ Flat tablet width 900mm (36 inches) (if Council supplied vase section required) <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Flat tablet width 1200mm (48 inches) (if no Council supplied vase section required) • Personal planting (seasonal flowers only) or items of memorabilia are permitted in a small area behind the Memorial Tablet, measuring a maximum of 300mm long by 1200mm wide (12 inches x 48 inches) (The Defined Memorial Area) and must not exceed a height of 12 inches (300mm). • If the personal planting/memorabilia area is not tended, Reading Borough Council reserves the right to seed or turf the area. • Up to four sets of cremated remains in a casket or urn can be interred in a cremated remains plot. 												
Cremated Remains Lawn Graves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorial stones should be erected in an upright position close to the outer edge of the plot and in line with the memorials of adjoining graves. • Memorial stones on Cremated Remains Lawn Graves should be within the following measurements: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40%;">◦ Memorial height</td> <td style="width: 60%; text-align: right;">3 feet (900mm)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>◦ Memorial thickness</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4 inches (100mm)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>◦ Memorial width</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2 feet (600mm)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>◦ Memorial Base width</td> <td style="text-align: right;">2 feet (600mm)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>◦ Memorial Base thickness</td> <td style="text-align: right;">4 inches (100mm)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>◦ Memorial Base depth</td> <td style="text-align: right;">1 foot (300mm)</td> </tr> </table> • Graves in the cremated remains lawn sections should be level with the ground. • Personal planting (seasonal flowers only) or items of memorabilia are permitted in a small area in front of the memorial stone, measuring: 8 inches long x 2 feet wide (200mm wide x 600mm long) (The Defined Memorial Area) • Items placed within the Defined Memorial Area may not exceed a height of 12 inches (300 mm). 	◦ Memorial height	3 feet (900mm)	◦ Memorial thickness	4 inches (100mm)	◦ Memorial width	2 feet (600mm)	◦ Memorial Base width	2 feet (600mm)	◦ Memorial Base thickness	4 inches (100mm)	◦ Memorial Base depth	1 foot (300mm)
◦ Memorial height	3 feet (900mm)												
◦ Memorial thickness	4 inches (100mm)												
◦ Memorial width	2 feet (600mm)												
◦ Memorial Base width	2 feet (600mm)												
◦ Memorial Base thickness	4 inches (100mm)												
◦ Memorial Base depth	1 foot (300mm)												

6.2 Subject to weather and seasonal changes Reading Borough Council, will keep all grassed areas tidy. Mounded graves will also be maintained by the Council. Any memorials or kerb sets will not be cleaned or maintained by the Council, these are the responsibility of the owner.

6.3 In addition to the above Grave types, alternate memorials are available:

Other Memorials	Defined Memorial Area	Dimensions*
Bronze Kerb Plaque in Gardens of Remembrance	Behind memorial plaque	12 inches long x 6 inches wide (300mm long x 150mm wide)
Vase blocks in the Central Square, Gardens of Remembrance	Behind the vase block, up to the kerb stone edge.	12 inches long x 7 ½ inches wide (300mm long x 190mm wide)
Any other memorial (including new memorial options)	Will be specified in the terms & conditions for that specific memorial	Will be specified in the terms & conditions for that specific memorial

SECTION 7 - GRAVE ALLOCATION AND OWNERSHIP

- 7.1 The grave spaces are used in strict consecutive order or as required by the Bereavement Services Manager. Selection of a grave space is not possible.
- 7.2 No grave may be pre-purchased by any person or Group for future use, to ensure the usable life of the cemetery is prolonged to ensure burial space for the future.
- 7.3 Double depth graves allow for loved ones to be buried together, however it is not possible to purchase additional plots adjacent to each other. The fee for a double depth must be paid at the time of the first interment.
- 7.4 Any person over the age of eighteen may purchase the Exclusive Right of Burial for a period of seventy-five years. The period of seventy-five years falls within the legal limit of 100 years which is the maximum that burial rights can be purchased under current legislation in England and Wales. Upon expiry of the seventy-five years, the lease can be renewed if the family wish. The standard fee is payable.
- 7.5 The fee for the Exclusive Right of Burial must be paid at the time that the arrangements are made at the Cemetery Office and a Grave Deed will be issued to the Grave Owner soon after.
- 7.6 The Deed will confirm the number of burials permitted within the grave. The Deed does not mean the Grave Owner owns the land. The Deed means the Grave Owner owns the Right to Bury, but only for the seventy-five-year term. The land remains in the ownership of Reading Borough Council.
- 7.7 It is the Grave Owner's responsibility to let the Cemetery Office know of any change of address.

SECTION 8 - TRANSFER OF RIGHT OF GRAVE OWNERSHIP (EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS)

- 8.1 A transferred 'Right of Ownership' to a grave is only valid if it has been registered and agreed by the Cemetery Office.
- 8.2 It is advisable that once the Grave Owner has been interred within the grave, arrangements are made for the transfer of ownership. No further burials, interments of cremated remains, scattering of cremated remains, additional inscriptions on memorials or installation of new memorials will be permitted until entitled ownership has been established.
- 8.3 In cases where the original purchaser is deceased, the new owner must demonstrate ownership of the grave by producing a) A valid Will, b) Grant of Probate, c) Letters of Administration or d) if the others are missing, a completed Statutory Declaration witnessed by a Commissioner of Oaths e.g. Solicitor (please contact office for more details).
- 8.4 A fee is charged for accepting this documentation which must be paid at the time the form is presented at the Cemetery office. The form will be retained at the Cemetery Office as a permanent record of the instruction to authorise the grave to be opened.
- 8.5 The number of joint owners will be limited to three and any change of circumstances, will require the agreement of all joint owners. Where one of the owners passes away, ownership is retained by the remaining two, however, a copy of the death certificate will be required.

SECTION 9 - COFFINS

- 9.1 Where the burial is in an earth grave, the body must be placed in a wooden, cardboard or wicker coffin, casket or shroud. If the burial is to be in a brick lined grave or vault, the body should be placed in an airtight inner case of lead or zinc and covered with an outer wooden shell.
- 9.2 Coffins used for cremation must comply with the requirements of the Federation of British Cremation Authorities. <https://www.fbc.org.uk/>
- 9.3 The Funeral Director in charge of the funeral should arrange for at least FOUR people to carry the coffin to the chapel and graveside. It is the responsibility of the Funeral Director to increase the number of bearers' subject to Health and Safety considerations.

SECTION 10 - EXHUMATION

- 10.1 Once a body or cremated remains have been buried, they can only be removed with permission from the Bereavement Services Manager and a licence granted by the Ministry of Justice. In the case of consecrated ground, consent from the Church of England (called a faculty) will also be required.

10.2 Any disturbance of remains is deemed to be an exhumation.

SECTION 11 - DISPOSAL OF CREMATED REMAINS

- 11.1 Each individual set of cremated remains will be reduced and placed in a container to await the wishes of the applicant regarding its final disposal.
- 11.2 Where specifically requested, cremated remains can be held at the Crematorium, for a period not exceeding three months. A charge will be made after the initial month.
- 11.3 In respect of any set of cremated remains left at the crematorium and not removed by the end of the three-month period. Two weeks' notice will be given to the applicant for cremation, after which the cremated remains may be reverently and permanently scattered in the grounds allocated for that purpose.
- 11.4 All metals remaining after cremation, including orthopaedic implants will be sensitively recycled. This is to ensure that all metals are disposed of in a suitable manner that will reduce the impact on our environment, and to comply with current legislation. It is possible to have metal remains returned if requested prior to cremation.
- 11.5 The Central Square in the Gardens of Remembrance and other locations as specified from time to time by the Bereavement Services Manager are not to be used for the scattering of cremated remains. This is to maintain the ecology and landscaping in the grounds.
- 11.6 All scatterings of cremated remains are to be organised through the Cemetery office.
- 11.7 Scatterings can only take place on graves with the written permission of the grave owner.

SECTION 12 - ERECTION AND REPAIR OF MEMORIALS

- 12.1 Only Memorial and Stonemasons registered with and fixing to the standards of BRAMM (British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons) or NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) and Reading Borough Council's Registration Scheme are permitted to erect memorials within the cemeteries and churchyards administered by the authority. This also applies to memorials being re-instated after their removal to permit an interment or additional works to be carried out.
- 12.2 Work may only be carried out by masons with a valid 'fixers' licence.
- 12.3 The identification number of each grave must be included at the foot of all monuments, gravestones or ledger stones on private graves.
- 12.4 All new memorials shall be subject to a Permit not exceeding 30 years and linked to the memorial masons' guarantees. During this period the memorial shall be subject to testing to ensure stability. Tests will be carried out every five years or sooner and in accordance to a nationally recognised standard.

- 12.5 Should a memorial fail a safety test the cemetery management, in accordance with health and safety requirements, will make the memorial safe under the terms of the Memorial Safety Policy.
- 12.6 Where Grave Owners can be identified, Reading Borough Council will notify the Grave Owner(s) of a failed Memorial safety test in writing. The Grave Owner will be requested to arrange for the Memorial to be made safe within a specific time period. Where the Council are unable to trace the grave owner, or the Grave Owner fails to respond, the Council reserve the right to make safe the Memorial by using the ‘socketing’ method. Socketing involves the Memorial stone being lowered into the ground to reduce the height to a safe level.
- 12.7 Details of the NAMM Code of Working Practice, the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons and the Local Authorities’ Cemeteries Order 1977 are available from the Cemetery office upon request. (<https://www.namm.org.uk>)
- 12.8 Work can only be carried out in the cemeteries Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 4.00pm. No work is to be carried out on weekends or Bank Holidays. All contractors must report to the office before working on site.
- 12.9 The Bereavement Services Manager must be contacted before fixing or erecting any monument or memorial, with details of the measurements and design, a copy of the proposed inscription, and a sample or specification of the material to be used.
- 12.10 Monuments may only be erected on a grave for which the exclusive right of burial has been purchased. Erection or removal of monuments and memorials must be done only after an officer from Reading Borough Council has been on site with the applicant to agree the location and type of work to be carried out.
- 12.11 Material for the memorials should be natural stone such as Portland, Granite, Marble or Hopton wood.
- 12.12 Wood memorials (cross or headstone) are permitted, provided they are fixed by a professional “fixer” approved by Reading Borough Council to standards as above, and come from verifiable sustainable sources.
- 12.13 A permit is required for any work to be carried out on a memorial. A fee is payable for the permit and must be paid in full at the time of application.
- 12.14 **Restriction on Memorial Inscriptions:**
Where the Grave Owner requires an inscription to be in any language other than English, a full translation shall be supplied to the Cemetery Office, prior to any works being carried out.
- 12.15 Masons who wish to add their names to memorials or monuments must follow the guidelines below:
- a) the inscription should be limited to the name of the stonemason only
 - b) the letters should be no more than **½ an inch in height (12.7mm)**
 - c) the inscription should be on the base of the memorial or monument at a maximum height of **6 inches (152mm)** above ground level.

12.16 Foundations:

It is the responsibility of the Mason to ensure the memorial is fixed to adequate foundations as recommended by the NAMM Code of Working Practice. The authority cannot accept any responsibility for any foundation supplied unless the memorial has been fixed in accordance with the NAMM Code.

12.17 Removal of memorials for burials:

If a memorial needs to be removed from the cemetery to allow a burial to take place, this should be done by an approved memorial stonemason who should ensure that it is re-fixed within 12 months.

SECTION 13 - OTHER MEMORIALS (plaques, benches etc)

13.1 A full list of memorial options is available at the Cemetery Office. This includes plaques, vases, benches, trees, Book of Remembrance entries. Other memorial options and areas may become available over time at the Henley Road Cemetery and Crematorium.

13.2 Memorial benches are available from time to time through a lease agreement. It is not permitted to place any other bench in the Cemetery or Gardens of Remembrance. Bench locations are at the discretion of the Bereavement Services Manager.

13.2 Memorial trees are available from time to time through a lease agreement. It is not permitted to place or plant any other tree in the Cemetery or Gardens of Remembrance.

13.3 All Regulations apply to the Rose Garden as to other areas of the Cemetery and Gardens of Remembrance.

13.4 The defined memorial area for any new memorials offered for lease, will be specified in the terms and conditions for that memorial.

SECTION 14 - FLOWERS AND FLORAL TRIBUTES

14.1 Following a funeral service, floral tributes should be placed in front of the appropriate named stand in the display area outside either the West or South Chapel. Any tributes left elsewhere will be removed.

14.2 Floral tributes from funeral services, if not collected by the Funeral Director, will be removed and disposed of three days after the funeral service by the Cemeteries staff.

14.3 Fresh cut flowers may be placed in the receptacles provided in the Hall of Memory. No floral tributes, pot plants or other items may be left in this area.

14.4 All wrappings should be removed and disposed of in the bins provided.

14.5 All perished floral tributes and cut flowers will be removed by Cemeteries staff at their discretion.

14.6 Reading Borough Council cannot be held responsible for any floral tributes that cannot be found. Floral tributes are left at the family's own risk.

SECTION 15 - GENERAL REGULATIONS RELATING TO OTHER ITEMS OF MEMORABILIA AND CHRISTMAS WREATHS (all areas of all cemeteries)

15.1 All graves and memorials have a Defined Memorial Area (except Cremated Remains Wedge Tablet Grave). Defined Memorial Areas for each grave type have been specified in Section 6

15.2 On Cremated Remains Wedge Tablet Graves, only fresh cut and artificial flowers are permitted in the sunken vases. No other item is permitted on or nearby these graves.

15.3 In the Gardens of Remembrance the defined memorial area for plaques is **6 inches wide by 12 inches long.** (150mm wide x 300mm long)

15.4 In the Central Square in the Gardens of Remembrance the defined memorial area for vase blocks is **7 ½ inches wide by 12 inches long,** (190mm wide x 300mm long) as defined by the kerb stone located behind the vase block.

15.5 Only artificial flowers, fresh cut flowers and seasonal flowers in pots are permitted in the defined memorial area behind vase blocks in the Central Square. This is to maintain the original design concept for the Square, providing a formal and attractive place for remembrance.

15.6 Items placed within the Defined Memorial Area may not exceed a height of **12 inches** (300 mm).

15.7 The following items are not permitted anywhere within the Cemetery or Gardens of Remembrance:

- Any item overlapping or outside the defined memorial area
- Any glass items, including vases
- Food and drink of any kind is not permitted as it attracts vermin.
- Chippings, pebbles and stones (except within a full kerb set on a traditional grave)
- Fencing, edging or borders of any kind around or within a defined memorial space
- Any item deemed to be offensive, dangerous or unbefitting of a cemetery

15.8 Any such items will be removed by Cemetery staff at their discretion and without the need for prior notice to the Grave Owner.

15.9 It is not permitted to plant shrubs or trees anywhere in the Cemetery or Gardens of Remembrance. These will grow to a large size, produce roots which unbalance headstones and cause additional maintenance and cost.

15.10 Weathered artificial flowers or mementos (e.g. wet and discoloured soft toys, such as teddy bears) will be removed at the discretion of the Bereavement Services Manager.

- 15.11 Grass cutting and maintenance may not be carried out around plots which do not conform to regulations in terms of size or what is put on and around them.
- 15.12 The Grave Owner may be liable if items on or around a memorial, which are in breach of regulations, cause injury to persons or damage to machinery.
- 15.13 It is not permitted to hang any item on trees within the Cemetery or Gardens of Remembrance, as this may damage the tree or and frighten off wildlife.
- 15.14 Planting (seasonal flowers only) is only permitted within the personal Defined Memorial Area (see Section 6). Planting anything, in any other location is prohibited and the items will be removed at the discretion of the Bereavement Services Manager.
- 15.15 Christmas wreaths may be placed within the Defined Memorial Area (see section 6), and on the Lych gate fencing during the Christmas period. Wreaths will be removed from 1 February onwards.
- 15.16 All other Christmas decorations will be removed after 7 January.
- 15.17 The Council does not accept any encroachment into common areas or on to other graves by any individual(s). Any contravention of this will result in any items found to be outside of the Defined Memorial Area being removed.
- 15.18 The Council reserves the right to periodically request the removal of all items placed from behind or on memorials, or from trees and shrubs, having initially given the owner of the memorial lease an opportunity to do so themselves. The Grave Owner is required to adhere to this request by the deadline specified in the Notification. Where no response is received from the Grave Owner by the deadline date, the Council reserves the right to proceed with the removal of items.
- 15.19 The requirement to give prior notice to the Grave Owner does not apply where the items may cause offence to others, are dangerous, cause a health and safety risk, are unbefitting of a cemetery, encroach on areas where burials or scatterings may have taken place, exceed the defined memorial area, or where planting may grow to an unacceptable size.
- 15.20 The Council will adhere to the published Enforcement framework (see Appendix 1) which details how infringements will be dealt with including time frames and storage information.
- 15.21 The Council reserves the right not to renew memorial leases where leaseholders are in regular infringement of regulations.

