

Cabinet

Date: Thursday 14 October 2021
Time: 1.45 pm
Venue: Committee Room 2, Shire Hall

Membership

Councillor Isobel Seccombe OBE (Chair)
Councillor Margaret Bell
Councillor Peter Butlin
Councillor Andy Crump
Councillor Andy Jenns
Councillor Kam Kaur
Councillor Jeff Morgan
Councillor Wallace Redford
Councillor Heather Timms

Items on the agenda: -

1. General

(1) Apologies

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2021.

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(4) Public Speaking

To note any requests to speak on any items that are on the agenda in accordance with the Council's Public Speaking Scheme (see footnote to this agenda).

2. Social Impact Fund

This report seeks approval for the establishment of a Social Impact Fund.

13 - 26

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Heather Timms

- 3. Customer Service Excellence Standard Review June 2021** 27 - 64
This report details the outcome of the annual Customer Service Excellence Review.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Andy Jenns
- 4. Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review and Summary of Upheld Complaints** 65 - 74
A report summarising the complaints made to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman about Warwickshire County Council and decisions made by the Ombudsman in the year 2020/21.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Andy Jenns
- 5. Priority Worker Help to Buy Scheme** 75 - 96
A report seeking Cabinet approval for the establishment of a Warwickshire Priority Worker Help to Buy scheme.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Peter Butlin
- 6. Tackling Social Inequalities in Warwickshire** 97 - 148
This paper presents a strategy to tackle social inequality in Warwickshire.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jeff Morgan
- 7. Warwickshire Children & Young People Strategy 2021-2030** 149 - 162
A paper seeking approval of the Warwickshire Children & Young People Strategy 2021-2030

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jeff Morgan
- 8. Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (National Bus Strategy)** 163 - 272
A report seeking Cabinet authorisation to undertake necessary actions arising from the National Bus Strategy for England, including publication of the Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Wallace Redford
- 9. Submission to the EIP Inspector of Proposed Modifications to the Submitted Minerals Plan 2018 and Next Steps Towards Adoption** 273 - 286
A report seeking approval of the submission of draft modifications to the Minerals Plan to the Examination Inspector and to progress the next steps towards adoption.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Wallace Redford

- 10. A46 Strategic Link Road Consultation** 287 - 394
This report summarises the process and response of the public consultation for the development of the A46 Link Road scheme and the work completed to date in respect of the feasibility design and preparation of the Outline Business Case submission to the Department for Transport.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Wallace Redford
- 11. Exclusion of the Press and Public**
To consider passing the following resolution:

'That members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the items mentioned below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1972'.
- 12. Exempt Minutes of the 9 September 2021 Meeting of Cabinet** 395 - 396
To consider the exempt minutes of the 9 September 2021 meeting of Cabinet.
- 13. Property Disposal** 397 - 406
An exempt report concerning the disposal of property.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Peter Butlin
- 14. South Warwickshire and Nuneaton & Bedworth Local Plans - Calls for Sites** 407 - 414
An exempt report seeking consideration and approval of a response to the South Warwickshire and Nuneaton & Bedworth Local Plans.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Councillor Peter Butlin

Monica Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall, Warwick

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A member attending a meeting where a matter arises in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest must (unless they have a dispensation):

- Declare the interest if they have not already registered it
- Not participate in any discussion or vote
- Leave the meeting room until the matter has been dealt with
- Give written notice of any unregistered interest to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting

Non-pecuniary interests relevant to the agenda should be declared at the commencement of the meeting.

The public reports referred to are available on the Warwickshire Web
<https://democracy.warwickshire.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

Public Speaking

Any member of the public who is resident or working in Warwickshire, or who is in receipt of services from the Council, may speak at the meeting for up to three minutes on any matter within the remit of the Committee. This can be in the form of a statement or a question. If you wish to speak please notify Democratic Services in writing at least two working days before the meeting. You should give your name and address and the subject upon which you wish to speak. Full details of the public speaking scheme are set out in the Council's Standing Orders.

COVID-19 Pandemic

Any member or officer of the Council or any person attending this meeting must inform Democratic Services if within a week of the meeting they discover they have COVID-19 or have been in close proximity to anyone found to have COVID-19.

Cabinet

Thursday 9 September 2021

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor Margaret Bell
Councillor Peter Butlin
Councillor Andy Crump
Councillor Kam Kaur
Councillor Jeff Morgan
Councillor Heather Timms

Others Present

Councillors John Holland, Jerry Roodhouse and Martin Watson

1. General

Councillor Peter Butlin (Deputy Leader, Finance and Property and Chair of this meeting of Cabinet) made two announcements.

1) Young Authority of the Year. Laura Pain and George McVerry recently represented the County Council at the Young Local Authority of the Year competition. They competed against 16 other teams and won the competition. Congratulations are due to Laura and George.

2) Leamington Fire. The Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service is to be commended for the way it managed a recent industrial fire at Juno Drive in Leamington. Officers of the County Council and Warwick District Council worked closely to manage the situation away from the fire, providing a good example of partnership working. Twenty pumps attended the fire with appliances from neighbouring services attending to back-fill cover. Condolences are extended to the relatives of the individual missing after the fire.

(1) Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Izzi Seccombe, Andy Jenns and Wallace Redford.

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

No declarations were made at the meeting.

(3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 July were agreed as an accurate record to be signed by the Chair.

(4) Public Speaking

None

2. Council Plan 2020-2025 Quarter 1 Performance Progress Report Period under review: 1st April 2021 to 30th June 2021

Councillor Kam Kaur (Portfolio Holder for Economy and Place) introduced the published report and highlighted some areas. She explained that the Council is returning to a “business as usual” status with a focus on its core work.

Cabinet was informed that there has been an increase in the number of businesses that have been assisted to start and grow, This is largely due to the large number of economic development programmes being developed.

Although customer satisfaction is high there are nine indicators that are not on track. Amongst those are Children’s Services, Fire and Rescue, the unemployment rate and spending on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

Projections of performance are that it will remain static or improve.

Councillor Jerry Roodhouse (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group) requested that he be provided with data on vacancy rates by directorate. This was agreed.

Resolved:

That Cabinet notes the progress of the delivery of the Council Plan 2020 - 2025 for the period as contained in the report.

3. 2021-22 Financial Monitoring - Forecast Position as at Quarter 1

Councillor Peter Butlin explained to Cabinet that a headline figure of an overspend of £20.995m is misleading. Funding has been put aside for these costs leaving £3.190m to be found. This latter figure is within the threshold variance. Whilst the Council is performing well in terms of its finances there are some areas of concern. These include the DSG and placement costs in Children’s Services. Spending is closely monitored but much of it is beyond the control of the Council.

Regarding capital projects Cabinet was advised that the Councils programme is very ambitious. It has, however, been impacted on by demands on supplies by the HS2 project and building work associated with the Commonwealth Games.

Concerned over DSG spending Cabinet agreed that a further element be added to the resolution. This states,

“Asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Education requesting that they urgently review and revise the rules around local authority support to the DSG. The letter to be copied to the Chairs of the Local Government Association and County Councils Network”.

Councillor Butlin concluded by stating that financial reserves are healthy.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

- Notes the forecast overspend of £3.190m that would need to be funded from Directorate and General Risk Reserves at the end of 2021/22.
- Notes there is a forecast under-delivery of the 2021/22 savings requirement to the value of £0.874m.
- Notes the forecast capital spend for 2021/22 of £218.8m, of which £175.4m is capital payments controllable by the County Council and the balance, of £43.4m, relates to schemes funded by s278 developer contributions where the timing is not directly controllable by the Council.
- Approves the carry forward of the reprofiled spend on the capital programme of £17.656 in 2021/22 into future years and note the carry forward of S278 contributions of £10.043m that is not directly controllable by the Council.
- Approves the creation of a new earmarked reserve within People Directorate relating to the recently received Domestic Abuse Funding, in order to enable appropriate planning to ensure robust targeting of the funds to a realistic spend profile. Based on current estimates c50% (£0.523m) of the funding received would be transferred into the earmarked reserve to be incurred in future years.
- Asks the Leader of the Council to write to the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for Education requesting that they urgently review and revise the rules around local authority support to the DSG. The letter to be copied to the Chairs of the Local Government Association and County Councils Network.

4. Warwickshire Youth Justice Plan 2021-2022

Councillor Jeff Morgan (Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education) explained that the Youth Justice Service exists to help young people who have become involved with the criminal system. It is important to remember that these are young people first and criminals second. The Council is required to annually submit a service plan. This should set out the principles agreed with partners. Warwickshire's Youth Justice Service is rated highly. At one time its performance was well ahead of that of its statistical neighbours. Now those neighbours are catching up although this

may be because they have been copying the techniques used in Warwickshire and have improved correspondingly. Councillor Peter Butlin agreed that Warwickshire is used as a benchmark by others.

Councillor Jeff Morgan closed stating that the Fire and Rescue Service operates a citizenship course that targets young people who may be on the verge of becoming involved with crime.

Resolved:

That Cabinet supports and recommends to Council the Warwickshire Youth Justice Plan.

5. Education (Schools) Capital Programme 2021/22

Councillor Jeff Morgan opened this item explaining the need for a new all-through school to the south of Leamington Spa. A shortage of places caused by extensive house building in the area is forecast. The County Council has secured a site for the school at no cost, but the construction of the school will require the provision of funding by the Council. The site is not perfect. It has a pronounced slope and will require regrading. This will add to the overall cost.

A request has been made for an uplift to allow some community use of the facilities on the site. However, this would require additional funding. The principal objective is to get the school constructed and operational on time.

Councillor Peter Butlin observed that with the difficulties presented by the site and complications in securing materials caused by HS2 there is a need to expedite the project. The school can be constructed using available funding but there will be a need to be mindful of potential future challenges concerning costs.

Councillor John Holland (Leader of the Labour Group) observed that the developments being referenced are in Warwick and not Leamington. He reminded Cabinet of the objections that had been raised in the past to the scale and location of the developments, observing that these had been ruled out by the Planning Inspector. He felt that a better outcome could have been secured particularly around the transporting of pupils.

Resolved:

That Cabinet:

- 1) Recommends to Council that £49.5 million be added to the capital programme to deliver the new all-through provision in South Leamington/ Warwick (Oakley Grove).
- 2) Authorises, subject to Council approving the necessary addition to the Capital Programme, the Strategic Director for Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education, to invite tenders and enter into contracts that he considers necessary on terms and conditions acceptable to the Strategic Director for Resources.

6. Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021 - 2024

Councillor Margaret Bell (Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health) summarised the published report explaining that the Strategy needs to be in place by October 2021. To get to this stage a great deal of negotiation had been required especially with neighbouring organisations.

Five objectives were described to the meeting. These are early interventions, accessible services, appropriate accommodation, increased multiagency delivery and options for people who have received support.

Councillor Peter Butlin stated that the strategy is a good example of multi- agency working. More work in this area will be conducted through the Blue Light Collaboration Joint Advisory Board.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approve the Warwickshire Safe Accommodation Strategy 2021-2024.

7. Review of Overview and Scrutiny

Cabinet was reminded of the background to the review undertaken by Dr Jane Martin in October 2020. It was acknowledged that the outcome has been shared by a range of bodies and individuals. Members had expressed a range of views and it was recognised that there were some areas that could be improved.

Resolved:

That Cabinet recommends to Council the proposals for scrutiny reform as set out in Appendix 2

8. Local Transport Plan Refresh

Cabinet was informed that from consultation to date four themes have emerged. These are environment, wellbeing, economy and place.

Councillor Martin Watson recognised that only through a great deal of hard work has this point been reached.

Resolved:

That Cabinet

1) Notes the outcomes of the formal consultation and Citizens' Panel processes that took place in the first half of 2021.

2) Approves in principle the adoption of a flexible and easily updatable suite of LTP documents and authorises the Strategic Director for Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport & Planning, to determine the most suitable structure of documents for this purpose to inform the next phase of consultation.

3) Approves the drafting of Local Transport Plan 4 using the four key themes consulted upon as the basis for the document and authorises the Strategic Director for Communities, in consultation with the Portfolio holder for Transport & Planning, to approve materials for public consultation at the earliest opportunity in 2022.

9. Warwickshire Waterway & Canal Strategy 2020-2026

Councillor Heather Timms (Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate and Culture) expressed her pleasure at being able to present this item. The pandemic, she stated, had brought the value of canals and waterways into sharp focus. It is important that work to secure their future is undertaken and that they be recognised for their value to tourism, wildlife and the economy.

Councillor Peter Butlin echoed that the canals and waterways in Warwickshire are an important cultural asset.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves:

- 1) the Warwickshire Waterways Strategy 2021 – 2026 at the Appendix
- 2) £50,000 funding from the Place Shaping and Economic Growth Fund to support the implementation of the Strategy including the commissioning of a county-wide towpath survey.

10. Warwickshire County Council Social Value Policy

Councillor Heather Timms stated that social value will feed into the Council's procurement policy. A tool is being developed to measure social value and this will be used to ensure that the Council is moving in the correct direction.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves the Warwickshire County Council Social Value Policy.

11. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Agreed

12. Exempt Minutes of the 8 July 2021 Meeting of Cabinet

The exempt minutes were agreed.

13. The Procurement of a New Professional Services Contract for Communities 2022

The recommendations were agreed as set out in the exempt minutes.

The meeting rose at 14.38

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Chair

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Cabinet

14 October 2021

Social Impact Fund

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

1. Approves proceeding with the establishment of a Social Impact Fund, using source funding of no less than £1,000,000 from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) and authorises the Strategic Director for Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Finance and Property, to increase the value of the fund drawn from the COMF if the appropriate conditions are met.
2. Approves the capital element of the fund to be added to the Capital Programme and authorises the Strategic Director for Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Finance and Property, to adjust the value of scheme in the capital programme depending on the balance of grant determinations approved.
3. Supports the operation of the fund to be delivered by a third party and authorises the Strategic Director for Resources to take all steps as he considers necessary to establish the fund.
4. Considers the feedback from the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out at paragraph 4.15.

Executive Summary

Purpose of the fund

- 1.1 The Council resolved in February 2021 to bring forward proposals for a Social/Community Endowment Fund to act as a catalyst for building stronger communities.
- 1.2 In developing proposals for the fund several key questions were posed:
 - What are the required outcomes, e.g., demand management, reducing the spread of COVID, early intervention and/or prevention, cost reduction etc.?
 - What does the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector need by way of additional investment?
 - How do we ensure the fund engages with smaller grass-roots organisations?

- How do we ensure sustainability around additional funding?
 - How do we measure the impact of additional funding?
- 1.3 To help address these questions an analysis was undertaken of the Council's existing VCSE sector funding streams. An extract of the analysis is included as Appendix 1 to this report. The analysis indicates an area of activity we do not currently support is around funding to promote inclusion, specifically around financial, digital, health, social, and cultural inclusion. A high-level review of strategic partners' funding streams indicates a similar gap.
- 1.4 A focus on promoting inclusion aligns strongly with the purposes of the COMF, i.e., Government funding to Local Authorities in England to help reduce the spread of coronavirus and support local public health. Applying the COMF guidance to the proposal, the social impact fund will:
- Apply targeted interventions for specific sections of the community.
 - Harness capacity within local sectors.
 - Extend and introduce specialist support.
 - Enable community-based support for those disproportionately impacted by COVID.

In the Warwickshire context the fund will also provide:

- Extra support/community engagement in 'vaccine shy' areas.
 - Community-based support for people with long-COVID.
- 1.5 The fund will address several priorities of the COVID Recovery Plan, especially Priority 4, harnessing the power of communities to tackle inequality and social exclusion.
- 1.6 The fund will support current and future Council Plan outcomes, i.e., for communities and individuals to be safe, healthy, and independent, and for the economy to be vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills, and infrastructure.
- 1.7 The fund will be clearly aligned to the Council's Community Powered Warwickshire workstream, reflecting much learning from the pandemic where the role of Warwickshire's VCSE sector has been instrumental and impactful, and the Council's impetus to develop and embed more community-powered approaches to service delivery across the county.

Fund model

- 1.8 The suggestion to create an endowment has been explored in detail. The key advantage of an endowment is intrinsic sustainability through the investment of a principal sum and the ability to make awards through any dividend or interest generated. However, our exploration has concluded that, because of current low interest rates and with the level of investment proposed, only a small amount of funding would be made available to award and this amount,

balanced against administration costs, would not represent good value for money. The creation of an endowment would also conflict with the COMF criteria.

- 1.9 The alternative to an endowment fund, often referred to as a “direct impact” fund, has less intrinsic sustainability, in the sense that once it’s spent, it’s spent. However, based on direct impact fund being able to make immediate and scalable investment, and build longer term capacity, this approach is more likely to deliver the outcomes the Council is seeking, and is therefore the proposed approach that officers are recommending.
- 1.10 The possibility of funding being provided either as grants or loans has been considered. The Local Communities and Enterprise Pillar of the Recovery and Investment Fund appears to satisfy much of the need and appetite for loan finance, likely to originate more from social enterprises, which can repay loans more readily than charities. There would seem little advantage in having a near identical element to this fund. The award of loans would also conflict with the COMF criteria. The proposal therefore is to award grants rather than loans to grass roots organisations which can demonstrate that they meet our ‘impact criteria’ which will be focused on inclusion in the context of reducing the spread and impact of COVID and supporting local public health. An application process will be drafted to ensure applications comply with the COMF criteria and the Council’s impact criteria.
- 1.11 For several years the VCSE sector has flagged a need for additional capital investment, especially for community buildings. This fund provides an opportunity to make this investment, although proposals in this paper maintain a bias towards revenue funding, reflecting intelligence from VCSE State of the Sector reports and similar. It has been confirmed that the COMF can be utilised to fund capital expenditure. Any capital expenditure will need to be added to the Council’s Capital Programme via the Council’s normal governance arrangements.
- 1.12 Options to lever-in other funding, for example through match-funding, crowdfunding, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) have also been explored. To a large extent the first two of these are dependent on the specific nature of projects and VCSE sector organisations’ ability and appetite to pursue these. The Council has a role in attracting CSR contributions, using our influence through economic development activities, and bodies such as the Local Enterprise Partnership and will continue to seek to influence this.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The Council resolved in February 2021 to bring forward proposals for a Social/Community Endowment Fund to act as a catalyst for building stronger communities.
- 2.2 The COMF is a revenue funding stream from the Government that can be used to fund revenue or capital expenditure in support of work to contain and

manage the impact of Covid at a local level. The recommendation to Cabinet is to create a Social Impact Fund of no less than £1,000,000 value using source funding from the COMF. It is further recommended that if the Strategic Director for Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Finance and Property, considers that more COMF funding could be allocated for this purpose without compromising competing demands on the COMF funding, and there are sufficient high-quality applications, authorisation is given to increase the funding available via the Social Impact Fund.

- 2.3 Cabinet are also recommended to add capital element of the fund to the Council's Capital Programme, funded from the COMF grant and authorise the Strategic Director for Resources, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder Finance and Property, to adjust the value of scheme in the capital programme depending on the balance of grant determinations approved. This is consistent with existing governance arrangements where the capital funding is from a revenue budget.
- 2.4 The operation of the fund will be commissioned from a third party, at a cost of £68,000. This cost will also be funded from the COMF grant.
- 2.5 COMF is a ringfenced grant with terms and conditions about how the funding can be used. The operational arrangements and determination framework put in place will ensure these conditions are met, to avoid the risk of the funding having to be repaid later. Key amongst these risks is the requirement that the funding is used by 31 March 2022.
- 2.6 To mitigate this risk, grants will be paid before 31 March 2022. The detailed rules around how any clawback of COMF funding will operate are still pending from the Government. The latest advice and guidance will continue to be monitored and operational arrangements adjusted accordingly over the coming months, prior to allocations being agreed.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 As part of the application process, organisations will be asked how their projects respond to and help to reduce climate change.
- 3.2 As part of the determination process, projects will be subject to scoring around their environmental implications.
- 3.3 The Council will reserve the right not to award funding to any organisation or project deemed to conflict with the Council's climate change commitments.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 Analysis of existing funding streams (Appendix 1) indicates that higher value revenue awards and capital awards, focused on promoting inclusion, will meet a hitherto unmet need.

- 4.2 Based on the analysis of existing funding streams, the fund value split 60% revenue and 40% capital is considered appropriate and is recommended. Based on the same analysis, revenue awards of between £25,000 and £50,000, and capital awards of between £50,000 and £100,000, are considered appropriate.

The number of awards would be scalable depending on the fund value:

Fund value	Revenue	Capital	Number of revenue awards	Number of capital awards
£250,000	£150,000	£100,000	3 to 6	1 to 2
£500,000	£300,000	£200,000	6 to 12	2 to 4
£1,000,000	£600,000	£400,000	12 to 24	4 to 8

The recommendation to Cabinet is to create a fund with a value of no less than £1,000,000.

- 4.3 With a requirement for COMF funding to be allocated by 31 March 2022 (to reflect known timescales associated with the use of COMF) a single funding round will take place, starting in November 2021, with an 8-week application window and a 6-week determination window.
- 4.4 Grant recipients must spend any revenue project funding within 15 months of award, acknowledging that most projects will be 12 months' duration and allowing for 3 months' set-up. Grant recipients must spend any capital project funding within 18 months, although some flexibility might need to be applied to allow for potential contractor delays and/or delays in mobilisation.
- 4.5 The application process will comprise an online application form and submission of all due diligence checks and documentation as per Appendix 2. The process will be made as simple as possible to encourage the greatest number of applications.
- 4.6 The determination process will comprise 4 key stages:
- Initial eligibility check and removal of any non-eligible applications.
 - Scoring, including weighting:
 - Towards applications/projects relating to areas with higher COVID infection rates (exact criteria around this to be determined in conjunction with Public Health).
 - Towards applications/projects all or partly relating to Lower Super Output Areas in the top 10% to 30% deprivation deciles as per the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation.
 - Rejection of applications not meeting the scoring threshold.
 - A streamlined selection process involving a panel of elected members and senior managers.

4.7 All successful applications will be subject to final sign-off by the Strategic Director for Resources.

4.8 The following monitoring and reporting will apply:

- Interim reports at 6 months.
- End of project reports for revenue projects at 15 months.
- End of project reports for capital projects at 18 months.

4.9 Subject to compliance with Contract Standing Orders (and securing an appropriate exemption) a recommendation is made for the operation of the fund to be commissioned to a third party for the following reasons.

- There are suppliers with a strong record of accomplishment in this field.
- There are suppliers potentially able to lever in complementary funding, e.g., corporate social responsibility funding.
- There are suppliers that specialise in end-to-end funding streams: designing, promoting, running, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting.

4.10 The cost of commissioning will vary depending on the total fund value. Indicative costs from one supplier are:

Total fund value	Cost	Percentage
£250,000	£32,115	12.8
£500,000	£46,750	9.4
£1,000,000	£67,740	6.8

These costs will be in addition to the fund value indicated in paragraph 4.2 but will also be funded from the COMF.

4.11 As a comparison to the cost of operating the fund internally, the Council's Green Shoots Fund is estimated to have cost between 5% and 10% of the value of the fund when all known costs including officer time are factored in. Therefore, commissioning a third party for a fund value of £1,000,000 will be comparable value for money.

4.12 The risks involved with commissioning will need to be managed carefully, especially considering this is a high value fund and this is the first time the Council will have commissioned the operation of a funding stream. However, officers are satisfied that suppliers are present with robust risk management arrangements in place and strong track records of working with organisations from across the sectors.

4.13 An appropriate marketing and communications plan will be in place for the fund, including extensive social media promotion.

4.14 An online seminar for potential applicants will be organised, to outline the fund and provide advice and guidance to organisations. This will be co-organised

by our VCSE sector support provider Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action.

4.15 The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the proposals for a Social Impact Fund at its meeting on 22 September 2021. The Committee expressed general support for the proposals and raised the following specific points:

- How we ensure that the scoring of applications supports allocation to higher priority areas given the broad aspirations and level of funding proposed.
- How we ensure that those under-represented communities/ those hardest to reach are encouraged to come forward and supported in the application process.
- Sought clarification that the Council will commission a single external provider to administer the fund (rather than several).
- Sought confirmation that the COMF funding has been allocated to the Council and is available but that this is finite funding so can only be awarded once.
- Sought confirmation that no area would be excluded however the proposed weighting would need to ensure COMF criteria are met and so would prioritise those areas most affected by COVID.
- Suggested that the success of the fund be evaluated at an appropriate time in the future.

5 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 The indicative timetable for the roll-out of the fund is as follows:

- Cabinet approval 14 October 2021.
- Appointment of third-party supplier by 25 October 2021.
- Application window opens 4 November 2021 to coincide with the Community Powered Warwickshire “Big Conversation”.
- Application window closes 30 December 2021.
- Determination window opens 3 January 2022 and closes no later than 14 February 2022.
- All successful and unsuccessful notifications, and payments made no later than 7 March 2022.
- Commencement of monitoring in September 2022.

Appendices

1. Extract from the analysis of existing funding streams.
2. Due diligence documents/checks, criteria, definitions.

Background Papers

None

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Charles Barlow	charlesbarlow@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Sarah Duxbury	sarahduxbury@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Strategic Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate & Culture	heathertimms@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Considered by the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 22 September 2021.

Local Member(s): None.

Other members: None.

Appendix 1

Extract from the analysis of existing funding streams

Name of Fund	Description of Fund	Amount	One off funding/rolling programme
County Councillors Grant Fund 2020/21 (Round 1)	Aimed at VCSE sector organisations. The fund provides each of the 57 Councillors with a pot of £6,000 to support small-scale projects within their divisions	£342,000	One off funding
Green Shoots Community Climate Change Fund 2020/21, Round 1	Grant funding to community projects to mitigate against, and adapt to, the impact of climate change. Aimed at VCSE sector organisations.	£1,000,000	Rolling programme for the total pot of funding
Targeted Youth Support Fund 2020/21 and 2021/22	Aimed at VCSE sector organisations that provide youth work services for 11- to 18-year-olds in Warwickshire. Its main purpose is to increase youth work capacity and capability in Warwickshire. The fund aims to support projects which tackle local and county issues and can provide long-term, sustainable, and demonstrable improvements in outcomes for young people in Warwickshire.	£800,000	Rolling programme
Mental Health and Wellbeing Resilience Fund	One-off funding aimed at VCSE sector organisations, including small to medium size businesses, that do not have access to an employee assistance programme, to respond to the mental wellbeing needs of Warwickshire residents. This includes the opportunity to bid for capital funding to make physical improvements to buildings and outdoor spaces to make environments more mental health friendly.	£750,000	One off funding
Mental Health and Wellbeing Resilience Fund	Supporting the Mental Health Curriculum in schools. Details to be confirmed.	£250,000	One off funding
Community Ownership Fund	From summer 2021 community organisations will be able to bid for up to £250,000 matched-funding to help them buy or take over local community assets at risk of being lost, to run as community-owned businesses. In exceptional cases, up to £1 million matched-funding will be available to help	£150M nationally	One off funding

	establish a community-owned sports club or help buy a sports ground at risk of being lost without community intervention.		
Community Renewal Fund (precursor to the Shared Prosperity Fund 2022)	With express intention of enabling and supporting innovative ideas and to pilot programmes and approaches to support local economic development which can inform the longer-term UK Shared Prosperity Fund (the Government's replacement funding for the European Structural & Investment Funds). In particular, the Government wishes to test and explore greater integration of types of interventions and greater flexibility between investment themes than under the European Union Structural Funds programme.	£220M nationally	Short term funding. Applications to be made via Lead Authorities including WCC
European Social Fund	The ESF is Europe's main tool for promoting employment and social inclusion – helping people get a job (or a better job), integrating disadvantaged people into society and ensuring fairer life opportunities for all. It does this by investing in Europe's people and their skills – employed and jobless, young, and old. programme offering funding pots of between £5,000 to £20,000 to small and voluntary organisations to help unemployed people advance towards employment, education, and training.	£80B Europe-wide	Ongoing

Levelling up Fund	Investing in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in cultural and heritage assets. The fund brings together the Department for Transport, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Treasury to invest £4.8billion in high-value local infrastructure. It also embodies the approach of the Green Book Review, focusing on the needs of individual places and the strategic case for investment. Bids can be up to £20m. While the Fund is open to every local area, it is especially intended to support investment in places where it can make the biggest difference to everyday life, including ex-industrial areas, deprived towns, and coastal communities. It is also designed to help local areas select genuine local priorities for investment by putting local stakeholder support, including the local MP where they want to be involved, at the heart of its mission. Within the competition, funding will be targeted towards places in England, Scotland, and Wales with the most significant need.	Up to £20M per District & Borough & County Council	One off funding - 3 years, projects fully delivered in third year of funding
Reducing the impact of COVID – Grants 2021-23. Building Resilience in Ethnically Diverse Communities	Aimed at ethnically diverse communities across Warwickshire. Funding will be available for community organisations to develop projects relating to the following four themes: - Reducing social isolation - Mental health and wellbeing - Unemployment - Physical health Grant application window in Sept/Oct 2021.	£325,000	TBC

Appendix 2

Due diligence documents/checks, criteria, definitions

Appropriate due diligence will be carried out on all project applications, including, but not exclusive to the following checks and/or document requests:

	Revenue applications	Capital applications
Business plan	No	Yes
Project proposal	Yes	No
Risk assessment describing any identified risks in delivery of the project	Yes	No (expected to be covered in full business plan)
Cost breakdown, including evidence of where any other funding is coming from, and any in-kind contributions	Yes	Yes
Timelines	Yes	Yes
Details of building ownership	Not applicable	Yes
Details of building rental terms	Not applicable	Yes
Details of current building usage	Not applicable	Yes
Evidence of relevant permissions, e.g., planning permission, permission from building owner to make changes.	Not applicable	Yes
Details of any partners, contractors, and sub-contractors	Yes	Yes
Governing document, e.g., articles of association or constitution	Yes	Yes
Latest financial statements or other accounts	Yes	Yes
Subsidy control declaration	Yes	Yes
Safeguarding policy for projects involving children, vulnerable adults, or regulated activity of any type	Yes	Yes
Confirmation of a bank account in the organisation's name	Yes	Yes

In addition to the above the following will also be required:

- A description of how projects will be sustainable beyond the term covered by the initial funding. In the case of capital projects, how any ongoing service costs and overheads will be met.
- A description of any non-financial resources required and/or secured to deliver the project, e.g., volunteer time.

The following criteria will apply:

- Applications will be welcome from all VCSE sector organisations, including town and parish councils.
- The following will be ineligible to apply:
 - Statutory organisations, except town and parish councils.

- Individuals.
- Organisations that have failed to meet the criteria of previous funding awards.
- Schools will be ineligible to apply directly, although “Friends Of” organisations and PTAs etc. will be eligible.
- The following project types will be ineligible:
 - Projects promoting religious or party-political beliefs.
 - Any activity deemed to be lobbying.
 - Projects for personal profit or the benefit of an individual.
 - Projects where costs relate to items or work already carried out or purchased before an award is made, and loan or debt repayments.
- Applications from religious organisations will be eligible if wider inclusive community benefit is demonstrated.
- Projects will focus on at least one of the following: financial, digital, health, social, and cultural inclusion.
- Projects will align with:
 - At least one of the COMF/local criteria specified in 1.4
 - At least one of the Council Plan outcomes.
 - At least one of the 6 core themes of the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy 2020-25.
- Applications will describe how the project relates to the Community Powered Warwickshire vision and offer.
- Applications will describe how the project responds to and help to reduce climate change.

The following definitions will be applied:

Financial exclusion

“Whereby people encounter difficulties accessing and/or using financial services and products in the mainstream market that are appropriate to their needs and enable them to lead a normal social life in the society in which they belong.” European Commission, 2008. *Financial inclusion* is defined as services and activities to tackle and/or address financial exclusion.

Digital exclusion

“Where a section of the population has continuing unequal access and capacity to use Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) that are essential to fully participate in society.” Schejter, 2015. Warren, 2007. *Digital inclusion* is defined as services and activities to tackle and/or address digital exclusion.

Health exclusion

“An overarching term relating to provision of health and care services for all, recognising that some groups can experience barriers to take up of traditional services, particularly marginalised groups and those who experience a number of overlapping risk factors for worse health outcomes, such as discrimination, poverty, trauma.” Public Health Warwickshire. *Health inclusion* is defined as services and activities to tackle and/or address health exclusion.

Social exclusion

“The lack, or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas.” Levitas et al, 2007. *Social inclusion* is defined as services and activities to tackle and/or address social exclusion.

Cultural exclusion

“A specific form of social exclusion, namely that which takes place every time people are discriminated against because of their perceived cultural differences with the culturally dominant group.” Lapeyronnie, 2008. *Cultural inclusion* is defined as services and activities to tackle and/or address cultural exclusion.

Cabinet

14 October 2021

Customer Service Excellence Standard Review June 2021

Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet

1. Notes and comments on the outcome of the Customer Service Excellence Review which took place in June 2021.
2. Agrees the actions to address the partial compliances listed in the table in section 1 of the report.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Customer Service Excellence Standard Reaccreditation took place in January 2020 and the Review over a 2-week period during June this year.
- 1.2 The Standard requires annual reviews which check compliance against the Standard, including progress on the previous compliance framework, levels of complaints, customer satisfaction with service delivery and developments which had taken place since the last audit to areas highlighted for continuous improvement. The annual reviews allow us to ensure we have maintained the standards we have achieved to date, check progress on our areas for improvement and identify those areas we need to pay more attention to.
- 1.3 The 2021 Review was undertaken 6 months late due to Covid-19 pressures on services. The Review included an assessment of several customer journeys from each Directorate over a six-day period via Microsoft teams.
- 1.4 The customer journeys were identified by the Directorates. During this time the Assessor, via Microsoft teams, met with staff, partners, and customers to check that we are working on the partial compliances and areas for improvement highlighted in the reaccreditation, that we still comply with the elements of the Standard and that we continue to maintain our high standards of customer care.
- 1.5 Details of the content of the review can be found at **Appendix 2**.
- 1.6 From the 2020 Reaccreditation:
 - All 13 areas for improvement were signed off.

- One of the 5 partial compliances was signed off - the outstanding 4 remain from this review and are detailed by the Assessor in the table below:

Ref	Element	Assessor's Comments	Recommended Responses
1.3.4	We set challenging and stretching targets for customer satisfaction and our levels are improving.	Although there are some areas where you can evidence improved satisfaction this is not yet consistent. There is a requirement for metrics to be established for customer satisfaction/positive customer experience. There is a commitment to look at customer satisfaction and failure demand as part of the implementation of the Customer Experience Strategy and review metrics and analyse outcomes within the Customer Service Centre and wider. This is to remain as a Partial Compliance as the comments have not yet been completely addressed.	<p>The Council has initiated a Customer Experience Programme (CEP), complete with Programme Manager who started in post in May 2021, and a programme Board whose remit is to oversee all the Council's priority customer experience projects. In addition, the board is designing a set of Customer Experience Standards, Principles, success criteria and measurements for adoption by the council for services within the Customer Experience Programme.</p> <p>The Customer Experience Strategy has been in place for over a year now, and there has been progress made on its accompanying action plan which was reported to the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview & Scrutiny Committee in March 2021. The Strategy and its action plan are being led by the Business & Customer Services Team and work is being undertaken to ensure that both the Strategy and the Programme work together to achieve the same outcomes for the customer.</p> <p>The CEP will engage with the refresh of the Corporate Performance Framework taking place this year to ensure that measures relating to customer experience are meaningful.</p> <p>Customer, digital and data have been brought together as a single programme, so that customer experience drives digital, and is informed by robust data. An example of this new approach is a review of the schools admissions system (2 of the priority projects sitting within the CEP) which will be a pathfinder for the wider programme by identifying failure demand and designing it out.</p>

Ref	Element	Assessor's Comments	Recommended Responses
3.3.2	We evaluate how customers interact with the organisation through access channels and we use this information to identify possible service improvements and offer better choices.	<p>Looking at the key point of access point – the website - an issue on feedback was identified. The most prominent feedback request point is the 'Was This Information Useful' button. This is intended to capture feedback about the web page only, but this was not clear to customers.</p> <p>You have started to look at data and better understand this issue and found that just under 50% of responses – 1,947 contained comments and of these 1,205 did not relate specifically to the user experience provided by the website or the information contained on that page but focused on the service offered and included some specific requests.</p> <p>Due to the competing priorities during the pandemic a process has not yet been established to ensure comments and feedback received are reviewed/triaged in a timely manner and comments passed to relevant service areas for action. In addition, there is an area you may wish to consider for improvement alongside this - Although you do evaluate the way customers interact with your services, some services set up during the pandemic may have this evaluation. (e.g., not all calls are recorded.) You may wish to consider reviewing this. This is to remain as a Partial Compliance as the comments have not yet been completely addressed.</p>	<p>Response provided in 2020 Currently, comments are received via the 'Was this information useful?' option at the bottom of every page which are checked weekly. We propose increasing this to a daily task, with focus on identifying comments that constitute enquiries.</p> <p>Response 2021 A process has been developed and agreed to ensure that all customer feedback via this button is being monitored and actioned by the appropriate team. The detail of this process will be provided as evidence to the Assessor at the 2022 review.</p>
5.1.1	We set appropriate and measurable standards for the timeliness of response for all forms of customer contact including phone calls, letters, e-communications, and personal callers.	As some customer contacts into the website are going to the wrong place and customers are having to chase responses as the process mentioned in 3.3.2 above has not been established. This remains a Partial Compliance	This is associated with the element and response above and will be covered by the actions described above.

Ref	Element	Assessor's Comments	Recommended Responses
5.2.3	We promptly share customer information with colleagues and partners within our organisation whenever appropriate and can demonstrate how this has reduced unnecessary contact for customers.	There has been good progress against this element since the previous assessment. There is more evidence of teams sharing information. These cross-team approaches are increasing, and the 'silo' effect is lessening due to an increased awareness of what other teams do. In part this has come about due to the laudable way all teams have pulled together in the response to Covid19. As it is still work in progress to establish this culture in all areas this remains a Partial Compliance	<p>Response provided in 2020 During the last consultation/engagement exercise WFRS worked with the library network to promote and communicate the consultation details. It is planned that WFRS will consider ways to utilise the mobile libraries as an information link for its prevention activities.</p> <p>Response 2022 We will continue to build on the work carried out during 2020 and improve the way we share customer information internally. One project which should impact this significantly is the new CRM system. It is planned that access to customer information will be enhanced across the organisation when this is implemented. The timetable for this project is approximately 12-18 months.</p>

2. Financial Implications

2.1 The costs are included in the council budget with an annual budget of £6,934.

3. Environmental Implications

None.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 Outcome of the Review

The Assessor recommended the continued award of the Customer Service Excellence Standard and this recommendation was ratified in July.

4.2 The review identified:

- 4 elements at compliance plus (Appendix 4)
- 25 areas of good practice (Appendix 4)
- 4 elements at partial compliance (detailed above)
- 5 areas for improvement (Appendix 3)

4.3 The Assessor's full report can be found at **Appendix 1**.

4.4 The ongoing Customer Service Excellence standard accreditation will be considered as part of the customer experience programme's wider work on implementation of the Customer Experience strategy.

4.5 The Assessor highlighted areas for improvement which are listed in **Appendix 3**. Responses have been provided to these and where appropriate actions have been recommended in the appendix.

4.6 Four elements at compliance plus and 25 areas of good practice were highlighted as a result of this review. Details can be found in **Appendix 4**.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 Actions recommended for the partial compliances to be completed by January 2022 prior to the Review.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Customer Service Excellence Standard Assessor’s full report

Appendix 2 – Details of content of the review

Appendix 3 – The Assessor’s highlighted areas for improvement with recommended actions where appropriate.

Appendix 4 – The Assessor’s highlighted compliance plus and areas of good practice

Background Papers

None

Supporting Information

The following link provides general information about the standard and detail of the elements within the standard -

<https://www.customerserviceexcellence.uk.com/about-the-standard/customer-service-excellence-standard/>

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Maureen Oakes	maureenoakes@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Sarah Stear	sarahstear@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Strategic Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portofilio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Customer & Transformation	andyjenns@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Not applicable

Other members:

Isobel Seccombe

Peter Butlin

Adrian Warwick

Parminder Singh Birdi

Sarah Boad

Caroline Phillips

Will Roberts

Jerry Roodhouse
Jonathan Chilvers
John Holland.



Assessment Report

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Warwickshire County Council

2 Surveillance





1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The assessment method used was a full remote assessment due to the current circumstances of the Covid19 Pandemic.

Following the assessment, Warwickshire County Council were found to have a deep understanding of, and commitment to, Customer Service Excellence. The commitment was displayed from Senior Management levels through to operations and front line staff.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people involved in the overall assessment process. It has been a pleasure meeting with your team and having the opportunity to observe your service remotely.

The outcome of the assessment was -

“Continued award of the Customer Service Excellence Standard has been recommended”

Address:	Shire Hall, Market Place Warwickshire West Midlands CV34 4RL		
Standard(s):	Customer Service Excellence	Accreditation Body(s)	UKAS
Representative:	Mrs. Maureen Oakes		
Site(s) assessed:	Remote Covid19- all directorates represented	Date(s) of audit(s):	07-06-2021, 08-06- 2021, 09-06-2021, 10-06-2021, 14-06- 2021, 15-06-2021, 17-06-2021,
Lead Assessor :	Di Smith	Additional team member(s):	
Type of Assessment:	Annual Review		
Review of Certification Claims	Claims are accurate and in accordance with SGS guidance		



2. CONTEXT

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) is the authority for the county of Warwickshire in the West Midlands with a diverse demography. The county town is Warwick, home to the Shire Hall, although the largest town is Nuneaton. The county is divided into five districts of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth, Rugby, Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon serving large areas of population and many rural communities and Parish Councils. Warwickshire also has 'transient' residents as it is a tourist area and there is a network of rivers and canals across the county. The mid 2018 population estimate is over 571,000 people.

WCC currently employs approximately 4,830 staff as at 31st March 2021 and has 104 sites - a decrease of 5 since the previous assessment. The budget responsibility in 2020/21 before income, including revenue spending and capital investment excluding schools is £ 905 million. This comprises of £686m revenue spending and £219m capital spending. It works with other public, private and voluntary bodies to deliver the One Organisational Plan which outlines their vision.

'To make Warwickshire the best it can be, sustainable now and for future generations.'

Its statutory responsibilities are to provide: -

- Schools and other educational opportunities
- Social care services for young and older people
- Libraries, Museums and other cultural activities
- Registration Service
- The Fire and Rescue Service
- The Trading Standards service
- Highways and other public rights of way
- Planning advice as the strategic planning authority and determining planning applications for minerals and disposal activities.

Many other services are provided through partnerships including with the five District and Borough councils, NHS and the Voluntary Sector.

There are three directorates and 12 Assistant Directors with services being split between Strategy and Commissioning and Service Delivery.

WCC has transformed the way it works in the light of increasing demand and reducing resources. The transformation programme of work, 'Doing things better' centred on using resources differently and transforming the way the authority delivers and commissions services.



WCC adopted a simple approach to the transformation journey with three phases:

- Concept and shape
- Detailed design
- Implementation

In concept and shape the new operating model was developed and in detailed design work was undertaken on the model's detailed design.

WCC has moved from detailed design into implementation/delivery - the authority is putting in place the changes needed to support the new operating model and become a high performing organisation.

The three plans for implementation were aligned to the organisational design principles:

- The demand management foundations plan sets out **What we do**
- The digital and technology foundations plan sets out **How we do things**
- The people foundations plan sets out **How we will work**

Implementation consisted of several releases. Each release had a time period of delivery to ensure a clear start and end point of each delivery of change and was delivered in a structured and agile way to ensure controlled change and to manage the impact on staff.

'What we do'

The authority has developed new ways of working in a number of support services including Finance, HR & OD, Business Support and Customer Services.

Reshaping support services has removed duplication of effort across the organisation so that it is now more efficient. Additionally, improvements have and are being made to processes and better use is being made of technology so that services are more effective, and customers can have better experiences when using services.

'How we do things'

How we do things is the programme of work to enable the delivery of Our Digital and Technology Strategy.



With the right technology and seamless digital services demand for services can be reduced, customer experiences improved, and resources needed to deliver services reduced. How this will be achieved is set out in Our Digital and Technology Strategy, ensuring the best possible use of new technologies and innovation and that customers are placed at the heart of our solutions.

'How we will work'

How we will work programme to change the way we work: adopting smart, agile working as the norm, so that we can meet our business needs in the most effective way.

The implementation plan for this programme of work will enable the delivery of Our People Strategy 2023. The plan focuses on four key themes:

- **People:** working in locations where they are most effective, at the most effective times and always respecting the needs of the task, service, team and individual
- **Process:** ensuring we have the right processes and policies in place
- **Technology:** implementing the right technology and making the best use of it
- **Space:** designing our workspaces to support our new ways of working

The first release in the How we will work programme was the roll out Microsoft 365 in October 2019.

Corporate Board agreed a set of organisational principles which act as a framework for informing individual service team principles.

Change agents were recruited from each of our directorates to promote and support all aspects of change and ensure our approach is consistent across the organisation.

The new transformation governance reflects the move from design to implementation and enables delivery of both service and corporate led transformation programmes.

Early 2020 the new structure for Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) was implemented. The structure is headed by a Chief Fire Officer (CFO) and two Assistant Chief Fire Officers (ACFOs).

The 3 main pillars of service delivery are:

- Customer Services – To provide effective response to the public



- Enabling – To ensure compliance with all appropriate legislation and policies
- Continuous Improvement and Change – To oversee the Fire continuous change programme including governance and impact assessments.

All senior management positions have now been recruited to and work is focused on embedding the new framework to ensure WFRS can deliver its statutory duties.

Warwickshire – ‘Being the best it can be’



3. METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment method used was a full remote assessment due to the current circumstances of the Covid19 Pandemic. Evidence was submitted electronically via email and the assessment interviews and observations took place over the telephone and via computer. Microsoft Teams was used for the opening and closing meeting and to conduct interviews with staff and customers.

The assessment was undertaken in two stages; the first was a review of your self-assessment submission. This review enabled the assessor to gain an understanding of how the organisation has met the requirements of the Customer Service Excellence standard.

The next stage was to review the actual service delivered remotely. This was conducted through reviewing practice as well as speaking to staff, partners and customers. This included following customer journeys through your processes and how these aligned with customer insight.

During the assessment process the criteria are scored on a four-band scale:

COMPLIANCE PLUS - Behaviours or practices which exceed the requirements of the standard and are viewed as exceptional or as exemplar to others, either within the applicant's organisation or the wider customer service arena.

COMPLIANT - Your organisation has a variety of good quality evidence which demonstrates that you comply fully with this element. The evidence which reflects compliance is consistent throughout and is embedded in the culture of the organisation.

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE - Your organisation has some evidence but there are significant gaps. The gaps could include:

- Parts of the applicant's organisation which are currently not compliant and/or
- Areas where the quality of the evidence is poor or incomplete and/or
- Areas which have begun to be addressed and are subject to significant further development and/or
- Areas where compliance has only been evident for a very short period of time

NON COMPLIANT - Your organisation has little or no evidence of compliance or what evidence you do have refers solely to a small (minor) part of your organisation.



The current scheme allows applicants a maximum number of partial compliances, equating to a pass mark of 80% for all criteria.

4. OPENING MEETING

The remote assessment commenced with an opening meeting using Microsoft teams.

The assessment activity and the partial compliances were discussed. The itinerary had been agreed with Warwickshire County Council in advance. The organisation was informed that all information obtained during the assessment would be treated as strictly confidential.

The scope of Assessment was confirmed as: Warwickshire County Council

5. REMOTE ASSESSMENT

I was supported throughout the assessment by Maureen Oakes and Nikki Bailey and other personnel within the organisation were involved when assessing activities within their responsibility.

The assessment resulted in the raising of no new partial compliances. A number of observations are listed in Section 7 of this report.





Number of good practices awarded during the assessment	26
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Have the partial compliance(s) raised at the last assessment been closed?	No
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6. AREAS OF PARTIAL COMPLIANCE

Included in the criterion sections below are the areas of the partial compliance identified at 2020 recertification assessment which are still remaining.

CRITERION 1

No new partial compliances identified June 2021 surveillance assessment

1.3.4 Although there are some areas where you can evidence improved satisfaction this is not yet consistent. There is a requirement for metrics to be established for customer satisfaction/positive customer experience. There is a commitment to look at customer satisfaction and failure demand as part of the implementation of the Customer Experience Strategy and review metrics and analyse outcomes within the CSC and wider. This is to remain as a Partial Compliance as the comments have not yet been completely addressed.

CRITERION 2

No new partial compliances identified June 2021 surveillance assessment

3.3.2 Looking at the key point of access point – the website - an issue on feedback was identified. The most prominent feedback request point is the ‘Was This Information Useful’ button. This is intended to capture feedback about the web page only, but this was not clear to customers.

You have started to look at data and better understand this issue and found that just under 50% of responses – 1947 contained comments and of these 1205 did not relate specifically to the user experience provided by the website or the information contained on that page but focused on the service offered and included some specific requests.