SECTION 16 - VEHICLES

- 16.1 If a funeral procession is to be led headed by any vehicle other than a motor driven funeral hearse, permission should be obtained from the Bereavement Services Manager, to ensure this can be accommodated. This includes, but is not limited to, horse-drawn hearses, gun carriages and other vehicles of this type.

- 16.2 Vehicles must not be left unattended for long periods of time in the cemeteries.
- 16.3 No unauthorised vehicle is to be left in front of the chapels.
- 16.4 Vehicles are not allowed in the cemetery beyond the main car parking area, except for vehicles displaying a disability badge, funeral directors and approved contractors. This is to provide a vehicle-free environment for pedestrians.
- 16.5 The maximum speed limit within the Cemetery grounds in the cemetery is 10 miles an hour.
- 16.6 Driving or parking on grassed areas or pathways between sections of the cemetery is not permitted, unless under exceptional circumstances when it is agreed by the Bereavement Services Manager.
- 16.7 All vehicles are parked at the Owners own risk.

SECTION 17 - GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 17.1 Children under the age of 14 years must be accompanied by a responsible adult when visiting the cemetery.
- 17.2 Only Assistance dogs, such as guide dogs are allowed in the cemetery.
- 17.3 **Search of the Burial Register:**
Reading Borough Council may charge a fee for a search of the burial register held at the Cemetery Office (For more detailed information, see the current list of fees and charges or contact the Cemetery Office).
- 17.4 **Official Plan**
A plan of the cemetery, showing the position of every grave is kept at the cemetery office and is freely accessible for everyone to use.
- 17.5 **Photography and filming**
Photography and filming are prohibited without prior consent from the Bereavement Services Manager. Permission is not guaranteed.
- 17.6 Families or a representative of a family however, may photograph an individual memorial.
- 17.7 The Authority reserves the right to charge for any commercial filming that may take place within the site
- 17.8 **Risk:**
All persons entering the cemetery do so at their own risk. The Council shall not be liable for any injury or damage sustained, regardless of the form of action, whether in contract, tort (including negligence or breach of statutory duty), strict liability or otherwise, **except** in respect of personal injury or death of any person caused by the Council's negligence.

- 17.9 As above, the Council shall not be liable for personal property brought on to the site or for any damage or loss of memorials or memorabilia. This includes any damage or loss to flowers.
- 17.10 Damage to land and premises
Reading Borough Council will hold any individual(s) responsible for any damage caused to cemetery land, walls, flower beds, lawns or premises by any cause whatsoever, including where the individual(s) have exceeded what regulations permit in terms of memorials and memorabilia. Any costs of repairing the damage may be passed on to the individual(s) involved.
- 17.11 No person shall trade any goods or services within any of the cemeteries except with the permission of the Bereavement Services Manager.
- 17.12 Visitors to the Cemetery must conduct themselves in a quiet and orderly manner and must keep to the roads and pathways clear, except when visiting graves.
- 17.13 All persons admitted to the cemetery will be subject to the directions of the Bereavement Services Manager and any person infringing the Regulations may be removed from the cemetery.
- 17.14 The Council may at any time vary, alter or revoke any of the foregoing Rules and Procedures.

SECTION 18 - FEES & CHARGES

- 18.1 A list of the fees and charges for services provided is available on the Reading Borough Council website and from the Cemetery Office. All payments must be made in advance.

<https://www.reading.gov.uk/life-events/deaths/crematorium-and-cemeteries/fees>

READING CEMETERIES & CREMATORIUM REGULATIONS - APPENDIX 1

Framework for Enforcement of Rules & Regulations

Introduction

In 2011, following numerous complaints about memorabilia and the upkeep of the grounds, it became evident that clearer regulations with a transparent enforcement framework were necessary. The Council consulted widely with residents, memorial owners, families of the bereaved and other stakeholders about amending the Rules and Regulations that apply to Reading Cemeteries and Crematorium. Revisions were made to support the implementation of the Charter for the Bereaved by offering more choice, whilst giving the Service the regulatory framework necessary to ensure a safe and dignified environment for all visitors, which is sympathetic to the landscape. And the Enforcement Framework was agreed.

This Enforcement Framework forms part of the Rules and Regulations as an Appendix. It makes clear how the Council intends to deal with any infringement of the Regulations and how this will be communicated to the person(s) concerned.

The Council recognises the importance of memorials to families after a bereavement and therefore any action to enforce Regulations will be taken in a sensitive and measured way.

Principles behind Enforcement Framework

The underlying principles behind the Enforcement Framework are:

- to ensure equal treatment for all;
- to ensure it is clear to everyone what will happen if Regulations are infringed;
- to ensure a safe and dignified environment for all visitors.

The Enforcement Framework

The Bereavement Services Manager will

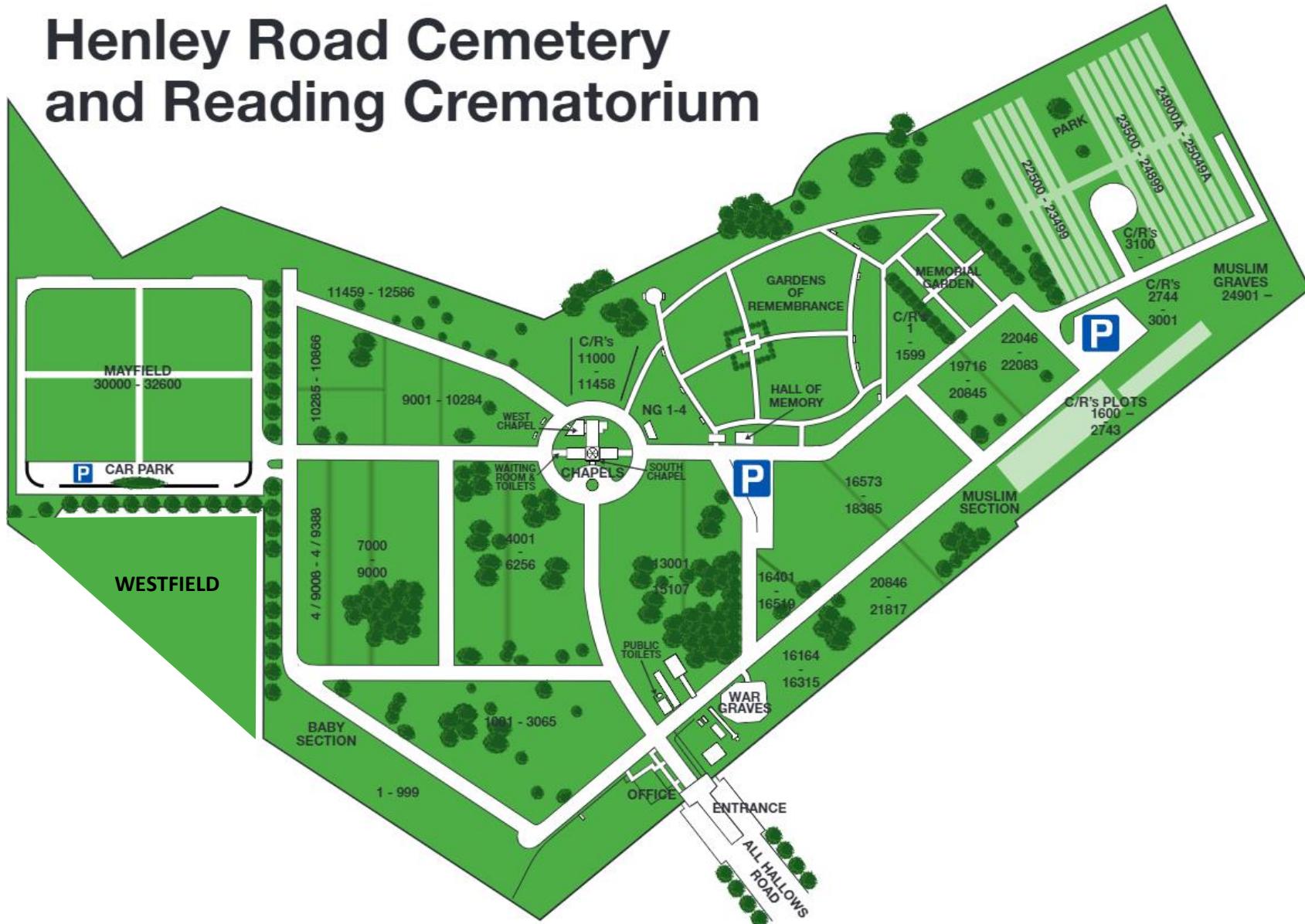
1. Prioritise areas of the grounds where the most infringements of Regulations are taking place.
2. Put up public notices in the area to be addressed.
3. Put up public notices on the notice boards nearest the area to be addressed and at the Cemetery Office.
4. Public notices will specify the following:
 - a. Precisely what area is to be addressed
 - b. Date the notice is put up
 - c. Date the notice period ends
 - d. Defined memorial area where personal items may be placed
 - e. Items that are not allowed
 - f. What will happen to any items infringing the Regulations
 - g. How to contact the Bereavement Services Manager
5. A notice period of 6 weeks will be specified.

6. Where records are available and considered to be in date, letters will be sent to all memorial owners in the area to be addressed, clearly stating that any items infringing Rules & Regulations need to be removed within the 6 week notice period. Information included will be identical to that on the public notices.
7. After the specified time period has expired any remaining items that infringe regulations will be removed with the utmost care and sensitivity.
8. Where possible removed items will be put in individual labelled bags and stored for 12 months.
9. After 12 months, any individual labelled bags of items not collected will be disposed of.
10. Any plants, trees or shrubs will be labelled and retained for collection where possible.
11. When it is not possible to remove any plant, tree or shrub without damaging it, it will be disposed of with other green waste at the cemetery.
12. Any memorial owner with concerns should address these to the Bereavement Services Manager for consideration
13. If a memorial owner wishes to make a formal complaint about the removal of personal items, this will be dealt with through the council's complaint procedure. Details can be found on the Reading Borough Council website:

<https://www.reading.gov.uk/council/feedback/make-a-complaint-or-comment>

The above enforcement framework will not apply where items must be removed immediately because they may cause offence to others, are dangerous, cause a health and safety risk, are unbefitting of a cemetery, encroach on areas where burials or scatterings may have taken place, exceed the defined memorial area, or where planting may grow to an unacceptable size.

Henley Road Cemetery and Reading Crematorium



GRAVE TYPES

Lawn Graves:



Mounded Graves:



Gardens of Peace



Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

For advice on this document please contact Clare Muir on 72119 or email Claire.Muir@reading.gov.uk.

Please contact the Project Management Office at pmo@reading.gov.uk for advice and/or support to complete this form from a project perspective.

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed:

New Cemetery Regulations & Burial Provision at Henley Road Cemetery

Directorate: **Resources - Corporate Improvement & Customer Services**

Service: **Registration & Bereavement Services**

Name: **Diane Willshire**

Job Title: **Registration & Bereavement Services Manager**

Date of assessment: **May 2021**

Version History

Version	Reason	Author	Date	Approved By
V1	Policy Committee	Di Willshire	25/5/2021	Isabel Edgar Briancon

Scope your proposal.

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

A full review of the provision being offered by the Service is underway with the aim of being able to enhance the Bereavement service offering currently available and meet more of the needs of our diverse community.

The review includes:

- 1) The Cemetery Rules and Regulations
 - 2) The grave types / memorial options available
 - 3) Opening hours and resources
 - 4) Accessibility
-

- Who will benefit from this proposal and how?

It is intended all residents of Reading Borough and their families could benefit from the changes. The enhancements will allow the Service to satisfy the wider needs of the culturally diverse community, especially in relation to the requirements based on religious belief or physical ability.

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

1) The Cemetery Rules and Regulations

The Cemetery & Crematorium Rules and Regulations are being updated to ensure clearer definitions and instructions are provided, and, commitment to transparency of our operations at the cemetery to allow better understanding of the Service by our users.

2) A wider choice of grave types.

Currently the Cemetery offers the following Grave Types for the burial of a coffin: Traditional Graves (Memorial Stone with Kerb Set) & Lawn graves (Upright Memorial stone only).

The Muslim community makes up around 7% (2011 Census) of our overall community in Reading, but over 17% of customers requesting burials. This Community have specifically approached us about the limitations of our current offer.

The change will see the introduction of a new grave type, to offer our customers better choice and specifically respond to Muslim faith burials.

Muslim Burials: The Muslim faith requires that no person nor machine, should be able to walk, ride or drive over the grave of a loved one. Due to the maintenance methods of a Lawn Grave, this cannot currently be observed. The Muslim community do have

access to a Traditional Grave, however this would be in the non / multi-faith section known as Mayfield, and this is not acceptable to the Community.

The additional grave option does potentially impact on the projected operations and lifespan of the burial ground. These will be reflected in the covering report for Policy Committee to consider.

Balancing the faith needs of this community along with the ongoing operating and longevity of the site must be considered. Therefore, best practice has been researched relating specifically to Muslim burials, and options such as Traditional or Mounded graves would meet the requirements of a Muslim burial.

Throughout the site, there are different sections for different grave types, and since the early 1980's, sections have been set aside specifically for Muslim burials.

Non-Muslim Burials: There is only one remaining Traditional grave area in the cemetery (Mayfield). Once this section is full, unless the Council have secured additional burial ground elsewhere, there will be no further provision for Traditional graves. This will impact on all faiths & non-faiths (except the Muslim Community) who use the Cemetery, but particularly the Black Caribbean and Traveller Communities.

3) Enhanced operating hours and opening times:

The addition of Saturday opening hours both for the Cemetery Office and burial/cremation services plus a late night on a Thursday in the summer season, provides more accessibility to the services for the Community as a whole.

Saturday opening also provides the additional benefit for Muslim families:

- Families will be able to book a Saturday burial in the event a loved one should die on a Friday*. Currently, where a death occurs on a Friday, the earliest burial that can pre-booked is a Monday.
- Families can arrange a same day burial (subject to all legal documentation being available before 11.30am) The last burial of the day on a Saturday is 2.15pm.
- Families can pre-book a burial for Monday, up to 4pm on a Saturday, in the event a loved one should die after the time a same day burial is not possible.

This removes the need for the current 'Out of Hours On-Call Service' (provided voluntarily by staff). This also means two members of staff would already be on site to manage a burial, removing the need for a mosque licensee to be present. This would be beneficial to the mosques, as it removes the need for them to purchase specialist training and insurance.

The removal of the On-Call service would mean burials are no longer available on a Sunday. However, this would have limited impact. On average, the On Call service is used 3 times per annum. No 'On-Call' requests have been received, to date, this year.

*It should be noted, with the introduction of Saturday opening hours, any faith family may pre-book a Saturday burial in advance should they wish, however this is unlikely, as very few Funeral Directors work on a Saturday. This will therefore not impact on the particular benefit to the Muslim Community for the reasons stated above.

4) Improved accessibility:

There are accessibility challenges throughout the site, and changes to operating practices (such as allowing Traditional graves in Lawn grave areas) may impact on the overall accessibility of the site. For example, blocking pathways for wheelchairs.

In older areas of the cemetery, it is not practical or feasible to introduce defined pathways due to the positioning of existing graves, however in all new areas of the cemetery, provision will be made to ensure grassed pathways are easily accessible.

The impact of this, is a likely reduction in the longevity of available burial space.