Due to the competing priorities during the pandemic a process has not yet been established to ensure comments and feedback received are reviewed/triaged in a timely manner and comments passed to relevant service areas for action.

In addition, there is an area you may wish to consider for improvement alongside this- Although you do evaluate the way customers interact with your services,



some services set up during the pandemic may have this evaluation. (e.g. not all calls are recorded.) You may wish to consider reviewing this

This is to remain as a Partial Compliance as the comments have not yet been completely addressed.

CRITERION 3

No new partial compliances identified June 2021 surveillance assessment

CRITERION 4

No new partial compliances identified June 2021 surveillance assessment

CRITERION 5

No new partial compliances identified June 2021 surveillance assessment

5.1.1 As some customer contacts into the website are going to the wrong place and customers are having to chase responses as the process mentioned in 3.3.2 above has not been established. This remains a Partial Compliance

5.2.3 There has been good progress against this element since the previous assessment. There is more evidence of teams sharing information. These cross-team approaches are increasing, and the 'silo' effect is lessening due to an increased awareness of what other teams do. In part this has come about due to the laudable way all teams have pulled together in the response to Covid19. As it is still work in progress to establish this culture in all areas this remains a Partial Compliance

7. OBSERVATIONS

During the site assessment the following general observations were made. These include: positive areas scored as Compliance Plus; areas of good practice; areas for improvement identified throughout the entire assessment process, as listed below.

Areas for Improvement

- Evidence observed during the assessment showed the high levels of digital poverty or exclusion and a demand for traditional methods of engagement (especially in relation to the public health campaigns). You



- may wish to consider if your proposed future ways of engaging with people, matches the data on preferences and customer insight captured during the pandemic, to check if your strategy really fits the aspirations of your customers (1.2.3)
- You use reliable and accurate methods to measure customer satisfaction on a regular basis. However, many new methods of delivery have been introduced during the pandemic as a necessary response. Due to the reactive nature there was no opportunity to measure satisfaction at the time. You may wish to consider metrics to capture the wealth of evidence there might be, which might support the new ways of working going forward. (1.3.1)
 - During the Covid19 response many decisions were made based on trusting the aptitude of team members to get things done. Some of the decisions would previously have had a series of 'hoops' to get through but have worked very well. You may wish to consider if the best aspects of this approach combined with the democratic process should be retained to improve customer experience. (2.2.4)
 - There is more evidence of a commitment to capturing evidence of improvements from informal complaints with the appointment of a new team manager. The team will prioritise prevention work and learning from feedback and a new system and processes under development This is still on going and therefore an area for improvement. (4.3.4)
 - Your performance compares very well to that of similar organisations and other local authorities and national government have used your best practice. However, but you do not appear to celebrate this success. You may wish to consider if you should 'raise the bar' in sharing these positive stories. (5.3.3)

Areas of Good Practice

There were many areas of good practice observed during the assessment. Key themes were

- Good use of customer insight.
- Strengthened and new partnership working for the benefit of customers
- Constant review to checking of service demand and delivery.
- Timely communication
- Joined up working for the benefit of customers.
- Innovation, flexibility and proactive actions.
- Going the extra mile.

Below are just some of the notable examples with tangible customer benefits



- Your Customer Experience Strategy, which will raise the profile of the “customer” throughout the organisation, with the stated aim being ‘to ensure that our plans, decisions, actions and overall culture, are customer centric and by working together, we can ensure that we make Warwickshire the best it can be.’
- Your engagement with adopters and the production of a video of adopters talking about their experience
- The volunteer ‘buddies’ for adopters and fostering offering peer support- ACE Hub Buddy scheme.
- Your annual survey of over 700 adoption households
- The reduction in the time taken to complete digital applications for school admissions
- The availability of all publicly related application forms, live, on your website.
- The joint working with Contact to establish a new Parent Carer Forum (Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice)
- The issuing of EHC plans within the statutory timeframe. In 2020, 89% of EHC plans were issued within this timeframe compared with a national average of 55%.
- The new quality assurance framework for EHC introduced in January 2021. The aligned survey resulting in over 90% return with over 60% scoring the process at 7 out of 10 or higher. 68% reporting that they felt fully involved in the planning process
- Your Local Offer website developed with customers as part of the SEND & Inclusion Change Programme.
- Sharing learning via debriefs and daily meetings throughout the pandemic. E.g. the emerging trends meeting to shape the service for domestic abuse teams; constantly learning and changing to meet customer need from data captured and case studies
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- The switch to delivering services in a virtual manner yet still meeting customer needs and customer focus e.g. online MARAC meetings; virtual carers forum.
- The innovative approach by the Library service to virtual events, virtual support and flexibility in service delivery based on customer demand
- The increase in delivery of safe and well checks for people isolated in the community



- The use of customer insight to identify families needing extra practical support including white goods and laptops
- The increase in resource to enable more social workers to deal with customer demand in seeking support
- The use of insight to identify all those most in need of food parcel support and not just accepting the data on those stated as shielding
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- The improved understanding of customer needs regarding those children who were not on a register for school. Using a targeted approach and existing intelligence to achieve positive results and greater insight of customers to feed in to improvements
- The high profile of your Registrars at the West Midlands regional meetings sharing and learning from best practice
- The befriending service, born from the realisation of the impact of isolation on customers - described as a life saver by many of those interviewed

Areas of Compliance Plus

Although Compliance plus is only usually awarded once for each element it should be noted that all those awarded in 2020 are still applicable at that high level as observed during this assessment.

The following additional areas of compliance plus were also identified at this assessment.

2.1.1 There is corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery and leaders in our organisation actively support this and advocate for customers

During the assessment there was evidence from all directorates that this is consistently the case across Warwickshire County Council.

I would like to quote one of your colleagues who described what you have done as a team as the *'The Art of the Possible'*, which you seem to have applied as much as you could and made it happen.

Examples include

UK.CSE.AR2 Issue 3



- The enhanced working with Edible Links and the WFRS- a public and 3rd sector informal partnership given the full support of leaders to meet the needs of the citizens of Warwickshire. Getting food and essentials to those who may otherwise have fallen through the gaps. This is currently an informal partnership but appears to have been given the status of a formal commitment - maybe this will continue going forward.
- The release of the Customer Service Centre to be able to deliver and coordinate the Shielding Hub combined with the deployment of community development workers to lead the response on the ground.
- The mobilisation of support for care homes with the current Expert Advisory Group -Warwickshire wide- an integrated support pulling together information.
- The shielding hub hotline and the immediate ability to capture data and triage delivering this service seven days a week at the outset of the pandemic.
- The innovative approach to the councils COVID risk assessment for funding, enabling organisations and families to get funding for laptops wi-fi for school work and to enable digital inclusion.
- The prioritising of employee well-being and support for early access to the vaccine for employees
- Freeing up resource for WFRS to increase the number of community safety contacts and checks and supporting more hospital to home events
- The preparedness for agile working – the fact that the Council was already leading the way in this, pre-pandemic, enabled a swift response to the situation.
- The approach to having highly trained employees - in particular the fire prevention team members breadth of training to support customers holistic needs e.g. the dementia training and dementia bus
- Your understanding of the effects of furlough and the crisis on families and pre-empting the huge increase in numbers of children qualifying for free school meals and seeking to inform them how to apply. You are also seeking to advocate for these customers, via financial inclusion partnerships, to change the system so that those qualifying with national benefits would automatically receive free school meals.

2.1.6 We empower and encourage all employees to actively promote and participate in the customer focused culture of our organisation.

There are many examples of where employees have been supported and encouraged to achieve this. This is something which was not as evident at the previous assessment and appears to be a real improvement. Colleagues are



working together and communicating strongly across the organisation. Some of this is due to the Covid19 response but is now seen as embedded and a positive outcome from these challenging times.

The contributory events to this element include

- Strategic Directors weekly live broadcasts including the section called 'shout outs' to celebrate good work and a thank you to individuals and teams
- The staff e magazine Working for Warwickshire – focusing on staff well-being -regularly sharing staff stories and experiences.
- The STAR AWARDS - delivered online reaching more colleagues than ever before.
- Corporate Board sharing their own message to all staff regularly.
- The 'You're extraordinary - thank you' video from Corporate Board to WCC staff.
- Your flexible approach to engagement, taking on board the skills and experience of front-line customer facing staff.
- The enhanced joint working between internal teams e.g. Family Information Service and the Welfare Team, WFRS and Edible Links and Home from Hospital, Schools and free School meals and Apettito.
- The use of your established welfare information and welfare schemes and sharing of information, resulting in better data and more streamlined ways of working going forward

3.2.3 We have improved the range, content and quality of verbal, published and web- based information we provide to ensure it is relevant and meets the needs of customers.

This is primarily in acknowledgement to the superbly coordinated communications during the Covid19 crisis.

The message was strong clear and 'branded' in a way that captured the eye and ear of all customer groups and stakeholders and was appropriate for all channels.

Using the key message 'Let's do what's Right for 'Warwickshire' gave it an overarching feeling of inclusivity and, when used locally for groups or geographical areas, this inclusion and buy-in just strengthened.

Every angle was thought through and it was ably 'tweaked' to suit the current message.

It was a customer focused yet professional approach which caught the interest of others who sought permission to copy it- and did.



This was combined with a corporate commitment to ensure information was going both ways with all the key services taking on board customer need and changing demands

Other good examples are

- Your use of social media not just the 'usual' but also targeting younger people through Snapchat to reach the hard to reach with a strong message
- The delivery of the 'Are You OK' initiative through schools – a mental health campaign based on customer needs.
- The use of the one-minute guides
- The development of the Directory for COVID merging with other information improving corporate data going forward
- The electronic newsletter bi weekly and use of social media keeping communications as a priority
- The communication with schools and business support teams offering support throughout COVID. The head teachers' weekly meetings and briefings which are very well received (an observation is that the timing of these may not be on the right day for head teachers going forward)

4.2.4 We have developed and learned from best practice identified within and outside our organisation, and we publish our examples externally where appropriate.

You have many examples of learning and developing from best practice and sharing this with others

For example:

- Your approach to communications on Covid19 campaign was shared widely and used by other organisations.
- Your approach to engagement was flexible and not one size fits all- reverting to traditional method of face to face with good results – the effectiveness of this was shared with others.
- You have had a proactive approach to supporting the care services in your county with access to PPE and advice on Covid19 risk assessment - an approach then followed by others.
- You set up the 'Blue bed' discharge facility to minimise risk of infection and ease the pressure on NHS –this was then followed by others.



8. ACTION PLANNING & NEXT STEPS

The achievement of Customer Service Excellence is an ongoing activity and it is important that Warwickshire County Council continues to meet the elements of the criteria throughout the three years the hallmark is awarded for. Efforts must be made by Customer Service Excellence holders to continually improve their service.

We recommend that you develop an action plan based on the findings of this report. The action plan does not need to be a separate document and is likely to be more effective if the actions are embedded in your normal improvement and service developments plans.

We will undertake an annual review that will look at your continued compliance with the Customer Service Excellence. As part of the review we will also look at progress on any findings of the previous assessments.

In addition to reviewing progress outlined above, we will also review the services delivery, done so by following customer journeys.

For more information on the annual review please refer to our document "Building on your Customer Service Excellence success – Preparing for the annual review".

Holders must inform SGS of any major changes in the service provision covered by the scope of the certificate. This includes reorganisation or mergers.

In addition, SGS must be informed should the certified service experience a significant increase in customer complaints or critical press coverage.

If you are in doubt at any stage, we strongly recommend contacting the Customer Service Team for advice on the significance of any service or organisational change, or issues surrounding customer complaints.

SGS will visit within the next 12 months for the annual review.

SGS recommends that Warwickshire County Council retains a copy of this report to aid continuous improvement, and as a reference document for future assessment reviews.

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Appendix 2

Customer Service Excellence Review 2021

The review focused on the following:

Directorate	Customer Journeys Assessed	Discussion Topics
Communities	Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) and Edible Links	<p>Background to the WCC and Edible Links Partnership including pre and post Covid</p> <p>Update on Covid-19 recovery within the service to include the HMICFRS Covid Recovery report</p> <p>Christmas Shared initiative</p> <p>Edible Links experience of working in partnership with WFRS to deliver for the community</p> <p>How the partnership works and the benefits it delivers for the community.</p>
	Special Educational Needs (SEN) Programme	<p>The Send and Inclusion programme of change to be made to the services provided for children and young people with SEN.</p> <p>The development of local and county wide strategies for SEND and Inclusion services which improve outcomes for children, young people, and families.</p>
	School Admissions (Not on a School Role)	<p>The Schools Admission customer journey was assigned as an area for improvement in the reaccreditation.</p> <p>The Assessor commented:</p> <p>There is also 'noise' around school admissions and the number of students not yet placed in school, but the data available did not seem to reflect the concerns raised. You may wish to consider reviewing the information you provide to ensure that it is meaningful to your customers.</p> <p>WCC response - The children in question are being picked up in a cell called Children not on a school roll (NOASR).</p> <p>A team of professionals were reviewing the situation every week during the first COVID lock down (V1.0) and providing additional resources to support the team. Currently we have the cell which meet monthly to discuss on a strategic level. We are also going through an Admissions Transformation Programme</p>

Directorate	Customer Journeys Assessed	Discussion Topics
		and Customer Experience Programme (starting December 2020)
	Free School Meals	Ensuring that children attending Warwickshire schools were supported in getting their free school meals during the lockdown period including those children not in main school (most vulnerable and those that had moved into Warwickshire and did not have a school place). During December 2020 Winter Fund Payments were rolled out to parents eligible for free school meals. This is an additional payment to help families over the Christmas period.
	WCC response to coronavirus to address the needs of WCC customers during lockdown.	Education Leadership Hotline to support all school leaders through the COVID-19 pandemic. This included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a dedicated phone number available for all school leaders • a dedicated email address for school leaders to contact and receive a response from. • A daily briefing sent to all school leaders to support them and signpost schools as necessary in correlation with Public Health. As the COVID-19 pandemic continued, the Education Leadership Hotline which supported all school leaders through the COVID-19 pandemic was evolved with Public Help to an Education COVID-19 Response Team dealing with all reported cases of children and staff with positive cases and advice herein.
	WFRS Hospital to home service	Amendments made to the service to ensure the service was able to continue during the pandemic. WCC's response to COVID-19 March to present and how we have supported the residents of Warwickshire during this pandemic.
People	Covid Response from Public Health Warwickshire	Overview of Public Health and how it's changed to support services during Covid-19.
	Covid Response from Domestic Abuse - Strategy & Commissioning	Domestic Abuses response to service adaptation due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Directorate	Customer Journeys Assessed	Discussion Topics
	Overview of Health Wellbeing and Self-Care - Recovery of Services	Overview of the People Directorate response to Covid-19 pandemic and how we had to support services to carry on with 'business as usual'.
	Community Equipment Service response during the pandemic	Millbrook Community Equipment Contract. How the customer journey has been impacted upon because of the pandemic and how the service has responded to supporting the customer during the Covid-19 pandemic.
	Children and Family Centres response during the pandemic.	<p>Service/customer journey overview pre/post Covid-19, how this has been impacted upon because of the pandemic and how the service has responded to supporting the customer during the pandemic.</p> <p>St Michaels - Service delivery including virtual offer and customer engagement with Bedworth community.</p> <p>Written case studies from parents accessing the centre services and food parcels.</p> <p>Barnardos - Service delivery including virtual offer, timetable of activities, engagement with midwifery across the county.</p> <p>Customer feedback gathered from parent survey questionnaires – September 2019 to date.</p> <p>Volunteer's programme and parent champions.</p> <p>Barnardo's national fund to support families in need during Covid-19.</p>
	Care Home service response during the pandemic	How WCC and the Care Home provider have had to adapt services due to the Covid-19 pandemic to keep customers safe and homes well equipped with PPE.
Resources	Warwickshire Registrars Service	WCC response to coronavirus to address the needs of WCC customers during lockdown.
	Covid19 Response Overview - Shielded Hub	WCC response to coronavirus to address the needs of WCC customers during lockdown.

Directorate	Customer Journeys Assessed	Discussion Topics
	Covid19 Response - Customer Service Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of telephone calls received and how this was resourced. • The development and implementation of a digital form to enable customers to be able to contact us digitally. • The use of a spreadsheet by all partners in addressing the needs of customers. • The provision of continued support and what that will entail.
	Covid19 Response - Hawkes Point	Co-ordination of food and other support in response to the coronavirus during lockdown
	Community Development Workers - Outreach workers who cover the whole of Warwickshire	Delivery of food and other support to customers during coronavirus lockdown and afterwards.
	Covid Directory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overview of the development of the Covid-19 directory: 2. Why separate from the Warwickshire Directory 3. The background behind the decision to develop the directory 4. The process of development, publication and maintenance of the Covid-19 directory.
	WCC Communications Strategy	Overview of the communications strategy during the pandemic.
	The Library and Information Service (LIS)	Overview of the impact and changes made to mitigate the impact on customers during lockdowns and the recovery of service delivery for LIS and Registrars Service.
	LIS - Customer Engagement (Face to face and virtually - Events and Activities)	<p>How the Service delivered events and activities during the lockdown period, take up of services and customer feedback.</p> <p>The recovery of events and activities and changes to delivery because of lockdown.</p>
	LIS - Befriending Service	<p>The development and administration of this service, the take up and customer feedback.</p> <p>Impact on customers and staff making the calls.</p>
	LIS - Digital support and E Offer	What is the service offer, uptake, feedback from customers and input

Directorate	Customer Journeys Assessed	Discussion Topics
		from those staff making the calls.
	Mini Mobile / Home Delivery Service	The change in the service offer during lockdowns, feedback from customers, recovery of service.

The following items were also discussed with the Assessor during the review:

1. A Microsoft Teams meeting with partners from Stratford District Council and Rugby Borough Council to discuss partnership working during the pandemic specifically lockdown 1.0.
2. A meeting with Corporate Board to discuss the positioning of customer service strategically and how this is contributing to organisational goals and objectives.
3. A staff focus group discussed:
 - a. What it is like working for Warwickshire County Council
 - b. Support for staff during Covid-19
 - c. Transformation
 - d. Staff Forums
4. Customer and Partner conversations regarding the Free School Meals Service
5. Conversation with a School Head Teacher about the support received from WCC during the Covid-19 crisis.
6. Telephone calls with a number of LIS customers to discuss their views on the necessary changes to the service due to the pandemic and the impact the changes had on them.

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Customer Service Excellence Standard Review 2021

Areas for Improvement

Ref	Assessors Comments	Response/Recommendations
1.2.3	Evidence observed during the assessment showed the high levels of digital poverty or exclusion and a demand for traditional methods of engagement (especially in relation to the public health campaigns). You may wish to consider if your proposed future ways of engaging with people, matches the data on preferences and customer insight captured during the pandemic, to check if your strategy really fits the aspirations of your customers.	We will review suggested improvement and build into plans where appropriate.
1.3.1	You do use reliable and accurate methods to measure customer satisfaction on a regular basis. However, many new methods of delivery have been introduced during the pandemic as a necessary response. Due to the reactive nature there was no opportunity to measure satisfaction at the time. You may wish to consider metrics to capture the wealth of evidence there might be, which might support the new ways of working going forward.	We will review suggested improvement and build into plans where appropriate.
2.2.4	During the Covid19 response many decisions were made based on trusting the aptitude of team members to get things done. Some of	We will review suggested improvement and build into plans where appropriate.

	<p>the decisions would previously have had a series of 'hoops' to get through but have worked very well. You may wish to consider if the best aspects of this approach combined with the democratic process should be retained to improve customer experience.</p>	
4.3.4	<p>There is more evidence of a commitment to capturing evidence of improvements from informal complaints with the appointment of a new team manager. The team will prioritise prevention work and learning from feedback and a new system and processes under development This is still on going and therefore an area for improvement.</p>	<p>This area will be addressed during the 2022 review. The continuation of this work is already planned and will be implemented over the next 12 months.</p>
5.3.3	<p>Your performance compares very well to that of similar organisations and other local authorities and national government have used your best practice. However, but you do not appear to celebrate this success. You may wish to consider if you should 'raise the bar' in sharing these positive stories.</p>	<p>We will review suggested improvement and build into plans where appropriate.</p>

Appendix 4

Areas of Compliance Plus from the 2021 Customer Service Excellence Review

Element – 2.1.1 - There is corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery and leaders in our organisation actively support this and advocate for customers.

During the assessment there was evidence from all directorates that this is consistently the case across Warwickshire County Council.

I would like to quote one of your colleagues who described what you have done as a team as the 'The Art of the Possible', which you seem to have applied as much as you could and made it happen.

Examples include:

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Element – 4.2.4 - We have developed and learned from best practice identified within and outside our organisation, and we publish our examples externally where appropriate.

You have many examples of learning and developing from best practice and

sharing this with others

For example:

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- You have had a proactive approach to supporting the care services in your county with access to PPE and advice on Covid19 risk assessment - an approach then followed by others.
- You set up the 'Blue bed' discharge facility to minimise risk of infection and ease the pressure on NHS –this was then followed by others.

Areas of Good Practice

1. Your Customer Experience Strategy, which will raise the profile of the “customer” throughout the organisation, with the stated aim being ‘to ensure that our plans, decisions, actions and overall culture, are customer centric and by working together, we can ensure that we make Warwickshire the best it can be.’
2. Your engagement with adopters and the production of a video of adopters talking about their experience
3. The volunteer ‘buddies’ for adopters and fostering offering peer support ACE Hub Buddy scheme.
4. Your annual survey of over 700 adoption households
5. The reduction in the time taken to complete digital applications for school Admissions
6. The availability of all publicly related application forms, live, on your website.
7. The joint working with Contact to establish a new Parent Carer Forum (Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice)
8. The issuing of EHC plans within the statutory timeframe. In 2020, 89% of EHC plans were issued within this timeframe compared with a national average of 55%.
9. The new quality assurance framework for EHC introduced in January 2021. The aligned survey resulting in over 90% return with over 60% scoring the process at 7 out of 10 or higher. 68% reporting that they felt fully involved in the planning process

10. Your Local Offer website developed with customers as part of the SEND & Inclusion Change Programme.
11. Sharing learning via debriefs and daily meetings throughout the pandemic. For example, the emerging trends meeting to shape the service for domestic abuse teams; constantly learning and changing to meet customer need from data captured and case studies
12. Building on existing partnerships to work together in the crisis. Partnerships strengthened during covid and a legacy for the future, also resulting in less duplication of delivery since this closer collaboration.
13. Developing new partnership e.g., working with local pharmacies to reach those who are hard to reach
14. The switch to delivering services in a virtual manner yet still meeting customer needs and customer focus e.g., online MARAC meetings; virtual carers forum.
15. The innovative approach by the Library service to virtual events, virtual support and flexibility in service delivery based on customer demand.
16. The increase in delivery of safe and well checks for people isolated in the community
17. The use of customer insight to identify families needing extra practical support including white goods and laptops
18. The increase in resource to enable more social workers to deal with customer demand in seeking support
19. The use of insight to identify all those most in need of food parcel support and not just accepting the data on those stated as shielding
20. The introduction of parent champions and the parent and family board
21. The innovative use of arts-based interventions to get the message across and support people at this time
22. The Christmas shared event - good use of insight - identifying those customers who were not necessarily on the radar as being in need for support at Christmas
23. The improved understanding of customer needs regarding those children who were not on a register for school. Using a targeted approach and existing intelligence to achieve positive results and greater insight of customers to feed into improvements
24. The high profile of your Registrars at the West Midlands regional meetings sharing and learning from best practice

25. The befriending service, born from the realisation of the impact of isolation on customers - described as a life saver by many of those interviewed

Cabinet

14 October 2021

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review and Summary of Upheld Complaints

Recommendation(s)

1. Cabinet is recommended to receive and comment on the annual review and summary of upheld complaints issued by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman in the financial year 2020/21.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Each year the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) produces a review letter which contains a summary of statistics on the complaints made about the Council for the year ended 31 March.
- 1.2 This report attaches a copy of the LGSCO's letter for 2020/21 (Appendix 1) and provides more detail in relation to the themes identified by the upheld cases and action being taken (section 6).

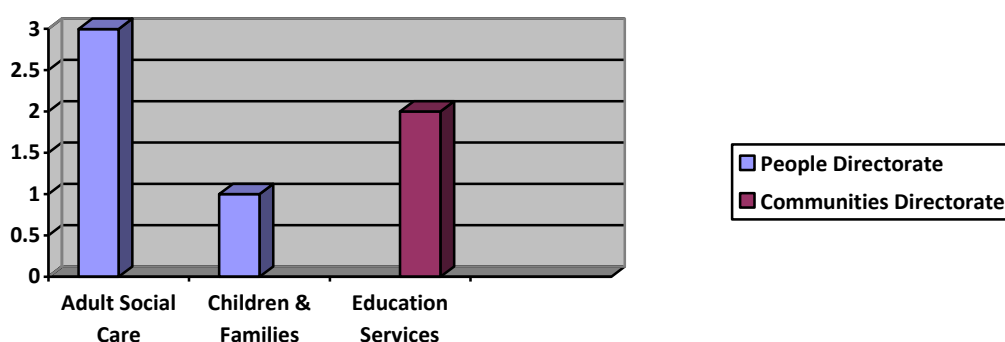
2. Complaints received by the LGSCO and decisions made

- 2.1 In the financial year 2020/21, 50 complaints and enquiries were received by the LGSCO in respect of Warwickshire County Council. The breakdown of the areas these complaints and enquiries related to were as follows:
 - 2.1.1 Adult Social Care = 20
 - 2.1.2 Corporate & other services = 1
 - 2.1.3 Education & Children's Services = 25
 - 2.1.4 Highways & Transport = 3
 - 2.1.5 Other = 1
- 2.2 In this period the LGSCO made 41 decisions (which includes a number of decisions in respect of complaints received by the LGSCO in the previous year (2019/20)). Of these 41 decisions, the LGSCO decided that:
 - 2.2.1 1 complainant was given advice and signposted back to complaint handling;
 - 2.2.2 1 complaint was incomplete or invalid;
 - 2.2.3 17 complaints were referred back to the Council for local resolution;
 - 2.2.4 13 complaints were closed after initial enquiries were made with the Council; and

2.2.5 9 complaints were the subject of full LGSCO investigations.

2.3 Of the 9 cases investigated, 6 complaints were upheld and 3 were not upheld, giving the Council an uphold rate of 67%. This is lower in percentage terms than the average for similar local authorities in this period (71%). The upheld rate should also be viewed in the context of the overall number of decisions made by the LGSCO in this period and the method of calculation. The LGSCO figure of 67% calculates the percentage against the number of complaints investigated (i.e. 6 upheld from 9 that were fully investigated) rather from the total number of complaints about the Council the LGSCO decided on in that period.

2.4 The table below illustrates the breakdown of complaints upheld by area:



2.5 The LGSCO’s Annual Letter includes details about compliance with agreed remedies. This shows that out of the 6 compliance outcomes for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021, the Council had a compliance rate of 100%. The LGSCO in his Annual Letter does note that whilst this compliance rate is pleasing, it is disappointing that in four of these cases, remedies were not completed within the agreed timescales. The LGSCO has noted that he highlighted delays in the remedy process in his previous annual letter to the Council and is therefore concerned that the issues persist. The LGSCO has invited the Council to consider how it might make improvements to reduce delays in the remedy process, including informing the LGSCO promptly when it completes a remedy.

2.6 The complaints that these decisions on remedies relate to are not necessarily the same complaints that were upheld in the same period and referred to in paragraph 2.1 as they may have been upheld in the previous financial year.

2.7 In terms of the complaints that were remedied outside of the agreed time frames:

2.7.1 Two related to complaints made about Education & Learning and delays in completing the remedies were caused in large part by the impact of Covid-19 and the officers responsible for implementing the agreed actions being at the heart of the Council’s education Covid-19 response; and

2.7.2 Two related to complaints made about Adult Social Care. In respect of one of these complaints the timeframes for the remedies were agreed just before the Covid-19 pandemic, when the focus of social care staff necessarily changed fundamentally. The LGSCO suspended casework with local authorities during part of this period. In respect of the other complaint, it took longer to implement the remedy in part because a decision on the compensation payable needed to be taken to the Regulatory Committee but also because some of the information to enable the remedy to be implemented had not been received from the complainant.

2.8 Officers in Legal Services monitor the implementation of remedies and continue to work closely with the relevant officers to encourage timely completion of remedies. Where it is not possible to do so because of events outside of the officers' control, the Council communicates with the LGSCO to see whether the agreed remedy, or the timescale, can be reviewed. A reminder of the importance of ensuring timely compliance with agreed remedies and the importance of ensuring they are achievable has been given to relevant officers who deal with these complaints. Consideration is also being given to whether additional monitoring of agreed remedies by the Council's Link Officer with the LGSCO (who sits in Legal Services) would help.

3. LGSCO Review of Local Government Complaints 2020/21

3.1 The LGSCO's Review of Local Government Complaints 2020/21 which was published at the end of July 2021 reports that across Local Government:

3.1.1 They are finding fault more often: they upheld 67% of complaints they investigated, up from 61% last year

3.1.2 The uphold rate increased across all categories of complaint, except Environmental Services. They continue to uphold the highest proportion of complaints about Education and Children's Services (77%)

3.1.3 They recommended 1,488 service improvements, up 2% on the previous year (as a proportion of all recommendations made)

3.1.4 Compliance with their recommendations remains high at 99.5%

3.2 The Review also highlights that the LGSCO published 40 public interest reports during the year 2020/21 and whilst the breadth of their casework is represented, complaints about Education and Children's Services continue to dominate, being the subject matter in two fifths of their reports.

3.3 The Review notes that compliance with agreed remedies remains high and that most local authorities demonstrate a willingness to put things right for individuals and commit to often significant wider reviews of services changes

to ensure others are not similarly affected by the faults their investigations uncover. The LGSCO commends such an approach.

- 3.4 The LGSCO also talks about the impact of the pandemic on local authorities and in particular on their complaint handling systems and notes that whilst the challenges local authorities are facing cannot be underestimated nor can the impact of the pandemic, he is concerned about the general erosion to the visibility, capacity, and status of complaint functions within local authorities.
- 3.5 The LGSCO reiterates that good public administration is more important than ever and managing complaints effectively is key to drive learning and improvement in public services. The LGSCO wants to use the evidence of its casework to identify those local authorities that require support to improve their complaint handling and wants to target specific support to those local authorities.
- 3.6 The full Report can be found online at <https://www.lgo.org.uk/information-centre/reports/annual-review-reports/local-government-complaint-reviews>.

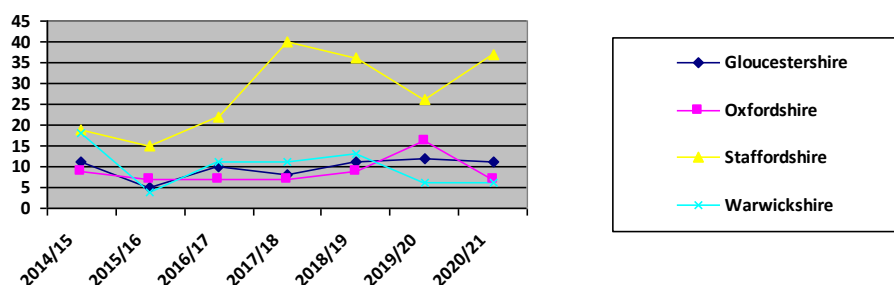
4. Actions taken by the Council to remedy fault

- 4.1 In terms of the actions that this Council agreed to take to remedy fault found by the LGSCO in 2020/21 (the 6 upheld complaints referred to in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 above):
 - 4.1.1 In 5 of the cases a financial remedy was agreed including agreement to refund or waive care fees and to refund costs incurred as a result of fault. In 3 of those cases the Council agreed to make payments to recognise the time and trouble in bringing the complaint or avoidable distress caused as a result of the fault. These payments totalled £1000.
 - 4.1.2 In 2 cases the Council agreed to reconsider a decision.
 - 4.1.3 In 2 cases the Council agreed to provide training/guidance to staff.
 - 4.1.4 In 2 cases the Council agreed to provide information or advice.
 - 4.1.5 In 2 cases the Council agreed to review policies or practices.

5. Comparison to previous years and other local authorities

- 5.1 By way of comparison to last year, the number of upheld complaints has remained the same (6 upheld complaints) but the percentage of upheld complaints out of all investigations undertaken has reduced. No formal Reports were issued against the Council in 2020/21.
- 5.2 Whilst there will be various reasons for the year on year variation in the number of upheld complaints, this data can be useful as a general guide to see how the Council is performing when it comes to LGSCO complaints. The

number of upheld complaints in previous years can be seen on the graph below and includes those for other County Councils in the West Midlands as a comparison:



6. Themes from upheld complaints and actions being taken

- 6.1 The largest number of upheld complaints in any single area for the Council was in relation to Adult Social Care where there were 3 upheld complaints in 2020/21. One complaint related to the quality of care received, another related to how the Council had calculated a personal budget and the other related to meeting needs in line with a support plan.
- 6.2 The service area with the second highest number of upheld complaints was Education Services, where the LGSCO upheld 2 complaints. One related to education provision whilst a child was out of school and integrating them back into school and the other related to school transport.
- 6.3 A further upheld complaint was in relation to Children & Families and related to the way a parental assessment was undertaken.
- 6.4 Colleagues from Legal Services and the Customer Relations Team continue to monitor any themes arising from LGSCO complaints and work with relevant service areas to highlight areas of concern. Focus Reports issued by the LGSCO are also brought to the attention of relevant service areas. These are reports that the LGSCO issues periodically to highlight common or systemic issues that they see in the complaints they investigate. The intention is to share learning from complaints with local authorities, to contribute to public policy debates and give elected members tools to scrutinise local services.

7. Reporting upheld complaints

- 7.1 Performance in relation to LGSCO complaints is one of the Council's Corporate Health Measures. For 2020/21 we had a target of no more than 10 upheld decisions (which included upheld Information Commissioner/Tribunal decisions and Judicial Reviews). This target was not exceeded in 2020/21. There were 6 upheld LGSCO complaints and no upheld Information Commissioner Office's decisions or adverse Judicial Review decisions.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 Financial implications of the individual upheld decisions have been included within the body of the report and totalled £1,000. These costs will be met from the resources of the individual services concerned.

9. Environmental Implications

- 9.1 None.

10. Supporting Information

- 10.1 None

11. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 11.1 None

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 - LGSCO Annual Letter and appendices

Background Papers

None

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Sioned Harper	sionedharper@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Sarah Duxbury	sarahduxbury@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Strategic Director for Resources – Rob Powell	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation	Portfolio Holder for Customer & Transformation – Cllr Andy Jenns	cllrjenns@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s):

Other members: The Chair and Party Spokes of the Resources and FRS Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 July 2021

By email

Ms Fogarty
Chief Executive
Warwickshire County Council

Dear Ms Fogarty

Annual Review letter 2021

I write to you with our annual summary of statistics on the decisions made by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman about your authority for the year ending 31 March 2021. At the end of a challenging year, we maintain that good public administration is more important than ever and I hope this feedback provides you with both the opportunity to reflect on your Council's performance and plan for the future.

You will be aware that, at the end of March 2020 we took the unprecedented step of temporarily stopping our casework, in the wider public interest, to allow authorities to concentrate efforts on vital frontline services during the first wave of the Covid-19 outbreak. We restarted casework in late June 2020, after a three month pause.

We listened to your feedback and decided it was unnecessary to pause our casework again during further waves of the pandemic. Instead, we have encouraged authorities to talk to us on an individual basis about difficulties responding to any stage of an investigation, including implementing our recommendations. We continue this approach and urge you to maintain clear communication with us.

Complaint statistics

This year, we continue to focus on the outcomes of complaints and what can be learned from them. We want to provide you with the most insightful information we can and have focused statistics on three key areas:

Complaints upheld - We uphold complaints when we find some form of fault in an authority's actions, including where the authority accepted fault before we investigated.

Compliance with recommendations - We recommend ways for authorities to put things right when faults have caused injustice and monitor their compliance with our recommendations. Failure to comply is rare and a compliance rate below 100% is a cause for concern.

Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority - In these cases, the authority upheld the complaint and we agreed with how it offered to put things right. We encourage the early resolution of complaints and credit authorities that accept fault and find appropriate ways to put things right.

Finally, we compare the three key annual statistics for your authority with similar types of authorities to work out an average level of performance. We do this for County Councils, District Councils, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary Councils, and London Boroughs.

Your annual data will be uploaded to our interactive map, [Your council's performance](#), along with a copy of this letter on 28 July 2021. This useful tool places all our data and information about councils in one place. You can find the decisions we have made about your Council, public reports we have issued, and the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

I would encourage you to share the resource with colleagues and elected members; the information can provide valuable insights into service areas, early warning signs of problems and is a key source of information for governance, audit, risk and scrutiny functions.

As you would expect, data has been impacted by the pause to casework in the first quarter of the year. This should be considered when making comparisons with previous year's data.

It is pleasing that we recorded our satisfaction with your Council's compliance in six cases where we recommended a remedy. However, it is disappointing that in four of these cases, remedies were not completed within the agreed timescales. While I acknowledge the pressures councils are under, such delays add to the injustice already suffered by complainants. Additionally, the actions you agree to take, and your performance in implementing them, are reported publicly on our website, so are likely to generate increased public and media scrutiny in future.

I reported my concerns about delays in the remedy process last year and it is concerning that the issues persist. I invite the Council to consider how it might make improvements to reduce delays in the remedy process, including informing us promptly when it completes a remedy.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

I am increasingly concerned about the evidence I see of the erosion of effective complaint functions in local authorities. While no doubt the result of considerable and prolonged budget and demand pressures, the Covid-19 pandemic appears to have amplified the problems and my concerns. With much greater frequency, we find poor local complaint handling practices when investigating substantive service issues and see evidence of reductions in the overall capacity, status and visibility of local redress systems.

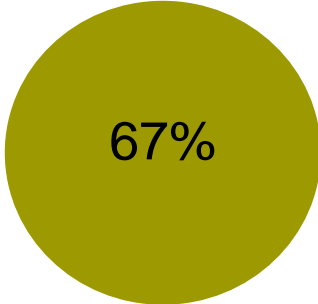
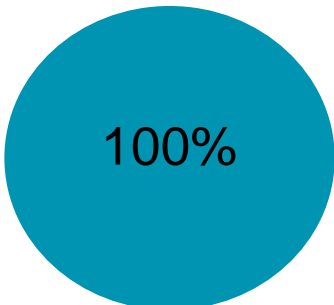
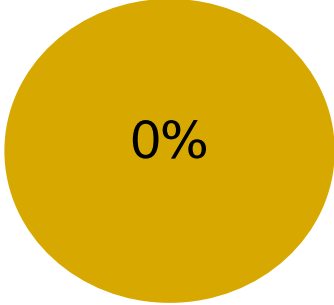
With this context in mind, we are developing a new programme of work that will utilise complaints to drive improvements in both local complaint systems and services. We want to use the rich evidence of our casework to better identify authorities that need support to improve their complaint handling and target specific support to them. We are at the start of this ambitious work and there will be opportunities for local authorities to shape it over the coming months and years.

An already established tool we have for supporting improvements in local complaint handling is our successful training programme. During the year, we successfully adapted our face-to-face courses for online delivery. We provided 79 online workshops during the year, reaching more than 1,100 people. To find out more visit www.lgo.org.uk/training.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M King', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael King
Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Complaints upheld		
	<p>67% of complaints we investigated were upheld.</p> <p>This compares to an average of 71% in similar authorities.</p>	<p>6 upheld decisions</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 9 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>
Compliance with Ombudsman recommendations		
	<p>In 100% of cases we were satisfied the authority had successfully implemented our recommendations.</p> <p>This compares to an average of 100% in similar authorities.</p>	<p>Statistics are based on a total of 6 compliance outcomes for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Failure to comply with our recommendations is rare. An authority with a compliance rate below 100% should scrutinise those complaints where it failed to comply and identify any learning.		
Satisfactory remedy provided by the authority		
	<p>In 0% of upheld cases we found the authority had provided a satisfactory remedy before the complaint reached the Ombudsman.</p> <p>This compares to an average of 8% in similar authorities.</p>	<p>0 satisfactory remedy decisions</p> <p>Statistics are based on a total of 9 detailed investigations for the period between 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021</p>

NOTE: To allow authorities to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, we did not accept new complaints and stopped investigating existing cases between March and June 2020. This reduced the number of complaints we received and decided in the 20-21 year. Please consider this when comparing data from previous years.

Cabinet

14 October 2021

Priority Worker Help To Buy Scheme

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 1 Agrees to further explore the setting up of a Priority Worker Help to Buy (PWHTB) Scheme on the basis set out in paragraph 2 below, subject to compliance with the financial principles set out in paragraph 4.10; and
- 2 Considers the observations made by the Resources and Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee and requests officers to continue to work with financial institutions to gather input as to how to further develop the final product to provide affordable help to priority workers who are or will be residents of Warwickshire; and
- 3 Requests officers make a further report to Cabinet on the detail of the PWHTB at the appropriate time in line for the first Warwickshire Property and Development Group (WPDG) site specific development likely to apply PWHTB.

1 Background to this report

- 1.1 This report follows the reports to Cabinet on the set up of the Warwickshire Property and Development Group (WPDG) and continues work on the operational delivery of the Commercial Strategy.
- 1.2 The proposal in this paper is intended to complement the new (replacement) national Help To Buy Scheme, as amended from April 2020. The proposal has potentially less restrictive applicant criteria and is potentially less restrictive on whom the property can be sold on to. The proposal in this paper aligns with the Council's Recovery Plan objective 7.8 'Working in partnership with Homes England, we will remove the blocks that have prevented some sites in Warwickshire from being developed, providing more and affordable housing whilst also supporting the recovery of our local economy.'
- 1.3 This report considers whether Warwickshire County Council should:
 - (i) progress developing a financial product of its own to encourage home ownership; and

- (ii) have an option to offer this product selectively across its own WPDG developed sites on a proportional basis.

1.4 On 15th September 2021 the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the proposals in this report and made several comments and recommendations. These are included in the table below, with a description of actions to be taken, where relevant:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee comment / recommendation:	Response:
a) site-by-site assessment based upon local knowledge is a sensible course of action, enabling a flexible approach	Each Site Specific Business Case developed by the WPDG will build in and reflect local insight derived from planning authorities, elected member engagement, data and insight on the local economy and labour market and various other sources. Oversight and review of the Business Cases will be undertaken by the Council's WPDG Governance Group, which will decide whether to submit WPDG business cases to Cabinet, including whether or not to apply PWHTB to particular schemes. At each stage in this process, assessment of the sites concerned will be informed by local knowledge and insight.
b) desire to avoid any annual accumulation of the interest rate chargeable after the initial 5 year period; communication with prospective applicants is required to make clear the rationale for why a second charge will form part of the terms of the scheme	Information for and communication with applicants will be a key component of the developmental work to be undertaken on the PWHTB scheme, following Cabinet consideration of the proposals on 14 th October. The charging rationale will be fully established and conveyed as part of this. The interest rate chargeable will not be subject to annual accumulation but will be fixed annually at a percentage above either the moving Retail Price Index (RPI) or the Bank of England Base Rate.
c) applicants would benefit from improved clarity by fixing the year six interest rate at the Bank of England base rate plus a percentage	Detailed financial modelling and further market engagement will take place following Cabinet consideration of the PWHTB proposals on 14 th October. Considerations such as the final approach to interest rates and other key features of the product will be a fundamental aspect of that development process and will be factored into a subsequent report to Cabinet seeking final approval of the product.

	As we finalise the detail, officers will assess whether base rate plus x% is a better approach than RPI plus x% and include this assessment in final recommendations on the product for Cabinet.
d) scope to reassign contracts after the initial five-year period is required to mitigate the risk of disproportionately expensive administrative costs applying to loans which had not been refinanced	As above, the product will be subject to further development work, subject to Cabinet consideration on 14 th October. Key features of the product, including options available to those utilising the scheme after the initial 5 year period expires, will be a fundamentally important component of this, and final proposals will appear in the next report to Cabinet on PWHTB.
e) Members expressed concern about the way in which a change in borrower circumstances would be handled by WCC at the point at which refinancing was due to take place	Key features of the product, including options available to those utilising the scheme who find themselves in hardship after the initial 5 year period expires, will be subject to further development work post Cabinet consideration on 14 th October. Final proposals will appear in the next report to Cabinet on PWHTB.
f) efforts should be made to support the widest possible uptake	<p>Site Specific Business Cases brought forward by WPDG will, if appropriate, contain proposals relating to the deployment of the PWHTB scheme. This will include proposed availability of homes to which the PWHTB scheme will be applicable and this availability will determine potential uptake.</p> <p>As availability is likely to be relatively low, the scheme will have to be targeted, with a commensurate impact on uptake.</p> <p>The Governance Group will need to consider the appropriateness of WPDG proposals to use PWHTB on a specific site in finalising its recommendations on business cases to Cabinet.</p>

The Committee made the following resolutions after its consideration of the report.

That the Committee:

1. Notes the proposals outlined by the Priority Worker Help to Buy (PWHTB) report;
2. Supports the concept of the scheme outlined in principle; and
3. Agrees that its observations be forwarded to Cabinet and asks that they be taken into consideration as part of the decision-making process.

- 1.5 This report is about the concept and development of a potential scheme. Roll out of the product will not take place until the scheme is further developed and approved and after WPDG develops out and builds homes. This report therefore seeks Cabinet approval of the work to date and the further development of the product to be provided by the Council in collaboration with WPDG.
- 1.6 It is possible that thereafter the Council could widen and increase the scheme scale as further developments take place or through working with Government to jointly utilise and potentially operate some of Government's funding programmes, building on the Council's enhanced knowledge of the local area.
- 1.7 The primary benefits of this proposed scheme are to provide the Council with a financial product it controls that:
- provides priority worker residents with a product that provides a 'better' alternative to the Government schemes, such as the new national Help To Buy and First Homes Schemes;
 - helps Warwickshire residents who are priority workers working in Warwickshire to afford to buy homes, thus contributing to 'levelling up' and demonstrating an innovative approach to addressing both local housing need and national priorities;
 - de-risks WPDG sales from an affordability perspective by making homes more affordable on a site-by-site basis (although transfers some of the financial risk associated with house prices reducing from buyers to WCC, as WCC's equity-based loan may decrease in value); and
 - provides a recruitment and retention tool for those employing priority workers who live and work in Warwickshire, contributing to robust, resilient services to the public, which may include (but not be limited to) Warwickshire County Council staff.
- 1.8 The legislation is complex, but, at present, is drafted in a way which means this scheme can only be applied to property WCC owns, or has provided development funding for (which may be the case for assets developed by WPDG). Whilst it is a point of detail to be finalised, it is currently envisaged that the key elements of a Warwickshire Priority Worker Help To Buy Product could include:
- being available for homeowners where this will be their only home (so not a pure first-time buyer scheme as it will include movers and previous owners, but explicitly not those with other homes);

- being based upon equity-based loans¹ – such a product could be interest free for 5 years (for example) after which it could convert into an interest bearing loan. This loan crystallisation date could require the homeowner to either refinance on day 1 of year 6 so that WCC gets its investment % back based on the house value at that time or the homeowner will pay WCC interest on the loan from the first day of year 6, in addition to WCC's stake in the property, until refinancing takes place;
- offering a loan rate on day 1 of year 6 that starts at x% and grows on the basis of a formula which could be RPI plus x%, or Bank of England base rate plus x%, to help encourage refinancing (rates to be set higher than the prevailing market rate) and it is proposed that these rates will be set at the time of issuing a PWHTB offer for a particular WPDG site;
- the ability for priority workers to buy the equity (staircasing up) in 5% blocks, so if WCC's interest was a 25% share, the homeowner could in this example have 5 additional share buying 'staircasing' events, until they own the entire property;
- no restrictions on who the home can be sold to (unlike the First Homes Scheme where equity is left in in perpetuity and sales are restricted to priority workers only, which reduces the demand for First Homes, and so appears to be unpopular with lenders);
- an example split of funding whereby the homeowner (Mortgagor) funds a deposit of say 4 to 5%, WCC/WPDG funds 25 to 26 %, and the Lender (Mortgagee) say 70%;
- the ability to set maximum house price levels for the WCC scheme in line with each development rather than being restricted by the maximum house price of £255,600 in the current national HTB scheme level (reduced from £600,000 in the Government's HTB Scheme 1); and
- the ability to set a timely maximum 'household' income level for the scheme to be available.

1.9 In essence, this is a scheme for WPDG developments with the potential for the Council to develop and promote access to homeownership within Warwickshire for current and future priority workers who work in Warwickshire and want to own

¹ In this instance, an equity-based loan means that WCC would in effect take share of the property. This ties the loan to the current house price, so if house prices fall, the loan reduces in value, but if they rise, then the value of the loan rises proportionally.

a home in Warwickshire. This report is about consideration for the concept and scheme development of such a product in advance of homes being built by WPDG so it is ready as an option for use when these homes are built. The appropriateness of the scheme for each WPDG development site would be considered as part of each Site Specific Business Case and thus considered at the WPDG Governance Group, and subject to recommendation from the Shareholder's Representative to Cabinet for decision.