All new burial areas will allow a 900mm grassed pathway between rows to allow greater accessibility for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

- **Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?**

Under the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977 (LACO) legislation, Local Authorities are required to prepare and adopt Cemetery Regulations that set out the Council's policy and procedures for the operation of the cemetery. The last time the cemetery regulations were updated and adopted by the Council was in 2011. The Regulation's apply to Henley Road Cemetery, Reading Cemetery and Caversham Cemetery only. They also apply to Reading Crematorium and Gardens of Remembrance based at Henley Road Cemetery.

In October 2020 the Council received representation from some members of the Muslim community who had loved ones recently buried at Henley Road Cemetery, stating the services being provided did not fully meet their needs in respect of burial options and satisfying their religious beliefs.

The Service committed to review the current Cemetery Regulations and consult on the proposals.

Although the review has been prompted by the Muslim Community, the changes will benefit all residents of Reading Borough and their families.

Assess whether an EqIA is Relevant.

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

- Do you have evidence or reason to believe that some (racial, disability, sex, gender, sexuality, age and religious belief) groups may be affected differently than others? Make reference to the known demographic profile of the service user group, your monitoring information, research, national data/reports etc.

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

The improved opening times and accessibility changes are intended to improve the service for all users of the Service. The introduction of Saturday opening will better meet the needs of the Sikh & Hindu communities, as research shows Saturday is their preferred day for cremation services.

The grave changes have been considered specifically to meet the needs of the Muslim Community.

The Muslim community make up around 7% of the population of Reading, however they represent around 17% of all burials undertaken.

Most users of the burial service are multi-faith/non-faith but burials are the preferred choice of Black Caribbean, Gypsy/Traveller and Muslims communities.

- Is there already public concern about potentially discriminatory practices/impact or could there be? Make reference to your complaints, consultation, feedback, media reports locally/nationally.

Yes / No (delete as appropriate)

Prior to the review taking place, the Muslim community initiated a petition against Lawn graves which was posted on the internet. It attracted worldwide interest and several million signatures. It was however impossible to identify how many signatures were from Reading Borough residents.

The BBC and the Reading Chronicle also ran a small piece on the topic, but no follow up.

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:

X

X

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

Think about who does and doesn't use the service? Is the take up representative of the community? What do different minority groups think? (You might think your policy, project or service is accessible and addressing the needs of these groups but asking them might give you a totally different view). Does it really meet their varied needs? Are some groups less likely to get a good service?

How do your proposals relate to other services - will your proposals have knock on effects on other services elsewhere? Are there proposals being made for other services that relate to yours and could lead to a cumulative impact?

Example: A local authority takes separate decisions to limit the eligibility criteria for community care services; increase charges for respite services; scale back its accessible housing programme; and cut concessionary travel.

Each separate decision may have a significant effect on the lives of disabled residents, and the cumulative impact of these decisions may be considerable.

This combined impact would not be apparent if decisions are considered in isolation.

Consultation

How have you consulted with or do you plan to consult with relevant groups and experts. If you haven't already completed a Consultation form do it now. The checklist helps you make sure you follow good consultation practice.

Consultation manager form - Reading Borough Council Dash

Relevant groups/experts	How were/will the views of these groups be obtained?	Date when contacted.
Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM)	Conversation & email	October 2020
Mosque Leaders	Meeting	March 2021
Approx. 70 Muslim community members	Meeting (open session)	March 2021
Other Local Authority Bereavement services	Conversation & email	April / May 2021

Gardens of Peace (Privately owned Muslim Cemetery)	Conversation & email with the Director of the Cemetery. Visits to the Gardens of Peace are planned for June 2021	May 2021
The Consultation Groups will include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Mosque Burials Working Group (set up specifically to represent the Muslim Community on these matters) ◦ Alliance for Cohesion & Racial Equality (ACRE) ◦ Religious & Faith Groups ◦ Cultural Identity Groups ◦ Access & Disabilities working Group ◦ Bereavement Support Services ◦ Existing Grave owners @ Henley Road (where possible) 	A formal consultation is to take place. Additional consultation will be promoted via the Council's Social Media, General Local Media and through our Voluntary and Community Groups. Notices will also be placed within the Cemetery grounds and office.	A period of 45 days commencing end June 2021

Collect and Assess your Data

Using information from Census, residents survey data, service monitoring data, satisfaction or complaints, feedback, consultation, research, your knowledge and the knowledge of people in your team, staff groups etc. describe how the proposal could impact on each group. Include both positive and negative impacts.

(Please delete relevant ticks)

- **Describe how this proposal could impact on racial groups.**
- **Is there a negative impact? Yes & No / Not sure**

The changes are intended to improve the service offering for all users, regardless of race or ethnic origin.

The changes could improve the service for the Sikh and Hindu communities as we will be able to provide cremation services on a Saturday.

The changes have a positive impact for the Muslim Community as we look to offer a new grave type specifically to meet the needs of their faith. They will not however

be able to have a Traditional Grave in their dedicated section of the area known as Westfield.

In order to ensure the lifespan of the cemetery is prolonged as much as possible, it will no longer be possible for families to purchase the lease/reserve adjacent plots. This practice was stopped for Muslim burials in 2015/2016 as space in the dedicated area was scarce.

Although this will impact on all users of the cemetery, the number of requests over the last 5 years is minimal compared to overall burial numbers. The Communities potentially impacted the most, will be the Black Caribbean and Traveller communities.

Families will still be able to bury loved ones together in a double-depth grave. This is detailed in the covering report for the Policy Committee.

- **Describe how this proposal could impact on Sex and Gender identity (include pregnancy and maternity, marriage, gender re-assignment)**
- **Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure**

The services offered are available to all individuals regardless of their sex or gender identity as defined above.

- **Describe how this proposal could impact on Disability**
- **Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure**

With the addition of grassed pathways to allow for the use of wheelchairs in the new burial grounds, the change has a positive impact for wheelchair users.

- **Describe how this proposal could impact on Sexual orientation (cover civil partnership)**
- **Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure**

The services offered are available to all individuals regardless of their sexual orientation.

- **Describe how this proposal could impact on age.**
- **Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure**

The services offered are available to all individuals regardless of their age, except where restrictions are required by law or on the grounds of Health and Safety. For example, the Cemetery Regulations have been updated to specifically state no-one under the age of 18 years old is permitted to backfill a grave.

- **Describe how this proposal could impact on Religious belief.**
- **Is there a negative impact? Yes / No / Not sure**
 - The introduction of the Mounded grave option allows the Service to better meet the needs of the Muslim Community.
 - Changes to the burial options do not have any negative impact on the following groups:
Sikh's, Hindu's, Buddhists & Mormons. Traditionally, these faiths choose cremations.
 - The Black Caribbean and Traveller Communities generally choose the Traditional Grave Option. This can still be provided in the Multi Faith area of Mayfield.
 - The Catholic Community generally choose burials, although in recent years, following a declaration by the Pope, the burial of cremated remains is also acceptable. Burials with both Lawn grave and Traditional grave options are available in Mayfield. Cremated remains graves are also available in a dedicated area of the cemetery.
 - Jewish burials take place at dedicated cemeteries.

Make a Decision.

If the impact is negative, then you must consider whether you can legally justify it. If not, you must set out how you will reduce or eliminate the impact. If you are not sure what the impact will be you MUST assume that there could be a negative impact. You may have to do further consultation or test out your proposal and monitor the impact before full implementation.

- **Negative impact identified but there is a justifiable reason.**

A negative impact has been identified with regards the removal of the option to purchase/reserve adjacent burial plots. The data shows the impact is expected to minimal, given the number of requests over a 5 year period compared to the total burials in the same period.

This change is necessary in order to extend the lifespan of the cemetery, predominantly in the non & multi-faith traditional grave area. This restriction had already been introduced for Muslim burials in 2015/16 as space in the dedicated area was scarce. The change will align the restriction for all faiths and non-faiths.



Diane Willshire - Completing Officer

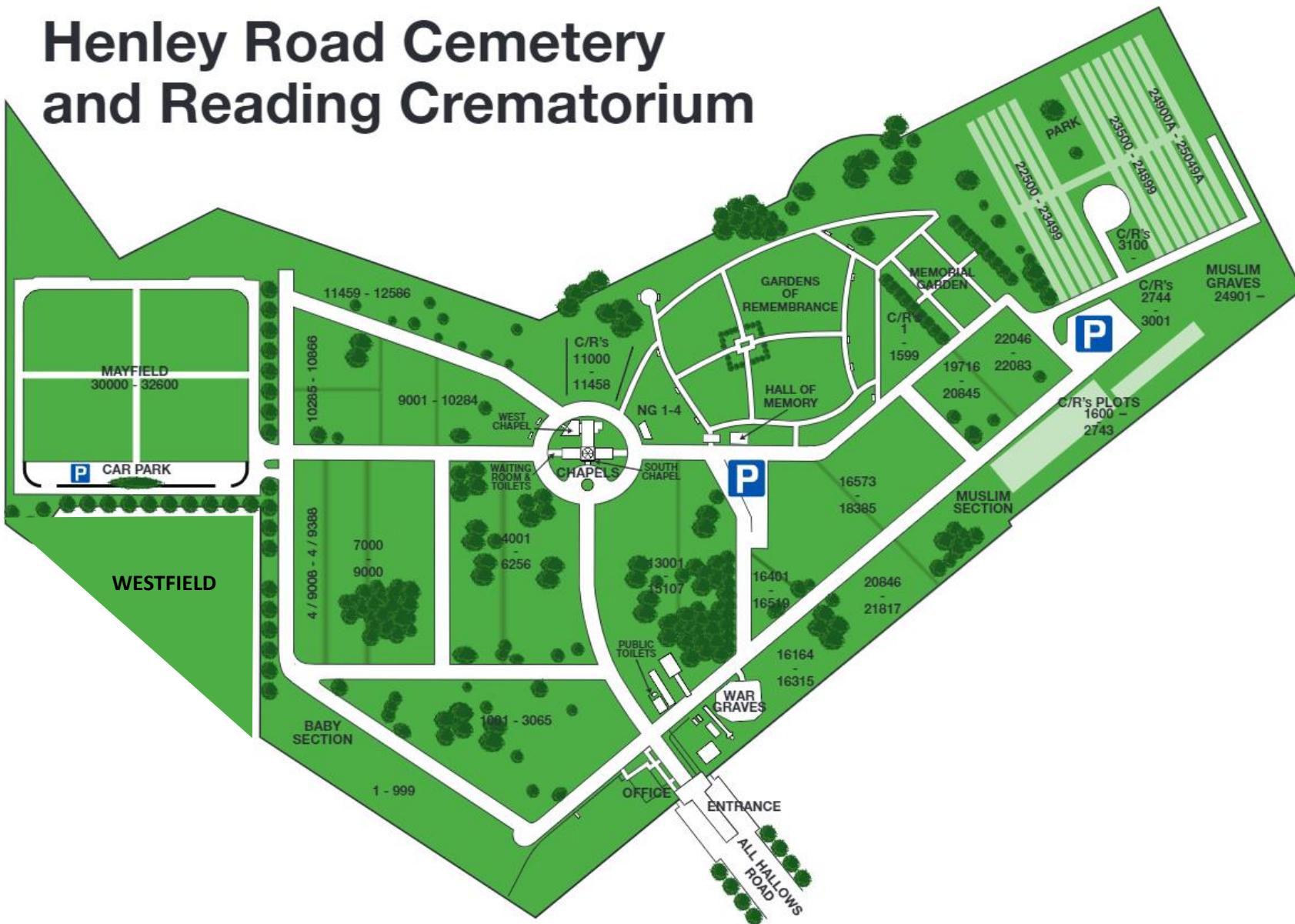
Isabel Edgar Briancon

Lead Officer

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Appendix 3 Cemetery Layout and Grave types

Henley Road Cemetery and Reading Crematorium



Grave Types

Lawn Graves:



Mounded Graves:



Gardens of Peace

Traditional Graves:



Somerset

Agenda Item 8

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 JUNE 2021		
TITLE:	ALLOCATION OF THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY 15% LOCAL CONTRIBUTION		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	ALL
LEAD OFFICER:	MARK WORRINGTON	TEL:	0118 9373337
JOB TITLE:	PLANNING POLICY TEAM LEADER	E-MAIL:	mark.worringham@reading.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report deals with the 15% of collected Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which should be allocated to the local area in which development takes place. The report:

- Summarises the results of consultation undertaken on the provisional allocation of 15% local CIL and future priorities agreed at Policy Committee on 15th February 2021;
- Proposes a final allocation of 15% local CIL collected up to 31st March 2020; and
- Recommends some changes to the previous allocation of 15% local CIL.

1.2 Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix 2 - Summary of outcome of consultation

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That the results of consultation undertaken on provisional allocations of 15% local CIL and priorities for future spend (Appendix 2) be noted;

2.2 That the following allocations of 15% local CIL collected up until 31st March 2020 be agreed, with a total allocation of £1.557m:

£0.075m for Borough-wide graffiti removal project
£0.050m for town centre monuments and statues
£0.100m for war memorials and public art
£0.100m for Thames cycle path in Kings Meadow
£0.275m for the High Street Heritage Action Zone project
£0.075m for Shinfield Road Recreation Ground improvements
£0.095m for skate park at John Rabson Recreation Ground
£0.095m for Waterloo Meadows play area improvements
£0.100m for Arthur Newbery Park play area improvements
£0.095m for Oxford Road Recreation Ground play area improvements
£0.050m for pedestrian crossing on Norcot Road
£0.085m for Dover Street play area improvements
£0.002m for laptops for Coley Park Community Centre
£0.100m for Brook Street West improvements
£0.030m for Moriston Close play area improvements
£0.100m for Palmer Park play area improvements
£0.005m for Morpeth Close road marking
£0.050m for pedestrian crossing on Addington Road
£0.050m for pedestrian crossing on Church End Lane
£0.010m for lining alteration on The Meadway
£0.015m for landscaping improvements at South Whitley Park

- 2.3 That delegation be given to the relevant Service Head to complete necessary procurement processes to deliver the programme of work.
- 2.4 That spend approval be delegated to the relevant officers in accordance with the funds approved at 2.2 above. Any variation to the allocations above be delegated to the relevant officers in consultation with the Lead Members for Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport and Corporate and Consumer Services and the Assistant Director of Finance.
- 2.5 That £0.010m of the 15% local CIL allocated to Broad Street seating refurbishment by Policy Committee in November 2018 and amended by Decision Book in August 2020 be allocated instead to the Dog Fountain, St Laurence's Churchyard.
- 2.6 That £0.050m allocated by Policy Committee in November 2018 to additional community facilities as part of, or near to, improved health care provision in Whitley Wood be used for Whitley Wood Community Centre.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Since 1st April 2015, the Council has operated the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) within Reading. This is a levy that is applied to new development, and which is to be used to fund infrastructure to support growth. The collection and spend of CIL is governed by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 3.2 Under the CIL Regulations, where there is no neighbourhood development plan in place and where development was not granted permission by a neighbourhood development order, 15% of CIL money arising must be spent in the ‘relevant local area’ in which development takes place (this is referred to hereafter as ‘15% local CIL’). In many authorities, this means passing the relevant proportion of collected CIL to the parish councils or town councils in whose area development takes place, but Reading requires different arrangements.
- 3.3 A protocol, originally approved at Policy Committee on 16th July 2018 (Minute 26 refers) and amended at Policy Committee on 15th February 2021 (Minute 97 refers) sets out a focus for the use of 15% local CIL as below and subject to the project according with a number of principles:
- Open space improvements/small scale leisure;
 - Local highway improvement projects;
 - Air quality;
 - Community improvements;
 - Renewable energy infrastructure;
 - Economic Support;
 - Other measures which help to mitigate the impact the development has on the area.
- 3.4 The protocol further states that allocations of 15% local CIL must accord with the following:
- Support:
 - (a) the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of local facilities and/or infrastructure; or
 - (b) anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on a local area.
 - May be included in the IDP and/or Approved Capital Programme.
 - May enable other funds that would not otherwise be available or offer a financial return on investment, e.g. needed to match or draw grant funding;
 - Address a specific impact of new development beyond that which has been secured through a S106 obligation or S278 agreement;
 - Contribute to the delivery of key development sites in the district to realise the Local Plan proposals.
- 3.5 At Policy Committee on 15th February, it was also agreed that the allocation of 15% local CIL would move away from the approach based on four zones (Central, North, South and West) that had previously been taken.