- 1.10 There are other options that could be considered in order to facilitate access to homeownership. These include Rent to Buy and lease products which provide support to potential buyers while they save for a deposit. These alternatives are not considered within this paper, other than to recognise that the proposed PWHTB scheme would potentially be one of a number of options available to help with affordability for Warwickshire priority workers at a point in time.
- 1.11 Whilst aiming to make home ownership for priority workers accessible within Warwickshire, there is further work to be undertaken in developing the PWHTB around the scheme's qualification as an affordable housing product such that it meets the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) definition and counts towards local plan requirements. This may require decisions on a site-by-site basis, and we will work with District and Borough colleagues on this. If PWHTB does not qualify as affordable housing on a particular site, then this will not prevent the use of PWHTB but may simply require an additional allocation of more traditional affordable housing products. Whether this is viable commercially would be considered before final decisions are taken on each site
- 1.12 Depending on the final structure of the PWHTB scheme, the Council will have decision making authority in terms of its use and the terms of the product; this will enable the Council to develop a product that meets local objectives on a scheme-by-scheme basis. It will be important for the Council to signpost unsuccessful PWHTB applicants and interested parties to other alternative schemes.
- 1.13 The Council will need to consider the potential parameters of any product and the priority groups it may be made available to. The original Homes England Help to Buy scheme has had a significant impact on the new build market largely because it was made available to a very broad range of potential purchasers. This has, however, also been the source of criticism of the scheme in that it has not provided targeted support. The new national Help to Buy scheme, which has been funded from April 2021, is a far more limited product designed to support first time buyers to access lower value properties.
- 1.14 The Council should consider as part of the design of any product the priorities for the Warwickshire area and the type of assistance which will make the most difference in the market. This should be aligned with the Council's existing

priorities and programmes and local intelligence on market need. In Warwickshire the maximum house value for which Help to Buy can be used was reduced from £600,000 in the original scheme to £255,600 in the current scheme.

1.15 The following table provides the new levels across England, for comparison:

Region	Maximum House Price
West Midlands	£255,600
East Midlands	£261,900
North East	£186,100
North West	£224,400
Yorkshire and the Humber	£228,100
East of England	£407,400
London	£600,000
South East	£437,600
South West	£349,000

Note: The Price caps are set at 1.5 times the average price paid by first time buyers in each region of England in August 2018.

1.16 As part of each development proposal, where the PWHTB product is to be utilised, the Cabinet could consider recommendations in respect of the use of price caps against the objectives of the specific development and types of homes being built. A house price cap would need careful consideration to ensure it accounts for people with different circumstances, for example, priority worker couples who have a requirement for 3 or more bedroomed new build homes or are looking at a flat as their home (which the new national scheme excludes) may have understandable needs which might not be catered for where a single maximum House Price is applied to all applicants. By taking a scheme-by-scheme local approach the County can apply a more up to date and targeted offer.

1.17 WCC has engaged with a local mortgage provider to test the appropriateness and mortgageability of this product. Feedback from these early discussions suggest:

- broad support of this concept and in particular the proposal for an unrestricted sale product (noting that this may impact upon the classification of the PWHTB product as “affordable” under the NPPF);
- a good savings track record of the priority worker buyers would help with, but not guarantee, any possible decision to consider a deposit lower than 5%; and
- they favoured a narrower definition of priority workers.

2 Draft product description

2.1 As set out above, our initial proposals are that the product:

- Will be developed on a site by site scheme basis taking account of the local priority worker recruitment and retention issues at the relevant time;
- Is purely available on WCC/WPDG developed assets - new builds only;
- Must be the homeowner's only home, including houses and flats, so not a pure first-time buyer scheme as will also include movers and excludes multiple homeowners and flats are no longer part of the new HTB2 Government Scheme;
- Offers equity-based loans - interest free for 5 years then becomes an interest bearing loan - crystallise for refinancing on day 1 of year 6 and WCC gets its investment % back based on the house value at that time or the homeowner will pay WCC interest on the loan;
- Offers a loan rate on day 1 of year 6 that starts at x % and grows at RPI plus x %, or Base Rate plus x%, to help with that refinancing decision. Rates could be set at the time of the Cabinet scheme on the development or nearer the time the homes are nearing build out;
- Provide for staircasing² in 5% blocks so if WPDG/WCC equity was a 25% share the homeowner would be able to take 5 staircasing opportunities; and
- Include no restrictions as to whom the home can be sold to.

2.2 Other alternatives to setting a scheme-by-scheme maximum price might include increasing the national scheme cap of £255,600 to either a flat rate of say £350k or offer different maximum levels for 1, 2, 3 and 4 bed homes of say £200k, £250k, £350k and £400k respectively. This and options relating to the percentage contribution to be made by the home buyer will be considered in the next phase of work.

2.3 The scheme will be open to priority workers only who work in Warwickshire:

- i. Great care must be taken when deciding who may be eligible, and Equality Impact Assessments will be required. The current intention is for the scheme to be available to priority workers, under a definition to be determined with an income eligibility threshold, who work in Warwickshire and live in Warwickshire homes developed through the WPDG.
- ii. As there will be limited volume of homes available from this offer and there are other national products available it may be advisable to keep the criteria for those eligible relatively narrow.
- iii. In addition WCC should also ensure that unsuccessful applicants are

² Staircasing is the ability of the home owner to buy out WCC's equity stake in a series of transactions, to try and find a balance between these being affordable, without WCC having to micromanage a large number of small changes.

directed towards other affordability products available at that time.

- 2.4 There are various definitions of priority workers / key workers in existence. Given this, it may be better to keep such a definition flexible at this stage. However, for the purposes of this report some of the potential included groups are shown below by way of example.

Narrow (preferred as per paragraph 2.3i):

- NHS
- Education (potentially incl. Higher Education)
- Police
- Firefighters
- Local Authority - all or just those highlighted as 'key workers' eg children's social workers, adult social workers, planners, HGV drivers
- Ministry of Defence (MoD) – include ex forces and their partners if they are deceased

Broader (option seen in other schemes):

- Prison Service/Probation Service
- Highways Agency frontline workers
- Supermarket workers
- Bus Drivers
- Nursery workers
- Court Service
- Delivery Drivers
- Non-NHS medical
- Care workers, including domiciliary and in care home workers
- Energy and environmental workers

- 2.5 Adding others is something to consider against the volume of available PWHTB homes which is a factor in this consideration given the small numbers of supply in addition to the local circumstances at the time of the developments.

3 Legal Implications

3.1 In summary, the legal advice received is as follows:

- i. An equity loan product in respect of housing stock owned or developed by the Council (including any wholly owned housing delivery vehicle or the JV) can be structured such that it is not FCA regulated (so the Council would not require FCA authorisation to offer it). This would need careful structuring and would need to be marketed appropriately to fit within the relevant FCA exemption, but it is considered that this would not be unduly restrictive in terms of the product the Council could offer.
- ii. An equity loan product in respect of open market housing (i.e. housing owned by persons who are unrelated to either the Council or its wholly owned subsidiary) is likely to require the Council to be FCA authorised and would also require the Council to offer the product on the basis of a statutorily prescribed interest rate which may make the product financially unviable for the proposed target purchasers. This is therefore not thought to be a viable option.

Subsidy Control

3.2 Subsidy Control is the post-Brexit replacement for State Aid. It is an area on which the Government is consulting and a Subsidy Control Bill is expected within the lifetime of the current parliament. Therefore, the below position could be subject to change.

3.3 There are two potential classes of beneficiary from a PWHTB scheme, the purchasers (who are in receipt of state assets to permit them to purchase a home) and the sellers (who are in receipt of state assets in return for sale of that home). The summary below applies to both.

3.4 Subsidy Control treats the provision of social/affordable housing more generously than other economic activities. Funding aimed at enhancing low-cost home ownership (LCHO) could be a lawful subsidy provided that the relevant criteria are complied with.

3.5 These criteria currently require that an investment:

- must involve tasks in the public interest – LCHO can be seen to be in the public interest;
- must be assigned in advance of payment in a transparent manner – WCC must have a clear set of eligibility criteria;
- should satisfy the relevant Subsidy Principles, i.e:

- a. should support a specific public policy objective to remedy an identified market failure;
 - b. be proportionate, limited to what is necessary;
 - c. be designed to bring about economic behaviour conducive to policy aims;
 - d. does not duplicate what recipients/beneficiaries would fund themselves;
 - e. be an appropriate policy instrument, with no other less distortive methods; and
 - f. make positive contributions which outweigh any negative effects
- should be limited to what is necessary to perform the task [in this instance the provision of affordable homes] plus, if necessary, a reasonable profit; and
 - should not cross subsidise market activities.

3.6 Provided that care is taken, the above criteria can be navigated, and the proposed scheme can be structured in such a way as to be compliant with the current Subsidy Control regime.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 In offering a PWHTB product the Council will need to have funded a capital sum in the development for each house that it puts into the PWHTB scheme. It will be deferring a proportion of the receipt on the sale of the house to the value of the help to buy equity-based loan.

4.2 Whilst the balance sheet will have an asset to the value of all these deferred receipts they will not be usable until such time as the priority worker exits the scheme. The equity-based loan may increase or decrease in value and valuations will take place annually for the accounts and can be more frequently estimated for reporting purposes. Where the home is a 100% WPDG home then in effect the Council is deferring the 25% if the equity-based loan is 25% of the value of the home. Where the home is constructed through the JV then the Council will be deferring 50% of its share of the value of the home. 80% to 90% of the homes constructed are due to be constructed through the JV.

4.3 Each site development plan will need to be considered individually within the context of the MTFS.

4.4 The Help To Buy equity based loan is a financial instrument which is held at and measured at 'fair value'. If the scheme is administered by the Council, any changes in value of each loan will need to be externally assessed at the end of each financial year and any change in value recognised through the Council's income and expenditure account. We would only need to resource any downward changes

in value at the point they materialised i.e. at the point of the loan crystallisation; up to this point valuation changes will be an unusable reserve. However, we would also not be able to benefit from any upward valuation until this point also.

- 4.5 The Council in making the investment will own a % of the property based on value and these values can go up or down. Whilst the homeowner would incur the first loss in this respect the Council will be second in line for any value losses which could become crystallised losses should a buyer have to sell the home at a price lower than the invested value. Consequently, the Council would be more protected through a 5% deposit scheme rather than a 3.75% one.
- 4.6 Assuming 20% of homes were PWHTB on our total portfolio this would mean circa 440 PWHTB homes in total over say a 20-year period. Were these to have a value of say £250k per home the equity-based loan value of WCC homes given the homeowner buying out our equity share, probably at least at the end of each five year period, we will have exposure on some 100 homes at any given time. A reduction in house values of 10% across the portfolio would give rise to a loss of (100 homes * 25% * 10% of £250k) £625k of our £6,250,000 portfolio which would be a cost that would need to be resourced at the point the loan crystallises.
- 4.7 The Council will be leaving its capital investment as an equity-based loan in the properties it allocates to the PWHTB scheme. This is, in effect, a deferral of capital receipt that it would otherwise take at the point of sale. In the case of Joint Venture (JV) developed properties, the Council would need to purchase the JV share of the property, so in the case of a £250k property, for example, this value would be a cost to the Council of £25k per property). The financial impact of this additional cost/deferral of receipt will need to form part of the considerations as to whether to offer the PWHTB scheme on each development based on the prevailing market conditions at that time.
- 4.8 At this stage the focus of the financial implications is on seeking agreement to some high-level principles that can be used to form the parameters of the subsequent detailed financial analysis and considerations if the concept is approved.
- 4.9 At the level of an individual property and desire to get a receipt now any help to buy option could be financially less attractive from a timing perspective than a straightforward sale at market value. For the County Council there will always be a cost in terms of either reduced returns (in the form of lower dividends at the time of sale from the WPDG) or the loss of dividends from any deferral of sale income for five years. That said, the dividend at year 6 (or beyond) on sale will be reflective of the house equity-based loan value at the point this is purchased by the homeowner.

4.10 Therefore, the overall framework within which the help to buy scheme is developed is subject to the following financial principles:

- There should be minimal impact (if any) on the approved benefit to the County Council from WPDG approved as part of the MTFS and/or longer term financial implications;
- Consideration of whether help to buy is offered must be on a site by site basis and form part of the business case for the site, as the level of Council investment tied up in any site will vary depending on whether PWHTB is offered on a site;
- The cost of offering PWHTB must be lower than the profit element of any development that would be returned to the County Council as a dividend;
- There should be no or limited change to the level and timing of the repayment of any equity loans, the level and timing of the repayment of any construction loans and the level and timing of profit share to the JV partner as a result of offering the PWHTB scheme; and
- The cumulative financial impact of the PWHTB scheme across the different sites must be affordable to the Council and not have a material impact on the Council's financial resilience.

4.11 To meet these requirements, it is likely that PWHTB can only be offered on a small proportion of houses on any development. Each development will include the business case on whether PWHTB is a product the Council wishes to include at that time.

4.12 The priority financial risks from offering such a scheme are:

- The assumption that homeowners' incomes will have increased sufficiently over the five year period to make taking on the full equity after five years affordable for them; and
- Assuming that the value of the Council's security in the asset is maintained over the period.

5 Environmental Considerations

5.1 There are no direct environmental implications (although there may be opportunities to reduce distances commuted) arising from the setup of the PWHTB. Environmental implications arising from the developments will be considered as part of each site-specific business case.

6 Risk and Risk Management

6.1 The following table summarises the key risks and proposed mitigations involved in setting up and operating the PWHTB scheme.

Risk	Mitigation
Fiduciary duties (PWL, Prudential Code)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual testing by the finance team independently of WPDG
Compliance with regulatory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular checks by the legal team internally Specialist external legal advice as required
Default/loss, bad debts, interest rates, economic cycle risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual valuations for the accounts More regular reporting and house price monitoring
Impact on MTFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to start small and build the PWHTB portfolio up slowly with ongoing review of impact on MTFS of external/internal borrowing Prudent accounting by including default assumptions in the business case and plan Annual review and annual business plan approval by Cabinet, effectively a site-by-site decision Specific further consideration of the adequacy of the £7.5m commercial reserve to cover any losses from PWHTB in addition to WRIF, WPDG and other commercial activity Full provision is made in the MTFS for any downside risk at the point the risk materialises, i.e. for any potential loss on valuation of the PWHTB equity loans, but any gain will not be reflected until it materialises
Reputational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy-driven objectives underpin PWHTB, with clear strategic priorities to drive decisions Development site approval of PWHTB plans Clear performance framework and benefits to track impact of PWHTB scheme and annual valuation Member Oversight Group meets quarterly to review performance and operation of the portfolio
Skills and capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix of internal skills available through WPDG to run the PWHTB Appointment of specialist support in Finance and Communities teams for financial valuation and advice if needed

Background Papers

None

	Name	Contact Information
Report Authors	Chris Kaye	01926 412836 chriskaye@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director for Finance Assistant Director for Legal	Andrew Felton Sarah Duxbury	01926 412441 andrewfelton@warwickshire.gov.uk 01926 412090 sarahduxbury@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director for Resources Strategic Director for Communities	Rob Powell Mark Ryder	01926 412564 robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk 01926 412705 markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder (Finance and Property)	Peter Butlin	01788 816488 cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Members of the Resources and Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the PWHTB proposals at a meeting of the committee on 15^h September 2021

Local Member(s): none

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Warwickshire County Council Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

The purpose of an EIA is to ensure WCC is as inclusive as possible, both as a service deliverer and as an employer. It also demonstrates our compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

This document is a planning tool, designed to help you improve programmes of work by considering the implications for different groups of people. A guidance document is available [here](#).

Please note that, once approved, this document will be made public, unless you have indicated that it contains sensitive information. Please ensure that the form is clear and easy to understand. If you would like any support or advice on completing this document, please contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team on 01926 412370 or equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk

Service / policy / strategy / practice / plan being assessed	Warwickshire Priority Worker Help to Buy (PWHTB) Scheme
Business Unit / Service Area	Finance / Strategic Asset Management
Is this a new or existing service / policy / strategy / practice / plan? If an existing service / policy / strategy / practice / plan please state date of last assessment	Proposal to Members is to set up a PWHTB scheme
EIA Review team – list of members	Chris Kaye, Keira Rounsley
Do any other Business Units / Service Areas need to be included?	Finance, Strategic Asset Management
Does this EIA contain personal and / or sensitive information?	No
Are any of the outcomes from this assessment likely to result in complaints from existing services users, members of the public and / or employees?	No

1. Please explain the background to your proposed activity and the reasons for it.

The Priority Worker Help to Buy (PWHTB) proposal follows the reports to Cabinet that led to the set up of the Warwickshire Property and Development Group (WPDG) and continues the operational delivery of the Council's Commercial Strategy.

The PWHTB proposal is intended to complement the new (replacement) national Help To Buy Scheme, as amended from April 2020, the newly announced First Buy Scheme. The proposal has potentially less restrictive applicant criteria and is potentially less restrictive on whom the property can be sold on to.

The proposal aligns with the Council's Recovery Plan objective 7.8:

'Working in partnership with Homes England, we will remove the blocks that have prevented some sites in Warwickshire from being developed, providing more and affordable housing whilst also supporting the recovery of our local economy.'

2. Please outline your proposed activity including a summary of the main actions.

The concept and design of the proposed PWHTB scheme is being presented in a report to Cabinet on 14th October, following consideration at the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15th September.

If Cabinet endorses the proposals in the report, then further work will be undertaken to shape and develop the product.

3. Who is this going to impact and how? (customers, service users, public and staff)

It is good practice to seek the views of your stakeholders and for these to influence your proposed activity. Please list anything you have already found out. If you still need to talk to stakeholders, include this as an 'action' at the end of your EIA. **Note that in some cases, there is a duty to consult, see [more](#).**

Using the two milestones identified in section 2, above, the following initial assessment of impact is made:

Consideration by Cabinet of the PWHTB scheme concept and design proposals (14th Oct)

There is no equalities impact arising from Cabinet consideration of the scheme concept and design proposals.

Further development and refinement of the product

Potential equality impacts will be considered as the proposals evolve.

4. Please analyse the potential impact of your proposed activity against the protected characteristics.

N.B Think about what actions you might take to mitigate / remove the negative impacts and maximize on the positive ones. This will form part of your action plan at question 7.

	What information do you have? What information do you still need to get?	Positive impacts	Negative impacts
Age	There is no impact on age arising from Cabinet decision making in October	N/a	N/a
Disability Consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical disabilities • Sensory impairments • Neurodiverse conditions (e.g. dyslexia) • Mental health conditions (e.g. depression) • Medical conditions (e.g. diabetes) 	There is no impact on disability arising from Cabinet decision making in October	N/a	N/a
Gender Reassignment	There is no impact on gender reassignment arising from Cabinet decision making in October	N/a	N/a
Marriage and Civil Partnership	There is no impact on marriage and civil partnership arising from Cabinet decision making in October	N/a	N/a
Pregnancy and Maternity	There is no impact on pregnancy and maternity	N/a	N/a

	arising from Cabinet decision making in October		
Race	There is no impact on race arising from Cabinet decision making in October	N/a	N/a
Religion or Belief	There is no impact on religion or belief arising from Cabinet decision making in October	N/a	N/a
Sex	There is no impact on sex arising from Cabinet decision making in October	N/a	N/a
Sexual Orientation	There is no impact on sexual orientation arising from Cabinet decision making in October	N/a	N/a

5. What could the impact of your proposed activity be on other vulnerable groups e.g. deprivation, looked after children, carers?

There is no impact on other vulnerable groups arising from Cabinet decision making in October.	N/a	N/a
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6. How does / could your proposed activity fulfil the three aims of PSED, giving due regard to:

- the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- creating equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- fostering good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

Cabinet decision making in October is neutral in respect of the three aims


7. Actions – what do you need to do next?

Consider:

- Who else do you need to talk to? Do you need to engage or consult?
- How you will ensure your activity is clearly communicated
- Whether you could mitigate any negative impacts for protected groups
- Whether you could do more to fulfil the aims of PSED
- Anything else you can think of!

Action	Timescale	Name of person responsible
Cabinet decision making on PWHTB	14/10/21	Cabinet

8. Sign off.

Name of person/s completing EIA	Chris Kaye
Name and signature of Assistant Director	Andrew Felton 
Date	4 th October 2021
Date of next review and name of person/s responsible	

Cabinet

14 October 2021

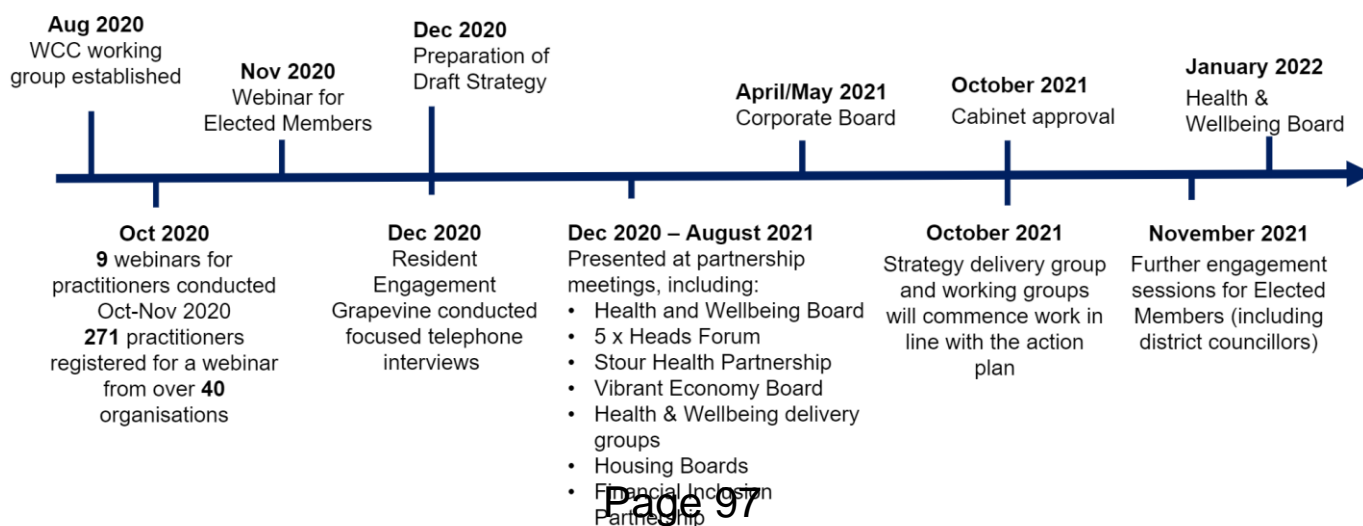
Tackling Social Inequalities in Warwickshire

Recommendation(s)

1. That Cabinet endorses the “Tackling Social Inequalities in Warwickshire Strategy” and accompanying draft action plan.
2. That Cabinet authorises the Strategic Director for People, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Families and Education, to approve the project budget allocation, action plan and future revisions aligned to the strategy priorities for the allocated budget between April 2021 and March 2024.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 There is no single, universally accepted definition of poverty in the UK and it may be measured in a number of ways, such as disposable household income. However, income-based measures alone do not acknowledge its root causes, and we also need to consider metrics that better reflect the nature and experiences of people living in hardship, such as fuel poverty, affordable housing, gaps in attainment at school, teenage conception rates, unemployment rates and food bank access.
- 1.2 Although there is no single definition, there is collective agreement that we need to work in partnership to tackle the causes of and reduce the impact of social inequalities for people living in Warwickshire. The strategy sets the direction for Warwickshire on this agenda.
- 1.3 Work to develop a strategy on tackling social inequalities in Warwickshire commenced in August 2020, led by the Family Wellbeing team, within People Strategy and Commissioning. The timeline of the strategy development is summarised below:



- 1.4 The working group, consisting of key representatives from across WCC, focussed on developing the following:
 - 1.4.1 Detailed analysis of current picture of social inequalities in Warwickshire to inform the strategy (*where are we now?*)
 - 1.4.2 A proposed strategy with focussed priorities (*where do we want to get to?*)
 - 1.4.3 An achievable action plan (*how are we going to get there?*)

- 1.5 As well as analysis of national and local data, a wide range of engagement took place with frontline practitioners, professionals, elected members and those with lived experience of social inequalities between October and December 2020. The findings from this work were used to develop the key findings and produce a set of recommended outcomes and priorities for the strategy. The priorities have been kept broad in order for us to design our on-going work programme based on identified need at a local level in conjunction with our place-based partners. As needs are likely to change over time, the priorities give us flexibility to responsively shape our work.

Delivering the vision

A set of cross-cutting priorities have been identified to collectively tackle the key factors contributing to social inequalities in Warwickshire, resulting in improved outcomes for Warwickshire residents.

CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES		
Developing the workforce and culture to enhance awareness of social inequalities	Improving access to goods, resources, services and communities, both physically and virtually	Supporting people to maximise and manage their income



KEY FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIAL INEQUALITIES				
More people are experiencing hardship for the first time	Social inequalities are increasing due to low-income employment	Isolation of individuals and communities creates additional hardship	Inter-generational inequality continues to be an issue	Some groups are at greater risk of experiencing social inequalities



OUTCOMES				
A reduction in the number of people facing hardship and experiencing persistent hardship	A reduction in the number of low-income households	Reducing barriers to accessing goods, resources services, and communities	An improvement in childhood outcomes	Improving advocacy and support for groups more at risk of experiencing social inequalities

- 1.6 The draft strategy was shared with those who took part in the original engagement activities and shared more widely with others with an interest in tackling social inequalities locally. Feedback from a survey on the draft strategy showed 87% agreed or strongly agreed with the outcomes and 94% agreed or strongly agreed with the 3 priorities (from 62 respondents across WCC, other public sector organisations and the third sector).
- 1.7 Following feedback from Corporate Board in April and May 2021, the final strategy (Appendix 1) has been produced for endorsement by Cabinet. The strategy will then be presented at the Health & Wellbeing Board for partnership endorsement in January 2022.
- 1.8 A draft action plan has been developed to shape the work of the 3 working groups aligned to the priorities and includes commitment from the third sector and District/Borough colleagues to support the delivery of the work programme (Appendix 2). The draft action plan includes an indication of the projects we will be progressing over the next 3 years and will be further developed using co-production with people with lived experience of social inequalities and those delivering front-line services to residents.
- 1.9 Regular updates demonstrating progress on delivering the strategy will be planned in as part of our action plan and work programme.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 Budget has been agreed to support delivery of the strategy for the next 3 years from the “Preventing Vulnerability” fund:
 - 2021/22 - £300,000
 - 2022/23 - £250,000
 - 2023/24 - £250,000
- 2.2 We will consider future financial requirements to continue delivering against the priorities in line with the regular review points for the strategy. Business cases will be developed aligned to the priorities where the required funding is likely to exceed the budget already allocated to this work. We will also seek opportunities for funding outside of WCC that will support delivery of the programme.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 Although there are no direct environmental implications for the strategy at this point, we will be working closely with colleagues within the Communities Directorate as part of the delivery of the Local Transport Plan. There may be opportunities for the strategy to have a positive impact on the environment in the context of sustainable travel.
- 3.2 A regular review of environmental implications will be included as part of the responsibilities of the working groups delivering the priorities.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 There is growing evidence that overall levels of social inequalities are rising, and this will be further compounded by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as inequalities between communities deepen. The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities, with an increase in stressors such as financial loss, social isolation and concerns about accessing services.
- 4.2 The “Tackling Social Inequalities in Warwickshire” strategy is an important step in tackling the causes of and addressing the impact of social inequalities in Warwickshire. It will help us to identify who is most in need of support and help us target the support we offer. By taking a public health approach to tackling social inequalities, we will use the principles of proportionate universalism. This approach recognises the gradient of need to ensure services are targeted to different levels of need but remain equitable. Our aim is to help our residents to have a decent and secure life, recognising that everyone has a role to play in tackling social inequalities across the system. The strategy will be supported by a long term, sustainable delivery plan over the next decade to 2030.
- 4.3 As well as the comprehensive engagement work undertaken to develop the “Tackling Social Inequalities Strategy” between October and December 2020, the Child Friendly Warwickshire survey undertaken in April 2021 also demonstrates tackling social inequalities is an area our young people believe is a priority. Of the 1,807 responses to the question ‘if you were in charge of your town what would be most important to you?’ the issue voted most important was “homelessness”, followed by “tackling child poverty”.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 The strategy will be presented to the Health & Wellbeing Board in January 2022 for partner endorsement.
- 5.2 The working groups to deliver the priorities will be formally established and the action plan fully mobilised by the end of October 2021. We anticipate the programmes of activity will work closely with the place-based partnerships across the county as they include representation from a wide range of partners.

Appendices

1. “Tackling Social Inequalities in Warwickshire” Strategy
2. “Tackling Social Inequalities in Warwickshire” Draft Action Plan

Background Papers

1. Equality Impact Assessment

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Kate Sahota	katesahota@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Becky Hale	beckyhale@warwickshire.gov.uk
Lead Director	Nigel Minns, Strategic Director for People	nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk
Lead Member	Portfolio Holder for Children, Families & Education	jeffmorgan@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

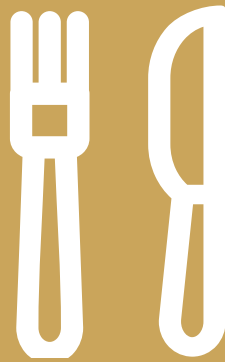
Local Member(s):

Other members:

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Tackling Social Inequalities in Warwickshire

Strategy 2021 - 2030



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Foreword



Cllr Jeff Morgan
Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services

Warwickshire is a reasonably affluent county and many key indicators such as life expectancy, levels of employment, average income and educational outcomes are above the national average. However, the overall prosperity hides considerable variation across the county and there are pockets of deprivation, with some areas and some groups achieving less positive outcomes.

Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent lockdown have both highlighted and exacerbated these inequalities, with an increase in stressors such as financial loss, social isolation and concerns about accessing services.¹ This strategy seeks to bring together a range of new and existing work focused on addressing these challenges. Our aim is to enable everyone in Warwickshire to “start well, live well and age well”.

The Social Inequalities Strategy is an important step in tackling the causes and the impact of deprivation in Warwickshire. It will help us to identify who is most in need of support and help us target the support we offer.

The strategy, which will be supported by a long term, sustainable delivery plan over the next decade to 2030, closely aligns to and supports other strategic ambitions and priorities in

THE 2021 REPORT ON CHILD POVERTY BY THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER² STATES:

- Children are the group of the population most likely to be in poverty, and child poverty has been rising in absolute and relative terms for nearly a decade, during which pensioner poverty has fallen consistently and dramatically.
- The gap between children eligible for free school meals (an indicator of poverty) and their peers is now widening, after decades of continuous progress in closing this gap.

Warwickshire, in particular Warwickshire County Council's Council Plan 2020 - 2025, Coventry and Warwickshire's Health and Care Partnership and the Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2026. Whilst WCC leads on the strategy and its development, the delivery will be supported by partnerships with our district and borough councils, the voluntary and third sector, local employers, the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Care Partnership.



The Council Vision for Tackling Social Inequalities

Tackling social inequalities will require a co-ordinated effort across several inter-connected strands of activity, starting with our overall Council Plan objectives which seeks to create the overall environment for our residents to thrive economically and socially:

- Warwickshire's economy is vibrant and supported by the right jobs, training, skills and infrastructure.
- Warwickshire's communities and individuals are supported to be safe, healthy and independent.

Alongside this, WCC's COVID-19 recovery plan includes a set of key priorities to support the recovery of our communities from the pandemic. Social inequalities will be tackled directly through a number of these priorities and the programmes of work they support:

- Helping our young people catch up on their education
- Harnessing the power of community to tackle inequality and social exclusion
- Support business and the economy to grow
- Stimulate job creation and skills
- Investing in regeneration.

STRATEGY PRINCIPLES

Based on the Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Care Partnership Concordat³, this strategy will be guided by the following principles:

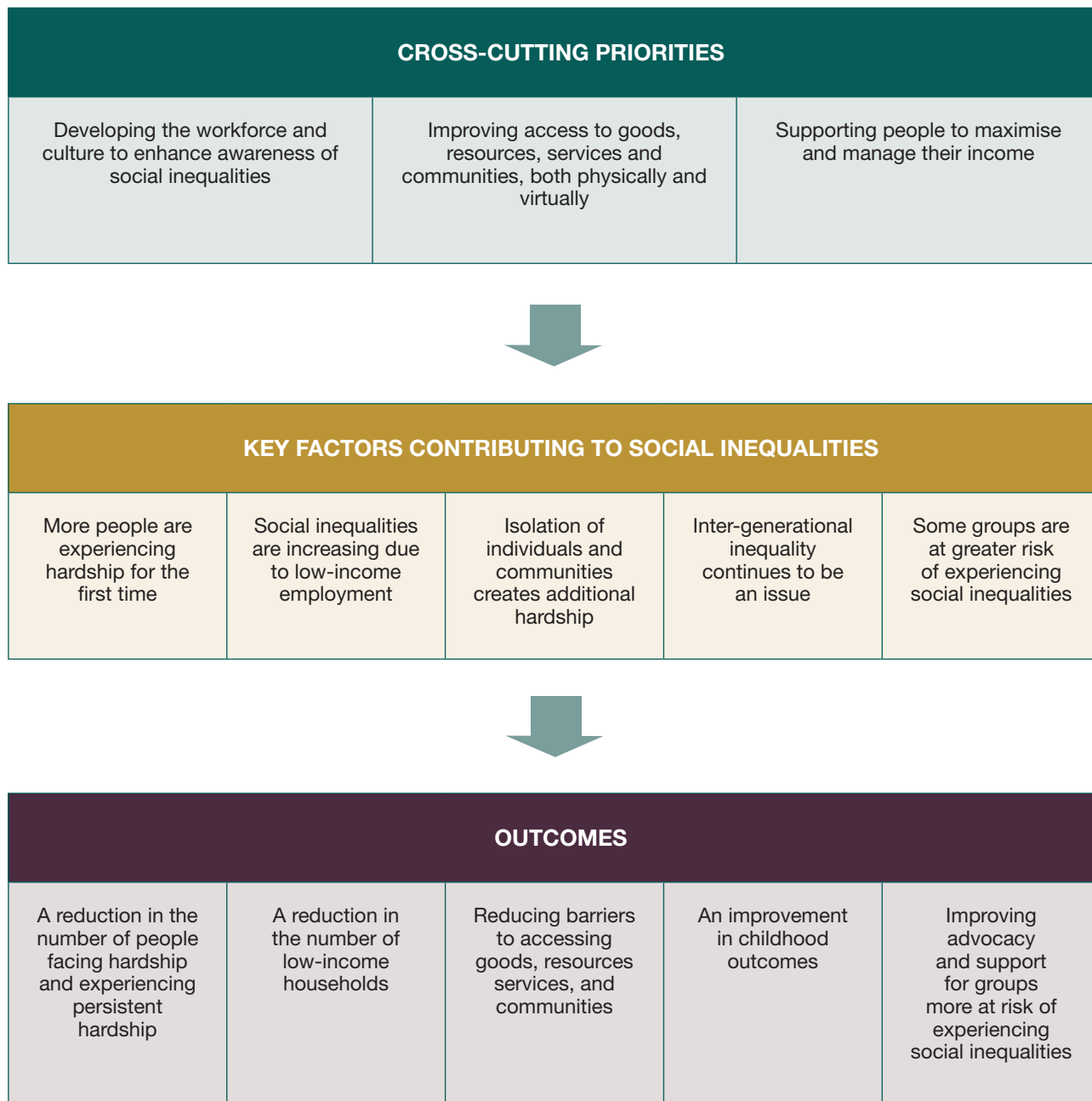
- **Prioritising prevention:** We will tackle the causes of social inequality to reduce the impact on people's lives, their families and communities. We will seek to address the root causes of social inequalities, listening to local people's priorities and acting on their concerns.
- **Strengthening communities:** We will support strong and stable communities. We will listen to residents to understand what they want from the services we provide and encourage them to lead change themselves where possible.
- **Co-ordinating services:** We will work together to design services which take account of the complexity of people's lives and their overlapping health and social needs. We will focus on the best way to achieve good outcomes for people, reducing the number of interactions people have with our services and avoiding multiple interventions from different providers.
- **Sharing responsibility:** We will maintain partnerships between the public sector, voluntary and community sector, local businesses and residents, recognising that we share a responsibility to tackle deprivation in our communities. We will pool resources, budgets and accountabilities where it will improve services for the public.

From 1st April 2021, every area of the country is operating as an integrated care system. For our area, this system is led by the Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Care Partnership³ and this strategy seeks to support their vision:

- We will do everything in our power to enable people across Coventry and Warwickshire to pursue happy, healthy lives and put people and communities at the heart of everything we do.
- We will share responsibility to transform our services, improve health outcomes for people and be more efficient in the way we use our resources.

Delivering the vision

A set of cross-cutting priorities have been identified to collectively tackle the key factors contributing to social inequalities in Warwickshire, resulting in improved outcomes for Warwickshire residents.



Starting with Strengths - What are we doing already?

In Warwickshire, WCC and our partners are already working to tackle the causes and effects of social inequalities. This strategy has been designed to complement and support the delivery of this work recognising how much is already being achieved and how this work connects across the rest of the organisation. Examples include:

Our **Early Years Strategy** aims to:

- Provide sufficiency of early years education places with a focus on uptake of places for two-year olds, especially in disadvantaged localities
- Decrease the gap between disadvantaged learners, compared with non-disadvantaged learners

The **Warwickshire Education Strategy** includes work on **Closing the Gap** and aims to:

- Narrow the gap between the achievements of learners eligible for Pupil Premium and those of their peers, particularly at age 11 and 16.
- Celebrate the achievements of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and give those who need it extra support to catch up.

The aim of the **Warwickshire Financial Inclusion Partnership** is:

- To minimise the likelihood and impact of financial exclusion in Warwickshire through the provision of advice, support and project delivery in a co-ordinated manner that demonstrates value for money, builds financial resilience and maximises benefits to the communities of Warwickshire

EXAMPLES OF WHAT WORKS

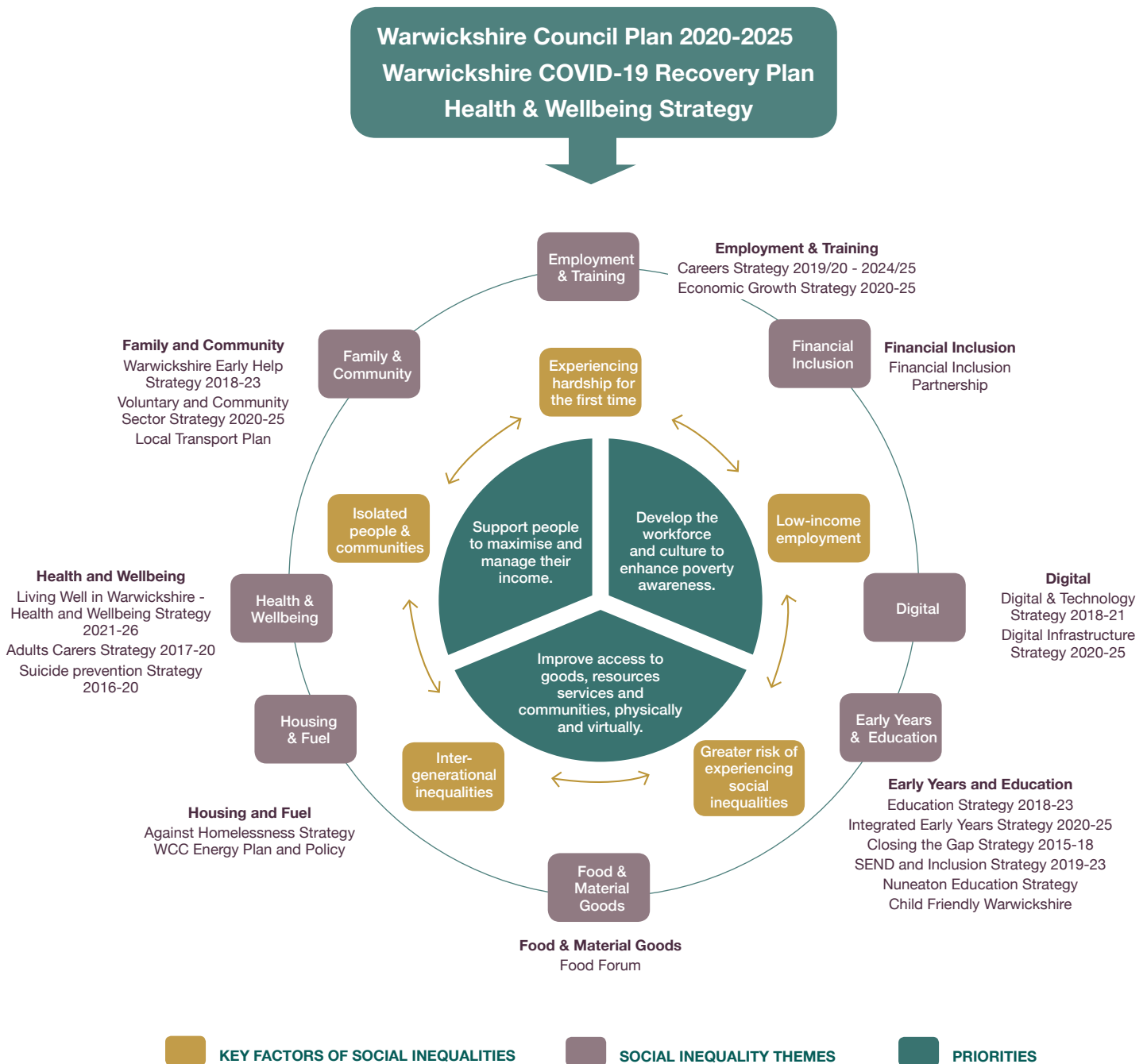
- A Warwickshire secondary school has changed their culture around second-hand uniforms by changing the language to “**up-cycling**”, reducing the stigma for families
- The **George Eliot School** in Nuneaton is offering all Year 7 pupils starting in Sept 2021 free school uniform, a free paid activity and sponsorship to gain the Crest Award for excellence in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths
- The **House Project** help young people leaving care to create their own home and live independently. House Projects are co-designed with young people. They work together to develop relationships and learn skills that enable them to live successful adult lives.
- **Partnership working** between BRANCAB Citizens Advice and the Trussell Trust supports families attending foodbanks to access advice and services.
- The **Family Information Service** provides a website, a helpline and a dedicated brokerage service to support families in financial difficulty.
- Health Visitors use the holistic **Outcomes Star** tool to help families recognise areas where they may need help so they may help them on their journey of change.
- Warwickshire’s Fire and Rescue Service provides residents with a **safe and well visit**, including welfare checks and providing advice on winter warmth. This gives opportunity for staff to signpost to support services as needed.
- The **Warwickshire Food Forum** brings together agencies from across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors work together to ensure a supply of food that is sustainable, accessible and affordable for everyone, but especially the most vulnerable in our communities.
- The **Warwickshire Welfare Scheme** provides help to our most vulnerable residents at times of unavoidable crisis when there are no other means of help, e.g. support towards food and energy costs.
- The **CSW Broadband programme** is bringing improved broadband speeds to the area, including a greater coverage and range of providers to drive down prices.

Other key strategies include the Health & Wellbeing Strategy, the Nuneaton Education Strategy, the Local Transport Plan, Economic Growth, Careers and the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

In addition to these strategies, examples of other work in development that supports the delivery of this strategy includes the transformation of adult mental health services and a dedicated role within Public Health using Warwickshire’s ‘Promoting health and wellbeing through spatial planning’ guidance.⁴

Strategies and key programmes supporting the vision

Our work to tackle social inequalities through this strategy links to a number of other key programmes of work, including our approach to Climate Change, delivery at place, tackling inequalities and helping our communities to thrive. To achieve our ambitions to reduce social inequalities across Warwickshire, we recognise there are several existing strategies which will contribute to this overall aim.





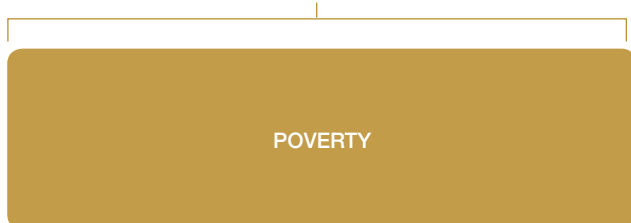
Section 1:

Why do we need to tackle social inequalities?

There is no single, universally accepted definition of poverty in the UK and it may be measured in a number of ways, such as disposable household income. However, income-based measures alone do not acknowledge its root causes, and we also need to consider metrics that better reflect the nature and experiences of people living in hardship, such as fuel poverty, affordable housing, gaps in attainment at school, teenage conception rates, unemployment rates and food bank access.

Deprivation exists as a result of a wide range of social inequalities that create differences between groups in our society. These differences are evident not just in our finances, economy, and household income, but also in areas such as crime, health, education, trust, participation, attitudes and happiness. Rising inequalities have seen a dramatic increase in the share of income going to the top, a decline in the share of those at the bottom and, more recently, a stagnation of incomes among those in the middle.²⁶

UNDERSTANDING WHO IS IN POVERTY



UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT THE NATURE OF THAT POVERTY



The Social Metrics Commission⁵ is aiming to address this by developing a much broader measurement of inequality that provides a deeper understanding of the factors that affect the experience, influence the future likelihood, or are consequences that flow from being in hardship. The measurement framework considers total resources available, persistence, depth and lived experience of poverty.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation report UK Poverty 2020/21⁶ states that child poverty and

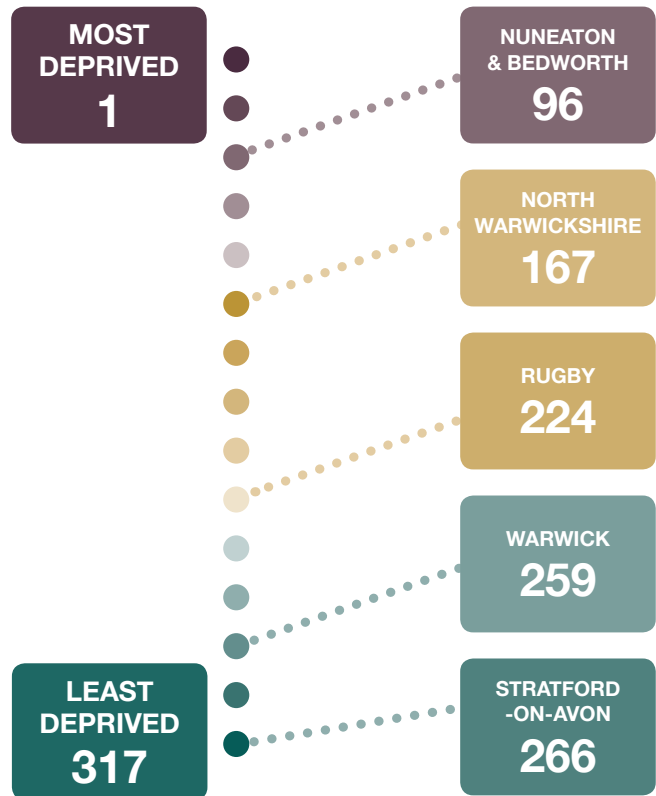
in-work poverty has been rising for several years. Some groups are disproportionately more likely to be pulled into hardship and are also more likely to have borne the brunt of the health and economic impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic and consequent lockdown. These groups include part-time workers, Black, Asian and minority ethnic households, lone parents (mostly women), private renters and areas of the UK where there are already higher levels of unemployment, poverty and deprivation.

What do social inequalities look like in Warwickshire?

Warwickshire is considered to be a fairly affluent county within England, ranking 121 out of 151 local authorities in 2019⁷, placing us in the top 20% of least deprived areas. However, this masks a wide variation across the 5 district and boroughs where there is real deprivation.

In Warwickshire, numbers of children (under 16) living in relative low-income households increased from 11,085 in 2014/15 to 15,305 in 2019/20, an increase of 38%.⁸ The rate of increase varies across the county, with the biggest percentage increase in Stratford-on-Avon (48%) and the lowest percentage increase in Warwick (34%). The proportion of Warwickshire children living in relative low-income families was 14.5% in 2019/20, although this rises to 20% of children living in Nuneaton & Bedworth.

The majority of data available for this strategy relates to before the COVID-19 pandemic and the departure of the United Kingdom from the European Union at the end of 2020. A snapshot of national and local data is included; however, we will continue to monitor data as it is published to ensure the strategy and associated work is guided by the most current picture of social inequality in Warwickshire and the UK.



In Warwickshire (in 2019/20) there were

15,305 (14.5%)

children under 16 in relative low-income families

Imagine all households in the UK are ordered from highest to lowest income.



Any household earning less than 60% of the median household income is considered to be in relative low income.