4. THE PROPOSAL

(a) Current Position

- 4.1 The first allocation of 15% local CIL took place at Policy Committee on 26th November 2018, after a consultation undertaken in summer 2018. An allocation of £1.208m to a range of projects was agreed, comprising 15% local CIL collected up to 30th September 2018. Additional funds were allocated towards two of the selected projects by Decision Book in August 2020, bringing the total allocated to £1.339m. The report to Policy Committee on 15th February 2021 provided an update on the progress of these projects.
- 4.2 The following allocations were among those agreed in November 2018:
- £0.015m for Broad St refurbishment of the seating areas Phase 1 (increased to £0.065m by Decision Book in August 2020);
 - £0.030m for the Dog Fountain in St Laurence's Churchyard (reduced to £0.015m by Decision Book in August 2020); and
 - £0.050m for additional community facilities as part of, or near to, improved health care provision in Whitley Wood.
- There is now a need to make some changes to these allocations to reflect the current situation.
- 4.3 There is expected to be an underspend on Broad Street seating refurbishment, and a need for additional funds for the Dog Fountain project. This report therefore recommends agreeing reallocating £0.010m from Broad Street seating to the Dog Fountain, amending the total allocations to £0.055m (Broad Street) and £0.025m (Dog Fountain).
- 4.4 In terms of the Whitley Wood community provision, this was originally identified to be used towards the development of a new church centre and health centre on the St Paul's church hall site on Whitley Wood Lane. There has been a resolution to grant planning permission for this development at Planning Applications Committee subject to the signing of a legal agreement, but the final decision is not yet issued, and it is likely that this development will not come forward for several years. Therefore, it is considered that this funding should be used for improvements to the nearby Whitley Wood Community Centre, to ensure that funds are used to deliver improvements in a timely manner which fulfils the intent of the initial allocation.
- 4.5 Remaining 15% local CIL funds collected up to 2018-19 as well as funds collected in 2019-20 mean that, at the end of 2019-20, there is an additional £1.669m 15% local CIL available to allocate.
- 4.6 Policy Committee on 15th February 2021 considered a list of projects that were subject to consultation in 2018, but did not receive funding at the time, and agreed a provisional allocation of £1.557m towards

these projects. The projects that formed part of this provisional allocation are set out below.

Table 1: Provisional allocation agreed at Policy Committee in February 2021

Project	Ward	Proposed allocation	Further information
Borough-wide graffiti removal project	Borough-wide	£75,000	Highway and cleansing inspections
Town centre monuments and statues	Abbey	£50,000	Inspection, cleaning and repairs
War memorials and public art	Abbey	£100,000	Inventory, maintenance and cleaning of war memorials & public art
Thames cycle/path route at Kings Meadow	Abbey	£100,000	The surface of the cycle/footpath along sections is cracked and broken from tree routes. Given its continual use by pedestrians and cyclists is in need of attention.
High Street Heritage Action Zones project	Abbey, Battle and Katesgrove	£275,000	Ongoing programme to make the high street within three town centre conservation areas a more attractive place through physical, community and cultural activities. Awarded £150,000 of 15% local CIL in previous allocations.
Improvements at Shinfield Road Recreation Ground, Linden Road, involving improving upgrading the park and facilities	Church	£75,000	Upgrading the park and facilities. Removal of the carpet style surfacing within the play area along with some of the fencing and returned to parkland. New furniture. Resurfacing of footpaths.
Skate park at John Rabson Recreation Ground	Church	£95,000	Installation of skate park. Previous consultation in 2018 proposed that this could be located at Cintra Park, but proposal is now that it be delivered at John Rabson Recreation Ground.
Play area improvements at Waterloo Meadows	Katesgrove	£95,000	Some items of play equipment need replacing along with safety surfacing.
Arthur Newbery Park play area improvements	Kentwood	£100,000	The large main play unit is over 30yrs old and needs replacing. Parts are obsolete and have to be specially hand made.

Oxford Road Recreation Ground play area improvements	Kentwood	£95,000	The play equipment is very old and in need of replacement.
Pedestrian crossing on Norcot Road, close to number 91	Kentwood/ Tilehurst	£50,000	Convert refuge island to a full pedestrian crossing, as the island is too small for push chairs. This would also be a safety benefit for school children. This is a significant distance from the nearest controlled crossings and near to the linking footway between Norcot Road and Wealden Way. Requires full site survey and feasibility investigation.
Dover Street play area improvements	Minster	£85,000	Equipment and surfacing is at the end of its life. Steep sloping site restricts improvement and is unsuitable for children with disabilities. It suffers from regular drug abuse and anti-social behaviour.
New laptops for Coley Park Community Centre	Minster	£2,000	Replace 8 old laptops with fully functioning new hardware to be used by the Community Centre, so that more members of the community could benefit from education and support.
Improvements and tidy up of wooden bridge area at Brook Street West	Minster	£100,000	Open out the area to make it more desirable for local people to visit and less desirable for drug users. Need for a full project plan. Could include cycle path link to Berkeley Avenue and/or nature trail.
Moriston Close play area improvements	Norcot	£30,000	Play equipment is old and has little play value. The size of the site limits potential improvements.
Palmer Park play area improvements	Park	£100,000	Offer for disabled children and for toddlers of all abilities needs to be improved. Investment in all-inclusive play a priority. Loose fill surfacing requires replacement to improve access. Several swing units require replacement for health and safety reasons.
Road marking on Morpeth Close,	Redlands	£5,000	Installing parking bay markings to assist in easing

involving parking bay markings			some of the area parking issues.
Pedestrian crossing on Addington Road, between the junctions with Erleigh Road and Eastern Avenue	Redlands	£50,000	Provision of controlled crossing at this location. Requires full site survey and feasibility investigation. May necessitate removal of some on street parking to enhance crossing visibility. Aspects of the scheme will require legal public consultation. Will require independent Road Safety Audit.
Pedestrian crossing on Church End Lane, in the vicinity of Moorlands Primary School	Tilehurst	£50,000	Installation of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities at this junction, as requested by 2017 petition. Requires full site survey and feasibility investigation. May require some on street parking restrictions to enhance crossing visibility and locating the crossing among the many driveway accesses will be challenging, if it is feasible at all. Aspects of the scheme will require legal public consultation. Will require independent Road Safety Audit.
Lining alteration on The Meadoway at the roundabout with St Michael's Road	Tilehurst	£10,000	Review lining on approaches ('unnecessary' 2 lane approaches) to encourage correct use of the roundabout and reduce the number of vehicles cutting across it. May require independent road safety audit.
Landscaping improvements at South Whitley Park	Whitley	£15,000	Re-landscape the area next to the ballcourt and swings to support informal play, look attractive and make best of areas that will drain.

- 4.7 Policy Committee agreed to consult on the provisional allocation of funds collected up to the end of 2019-20 and on the future priorities for allocation of 15% local CIL. A consultation document was approved, and formed the basis for an online consultation. This consultation took place between 19th February and 16th April.
- 4.8 The results of the consultation are summarised in Appendix 2. In total, there were 171 responses.
- 4.9 In terms of the provisional allocations, a strong majority of respondents (almost 70%) agreed with the proposed allocations overall. 18% of

respondents disagreed, whilst 11% did not know. A number of comments were made on the individual proposals for spend, and these are detailed in Appendix 2.

- 4.10 A number of additional proposals for allocation of funds in this round were put forward, some relating to specific pieces of infrastructure, and others more general. These are listed in full in Appendix 2, but those which were suggested by more than one respondent were:
- Pothole repairs and road resurfacing (3)
 - Cycle lanes and segregated cycle routes (3)
 - A roller-skating rink/bowling alley/ice rink (3)
 - Clearing rubbish and addressing fly-tipping, particularly along riverside paths (3)
 - Additional swimming provision (2)
 - More youth clubs (2)
 - Works which improve the safety/environment of pedestrians and cyclists (2)
 - Owners of premises at junction of Northcourt Avenue and Christchurch Road should tidy up the area they mostly own, or CPO powers used (2)
 - Funding treatment and support for drug users (2).

- 4.11 The next part of the consultation dealt with the priorities for future allocations. Respondents were asked to rank a list of nine possible priorities in order of importance. Across the Borough, the priorities were ranked as follows (based on the average rank from all responses).

Table 2: Ranking of future priorities from consultation

Overall rank	Item
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces
2	H - Climate change and renewable energy
3	G - Natural environment
4	A - Highways, transport and travel
5	F - General environmental enhancements
6	D - Community centres and hubs
7	E - Healthcare provision
8	I - Education provision
9	C - Heritage and cultural provision

- 4.12 Play areas and public open spaces emerged as the top ranked item, followed by climate change and renewable energy and the natural environment. Although more respondents chose highways, transport and travel as the top-ranked item than any other item, the average ranking was not amongst the highest, as many other respondents ranked it as a comparatively low priority. Heritage and cultural provision was the lowest ranked item.
- 4.13 This information is also reported in Appendix 2 for each individual ward, so that future decisions on allocations can be made taking into

account how priorities differ across Reading. This information can also be reported by new ward boundaries in the future.

- 4.14 The consultation asked whether there were any other priorities that should be considered. Most of the possible priorities highlighted in the responses broadly fit within the nine priorities above (see Appendix 2 for the full summary), but areas not covered include provision of sports and leisure facilities, support for people with disabilities, older people or vulnerable groups, and provision for public safety and tackling crime.
- 4.15 The priorities identified should be taken into account in considering future allocations of 15% local CIL from 2022 onwards.

(b) Option Proposed

- 4.16 This report recommends that the provisional allocation of £1.557m which was subject to consultation be agreed as a final allocation. This comprises the items set out in Table 1 of this report. The balance of available 15% local CIL funding (£0.112m) would be carried over to be allocated in future years.
- 4.17 As set out in paragraph 4.7 above, almost 70% of respondents agreed with the proposed allocations. Only 18% of respondents disagreed with the allocations, with the remainder either not sure or not answering the question.
- 4.18 Whilst a number of additional proposed uses for funds were put forward, as set out in Appendix 2, these are not recommended for inclusion in this round of funding. Funding of some of these items would not comply with the CIL Regulations in terms of supporting the development of the area, whilst some other items are outside the control of the Council due to being in private ownership. Some items would require levels of funding beyond what can be covered by 15% local CIL. A number of items do have potential for future allocation, but would need to be investigated and costed before funding could be allocated, and may need to be considered in future funding decisions.
- 4.19 It is also recommended to agree the changes to the previous allocations outlined in paragraphs 4.2-4.4.

(c) Other Options Considered

- 4.20 There are a range of alternative options open to this Committee to consider. While public consultation is required on the proposals to allocate 15% CIL funds, it is for the Committee to decide the final allocations of funds.
- 4.21 The options would involve different uses of the funds, including those suggested through public consultation and detailed in Appendix 2. It is

worth noting once again in this regards that almost 70% of respondents agreed with the provisional allocations. However, many of these projects do not fall within the scope of 15% local CIL, are not within the Council's control or would cost more than is available. Others are more around general priorities than specific projects. Where those projects could potentially be delivered, they have not been fully assessed in terms of their cost, deliverability and desirability, and the Council would not therefore be in a position to quickly move forwards to implementation.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The proposals to use CIL 15% local contribution supports a number of strategic aims. Given the proposed allocation of the majority of funds to transport, open space and leisure, community and the historic environment proposals the recommendations set out in this report mainly support:
- Protecting and enhancing the lives of vulnerable adults and children
 - Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
 - Promoting great education, leisure and cultural opportunities for people in Reading.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The proposed allocations of CIL already collected will mean the improvement of infrastructure such as open spaces and play areas in areas where residents live, as well as improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure, which should help to reduce the need to travel by car. Identified priorities for spend of 15% local CIL within the protocol continue to include this type of infrastructure, as well as infrastructure which will directly address environmental and climate issues such as air quality and renewable energy provision.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 There is no statutory requirement for community engagement on allocation or spend of 15% local CIL. However, national Planning Practice Guidance states that authorities "*should engage with the communities where development has taken place and agree with them how best to spend the neighbourhood funding*". It is for authorities to set out how this consultation will take place.
- 7.2 Consultation on the proposed allocation of 15% local CIL collected up to 31st March 2020 and priorities for future spend took place between 19th February and 16th April 2021, an eight-week period to reflect the fact that the period took in the Easter holidays. This centred on an online questionnaire on the Council's website. In total, there were 171 responses. Appendix 2 summarises the results of the consultation.

8. EQUALITY ASSESSMENT

8.1 The Scoping Assessment, included at Appendix 1 identifies that an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is relevant to this decision. The EqIA (also at Appendix 1) identifies that, where there are identified impacts upon specific groups, these are expected to be positive. Compliance with the duties under S149 of the Equality Act 2010 can involve treating some persons more favourably than others, but it is not considered that there will be a negative impact on other groups with relevant protected characteristics.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The collection and application of CIL is governed by the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). Regulation 59F states that, where there are no parish councils, the portion of CIL that would otherwise have been passed to parishes (which, where no neighbourhood plan is in place, is 15%) should be used to support the development of the relevant area by funding:

- (a) *the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure; or*
- (b) *anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on an area.”*

9.2 The ‘relevant area’ in this instance is the part of an authority’s area not covered by a parish council area, which in this case means the whole Borough.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 CIL funds can be used flexibly to fund any infrastructure projects as defined within the regulations and are not tied to a specific development or the provision of specific infrastructure. Of the total CIL receipts, 80% will be used to fund strategic infrastructure through the Council’s capital programme. 15% will be spent in the ‘relevant local area’ in which development occurs. The 15% local CIL does not have to be spent on items in the Infrastructure Funding Statement. Up to 5% of CIL will be allocated to cover CIL administration costs.

10.2 The amended CIL protocol agreed at Policy Committee on 15th February 2021 set out proposed procedures for dealing with the allocation and monitoring of the use of all CIL receipts and provides a framework for identifying projects that contribute to achieving the Council’s strategic priorities while meeting CIL regulations. This enables the optimum use of the finite resources available.

10.3 The summary position in relation to 15% local CIL funds collected up to 31st March 2020 is set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Summary position for 15% local CIL collected

15% local CIL collected up to 31/03/2020	£3.008m
--	---------

Allocated in November 2018 by Policy Committee	£1.204m
Allocated in August 2020 by Decision Book	£0.135m
Proposed allocation in this report	£1.557m
15% local CIL remaining unallocated after proposed allocation (to be carried forward)	£0.112m

- 10.4 Up to 10% of the allocated funds can be used for project management costs. None of the items identified as part of the provisional allocation have known revenue implications.

Value for Money (VFM)

- 10.5 The proposed schemes for allocation have been assessed as being deliverable and a worthwhile use of 15% local CIL funds. The agreed protocol includes financial considerations among the assessment criteria, and this includes assessment of value for money.

Risk Assessment

- 10.6 There are no direct financial risks associated with the recommendations of this report. In the event that schemes identified as part of the allocation are not delivered, remaining funds will be available for future allocations.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended)
 Planning Practice Guidance

APPENDIX 1 (to Policy Committee report): EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Provide basic details

Name of proposal/activity/policy to be assessed:

Allocation of 15% local CIL funds

Directorate: DEGNS - Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

Service: Planning

Name: Mark Worringham

Job Title: Planning Policy Team Leader

Date of assessment: 05/01/2021

Scope your proposal

What is the aim of your policy or new service?

To allocate funds received through CIL receipts to local projects within the Borough, and to determine how future allocations will be undertaken.

Who will benefit from this proposal and how?

The local community will benefit through a range of capital and other improvements - including highway enhancements, improved leisure/open space enhancements and community enhancements.

What outcomes will the change achieve and for whom?

The outcome will be to secure improved facilities, improved accessibility and improvements to community facilities.

Who are the main stakeholders and what do they want?

The local community, wider public and community groups. The public will want to ensure allocations of funds are to projects that meet infrastructure needs, particularly where it arises from new development.