Approach and Key Findings

As well as comprehensive analysis of local and national datasets, this strategy is underpinned by engagement with key stakeholders, including at least 250 practitioners from over 50 organisations across Warwickshire. The engagement was undertaken to enhance our understanding of the issues facing those experiencing social inequalities and the barriers to overcoming those issues across 8 themes:

- Employment & Training
- Financial Inclusion
- Digital
- Early Years & Education
- Family & Community
- Housing & Fuel
- Health & Wellbeing
- Food & Material Goods

Practitioners included social workers, health professionals, family support workers, teachers, advocates and debt, housing, and employment specialists. In addition, a local community organisation completed in-depth interviews with members of the public to collect real life experiences. A selection of quotes from front-line facing practitioners and cases studies from residents are included in Appendix 1 (page 20-24).

Analysis of the strategy engagement has

identified five key factors contributing to people experiencing social inequalities, emphasising a wide range of inter-connecting challenges we need to address in order to tackle social inequalities in Warwickshire:

- More people are experiencing hardship for the first time
- Social inequalities are increasing due to low-income employment
- Isolation of individuals and communities creates additional social inequalities
- Inter-generational inequality continues to be an issue
- Some groups are at greater risk of experiencing social inequalities

The key findings are described in more detail below and can also be found within the appendices, supported by real-life case studies and quotes from practitioners from our engagement work.

The key findings have been used to develop the outcomes and priorities (page 16), recognising that there are a number of existing strategies and programmes already addressing some of these challenges (pages 6 and 15).

This strategy will be delivered in collaboration with our partners; including the Integrated Care System, the Health & Care Partnership, the voluntary and community sector, providers, employers and Districts and Boroughs to support delivery of our shared ambitions.

“I have to admit, it is incredibly embarrassing being in the position I now am. Never in my whole life did I ever think my children would be receiving free meals at school.”

Warwickshire parent, March 2021

Key factors contributing to social inequalities in Warwickshire

More people are experiencing hardship for the first time

The COVID-19 pandemic and consequent lockdown has caused greater economic uncertainty through furlough or redundancy resulting in an increase in people experiencing hardship for the first time. As of February 2021, in Warwickshire over 17,000 people have registered to receive Universal Credit or Job Seekers Allowance, this is more than double the number of claimants prior to the first lockdown in March 2020.⁹ The economic impacts of COVID-19 have not been felt equally across different groups, with those in low earning jobs and young workers

most affected.¹⁰

There are a wide range of other reasons why people find themselves with limited resources. For example, a relationship breakdown can mean that a household becomes reliant on one income instead of two, or an individual may be prevented from working due to a worsening chronic illness or due to caring responsibilities. Households may also experience fluctuating periods of financial hardship and will come in and out of hardship.

Practitioners discussed that many people in Warwickshire don't always know where to seek help, are unaware of what services are available and how to access them. In addition, stigma

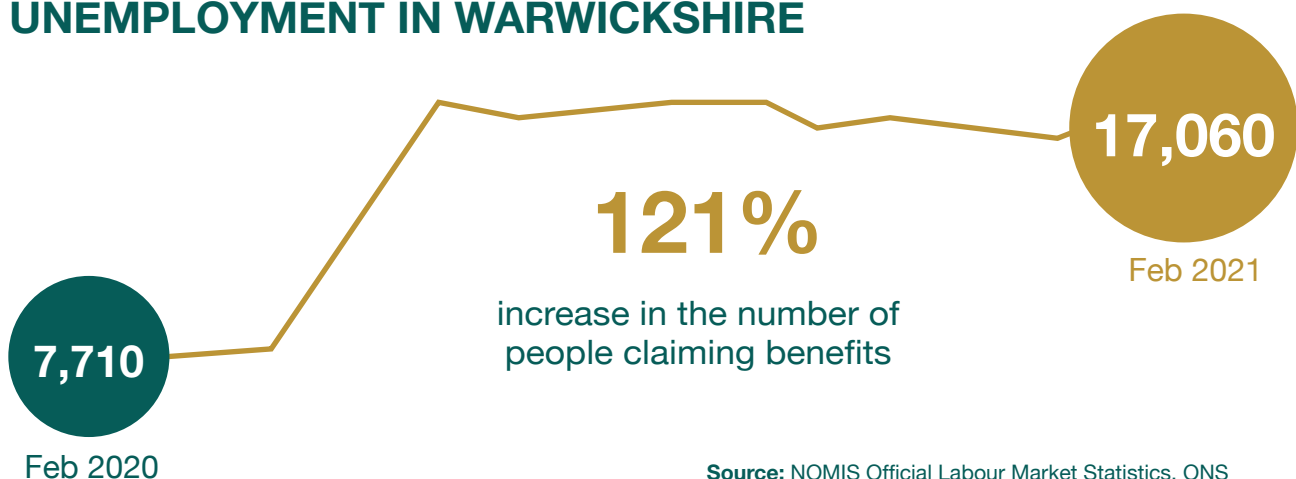
COST OF COVID-19

31% of adults in Britain report being financially worse off as a direct result of COVID-19 ²⁰²¹



Source: The cost of Covid, Money Advice Trust

UNEMPLOYMENT IN WARWICKSHIRE



Source: NOMIS Official Labour Market Statistics, ONS

Low-income employment

Unstable, part-time and/or temporary employment can be a major contributor to low income. In the UK, low-income employment has risen in recent years: 56% of people are on a relative low income compared to 39% 20 years ago.¹¹ Zero-hours contracts in particular are becoming more common, accounting for 3.5% of the West Midlands workforce in 2020, up from 2.6% in 2019.¹²

There are many people who are in employment and yet still find they do not have enough disposable income for housing, utilities, and essential goods. Households in this position may find themselves ineligible for some support and benefits, such as Free School Meals.

Low-income employment is highlighted by Warwickshire Foodbank data, where the most common reason for accessing a foodbank was low-income (39%), followed by benefit delays (17%).¹³ Furthermore, low-income was found to be the most commonly reported reason for accessing the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme.¹⁴

In 2018, 9.5% of households in Warwickshire were in fuel poverty.¹⁵ We expect this to have increased due to worsening economic circumstances for many and people spending more time at home during the COVID-19 pandemic.



FUEL POVERTY* IN WARWICKSHIRE

1 in 10

households experience fuel poverty. ²⁰¹⁸

Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, PHE Fingertips

.....

*A household is considered to be fuel poor if they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level) and, were they to spend that amount, they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.



FOODBANKS IN WARWICKSHIRE

67%

Increase in foodbank users from September 2019 to March 2021. Most common reason for accessing foodbank was **low income.**

Source: Trussell Trust, WCC Business Intelligence

.....

Food poverty, often referred to as household food insecurity, can be triggered by a crisis in finance or personal circumstances, but may also be a long-term experience of not being able to access or have the facilities to prepare a healthy diet. It encompasses both the affordability of food and its availability within local communities.

Source: Sustain

<https://www.sustainweb.org/foodpoverty/whatisfoodpoverty>

Groups at greater risk of experiencing social inequalities

It is well recognised that certain groups are more at risk of experiencing financial hardship than others, including those living with mental health issues, learning disabilities, those with caring responsibilities, and those with protected characteristics.

Individuals in households in the lowest 20% income bracket in Great Britain are two to three times more likely to develop mental health problems than those in the highest bracket.¹⁶ The relationship between mental health and financial hardship is complex and often described as cyclical, where financial hardship can be a causal factor and a consequence of mental health. For example, there are several mechanisms by which unemployment causes stress; the financial insecurity of losing income; losing the day-to-day structure of work and using the social security system.¹⁷

Gender is a significant determinant of income inequality; women on average, earn less and work fewer hours. This is highlighted in lone parent households who have the highest relative poverty rate among working-age adults, with 43% living in relative poverty in the UK.¹¹ Ethnicity is also a driver of low income; in the UK, the percentage of people in relative low income (after housing costs) is highest for households where the head is from the Bangladeshi (55%), Pakistani (47%), or Black (40%) ethnic groups and lowest for White ethnic groups (19%).¹⁸ Using the same definition, families where at least one member has a disability are more likely to have a relative low income (21%) compared to households with no people with disabilities (19%). It is recognised that the more protected characteristics a person has, the more risk they bear. Research indicates that not only are these risk factors for low income, but also for increased likelihood of incurring poverty premiums.¹⁹

INEQUALITIES

In the UK, income is **6X** higher for richest 20% compared to poorest 20%. 2020

Drivers of income inequality include gender, ethnicity and disability.



Source: Office for National Statistics



CHILD MORTALITY IN ENGLAND

Relative **10%** increase

in risk of child death between each decile of increasing deprivation (on average)^{2019/20}

Source: National Child Mortality Database

UK POVERTY PREMIUM

Low-income households pay an average of

£490

more per year for basic goods and services, as a result of area-based premiums, access to money, higher-cost credit, billing methods and energy tariffs.

Source: Personal Finance Research Centre, University of Bristol

Inter-generational inequality

Financial hardship has a negative impact on children’s prospects; where evidence shows that the children of parents in lower income groups are more likely to have lower incomes themselves in adulthood.^{20,21} Children in low income families are more likely to have poorer outcomes for cognitive development, health and wellbeing, school achievement, and social and behavioural development compared to their peers. Recent research has found households with younger children (aged under 3) face the highest risk of financial hardship and are at greatest risk of persistent hardship.²² Evidence has shown how the UK lockdown has further exacerbated this; widening the disadvantage gap for babies and toddlers.²³

Although Warwickshire is an academically high-achieving county, the data shows that as children move further through the educational system,

disadvantaged children are falling further behind. In 2019, Warwickshire’s attainment gap was 19% at Early Years Foundation Stage, rising to 24% in Year 6 (2019). This gap is greater in Warwickshire than it is nationally.

Warwickshire practitioners highlighted a wide range of challenges that families are facing. For example, parents reporting their struggle into employment due to childcare issues, such as finding flexible and affordable childcare. Discussions included the challenges disadvantaged families face, such as difficulty accessing digital technology whilst home-schooling during the COVID-19 pandemic. Wider issues were also identified such as affording school uniform, accessing free school meals and the need for financial education for children and young people.



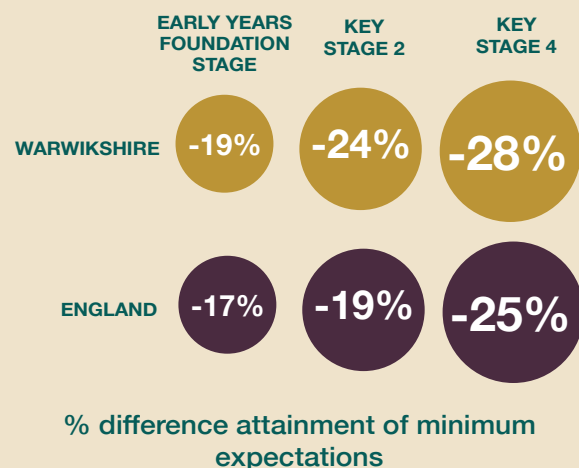
14.5%

Children live in relative low income families in Warwickshire. 2019/20

Source: HM Revenue and Customs (Personal Tax Credits: Related Statistics - Child Poverty Statistics)

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT GAP

The attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils widens as children progress through the education system. 2019



Source: Department for Education, WCC Business Intelligence

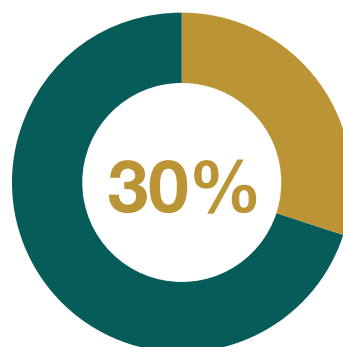
Isolation and access to goods, services and communities

Practitioners highlighted that travel across the county is problematic for those struggling financially. Transport services, particularly in rural locations and for new build developments, were reported to be infrequent and expensive. A particular issue for those provided with affordable housing on the edge of towns, is a feeling of isolation and being unable to access essential amenities and services.

Those in challenging financial circumstances can find themselves reliant on services to help them make ends meet. Practitioners reported that families experience high levels of stress due to changes in access to services.

As well as barriers to accessing face to face services, the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent lockdown has created additional barriers for families where services have moved to a digital offer and they don't have the technology, broadband or skills to access these, further increasing their isolation. In 2021, in the West Midlands, an estimated 3% of the population are offline compared to 5% in England. The survey also found 30% had very low digital engagement compared to 28% in England, defined as not using email or online banking.²⁴

DIGITAL POVERTY



of the population in the West Midlands had very low digital engagement (defined as not using email or online banking).

Source: Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021
https://lloydsbank.com/assets/media/pdfs/banking_with_us/whats-happening/210513-lloyds-consumer-digital-index-2021-report.pdf

HEALTHY START VOUCHERS

In February 2021, take up of Healthy Start Vouchers ranged from



of eligible families in Stratford-on-Avon



of eligible families in Nuneaton and Bedworth



Section 2:

What are we going to do – Our priorities and outcomes

The key findings described in this strategy have been used to develop a set of cross-cutting priorities, outcomes and indicators. The indicators will be used to monitor progress and impact of our work to tackle social inequalities in Warwickshire.

Our Priorities:

- We will develop the workforce and culture to enhance awareness of social inequalities.
- We will improve access to goods, resources, services and communities, both physically and virtually.
- We will support people to maximise and manage their income.

Our Outcomes:

The priorities have been designed to collectively tackle the key factors contributing to social inequalities. Workstreams based on the priorities will work in partnership to deliver the following outcomes:

OUTCOMES	SUGGESTED INDICATORS
A reduction in the number of people experiencing financial hardship and remaining on a low income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workforce aware of social inequalities and equipped to signpost/support where appropriate • An increase in good quality employment
A reduction in the number of in-work households experiencing financial hardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in working people receiving the Real Living Wage • A reduction in the proportion of children living in relative low-income households • Residents receive their full income entitlement • A reduction in food bank usage, in particular persistent usage • A reduction in the proportion of fuel-poor households
An improvement in childhood outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students • An increase in Pupil Premium take-up in schools • An increase in access to financial literacy education
Reducing barriers to accessing goods, resources services, and communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A workforce aware of social inequalities and equipped to signpost/support where appropriate.” • An increase of households with internet access and digital skills
Improving advocacy and support for groups more at risk of experiencing social inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer people with additional risks are impacted by financial hardship



Section 3:

How will we make it happen?

To deliver the outcomes, working groups will be established to develop and monitor individual action plans for each of the strategy priorities. These plans will provide more detail around our intentions for “how” the strategy will be delivered.

High-level actions for each priority are detailed below:

PRIORITY 1: TO DEVELOP THE WORKFORCE AND CULTURE TO ENHANCE AWARENESS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES	
How will this be achieved?	<p>Upskilling practitioners to increase their skills and confidence in identifying and supporting residents facing financial hardship</p> <p>We will provide practitioners with bespoke training to equip them with skills and confidence to identify and support residents experiencing, or at risk of, financial hardship. This may include shadowing opportunities with frontline services tackling social inequalities such as Citizens Advice and Foodbanks.</p> <p>Develop effective, accessible communications and signposting to services</p> <p>We will work with the Family Information Service to ensure practitioners and residents have access to up to date / timely information on services available. This will include provision of information in different formats and languages.</p> <p>Poverty-proofing services to increase accessibility and reduce stigma</p> <p>We will work with our services to collectively reduce stigma and tackle social inequalities. This will include working with schools to identify and overcome the barriers that children and young people experiencing social inequalities can face during the school day.</p> <p>Promote corporate social responsibility and social value</p> <p>We will deliver a countywide social inequalities awareness campaign to challenge prejudice and discrimination at an institutional, social and personal level. This will include best practice guide and tackling social inequalities pledges for local businesses.</p>

“POVERTY PROOFING” is the process by which services, policies, strategies and programmes are assessed in relation to the likely impact that they will have (or have had) on poverty and on inequalities which are likely to lead to poverty. By using this process at design, implementation and review stages, poverty reduction becomes a part of mainstream policy and programme development.

PRIORITY TWO: IMPROVING ACCESS TO GOODS, RESOURCES, SERVICES AND COMMUNITIES, BOTH PHYSICALLY AND VIRTUALLY

<p>How will this be achieved?</p>	<p>Accessible and affordable transport to access goods, resources, services and communities</p> <p>We will support residents to overcome barriers to accessing goods, resources, services and communities, such as improved access to a range of flexible travel options and improved affordability of travel.</p> <p>Improving access to digital technology and the skills to use these technologies</p> <p>We will support residents with the technology they need in order to access goods, services and communities. This will include access to technology, broadband and digital skills development.</p> <p>Improving advocacy and support for groups more at risk of experiencing social inequalities</p> <p>We will provide additional support to those residents with additional risks for experiencing social inequalities, such as those from BAME groups, those with learning disabilities or mental health conditions, to reduce their risk of entering or remaining on a low income.</p> <p>Maximising take-up of the Pupil Premium for schools</p> <p>We will work with our partners to increase the number and proportion of eligible parents/carers claiming free school meals and the associated pupil premium funding for schools.</p>
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PRIORITY THREE: MAXIMISING AND MANAGING INCOME

<p>How will this be achieved?</p>	<p>Supporting Warwickshire residents to access employment that pays the Real Living Wage</p> <p>We will work with residents to identify, promote and secure opportunities for employment that will pay them at least the Real Living Wage. We will work with employers to encourage them to implement the Real Living Wage as a minimum.</p> <p>Supporting the development of the local economy and job market</p> <p>We will work with our partners and residents to develop the local economy and job market to increase the opportunities available for residents to access employment.</p> <p>Developing financial skills training through schools, colleges and developing independence programmes</p> <p>We will work with our education settings (from primary school upwards) to establish an effective curriculum that will develop the financial skills of children and young people.</p> <p>Providing emergency, flexible funds to support those most in need</p> <p>We will work with frontline services and practitioners to develop a robust pathway for residents where emergency funds would overcome immediate issues and reducing the likelihood of residents entering persistent hardship.</p>
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Governance and next steps

The longevity of the strategy has been set at nine years to reflect our desire to make a real impact on people's lives, recognising that tackling social inequalities in our communities will be an ongoing process. However, we are recommending that this strategy be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that as new evidence, data and intelligence becomes available, the strategy remains agile and flexible to respond. We are particularly mindful of the emerging data and trends post-COVID-19 which will only be truly known over the next few years. At these review points we will also take the opportunity to realign, where needed, to other WCC strategies. Therefore, we recommend that the strategy will be reviewed every three years to ensure the priorities are still meeting the needs of our local communities and are aligned to the Local Development Plans from the Districts and Boroughs.

Working groups will be established to develop and monitor individual action plans for each of the strategy priorities. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and will be reviewed on a regular basis by each working group to ensure we meet our Public Sector equality duties.²⁵ The working groups will report on progress into appropriate local governance structures, including WCC's Corporate Board, Cabinet and the Health & Wellbeing Board recognising that the responsibility for delivery is across a number of areas of the council's activity and with wider partners.

Some of our objectives will need to be achieved through existing funding, however we have secured finances from the Warwickshire COVID-19 recovery fund to support objectives that will require additional funding for the next 3 financial years (to March 2024).



Appendix 1 – Case Studies

Consultation included in-depth interviews with members of the public to collect real life experiences which are thematically summarised in the case studies below. In addition, we engaged with at least 250 practitioners from over 50 organisations across Warwickshire. Practitioners included social workers, health professionals, family support workers, teachers, advocates and debt, housing, and employment specialists. Selected quotes from these practitioners are shown below.

More people are experiencing hardship for the first time

DARREN AND JESS' STORY

Darren and Jess live together with their 2 children, age 9, and 6. Darren has a low paid job and Jess is currently searching for work after recently losing her job.

Darren and Jess struggle to manage their finances, especially when the children are on school holidays and their family expenses increase. They have found they are more likely to use credit cards, loans or have to use food banks.

They both worry about the children keeping up at school and are reliant on free school meals. They find school uniform, equipment and trips are a big expense and struggle to pay for these. Jess tries her best to shop in charity shops and second-hand sales at the school but sometimes there's not the time to shop like this and she has to buy brand new.

When Jess was recently employed they were reliant on family members providing free childcare. This has become increasingly hard for them during the pandemic as they worry about risks of COVID-19. Jess is worried about finding a job that will fit in with school hours.

They both worry about the impact of school closures during the pandemic on the children. Darren and Jess don't feel they have the skills or knowledge to home school, or the technology and good enough broadband for the children to keep up with the work.

.....

“Parents are sometimes afraid to say they need help because they don't want to admit they are struggling. They feel ashamed to ask for meal vouchers or parenting advice.”

.....

“We are seeing many more people experiencing poverty as a result of COVID.”

.....

Low-income employment

DOM AND STACEY'S STORY

The household receives universal credit and other benefits. Dom is in work, but it is low paid and unstable. Stacey finds the choice of shops in her small town limited, so prefers to travel by bus to Coventry to shop. The cost of travel is an extra financial burden to the family. The family finds it hard to budget for extra costs around Christmas and birthdays.

Dom and Stacey had difficulties when their fridge freezer broke - they couldn't afford a new one and lost three weeks' worth of food. Dom's parents had an old fridge freezer they gave to the family, alternatively they would have turned to an expensive finance agreement with high interest rates.

The family have had to access food banks. The food selection given in the parcels is variable and Stacey doesn't always know how to cook with some of the ingredients given. To ensure they have enough food to last the month, Stacey tries to do a large food shop once a month and is concerned she isn't able to buy enough fresh and healthy food for her children to have a balanced diet.

All three children receive free school meals, but the family experiences increased stress around school holidays. This summer holiday all 3 children received free school meals, which was a great relief to Dom and Stacey.

.....

“Families are struggling on low incomes – a health visitor met a family who can't afford a pushchair despite both partners in work.”

.....

“Zero hours type contracts are a big issue with the families I work with - unstable income and very little coming into the household.”

.....

Groups at greater risk of experiencing social inequalities

JOSH'S STORY

Josh was 21 years old when he moved out of his family home into social housing. He has a learning disability but doesn't qualify for personal independent payments or statutory support services. As this was the first time, he had to manage his own finances, he didn't feel confident understanding bills and payments.

He tries to pay all of his bills as soon as his money comes in, but he often doesn't understand what the letters were asking. This leads to the bills piling up, and Josh not opening letters. He struggles to manage online banking, often forgetting passwords and getting locked out of accounts.

Josh doesn't know where to go for advice - he reaches out to many services, but they didn't understand about his disability. They are impatient when he doesn't understand things, and often blame him for spending money on things he doesn't need.

.....

“There are additional pressures for parents of children with disabilities, and this becomes a barrier to employment even though they want, and need, to work.”

.....

“Barriers such as poor mental health, low literacy levels and language barriers can cause people to slip through the net for support from services as they struggle to access them.”

.....

Inter-generational inequalities

MARGARET AND KATE'S STORY

Mother Margaret and daughter Kate live together, they both have a mild learning disability. Margaret and Kate live independently in their family home. They have a home phone but no access to the internet and Kate has a pay as you go phone. They are reliant on services and businesses to manage their day to day lives, for example Kate uses libraries to access social media and Margaret manages their money through weekly visits to the bank.

Throughout the pandemic Margaret and Kate found it hard to manage their day to day life. Kate is currently at college and struggled to take part in distanced learning during the closure of schools and colleges. The college had to post work to her for her to complete, she found this hard to keep up with.

Several services have approached Margaret about getting internet installed in their house, but she feels they wouldn't be able to afford it as well as the technology to be able to use it. She also worries about making payments online due to friend's past experiences of scams or financial exploitation online. A tutor at Kate's college even investigated Kate getting a phone contract with data that she could use but Kate didn't have enough identification to successfully get a contract.

.....

“Low literacy levels within some families has meant that it has been difficult to support their children’s education. There is also a lack of access to digital technology and wi-fi.”

.....

“There is no money left over to access transport, activities and holidays. Some families I have worked with have only occasionally left Nuneaton. Therefore, the children have limited opportunities & experiences.”

.....

Isolation and access to goods, services and communities

CLAIRE'S STORY

Claire is a single mother of three young children in Nuneaton. She has recently been housed in a new property having moved from an overcrowded flat with no garden. Although the house is nice and has space for the family and a garden for the children to play, they are very isolated. The estate is on the outskirts of the town with poor public transport links. The oldest child attends a school some distance away which Claire has to travel to with all the children via the bus (four journeys each day). This caused additional expense to the family and anxiety about travelling on public transport due to COVID-19. Home-schooling through school closures was challenging as the children had to share a device for learning.

Claire struggles with finances and budgeting but is very proud and feels she should be able to manage without asking for support. She has little support from family, very few close friends and does not yet feel a sense of community in her new home. This has culminated in her own health and wellbeing being compromised.

“Services seem to change so frequently. We need support in place that is consistent and long term. All these changes in services is confusing for us working in the system, let alone for families.”

“Families who have secured housing with housings associations on new build developments often find that they are very isolated as they are out of town and often not on good bus routes so they struggle with transport links and have little money to afford transport.”



APPENDIX 2

Links between the evidence, findings and priorities

PRIORITY 1: TO DEVELOP THE WORKFORCE AND CULTURE TO ENHANCE AWARENESS OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES	
KEY FINDINGS	ENGAGEMENT
<p>The key findings show that we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise when people are experiencing and being impacted financial hardship • Be aware of the wide range of ways in which people can be impacted by financial hardship, the risk factors and longer-term effects • Increase practitioner confidence and competence to support people experiencing social inequalities • Be aware of the range of services available to support people – both preventative and when they have reached crisis point • Reduce the stigma around financial hardship • Make tackling poverty everyone's business 	<p>Practitioners and resident interviews/case studies have told us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners need to feel equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to help families experiencing financial hardship • Practitioners and residents require up to date information on services available to signposting effectively • Practitioners have seen an increasing number of people experiencing financial hardship because of the pandemic and changes in life circumstances • Residents are sometimes unwilling to access services as they don't want to admit they are struggling and feel ashamed or too proud to accept help. • There are increasing numbers of people experiencing financial hardship
PRIORITY TWO: WE WILL IMPROVE ACCESS TO GOODS, SERVICES AND COMMUNITIES, BOTH PHYSICALLY AND VIRTUALLY	
KEY FINDINGS	ENGAGEMENT
<p>The key findings show that we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it as easy as possible for residents to access goods, services and communities • Design services that can be easily accessed in a number of ways to meet the local needs of residents, whether that is physical or virtual • Work with communities to provide the means to access goods, services and communities, such as improved transport or access to digital technology • Ensure schools are receiving their pupil premium entitlement (linked to Free School Meals) in order that disadvantaged students can benefit fully and reduce the gap in educational attainment 	<p>Practitioners and resident interviews/case studies have told us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents struggle with the affordability and accessibility of transport around the county • Digital barriers are more than just access to the physical equipment, residents also need broadband and the skills to be able to use the technology • Where there is limited access to shops selling affordable healthy food, residents use local shops where these goods are often more expensive • Services don't always understand additional risk factors for experiencing social inequalities (e.g. disability) and what they can do to support people

PRIORITY THREE: WE WILL SUPPORT PEOPLE TO MAXIMISE AND MANAGE THEIR INCOME

KEY FINDINGS	ENGAGEMENT
<p>The key findings show that we need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure residents have access to affordable credit options • Work with employers in Warwickshire to secure a minimum of the Real Living Wage for all Warwickshire residents • Work with residents to support them in accessing employment that pays at least the real living wage • Develop financial skills training to help people manage their finances, starting in school 	<p>Practitioners and resident interviews/case studies have told us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increasing number residents are in unstable employment, e.g. low wages/ zero hours contracts, and are living below the relative poverty line • People with additional vulnerabilities, such as learning difficulties, find it particularly hard to manage their income • Financial literacy on the curriculum is limited and we need to do more to develop these skills in children and young people

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Warwickshire County Council Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

The purpose of an EIA is to ensure WCC is as inclusive as possible, both as a service deliverer and as an employer. It also demonstrates our compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

This document is a planning tool, designed to help you improve programmes of work by considering the implications for different groups of people. A guidance document is available [here](#).

Please note that, once approved, this document will be made public, unless you have indicated that it contains sensitive information. Please ensure that the form is clear and easy to understand. If you would like any support or advice on completing this document, please contact the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) team on 01926 412370 or equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk

Service / policy / strategy / practice / plan being assessed	Tackling Social Inequalities Strategy
Business Unit / Service Area	People, Strategy and Commissioning
Is this a new or existing service / policy / strategy / practice / plan? If an existing service / policy / strategy / practice / plan please state date of last assessment	New strategy
EIA Review team – list of members	Kate Sahota (Lead Commissioner) Tanya Khara-Butler (Commissioner)
Do any other Business Units / Service Areas need to be included?	Children and Families Business & Customer Services Education Public Health

Does this EIA contain personal and / or sensitive information?	No
Are any of the outcomes from this assessment likely to result in complaints from existing services users, members of the public and / or employees?	No

1. Please explain the background to your proposed activity and the reasons for it.

Warwickshire had previously published a Child Poverty strategy 2015-18. There has been a corporate recognition that we need to develop a new strategy to take this work forward. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has both highlighted and exacerbated the inequalities that exist, further demonstrating the need for a new strategy. There is likely to be further inequalities due to the impact of Brexit.

The Tackling social inequalities strategy is underpinned by the findings of the place-based JSNAs and supported by engagement with key stakeholders, including over 250 practitioners from 50 organisations across Warwickshire. Practitioners included social workers, health professionals, family support workers, teachers, advocates and debt, housing, and employment specialists. The main focus of the engagement was to understand the issues facing those living in hardship and the barriers to overcoming those issues. In addition, a local community organisation completed in-depth interviews with members of the public on the key themes around hardship.

The strategy is an important step in tackling the causes of and addressing the impact of social inequalities in Warwickshire. It will help us to identify who is most in need of support and help us target the support we offer. By taking a public health approach to tackling social inequalities, we will use the principles of proportionate universalism. This approach recognises the gradient of need to ensure services are targeted to different levels of need but remain equitable. Our aim is to help our residents to have a decent and secure life, recognising that everyone has a role to play in tackling social inequalities across the system. The strategy will be supported by a long term, sustainable delivery plan over the next decade to 2030.

The strategy closely aligns to and supports other strategic ambitions and priorities in Warwickshire, in particular Warwickshire County Council's Council Plan 2025, Coventry and Warwickshire's Health and Care Partnership, the Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2020 – 2025, and our COVID-19 Recovery Plan. Whilst WCC leads on the strategy and its development, the delivery will be supported by partnerships with our district and borough councils, the voluntary and third sector, local employers, the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Care Partnership.

2. Please outline your proposed activity including a summary of the main actions.

A working group with key stakeholders from across WCC was initiated in August 2020 to shape the development of the strategy and continues to meet on a monthly basis. The working group will be superseded by the strategy working groups described below.

The engagement work supporting the development of the strategy is described in section 3, and has involved service users, practitioners and key stakeholders.

Using the initial engagement to develop a draft strategy, further engagement with key stakeholders will be sought before finalising the strategy through Corporate Board, Cabinet and the Health & Wellbeing Board.

We are proposing that the Tackling social inequalities strategy will run for 9 years to 2030, with three-yearly refreshes. This approach considers the ever-changing climate, with reference to the current COVID-19 pandemic and the longer-term impacts of this.

The strategy will be delivered through working groups, established to support and implement each of these priorities. The working groups will report into a corporate governance structure that is currently being developed. Each working group will develop their own EIA. These groups will monitor progress using an agreed set of indicators. Implementation of the priorities will also be supported by £300,000 for 2021/22 and £250,000 funding each year for two years thereafter.

The first three yearly refresh (2023/24) will be informed by a planned Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, due to take place from May 2023-Oct 2023.

3. Who is this going to impact and how? (customers, service users, public and staff)

It is good practice to seek the views of your stakeholders and for these to influence your proposed activity. Please list anything you have already found out. If you still need to talk to stakeholders, include this as an 'action' at the end of your EIA. **Note that in some cases, there is a duty to consult, see [more](#).**

After engagement with 250 practitioners (from over 50 organisations) and focused interviews with residents we have identified three strategic priorities, these are supported with sub-priorities to guide the action plans that will be developed during the next phase of delivery.

Priority One: To develop the workforce and culture to enhance awareness of social inequalities

How will this be achieved?

Upskilling practitioners to increase their skills and confidence in identifying and supporting residents facing financial hardship

We will provide practitioners with bespoke training to equip them with skills and confidence to identify and support residents experiencing, or at risk of, financial hardship. This may include shadowing opportunities with frontline services tackling social inequalities such as Citizens Advice and Foodbanks.

Develop effective, accessible communications and signposting to services

We will work with the Family Information Service to ensure practitioners and residents have access to up to date / timely information on services available. This will include provision of information in different formats and languages.

Poverty-proofing services to increase accessibility and reduce stigma

We will work with our services to collectively reduce stigma and tackle social inequalities. This will include working with schools to identify and overcome the barriers that children and young people experiencing social inequalities can face during the school day.

Promote corporate social responsibility and social value

We will deliver a countywide social inequalities awareness campaign to challenge prejudice and discrimination at an institutional, social and personal level. This will include best practice guide and tackling social inequalities pledges for local businesses.

Priority Two: Improving access to goods, resources, services and communities, both physically and virtually

<p>How will this be achieved?</p>	<p>Accessible and affordable transport to access goods, resources, services and communities We will support residents to overcome barriers to accessing goods, resources, services and communities, such as improved access to a range of flexible travel options and improved affordability of travel.</p> <p>Improving access to digital technology and the skills to use these technologies We will support residents with the technology they need in order to access goods, services and communities. This will include access to technology, broadband and digital skills development.</p> <p>Improving advocacy and support for groups more at risk of experiencing social inequalities We will provide additional support to those residents with additional risks for experiencing social inequalities, such as those from BAME groups, those with learning disabilities or mental health conditions, to reduce their risk of entering or remaining on a low income.</p> <p>Maximising take-up of the Pupil Premium for schools We will work with our partners to increase the number and proportion of eligible parents/carers claiming free school meals and the associated pupil premium funding for schools.</p>
<p>Priority Three: Maximising and managing income</p>	
<p>How will this be achieved?</p>	<p>Supporting Warwickshire residents to access employment that pays the Real Living Wage We will work with residents to identify, promote and secure opportunities for employment that will pay them at least the Real Living Wage. We will work with employers to encourage them to implement the Real Living Wage as a minimum.</p> <p>Supporting the development of the local economy and jobs market We will work with our partners and residents to develop the local economy and jobs market to increase the opportunities available for residents to access employment.</p> <p>Developing financial skills training through schools, colleges and developing independence programmes</p>

We will work with our education settings (from primary school upwards) to establish an effective curriculum that will develop the financial skills of children and young people.

Providing emergency, flexible funds to support those most in need

We will work with frontline services and practitioners to develop a robust pathway for residents where emergency funds would overcome immediate issues and reducing the likelihood of residents entering persistent hardship.

We propose continuing with our engagement with practitioners and residents as part of the working groups to deliver the priorities. This engagement will help define and shape the activities we need to undertake in order to achieve our priorities. This is likely to require targeted engagement work to ensure we are meeting our duties as part of the PSED. We will use the EIA tool to ensure with engage with and hear from a representative pool of people as part of the working groups. EIA will be undertaken in development with programmes of work deriving from the strategy.

Please analyse the potential impact of your proposed activity against the protected characteristics.

N.B Think about what actions you might take to mitigate / remove the negative impacts and maximize on the positive ones. This will form part of your action plan at question 7.

	What information do you have? What information do you still need to get?	Positive impacts	Negative impacts
Age	Children are more likely than any other age group to be living in poverty. In 2018/19, 30% of	The strategy will work in conjunction with Child Friendly Warwickshire programme of	None

	<p>children in the UK were living in relative low income after housing costs, compared to 21% of working age adults and 16% of pensioners.</p> <p>Young workers have been most economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as they were most likely to be furloughed or be made redundant.</p>	<p>work to ensure there is a particular focus on reducing the impact of poverty on children and young people.</p>	
<p>Disability Consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical disabilities • Sensory impairments • Neurodiverse conditions (e.g. dyslexia) • Mental health conditions (e.g. depression) • Medical conditions (e.g. diabetes) 	<p>Feedback from practitioners has indicated people with disabilities struggle to secure paid employment with a fair wage, sustain employment and access support services if required.</p> <p>In the UK, 25% of disabled individuals are in the bottom poorest quintile based on disposable household income compared to 19% of non-disabled individuals.</p>	<p>This issue has been identified as one of the key priorities of this strategy - Advocacy for groups with additional risks for poverty</p> <p>We will provide additional support to those residents with additional risks for poverty, such as those from BAME groups, those with learning disabilities or mental health conditions, to reduce their risk of entering or remaining in poverty.</p>	None
Gender Reassignment	No information available	<p>As part of the development of our data capture, we will seek to capture information on this cohort to support the development of our priority work</p>	None
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>In the UK, 17% of those classified in a couple are in the bottom poorest quintile based on household disposable income compared to 25% of</p>	<p>This issue has been identified as one of the key priorities of this strategy - Advocacy for groups with additional risks for poverty</p>	None

	single people. Moreover, 33% of those who are single with children are in the bottom poorest quintile.	We will provide additional support to those residents with additional risks for poverty, such as those from BAME groups, those with learning disabilities or mental health conditions, to reduce their risk of entering or remaining in poverty.	
Pregnancy and Maternity	No information available	As part of the development of our data capture, we will seek to capture information on this cohort to support the development of our priority work	None
Race	<p>The data shows that median salary income is different depending on race.</p> <p>In the UK, 18% of White people are in the bottom poorest quintile based on disposable household income. In comparison 32% and 31% of Asian and Black people are in the bottom poorest quintile, respectively.</p>	<p>This issue has been identified as one of the key priorities of this strategy - Advocacy for groups with additional risks for poverty</p> <p>We will provide additional support to those residents with additional risks for poverty, such as those from BAME groups, those with learning disabilities or mental health conditions, to reduce their risk of entering or remaining in poverty.</p>	None
Religion or Belief	No information available	As part of the development of our data capture, we will seek to capture information on this cohort to support the development of our priority work	None

Sex	In the UK, 18% of men are in the bottom poorest quintile for disposable household income compared to 20% of women. Conversely, 23% of men are in the richest top quintile compared to 20% of women. An estimated 48% of single parent households are in poverty, compared to 24% of couple families. Most single parent households (89%) are headed by women.	This issue has been identified as one of the key priorities of this strategy - Advocacy for groups with additional risks for poverty We will provide additional support to those residents with additional risks for poverty, such as those from BAME groups, those with learning disabilities or mental health conditions, to reduce their risk of entering or remaining in poverty.	None
Sexual Orientation	No information available	As part of the development of our data capture, we will seek to capture information on this cohort to support the development of our priority work	None

4. What could the impact of your proposed activity be on other vulnerable groups e.g. deprivation, looked after children, carers?

Action plans

As discussed above vulnerable groups have been identified as one of the key priorities.

5. How does / could your proposed activity fulfil the three aims of PSED, giving due regard to:

- the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation

- creating equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- fostering good relationships between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The Tackling Social Inequalities Strategy is creating equality of opportunity by removing the inequalities gap for disadvantaged individuals.

Our strategy priority of workforce and culture training to promote poverty awareness will aim to foster good relationships between groups, this strategy will tackle prejudice for disadvantaged groups using this platform.

6. Actions – what do you need to do next?

Consider:

- Who else do you need to talk to? Do you need to engage or consult?
- How you will ensure your activity is clearly communicated
- Whether you could mitigate any negative impacts for protected groups
- Whether you could do more to fulfil the aims of PSED
- Anything else you can think of!

Action	Timescale	Name of person responsible
Develop working principles for each of the working groups to ensure all protected characteristics are considered when delivering detailed action plans.	June 2021	Kate Sahota
Seeking local data to reinforce local needs so our priorities can be shaped accordingly.	Ongoing and reviewed annually	Kate Sahota

Ongoing monitoring of Benefits / indicators will need to consider protected characteristics.	Ongoing and reviewed annually	Kate Sahota
The EIA will be reviewed in line with any new developments arising from responses to the engagement and from the discussions of the working groups.	Ongoing and reviewed annually	Kate Sahota

7. Sign off.

Name of person/s completing EIA	Kate Sahota Tanya Khera-Butler
Name and signature of Assistant Director	Becky Hale, 20.5.2
Date	20 th May 2021
Date of next review and name of person/s responsible	1 st November 2021 Kate Sahota

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Tackling Social Inequalities in Warwickshire

Draft Action Plan 2021 - 2024

Priority	Leads	WCC Membership (to include, but not limited to)	Partner Membership (to include, but not limited to)
Priority 1: Develop the workforce and culture to enhance awareness of social inequalities	Tanya Khera-Butler Duncan Vernon (Public Health/SWFT)	Jo Rolls (FIS), Hannah Cramp (Communities), Sarah Cox (Education), Emma Neale/Fay Winterburn (Skills)	Health settings, education settings, Districts & Boroughs, Voluntary & Community Sector
Priority 2: Improving access to goods, resources, services and communities (physically and virtually)	Kate Sahota Sally Roberts (NBBC)	Susie Harrison (CSW Broadband), Sophie Thomson (Education), Keira Rounsley (Equality & diversity), Jo Rolls (FIS), Jackie Kerby (Commissioning), Hayley Sparks (Public Health), Isher Kehal (Public Health), Gemma McKinnon (Public Health)	Districts & Boroughs, Voluntary & Community Sector
Priority 3: Maximising and managing income	Amanda Wilson-Patterson (WCC) Bill Basra (BRANCAB)	Debbie Hibberd (Education), Emma Neale/Fay Winterburn (Skills), Jan Lennon (ACL)	Education settings, Districts & Boroughs, Voluntary & Community Sector, Citizens Advice,

Please note: the action plan currently includes a high-level indication of proposed projects aligned to the priorities. They will be worked up in more detail once we have embedded co-production within our working groups to ensure the activities are guided by people with lived experiences of poverty and practitioners working with residents.

Cross-cutting Activities

Project	Purpose	Partners
Governance set-up	To ensure appropriate governance mechanisms are in place to support the delivery of the strategy	Place-based health and wellbeing partnerships Health & Wellbeing Board
Easy-read version of strategy	To create a version of the strategy that we will be able to share with those with lived experience of social inequalities	Communications
Embedding co-production within workstreams	To provide training to members of the working group to develop co-production skills	Co-production Wales (TBC), Corporate Consultation Team
Social Inequalities data and insight	To provide up to date data and insight on social inequalities related intelligence. To include improvements in data relating to protected characteristics	Business Intelligence
Monitoring and evaluation	To provide evidence and impact of the initiatives delivered as part of the workstreams	Universities
Equality Impact Assessments / Environmental Impact	To ensure Equality Impact Assessments are updated regularly as part of the workstreams. To consider Environmental Impact as part of programme delivery	All

Priority 1: Developing the workforce and culture to enhance awareness of social inequalities

Sub priority	Project	Purpose	Partners
1.1. Upskilling practitioners to increase their skills and confidence in identifying and supporting residents facing financial hardship	MECC module	Making social inequalities everyone's business, making everybody poverty aware and knowledge of services available	Learning & Development team, NE Children
	Half-day workshop	More intensive training to frontline practitioners, to equip them to have conversations about poverty, identify poverty and be able to signpost and provide advice as appropriate.	NE Children
	Train the Trainer	In depth training provided to a select group of practitioners, enabling them to delivery training to their teams and wider.	NE Children
1.2. Develop effective, accessible communications and signposting to services	FIS support	Enabling FIS to enhance their current service, specifically looking at poverty outcomes	FIS
1.3. Poverty-Proofing	Poverty Proofing Schools	To audit schools through a "poverty sensitive" lens, look at the day through pupil perspective, identify barriers/unintentional stigma, develop action plan	NE Children, Schools, School Improvement Team?
	Poverty Proofing Employers	To audit, provide report and action plan of addressing the barriers that poverty creates. Poverty Toolkit - Development of toolkit to support organisations (piloting within WCC)	NE Children
	Poverty Proofing Health Services	To audit, provide report and action plan of addressing the barriers that poverty creates	NE Children
	Poverty Proofing Communities	To audit, provide report and action plan of addressing the barriers that poverty creates. To include links with Child Friendly Warwickshire	NE Children

1.4. Corporate Social Responsibility and social value	Poverty Toolkit	We will deliver a countywide anti-stigma poverty campaign to challenge prejudice and discrimination at an institutional, social and personal level. This will include best practice guide and poverty pledges for local businesses.	Comms and Localities team Hannah Cramp, Child Friendly Warwickshire
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Priority 2: Improving access to goods, resources, services and communities, both physically and virtually

Sub priority	Project	Purpose	Partners
2.1 Accessible and affordable transport to access good, resources, services and communities	Local Transport Plan	To support the implementation of the Local Transport Plan	Traffic/Road Safety Group Public Health
	Stour Health & Wellbeing Partnership Transport Workstream	To work with the Transport Workstream as part of the Stour Health & Wellbeing Partnership	Stour Health & Wellbeing Partnership
	Aiding new settlements	To support new communities being developed with their established and access to key services	Districts and boroughs
2.2 Improving access to digital technology and the skills to use these technologies	Digital skills	Delivery of training programmes to improve digital skills, including sharing national resources (e.g. https://elearning.cpag.org.uk/)	CSW Broadband team Adult Community Learning
	Affordable broadband	To provide access to local communities with affordable high-speed broadband	
	Equipment	To provide access to equipment for local communities to get online	
2.3 Improving advocacy and support for groups more at risk of experiencing social inequalities	Scoping exercise	To undertake a scoping exercise on how we can provide additional support to those residents with additional risks for poverty, such	Equality & Diversity, Children with Disabilities, SENDAR,

		as those from BAME groups, those with learning disabilities or mental health conditions, to reduce their risk of entering or remaining in poverty. This will lead to a prioritised set of projects for this element of the work programme	
2.4 Maximising take-up of Pupil Premium for schools	Information sharing on eligible families	To improve the information shared between departments (in line with GDPR) to increase the number of eligible families claiming Free School Meals	Education and schools, FIS, DWP
	Communications campaign	To increase the number of eligible families claiming Free School Meals	Education and schools, FIS

Priority 3: Maximising and managing income

Sub priority	Project	Purpose	Partners
3.1 Supporting Warwickshire residents to access employment that pays the Real Living Wage	Work with our partners to understand barriers to accessing good jobs and work to tackle this.	We will work with residents to identify, promote and secure opportunities for employment that will pay them at least the Real Living Wage	Job Centres, Citizens Advice, Warwickshire Employment Service - Rethink, Warwickshire Employment Support Team,
	Engagement roadshows/conferences/webinars with local employers around staff wellbeing in the workplace.	We will work with employers to encourage them to implement the Real Living Wage as a minimum.	Local large employers https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/r2elle
3.2 Supporting the development of the local economy and jobs market	Grant funding opportunities for young people at risk	We will work with our partners and residents to develop the local economy and jobs market to increase the opportunities available for residents to access employment.	Community safety, economy & skills

<p>3.3 Developing financial skills training through schools, colleges and developing independence programmes</p>	<p>Financial skills training across different settings: - primary - secondary -16+ - specialist provision</p>	<p>Provide age appropriate financial education programmes to equip all with confidence and skills for effective money management. To tackle intergenerational poverty, where evidence shows starting financial education early is effective.</p>	<p>schools, colleges, organisations such as The Money and Pension Service</p>
<p>3.4 Providing emergency, flexible funds to support those most in need</p>	<p>Establish pathway and reserve to support emergency and flexible funds for residents experiencing poverty</p>	<p>Ensure that frontline services have access to discretionary emergency funds that would overcome immediate issues.</p>	<p>FIS, social workers, family support workers,</p>

Cabinet

14th October 2021

Warwickshire Children & Young People Strategy 2021-2030

Recommendation

- 1) Cabinet approve the Warwickshire Children & Young People Strategy 2021 - 2030.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The establishment of the first Warwickshire Children & Young People Strategy offers a real opportunity to take positive steps forward prioritising children and childhood in our post pandemic recovery work and in the future Council Plan.
- 1.2 The Warwickshire Children & Young People Strategy has been designed by cross-services within the Council and with partner agencies. This allows for a whole council and partner, long-term plan. This is a County Council strategy but to be successful it is vital that we build and use the power of partnerships. Multi-agency endeavours underpinned by one aim, one set of collective principles, ambitions, outcomes, and measures will allow us to collectively improve the life chances and outcomes of children, young people and families.
- 1.3 The strategy establishes a clear and simple aim, to achieve a Child Friendly Warwickshire. This means that Warwickshire is a county that puts children at the heart of all we do. This will support our Council's overall vision for Warwickshire to be the best it can be.
- 1.4 Accountability for the plan will be held by the Strategic Director People in their statutory role as Director of Children's Services. However, it will be overseen on a regular basis by the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board. Other partnership boards will have some cross over into the strategy including the Corporate Parenting Board, Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership and the Warwickshire Together for Children Board.
- 1.5 In forming the strategy we have engaged with many people. This has included cross Council teams and partner agencies including headteachers, health colleagues, police, various commissioned services and voluntary and community organisations. Over 146 individual comments and suggestions were received. We have also engaged with 1,807 children and young people through the Child Friendly Warwickshire survey which helped identify our priority areas and with the parent and carer forums. On 30th September 2021

the Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee also provided their views about the draft strategy, which has resulted in changes being made.