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
A public consultation was undertaken on the provisional allocation and on future priorities for allocation of 15% local CIL, and results are summarised in Appendix 2.	An e-mail highlighting the consultation was sent to contacts on the Council's Citizen's panel list, as well as being included within the consultations list on the website.	February 2021

Collect and Assess your Data

Describe how could this proposal impact on Racial groups

No specific impacts are identified

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

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

No specific impacts are identified.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how could this proposal impact on Disability

Projects allocated funding will need to ensure appropriate access for all.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

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

No specific impacts are identified.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how could this proposal impact on Age

A number of the proposed allocations for funding are for improvement of children's play areas, which will have a positive impact on the quality of facilities available for children.

Is there a negative impact? Yes No Not sure

Describe how could this proposal impact on Religious belief?

No specific impacts are identified.

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

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?

Individual projects will need to ensure that appropriate access for all is taken into account in each scheme. It is noted that some schemes will not receive funding from this allocation. Unfunded projects may receive future funding.

Signed (completing officer) Mark Worringham Date: 19th April 2021

Signed (Lead Officer) Mark Worringham Date: 19th April 2021

APPENDIX 2 (to Policy Committee report): SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION ON PROVISIONAL ALLOCATION OF 15% LOCAL CIL AND FUTURE PRIORITIES

This summarises the response to the consultation carried out between 19th February and 16th April 2021 on 15% local CIL. The consultation asked for views on a provisional allocation agreed by Policy Committee in February 2021 (questions 4 to 6) and on future priorities for allocation (questions 7 to 9). The consultation took the form of an online webform.

In total, there were 171 responses.

In the following pages, where a comment has been made by more than one respondent, the number of respondents who made a similar point is shown in brackets.

Questions 1 to 3

The first three questions were on personal details and whether respondents wished to be kept informed of future matters.

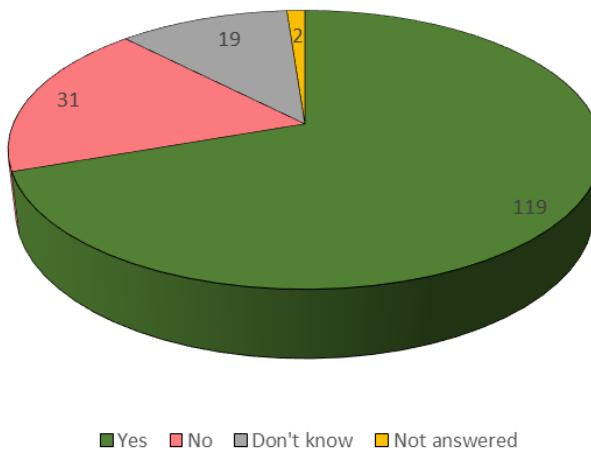
Question 2 asked which ward respondents lived in, and the answers are below.

Ward	Number of respondents
Abbey	12
Battle	10
Caversham	22
Church	9
Katesgrove	4
Kentwood	4
Mapledurham	3
Minster	20
Norcot	6
Park	19
Peppard	9
Redlands	20
Southcote	8
Thames	6
Tilehurst	12
Whitley	6
Out of Borough	1
Total	171

Please note that the totals for wards in the above table may differ from tables under question 7, because some respondents did not answer the question about ranking of priorities.

Question 4: Do you agree with the proposed allocation of 15% local CIL collected up to 31st March 2020?

Of the 171 respondents, 119 (69.6%) agreed with the proposed allocation. Of the remainder, 31 respondents (18.1%) disagreed and 19 respondents (11.1%) did not know. Two respondents did not answer this question.



Question 5: Please provide any comments you want to make below the relevant project.

In addition to their view of the overall allocations, respondents were asked for any comments on individual projects. Comments provided on each of the projects are set out below.

Borough-wide graffiti removal project

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (27)
- General opposition (6)
- Graffiti can be artistic and is not necessarily vandalism, an area should be dedicated for graffiti artists (9)
- The cost is excessive and could be reduced (5)
- This should be covered by Council Tax/usual budgets (4)
- Removing graffiti will just result in others putting up more graffiti (3)
- Need a future deterrent policy or prevention measures (2)
- Should be done by people on community service (2)
- More funding should be allocated to this project
- Particularly needed around the Kennet
- Not clear how this is related to supporting growth
- Private property owners should be responsible for removing graffiti on their property
- Would be cheaper to have someone patrol these areas
- Preserve the recent Banksy but do not allow more graffiti to accumulate on this wall
- Katesgrove underpass needs particular attention
- More should be done to remove graffiti as soon as it is sprayed
- Options for murals in underpasses should be considered, as these seem to be targeted less frequently
- More of this could be done through CSR partnerships with corporates, which Connect Reading would be happy to arrange, leaving the harder to reach graffiti for professional teams
- Get children involved in brightening up areas with good colourful graffiti
- This will presumably be an ongoing cost due to the nature of graffiti

Town centre monuments and statues

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (21)
- General opposition (9)
- The cost is excessive and should be reduced (4)
- Could this be combined with war memorials and public art and spend reduced to £100K? (2)
- Should be maintained with information notices regarding historical information such as any links to slavery (2)
- Need to be careful about what the monuments depict and that they represent Reading's current values and people (2)
- Should be essential works only and costs reduced
- It is not clear what the money would be spent on
- Wish the statue of Valkyrie street was still on view
- Do we have any controversial statues?
- Not wholly opposed but would prefer to see funds address community inequality
- The town centre is OK, Caversham needs more help
- Need to bring life back to Reading centre after pandemic, with more informal seating areas, performance spaces, licensed performers
- Need some new monuments and statues
- Commercial town centre landowners should contribute to this
- Should be covered by heritage grants
- Filling the niches on the museum/old town hall would be good, suggest Hugh Farringdon
- Should relate to British historical figures
- Should invest in swimming pools and youth centres instead
- Nothing clearly wrong with monuments and statues that requires this funding
- Invest in addressing crime and public safety instead

War memorials and public art

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (18)
- General opposition (5)
- The cost is excessive and should be reduced (6)
- Not clear what this would cover (2)
- Could this be combined with town centre monuments and statues and spend reduced to £100K? (2)
- Yes to war memorials, but no to public art (2)
- The black history mural should be covered in the maintenance
- Not wholly opposed but would prefer to see funds address community inequality
- Should be essential works only and costs reduced
- The town centre is OK, Caversham needs more help
- Shrine needed in Forbury Gardens to commemorate victims of the attack there

- Not clear how this is related to supporting growth
- Should be relevant to local people
- Could have dual use by inclusion of street furniture
- Should be covered by heritage grants
- Will investment be made in public art produced by young people, e.g. South Bank in London?
- If additional memorials are proposed, are these really needed?
- What kind of public art is planned and would this benefit the overall look of Reading?
- This money could be spent on improving the infrastructure and safety at Reading town centre
- Role of war memorials could be fulfilled by education
- Could instal LED lights working from solar panel, incorporating charging points
- Need more spaces for people to sit, with evergreen plants, picnic areas

Thames cycle/path route at Kings Meadow

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (27)
- General opposition (4)
- Should be clear separation of pedestrians and cyclists (4)
- Needs to be widened (3)
- The cost seems excessive and could be reduced (3)
- More cycle pathways needed all over (3)
- Major investment needed in cycling infrastructure and this is a drop in the ocean
- This will not lead to modal shift - what will happen to the list of schemes the cycle working group has drawn up which are unfunded?
- As a cyclist would prefer spend on fixing potholes or creating more cycle lanes
- Extension would be better than repair, as not sure that the damage is bad enough to warrant repair at this cost
- Why should this have priority over repairing pavements on residential roads?
- Will not be maintained or greatly used
- Should not be at the expense of trees
- The part of the path by Tesco is in particular need of repair
- Emphasis for cycle paths should be commuting not recreation
- Anything to get cyclists off the pavement where they intimidate pedestrians
- Prefer connecting road between A3290/A4 and Reading Bridge to reduce traffic in centre of town
- A speed limit of 20 mph should be implemented
- Money needed for footpaths
- Proper consultation required
- With savings elsewhere an additional £100,000 could be made available for cycling improvements
- Attention needed on the canal part of the path rather than Kings Meadow
- Cycle paths elsewhere are horrendous e.g. Portman Road

- Include improvements to link to Horseshoe Bridge
- Works also needed in McIlroy Park

High Street Heritage Action Zones project

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (16)
- General opposition (6)
- Too much money to this project (6)
- Agree with the overall principle but it is not clear what is planned (4)
- More contributions could be made from businesses in the area (2)
- Too nebulous and requires more focus on practical projects
- Consider the provision of electrical connections that can be hired to vendors during events to eliminate need for diesel generators
- Consider provision of a craft market for local artisans
- There are still too many trucks using the Oxford Road rather than Portman Road
- This is a lot of money to spend in a few wards
- The town centre is OK, Caversham needs more help
- No clear link to effects of new development
- The high street is dead so this level of spend is not needed
- Consider heritage grants
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- Looking forward to greater pedestrianisation and rewilding in town centre
- Better spend on tackling high speed driving through the centre of town cycling routes and closing roads for better public amenity.

Improvements at Shinfield Road Recreation Ground, Linden Road

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (24)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (2)
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- Put facilities in such as swings that suit older children and netball courts etc
- Does this include any ecological enhancements?

Skate park at John Rabson Recreation Ground

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (25)
- General opposition (6)
- Many skate parks are poorly used and there may be better activities that may be more appropriate (2)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (2)
- The cost seems excessive and could be reduced (2)
- Only benefits those who skate and may have equalities implications as it is limited to certain groups (2)
- This is welcome as long as it is an improvement and not removal of facilities
- Do not agree as there is already one skate park that has fallen into disrepair

- Skateboarding is becoming passé
- Cost is high as such facilities end up being abused
- Spend money on cleaning Reading instead
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- Why was this moved from Cintra Park?
- A skate park would be welcomed in McIlroy Park

Waterloo Meadows play area improvements

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (27)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (2)
- The cost seems excessive and could be reduced
- Stop the area being abused
- This is welcome as long as it is an improvement and not removal of facilities
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- Contact the Friends of Waterloo Meadows.
- Connect Reading would be able to provide a connection to businesses to help with clean-up of area.
- Cintra Park needs money spent on it, as it is overused for the facilities there. Additional benches would be welcome.

Arthur Newbery Park play area improvements

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (20)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (2)
- The cost seems excessive and could be reduced (2)
- Play area will only get abused
- Too much is spent overall on play areas
- This is welcome as long as it is an improvement and not removal of facilities
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- A larger play area could be developed together with a picnic area if some of the brambles were removed, which would also allow further tree planting. A more open area would also help to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour.
- More should be spent on the town centre rather than areas such as this
- Depends on whether this is replacement or refurbishment, as the current set up is good and a dramatic change is not needed
- Arthur Newbery Park is already in a good condition and a playground in McIlroy Park would be appreciated

Oxford Road Recreation Ground play area improvements

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (25)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (2)
- The cost seems excessive and could be reduced (2)
- Too much is spent overall on play areas
- This is welcome as long as it is an improvement and not removal of facilities

- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- Consultation should be carried out with the Oxford Road NAG

Pedestrian crossing on Norcot Road close to number 91

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (21)
- General opposition (2)
- The cost seems excessive (2)
- More funding should be allocated to this
- Crossings should be kept in good condition
- This is a narrow stretch of the road, will residents be able to reverse out of their drives with an island refuge in the road?
- A pedestrian crossing is needed at the A4 junction with Parkside Road
- Should this be funded from this fund?
- What about traffic calming by adding a cycle lane?
- Caution is needed on the correct siting
- A crossing is also needed next to Tilehurst Triangle pharmacy

Dover Street play area improvements

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (21)
- The cost seems excessive (2)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (1)
- Too much is spent overall on play areas
- This appears to be the only inclusive scheme catering for those with disabilities
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?

New laptops for Coley Park Community Centre

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (22)
- Desktop computers would be cheaper and harder to steal or damage
- Consider cheaper options such as Chrome Books
- Regular update of laptops should be in the budget
- Why Coley Park and not other centres such as Whitley and Amersham Road?
- Should be a priority for disadvantaged children across Reading
- Many more are needed
- Not sure if they would be used
- Locally based ICT companies should be asked to contribute
- Connect Reading may be able to assist in providing laptops through digital contacts, in which case the money could be used for digital skills
- All schools need computers
- Similar assistance required for Park Lane School in Tilehurst

Improvements and tidy up of wooden bridge area at Brook Street West

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (14)

- This is an excessive cost for the project (2)
- Funding may not be sufficient
- Agreed if this is for the purposes of enhancing safety
- Should be for health and safety and essential works only
- A clean up is needed but the area should be left with wildlife corridors and nesting areas, nature trails, maybe hides, bird boxes, bat boxes
- The wider area around the Holy Brook and Kennet needs more investment
- This was left after trees were chopped down, and is growing back as weeds and nettles, so should be replanted and adequate lighting provided
- Should be firmer plans for inclusion of cycling
- A similar tidy-up is required at McIlroy Park

Moriston Close play area improvements

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (19)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (2)
- This should be applied to all play areas
- Too much is spent overall on play areas
- This is welcome as long as it is an improvement and not removal of facilities
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- The cost seems excessive

Palmer Park play area improvements

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (25)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (2)
- The cost seems excessive and could be reduced (2)
- This should be applied to all play areas
- Support making the play area more inclusive for children with disabilities
- Parents of children with disabilities should be consulted from start to finish
- This is already an amazing play area
- Too much is spent overall on play areas
- How much more do you plan to spend here?
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- This is welcome as long as it is an improvement and not removal of facilities
- Needs to use sustainable materials
- Could any of this be sponsored by businesses from Thames Valley Park?
Connect Reading may be able to assist in making contacts
- The park needs better clearing of litter
- McIlroy Park would benefit from play improvements

Road marking on Morpeth Close

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (13)
- General opposition (4)
- The cost seems excessive (2)
- More funding should be allocated to this

- Potholes should be a priority rather than road markings
- Money for road marking should come from the Council's usual budget
- If parking is a problem then the solution should be paid for by the car drivers, e.g. a permit scheme

Pedestrian crossing on Addington Road, between the junction with Erleigh Road and Eastern Avenue

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (27)
- General opposition (3)
- The cost seems excessive (2)
- More funding should be allocated to this
- Money should not be used for pedestrian crossings, the Council should wait to see if this is necessary once lockdown eases
- Money for crossings should come from the Council's usual budget
- This will support the introduction of School Streets for the schools around the Crescent Road/Wokingham Road area
- It would be good to make the crossing cross Erleigh Road by the chemist
- Unclear whether this is Addington Road or Erleigh Road
- The whole area needs traffic planning, calming and speed reduction
- Any other measures that would slow traffic on Alexandra Road are welcome
- Opposed to this as it is a crossroads and would cause considerable disruption to traffic flow, and would remove free parking outside the shops. Individual crossings on the different roads would be better.
- A crossing is also needed at the at the Alexandra Road and Erleigh road and Addington Road junctions
- A crossing is also needed next to Tilehurst Triangle pharmacy

Pedestrian crossing on Church End Lane, in the vicinity of Moorlands Primary School

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (20)
- General opposition (1)
- The cost seems excessive (2)
- More funding should be allocated to this
- Money should not be used for pedestrian crossings, the Council should wait to see if this is necessary once lockdown eases

Lining alteration on The Meadway at the roundabout with St Michael's Road

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (12)
- General opposition (5)
- This should include improvements for cyclists (2)
- The cost seems excessive (1)
- More funding should be allocated to this
- This should be funded from the Council's usual budget not CIL

Landscaping improvements at South Whitley Park

The following comments were made on this proposal:

- General support (17)
- General opposition (2)
- This is particularly important given the pandemic (1)
- The Council should remove caravans as soon as possible and give bill to occupants for any damage
- Are these really the highest priorities for the town?
- More money should be made available to green other areas of Whitley
- Will this be an ecological enhancement?
- Consultation is required with local residents from start to finish

Question 6: Do you have any other comments on the proposed allocation of 15% local CIL collected up to 31st March 2020?

A number of potential alternative uses for 15% local CIL collected up to the end of 2019-20 were suggested, as follows:

- Fund pothole repairs and road resurfacing (3)
- Fund cycle lanes and segregated cycle routes (3)
- A roller-skating rink, bowling alley and ice rink should be built (3).
- Focus on clearing rubbish and addressing fly-tipping, particularly along riverside paths (3)
- More swimming provision needed (2)
- More youth clubs needed (2)
- Priority should be given to works which improve the safety/environment of pedestrians and cyclists (2)
- Owners of premises at junction of Northcourt Avenue and Christchurch Road should tidy up the area they mostly own, or CPO powers used (2)
- Need to fund treatment and support for drug users (2)
- More projects related to reducing the carbon footprint and increasing green space.
- Use remainder of this year's funds on addressing climate emergency
- Spend the money on the natural environment and rewilding
- Disappointing that so few projects address the issues of traffic congestion, and that no projects have the aim of achieving a Low Traffic Neighbourhood
- Closing of roads for public amenity
- Projects should focus on improving traffic flow
- Need more traffic calming and prevention of on-road parking
- Spend on reducing traffic speeds through the town centre
- Money should be spent on improving footpaths.
- More provision needed for disabled people
- The building of collaborations between different sectors, to address some of these issues would be considered? Team Challenges (especially outdoor ones) are going to be in high demand for businesses looking to bring teams back together in a safe (outdoor) manner, so some of these could perhaps benefit from 1-2 days' work from local businesses?
- Create more high street diversity by subsidising rents and attracting local small businesses
- Improvements to duck pond at Prospect Park which is infested with rats

- Repairing, repainting Caversham and Reading bridges, improving lighting and flowers/hanging baskets
- Re-introduced park rangers
- Pop-up events in local parks such as climbing wall or sports day events
- Road markings in Caversham have faded over time
- Building more pedestrian bridges over the Thames, for example on the east side close to Tesco
- Caversham needs an over 70s exercise park
- Spend money on regenerating the use of allotments in Whitley
- Surveying locations for new tree planting
- Some clearing needed on the old goods line from Southcote junction to the A33
- Playground resurfacing and removal of sandpit at Coley Park Recreation Ground
- Complete refurbishment of Emmer Green Recreation Ground play area required
- Renew or refurbish the dilapidated railings at the bottom of Peppard Road running alongside Queen Anne's School
- Use funds for ongoing care of Eldon Square gardens
- Pedestrian crossing of Upper Redlands Road at St Josephs College
- Prospect Park is in need of investment, including updating equipment, outdoor exercise trail, nature trail, pitch and put, crazy golf etc
- Pedestrian crossings at the junction of Grove Hill and Rotherfield Way and at the bottom of Oakley Road
- Upgrade existing services, e.g. library service in Tilehurst
- Replanting of daffodils around Reading
- Wildflower beds at Christchurch Green, Cintra Park and along Shinfield Road
- Addressing the abuse of Shinfield Road grass verge by parking caravans
- Repair to the wooden bridge on the Reading town centre to Kennet Island route river side footpath, opposite Waterloo Meadows

A number of additional comments were made on the provisional allocation as follows:

- No proposals in Caversham (6)
- There is a clear emphasis on more central areas of Reading (2)
- What about the Green Park area?
- Do not agree with the way allocations are being made and consider the costs too high
- Not enough information for detailed comments
- Do not carry any money over, use it for other proposals
- There is nothing in these proposals to address the climate emergency
- Please provide detail of the developments which provide the 15% local CIL
- 25% of funds should be available for local projects
- Some of these projects, e.g. crossings, should come from the normal budget
- Highway alterations and repairs should come from the existing budgets
- Funds should not be used to fix deficiencies to which the developers committed and never delivered
- Should engage with young people to ask what would keep them off the streets
- Section 106 funding for repairs at Queens Road junction have not been delivered

- A lot of money is proposed for play areas, more should be spent on facilities for adults e.g. cycle lanes

Question 7: Please identify your priority for future spend of 15% local CIL

Respondents were asked to rank the nine identified priorities for future spend of 15% local CIL, with rank 1 being the most important and 9 being the least important.

A minority of respondents did not rank every item. For the purposes of analysing the responses, where a respondent did not identify a ranking for an item, it was accorded rank 9 (lowest priority).

An average ranking for each item has been calculated in the tables below and used to identify an overall ranking. Where the average ranking is the same for two or more items, the item is ranked according to the number of times it was chosen as the top ranked item.

Whole Borough - 166 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	4.23	29
2	H - Climate change and renewable energy	4.69	28
3	G - Natural environment	4.76	12
4	A - Highways, transport and travel	4.83	44
5	F - General environmental enhancements	5.22	13
6	D - Community centres and hubs	5.36	9
7	E - Healthcare provision	5.46	19
8	I - Education provision	5.88	5
9	C - Heritage and cultural provision	6.20	7

The highest priority identified across Reading is for play areas and public open spaces, followed by climate change and renewable energy and the natural environment. It is worth noting the results for highways, transport and travel, which was selected as the highest priority by the largest number of people, a quarter of all respondents, but which was only fourth on average rank, indicating that opinion was very much split about where this should rank.

Heritage and cultural provision was ranked as the lowest priority overall, followed by education and healthcare provision.

This analysis has also been carried out by ward, which gives an indication of how views vary across Reading. However, due to the low numbers of responses in some wards, ward-specific information should be used with some caution when considering future allocations.

Abbey - 12 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	H - Climate change and renewable energy	2.83	4
2	F - General environmental enhancements	4.25	2
3	A - Highways, transport and travel	4.5	2
4	G - Natural environment	5.17	1
5	E - Healthcare provision	5.33	2
6	B - Play areas and public open spaces	5.33	1
7	I - Education provision	5.42	0
8	D - Community centres and hubs	6.75	0
9	C - Heritage and cultural provision	7.08	0

Battle - 10 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	3.5	2
2	H - Climate change and renewable energy	4.5	2
3 =	G - Natural environment	4.9	0
3 =	I - Education provision	4.9	0
5	A - Highways, transport and travel	5.4	3
6	E - Healthcare provision	5.5	1
7	D - Community centres and hubs	5.8	1
8	F - General environmental enhancements	6.5	1
9	C - Heritage and cultural provision	6.8	0

Caversham - 22 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	3.64	4
2	H - Climate change and renewable energy	4.82	6
3	F - General environmental enhancements	4.86	2
4	I - Education provision	4.91	1
5 =	D - Community centres and hubs	4.95	2
5 =	G - Natural environment	4.95	2
7	A - Highways, transport and travel	5.32	4
8	E - Healthcare provision	5.41	1
9	C - Heritage and cultural provision	6.82	0

Church - 9 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	G - Natural environment	4.67	1
2	F - General environmental enhancements	4.67	0
3 =	B - Play areas and public open spaces	4.78	2
3 =	E - Healthcare provision	4.78	2
5	D - Community centres and hubs	4.78	0
6	A - Highways, transport and travel	5.11	2
7	H - Climate change and renewable energy	5.22	1
8	C - Heritage and cultural provision	6.33	1
9	I - Education provision	7.44	0

Katesgrove - 3 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	F - General environmental enhancements	1.67	2
2	G - Natural environment	3.0	0
3	H - Climate change and renewable energy	3.67	1
4	C - Heritage and cultural provision	3.67	0
5	B - Play areas and public open spaces	5.33	0
6	I - Education provision	6.33	0
7	A - Highways, transport and travel	6.67	0
8 =	D - Community centres and hubs	7.33	0
8 =	E - Healthcare provision	7.33	0

Kentwood - 4 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	2.0	2
2 =	A - Highways, transport and travel	4.25	1
2 =	I - Education provision	4.25	1
4 =	D - Community centres and hubs	4.25	0
4 =	E - Healthcare provision	4.25	0
6	C - Heritage and cultural provision	7.0	0
7 =	F - General environmental enhancements	7.5	0
7 =	H - Climate change and renewable energy	7.5	0
9	G - Natural environment	8.25	0

Mapledurham - 3 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	A - Highways, transport and travel	3.0	1
2	F - General environmental enhancements	3.0	0
3	B - Play areas and public open spaces	3.67	0
4 =	D - Community centres and hubs	4.67	1
4 =	G - Natural environment	4.67	1
6	C - Heritage and cultural provision	5.0	0
7	H - Climate change and renewable energy	6.67	0
8	E - Healthcare provision	8.0	0
9	I - Education provision	8.33	0

Minster - 20 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	3.55	3
2	G - Natural environment	4.4	3
3	A - Highways, transport and travel	5.0	5
4	F - General environmental enhancements	5.0	2
5	E - Healthcare provision	5.25	1
6	H - Climate change and renewable energy	5.35	2
7	C - Heritage and cultural provision	5.4	1
8	D - Community centres and hubs	5.65	2
9	I - Education provision	6.3	0

Norcot - 6 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	3.5	2
2	G - Natural environment	4.17	1
3	A - Highways, transport and travel	4.33	3
4 =	D - Community centres and hubs	5.0	0
4 =	H - Climate change and renewable energy	5.0	0
6	F - General environmental enhancements	6.17	0
7	E - Healthcare provision	7.0	0
8	I - Education provision	7.17	0
9	C - Heritage and cultural provision	8.33	0

Park - 18 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	E - Healthcare provision	4.11	5
2	D - Community centres and hubs	4.72	1
3	G - Natural environment	4.78	1
4	A - Highways, transport and travel	5.06	4
5	B - Play areas and public open spaces	5.17	2
6	H - Climate change and renewable energy	5.17	1
7	F - General environmental enhancements	5.5	2
8	I - Education provision	5.78	2
9	C - Heritage and cultural provision	6.11	0

Peppard - 8 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	4.38	3
2	I - Education provision	4.38	0
3	G - Natural environment	4.5	0
4	H - Climate change and renewable energy	4.63	2
5 =	C - Heritage and cultural provision	5.88	1
5 =	E - Healthcare provision	5.88	1
7	A - Highways, transport and travel	6.0	1
8	F - General environmental enhancements	6.0	0
9	D - Community centres and hubs	6.13	0

Redlands - 18 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	H - Climate change and renewable energy	3.94	5
2	A - Highways, transport and travel	4.61	7
3	G - Natural environment	4.78	1
4	D - Community centres and hubs	4.89	1
5	C - Heritage and cultural provision	5.17	1
6	B - Play areas and public open spaces	5.33	1
7	E - Healthcare provision	5.61	2
8	F - General environmental enhancements	5.67	0
9	I - Education provision	6.17	0

Southcote - 8 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	3.5	3
2	H - Climate change and renewable energy	3.63	1
3	A - Highways, transport and travel	4.25	2
4	G - Natural environment	4.5	0
5	D - Community centres and hubs	4.63	0
6	F - General environmental enhancements	5.25	1
7	C - Heritage and cultural provision	6.88	0
8	E - Healthcare provision	7.0	0
9	I - Education provision	7.25	0

Thames - 6 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	3.5	2
2	G - Natural environment	4.17	1
3	F - General environmental enhancements	4.5	0
4 =	C - Heritage and cultural provision	4.67	1
4 =	H - Climate change and renewable energy	4.67	1
6	A - Highways, transport and travel	4.83	1
7	E - Healthcare provision	5.67	0
8	D - Community centres and hubs	6.33	0
9	I - Education provision	6.67	0

Tilehurst - 12 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	A - Highways, transport and travel	3.25	6
2	B - Play areas and public open spaces	4.33	1
3	H - Climate change and renewable energy	4.42	0
4	G - Natural environment	4.92	0
5	E - Healthcare provision	5.08	2
6 =	D - Community centres and hubs	5.58	0
6 =	F - General environmental enhancements	5.58	0
8	C - Heritage and cultural provision	6.08	1
9	I - Education provision	6.5	1

Whitley - 6 responses

Overall rank	Item	Average rank	Number of times picked as top ranked
1	B - Play areas and public open spaces	3.33	1
2	A - Highways, transport and travel	4.33	2
3	F - General environmental enhancements	4.5	1
4	I - Education provision	4.67	0
5	G - Natural environment	4.83	0
6	D - Community centres and hubs	5.0	0
7	E - Healthcare provision	5.17	1
8	H - Climate change and renewable energy	6.0	0
9	C - Heritage and cultural provision	7.17	1

Question 8: Are there any priorities not listed above that you would like to see considered?

Many respondents commented to propose priorities for how future funds should be allocated. Some of these were more general uses for the funds, whilst others related to specific projects, usually in a defined location. These are dealt with separately below.

Suggestions for types of project or infrastructure were as follows:

- Creation of a comprehensive network of high-quality, safe, linked cycle routes and improved cycle facilities (8)
- Clearing up rubbish and tackling fly-tipping (5)
- Further provision for older children, teenagers and young people (5)
- Provision of leisure facilities, e.g. swimming, bowling, roller skating, snooker, ski slope, indoor sky diving (5)
- Greening of Reading, tree planting and biodiversity enhancement, which could include public education programmes (4)
- Better provision for those with a disability, including access, toilets, parking and removing obstacles such as pavement parking (4)
- Provision for public safety and tackling crime and anti-social behaviour (3)
- Repair of pavements and footpaths (3)
- Rewilding of parks (3)
- Provision of sports facilities (3)
- Provision of youth clubs and community centres (3)
- More provision and support for older people (2)
- Provision of allotments and community gardens (2)
- Need to separate provision for private vehicles from other forms of transport provision (2)
- Electric vehicle charging infrastructure (2)
- Resurfacing and improvements of roads (3)
- Tackling air pollution (2)
- Support for those suffering mental health issues
- Supporting and creating a vibrant community in neighbourhoods
- Supporting community and residents' groups
- Fund residents to object to developments
- Provision of drug rehabilitation support hubs
- Support for vulnerable people
- Enhancing and celebrating Reading's diversity, for example investment in a Reading Festival of Culture as discussed by the University
- Zero emissions zone for the town centre with a low emissions zone covering the rest of Reading
- Apply a 20 mph speed limit to all roads except main roads in Reading
- General traffic calming
- Funding for active travel, such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods
- Make particular provision for improving junctions for cyclists' safety
- Implement School Streets in the vicinity of schools
- Provision of dropped kerbs near schools for buggies
- More bridges across the Thames are required
- Improvement of traffic flow

- Signage to deter HGVs from local areas
- More should be spent on roads rather than cycle lanes
- More traffic enforcement officers to prevent people parking on footpaths
- Better provision of walking facilities
- Improved safety and security of pedestrian areas
- More CCTV cameras
- Environmental improvements to local centres
- Develop local shopping mini centres into areas people want to be
- Provision of mooring facilities for boats
- Energy saving, community heating and journey saving
- Stopping use of glyphosate on pavements
- Investment in renewable energy and development of planning policies for sustainable buildings with reduced energy consumption fed by ground or air sourced heat exchangers
- Interactive facilities combining the outdoors and education
- Provision of wildlife reserves and ecological measures
- Access to open space e.g. the Kennet Meadows
- Removal of billboards and enhancement of green areas without commercialisation.
- Places for children to go safely
- Provision of bike tracks
- More opportunities for recycling for residents without cars, e.g. a pop-up facility for items such as paint or furniture
- Provision of a recycling bin for plastics
- Economic measures, for instance promotion of local retail and work spaces, co-working spaces and cost concessions for local businesses
- Funds to support private investors with the right types of green initiatives, typically navigating government hurdles
- Drains should be improved as they do not drain rainwater

More specific suggestions, usually related to a defined location, were as follows.