- 1.6 The audience for the strategy is predominantly those working with children and young people to send a clear aim and direction of travel for integration, collaboration and council led partnership to improve outcomes for children. Whilst this version of the strategy will be published, we intend to also establish a version for children, young people and parents/carers in Warwickshire.
- 1.7 We have worked with colleagues in Leeds City Council as part of the Strengthening Families, Protecting Children Project in formulating the strategy. In particular, the establishment of clear measurable objectives has been established. This will allow us to have one children's outcomes framework which we intend to implement within power BI to help elected members and senior managers to measure, monitor and scrutinise the delivery of the strategy. The five outcomes, fourteen prioritise and twenty-two measures are designed to incorporate all parts of Children's Services.
- 1.8 There will be a more detailed delivery plan established to support the strategy and to monitor how our ambitions are achieved. This will be supported by a new Power BI dashboard that will measure impact and outcomes, this will be available to elected members and will also be published, at least annually on our website.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 There are no financial implications arising from this strategy. Any specific projects that have a financial implication will need to be managed by the Assistant Directors within the current budget.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 There are no adverse environmental implications.

4. Implementation of the strategy

- 4.1 The table on page six onwards will be formulated into a more detailed delivery plan. An update on progress of the strategy will be timetabled on at least an annual basis at the Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and an update of the strategy, with any revisions, will be provided to Cabinet on an annual basis.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Cabinet are asked to approve the first Warwickshire Children's Strategy 2021-2030.

6. Background papers

6.1 There are no background papers.

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix A – Warwickshire Children & Young People Strategy 2021 -2030.

Report Author	John Coleman, Assistant Director, Children & Families	johncoleman@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Nigel Minns	nigelminns@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Jeff Morgan	jeffmorgan@warwickshire.gov.uk

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Warwickshire Children and Young People Strategy 2021-2030



Foreword

Warwickshire County Councillor Jeff Morgan, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families and Education.

Welcome to the first Children and Young People Strategy 2021-2030. This is the first strategy of its kind for the county's children and young people and has, at its heart, the Child Friendly Warwickshire programme.

In order to best understand what this strategy aims to achieve, there is for me, one question that needs to be answered at the outset.

What does Child Friendly Warwickshire mean?

Child Friendly Warwickshire is a programme which forms part of a wider £12 million change, partly funded by the Department for Education, in how Warwickshire County Council's Children and Families' services work.

This programme will enable us to meet our ambitions for children and young people. These include improving school attendance, reducing the number of young people not in education, training or employment and safely reducing the number of children in care.

To help us to achieve these ambitions, our strategy aims to bring the county together in a collective effort to ensure our children and young people have a voice and that they are heard, that they are safe, happy and healthy and that they are equipped with the skills to have the best lives they can.

Having the best life possible does not happen by accident. It needs involvement from a range of groups beyond the children themselves. So, this strategy looks at how Warwickshire County Council will work with not only the children

and young people but also with parents, carers, communities and other agencies – all composite parts that, when brought together, create a county that is child-friendly, one where children and young people have every opportunity to flourish in all aspects of their lives. A Child Friendly Warwickshire.

How have we come up with this strategy? As with all good plans, it started by listening. Children and young people are at the heart of all that we do but, as adults, we may have lost sight of what a child needs in such a fast-changing world. Earlier this year we surveyed youngsters in all sorts of settings asking them how we can make ours a county that is committed to creating an environment in which they can thrive. Their responses guided our ambitions and the priority areas outlined in the strategy where we will give focus. Alignment to the Council Plan and its core objectives was also critical and we will deliver our plans to ensure our resources are managed well and that the economy and environment are supported.

That is the first step and there will be many more. It is a long term vision and one that will evolve as we learn. I am very proud to be launching it now, though, as we take the first steps in not only making Warwickshire the best it can be for our children and young people, but also helping our children and young people be the best they can be for Warwickshire.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Morgan".

Councillor Jeff Morgan
Portfolio Holder for Children and Families
and Education, Warwickshire County
Council

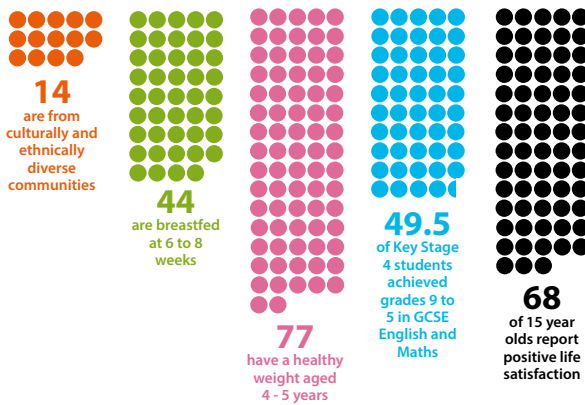
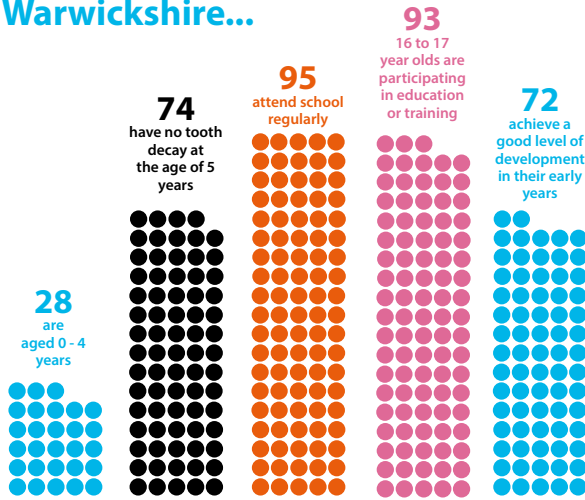
Introduction

Our aim is for Warwickshire to be a Child Friendly County.

This strategy will establish how Warwickshire County Council will work with parents, carers, children, young people, communities, and other agencies to ensure children in Warwickshire can be the best they can be. It sets out how we will create a child friendly county and a safe place for children to grow up and reach their full potential.

Did you know?

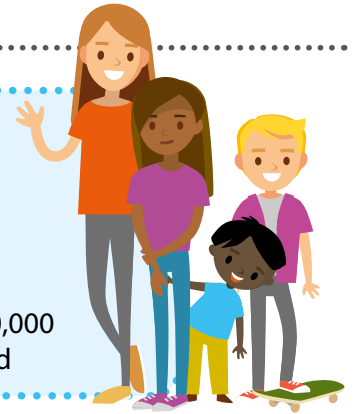
For every 100 children in Warwickshire...



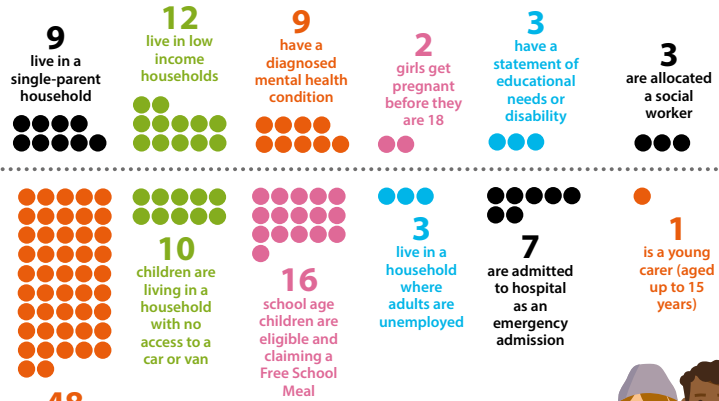
In Warwickshire...

20% of the population are 0-17 (2020)

Population of 120,000 under 18 years old



Source: Warwickshire County Council Business Intelligence 2020



10 children are living in a household with no access to a car or van

48 are physically active for an hour a day

16 school age children are eligible and claiming a Free School Meal



Our challenges & opportunities

This strategy will seek to address the following challenges and utilise these opportunities to achieve better outcomes for children.

Warwickshire has a high number of children in care compared to other similar areas.

Warwickshire has experienced a decrease in the number of children aged 2 plus accessing free early years provision compared to other similar areas.

Warwickshire has a rising number of children in Year 6 who are obese.

Warwickshire has long waiting lists for Autistic Spectrum Disorder diagnostics.

Warwickshire has high levels of hospital admissions for children and young people needing tier 4 mental health and for alcohol specific conditions compared to other similar areas.

Warwickshire has seen a 39% rise between 2017-2020 in the number of children with an Education, Health and Social Care Plan.

Warwickshire County Council has an ambitious £13m change programme for Children's & Education (SEND) Services, focusing on support for our most vulnerable children.

Warwickshire children (72%) achieve a good level of development in early years.

Warwickshire has lower levels of young people aged 19 who are not in education, employment or training (6.9%) compared to the national average (10.9%).

Warwickshire Together for Children Partnership is implementing the Warwickshire Family Values programme, a recommended approach to support children & their families.

Warwickshire children (41.5%) go on to achieve a degree or equivalent qualification above the national average (35%).

Warwickshire schools have decreased permanent exclusions by 29% since 2018/19.

The voice of children & young people

Children and young people are at the heart of all we do. We are committed to listening to their voice as this will ensure it has impact and influence to shape services. In 2021, we started an annual survey of children and young people asking them how we can make Warwickshire a child friendly county.



1,807 children responded and they said...

81% considered the area they lived in was child friendly. This figure reduced by age and varied by location.

Children said their family, friends and school make them feel safe.

What would make your area more Child Friendly?

- 1 Places to play
- 2 Clean environment
- 3 Good schools
- 4 Enough food for everyone
- 5 Children to be involved in important decisions
- 6 Enough housing for everyone

If children and young people were in charge of their town, they said they would prioritise:

- 1 More homes and stop homelessness
- 2 Reducing child poverty
- 3 Support to stop Domestic Abuse
- 4 Improving access to training and jobs
- 5 Making young people's voices heard in creating services
- 6 Improving play, leisure and cultural activities

Our Principles

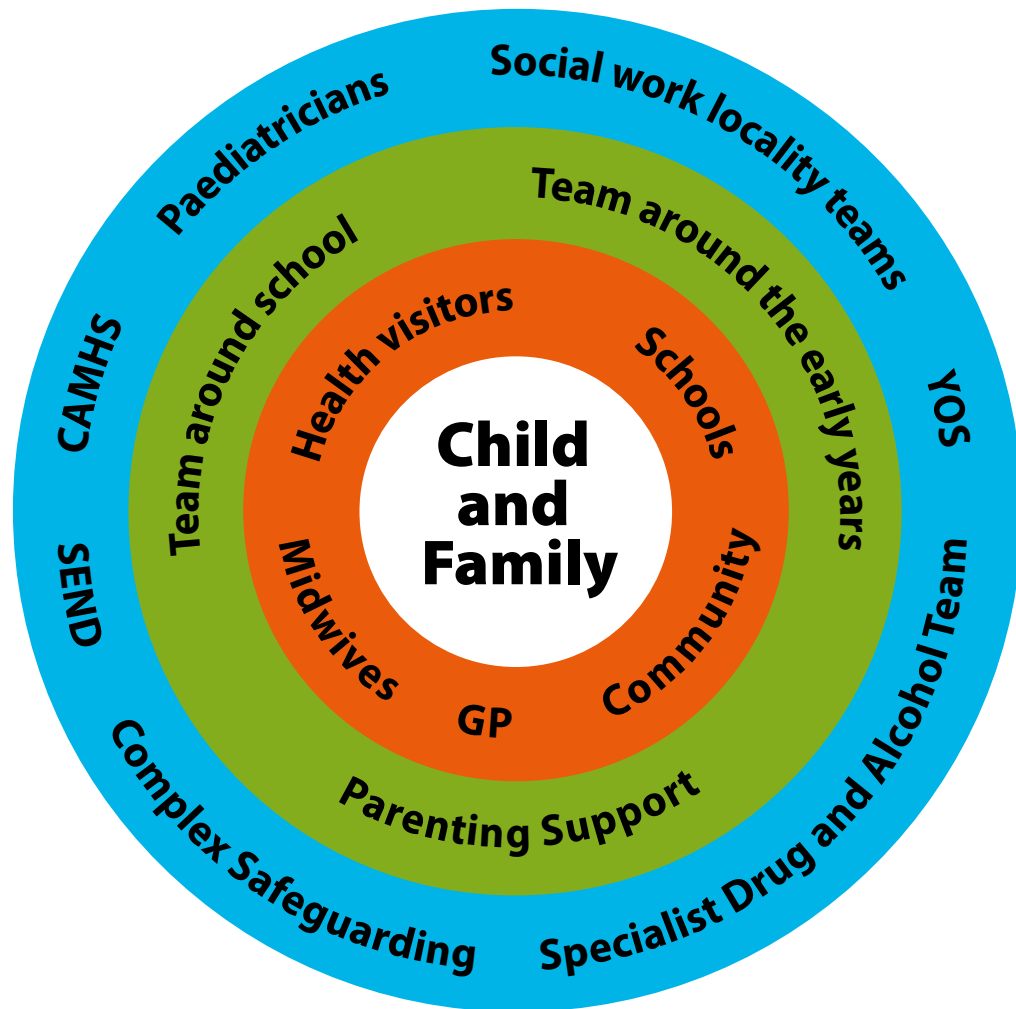
The County Council is committed to building services for children and young people that are:

- Aspirational and inclusive – equal opportunities for all children and young people.
- Based on a strengths-based approach, that is restorative and trauma informed.
- One integrated approach that is multi-disciplinary and multi-agency.
- A local and community-based approach that considers the level of need/context.
- Provision of timely and helpful support for children, young people, and parents/carers.
- Prioritising prevention and early help. Always providing the right service, at the right time.
- Enabling and empowering children, young people and families to be resilient.

Our Approach

We value relationships and partnership. When strategic partnerships work together to respond to need, the opportunities are enormous. Collaborative commissioning and delivery models will be a priority. We will reimagine Children’s Services, through interdependent working. A Council led coalition of partner agencies across the county will reach children and young people in need of help and protection. Working this way leads to better outcomes for children and young people.

By 2030 we will build integrated, multi-disciplinary and multi-agency services. We will have a fully integrated leadership and management team and children’s commissioning model. The objective is in each locality there will be a dedicated integrated multi-disciplinary team, wrapped around school consortia. We want to take an incremental approach to integration, achieved by consent, together with people and to improve the system. We will start with areas where we have the biggest challenges and make support systems better. Our initial priority areas are mental health, health services and SEND.



Achieving integrated services and commissioning will require transparency, strong strategic leadership and ownership across the whole system. An integrated system will achieve better outcomes by:

- Improving mental health and wellbeing for children and young people.
- Improving school readiness and education outcomes.
- Improving health outcomes.
- Helping more children to safely remain within their family and community.
- Reducing domestic abuse, child exploitation and youth violence.
- Support children and families earlier.
- Improving integration and reducing inequality.
- Improving children and their families and professional’s morale and satisfaction.

One integrated impact and outcomes performance framework

Across Warwickshire we will adopt a new integrated performance framework.



With parents, young people and professionals we have developed five outcomes and fourteen priorities which we want to achieve by 2030.


Our outcomes and priorities have been chosen as critical measures for success as these are the things young people said were most important to them. In early 2021 over one thousand young people took part in our Child Friendly Warwickshire Survey and their feedback highlighted the things that matter most to them and would make them feel that they live in a child friendly county.

The strategy will be supported by a delivery plan, this will detail how we will do this, who will be responsible and offer a timetable for activity and a performance framework will be developed to measure the impact of this strategy. The twenty-one high level measures on the table below are some of the measures we use to monitor progress. We will establish and publish a Power BI dashboard that will measure the impact and outcomes. This will enable elected members, senior officers and interested parties to review progress to ensure real change is evidenced and achieved.

Five outcomes we want to achieve	Fourteen priorities we want to focus upon:	We will achieve this by...	We will measure success by...
 <p>Be healthy - Happy, healthy, resilient children.</p>	<p>Improve social, emotional, and mental health and wellbeing.</p> <hr/> <p>Encourage physical activity and healthy eating.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work collaboratively across health, social care, education and with communities to ensure children and young people with special educational needs and a disability (SEND) and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) are identified and receive support earlier. • We will redesign the system to focus upon prevention of emotional and mental health issues escalating. Focusing upon earlier solution focused approaches such as improving social prescribing and self-harm support pathways. • We will significantly reduce the number of children requiring tier 4 mental health provision. • We will work with partner agencies in health to ensure access to diagnostics and treatment is timely and effective for all children, particularly vulnerable children. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will provide access to opportunities in school and the community to value physical activities and exercise, from an earlier age. • We will provide advice and support to parents and carers to ensure children grow up in an environment that enables them to make good health eating choices. • We will tackle the causes of health-related problems to reduce the impact of ill health and inequalities on people's lives, their families, and communities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage of children and young people seen within 18 weeks (Referral to Treatment Time) by RISE and the number of children and young people waiting more than 12 weeks for a follow up appointment. 2. Prevalence of children at age 11 who are a healthy weight. 3. Under-18 conception rates. 4. Admission episodes to hospital, including alcohol-specific conditions: under18s. 5. Infant mortality rates.

	<p>Provide play, leisure, culture, and sporting opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure all children have local access to play and leisure activities. • We will invest in our Youth Services to increase access to targeted support and outreach work in schools, colleges, and local communities. • We will ensure continued support for children during school holidays through the Warwickshire Welfare scheme. 	
 <p>Be safe - Children and young people are safe from harm.</p>	<p>Help children live in safe and supportive families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We value family and will utilise the full strengths of their family and community. • We will continue to invest in Family Group Conferencing and restorative approaches, which support children and their families to establish their own solutions to problems. • We will provide support to reduce the impact of parental conflict upon children when parents separate. • Where children are unsafe, we will act working with families, through high support and high challenge so children are safe from harm. 	<p>6. Number of children in care and the number of children/ parents experiencing a second or subsequent instance of having a child or children enter care.</p> <p>7. Number of children and young people subject to a child in need and child protection plan, including those who experience repeat plans.</p>
	<p>Ensure that the most vulnerable are protected.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will tackle young people and family homelessness by supporting families to maintain their home and increase access to more homes across Warwickshire. • We will provide access to a range of early interventions, so issues are addressed and do not escalate. • We will provide children subject to child protection plans with timely and effective support to reduce the risk of harm. • When children need to be in the care of the Council, we will ensure access to therapeutic support and good quality foster care and residential homes that are local and within children's own community. • We will support more children in care to achieve permanency, by increasing support for parents to enable safe reunification and for connected others, special guardians, and adopters to care for children who cannot live with their parents. • We will continue to prioritise our corporate parenting responsibilities and to influence the care market, ensuring children are provided with local, good quality and stable care. We will remain focused upon keeping families together, recruiting and supporting more foster carers and opening our own Children's Homes. 	
	<p>Create confident workforce with a common core of knowledge and understanding about children's needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are committed to ensuring all organisations are connected and work together to deliver and commission services for children in Warwickshire. We will streamline ways of working to ensure pathways for services are integrated and accessible. Integration could include streamlined ways of working together, co-location and/or full structural integration. We will decide on this together, by consent and only if this benefits children, young people, and their families. • We develop a learning culture, which includes investment in develop opportunities and where the environment enables restorative practice and trauma informed approaches to be implemented across the whole of the children and young peoples' workforce. • We will ensure there is a clear and consistent understanding and application of the Spectrum of Support, particularly focusing upon early and targeted support. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will build local partnerships around our schools and children and family centres, • We value voluntary and community services. We will provide support particularly to organisations providing youth services to maintain quality, consistency and availability of activities and support to children and young people. • Support our workforce to work with all family members, particularly engaging fathers more, ensuring support is provided through our Caring Dad’s programme. 	
 <p>Be happy - Families able to make positive changes.</p>	<p>Access to helpful and earlier solution-focused and evidence-based interventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will work with our partner organisations to ensure people have access to the support and information they need and, where possible, are able to manage their own support. • We will invest in evidence-based parenting strategies. To ensure parents and carers have access to a wide range of parenting information, courses, and specialist one to one support. • We will invest in whole family approaches, to ensure multi agency integrated support is provided to address issues such as mental health, substance misuse and domestic abuse. • We will enhance support for children who experience domestic abuse by increasing access to provision for domestic abuse counselling and therapeutic support. <p>An open, honest, and transparent approach to supporting children and their families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will remain inquisitive in our practice, to ensure all decision makers, professionals, volunteers, and community leaders keep children at the centre of all we do. • We will provide high support and high challenge to others and ourselves. Working <u>with</u> children, young people, and families, not doing “for” or “to” them. 	<p>8. Number of closed Family Group Conference (FGC) which contributed to preventing family breakdown.</p> <p>9. Satisfaction levels of children, young people, parents and carers with provision of services to enable sustained change.</p> <p>*The measure under Be Safe will also measure Be Happy.</p>
 <p>Be skilled - Children are able to achieve at all levels of learning and have skills for life.</p>	<p>Support children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will increase the number of children accessing free early years provision from the age of two. • We will ensure fair access to good and outstanding education providers. • We will ensure health checks and support are provided to identify earlier health and care issues. This will enable us to ensure children are supported earlier to thrive and achieve their full potential. <p>Close the achievement gap at all levels of learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure children have access to high quality teaching, together with strong leadership, which enables schools to meet the needs of disadvantaged children. This includes early years, as education starting at age 2 can have an impact on long-term social mobility. • Schools will be supported to ensure maximise Pupil Premium funding to raise the attainment of disadvantaged young people. • We will increase targeted support for children not in education, for those in alternative education or not in school full time. We will ensure children who are electively home educated are supported. • We will rigorously use data to identify gaps and to make them visible, pinpoint pupils at risk of underperforming and challenge those whose progress needs to accelerate. This will enable us to reach out to the families of disadvantaged learners and the communities in which they live to raise pupil aspirations/engagement. 	<p>10. Percentage of pupils achieving a good level of school readiness and development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.</p> <p>11. Percentage of new school places in good and outstanding schools.</p> <p>12. Attendance at primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>13. Number of fixed term exclusions from primary and secondary schools.</p>

	<p>Support schools to improve attendance, to become more inclusive and develop positive behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing effective practice between schools and teachers. Applying the findings to the classroom focusing on using structured phonics instruction, cooperative learning, frequent assessment and teaching meta-cognitive skills which can significantly raise outcomes. • We will provide support and training to ensure education providers are skilled and enable to meet the needs of children with SEND, so our schools become more inclusive. • We will implement a “one meeting, one plan approach”, so that the Education & Health Care Plan (EHCP) is the single plan for the child or young person with special educational needs or a disability. • Implement a new Attend Framework to support attendance and tackle persistent non-attendance. • Provide wrap around support to schools and children to reduce temporary and permanent exclusions. • We will work with providers to achieve high standards in alternative provision, ensuring the focus is supporting children back to mainstream education provision. 	<p>14. Percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing, and maths at the end of Key Stage 2.</p> <p>15. Progress 8 score at the end of Key Stage 4.</p> <p>16. Percentage of disadvantaged children achieving Grade 5+ (strong pass) in English and Maths GCSEs at Key Stage 4 (age 16).</p>
 <p>Be heard - Young people are active citizens and are ready for and contributing to adult life.</p>	<p>Increase participation and engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage and coproduce integrated services with children, young people and parents so they co design and shape services that impact upon them. • We will build upon the success of our voice and participation team, to ensure all children are listened to and this impacts upon the design of our services. • We will support our Youth Council to become more inclusive, widening engagement and increasing influence of children and young people in Warwickshire at a local, regional, and national level. • We will strengthen the voice of all parents, carers, adopters, and special guardians. In particular, improving engagement and communication between the Council and SEND Parent Carer Voice. 	<p>17. Proportion of young offenders who reoffend.</p> <p>18. Number of children identified and protected from child exploitation.</p> <p>19. Percentage of students achieving a level 3 qualification at age 19.</p>
	<p>Reduce crime and child exploitation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will always treat young people as a child first and as an offender second. But we will ensure that young people understand and take responsibility for their behaviour. • We will remain focused on preventing young people from offending and re-offending. By improving the quality of young people’s lives, we will seek to ensure that they are diverted from the criminal justice system. • We will increase integrated support to parents with substance and alcohol misuse through the implementation of Family Drug & Alcohol Courts to ensure parents receive the right support, so children and families can remain safely together. • We will support children and their families to safely access the internet and technology. • We will reduce missing episodes and ensure victims of exploitation are listened to, believed, and supported. • We will identify and manage risks in the community and keep a strong multi agency response to bring offenders of exploitation of children to justice by harnessing Police, Council and Court powers to protect children from harm. 	<p>20. Number of young people who are not in employment, education, or training.</p> <p>21. Number of young people who have completed independence accredited training.</p>

Support young people to successfully transition into adulthood.

- We will help young people to develop life skills and be ready for work by further developing and increasing access to our independence training accredited programmes.
- We will support parents and carers to begin independence work earlier with young people.
- We will maintain and extend our offer for Care Experienced young people. With a particular focus upon extending the House Project.
- We will continue to build strong links with businesses to increase opportunities for work experience, internships, apprenticeships, training, and jobs for our children to build successful adult lives in Warwickshire.
- We will provide bespoke support where needed for young people, so they are able between 16-25 years old to be engaged in education, employment, or training.

This strategy is linked to the Warwickshire County Council Plan. It does not replace other strategies but is an overarching approach to services for children, young people and their families. The Warwickshire Children’s Strategy will be overseen and championed by several partnership boards listed below.

- **Warwickshire County Council’s Children & Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee**
- **Warwickshire County Council’s Corporate Parenting Board**
- **Warwickshire Health and Wellbeing Board**
- **Warwickshire Safeguarding Partnership**
- **Warwickshire Together for Children Partnership Board**



The triangle details the main strategies within the County Council and partner agencies. We also recognise the importance of other system wide strategies, such as the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy where children and young people are one of the prioritise and the importance of specific strategies such as the Autism Strategy.

Cabinet

14 October 2021

Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (National Bus Strategy)

Recommendation(s)

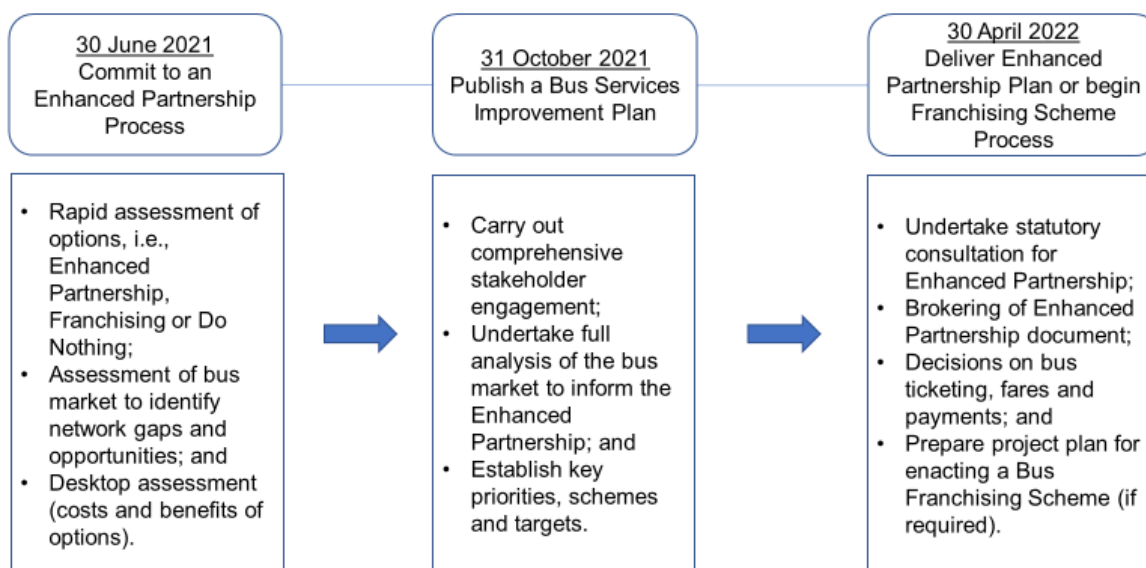
Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Authorise the Strategic Director for Communities, acting in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning, to prepare the Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (based on the details in this report) and publish and submit it to the Department for Transport as the basis of a bid for the allocation of funding.
2. Authorise the Strategic Director for Communities, acting in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning, to prepare and consult on the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes (based on the content of the Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan) in accordance with section 138F of the Transport Act 2000 with the intention of asking Cabinet to approve them in Spring 2022.

1. National Bus Strategy for England (except London)

- 1.1 The Government published the National Bus Strategy for England (Bus Back Better) in March 2021, which is tied to a £3 billion funding stream aimed at transforming bus travel outside London. The National Bus Strategy places emphasis on boosting bus patronage to pre-pandemic levels and beyond by encouraging further partnership working between local authorities and bus operators in the form of Enhanced Partnerships for the benefit of passengers. This would be achieved through measures aimed at enhancing the passenger experience and reducing bus journey times. The flowchart demonstrating the timescales for this process as stipulated by the Government is provided below:

National Bus Strategy Flowchart



- 1.2 The National Bus Strategy expects the County Council to work with bus operators in developing a non-statutory Warwickshire Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP) to be published by the end of October 2021 including submission to the Department for Transport (DfT). The Plan is a high-level strategic document setting out how the County Council will use their Enhanced Partnership with bus operators to deliver an ambitious vision for travel by bus in Warwickshire by means of introducing measures aimed at helping achieve the patronage growth objectives of the National Bus Strategy. The DfT will view the Warwickshire BSIP as a strategic outline business case.
- 1.3 The County Council must publish a Warwickshire BSIP to ensure eligibility to receive part of the £3 billion funding and any other existing sources of funding towards the provision of bus services. The £3 billion replaces existing government funding streams for bus service provision and provides new funding towards delivering BSIP initiatives. Other existing sources include the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) from May 2022 onwards and the Bus Recovery Grant (BRG), which commences in September 2021 (replacing the COVID-19 Bus Services Support Grant which has now ceased) and runs until the end of the 2021-22 financial year.
- 1.4 Following the Motion (Bus Services in Warwickshire) put forward to Full Council on 1 July 2021, eight County Councillors formed a WCC Member Cross-Party Working Group to support officers in drawing up a fully costed Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The Working Group played a key role in helping to identify the key bus corridors to be the subject of enhancements and supporting marketing activities aimed at promoting the public engagement exercise seeking feedback from the community and stakeholders on bus services.
- 1.5 The level of funding allocated to the County Council by the DfT will be related to the content of the Warwickshire BSIP. The Warwickshire BSIP will need to

be updated annually and reflected in the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan and in other relevant plans such as cycling and walking plans, planning policy frameworks and infrastructure development plans.

- 1.6 A Warwickshire Bus Network Review has been undertaken to identify a level of bus service provision across the county, including cross-boundary services running into neighbouring local authorities, which are sustainable when reductions in Covid support grant funding come on stream. The review assumed that the total number of passenger journeys will reach 85% of pre-Covid levels by 2022-23. However, this did not consider factors boosting bus patronage in Warwickshire arising from the National Bus Strategy. The review also examined gaps in the current Warwickshire bus network and identified ways bus service provision could be utilised to fill these gaps going forward in partnership with bus operators. The review provided background information to support development of the Warwickshire BSIP and will be updated annually.

2. Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan

- 2.1 The WCC Member Cross-Party Working Group, WCC officers and bus operators collaborated in developing a Warwickshire BSIP, which was driven by what existing and potential passengers want regarding bus travel in Warwickshire by way of a public engagement exercise carried out over a period of 8 weeks between Monday 26 July 2021 to Sunday 19 September 2021. This provided residents and organisations with an opportunity to have their say on how the Warwickshire bus network can be improved so that their feedback could help shape the Warwickshire BSIP. The public engagement exercise comprised the following activities:
- A Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Survey available to complete either online or in writing. A total of 1,653 survey responses were received and analysed;
 - Individual meetings with key stakeholders, i.e., bus operators, public transport user groups, Borough and District Council officers, MPs serving Warwickshire, Highways England and neighbouring local authorities; and
 - Focus group activities with under-represented groups, i.e., ethnic minorities, mobility impaired people, people with learning difficulties and young people under the age of 18.
- 2.2 The survey responses are detailed in the Engagement Response Report attached to this report. This feedback identified the key priorities and targets to be outlined in the Warwickshire BSIP, which are detailed in Table 1 at Appendix A of this report. The Warwickshire BSIP is being finalised ready for publication by the end of October 2021 and brief details regarding content are provided in this report.
- 2.3 The Warwickshire BSIP will include a commitment for the County Council to develop a non-statutory Passenger Charter in partnership with bus operators and groups representing the interests of bus passengers, e.g., Bus Users UK. The key provisions to be included in the Charter are certain standards of

service including punctuality, vehicle cleanliness, proportion of services operated, information and redress. There is also a commitment to review the Charter on a fixed basis and to consult on any revised versions. Passengers already have legal rights when travelling by bus and these are not affected by the Charter and it does not create any new legal rights for passengers.

3. Warwickshire Bus Services Motion Enhancement Schedule

- 3.1 The Warwickshire BSIP will also include the Bus Services Motion Enhancement Schedule. At their meeting on 23 September 2020, the WCC Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the following:
- The key findings of the Bus Services Motion Report produced by The TAS Partnership Ltd investigating the items in the Bus Services Motion endorsed by full Council on 17 December 2019; and
 - The proposed Warwickshire Bus Services Motion Enhancement Schedule consisting of measures aimed at delivering improvements to the bus services and supporting infrastructure, which The TAS Partnership Ltd has presented in the report following consultation with bus operators, County Council officers, Borough and District officers, the Department for Transport and employers across Warwickshire.
- 3.2 The Warwickshire Bus Services Motion Enhancement Schedule pre-empted some of the proposals in the National Bus Strategy aimed at boosting bus patronage, e.g., Enhanced Partnership between local authority and bus operators, multi operator bus ticketing, improved bus information and the launch of further demand responsive transport services. The Warwickshire Bus Services Motion Enhancement Schedule was costed at £8.585 million and is detailed in Table 2 at Appendix B of this report.

4. The Next Step – Formation of a Statutory Enhanced Partnership (EP) with Bus Operators including an EP Plan and Schemes

- 4.1 The National Bus Strategy also expects the County Council to use its power under section 138A of the Transport Act 2000 to make a statutory Enhanced Partnership Plan and one or more enhanced partnership schemes by April 2022. An Enhanced Partnership Plan analyses local bus services and sets out policies and objectives for their quality and effectiveness and describes how the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Scheme(s) will help achieve those policies and objectives.
- 4.2 An EP Scheme may be prepared for the whole county or there may be one or more schemes for different areas in the county. From discussions with the WCC Member Cross-Party Working Group and bus operators it is likely that Warwickshire will have a combination of some EP Schemes covering the entire county such as multi-operator bus ticketing, and some covering different areas of the county such as specific bus corridor improvements.

- 4.3 An EP Scheme may specify requirements as to the timing and frequency of local bus services and other service standards to be met by bus operators, and the facilities and other measures which will be provided and taken by the County Council. The EP Plan and the Scheme(s) will carry forward the commitments made in the Warwickshire BSIP. The EP Plan and the Scheme(s) will need to be prepared in liaison with the bus operators and then undergo a process of public and stakeholder consultation. The County Council will not be able to proceed to consultation on a Plan or Scheme if enough operators object to it (the Secretary of State specifies what a sufficient number is in Regulations).
- 4.4 After the consultation process, if Cabinet agrees to make the EP Plan and Scheme(s), these will set out how improvements to the Warwickshire bus network, information, bus fare systems and supporting infrastructure on the local highway network will be delivered over a period of several years and the targets put in place to monitor performance. The enhancements delivered through these means do not involve subsidising fares.
- 4.5 A further report will be taken to Cabinet in 2022 seeking approval to finalise the EP arrangements enabling commencement in April 2022. Upon receiving the BSIP funding from the DfT, a further report will be taken to Cabinet and then onto Full Council for approval to add the funding on to the Capital Programme if the funding will be in excess of £2 million. Any additions of less than £2m may be approved by the Deputy Leader.
- 4.6 County Council officers attend BSIP West Midlands Region Local Transport Authorities (LTA) Collaboration meetings arranged by Transport for West Midlands. These meetings are held fortnightly and are also attended by officers at neighbouring authorities Staffordshire County Council and Worcestershire County Council. Officers at these authorities have not expressed an interest in developing a joint BSIP with another LTA. Liaison has also taken place with officers at neighbouring Leicestershire County Council, West Northamptonshire Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Gloucestershire County Council during the development of the Warwickshire BSIP and their own BSIPs. Similarly, these officers did not raise the possibility of working on a joint BSIP. The vision is for joint working to take place when delivering initiatives on cross boundary bus corridors. This pattern is replicated across the country and it is understood that only a small number of joint BSIPs are being progressed in England.
- 4.7 The National Bus Strategy also provides an option for LTAs to pursue Bus Franchising aimed at taking greater control over bus services and fares in their area and contracting bus operators to deliver these bus services to a good standard. Authorities wishing to pursue Bus Franchising would put an Enhanced Partnership in place initially, as the process to enact franchising is lengthy including applying to the Secretary of State for access to franchising powers. From discussions with other officers at other local authorities across England and the DfT it is understood that only one local authority is actively pursuing a bus franchise arrangement.

- 4.8 County Council officers do not recommend that the County Council pursue a bus franchising arrangement, without guarantees of appropriate central Government funding, due to the following considerations:
- A bus franchising scheme would be a major commitment for a local transport authority, who will be taking on substantial financial risks, e.g., the revenue risk of operating, maintaining and replacing a fleet of approximately 450 buses across Warwickshire including staff and depot costs, which would require funding from WCC capital and revenue resources;
 - There is no guarantee that the County Council would generate the necessary level of revenue from bus ticket sales and ancillary measures, e.g., advertising streams, to cover the cost of running the entire Warwickshire bus network, and thus, there is a risk that a substantial financial commitment would need to be borne by the County Council to cover the shortfall on an annual basis; and
 - The likely increase in WCC spending to cover operation of the Warwickshire bus network will likely place a financial burden on residents in terms of increased taxation on an annual basis to contribute towards covering costs; and
 - The County Council would be exposed to further increased costs due to legislation and and policy and economic developments which affect the bus industry, e.g. decarbonisation agenda requiring a substantial level of investment aimed at improving vehicle fleet such as provision of zero emission buses and driver shortages partially due to competition with the HGV industry leading to higher bus contract costs.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Warwickshire BSIP has been costed at £216.450 million covering a 3-year timeframe period between 2022-23 to 2024-25, as specified in the BSIP guidelines. This is a realistic programme of high and medium priority elements agreed with bus operators, which are deliverable within the timeframe. Therefore, this does not represent the total of funding requirement for Warwickshire. Further Schemes to a sum of £89.280 million are listed beyond 2024-25 requiring a total sum of £87.980 million from a potential further round of BSIP funding from the DfT to be progressed. The breakdown of the costed Warwickshire BSIP is presented in the table below:

Warwickshire BSIP Cost Breakdown (2022/23 – 2024/25)	Projected Cost £m
<u>Projected Cost of the Warwickshire BSIP Programme of 2022-23 to 2024-25:</u>	
Capital Funding Requirement	£164.797
Revenue Funding Requirement	£51.653
<u>Total</u>	<u>£216.450</u>
<u>Breakdown of Projected Funding Contributions Covering the Costed Warwickshire BSIP Programme 2022-23 to 2024-25:</u>	

Warwickshire County Council Existing Secured Funding, e.g., Bus Services Revenue Support Budget and Capital Investment Fund	£9.935
Bus Operator Contribution	£24.438
Other Sources of External Funding, e.g., Coventry All Electric Bus City Scheme (DfT contribution for Warwickshire element only), DfT Rural Mobility Fund and S106 developer contributions	£29.253
Requested BSIP Funding Requirement from the DfT	£152.824
Total	£216.450
Indicative future Warwickshire BSIP Costs (Beyond 2024/25)	
<u>Warwickshire BSIP Programme - Indicative Cost of New Measures to be progressed 'beyond 2024-25':</u>	
Indicative Capital Funding Requirement	£85.095
Indicative Revenue Funding Requirement	£4.185
Total	£89.280
<u>Indicative Breakdown of Funding Contributions covering the New Measures to be progressed 'beyond 2024/25'</u>	
Associated match funding	£1.300
Indicative BSIP funding request beyond 2024/25	£87.980
Total	£89.280

- 5.2 The £152.824 million BSIP funding requirement from the DfT between 2022-23 and 2024-25 includes the £8.585 million specified to deliver the Warwickshire Bus Services Motion Enhancement Schedule. Other Schemes in the Warwickshire BSIP programme include bus priority and real time information provision across the county, audio and visual equipment on buses, maintaining bus service frequencies at pre-Covid levels, improving bus services, introducing a tap-on-tap-off fare payment system like London, introducing cleaner vehicles, delivery of bus interchanges and supporting highway infrastructure and provision of green infrastructure. Details of the Warwickshire BSIP Programme costs of £216.450 million are provided in Table 3 at Appendix C of this report.
- 5.3 The DfT is expected to confirm their funding decision before the end of the 2021-22 financial year. At the time of producing this report, the DfT had not published any guidance for local authorities on how the Bus Service Improvement Plans will be evaluated including the formula for designating the funding allocation for each local authority. The DfT anticipate that a funding announcement would be made before the County Council enter a statutory Enhanced Partnership in April 2022.
- 5.4 The funding allocated by the DfT after considering the Warwickshire BSIP will contribute towards the cost of delivering the EP Schemes. With the current budget pressures faced by the County Council, the Warwickshire BSIP must live within the DfT budget provided outside of the existing Bus Services

Revenue Support budget, schemes which are already fully funded, section 106 contributions and any contributions provided by bus operators towards the new schemes. It is acknowledged that this may not be viewed favourably by the bus operators involved in the Enhanced Partnership.

- 5.5 Previous work carried by Transport for West Midlands and Urban Transport Group highlighted that the total funding requirement for LTAs across England (outside London) to deliver the National Bus Strategy in its entirety is projected be in the region of £9 billion - £11 billion. The general feeling across LTAs is that whilst the significant £3 billion investment is welcomed, it is highly likely that LTAs will be dependent on Government identifying longer term support over and above the £3 billion investment to continue delivering the transformation to bus services outlined in their BSIPs.
- 5.6 Further details of the financial implications for the County Council arising from the EP Plan and Scheme(s) will be provided in the further report to Cabinet in 2022.

6. Environmental Implications

- 6.3 The Warwickshire BSIP presents a vision of how bus travel in Warwickshire will be transformed with strong emphasis on better information, bus priority, fares and ticketing, simplicity, coordination and integration with the aim of increasing bus patronage, supporting social inclusion and delivering sustainable transport utilisation, which will contribute towards improving the environment including air quality across the county.
- 6.4 The Warwickshire BSIP includes measures such as bus priority helping to reduce bus journey times that will contribute towards the County Council achieving aspirations of reducing transport emissions and improving public health, as set out in the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan. In addition, increased bus patronage will also support Borough and District Councils across Warwickshire in achieving their air quality and Climate Emergency targets focused on reducing carbon emissions.
- 6.3 The Warwickshire BSIP also includes measures such as reducing emissions from buses on key corridors, which would help reduce energy consumption and harmful carbon dioxide (CO₂) greenhouse gas emissions that damage the environment, in acknowledgement that travelling by bus uses less energy and produces less pollution than comparable travel in private vehicles. Therefore, the Warwickshire BSIP complements the Climate Emergency and carbon reduction aspirations of the County Council and the Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan including the UK target of reducing all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

7. Supporting Information

- 7.1 Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan Visioning Workshops were held with bus operators, which helped ensure they had full input in development of the plan and endorsed the vision and content.

8. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 8.1 If Cabinet approve the recommendations in this report, the key milestones will be as follows:
- Completion and Publication of the Warwickshire BSIP on WCC website and submission to the DfT - end of October 2021;
 - Development of an Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes based on the Warwickshire BSIP – November 2021;
 - Commence a statutory consultation regarding the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Schemes - December 2021 to February 2022;
 - DfT to confirm their funding decision after reviewing the Warwickshire BSIP - between January 2022 and March 2022;
 - Reports taken to Corporate Board and then Cabinet for approval to finalise Enhanced Partnership arrangements with bus operators – April 2022;
 - Report taken to Cabinet and then Full Council for approval to add the DfT funding on to the Capital Programme (or Deputy Leader if the funding received is below £2 million) – April 2022;
 - Statutory Enhanced Partnership between the County Council and bus operators to be in place by April 2022;
 - Publish a Warwickshire Bus Passenger Charter on the WCC website and on the websites of participating bus operators – May 2022;
 - Delivery of EP Schemes – May 2022 onwards;
 - First annual Warwickshire Bus Network Review – August 2022; and
 - First annual update of the Warwickshire BSIP - October 2022.

Appendices

1. Appendix A - Table 1: Key Priorities and Targets in the Warwickshire BSIP
2. Appendix B - Table 2: Warwickshire Bus Services Motion Enhancement Schedule
3. Appendix C – Table 3: The Warwickshire BSIP Programme 2022-23 to 2024-25 costed at £216.450million

Background Papers

1. Engagement Response Report

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Nigel Whyte	nigelwhyte@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	David Ayton Hill – Assistant Director for Communities	davidayton-hill@warwickshire.gov.uk

	Scott Tompkins – Assistant Director for Environment Services	scotttompkins@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Mark Ryder - Strategic Director for Communities	markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Wallace Redford - Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning	cllrredford@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

WCC Member Cross Party Working Group:

Cllr Jo Barker (Shipston Electoral Division)
 Cllr Sarah Boad (Leamington North Electoral Division)
 Cllr Jonathan Chilvers (Leamington Brunswick Electoral Division)
 Cllr Judy Falp (Whitnash Electoral Division)
 Cllr Sarah Feeney (Benn Electoral Division)
 Cllr Wallace Redford (Cubbington & Leek Wootton Electoral Division)
 Cllr Tim Sinclair (Stratford North Electoral Division)
 Cllr Martin Watson (Coleshill North & Water Orton)

Other members: Councillors Seccombe, Holland and Roodhouse

Appendix A:

Key Priorities	Vision
Make buses easier to understand and use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll out of further Real Time Information displays at key bus stops across Warwickshire on key corridors and areas; • Partnership approach to information provision and marketing; • Timetable changes minimised and coordinated to show all bus services together regardless of operator; and • All information to be accessed through one platform.
Service frequency / comprehensive network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a phased approach to service enhancements; • Agree what should be prioritised and in what order; • Be pragmatic about what can be achieved with the funding available, concentrating efforts of known latent demand; • Timetable coordination to ensure multi-integration; • Consider interchange / transport hub upgrades; and • Respond proactively to new developments and the opportunities these present.
Bus Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence-based corridor improvements (using reliability data; evidence of additional Peak Vehicle Requirement; link frequency etc.); • Reduce disruption on highway network, i.e., better information, planning and enforcement; • Centralised traffic light priority for buses; • Reducing congestion through parking restrictions, parking charges, Workplace Parking Levy's and Low Emission Zones in town centres and Road User Charging; and • Work with WCC Members and Borough / District Councils to gain political sign-off endorsing all aspects of the vision.
Fares and Ticketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to align fares and products where possible, e.g. ages / discount for Young Persons tickets, duration of a day ticket and similar prices for similar journeys; • All buses to have Electronic Ticket Machines (ETMs) facilitating contactless card payments; • Delivering a Warwickshire Multi Operator Bus Ticket enabling people to make their entire journey without having to buy more than one ticket; and • Ensure all bus operators can participate in a 'one-network' ticketing / smartcard approach in liaison with neighbouring Local Transport Authorities, e.g. Transport for West Midlands.

Decarbonisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phased approach to delivering cleaner buses on the Warwickshire network kickstarted by the Coventry All Electric Bus City Scheme; • Reduce engine idling at key bus stops in town centres; • Provide additional bus interchanges in town centres, which would enable layover opportunities; Explore green infrastructure when improving / replacing on-street bus stop infrastructure, e.g., solar roofs; PV glass; green roofs on bus shelters; and • Pursue delivery of low emission zones in line with the Government's Transport Decarbonisation Plan, in the event of air quality being classified as a significant issue in a Warwickshire town.
Quality of Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phased approach to delivering on-street bus stop infrastructure improvements, e.g., prioritise by corridor/area; • Develop and sign up to a Passenger Charter to include quality standards; and • Agree and deliver a phased approach to minimal quality standards on all buses, e.g., provision of onboard audio and visual announcements.
Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) / Socially Necessary Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build upon the pilot Warwick – Kenilworth DRT being launched in 2022 and co-funded by the DfT Rural Mobility Fund grant, to roll out elsewhere in the County if a success; • Focus DRT services in areas and at times of day which will benefit the most from this type of service; and • DRT services to complement and integrate with other services at interchanges / transport hubs.
Additional Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore park and ride opportunities; and • Work closely with District Councils over development opportunities, being involved at first phase.
<u>Targets</u>	<p>The Warwickshire BSIP sets the following targets agreed with bus operators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase bus patronage; • Decrease bus journey times; • Improve service reliability; • Further improve customer satisfaction <p>A baseline has been agreed with bus operators on which to measure the targets. A consistent and ongoing methodology for future measurements has also been agreed with bus operators.</p>
<u>Key Bus Corridors</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Stratford-upon-Avon - Warwick – Leamington – Kenilworth - Coventry (including Warwick Hospital, University of Warwick, Whitnash and Woodloes) 2) Northern Nuneaton (including new developments)

	<p>at the north / northeast of the town / A47 Hinckley Road / The Long Shoot and A5 to Hinckley) - Nuneaton Town Centre - Bedworth – Coventry</p> <p>3) Rugby North (new developments at north of town) - Elliots Field Retail Park - Rugby Rail Station - Rugby Town Centre – St Cross Hospital - Southwest Rugby developments sites</p> <p>4) Nuneaton - Atherstone – Polesworth - Tamworth</p> <p>5) North Stratford (including shared Stratford Park and Ride / Stratford Parkway Rail Station Site) – Stratford Town Centre – Southern Stratford, i.e., Severn Meadows Road / Clifford Lane - Long Marston Garden Village and Meon Vale Development Sites - Honeybourne (and extended to include Redditch, Alcester and Shipston-on-Stour)</p> <p>6) Rugby – Southam - Leamington– Warwick – Lighthorne Heath – Wellesbourne – Stratford – Evesham</p>
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Appendix B

Table 2 – Warwickshire Bus Services Motion Enhancement Schedule		
Item No.	Measure	Projected Cost of Delivery
1	<u>How to use the Bus Information Guide:</u> Design and printing a Guide encouraging people to use bus services and to help increase confidence in travelling by bus.	£0.010m
2	<u>Better Roadside Publicity:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly improved roadside paper-based bus information; • Enhanced standalone roadside timetable software; • Launch of 100 no. desirable solar panelled digital roadside information; and • Maintenance and upkeep costs during period. 	£ 0.568m
3	<u>Planning Policy Guidance:</u> Collaboration with Borough/District Councils and bus operators to create a set of guidelines for large new developments in Warwickshire, ensuring they are bus-friendly early in the design process.	£0.025m
4	<u>Annual 'Warwickshire' Bus Conference:</u> Involving bus operators, local authorities and the public sector organisations across Warwickshire to discuss bus issues and actions to resolve concerns.	£0.030m
5	<u>New Bus Links to Birmingham International Airport / NEC / UK Central</u> Launch of new bus services and/or extension of existing services	£1.310 million (over 5 years)
6	<u>Warwick – Leamington - Coventry Bus Corridor Enhanced Partnership:</u> Bus operators to provide improved vehicles and the County Council to provide supporting infrastructure including bus priority measures, real time information and multi-operator bus ticketing.	WCC Contribution: £3.150m
7	<u>Introduce a Countywide Multi-Operator Day Ticket</u> Launch and operation of bus ticket encompassing all bus services in Warwickshire	£0.200m
8	<u>Southbound bus stop on Leicester Road (A426) opposite Elliott's Field Retail Park in Rugby</u> Provision of an elongated bus lay-by holding two full-length buses and a high-quality bus shelter.	£0.492m
9	<u>Expansion of DRT Provision and Technology</u> Launch of further demand responsive bus services with journeys bookable via mobile app, internet or telephone.	£2.000m

10	<u>Provision of Park and Ride in Leamington for the Commonwealth Games 2022</u> Launch of a temporary Park and Ride service reducing the number of car journeys into Leamington Town Centre, with potential to be made permanent.	£0.800m
	Total Projected Cost	£8.585million

Appendix C

Table 3: The Warwickshire BSIP Programme 2022-23 to 2024-25 costed at £216.450million			
Programme Element	Project	Description	Priority
Reliability Improvements	Enforcement of bus clearways and stops	Roll-out of enforcement cameras	High
Reliability Improvements	Centralised traffic light priority	Phased approach to traffic light priority, focussing on key corridors.	High
Reliability Improvements	Bus Priority (including measures to tackle obstruction to bus movement on the highway)	1) Stratford - Warwick – Leamington – Kenilworth - Coventry (including Warwick Hospital, University of Warwick, Whitnash and Woodloes)	High
Reliability Improvements	Bus Priority (including measures to tackle obstruction to bus movement on the highway)	2) Northern Nuneaton (including new developments at the north / northeast of the town / A47 Hinckley Road / The Long Shoot and A5 to Hinckley) - Nuneaton Town Centre - Bedworth – Coventry	High
Reliability Improvements	Parking review	Work with district/borough authorities and WCC Parking Management Team to ensure buses are considered when parking availability and charging is reviewed.	High
Supported Services	Existing Subsidised Bus Network	Maintaining the subsidised bus network in Warwickshire to meet customer needs, e.g., routes, flexibility and accessibility.	High
Publicity/information	Information coordination	Partnership approach to information provision and marketing, including minimising and coordinating timetable changes	High
Publicity/information	Improved quality of information	Apply minimum standards of information available to residents, including operator websites and	High

		printed information. Include a one-stop gateway for access to information.	
Publicity/information	Improvement of roadside publicity	Improved roadside paper-based information; enhanced standalone roadside timetable software; and launch of solar panelled digital roadside information	High
Publicity/information	RTI implementation	Phased approach to Real Time Information (RTI) implementation along key corridors.	High
Publicity/information	Audi-visual equipment	Support the fitting of audio-visual next stop equipment to buses	High
Publicity/information	Bus Information Guide	Produce a Guide encouraging people to use bus services and to help increase confidence in travelling by bus.	High
Planning	Review use of S106 contributions	Building on recent study, consider the most effective and efficient way of using S106 contributions	High
Planning	Planning Policy Guidance	Collaboration with Borough/District Councils and bus operators to create a set of guidelines for large new developments in Warwickshire, ensuring they are bus-friendly early in the design process	High
Network Development	Maintain pre-covid levels	Support services to maintain pre-Covid Warwickshire Bus Network	High
Network Development	Integration	Review the network with the purpose of integrating bus services and timetables to ensure the ability for multi-modal connections. Explore rural mobility hubs in addition to new interchanges.	High
Network Development	DRT	Launch of a pilot demand responsive transport service (including booking app) serving residents in	High

		rural settlements to the west of Warwick and parts of Kenilworth	
Fares/ticketing	Multi-operator Day Ticket	Phase 1 - Delivery of a multi operator bus ticket in Nuneaton and Bedworth; Leamington and Warwick; and Rugby in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games in 2022	High
Fares/ticketing	Multi-operator Day Ticket	Phase 2 - introduce a county-wide solution	High
Fares/ticketing	Introduce Tap on Tap off technology	Phased approach to implementing 'ToTo' technology on key corridors	High
Fares/ticketing	Standardisation of products	Where possible, align ticket products to make it simpler for the customer	High
Fares/ticketing	Jobseekers scheme	Introduce a jobseekers scheme providing discounts for those seeking to access work opportunities	High
Service Quality	Passenger Charter	All operators to sign up to a passenger charter	High
Service Quality	Warwickshire Annual Bus Conference	Involving bus operators, local authorities and the public sector organisations across Warwickshire to discuss bus issues and actions to resolve concerns	High
Infrastructure	Super Stops	Provision of an elongated bus lay-by holding two full-length buses and a high-quality bus shelters at key stops	High
Infrastructure	Special Projects	Nuneaton Bus Bridge; Improving Bus Access to Nuneaton town centre	High
Reliability Improvements	Workplace parking levy	Feasibility to consider options for introducing a WPL	Medium
Reliability Improvements	Road user charging	Feasibility study to consider options for introducing RUC	Medium
Reliability Improvements	Red routes	Feasibility study to consider the impacts and benefits of red routes on specified corridors	Medium

Supported Services	Improvements to Subsidised Bus Network	Improving and expanding the subsidised bus network in Warwickshire to meet customer needs, e.g., new routes.	Medium
Planning	DRT	Investigate using DRT to serve a new residential or commercial development where either: a) the size of the development does not justify a fixed bus route; or b) there is no obvious single traffic generator meaning a simple fixed bus route would not cater for most of the travel demand. Expansion to other parts of the network.	Medium
Network Development	Develop the network, improving links and frequency in a phased corridor approach	Nuneaton – Magna Park – Lutterworth or Rugby	Medium
Network Development	Improving frequency and evening/Sunday services	Phased approach to improving services to generate growth	Medium
Network Development	Park and Ride	Develop new Park and Ride sites and services to reduce the number of car journeys into town/city centres, focusing primarily on Leamington; Warwick; and Stratford.	Medium
Fares/ticketing	Multi-Operator Day Ticket	Phase 3 - integration with rail	Medium
Fares/ticketing	Mobility Credit Scheme	Introduce a Mobility Credit scheme for drivers willing to drive less or trade in their car	Medium
Decarbonisation	Introduce cleaner vehicles	Phased approach to reducing emissions from buses on key corridors	Medium
Decarbonisation	Cut engine idling	Liaison with bus operators, supporting feasibility work and capital investment in retrofitting cleaner engines	Medium
Service Quality	Vehicle quality	Implement minimum	Medium

		standards set by type of service; those on quality corridors to have higher standards	
Infrastructure	Interchanges	New or improved interchanges in Rugby; Nuneaton; Leamington town centre (south); and Stratford-on-Avon	Medium

Warwickshire County Council

Warwickshire BSIP
Engagement Response Report

October 2021



Warwickshire BSIP Engagement Response Report

Version 1-0

October 2021

Produced by:



For:

Warwickshire County Council

Contact:

Jim Bradley

Integrated Transport Planning Ltd.
Charles House
148 Great Charles Street
Birmingham
B3 3HT
UNITED KINGDOM

0121 285 7301
bradley@itpworld.net
www.itpworld.net

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Client	Warwickshire County Council
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Project Director	Denise Faber
Project Manager	Jim Bradley
Additional Team Members	Peter Hardy, Tatum Houlston, Laura Marshall, Phoebe Garside, Oliver Williamson
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Notice

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- Appendix A: Ask Warwickshire Public Engagement Survey Questionnaire
- Appendix B: Warwickshire BSIP Hard To Reach Groups Focus Group Topic Guide & Presentation
- Appendix C: Summary of Findings from Warwickshire BSIP Hard To Reach Groups
- Appendix D: Warwickshire BSIP Stakeholder Engagement Survey Questionnaire

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report brings together all the relevant data gathered through the programme of public and stakeholder engagement conducted to inform the development of the Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) on behalf of Warwickshire County Council's (WCC) as detailed in WCC's BSIP Project Engagement Plan submitted by Integrated Transport Planning (ITP) to WCC in July 2021.
- 1.2 To recap, the overall aims of WCC's BSIP engagement programme were:
- To engage with members of the travelling public in Warwickshire (including both bus users and non-bus users) to assess what passengers, would-be passengers, and communities want from local bus services in order to reverse the cycle of decline in bus use and provision.
 - To engage with key stakeholders identified by WCC to introduce the concept of the BSIP; discuss what it aims to achieve; and gather thoughts and suggestions for what could be included within it, based on their views and priorities.

Structure of the report

- 1.3 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:
- Chapter 2 provides the outcomes of the Ask Warwickshire BSIP Public Engagement Survey that ran online between 26th July and 19th September 2021 and was promoted to Warwickshire residents and representatives of public and private sector organisations with 1653 responses in total;
 - Chapter 3 provides the outcomes of the three focus groups conducted with hard-to-reach groups, typically under-represented in previous public engagement exercises conducted by WCC (residents aged 16-24 years, residents with non-physical, hidden disabilities and residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds); and
 - Chapter 4 provides the outcomes of the BSIP Stakeholder Engagement Survey that ran online between 17th August and 19th September 2021 and was promoted to key business and community group stakeholders in Warwickshire, relevant Borough and District Council officers, officers from neighbouring local authorities and rail stakeholders with 31 responses in total. In addition, one to one depth interviews and group discussions were conducted with the following stakeholders, with their

views feeding directly into the development of the Warwickshire BSIP bid (and not recorded separately within this report):

- Representatives for the primary bus operators in Warwickshire (Stagecoach and Arriva);
- Members of the WCC Passenger Transport Team;
- WCC Members through meetings of the Cross Party BSIP Working Group;
- Representatives of Transport Focus and Bus Users UK;
- Representative officers from the 5 Borough and District Councils in Warwickshire;
- Representative officers from Transport for West Midlands, Coventry City Council, Solihull Borough Council, Birmingham City Council and Oxfordshire County Council;
- Local MPs;
- Representative officers from National Highways (formerly Highways England).

2. Ask Warwickshire BSIP Public Engagement Survey

- 2.1 This section includes the methodology and results of the Ask Warwickshire BSIP Public Engagement Survey and a conclusion summarising the key findings of this survey.

Methodology

- 2.2 An online survey was developed to understand the current patterns of bus use amongst people living and working in Warwickshire, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on bus use in the county, the main barriers to bus use amongst non-bus users and potential improvements to local bus services that could encourage people to use bus services more frequently. The Survey was hosted on the Ask Warwickshire portal and ran for a period of 8 weeks between 26th July and 19th September 2021. A copy of the full survey questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.
- 2.3 The Survey was open to the general public, and representatives of Warwickshire businesses, voluntary sector organisations, charities and community groups, employees of public sector organisations and local Council Members and MPs were also able to respond to the Survey. The majority of respondents were members of the general public (96.2%), with responses on behalf of elected members of councils and parliament (1.8% of respondents) and organisations (2%) making up a very small proportion of total responses (see Figure 2-1).
- 2.4 It should be noted that the online survey does not, however, provide a statistical representation of the population, as respondents were self-selecting. During the Survey planning stages therefore consideration was given to supplementing the Survey with focus group discussions with hard-to-reach group of residents, typically under-represented in previous public engagement exercises conducted by WCC. Three such discussions were held with residents aged 16-24 years, disabled residents and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents and the findings of these focus group discussions are detailed in Section 3 of this report.
- 2.5 The Ask Warwickshire BSIP Public Engagement Survey was promoted through a range of means to residents on the WCC website, via social media, press releases and in key newsletters to various mailing lists. Publicity posters were distributed at bus focal points and on buses with a QR code linking to the Survey. Information was forwarded

to interest groups, parish and town councils and other stakeholders that were considered to be in a good position to promote the Survey.

- 2.6 In addition to the online survey format, the Survey was provided in alternative formats (including an easy read version) and paper copies were distributed on request to those residents without online access.

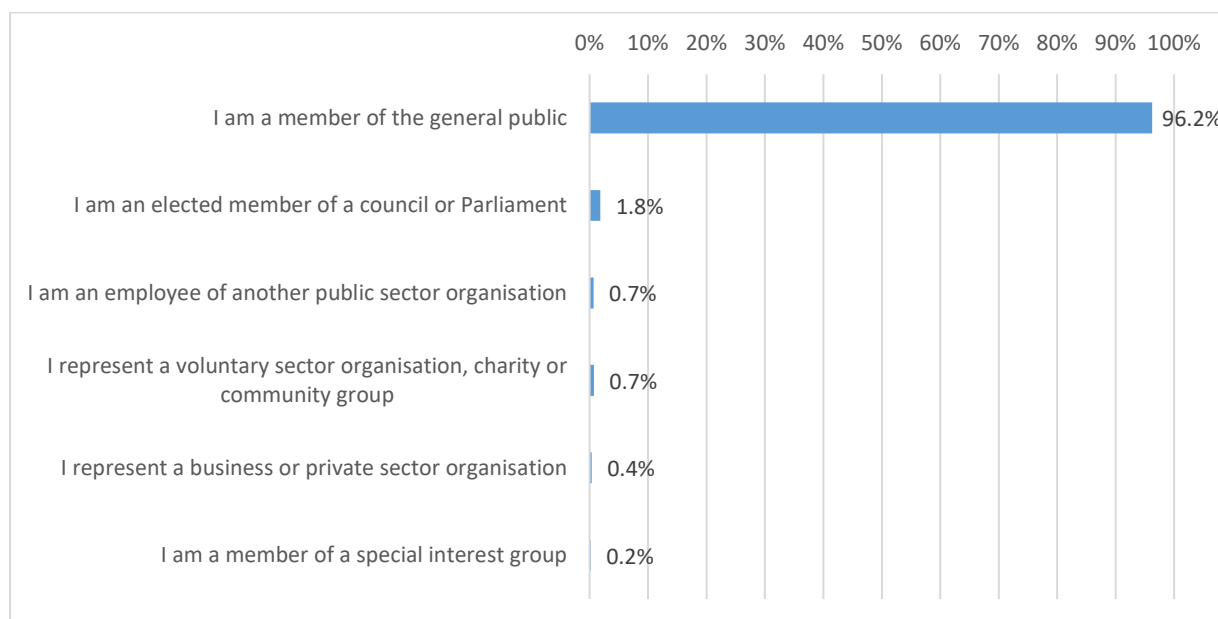
Survey Results

- 2.7 This section details the headline results of the Public Engagement Survey, with more detailed analysis provided by selected sample characteristics (e.g., Borough/District, age, gender, disability, ethnicity etc.) where key differences in responses by different sample groups have been observed.

Sample characteristics

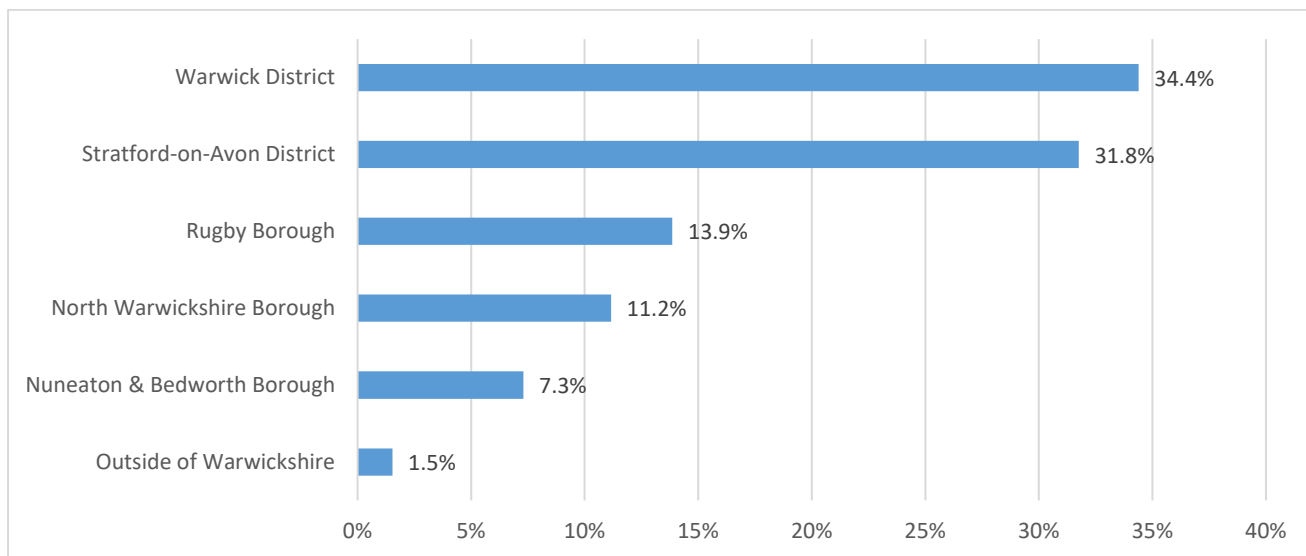
- 2.8 In total, 1653 people responded to the Survey in online and paper-based form. 4 additional paper-based survey responses were received following the cut off point for inclusion in this report and have therefore been excluded from our analysis here.
- 2.9 Most respondents were members of the general public (96.2%) with only a very small number of respondents answering on behalf of members of groups or as an elected member of parliament (Figure 2-1).

Figure 2-1: Survey response by respondent type (n=1653)



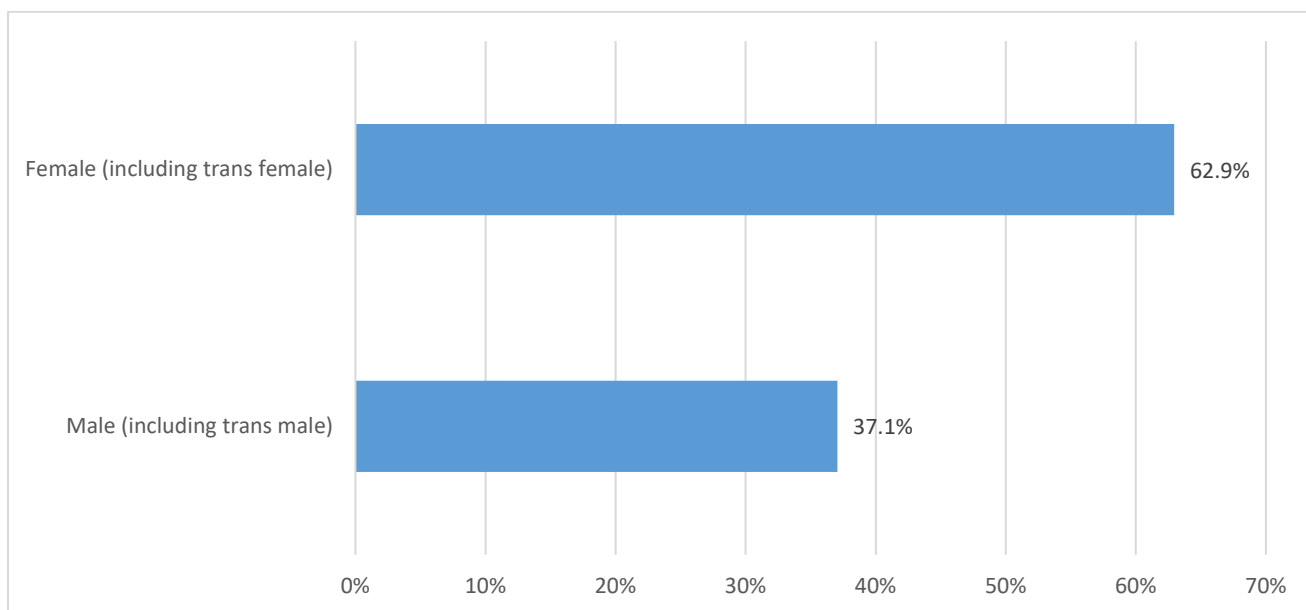
2.10 The majority of respondents to the Survey (97.2%) live in Warwickshire (see Figure 2-2). The responses were particularly concentrated in the south of the county with just over a third of respondents living in Warwick District and almost a third living in Stratford-upon-Avon District. The most under-represented borough in terms of survey response was Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough (7.2%).

Figure 2-2: Survey response by respondents' home location (n=1621)



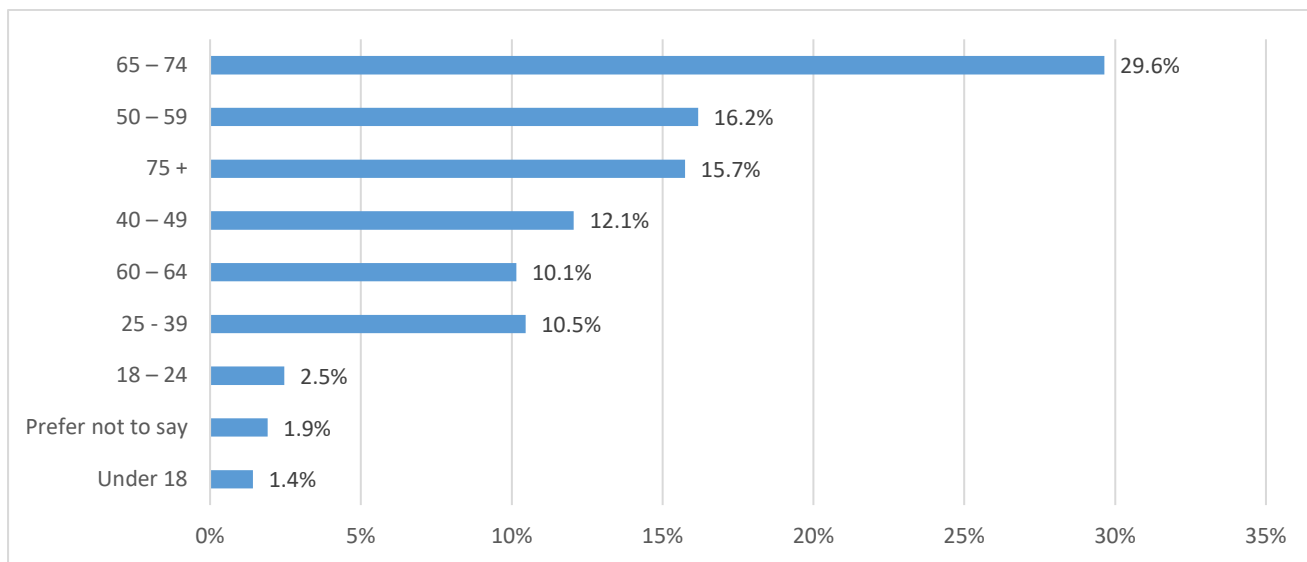
2.11 63% of survey respondents identify as female and 37% identify as male (Figure 2-3).

Figure 2-3: Survey response by gender (n=1653)



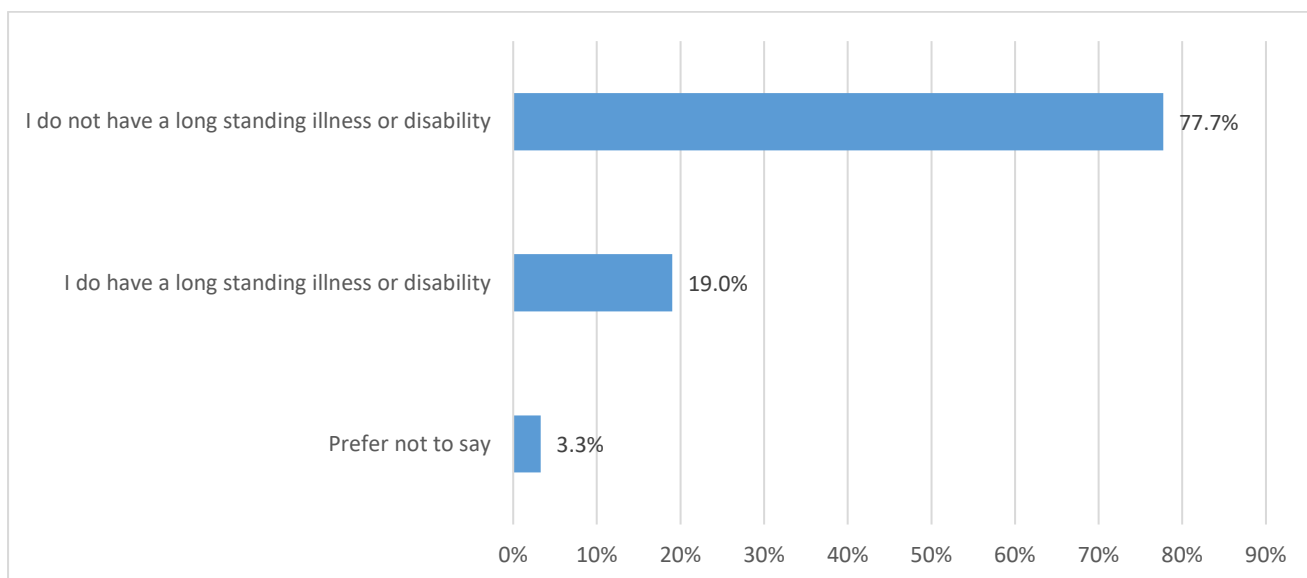
2.12 As the Survey sample was self-selecting, the age profile of respondents was skewed towards the older age groups (see Figure 2-4), with the most prevalent age category being 65-74 year olds (29.6%), then 50-59 year olds (16.2%), followed by those aged 75 or above (15.7%). Those aged under 24 accounted for just 3.9% of survey responses.

Figure 2-4: Survey response by age (n=1626)



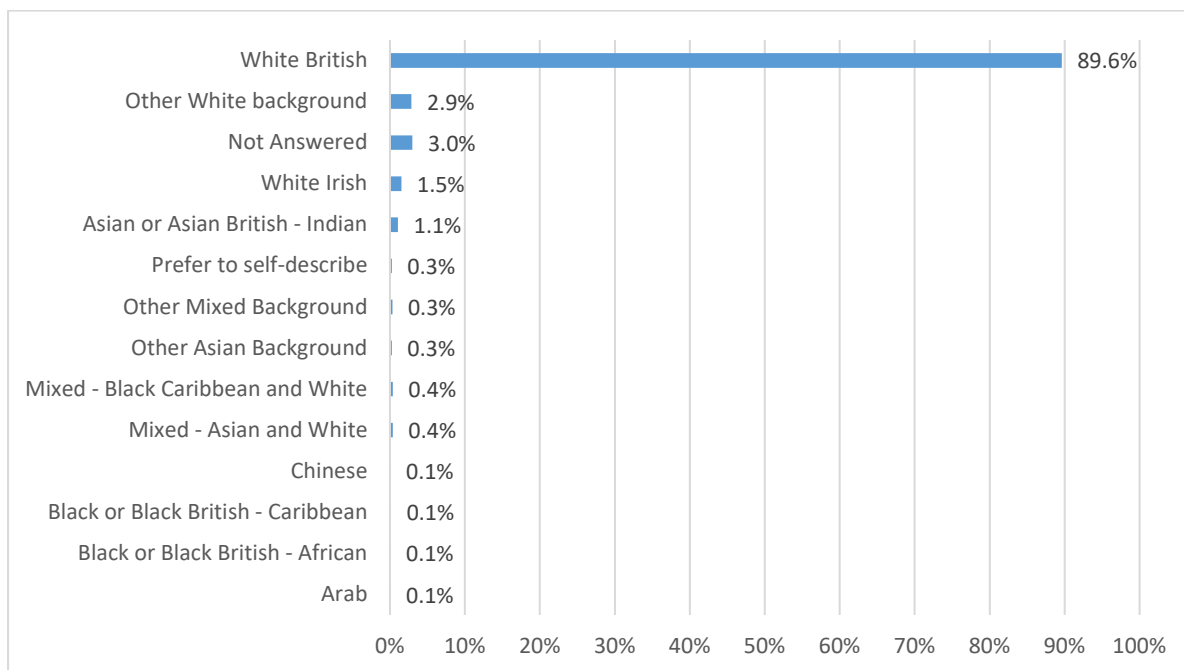
2.13 19% of respondents reported that they have a long standing illness or disability which impacts their day-to-day activities (Figure 2-5).

Figure 2-5: Survey response by personal health and disability (n=1615)



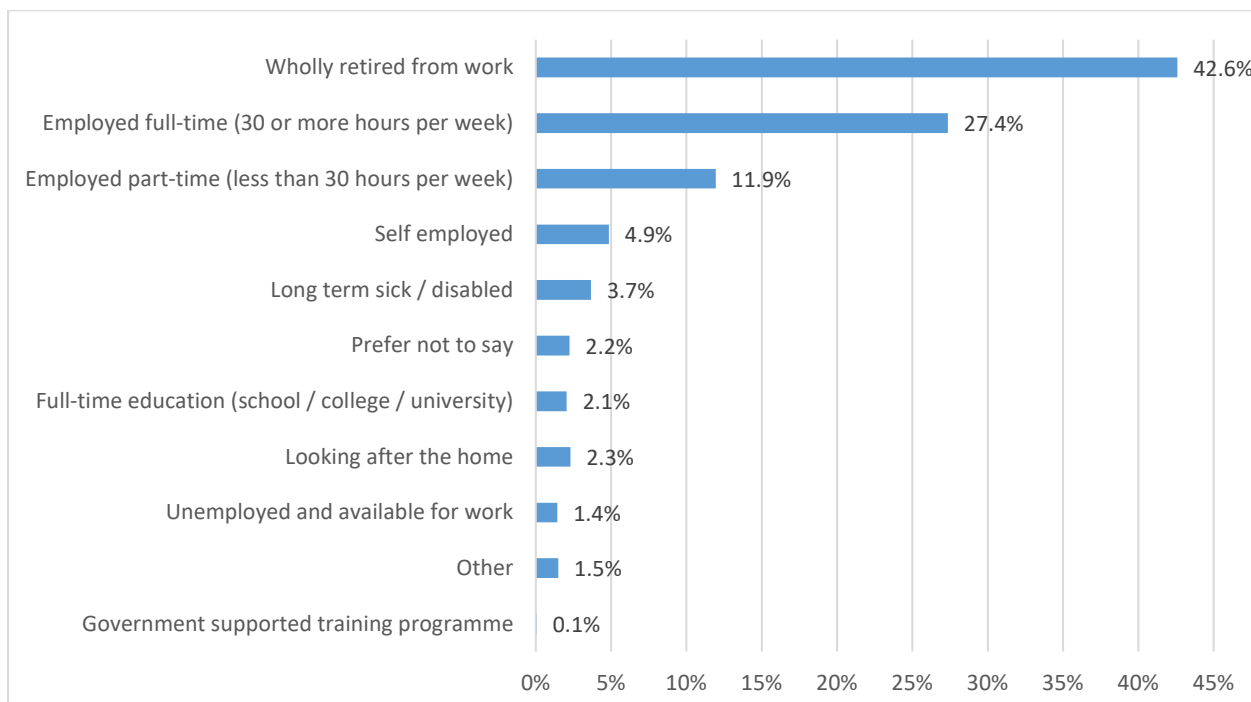
2.14 93% of survey respondents were from a White background (Figure 2-6).

Figure 2-6: Survey response by ethnicity (n=1570)



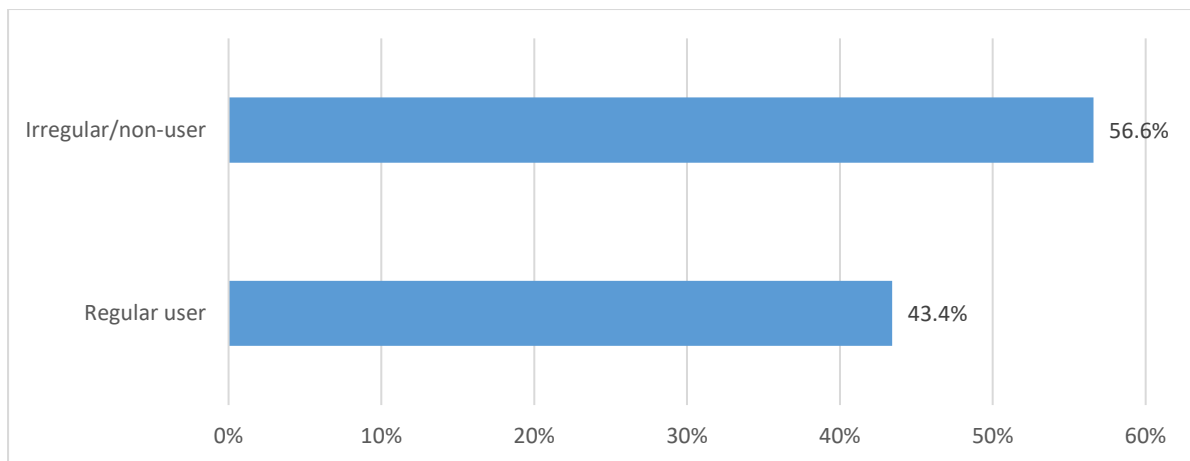
2.15 As detailed in Figure 2-7, 45% of survey respondents are economically active, with 43% wholly retired from work, reflecting the relatively high proportion of respondents aged 65 and above.

Figure 2-7: Survey response by economic activity (n=1608)



2.16 Figure 2-8 shows that 43% of respondents were regular bus users (defined as anyone using a bus once a week or more) prior to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic with 57% of respondents being irregular users (defined as anyone who uses the bus less than once a week).

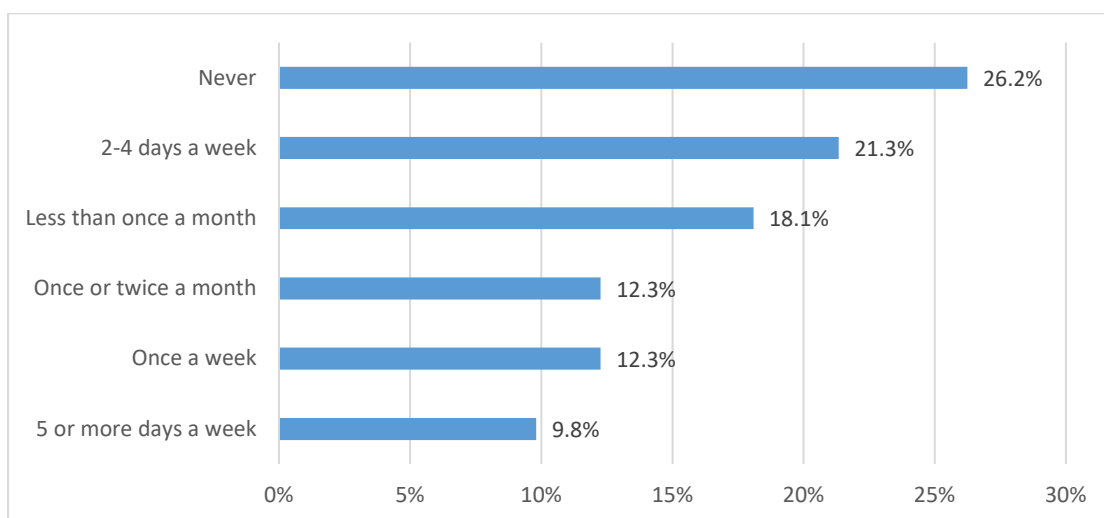
Figure 2-8: Survey response by regularity of bus use in Warwickshire (pre-Covid 19 pandemic) (n=1631)



Use of buses in Warwickshire

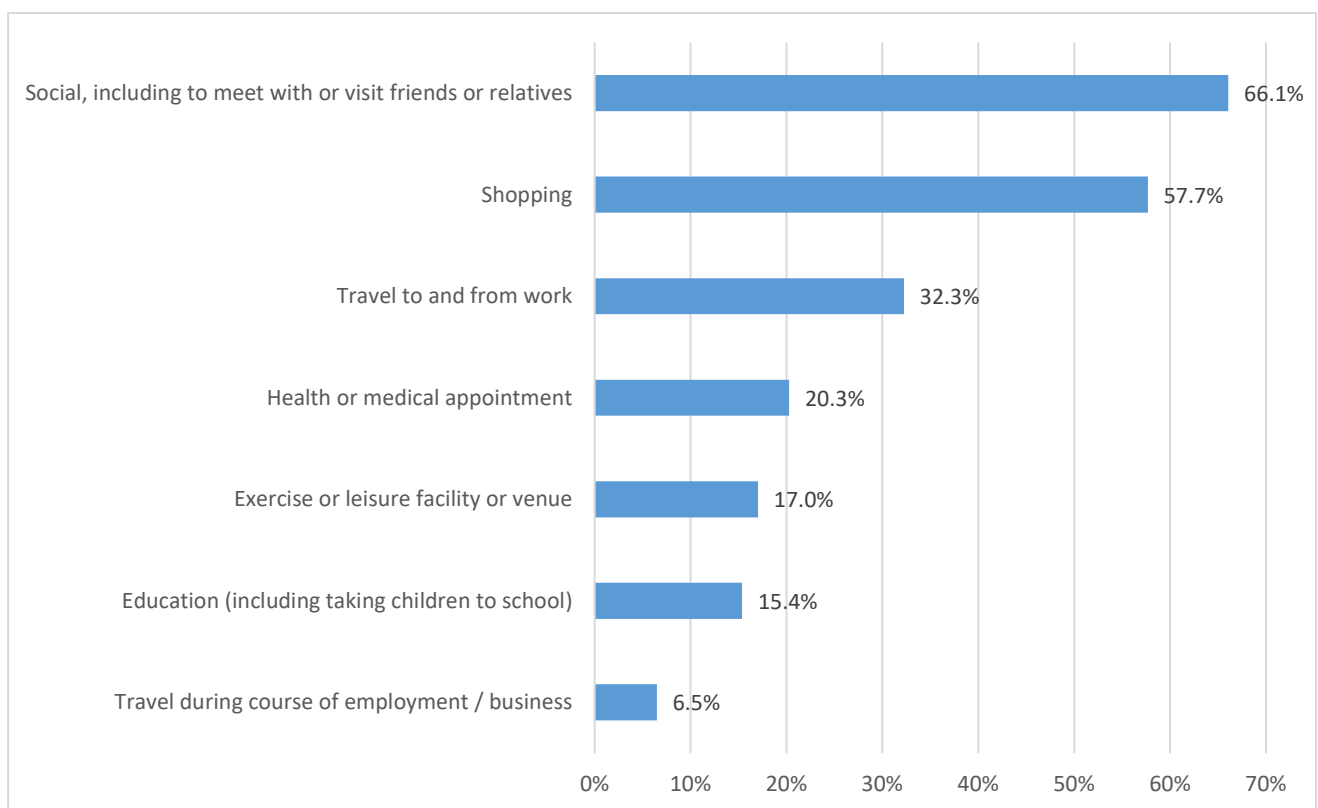
2.17 Following on from Figure 2-8, the frequency of pre-Covid travel by bus in Warwickshire of the Survey sample is detailed in Figure 2-9 showing that over a quarter of respondents (26.2%) reported that they never used a local bus service prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure 2-9: Frequency of bus use in Warwickshire pre-Covid 19 pandemic (n=1631)



- 2.18 When disaggregated by Borough/District, Stratford upon Avon District has the lowest proportion of regular bus users (once a week or more) at 33.8% of respondents and Nuneaton and Bedworth has the highest at 56.3%.
- 2.19 When disaggregated by age group, the most regular users of the bus at 5 or more days per week are under 18 year olds, followed by 18-24 year olds. At 2-4 days per week the most regular users of the bus are again the under 18s, but this time followed by the over 75 years age group. Of those who had never used local buses, 40-49 year olds were the most prevalent, followed by 50-59 year olds and then 60-64 year olds.
- 2.20 As shown in Figure 2-10 the most usual reason for travelling by bus in Warwickshire was for social purposes (66.1%) closely followed by shopping (57.7%).

Figure 2-10: Reasons for bus use (n=1203)

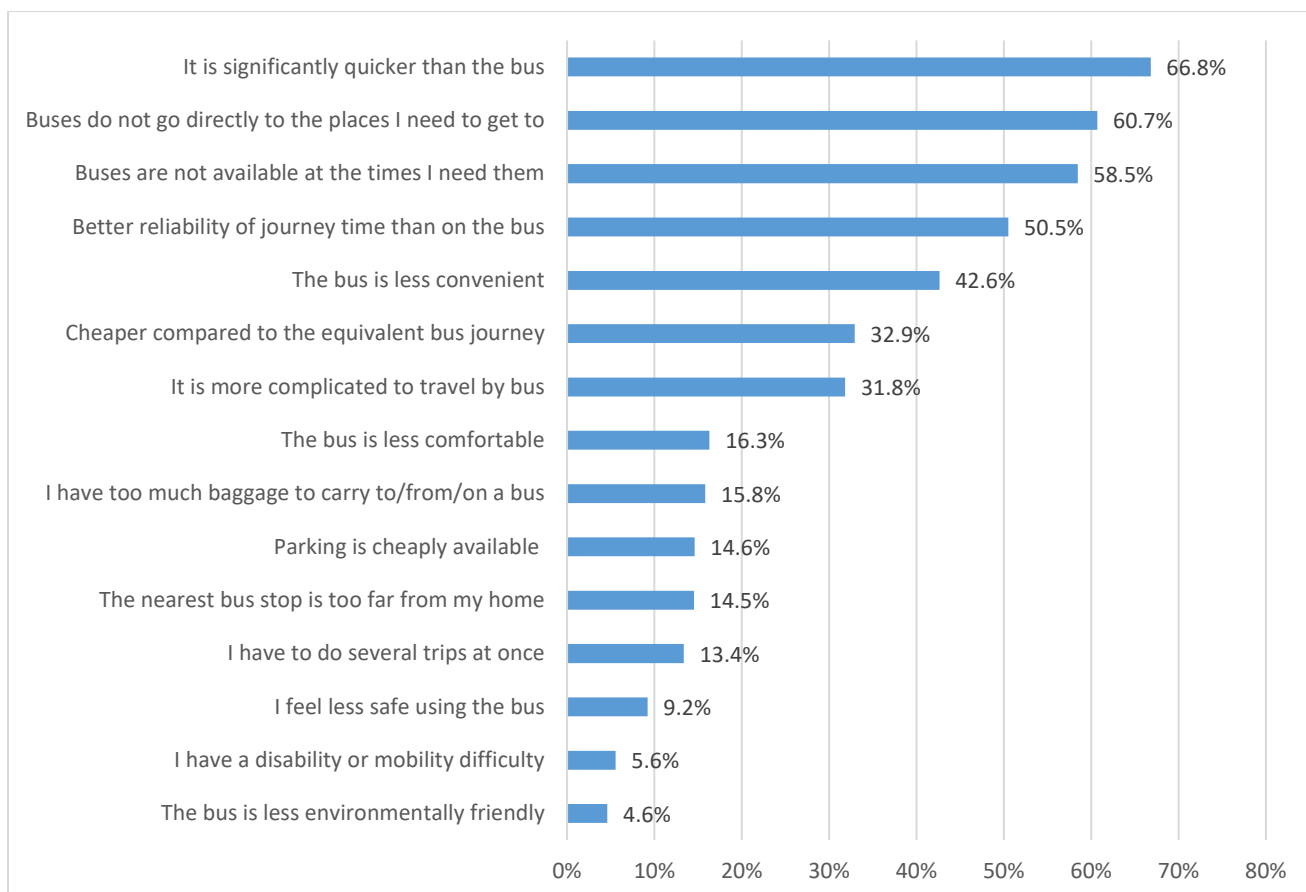


Barriers to bus use in Warwickshire

- 2.21 As shown in Figure 2-11, a majority of respondents indicated that the perceived journey length (in time) compared to other modes of travel, mainly including the car (66.8% of respondents indicated this as a factor), the perceived lack of direct bus services to desirable destinations (60.7%) and a perceived lack of frequent (58.5%) and reliable (50.5%) bus services are the main barriers to bus use in Warwickshire. The

perceived relative lack of convenience compared to other modes of transport (42.6%), the perceived relative cost of bus use (32.9%) and the perceived relative simplicity of travelling by other methods of transport (31.8%) are other significant barriers to bus use in Warwickshire.