- Filling in potholes in Tilehurst
- Install electric lighting along footpaths in Blagrave Recreation Ground
- Improve McIlroy Park by adding a playground, skate park etc
- The closed Restoration PH on Oxford Road is an eyesore, and this area should be improved
- Improve safety and security at Scours Lane
- Speed controls on Bath Road, particularly between Liebenrood Road and Berkeley Avenue
- Crossing of A4 at Parkside Road, and enforcement of no right turns into and out of Parkside Road
- Improvements at Coley Meadow
- Refurbishment and widening of Caversham Bridge, and prevent traffic from Caversham from turning into A4074, redirecting to cross the bridge and turn at the roundabout.
- Address flooding at Christchurch Meadows
- Repair lights on Christchurch Bridge and reinstate colour changing
- Provide support to the Reading Hydro project
- Establish and enhance a wildlife corridor along the Thames riverside
- Pedestrian barrier needed at the entrance to the underpass on Napier Road

- Provision of segregated cycle route between the University and the town centre
- Environmental improvements of Christchurch Road shops and parking area
- Renovation of rear of shops at Christchurch Green, potentially including residential development such as for elderly people
- Planting at the Christchurch Road end of Cintra Park
- Addressing waste in the University area
- Pedestrian crossing at Upper Redlands Road
- Redlands School has reached the end of the road and the surrounding housing should be replaced with modern housing and an infant/junior school
- Consider Eastern Avenue for a low traffic neighbourhood, or Park ward more generally (2)
- Traffic exclusion zone needed in the vicinity of Crescent Road to keep schoolchildren safe
- Introduce a one way system from left to right only from Wokingham Road onto Crescent Road to reduce rat running and traffic speeds and introduce restricted one way access off Wokingham Road onto Bulmershe Road or Hamilton Road, the same as the Eastern Avenue access arrangements.
- Addressing London Road at Cemetery Junction, in particular conflict between vehicles and pedestrians
- Drainage system for Bulmershe allotments to drain water to a lower area owned by RBC to create a wetland area
- Pedestrian crossing at Grove Hill/ Rotherfield Way junction and at the bottom of Oakley Road
- Improvements needed to Emmer Green play area
- Fixing pathways and potholes in Emmer Green
- Provision of hard pathways and improvements to car park at Clayfield Copse
- A road bridge between Caversham and Oxford connected to the A3290
- Support for Readibus, which crosses several of these priorities

It should be noted that there was considerable overlap with the next question, which asked for any other comments on future priorities. Often, proposals for further priorities were given in response to question 9, whilst general comments on the consultation were given in response to question 8. Where responses to question 9 appear to better relate to question 8, they have been reported in this section, and vice versa.

Question 9: Do you have any other comments on the priorities for future spend?

Answers to this question tended to address the consultation or approach to CIL more generally, or provided further comment on how priorities should be weighed. The following comments were made.

- Action on climate change is crucial (4)
- It is hard to decide between categories without further details (3)
- CIL should prioritise those subjects where national grant funding or other funding is unlikely to be available (2)
- All priorities are equally important
- The list of priorities should be replaced by a list of policy objectives so that projects can be ranked by what they are intended to achieve

- It is difficult to rank these priorities, and people need to see not only the general headings but also criteria on which to judge them
- There is insufficient granularity, for instance all transport being lumped in together will mean a focus on bus lanes without considering other measures to reduce car dependence.
- Future consultations should be on specific schemes not general priorities (2)
- Council should consult more regularly
- The Council should directly ask the residents in each ward what the money should be spent on
- Priorities should be set using the Reading Climate Emergency Strategy
- Do not use funds to finance road construction
- Most of these projects are not what CIL was intended to fund and should be funded from Council Tax
- Developer contributions to the Council such as 15% CIL could mean that it is in the Council's interest to permit development
- CIL funding does not compensate for the effects of undesirable developments
- Planning enforcement should be strengthened
- All communities should be consulted
- Involve RAYS groups and coordinators into this
- Cycle lanes put in along Oxford Road from the Norcot roundabout to Tilehurst Station remain empty, which seems to have been a waste of money and has caused the traffic into one lane and made it awkward joining the left hand filter lane at Norcot roundabout to Portman road, as you have to cross from right to left at the junction with Scours lane. Traffic lights at the junction of Scours Lane and the Oxford road would help this problem. Cyclists are also re-routed at this point onto the footpath shared with pedestrians.
- The Transport theme of the Reading Climate Action Plan would be a useful forum to explore transport related ideas but has only met twice in two years. Other sources of competence in the field are Reading Cycle Campaign and Cycle UK Reading branch who don't feel that they are generally listened to on cycling improvements in Reading.
- Ensure a wide variety of play equipment across the Council's parks
- There is too great a focus on children's play in this consultation.

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Agenda Item 9

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 JUNE 2021		
TITLE:	SPECIALIST VEHICLE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING & TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
OFFICERS	KEVIN GREEN/ GARETH PRANDLE	TEL:	0118 937 3419
JOB TITLE:	FLEET & TRANSPORT MANAGER/PROCURE MENT CATEGORY MANAGER	E-MAIL:	Kevin.green@reading.gov.uk Gareth.prandle@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To highlight progress with the renewal of the specialist vehicles maintenance contract, outline some of the challenges of this renewal, set out considerations for the future and seek approval to award a new contract in June 2021 to avoid service disruption.
- 1.2 In order to operate the 82 specialist vehicles including refuse collection, street sweepers and the mobile library, an Operator's Licence is required by law. Failure to have a maintenance contract in place is a breach of the licence undertaking. As the existing contract expires on the 31 August 2021, any break in contact would result in service failure.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee approve the award of the Specialist Vehicle Maintenance contract to Dennis Eagle via the YPO framework for a period of three years with an option to extend for up to twenty-four more months.
- 2.2 That further investigations be carried out into future options including a full business evaluation of bringing the maintenance service in house and a separate evaluation of the future of the Bennet Road Depot capacity issues.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 In line with the Corporate Plan 2021-22 theme on Healthy Environment it is essential that the Council's vehicle fleet is maintained. Regular maintenance is

essential in keeping vehicles operating in a safe environment, preventing and rectifying issues which could cause harm to staff or others.

- 3.2 Regular maintenance of vehicles also helps to ensure the efficiency of vehicles is not compromised which in turn lowers emissions from the vehicle. This feeds in to the Climate Change Emergency and the Council Carbon Plan 2020-25 which outlines a pathway to an 85% cut in the Council's emissions by 2025.
- 3.3 A further element of both the Climate change Emergency and Council Carbon plan is the commitment of the council toward a greener vehicle fleet. This new proposed maintenance contract will ensure the contractor has capability to maintain the new electric specialist fleet vehicles starting with the first of the fully electric refuse collection vehicles that is due to be in service in August 2021.
- 3.4 Therefore a maintenance contract is required for specialist Vehicle maintenance for the council owned vehicles in this category (generally vehicles over 3.5 tons and including road sweepers, refuse collection vehicles and the mobile library amongst others).
- 3.5 Officers followed Contract Procedure Rules as adopted on the 16 October 2018. Due to the value of the contract this would be deemed a high value Procurement.
- 3.6 Having examined options in the relevant Governing Principals, officers selected and followed option point 2 (e) commissioning that includes use of relevant Frameworks as being the most appropriate.
- 3.7 Officers utilised the Yorkshire Procurement Organisation Framework Fleet Management Services - Framework ref 921 LOT 2 - Managed Workshops in order to conduct a mini competition in compliance the Councils Contract Procedures Rules and the Frameworks guidelines. This framework is compliant with UK / EU regulations having the OJEU Contract award notice ref no: 2018/S 247-570119
- 3.8 Policy Committee have authority to accept and authorise the award of this contract.

4. THE PROPOSAL

Current Position:

- 4.1 The initial contract term of 5 years for the existing specialist vehicle contract with Geesinknorba expires at the end of August 2021. This contract has two one-year extension options. However, when officers contacted Geesinknorba in late 2019 to discuss the potential for enacting these extension options, the response was that whilst they would honour the existing term, they would not extend beyond that date. The rationale was that they had made losses over the term of the contract, an issue that was common on several contracts, the result of which was to pull back from this market. They have pulled out of other contracts with local authorities, and even paid a penalty fee to pull out early from the contract with Hammersmith & Fulham Council. A new contract needs to be in place by late June 2021 to ensure service continuity.

- 4.2 Some of the losses experienced by Geesinknorba have been due to the changes in the specialist vehicle marketplace, there are now fewer companies and manufacturers are acquiring sections of the parts supply chain network, further reducing competition in this sector.

Options Proposed

4.3 Over the renewal process of this contract, officers have looked at several sourcing options and the main three main options are detailed below:

- Option A. Joining the two main maintenance contracts (specialist vehicles and smaller vehicles) together to increase market leverage and potential for efficiencies on contract costs.
- Option B. Keeping specialist and smaller vehicle contracts separate (as they have been) and allow the specialist vehicle winning contractors to repair other organisations vehicles in the Bennet Rd depot workshop or allow public MOTs.
- Option C. Take the specialist vehicle contract or both contracts in-house and develop an income generation service from public MOTs/ other organisations/ taxi vehicle servicing.

4.4 An options appraisal is set out in the Appendix 1.

4.5 Due to the limitations of the footprint and existing infrastructure, commercialisation and insourcing of the workshop would not be viable as reflected in the tendering process by three of the contractors pulling out of the tender for these reasons.

4.6 The main issue impacting the viability of all three options is the workshop building and the space available at the Bennet Road depot. The building used as the workshop was designed to be used as an old cement storage shed that has been slightly extended in order that one of the refuse collection vehicles (RCV) could be accommodated under cover.

4.7 When this work was completed over a decade ago the specialist vehicle contract was only in place to maintain the 13 RCVs. At that time all the other vehicles were maintained in a mix of other vehicle dealerships. This scenario led to high costs in both maintenance and short-term hire requirements. In addition, there was poorer productivity for Council services, due to the delay and logistics when the vehicles needed any service and repair work.

4.8 When the existing specialist vehicle contract was let, one more section of the cement storage shed was taken into use as additional workshop space for the shorter vehicles. This enabled an increase in the number of vehicles that could be maintained on the current contract from 13 to 76. The new contract will cover 82 vehicles. The move to more income generation across the council and improvements to recycling rates including food waste has increased the number of operator licence/larger size vehicles, that also need to use the main extended part of the workshop and this trend is likely to continue. With the limitations of the workshop building and space available other vehicles due for MOT preparation and major repairs must go out to other contractors.

4.9 The additional high value specialist vehicles need to be parked securely when not in use. The number of additional vehicles is putting further pressure on the

Bennet Road depot. The depot is the Council's main hub for direct services and the main operating centre, consequently this has further reduced available space for any possible additional vehicles including the Council's smaller vehicles. Many of these smaller vehicles now need to be parked away from the Bennet Rd site. The limitations of space and increased requirement for vehicle parking needs to be fully considered in order that it does not become a future barrier to the electrification of the Council vehicle fleet.

Other Options Considered

- 4.10 The short term of this proposed contract takes into account the major changes in the alternative fuelled vehicle market. It is likely for the duration of the time period this contract covers that there will be further reduction of competition in the specialist vehicle maintenance and parts market and the ability to control parts supply and costs would be very limited so fixing costs is beneficial.
- 4.11 Beyond this period, the market should start to grow again as has been seen in the electric car market. In the meantime, this contract will enable the council to continue its Zero carbon ambitions whilst minimising risk of service failure.
- 4.12 The limitations of space and increased requirements for vehicle parking on the Bennet Road depot needs to be fully considered in order that it does not become a future barrier to the electrification of the Council vehicle fleet. However, this sits outside the scope of this contract renewal.
- 4.13 The contract needs to be awarded imminently to avoid major service disruption with the new contractors not having sufficient time to order in the workshop equipment and specialist tool needed, which would also put the Council in breach of its Operator Licence agreement.
- 4.14 Officers have spoken to the existing contractor about running on the existing contract should there be any delays in appointing a new contractor, however it was made very clear that this was not a viable option.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 This proposed contract helps to contribute towards the Council's strategic aims.
 1. Keeping Reading's environment clean, green and safe
 2. Ensuring the Council is fit for the future
- 5.2 This decision contributes to the following strategic aims:
 - To Develop Reading as a Green City with a sustainable environment and economy at the heart of the Thames Valley.

This proposed contract allows for the movement away from diesel engine vehicle to electric vehicles maintenance this contributes towards the Council's zero carbon target.

 3. Ensuring the Council is fit for the future

The contract has been market tested in line with Contract and Procurement rules and ensures that the Council can deliver its key front line services.

5.3 This contract also contributes to:

- Sustainability
Reducing the reliance on fossil fuels with the introduction of alternative fuels vehicle maintenance
- Health
Support for electric vehicle maintenance to allow zero carbon vehicle use

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 6.2 A well maintained fleet of vehicles is not only a legal requirement, but also lowers the environmental impact as well. By ensuring the vehicle emissions targets are met as well as reducing noise pollution.
- 6.3 This proposed contract feeds into the Council zero carbon plan by supporting the move away from fossil fuel in the Council fleet of vehicles, to the use of fully electric zero carbon vehicles wherever possible.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 There is no requirement for community engagement on a procurement of this type.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The proposed contract is for vehicle maintenance and officers foresee this as having no equality issues
- 8.2 No formal equality impact assessment undertaken (see above)

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Yorkshire Procurement Organisation (YPO) framework (000921) Managed Workshop was used and from this the YPO ran a mini tender on the Council's behalf (FC1485S).
- 9.2 In order to operate these specialist vehicles an Operator's Licence is required by law. Failure to have a maintenance contract in place would be a breach of the licence undertaking and would result in vehicles being removed from operation which would seriously impact on the Council's ability to its supply front line services.
- 9.3 To enable continuous service delivery, a new contract must be in place by the end of June 2021, even though the current contract does not run out until the end of August 2021. This is to allow for the new contractor to:
- order in the required new workshop equipment and specialist tools
 - allow a smooth contract handover process and the
 - completion of the required Operator Licencing paperwork, to avoid service disruption.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The impact of the proposed contract is an increase of £34.5k in 2021-22 part year and then an increase of £69k in 2022-23 & 2023-21.
- 10.2 This represents an average increase over the old contract of 19% in a full year, however, considering no RPI increases over the 5 years of the previous contract and no increase in the tendered contract, this equates to an annual increase of 2.4% over the eight-year period. This is below the market RPI rate over the same period.

Revenue Implications

	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000
Employee costs Current Budget for existing contract.	0 365	0 365	0 365
Proposed Contract costs	399	434	434
Capital financings costs	0	0	0
Additional Expenditure against Revenue code 4552-3007-00000-00	34.5k	69k	69k
Income from: Fees and charges (0	0	0
Grant funding (specify)			
Other income			
Total Income	0	0	0
Net Cost (+)/saving (-)	+34.5k	+69k	+69k

The additional cost over the three years of the main term of the proposed contract will be £207k and service managers are aware of it and can manage it within existing budgets.

Value for Money (VFM)

The proposed contract has been let via MINI Competition on one of the top procurement framework bodies (Yorkshire Procurement Organisation). This framework is used by many public and private organisations.

Risk Assessment

The key financial risk is passing on these additional costs onto the service, who will not have budgeted for them as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. Where these vehicles are used for commercial activity, additional costs may need to be passed onto the customer, which could reduce the competitiveness of the Council's offer.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 TENDER

Options	Pros	Cons	Constraints
Option A: Joining the small vehicle maintenance with the specialist vehicle maintenance contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A larger contract to take to the market. • Benefits of scale, wide base to spread costs. • Off-site maintenance leaving more space at Bennet Rd for other use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two very different vehicle repair specialisms. • Higher skill sets needed on specialist vehicles driving up cost for small vehicle maintenance • Constraints of Bennet Road and workshop space. • Increase travel and fuel costs • Reduction in service unit's productivity. • Increased short term hire costs • Vehicle parking will still be needed at Bennet Road for day to day vehicle operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bennet Road depot and workshop space • Small Vehicle Maintenance Contract has 3 years to run. • Time: new contract award by end of June 21
Option B: Allow the successful contractor to undertake additional commercial work at the Bennet Road Dept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractors could use this option to offset some of their costs over a wider customer base. • Ability for income generation work to be undertaken by the contractors. • Reduction in overheads for the contractors • Allows contractors to operate in a new location to better target new contracts. • More Contractors likely to tender for the contract in future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constraints of Bennet Road and workshop space. • Cannot currently park all council vehicles on the Bennet Road site. • Impact on service delivery, conflict of which vehicles are repaired first. • Security and Health & Safety issues. • Risk to the plan for electrification of the Council fleet and zero carbon target 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bennet Road depot and workshop space • Risk to Councils zero carbon target. • Resource's to find/cost additional depot and workshop space and work on a fully costed plan • Time: new contract award by end of June 21.