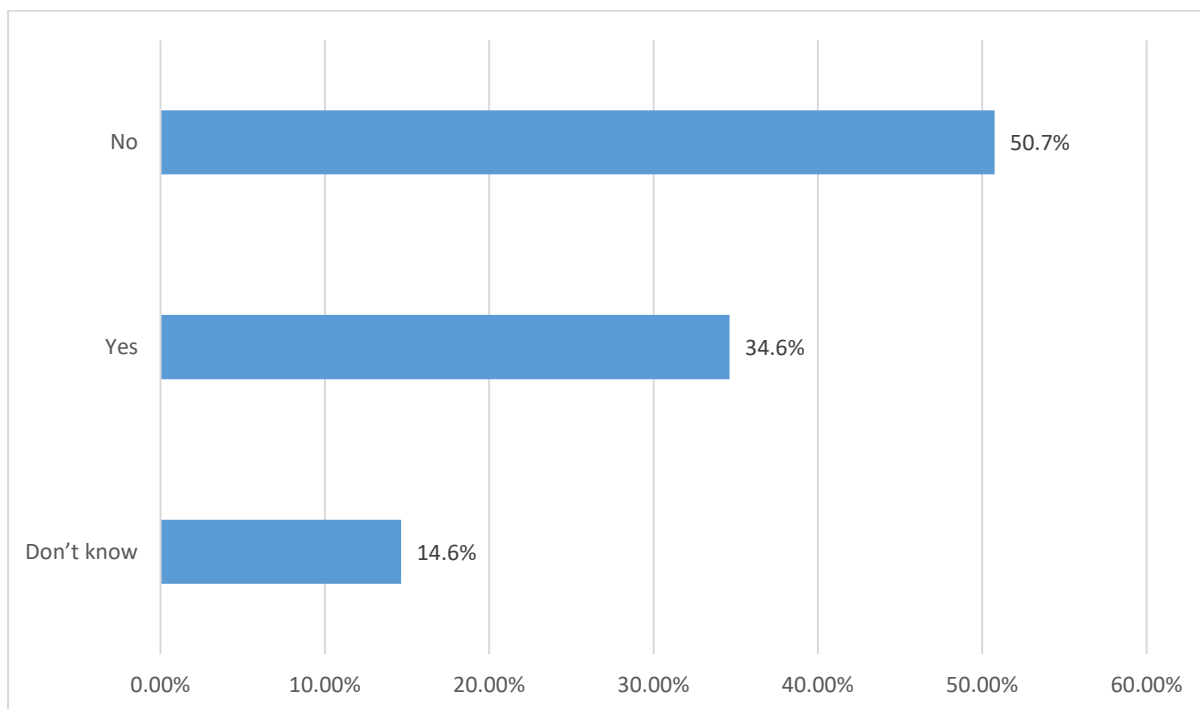
Figure 2-11: Reasons for travelling by an alternative means of transport when there is a local bus available (n=1473)



Post-Covid patterns of travel and bus use

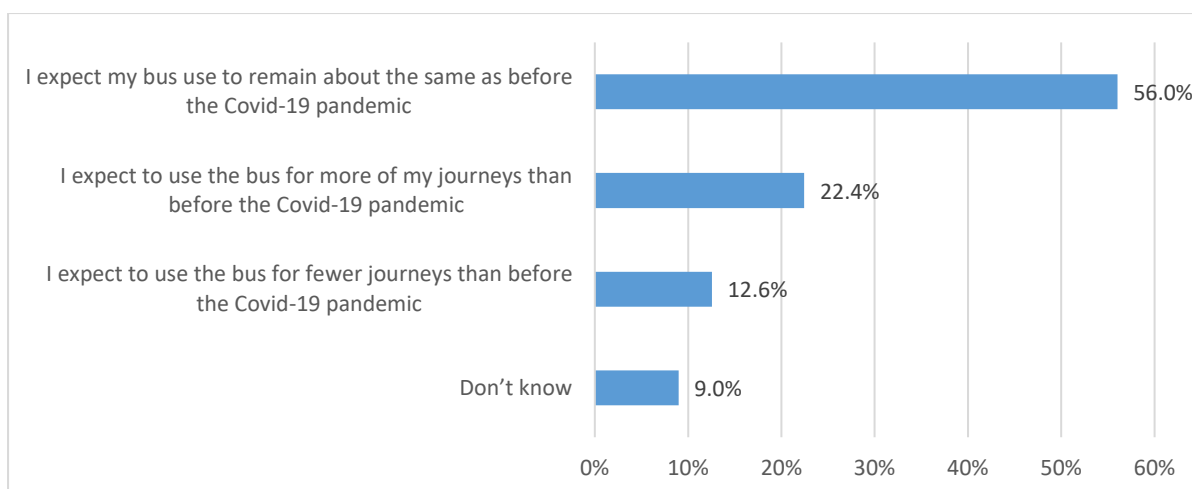
2.22 Given the potential increased flexibility in working arrangements that is likely to be provided by many employers post-pandemic, 35% of respondents reported that they anticipated a change in their patterns of travel for work purposes (either journey frequency, time and/or destination of travel) in the future (see Figure 2-12) with 15% of respondents uncertain at the time of the Survey as to what the future holds in this respect.

Figure 2-12: Expectation of a change in work travel patterns post-Covid 19 (n=936)



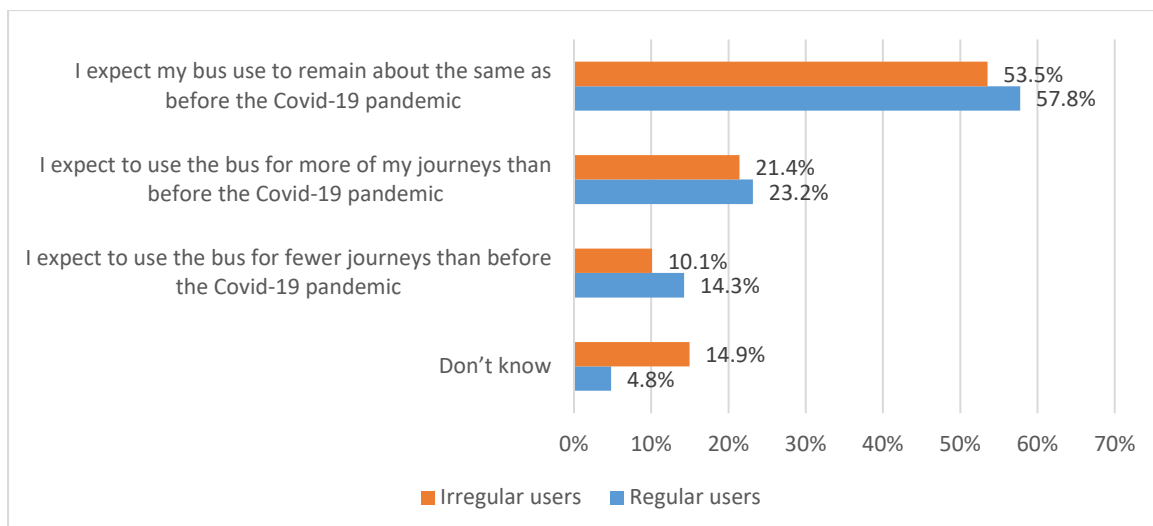
2.23 Figure 2-13 shows that around half of all respondents (56%) expect their bus use to remain consistent with their pre-Covid 19 pandemic levels of use. 22% of respondents expect their bus use to increase and 12% expect their bus use to decrease compared to their pre-Covid levels of use. 9% of respondents were unsure of their bus use in the future at the time of the Survey.

Figure 2-13: Expected bus use post-Covid 19 pandemic (n=1203)



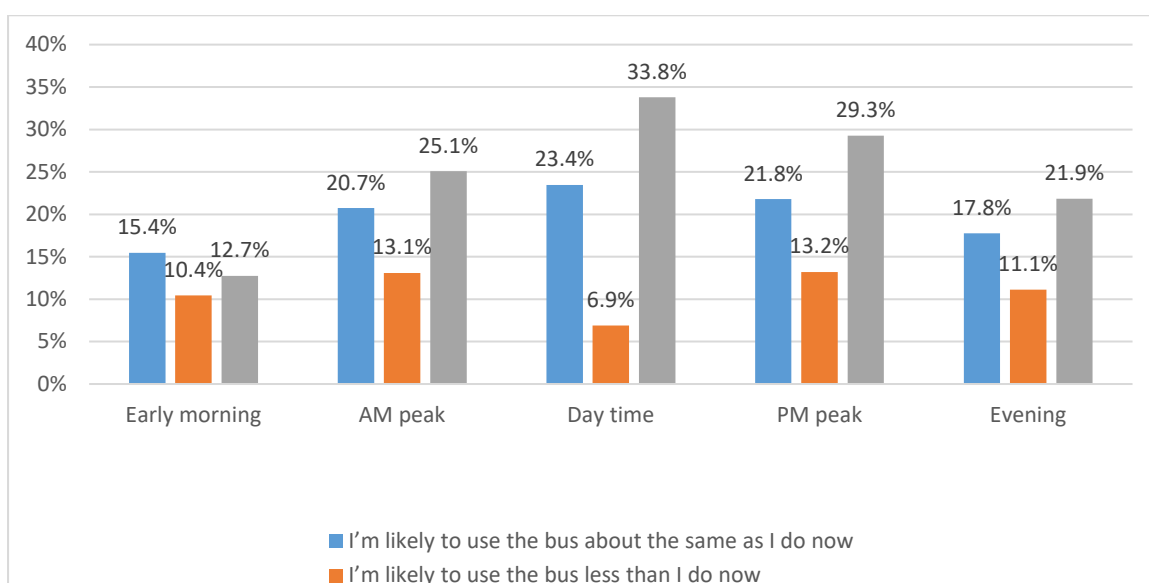
2.24 As shown in Figure 2-14 expected bus use post-Covid 19 is generally comparable between regular and irregular bus users although there is more uncertainty about future bus use from irregular users (14.9%) compared with regular users (4.8%).

Figure 2-14: Expected bus use post-Covid 19 pandemic by user type (n=1203)



2.25 Expected bus use for the journey to work post-Covid-19 can be seen in Figure 2-15. This analysis is based on a smaller sample size due to the routing of the Survey which meant that only economically active respondents answered this question. The graph shows the potential for the traditional morning and afternoon peaks in bus travel for work purposes to spread further into the day (for the morning peak) and evenings (for the afternoon peak) post-Covid-19.

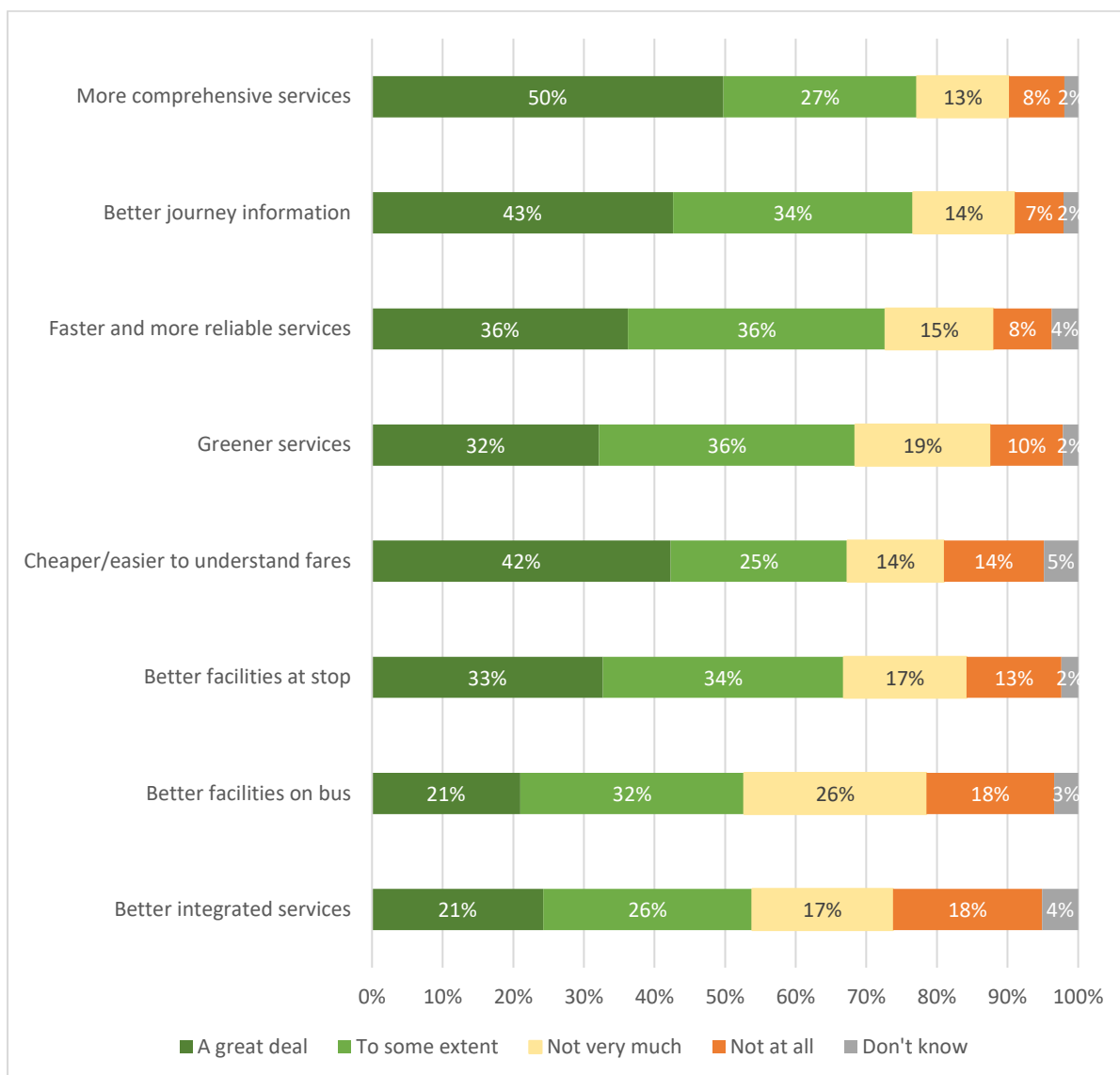
Figure 2-15: Anticipated bus use for work post-Covid 19 pandemic (n=317)



Views on potential improvements to bus services in Warwickshire

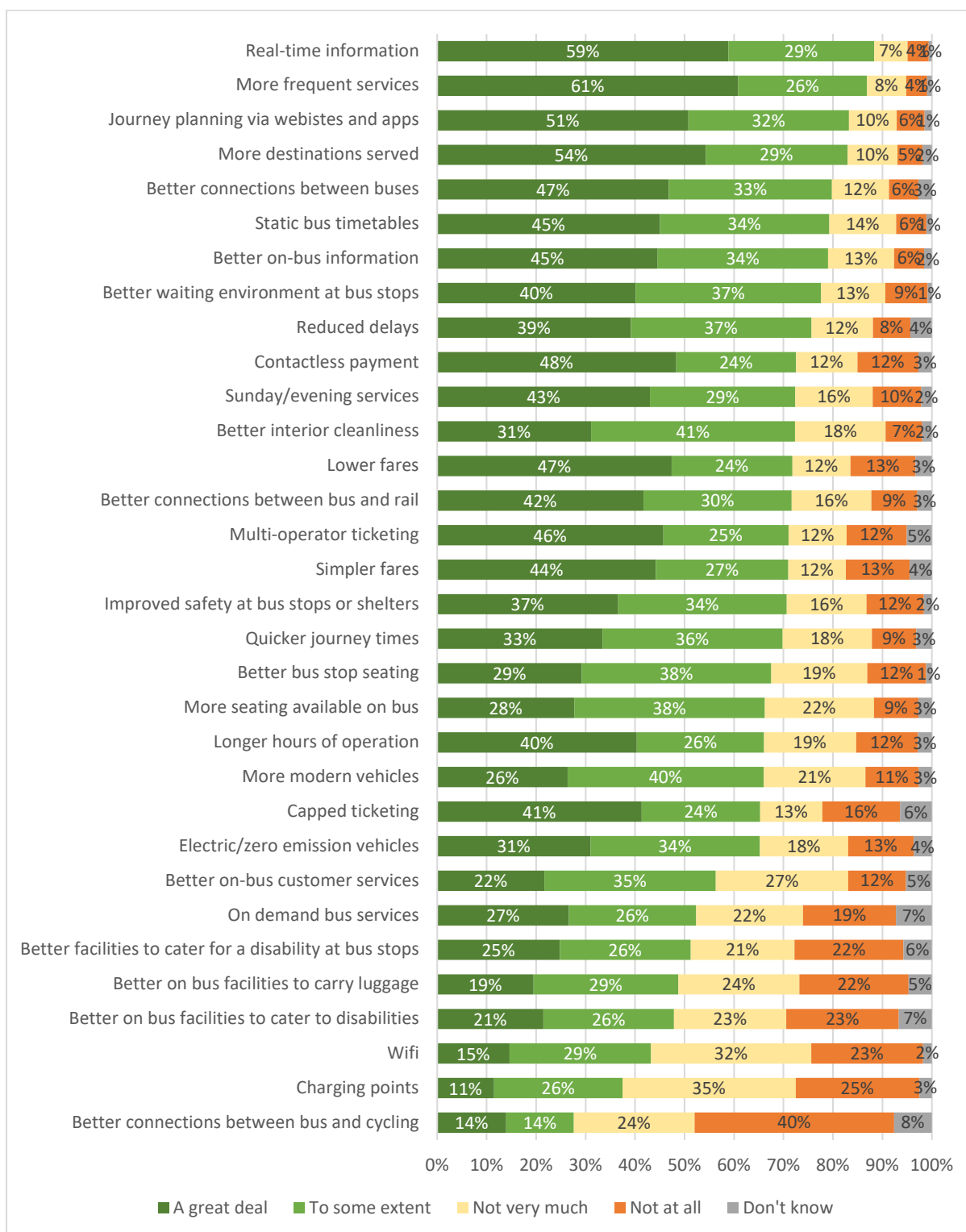
2.26 The relative potential impact that a set of bus service improvements (broadly reflecting the priorities of the National Bus Strategy) could have in encouraging an increase in bus patronage in Warwickshire is detailed in Figure 2-16 below. When combining the proportions of positive responses (defined as an answer of either “a great deal” or “to some extent”) the four most popular categories of improvement are more comprehensive services (77%), better journey information (77%, although with a lower proportion of “A great extent” responses, improved speed and reliability of services (73%) and greener services (68%).

Figure 2-16: Extent to which different categories of bus service improvement could potentially encourage bus patronage in Warwickshire (n=1653)



- 2.27 A more detailed analysis is provided in Figure 2-17 by breaking down each category of bus service improvement into specific service attributes, each of which was rated by survey respondents according to the extent to which they would likely encourage an increase in bus patronage. The most popular measures shown here (with more than an 80% positive response) are the provision of real time information at bus stops (88%), more frequent services (87%), journey planning (via websites and apps) and more destinations served (both 83%). The least popular responses (with less than 50% positive response) are better connections between cycling and buses (28%), provision of charging points on buses (37%), on bus Wi-Fi provision (44%), better on bus facilities to cater for people with disabilities (48%) and better on bus facilities to carry luggage (49%).
- 2.28 Specific attributes within the more comprehensive services category were ranked 2nd (more frequent services), 4th (more destinations served), 11th (Sunday and evening services) and 21st (longer hours of operation) by respondents, but as the most popular category overall, this highlights the importance placed by respondents on a requirement for more frequent services and more destinations to be served.
- 2.29 Better journey information is the second most popular category of improvements for encouraging an increase in bus patronage in Warwickshire overall and the service attributes within this category were ranked 1st (real-time information), 3rd (journey planning via websites and apps), 6th (static timetables), 7th (on-bus information) and 25th (better customer services on board).
- 2.30 Despite integrated services being the least popular category of improvements for encouraging an increase in bus patronage in Warwickshire overall, better connections between buses was ranked as the 5th most prioritised service attribute overall.
- 2.31 An analysis of the popularity of the overall categories of improvement by the main sample characteristics reported earlier in this section did not really result in any key differences highlighted by respondents living in each of the 5 Boroughs/Districts of Warwickshire, between male and female respondents, amongst residents with different ethnic backgrounds or based on different levels of economic activity.
- 2.32 However, the same analysis by type of user (regular/irregular), age and disability did provide some interesting differences in terms of the views held by different sub-groups as detailed in Figures 2-18 to 2-20).

Figure 2-17: The extent to which various BSIP measures would encourage bus patronage (n=1653)

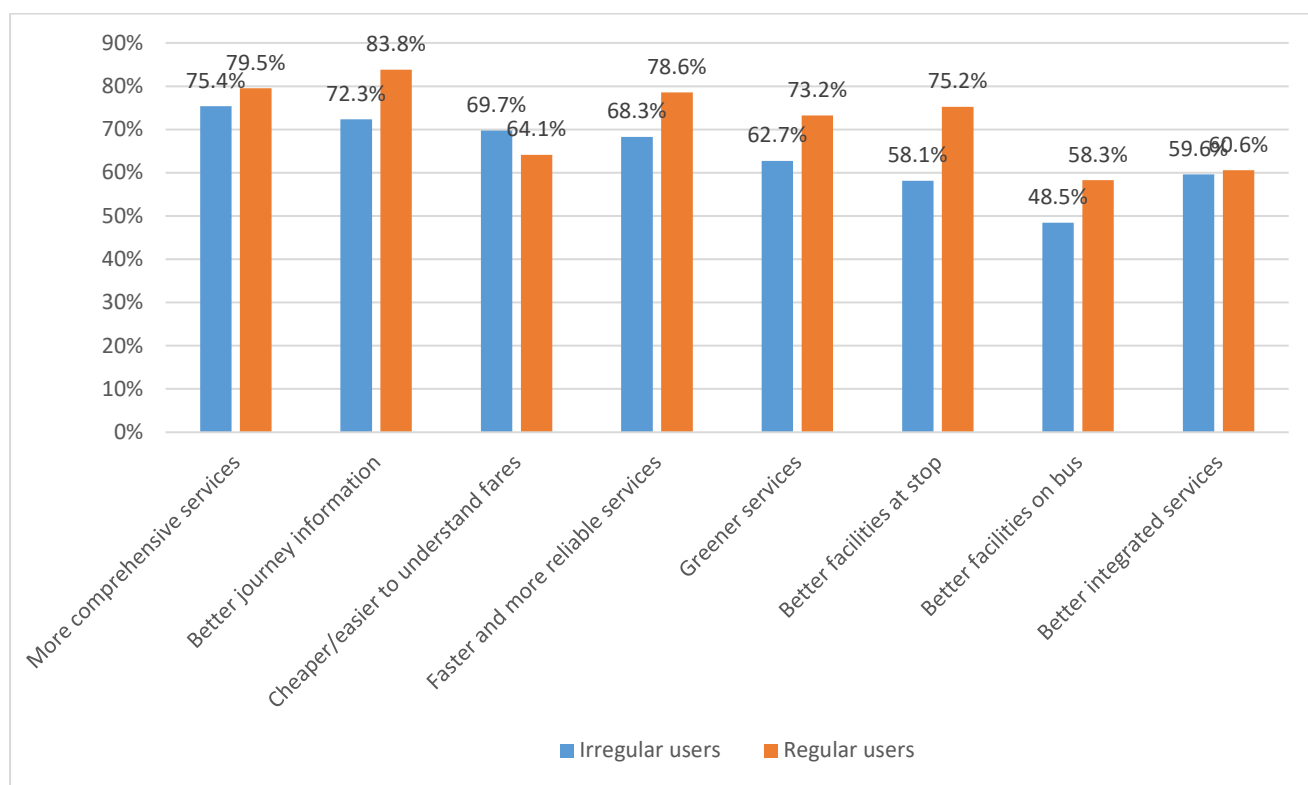


2.33 Figure 2-18 shows an analysis of the categories of improvement listed in the Survey with a comparison of the proportions of positive responses (defined as an answer of

either “a great deal” or “to some extent”) in each case by user type (regular or irregular). Interestingly, this graph shows that a significantly greater proportion of regular users felt that better facilities at bus stops would encourage them to use buses at least to some extent (75.2%) compared to irregular users (58.1%).

2.34 Other categories where a greater proportion of regular than irregular users indicated a positive response in this sense included for the provision of journey information (83.8% for regular users; 72.3% irregular users), greener services (73.2% for regular users, 62.7% for irregular users), faster and more reliable services (78.6% regular users, 68.3% irregular users) and better facilities on bus (58.3% for regular users, 48.5% irregular users). Interestingly however, the only category which had a comparatively higher proportion of positive response from irregular users was the provision of cheaper/easier to understand bus fares (69.7% for irregular users, 64.1% for regular users).

Figure 2-18: Relative popularity of different categories of bus service improvement by user type (n=1606)

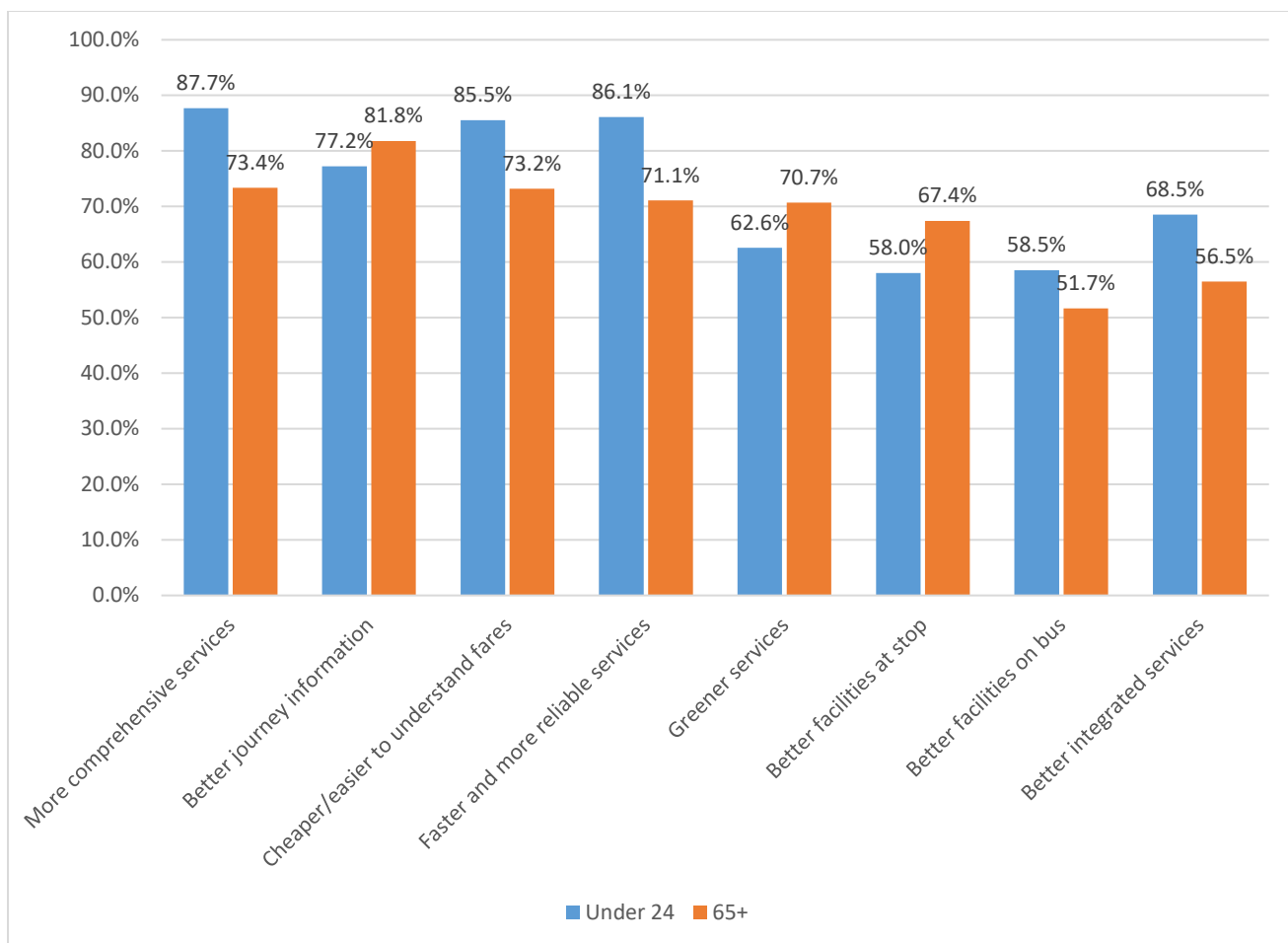


2.35 As shown in Figure 2-19, a greater proportion of respondents in the 65 years and above age group felt that better facilities at bus stops would encourage them to use buses at least to some extent (67.4%) compared to the proportion of positive respondents in the 24 years age and below age group (58%). This cohort of older

respondents also seemingly placed more importance on greener services (70.7% compared to 62.6%) and better journey information (although less significantly so at 81.8% compared to 77.2%).

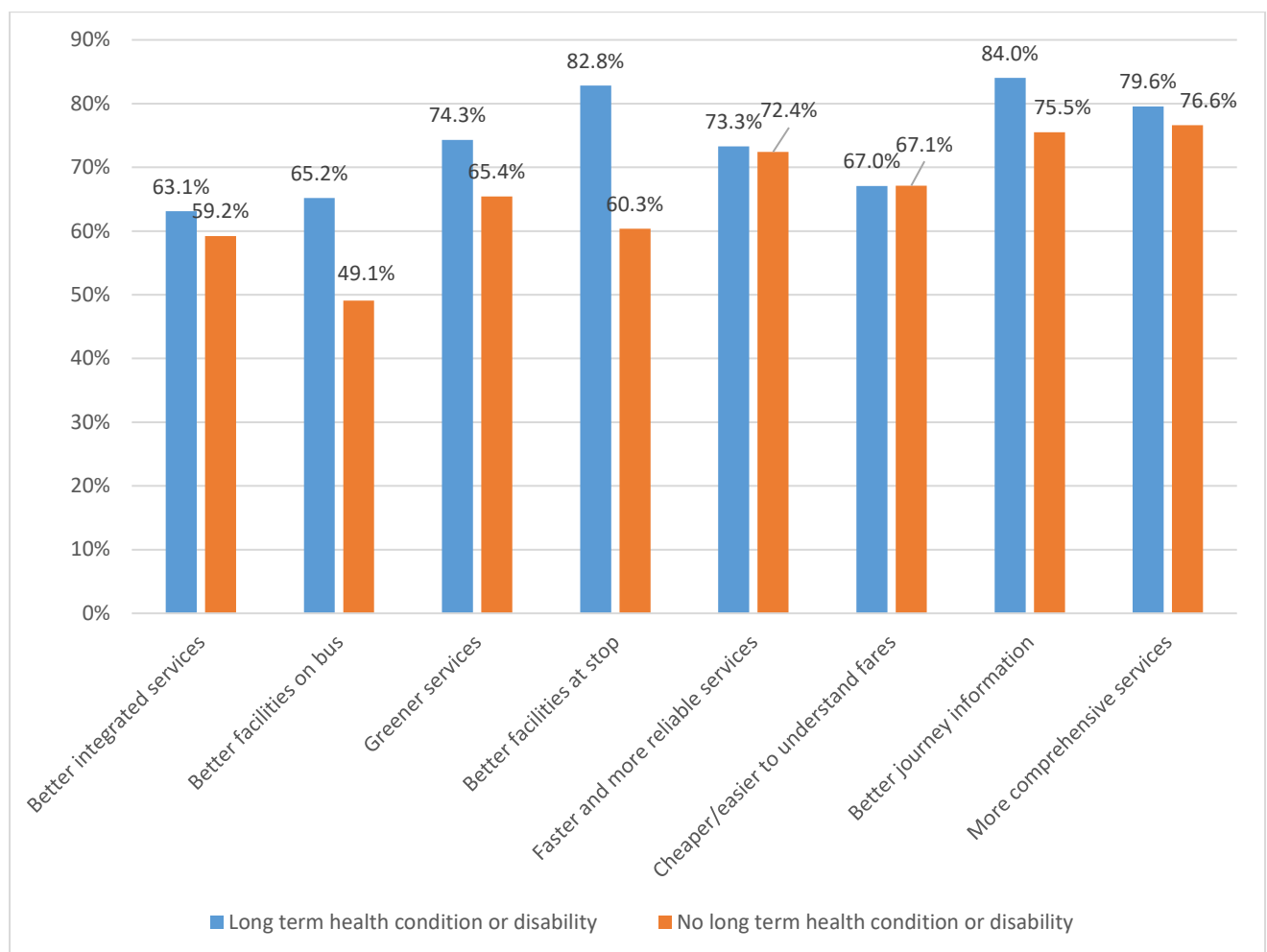
2.36 Conversely for all the other categories, greater proportions of the younger cohort of respondents felt that the improvement in question would encourage them to use buses at least to some extent when compared to their older counterparts. Significantly higher proportions of the younger cohort of respondents felt that faster and more reliable services (86.1% compared to 71.1%), more comprehensive services (87.7% compared to 73.4%), cheaper/easier to understand fares (85.5% compared to 71.1%) and better integrated services (68.5% compared to 56.5%) would encourage them to use buses at least to some extent.

Figure 2-19: Relative popularity of different categories of bus service improvement for respondents aged 24 years and under compared to those aged 65 years and above (n=801)



2.37 Figure 2-20 shows the same analysis of the proportions of positive responses (defined as an answer of either “a great deal” or “to some extent”) by those respondents with and without a long-term health condition or disability.

Figure 2-20: BSIP priorities for respondents with a long-term health condition or disability compared with those for respondents without (n=1541)



2.38 The graph above shows that, with the exception of cheaper/easier to understand fares, a greater proportion of disabled respondents felt all of the remaining categories of improvement would encourage them to use buses at least to some extent, with significantly higher proportions of disabled respondents indicating this for the categories of better facilities at stop (82.8% compared to 62.3%) and better facilities on bus (65.2% compared to 49.1%) in particular.

Conclusions

- 2.39 The Public Engagement Survey received a good volume of response in general, with the views of both regular and irregular bus users well represented, albeit with some under-representation of residents aged 24 and under, residents with a Black and Minority Ethnic background and residents living in North Warwickshire Borough, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough and Rugby Borough.
- 2.40 A range of barriers to travelling by bus were highlighted by survey respondents, the most powerful of which were perceptions of slower journeys by bus relative to other modes (particularly the car), a lack of direct services going to where people want to travel, when they want to travel, unreliable and inconvenient bus services and the fact that the bus was judged to be a relatively expensive and less straight forward method of transport.
- 2.41 In addition, the Survey indicated that the Covid-19 pandemic had created a relatively uncertain picture of future bus use, particularly for the commute, although with some indication of quite significant peak spreading for future journeys to and from work.
- 2.42 The main finding of the Public Engagement Survey in terms of setting priorities for the Warwickshire BSIP was that more comprehensive services (particularly more frequent bus services serving more destinations), better journey information (including provision of real-time information provision at bus stops, better journey planning websites and apps, better provision of static timetable information and greater provision of on-bus information), faster and more reliable services, greener services and better connecting bus services were the main measures most likely to encourage Warwickshire residents to use local buses in Warwickshire more frequently.
- 2.43 It should be noted however that the relative importance of these (and other factors) varied according to variables including user type, age and disability. In order to encourage non- and irregular users and younger residents on to bus services in Warwickshire, the Survey indicated that the provision of cheaper and easier to understand fares was a key priority in addition to all of the above mentioned factors, with more of a focus on at stop and on bus facilities as a priority for improvement amongst disabled residents.

3. Focus Groups with Hard to Reach Groups

- 3.1 This section includes the methodology and summary of the outcomes of the three focus groups conducted with hard-to-reach groups, typically under-represented in previous public engagement exercises conducted by WCC, and a conclusion summarising the key findings from this engagement activity.

Methodology

- 3.2 A key part of the process of developing the Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) involved engagement with members of the travelling public in Warwickshire to assess what passengers, would-be passengers, and communities want from local bus services in order to reverse the cycle of decline in bus use and provision. As reported in Section 2, the main public engagement tool utilised by WCC was the Public Engagement Survey hosted on the Ask Warwickshire portal and open to the public (and promoted via various channels) between 26th July to 19th September 2021.
- 3.3 Bearing in mind the nature and subject matter of the Public Engagement Survey, the channels for publicising it to the public within the budget available and previous experiences of conducting similar public engagement surveys, within WCC's Project Engagement Plan it was anticipated that groups of people that were likely to be under-represented in the Survey response ('hard to reach' groups) would include:
- Residents aged 16-24 years;
 - Residents with non-physical, hidden disabilities; and
 - Residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.
- 3.4 At an early stage in the development of the Project Engagement Plan, WCC therefore proposed to supplement the Public Engagement Survey with the conduct of a focus group with representatives of each of these three groups of residents during the Survey period. The purpose of these focus groups was to gain an understanding, in greater depth, of the views of representatives of these 'hard to reach groups' (including both bus users and non-users) in a qualitative sense focussing in the main on their general experiences of using local bus services, their perceived barriers to bus use and their views on potential improvements to bus services in Warwickshire.
- 3.5 The three groups were recruited with the assistance of:
- Child Friendly Warwickshire (recruitment of the group of residents aged 16-24 years);

- Grapevine (recruitment of the group of residents with non-physical, hidden disabilities); and
 - Equip (recruitment of the group of residents from BAME backgrounds).
- 3.6 In order to satisfy GDPR requirements, a recruitment invitation was drafted by the ITP team, but was sent from the organisations detailed above making the purpose of the research very clear, and requesting that the individual 'opted-in' to the project by completing a consent form.
- 3.7 Due to ongoing issues related to social distancing, each group was conducted online using Zoom, the cloud-based video conferencing web and app-based service during the week commencing 13th September 2021 in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Market Research Society. A small incentive of a £20 voucher from a well-known retail outlet was provided to all participants to thank them for providing their time and views.

Summary of key themes

- 3.8 Five-page summaries of each of the three discussions conducted with 'hard to reach' groups are provided in Appendix C, each also containing a short conclusion highlighting those measures to be prioritised through the development of the Warwickshire BSIP.
- 3.9 Key themes emerging from the group discussions in relation to the central questions around perceived barriers to bus use and the priorities for improvements to bus services in Warwickshire are however also summarised below, with common sequences and distinct differences in views and opinions between groups highlighted accordingly.

Barriers to bus use in Warwickshire

- 3.10 The main barriers to bus use amongst the different groups of participants tended to depend on relative levels of access to a car, in the sense that those who had the option of using a car tended to do so, mainly for reasons of convenience, control over the journey and because it was a more familiar option.
- 3.11 Common perceived issues with using buses amongst non- and irregular users tended to centre around the reliability and speed of journey times when compared to using the car, the fact that buses aren't available to take people to the places they need to get to at the times they need to travel and a lack of connecting and evening and weekend services and a lack of co-ordination with shift finishing times.

- 3.12 The lack of customer service on buses, and generally the perceived unfriendly nature of drivers was also a factor raised in all three groups. Comments around bus drivers not supporting the needs of those people with reduced mobility were also common and not just made by disabled participants.
- 3.13 Facilities at bus stops were generally felt to be in need of improvement from a personal safety, accessibility, information provision and comfort perspective and participants with hidden disabilities and visual impairments, in particular, felt that on-bus facilities were generally poor with issues with bus cleanliness (dirty windows impacting on a sense of location along the route) and a lack of on-board information (e.g. next stop displays and audio announcements) adding to their anxiety when travelling by bus. There was also some concern raised around crowding on buses in more than one group, particularly in relation to the need to socially distance due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.14 The cost of using buses was mainly seen as a barrier for those on lower incomes, including younger people, who often tended to choose to walk for shorter journeys rather than catch the bus for this reason.

Potential improvements to bus services in Warwickshire

- 3.15 As part of each group discussion a presentation (slides included along with the focus group topic guide within Appendix B) was shared with participants detailing a set of eight potential options for improving bus services in Warwickshire based on the key aims of the National Bus Strategy. In response, participants were asked to provide their thoughts on the extent to which each option would likely encourage them (and people like them) to use buses more often.
- 3.16 A comparative analysis of the main points raised by and between each group, including the relative sense of priority given to each option by members of different groups using **green** (strong support from each group) and **amber** (medium support) shading in the cells of Table 3-1 on the following page. This table also includes a '**#1**', '**#2**', '**#3**' or '**#4**' ranking of the top priorities for improvement from the list of options indicated through each group discussion.

Table 3-1: Comparative analysis of priorities for potential improvements to bus services in Warwickshire

Options for improvement	Residents aged 16-24 years	Residents with non-physical, hidden disabilities	Residents from BAME backgrounds
Faster and more reliable services	Popular option but mainly to encourage non-users to use the bus (most participants were regular users)	Popular option but mainly to encourage non-users to use the bus (most participants were regular users). Stratford to Leamington service could be faster	(#1) Most popular option with reducing journey times and improved journey time reliability seen as a priority to encourage current car users
More comprehensive services	(#1) Buses running later in the evenings and weekends is the most attractive element of this option with requests for improved frequency on some routes	(#4) Requests for more places to be served by bus to improve social inclusion	Seen as an attractive option to serve more places and later evenings and weekends by bus
Better integrated services	Integration between buses is a less popular option but some requests for better integration between bus and rail	Need for better connecting services across Rugby. Would rather have a direct bus service to Birmingham from Nuneaton	(#3) Less popular but better connecting services seen as important for some
Greener services	Environmental issues are important and greener services would encourage bus use	Improvements needed for better air quality. Concern around silent electric buses from people with visual impairments	Although important, concerned that these measures would take longer to implement due to the current political climate in UK
Better journey information	(#4) Better digital and static information a definite priority, with particular enthusiasm for better bus journey planning apps	(#3) Real-time information at bus stops, provision of next stop displays and audio announcements all provide re-assurance to users	(#2) Important option to ensure better awareness of bus services. Both digital and paper-based methods need improving.

Options for improvement	Residents aged 16-24 years	Residents with non-physical, hidden disabilities	Residents from BAME backgrounds
Better facilities on bus	Comfort of buses is acceptable. Charging points are useful, Wi-Fi not a necessity. Accessibility for people with specific mobility needs requires improvement	(#1) Cleaner vehicles requested (particularly cleaner windows), provision of next stop displays and audio announcements for visually impaired. Wi-Fi not essential.	Not deemed to be as important as improving facilities at bus stops although consideration needs to be given to social distancing currently
Better facilities at the bus stop	(#2) Overwhelming consensus to improve waiting facilities with provision of shelters as a minimum. Seating not crucial	(#2) overwhelming consensus that bus stops need to be improved. Better seating, lighting and CCTV provision and hard standing surfaces requested. Real time information and audible information at stops would help reassure users	Consensus that bus stops need to be improved, with better lighting, seating and shelters although most people felt generally safe when waiting for the bus
Cheaper / easier to understand fares	(#3) Emphasis on simplicity ahead of cost (although group tends to have less disposable income). Multi-operator ticketing and contactless seen as the future. No real interest in Demand Responsive Transport (DRT).	Cost of using bus services is less relevant to this group, most of whom have free bus passes. Requests for more consistent fares to provide added confidence to bus users. DRT positively received	(#4) Buses need to be cheaper to encourage more people to use them. Enthusiasm for a contactless and capped card system (especially for infrequent travellers). DRT seen as a good idea to serve rural areas

Conclusions

- 3.17 There were differences in opinions both within and between the three groups with respect to prioritisation of potential measures to be included in the Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- 3.18 There was a general consensus amongst residents from BAME backgrounds that faster and more reliable services, better journey information, more comprehensive services and cheaper and easier to understand fares would be the measures most likely to encourage non-users to try using bus services in Warwickshire.
- 3.1 There was less consensus amongst the group of residents with hidden disabilities, with the obvious exception that better facilities on the bus and at the bus stop should be the main priority areas to be addressed. Better on-bus information through provision of next stop displays and audio announcements in particular was a popular request for this group of residents to assuage their anxiety when travelling by bus.
- 3.2 Younger people tended to be more positive about their experiences of bus use in general, but requested more comprehensive services, improved waiting facilities at stop, lower and simpler to understand fares (with a particular preference for contactless, multi-operator ticketing solutions) and the provision of better journey information, both in static and digital form (but with an emphasis on providing improved bus planning and journey tracking apps).

4. BSIP Stakeholder Engagement Survey

- 4.1 This section includes the methodology and results of the Warwickshire BSIP Stakeholder Engagement Survey and a conclusion summarising the key findings of this survey.

Methodology

- 4.2 An online survey was developed to understand stakeholders' views of the bus network in Warwickshire and the priority order for potential improvements that could be made to local bus services to encourage people to use them more frequently.
- 4.3 The Survey was open to key business and community group stakeholders, relevant Borough and District Council officers, officers from neighbouring local authorities and rail stakeholders across Warwickshire to respond to. The Survey ran for a period of 5 weeks between 17th August and 19th September 2021. A copy of the full survey questionnaire can be found in Appendix D.
- 4.4 The Survey was promoted via an email (including the Survey link) sent by WCC's Economy and Skills team to all business and community group stakeholders on their mailing list, and also via an article which featured in the August edition of Warwickshire Means Business. In addition, ITP sent the Survey link via email to Borough and District Council and neighbouring local authority officer and rail stakeholder contacts provided by the WCC BSIP Project Board.

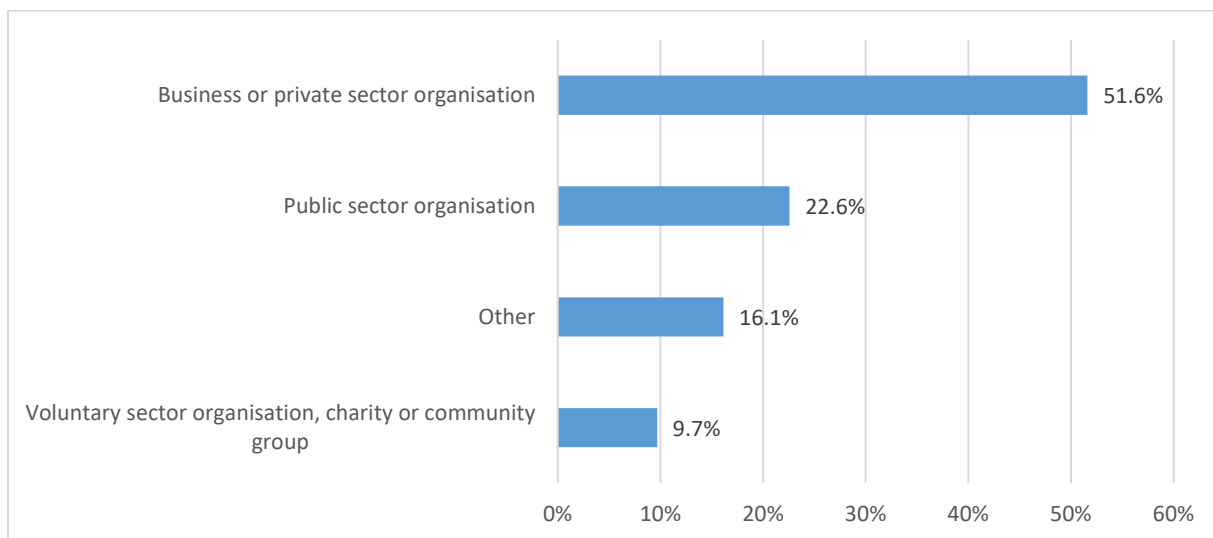
Survey results

- 4.5 There were a relatively small number of respondents to the Stakeholder Engagement Survey (31), however a relatively large cross-section of businesses across Warwickshire were represented in the Survey response alongside responses received from officers from Warwickshire Borough and District Councils, neighbouring authorities and rail stakeholders.

Sample characteristics

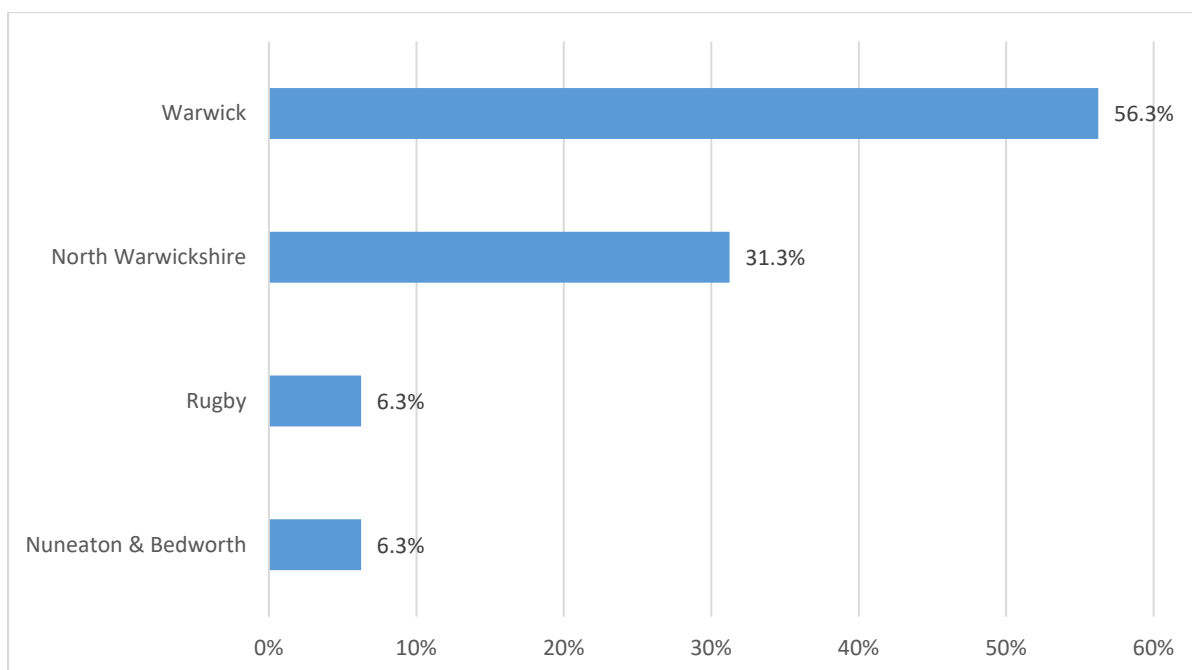
- 4.6 Just over half of the surveyed stakeholders were representing the views of businesses or private sector organisations (51.6%), around a fifth of respondents were representing the views of public sector organisations (22.6%), with representatives of the voluntary sector representatives accounting for 9.7% responses (see Figure 4-1).