Options	Pros	Cons	Constraints
Option C: Take the Specialist Maintenance contract in house.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the market as it is Officers could not see any pros for this option at this time. • When the market settles down from all the current changes this will need to be revisited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer manufacturers in the specialist vehicle supply and maintenance market. • Manufacturers buying up sections of the parts supply chain • Reduced ability to control parts costs • Increased head count above that of the direct three maintenance staff that would be subject to TUPE. • Contractor supply support service via head office • The highly changeable vehicle and maintenance supply market. • Alternative fuels (electric) market is also changing at rapid rate. • Specialist tools and equipment can become quickly obsolete. • Increased training costs. • Bennet Road depot and workshop space constraint's means no opportunity for income generation work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Bennet Road depot and workshop space available. • Risk to Council's zero carbon target. • Resource's to find/cost additional depot and workshop space and depot design. • Look at the possibilities of an additional site. • Resource to work on a fully costed plan. • Time: new contract award by end of June 21.

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Agenda Item 10

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 JUNE 2021		
TITLE:	APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES		
LEAD CLLR:	COUNCILLOR BROCK	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.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 2021/22, or longer where required. A schedule of outside body appointments showing the Group Leaders' recommendations will be circulated prior to the meeting.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Committee make appointments or nominations to the listed outside bodies;
- 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 appointments have been added to or removed from the register in 2020/21.
- 3.2 Appointments to the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority and Joint Waste Disposal Board were made by Policy Committee motion at the Council AGM on 26 May 2021 - see the Minutes elsewhere on the agenda.

4. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 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.

- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 Non-Councillors who are appointed to represent the Borough on outside bodies may claim financial loss allowance and travel and subsistence, if applicable.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 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.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

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

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Outside Bodies correspondence and questionnaires.

Agenda Item 11

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	14 JUNE 2021		
TITLE:	READING TRANSPORT LIMITED SHAREHOLDER REPORT		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLORS PAGE & BROCK	AREA COVERED:	TRANSPORT & STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT AND STRATEGIC FINANCE
SERVICE:		WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Reading Transport Ltd (RTL) is a wholly owned company of Reading Borough Council.
- 1.2 In light of RTL's trading position and the significant financial impact of Covid 19 on all passenger transport operators, it was agreed that the Council should commission an independent review into the governance and operating arrangements of the Company with a view to improving its financial viability going forward.
- 1.3 Systra, a leading engineering and consulting firm specialising in public transport were commissioned in September 2020 to undertake the review. Their findings were presented to a joint meeting of senior RBC and RTL representatives in early January 2021.
- 1.4 The purpose of this report is to set out the proposed actions and next steps arising from Systra's recommendations in respect of Part 1 of their report: RTL's governance arrangements.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is recommended that the Policy Committee acting as Shareholder of Reading Transport Ltd (RTL) note:

- 2.1 Systra's recommendations in respect of their Part 1 report commissioned by the Council.

It is further recommended that Policy Committee acting as Shareholder of Reading Transport Ltd. agree:

- 2.3 To the recruitment of a new board of Non-executive Directors to take effect from 1st January 2022.**
- 2.4 That the Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services formally write to RTL's current Non-executive Directors serving them with notice and advising them of the recruitment process, once finalised, should they wish to apply.**
- 2.5 That the Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services prepares a revised set of Articles of Association in line with the recommendations in Systra's Part 1 report for consideration at a future Policy Committee.**
- 2.6 That the Assistant Director for Legal and Democratic Services prepares a draft Shareholder Agreement to give effect to the operational recommendations in Systra's Part 1 report for consideration at a future Policy Committee.**
- 2.7 The Shareholder representatives to sit on the interview panel.**

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Draft job description and proposed timeline for the recruitment of new Non-executive Directors

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In light of RTL's recent trading position and the significant financial impact of Covid 19 on all passenger transport operators, an independent report was commissioned by the Council in September 2020, with a view to significantly improving the Company's financial viability. The terms of reference for the report were twofold:**
 - 1) To undertake a review of governance within RTL, including the roles, responsibilities, composition and required skill set of the Board, to ensure decision making is robust and that there is appropriate challenge and review within the system, and**
 - 2) In conjunction with RTL's Executive Directors undertake a review of the Company's operations, in order to make viable recommendations to secure the financial sustainability of the Company and deliver the Shareholder's aspiration for a reasonable financial dividend in the medium term.**
- 3.2 Systra, a leading engineering and consulting firm specialising in public transport were commissioned in September 2020 to undertake the review. The work was carried out by a multi-disciplinary team of industry experts.**
- 3.3 The findings and recommendations were reported and subsequently presented by Systra to a joint meeting of senior RBC and RTL representatives in January 2021.**
- 3.4 A summary of Systra's findings in relation to the first part of their commission are set out in para 3.9 below.**

- 3.5 RTL's existing Board is made up of 12 members in accordance with its Articles of Association. These include:
- 8 Non-executive Directors including the Chair, 1 Employee nominated, 3 with Commercial/ Business experience and 3 nominated by RBC
 - 4 Executive Directors

Non-executive Directors are appointed for a four-year term and automatically retire on the expiry of their term. However, the term can be rolled over if parties are willing. There is currently no limit on the number of times an appointment can be rolled on and several members have served more than 10 years with one serving 14 years.

- 3.6 The Company's Articles of Association allow the Council as Shareholder to serve notice on the Non-executive Directors prior to the end of their term.
- 3.7 The minimum number of directors the Company can have at any one time is 4.

POINTS TO NOTE

- 3.8 In undertaking the first part of their review Systra undertook one to one interviews with RTL Board members and considered supporting documents and information provided by RTL. Their findings and recommendations are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Systra Part 1 Recommendations

Topic Area	Conclusions	Recommendations
Framework for Future Board Appointments	There does not appear to be a formal appointments framework in place.	An assessment of the skills, experience, and knowledge missing in respect of the board should be undertaken prior to appointing non-executives. The skills, experience and knowledge required for nonexecutive and executive directors should follow industry best practice. See Table 2 below.
Skills Audit	More robust selection, induction and training regimes are required for non-executives.	Clear and measurable targets need to be set for the Chief Executive against which progress should be measured. A formal selection process for nonexecutive Board members should be introduced. Induction training should be formalised for all non-executives. Training modules such as "finance for non-finance professionals" should be developed and made available to non-executives.

Board Composition and Size	<p>There are concerns over the number of long serving nonexecutives</p> <p>SYSTRA believe that there are too many non-executive Board Members.</p> <p>There are a limited number of nonexecutives effectively running the Board with the remaining members having limited or no influence.</p>	<p>A maximum of two four-year terms should be established for nonexecutive directors.</p> <p>RBC as Shareholder should approve changes to the Board composition and membership</p> <p>The number of non-executive directors should be reduced to five including the Chair.</p>
Financial Scrutiny	Business decisions must be based on relevant, timely, accurate and robust financial information.	A process map of internal procedures should be developed
Financial Reporting	<p>There is no consistency in presentational formats of the profit/loss between the three operating companies.</p> <p>The Finance Director aims to increase the emphasis onto providing rolling forecasts and reporting variances against this.</p>	<p>Financial Reporting should be standardised across the business</p> <p>Profit/loss reporting should show revenue split; local bus (on-bus, concessions, scholars, tenders etc) and other revenue (coaching, contracts, advertising etc). Costs should be shown in following split; Direct costs (drivers wages, fuel & tyres), Semi-direct (engineering, traffic, PCV, marketing costs) and overheads (buildings, admin payroll, non-motor insurance, non-PCV depreciation etc).</p> <p>Reports should include key nonfinancial metrics (mileage, PVR, number employees and passengers).</p> <p>Cashflow forecast should be provided for at least six months into the future and track actuals against forecast.</p> <p>Quarterly Board meetings should become more frequent.</p> <p>Draft budget should be presented in Jan/Feb.</p>
Audit & Remunerations Committees	The requirement for the need to have Audit and Remunerations Committees should be proportionate to the task, and will vary according to the size, complexity and risk profile of the company.	<p>SYSTRA do not believe Audit and Remunerations Committees would be of additional benefit to the business nor to the Shareholder.</p> <p>It is not felt that there is a need for additional committees to be instigated at this time.</p>

3.9 Table 2 below sets out in broad terms the recommended skills and knowledge non-executives should have.

Table 2: Non-Executive Director's Required Skills and Knowledge

Ability to see the “big picture”
Knowledge of corporate governance
Independent mindset
Stakeholder Management
Energy & Commitment
Specialist skills/knowledge*
Appropriate Qualification/Experience

*not necessarily industry specific

Whilst Executive and Non-executive board members share the same responsibilities, legal duties, and potential risks, their roles differ. The role of Non-executive board members is to oversee and be a “critical friend” to the senior leadership team, constructively challenge executive colleagues in the implementation of plans and strategy and provide advice and support for the benefit of the Company and its Shareholder.

3.10 In light of the outcomes of the review it is recommended that:

- the Council exercises its right under section 28.2 of the Company’s Articles of Association to serve notice on RTL’s current non- executive board members effective from 1st January 2022.
- a formal recruitment process for new non-executive directors is undertaken in October 2021 with adverts placed in the Guardian and other media.
- the Council as Shareholder reviews RTL’s Articles of Association in light of Systra’s recommendations and amend them to limit the number or terms a non-executive director can serve to 2 (8 years in total) and,
- determines who its representatives will be on the interview panel.

3.11 Due to the roll over arrangements set out above; retirement dates of non-executives are not coterminous, and none fall due in the current financial year. Additionally, the maximum number of non-execs allowed within the Company’s Articles is 7. Therefore, in exercising its right under section 28.2 of the Articles and seeking to refresh the non-executive Board membership in its entirety; there is a risk that none of the current post holders will either participate or be successful in a recruitment exercise which may result in a loss of experience and knowledge. There is also a risk that some may choose to resign in advance of the notice date.

3.12 The cap on the number of non-executive board members largely dictates the timing of the recruitment process, assuming all current post holders serve until

the termination date of the 1st January. A draft timetable and proposed job description are attached.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 The proposals set out in this report seek to clarify the expectations of the Council as Shareholder of RTL and strengthen the companies governance arrangements, ensuring that the RTL Board have the requisite skills and capacity to ensure the Company remains a going concern and continues to contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities of providing a Healthy Environment and Thriving Communities.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However, RTL's financial position as reported to the Policy Committee in its capacity as Shareholder in November 2020 has not improved and securing its long-term financial viability is essential.
- 5.2 RTL's loss as at 6th April 2020, still subject to auditor sign off, is marginally worse in overall terms than previously reported. The outturn position for 2020/21 is not yet clear.
- 5.3 The Company have budgeted for a breakeven position in the current year. However, they are operating in a very difficult environment and industry experts are suggesting that at best patronage levels are only likely to get back to 80% of pre pandemic levels due to changes in people's behaviours - increased homeworking and online shopping. Ensuring the Company does as a minimum break even is essential in order that it remains a going concern.
- 5.4 Currently RTL are only required to report to the Shareholder twice a year. It is recommended that more frequent reporting is standardised and that the Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services drafts a Shareholder Agreement for consideration by Policy Committee to formalise this together with the other operational recommendations made by Systra.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Constitution of the Company is its Articles of Association. The Articles were last reviewed by the Council in 2013. The Council, as the sole shareholder in the Company has the right to amend the Articles of Association.
- 5.2 The Articles of Association are the primary governance document for the company but of course any company is also subject to the provisions of the Companies Act 2006, and as far as local authority controlled or influenced companies are concerned, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 5.3 The Articles cover such matters as:
- Directors powers and responsibilities
 - Reserve powers of the Council
 - Decision making by Directors

- Operation of Board meetings
 - Appointment and dismissal of Directors
 - Directors renumeration and expenses
 - Issue of shares and dealings in shares
 - Distribution of dividends
 - Decision making by Shareholders
 - Administrative issues
 - Indemnity and insurance
- 5.4 The Articles give power to the Shareholder to appoint and dismiss directors. This is a power which is exercised concurrently with the Directors and this is a common scenario in companies generally. Shareholders may be happy for the Board to appoint and terminate director's appointments, but they also have a reserve power to make these decisions themselves if they consider it appropriate.
- 5.5 In addition to stipulating Governance matters within the Articles, shareholders often require companies to enter into a "Shareholder Agreement" which sets out requirements of the shareholder on operational company matters such as investment decisions, financial limits and targets, reporting, key performance indicators etc. A Shareholder Agreement may be in place for a number of years but can be amended from time to time. It is a document which sets out the expectations of the Shareholder that the Company is expected to deliver. Such agreements are helpful to clarify the relationship between the shareholder and the company in finer detail than the Articles.
- 5.6 The Systra report makes a number of recommendations for the future operation of the Company and these can be articulated in a Shareholder Agreement so that the Company is obliged to deliver them.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 RTL contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan priority of ensuring Reading's environment is clean, green and safe, in particular by improving air quality and the reduction in carbon emissions.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are none.

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Reading Buses - Appointment of Non-Executive Directors

Draft Non-Executive Director Job Description

Background

Reading Transport Ltd (RTL) (trading as Reading Buses) is a wholly owned subsidiary of Reading Borough Council (RBC). It is a local authority controlled company which operates day to day on an “arms-length” basis from RBC. RTL is one of the few remaining municipal bus companies in the country and has been recognised nationally over several years winning or being shortlisted for various awards.

The company has invested heavily in environmentally sustainable vehicles and has a track record of delivering social value.

Following a period of rapid expansion over recent years, including the acquisition of two subsidiaries, closely followed by the impact of Covid 19, the Company are now focused on recovery and consolidation, ensuring the viability of RTL in the long term. As part of that recovery RTL are seeking a number of new Non-Executive Directors to join their Board.

Job description

As a member of the Board, Non-Executive Directors are expected to invest a suitable amount of time on a flexible basis each month, sufficient to effectively review, oversee and inform the plans and performance of the Executive Directors in their stewardship of RTL. Non-Executives should plan to allow sufficient time outside Board meetings to familiarise themselves with Board papers and other relevant background material.

Non-Executives are expected to provide objective, independent advice to help the Senior Leadership Team deliver the best possible results for the business, acting as a “critical friend” in bringing support which draws on personal experience from their own field of expertise. However, Non-Executive Directors are not expected to become involved in the day to day running of RTL.

Non-Executive Directors are also expected to ensure RTL operates to appropriate standards of Corporate Governance and keep abreast of wider developments in both the Transport Sector and commerce generally (e.g. IT, employment policies, diversity issues).

On joining the Board, Non-Executive Directors are expected to commit sufficient time to complete a comprehensive induction process. Thereafter they are expected to ensure that their knowledge of the business and sector remains up to date.

Non-Executive Directors are expected to attend monthly RTL Board meetings as required together with an annual “away day”. In normal times, Board meetings are held at RTL’s offices in central Reading.

Term of appointment

Non-Executive Directors are appointed for an initial term of four years which may be extended by a further four years by mutual agreement.

Remuneration

Non-Executive Directors are paid an allowance of £x,xxx for the required Board meetings, events and other activities set out above.

Person Specification

Candidates for the role of Non-Executive Director at RTL should demonstrate a range of personal qualities including the following;

- Ability to see the “big picture”
- Knowledge of Corporate Governance
- An independent mindset
- Experience of stakeholder management
- Demonstrable energy and commitment to the role
- Specialist skills and knowledge relevant to an individual’s background (not necessarily from the Transport sector)
 - Significant Financial Experience, Accountant
 - Communications, Customer Relations
 - Human Resources including Trade Union Negotiations
 - Marketing
- Professional qualifications relevant to the individual’s background

Selection process

It is proposed that the opportunity to apply to become a Non-Executive Director of RTL will be advertised in the Guardian and other appropriate press. All candidates wishing to apply for the role of RTL Non-Executive Director will be required to submit a CV setting out their relevant experience/ expertise and will be selected following an interview process involving current RTL Board members and Shareholder representatives.

Proposed Timetable

Activity	Date
Report to Policy Committee in its Capacity as Shareholder	14 th June 21
AD Legal and Democratic Services revises Articles	July/August 21
Job and Person specification and route to market agreed	July/August 21
Current Non Executive Board Members served notice	Late September 21
Advert placed	October 21
Interviews	November 21
Appointments Confirmed by Policy Committee as Shareholder	13 th December 21
Appointees take up their roles	1 st Jan 2022
Induction Process	January 22

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Agenda Item 14

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Agenda Item 15

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