Figure 4-1: Survey response by stakeholder type (n=31)



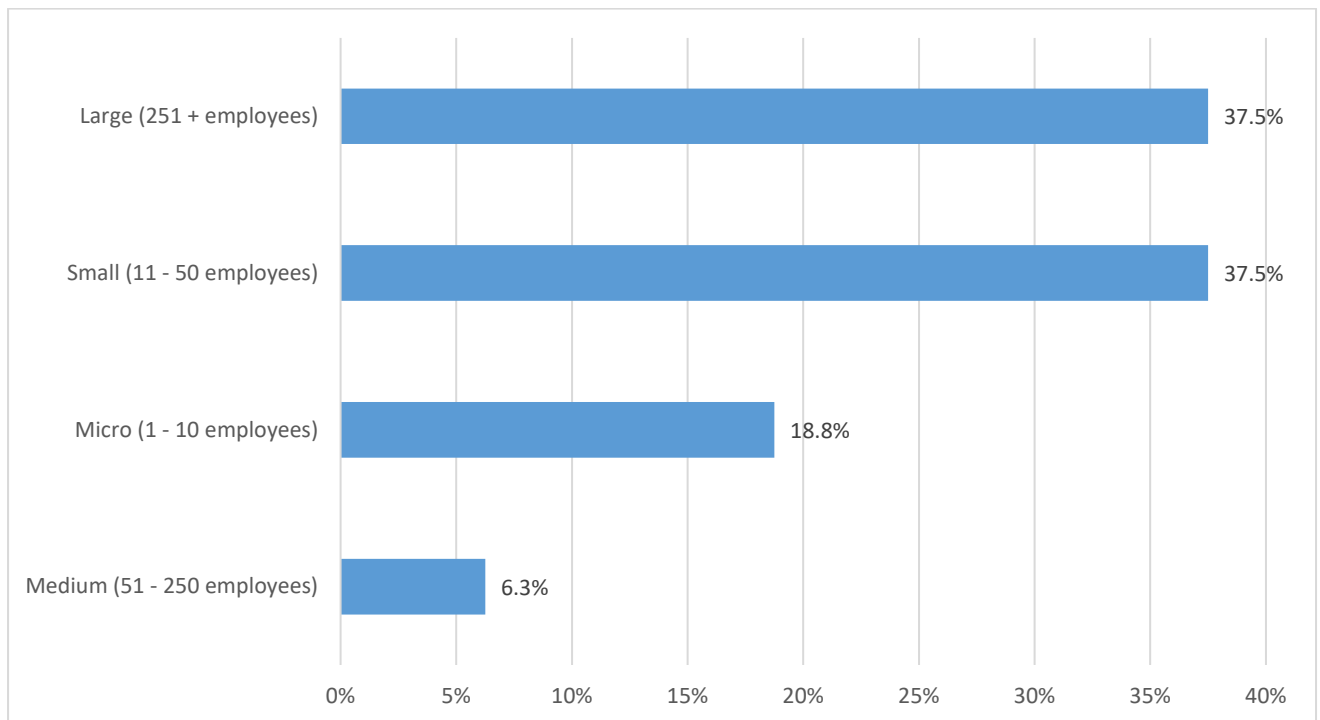
4.7 Figure 4-2 shows of the 16 businesses represented by a response to the stakeholder survey, the majority (56.3%) are based in Warwick District, with just under a third (31.3%) located in North Warwickshire. There were no businesses with a site located in Stratford-on-Avon represented in the Stakeholder Engagement Survey.

Figure 4-2: Business organisation response by location of organisation’s main site (n=16)



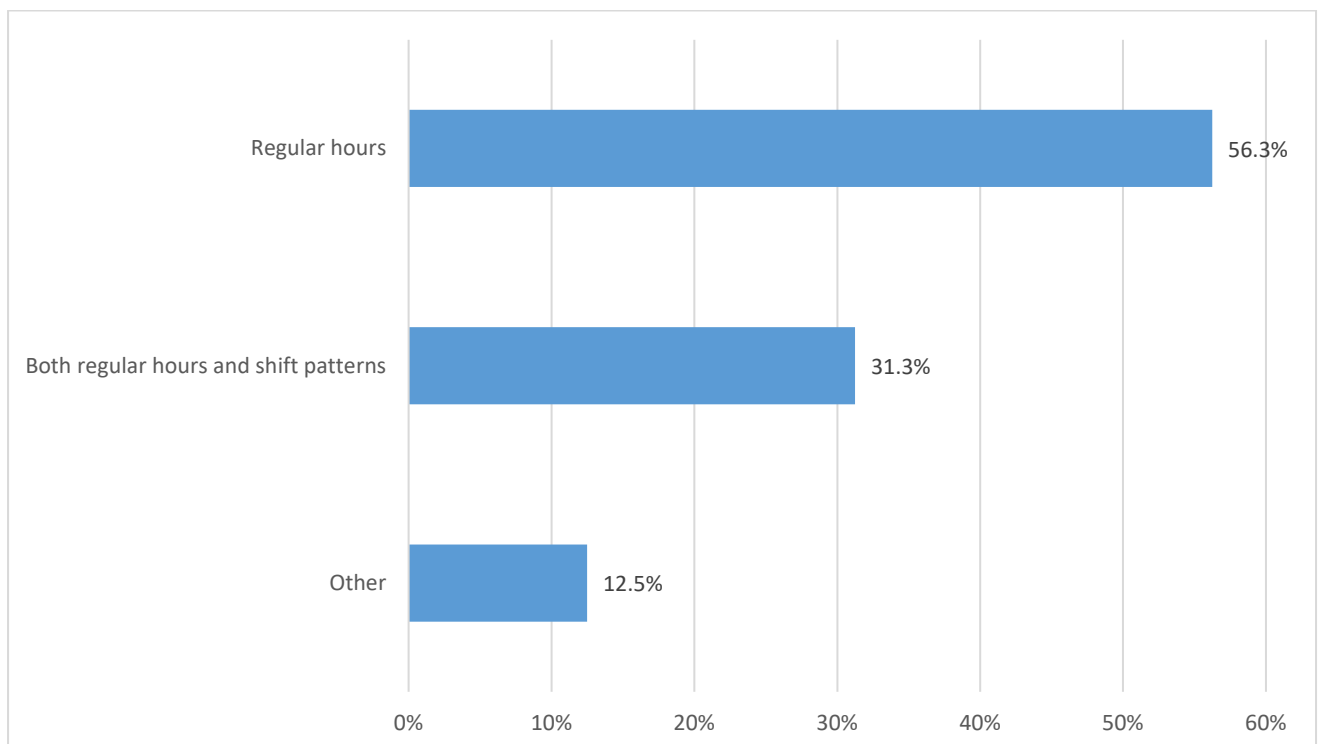
4.8 Figure 4-3 shows that there was a good mix of large, small and micro businesses represented in the stakeholder survey.

Figure 4-3: Business organisation response by size of organisation (n=16)



4.9 Figure 4-4 shows that a majority of these businesses operate during regular office hours with others working a combination of regular and shift or other working hours.

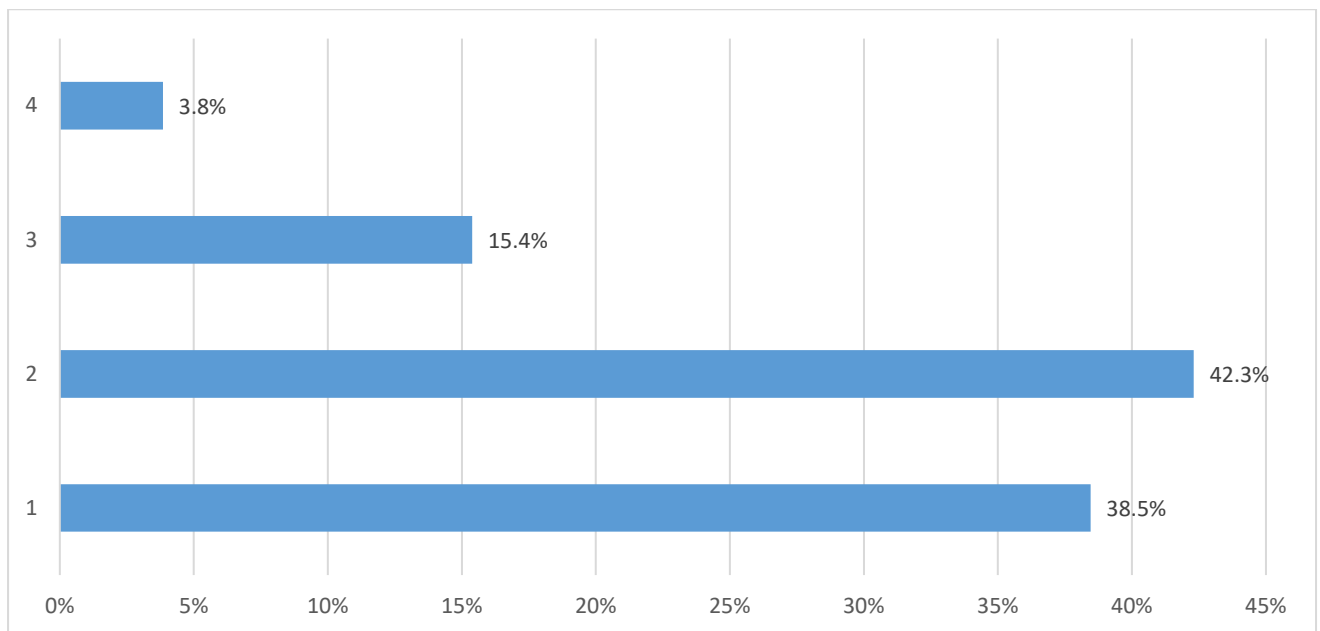
Figure 4-4: Business organisation response by employee work hours (n=16)



Rating of bus services in Warwickshire

4.10 The average rating representing stakeholders' overall impression of the bus network in Warwickshire (Figure 4-5) on a scale from 5 (excellent) to 1 (awful) was 2.13. None of the Survey respondents rated the network as excellent. In fact, the majority of respondents (42.3%) rated the network with a score of 2 out of 5, followed by 38.5% scoring the network 1 out of 5 (awful).

Figure 4-5: Respondents' rating of their overall impression of the bus network in Warwickshire on a scale of 1 (Awful) to 5 (Excellent) (n=31)



Barriers to bus use in Warwickshire

4.11 Table 4-1 shows the verbatim comments provided in response to a question asked about the biggest barriers impacting bus travel in Warwickshire amongst the people that each stakeholder represents. These have been categorised into re-occurring themes in Figure 4-6: Percentage frequency of categorised stakeholder comments reflecting barriers to bus use in Warwickshire (n=25)Figure 4-6.

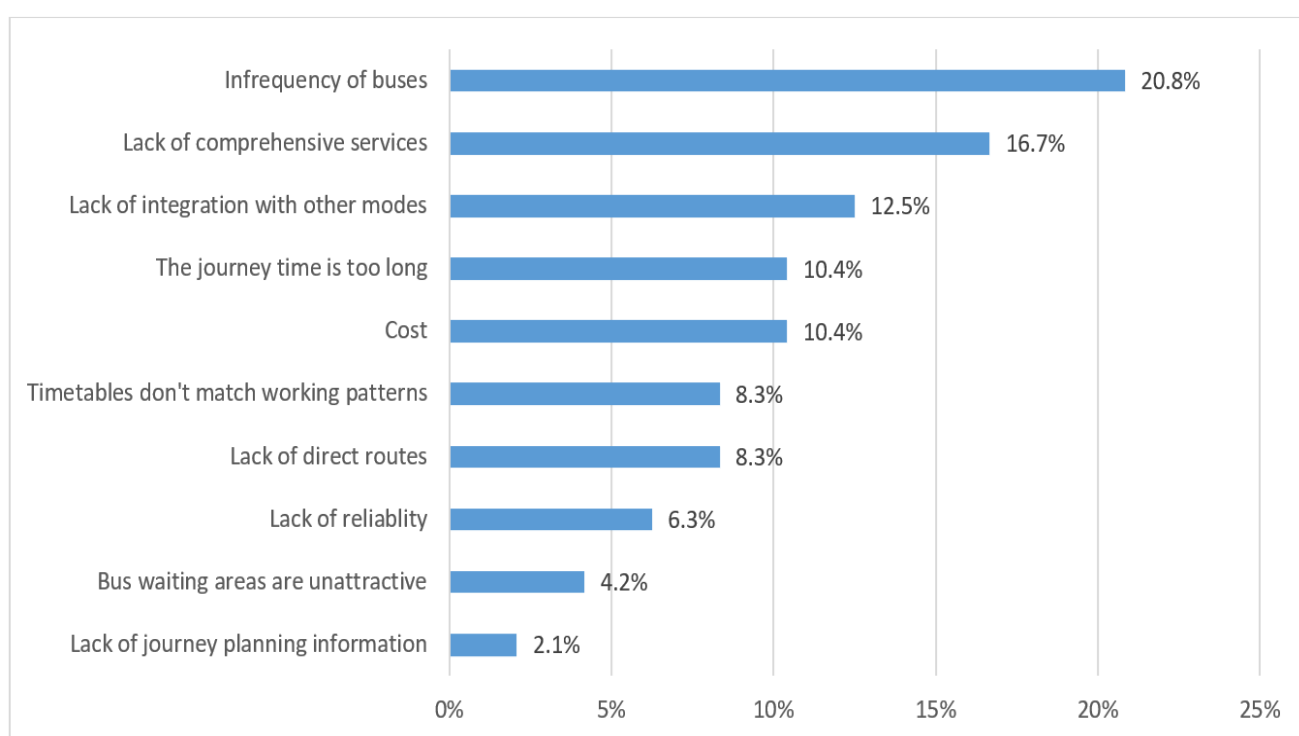
Table 4-1. Stakeholder comments on the barriers impacting people’s use of bus services in Warwickshire

Barriers comments
<p>There are too many gaps in the network between settlements in Warwickshire and settlements in Solihull Borough. Services are of very low frequency and have a very low profile. The X20 provides a really good link from Henley in Arden, Wootton Wawen and Stratford upon Avon into Shirley and Solihull but suffers from a lack of sales pitch to non-users. Similarly the X70 provides a good link from Coleshill to Chelmsley Wood. However, there is no equivalent bus link from Solihull borough into Kenilworth, Warwick or Leamington Spa and very limited bus service between Birmingham Airport / NEC / Resorts World and anywhere in Warwickshire county.</p> <p>The area alongside the airport and the NEC is known as Arden Cross and is planned to be the epicentre of significant commercial and housing development over the lifetime of the Warwickshire BSIP. A strong plan for bus links from Arden Cross to Warwickshire needs to be drawn up and implemented ready for the opening of Birmingham Interchange station. Generally bus journey times are too long, vehicle type is not consistent and street side infrastructure is overlooked. However, by far the largest reason why people from Solihull borough do not use bus services into Warwickshire is the high availability of cheap car parking in Warwickshire towns.</p>
<p>Inadequate co-ordination between services - the provision of bus services is not like the old Midland Red approach where there was a timetable that included all services and you could work out connections etc.</p> <p>Bus services are too infrequent to enable people to make them a choice</p> <p>The council needs to be much better at integrating buses with train services.</p>
<p>Poor overall road network, leading to congestion and loss of timings of journeys.</p>
<p>Lack of services for many rural communities in Stratford-on-Avon District. There are frequent services in Stratford-upon-Avon town and along various arterial routes but elsewhere there are very limited services.</p> <p>Having said that, very few people would use bus services anyway due to high levels of car ownership in the District. Using the bus would need to be made considerably more attractive through improvements to the frequency and reliability of services and the image of buses.</p>
<p>High cost of bus fares.</p>

Frequency of bus services in relation to development proposals.
Insufficient bus services and poor time schedules.
Expensive services that do not cross ticket with onward rail travel - need to work like Transport for London.
1) They do not live on a bus route, or too far from Warwick e.g. Rugby, Coventry, Daventry. 2) Those that do live in Warwick/Leamington found the service too infrequent to be convenient, and journeys would involve a change of buses, making the journey significantly longer than by car.
No one lives near a direct bus route.
Lack of spread for surrounding villages and connection to Warwick University.
Not having a regular bus service from the train station to the Technology Park.
Lack of frequent services to/from Leamington.
Complete lack of useable connections near the office.
Buses go through a convoluted route which takes a journey that should take 20 minutes, 1 hour 15 minutes. Buses between Leamington and Warwick have been scrapped and so a single bus picks up the slack and changes its route to do the journey of 2 buses.
The bus from Leamington to Warwick Technology Park is too infrequent and takes too long.
There are no buses to use with our start/finish times,
Our shift patterns don't match the bus timetable.
The times when the bus arrives does not match the working hours and also there are no buses always available (at night-time).
Cost of bus tickets making it more cost effective to drive and park in most cases.
Not enough late night buses.
The cost of the bus fares, they are very expensive in Nuneaton.
The two most frustrating things are infrequency of buses, and their inconsistency. I'm often put off by the wait time as we only get a bus once an hour. The timings of the buses are also inconsistent which makes planning my journey difficult, and I often end up asking for a lift or even ordering a taxi to save time. When I visit other larger towns, the bus stops have digital displays, with an ETA for the next bus which helps me to time journeys.
I also think on top of this that accessibility is a huge issue. Most stops don't have anywhere to sit for elderly or disabled bus users. Or are on cracked pavements that make accessing the stop difficult if you're elderly/in a wheelchair/ have a pram with you.

- 4.12 As a summary of the above, Figure 4-6 shows that the main barriers to using buses, as represented by stakeholder comments, are a lack of frequent bus services (20.8% of all comments received), followed by a lack of a comprehensive network (16.7%) and a lack of integration between bus and train services (12.5%). Issues of long journey times (10.4%), the relative expense of bus travel (10.4%), a lack of integration of bus timetables with working patterns (8.3%) and a lack of direct bus routes (8.3%) were also raised more than once by stakeholders responding to the Survey.

Figure 4-6: Percentage frequency of categorised stakeholder comments reflecting barriers to bus use in Warwickshire (n=25)



Views on potential improvements to bus services in Warwickshire

- 4.13 Stakeholders were also asked to rank a pre-prepared list of ten potential Warwickshire BSIP measures in the order in which the organisation they represent would want to see them prioritised in order to improve bus services in Warwickshire.
- 4.14 Based on the outcome of this process, Table 4-2 shows that improving the reliability of local bus services was the measure ranked highest by stakeholders, followed by improving the frequency of services, extending bus service hours earlier and later in the day and at weekends, providing for a more comprehensive network and addressing the issue of the cost of using the bus. Interestingly the provision of journey planning

information was the measure ranked lowest by stakeholder in contrast to the feedback received through the Public Engagement Survey.

Table 4-2: Stakeholder ranking of potential bus service improvement measures (n=13)

Answer Choice	Total Score	Overall Rank
Reliability of service	192	1
Frequency of service	185	2
More services earlier in the morning, later in the day and/or at weekends	180	3
Buses that serve more places	171	4
Cost of fare	170	5
Journey time	167	6
Integration with other modes	160	7
Ability to use one ticket on any bus	135	8
Quality and comfort of the bus journey (including customer service aspects)	127	9
Provision of journey planning information	108	10

Other comments received from stakeholders

- 4.15 Other verbatim comments received from stakeholders are provided in Table 4-3 below, with a summary of these comments provided in Table 4-4.
- 4.16 Requests for rural hubs and rural services which use smaller vehicles, potentially on a flexible, demand responsive basis, were made most frequently by stakeholders (18.2% of all other comments received) in this part of the Survey alongside requests for increased integration with new housing and business development (18.2%). Further requests for infrastructure improvements, integration improvements and bus stop improvements were also suggested by multiple respondents alongside additional comments on the need for a more comprehensive network running earlier in the morning and later in the day in Warwickshire.

Table 4-3: Other comments provided by stakeholders (n=11)

Other comments
<p>The Warwickshire BSIP should address funding for service support, infrastructure maintenance, infrastructure development and overall network development. Without reliable sources of funding we do not see how the BSIP can be successful.</p>
<p>Buses should not be used where train travel would be a better option.</p>
<p>To make the service levels better for passengers to leave their cars it is important that rail and bus hubs are developed to take regard of the number of housing developments in Warwickshire.</p>
<p>It seems to me that much greater use of smaller buses, even minibuses, would be more flexible and appropriate for rural services between villages and larger towns.</p> <p>One idea I have raised on occasions is the concept of a circular route which uses minibuses going through villages in the Southam area to take people to/from the town as a local hub which provides a range of shops and services. Such a route would probably take say 45 to 60 minutes each time and be continuous throughout the day.</p>
<p>Relate to planned growth particularly Rugby Town Centre and Rugby South West so that long term planning can be co-ordinated</p>
<p>I represent the Abbey Park Office Campus at Stareton just one mile from Stoneleigh Park which is another significant employment centre. When Abbey Park is fully developed it will employ around 2,000/3,000 people.</p> <p>The two centres of Abbey Park and Stoneleigh Park should be treated as one major employment area with bus services from Leamington, Warwick, Kenilworth and Coventry with integration with rail stations. Services should be targeted to provide early morning and late afternoon service.</p>
<p>Better bus stops with information screens on main routes</p>
<p>Roads around Warwick, and the number of new housing developments will mean the highways won't be able to cope with the increase in demand from Buses let alone cars!</p> <p>Public transport isn't the answer, no one will use them for commuting into Warwick from outside Warwick. Some companies have actually hired their own services from and to Warwick Parkway (i.e. National Grid)</p>

There are no shuttle bus or direct bus services to Warwick Tech Park. The Park employs a huge number of employees who all leave by car at the same time. The traffic used to be a nightmare before the houses were built around the Technology Park. Now that there are housing estates adding to the already congested roads at rush hour, it is going to be a nightmare even for buses to get to and from the technology park during rush hour without a dedicated bus lane.

I do not believe that large buses should be put on as a matter of course. There is a refusal service that goes past my house and only one or two people are on the bus. Why can't a smaller bus be used? Surely the ticket sales could determine the size of the bus required. This has gone on for over 11 years without anything changing

Please provide bus shelters, people will not wait in the rain for a late bus - they will simply not bother to use public transport.

Electric or hybrid buses would be great, and would help our local authority reach its net zero commitments.

Table 4-4: Percentage frequency of categorised other comments provided by stakeholders (n=13)

BSIP comment category	% of all responses received
Rural hubs/smaller vehicles with flexible services	18.2%
Integration with new housing/business developments	18.2%
Integration with rail services	13.6%
Infrastructure development e.g. bus priority lanes	13.6%
More destinations served	9.1%
Longer hours of operation	9.1%
Better bus stops	9.1%
Journey planning information	4.5%
Electric/hybrid vehicles	4.5%

Conclusions

- 4.17 Whilst the Stakeholder Engagement Survey received relatively few responses, over half of them came from a range of Warwickshire businesses who otherwise may not have been engaged in the BSIP development process. In addition, the response from Borough and District Council and neighbouring authority officers and rail stakeholders

has been supplemented with a series of one to one depth interviews and group discussions with an additional 30+ individual stakeholders whose views have been fed directly into the development of the Warwickshire BSIP.

- 4.18 In terms of the key themes from the Survey, the current bus network in Warwickshire was generally scored poorly (2 out of 5 on average) by stakeholders. The key barriers to bus travel were felt to be a lack of frequent bus of services, a lack of comprehensive bus service coverage across Warwickshire and a lack of service integration. The issue of access to and from rural areas and new developments by bus was also regularly mentioned.
- 4.19 Improving the reliability of local bus services was ranked highest as a potential BSIP measure by stakeholders, followed by improving the frequency of services, extending bus service hours earlier and later in the day and at weekends, providing for a more comprehensive network and addressing the issue of the cost of using the bus.

Appendix A

Ask Warwickshire Public Engagement Survey Questionnaire

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Q1 Please tell us in which role you're responding to this survey?: *[Allow selection of one option only]*
[MANDATORY]

- I am a member of the general public *[Route to Q3]*
- I represent a business or private sector organisation *[Route to Q2]*
- I represent a voluntary sector organisation, charity or community group *[Route to Q2]*
- I am a member of a special interest group *[Route to Q2]*
- I am a Warwickshire County Council employee (please specify below) *[Route to Q2]*
- I am an employee of another public sector organisation *[Route to Q2]*
- I am an elected member of a council or Parliament *[Route to Q2]*
- Other (please specify below) *[Route to Q2]*

.....

Q2 Are you providing your organisation's official response to this survey, responding as an elected member of a council or Parliament or providing your own individual response? [MANDATORY]

- Organisation's official response *[Route to Q22]*
- Responding in my capacity as an elected member of a council or Parliament *[Route to Q22]*
- My own individual response

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS

Q3 Which Warwickshire district or borough do you live in? *[Allow selection of one option only]*
[MANDATORY]

- North Warwickshire Borough
- Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough
- Rugby Borough
- Warwick District
- Stratford-on-Avon District
- I live outside of Warwickshire (please specify below)

.....

Q4 What is your full postcode? This will allow us to see what types of areas people are responding from. It will not identify your house.

.....

- Prefer not to say

Q5 Which methods of transport do you use regularly? Please select all that apply [MANDATORY]

- Bus
- Train
- Tram
- Car (as a passenger)
- Car (as a driver)
- Taxi
- Motorbike/moped
- E-scooter

- Bicycle
 - Walk
 - Other (please specify below)
-

TRAVEL BY BUS

Q6 Thinking about a typical week before the Covid-19 pandemic (before 1st March 2020), how often, if at all, did you use a local bus service in Warwickshire? *[Allow selection of one option only]* [MANDATORY]

- 5 or more days a week
- 2-4 days a week
- Once a week
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Never *[Route to Q9]*

Q7 Thinking about a typical week before the Covid-19 pandemic (before 1st March 2020), what were your usual/most frequent reason(s) for travelling by local bus in Warwickshire? Please select all that apply. [MANDATORY]

- Travel to and from work
 - Travel during course of employment / business
 - Shopping
 - Social, including to meet with or visit friends or relatives
 - Exercise or leisure facility or venue
 - Education (including taking children to school)
 - Health or medical appointment
 - Other (please specify below)
-

Q8 After all social distancing restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic have been removed how do you expect your use of local bus services will change (compared to how you used to travel before the Covid-19 pandemic before 1st March 2020)? *[Allow selection of one option only]* [MANDATORY]

- I expect my bus use to remain about the same as before the Covid-19 pandemic
- I expect to use the bus for fewer journeys than before the Covid-19 pandemic
- I expect to use the bus for more of my journeys than before the Covid-19 pandemic
- Don't know

Q9 After Covid restrictions have been lifted, do you envisage your patterns of travel (frequency, time and destination of travel) to and from work changing? *[Allow selection of one option only]*

- Yes *[Route to Q10]*
- No *[Route to Q11]*
- Don't know *[Route to Q11]*
- I don't travel to and from work *[Route to Q11]*

Q10 After Covid restrictions have been lifted are you therefore likely to use the bus more, less or about the same as you do now at the following times of day for work purposes? Please tick one box for each time period [Allow selection of one option per row only]

	Likely to use the bus more	Likely to use the bus about the same	Likely to use the bus less	Bus use at this time will not be applicable to me
Early mornings (before 0700)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Morning peak (0700-0900)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
During the day (0900-1600)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Afternoon peak (1600-1800)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
After 6pm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q11 To what extent, if at all, would the following make you use local buses in Warwickshire more? Please tick one box for each improvement [Allow selection of one option per row only]

	A great deal	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
Faster and more reliable services					
i. Journey times on local bus services made quicker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Delays on local bus services reduced to make journey times more reliable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More comprehensive services					
iii. Local bus services near you operating more frequently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. Local buses near you operating later in the day or earlier in the morning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. More bus services at evenings and weekends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vi. Local buses near you serving more destinations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better integrated services					
vii. Better connections between bus services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
viii. Better connections between bus services and rail services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ix. Better connectivity between bus and cycling (cycle parking and cycle paths serving bus stops)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greener services					
x. Services operated with electric or other zero emission vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xi. Services operated with more modern vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Better journey information

- xii. Information on local bus services provided via journey planning websites and apps
- xiii. Better on-bus information such as 'next stop' displays or announcements
- xiv. Provision of real time information at bus stops (display providing an accurate count down in minutes to the arrival of the next bus)
- xv. Better provision of static bus timetable information at stops
- xvi. Better customer service from bus drivers

Better facilities on bus

- xvii. Better availability of Wi-Fi on board buses
- xviii. Better availability of electric charging points on board buses
- xix. Better interior cleanliness of the vehicle
- xx. Better availability of seating on bus
- xxi. Better facilities to cater for a disability on bus
- xxii. Better facilities on bus to carry buggies / shopping etc.

Better facilities at stop

- xxiii. Better availability of seating at bus stops
- xxiv. Better waiting environment (e.g. provision of shelters and hard standing areas)
- xxv. Better facilities to cater for a disability at stop
- xxvi. Improved safety at bus stops or shelters (e.g. provision of lighting and CCTV)

Cheaper / easier to understand fares

- xxvii. Lower fares
- xxviii. Simpler fare options
- xxix. Contactless fare payment on buses
- xxx. Having daily or weekly ticket caps and a card which automatically assigns the best fare
- xxxi. Wider availability of multi-operator tickets (or e-tickets) that could be used on more than one operator's buses

- xxxii. On-demand bus services booked and paid for at short notice with an app

TRAVEL BY OTHER METHODS OF TRANSPORT

Q12 If you use an alternative method of transport to the bus, why do you choose it? Tick all that apply [MANDATORY]

- It is significantly quicker than the bus
- It is cheaper to use than a bus ticket for the same journey
- The reliability of journey time is better than on the bus
- The bus is less convenient
- The bus is less comfortable
- The nearest bus stop is too far from my home
- Buses are not available at the times I need them
- Buses do not go directly to the places I need to get to.
- It is more complicated to travel by bus
- I feel less safe using the bus
- I have a disability or mobility difficulty which means I am unable to walk to a bus stop
- I have too much baggage to carry to/from/on a bus.
- I have to do several trips at once which can't be done by bus, for instance, taking the children to school on the way to work, or visiting the supermarket around caring for relatives.
- The bus is less environmentally friendly.
- Car parking is freely available at my destination
- Other (please specify below)

.....

- Not applicable (there is no local bus available)

ABOUT YOU

Warwickshire County Council is committed to ensuring that its services, policies and practices are free from discrimination and prejudice, meet the needs of all sections of the community and promote and advance equality of opportunity.

It is voluntary to disclose this information but doing so will help us:

- Better understand the communities we serve
- Enable us to ensure that we can identify, tackle and prevent issues that would otherwise prevent engagement with different groups of people
- Ensure our services are suitable for and reach as wide an audience as possible
- Ensure our consultation has reached as wide an audience as possible
- Meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010

If you have any questions in relation to this data collection, please email: equalities@warwickshire.gov.uk

Q13 What was your age on your last birthday? *[Allow selection of one option only]*

- Under 18
- 18 – 24
- 25 - 39
- 40 – 49
- 50 – 59
- 60 – 64
- 65 – 74
- 75 +
- Prefer not to say

Q14 Do you have a long standing illness or disability (physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities)? *[Allow selection of one option only]*

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Q15 Do you have a concessionary bus pass entitling you to free travel? *[Allow selection of one option only]*

- Yes
- No

Q16 Which of the following best describes you? *[Allow selection of one option only]*

- Employed full-time (30 or more hours per week)
- Employed part-time (less than 30 hours per week)
- Self employed
- Government supported training programme
- Full-time education (school / college / university)
- Unemployed and available for work
- Long term sick / disabled
- Wholly retired from work
- Looking after the home
- Other (please specify below)

.....

- Prefer not to say

Q17 Do you identify as: *[Allow selection of one option only]*

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary / agender / gender-fluid
- Prefer to self-describe (please specify below if you wish)

.....

- Prefer not to say

Q18 Does your gender identity match your sex registered at birth?

- Yes – my gender is the same as at birth
- No – my gender identity has changed
- Prefer not to say

Q19 What is your ethnic group? [*Allow selection of one option only*]

- Arab
- Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British - Indian
- Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
- Chinese
- Other Asian Background
- Black or Black British - African
- Black or Black British - Caribbean
- Other Black Background
- Mixed - Asian and White
- Mixed - Black African and White
- Mixed - Black Caribbean and White
- Other Mixed Background
- White British
- White Irish
- Gypsy or Traveller
- Other White background
- Prefer to self-describe (please specify below if you wish)

.....

- Prefer not to say

Q20 Do you have a religion or belief? [*Allow selection of one option only*]

- Baha'i
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- Spiritual
- Any other religion or belief (please specify below if you wish)

.....

- No religion
- Prefer not to say

Q21 What is your sexual orientation?

- Asexual
- Bi / bisexual
- Gay man

- Gay woman / lesbian
- Heterosexual / straight
- Pansexual
- Other
- Prefer to self-describe (please specify below if you wish)

.....

- Prefer not to say

[Route to Q25 for those responding as a member of the public or those representing an organisation, business, charity, community group, special interest group or constituency but providing an individual response]

QUESTIONS FOR PEOPLE RESPONDING ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANISATION

Q22 In which district/borough do you work or undertake your role? *[Allow selection of one option only]* [MANDATORY]

- North Warwickshire
- Nuneaton & Bedworth
- Rugby
- Warwick
- Stratford-on-Avon
- County-wide
- Other (please specify below)

.....

Q23 To what extent, if at all, do you think the following would make people whose views you represent (constituents, employees, members etc) use local buses in Warwickshire more? *[Allow selection of one option per row only]*

	A great deal	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
Faster and more reliable services					
i. Journey times on local bus services made quicker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii. Delays on local bus services reduced to make journey times more reliable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More comprehensive services					
iii. Local bus services operating more frequently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv. Local buses operating later in the day or earlier in the morning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. More bus services at evenings and weekends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vi. Local buses serving more destinations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better integrated services					
vii. Better connections between bus services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

viii.	Better connections between bus services and rail services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ix.	Better connectivity between bus and cycling (cycle parking and cycle paths serving bus stops)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greener services						
x.	Services operated with electric or other zero emission vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xi.	Services operated with more modern vehicles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better journey information						
xii.	Information on local bus services provided via journey planning websites and apps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xiii.	Better on-bus information such as 'next stop' displays or announcements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xiv.	Provision of real time information at bus stops (display providing an accurate count down in minutes to the arrival of the next bus)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xv.	Better provision of static bus timetable information at stops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xvi.	Better customer service from bus drivers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better facilities on bus						
xvii.	Better availability of Wi-Fi on board buses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xviii.	Better availability of electric charging points on board buses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xix.	Better interior cleanliness of the vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xx.	Better availability of seating on bus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxi.	Better facilities to cater for a disability on bus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxii.	Better facilities on bus to carry buggies / shopping etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better facilities at stop						
xxiii.	Better availability of seating at bus stops	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxiv.	Better waiting environment (e.g. provision of shelters and hard standing areas)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxv.	Better facilities to cater for a disability at stop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxvi.	Improved safety at bus stops or shelters (e.g. provision of lighting and CCTV)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheaper / easier to understand fares						
xxvii.	Lower fares	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

xxviii. Simpler fare options	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxix. Contactless fare payment on buses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxx. Having daily or weekly ticket caps and a card which automatically assigns the best fare	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxxi. Wider availability of multi-operator tickets (or e-tickets) that could be used on more than one operator's buses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
xxxii. On-demand bus services booked and paid for at short notice with an app	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q24 Which of the following aspects of local bus service provision could be improved to support your organisation or the people whose views you represent (constituents etc.) in recruiting and retaining staff from Warwickshire? Tick all that apply [MANDATORY]

- Reliability of service (i.e. bus turns up according to timetable)
- Journey time
- Cost of fare
- Ability to use one ticket (or e-ticket) on any bus
- Distance to the bus stop from start / end point of journey
- Time service starts in the morning and ends at night
- Frequency of service (i.e. number of buses per hour)
- Provision of journey planning information (e.g. websites)
- Stations and stops that allow interchange with rail, tram or other bus services
- Lack of facilities to cater for a disability
- Other (Please specify below):

.....

FURTHER CONTACT

Q25 Please indicate below if you would be willing to be contacted about future transport initiatives in Warwickshire [Allow selection of one option only]

- Yes [Route to Q26]
- No [Route to End Statement]

Q26 If you are happy to be contacted, please provide your contact details.

Name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Email:

Phone:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Feedback will inform the development of the Bus Service Improvement Plan to be considered by Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet. Subject

to Cabinet agreement, the Bus Service Improvement Plan will be published at the end of October 2021.

Following on from this, the County Council and all bus operators in Warwickshire will form a statutory Enhanced Partnership setting out how we will work together to deliver the aspirations of the Bus Service Improvement Plan. This will require further engagement with residents, public sector, private sector and voluntary organisations, prior to the formal launch of the Enhanced Partnership and EP Scheme(s) in April 2022.

Appendix B

Warwickshire BSIP Hard To Reach Groups Focus Group Topic Guide & Presentation

Title: Warwickshire BSIP Hard to Reach Groups Engagement – Topic Guide
Date: 2nd September 2021
Author: Jim Bradley
Project Code: 3655
Rev: V1-0



1 WELCOME & INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

- 1.1 Many thanks for taking the time to attend this discussion group today. My name is Jim Bradley, and I am being assisted today by Phoebe Garside. We work for Integrated Transport Planning Ltd, an independent transport planning and research consultancy and have been commissioned by Warwickshire County Council to explore people's views of bus services in Warwickshire.
- 1.2 The purpose of today's discussion is to find out a little bit about your use of buses in Warwickshire, to assess the barriers to you using the bus, including the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and to understand which aspects of local bus service provision are most in need of improvement.
- 1.3 The session is not expected to last for more than one and a half hours, and I will be using a topic guide to ensure we cover all of the discussion points that are relevant to our research at this stage. Before we start I have a few ground rules for the discussion which are:
 - Please be as frank and honest as you can about your opinions, even if you think that they may not be popular;
 - Please speak clearly and one at a time when you are asked to do so;
 - Please be courteous with each other, and;
 - Please turn off any mobile phones you may have with you.
- 1.4 Before we proceed, does anyone object if we record the remainder of this discussion? In line with the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct, this recording will be used solely for the purpose of assisting our analysis of this research study. Any direct quotations from the discussion that are made available in our report will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified and any variation to this approach will only occur with your explicit approval.
- 1.5 Finally, does anybody have any questions before we get started?

2 PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTIONS (10 MINUTES)

- 2.1 OK. Can I begin by going around the table and ask each of you to tell me your name, your age, where you live, and a little about where you tend to travel to most regularly in and around Warwickshire and the reasons why you travel there (travelling for work, for education for shopping, leisure purposes etc.)?

[Moderator to lead the process of going around the group to learn everyone's names and to understand a bit of background in terms of where they live and the types of journeys they make regularly in Warwickshire]

3 USE OF THE BUS TO TRAVEL AROUND WARWICKSHIRE (30 MINUTES)

3.1 Thank you. I'd now like to understand a little bit about more about those journeys you make regularly in and around Warwickshire ***[Moderator to summarise responses on the different journeys made as part of the previous discussion, prompting with:]***

- Which types of transport do you tend to use most regularly for these journeys?
- Does this differ according to the type of journey you make (e.g. travelling to work, for education, for shopping or leisure etc.)?
- How often, if at all, do you use the bus and for which kinds of journeys?
- For the regular bus users in the group:
 - Why do you choose to travel by bus?
 - Has the COVID-19 pandemic had any impact on your usage of bus services over the last 18 months?
 - How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted your use of local buses?
 - Do you think your patterns of bus travel will change post COVID-19?:
 - For which journey purposes do you think your patterns of bus use will change most significantly post COVID-19?
 - How do you think they will change (frequency, time and destination of travel)?
- For the irregular bus users in the group:
 - Why don't you use bus services more frequently in Warwickshire?
 - What are the main factors that make bus services less attractive to you as a travel option ***[Moderator to prompt with the following]:***
 - Relative speed of journey by bus
 - Relative cost of bus use
 - Relative reliability of bus
 - Relative convenience/availability of bus to travel where & when I want to
 - Relative ease of use (including accessibility) of bus
 - Relative comfort and cleanliness of the bus journey
 - Relative personal safety of using the bus
 - Relative ability to trip chain by bus
 - Lack of knowledge and awareness of local bus routes
 - COVID-19 related issues.

4 PRIORITIES FOR BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS IN WARWICKSHIRE (45 MINUTES)

4.1 Warwickshire County Council are working with local bus operators (including Stagecoach, Arriva, National Express and Johnsons) on a plan to improve bus services in the County to encourage those people that currently make trips by car to use the bus instead and to encourage those people that currently use buses, to use them more often.

4.2 We are therefore interested in knowing what improvements need to be made to local bus services in Warwickshire in order to encourage people to use bus services more. I'm going to

share a presentation with you which details some options we are working on for improving bus services and I want you to provide your thoughts as to the level at which each of these options is likely to encourage you to use buses more often in place of using the car. ***[Moderator to present the 8 slides on Bus Service Improvement Plan Options and after presenting each slide, to prompt participants to give their thoughts by asking]:***

- What do you think of this as an option to improve bus services in Warwickshire?
- To what extent, if at all, would this option encourage you to use local buses in Warwickshire more regularly? ***[Moderator to prompt with]:***
 - A great deal;
 - To some extent;
 - Not very much;
 - Not at all.
- Is there anything on this slide that you particularly like and that would definitely encourage you to use the bus more regularly?
- Is there anything on this slide that you don't like and that would not be very effective at encouraging you to use the bus more regularly?

4.3 Now that you have seen our presentation of each of the options for improving bus services in Warwickshire which *three* of the improvements on this final slide do you think would have the biggest impact on encouraging people like you to use bus services in Warwickshire more regularly? ***[Moderator to present slide 9 providing a summary of all 8 Bus Service Improvement Plan Options]***

5 CLOSE (5 MINUTES)

- 5.1 That concludes our discussion, so I just want to say thank you very much for your time today on behalf of Warwickshire County Council and ITP. Your feedback will be included in our report alongside the views and opinions of the other stakeholders to inform the development of the Bus Service Improvement Plan to be considered by Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet. Subject to Cabinet agreement, the Bus Service Improvement Plan will be published at the end of October 2021.
- 5.2 Following on from this, the County Council and all bus operators in Warwickshire will work together to deliver the aspirations of the Bus Service Improvement Plan. This will require further engagement with residents, public sector, private sector and voluntary organisations, prior to the formal launch of the Enhanced Partnership and EP Scheme(s) in April 2022..

Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) Options

Option 1: Faster and more reliable services

- Journey times on local bus services made quicker
- Delays on local bus services reduced to make journey times more reliable



Option 2: More comprehensive services

- Local bus services near you operating more frequently
- Local buses near you operating later in the day or earlier in the morning
- More bus services at evenings and weekends
- Local buses near you serving more destinations

Option 3: Better integrated services

- Better connections between bus services
- Better connections between bus services and rail services
- Better connectivity between bus and cycling (cycle parking and cycle paths serving bus stops)

- Services operated with electric or other zero emission vehicles
- Services operated with more modern vehicles



Option 5: Better journey information

- Information on local bus services provided via journey planning websites and apps
- Better on-bus information such as 'next stop' displays or announcements
- Provision of real time information at bus stops (display providing an accurate count down in minutes to the arrival of the next bus)
- Better provision of static bus timetable information at stops
- Better customer service from bus drivers

Option 6: Better facilities on bus

- Better availability of Wi-Fi on board buses
- Better availability of electric charging points on board buses
- Better interior cleanliness of the vehicle
- Better availability of seating on bus
- Better facilities to cater for a disability on bus
- Better facilities on bus to carry buggies / shopping etc.

Option 7: Better facilities at the bus stop

- Better availability of seating at bus stops
- Better waiting environment (e.g. provision of shelters and hard standing areas)
- Better facilities to cater for a disability at stop
- Improved safety at bus stops or shelters (e.g. provision of lighting and CCTV)

itp Option 8: Cheaper/easier to understand fares

- Lower fares
- Simpler fare options
- Contactless fare payment on buses
- Having daily or weekly ticket caps and a card which assigns the best fare
- Wider availability of multi-operator tickets that could be used on more than one operator's buses
- On-demand bus services booked and paid for at short notice with an app

- Option 1: Faster and more reliable services
- Option 2: More comprehensive services
- Option 3: Better integrated services
- Option 4: Greener services
- Option 5: Better journey information
- Option 6: Better facilities on bus
- Option 7: Better facilities at the bus stop
- Option 8: Cheaper / easier to understand fares

Appendix C

Summary of Findings from Warwickshire BSIP Hard To Reach Groups

Title	Focus group with residents aged 16-24 years
Date	14/09/2021
Author(s)	Phoebe Garside
Project Code	3655
Version	1



1. Group Composition

- 1.1 Three participants attended this discussion group: one female and two males. All participants live in Warwickshire, around Nuneaton and Rugby and were aged 14-23. All participants have experience of using the bus in Warwickshire pre-pandemic to differing degrees of regularity. Group participants travel around Warwickshire for a range of purposes mainly to travel to work and school and for shopping and social and leisure purposes.

2. Nature of and Barriers to Bus Use

- 2.1 There is a relatively high level of bus use amongst group participants, partly due to a lack of alternative transport options. All participants use buses on a daily or weekly basis with two using the bus every day. Scores given for the bus service overall ranged from 6 to 10 out of 10. Participants use a wide variety of services provided by two operators – Stagecoach and National Express.
- 2.2 Participants travel by bus at various times during the day. Two use it early in the morning to travel to school. One participant said that they walk 20 minutes to their nearest bus stop and the bus journey to school then takes a further 10 to 20 minutes depending on traffic. They said the bus was often crowded and they often struggled to get a seat. This was echoed by one participant who usually stands to allow those with less mobility than him to sit, adding that the bus is often noisy; however another participant said that they never struggle to get a seat and they found it a relaxing way to travel.
- 2.3 Shopping, work and to meet up with friends were cited as the other main reasons for travelling by bus. Whilst this was often because of a lack of car access, fun, fitness (getting to the bus stop) and environmental concerns were also mentioned as reasons for taking the bus, sometimes over a lift in a car.

“The bus is a fun way to travel and meet up with my friends; it gives me independence”

- 2.4 Walking was the main alternative to bus travel, alongside travelling by train or as a car passenger (to a lesser extent), and this is popular as it is free both in terms of cost and convenience. The cost of the bus was seen as quite prohibitive to more regular bus use, especially given that participants usually had low or no income. This was a particular sticking point for one participant who was not eligible for a free/subsidised bus pass for school.

“It’s not fair I should effectively have to pay to get an education”

- 2.5 In contrast the participant who had a termly rider bus pass uses the bus for about an hour everyday (comprising multiple journeys) and says this plays an active role in her deciding to use the bus with each journey working out at around 45p.

3. Views on potential improvements to bus services

Faster and More Reliable Bus Services

- 3.1 This was a popular choice as a potential BSIP improvement to encourage patronage, although concerns were raised as to whether bus reliability could be increased given the sheer volume of traffic congestion on local roads. Improving journey times was mentioned as being helpful when commuting however participants were already regular bus users so noted this wouldn’t make much difference to them.

More Comprehensive Services

- 3.2 The idea of more comprehensive services was seen as an extremely attractive option amongst all participants. There was considerable enthusiasm for later operating hours and weekend services followed by more destinations served, especially given that the bus is many peoples only method of travel.
- 3.3 There was a consensus that it is difficult to remember a change of timetable at the weekend once you’re used to the weekday timetable. Additionally the reduction in Sunday and Bank Holidays services was viewed as particularly irksome.
- 3.4 The current level of frequency was generally seen as acceptable, although one participant pointed out how inflexible and unattractive that can make getting the bus after work when you’re tired and have to coordinate finish times.

- 3.5 Hub services, such as more frequent buses to Coleshill, were suggested as this would allow a significantly cheaper fare into Birmingham city centre, making the bus more competitive against the train.

Better Integrated Services

- 3.6 This option got a lukewarm reaction as participants rarely made multi-bus or multi-modal trips. There was a general consensus that integration with train timetables would be the most important factor in Rugby in particular.

Greener Services

- 3.7 The environment is a key issue generally amongst younger people with participants stating that increased publicity and awareness of the green credentials of low emission buses would encourage bus usage amongst both them and their peers. One participant expressed concerns that electric buses are still in their infancy and that whilst it would encourage usage it may have to wait for the further development of the Government's overall climate change plan.

Better Journey Information

- 3.8 Increased information for planning journeys, both in static and digital format, was met with enthusiasm, with particular appetite for an improved app for both tracking journeys and planning ahead. The Stagecoach and Nuneaton website was deemed acceptable, but the Stagecoach app was criticised for not being intuitive enough, nor updated regularly and lacking detail; Google Maps was therefore their preferred app for planning and making bus journeys.

"The trainline app is really useful and efforts from bus companies just don't compare"

- 3.9 There was still an appreciation for paper information at bus stops though, with two participants expressing annoyance that timetable information at bus stops is often missing or has been vandalised. Whilst one participant said this wasn't too much of an issue as buses are frequent enough to not require much forward planning, this was countered with the difficulties of delays when you are planning specific trips such as for the commute to work.
- 3.10 Criticism of the lack of customer service from bus drivers was also a key theme, with anecdotes of drivers missing stops in adverse weather conditions, supplying wrong information around changes and issuing incorrect tickets.

"I had to walk for an hour through the snow and ice because the bus driver drove straight past two stops"

- 3.11 The attitude of some drivers, both in Rugby and Nuneaton was also besmirched.

"Sometimes you get a driver who isn't too nice which just makes your day a little bit worse"

Better Facilities on the Bus

- 3.12 There was minimal comment on this option. The general consensus was that mobile 'phone chargers on buses are beneficial, but Wi-Fi is not a necessity.
- 3.13 Although one participant noted that the older buses were generally more uncomfortable, it was agreed they were acceptable, and that the journey length isn't long enough to warrant major changes in this area being a priority.
- 3.14 There were mixed opinions on accessibility, with one participant recalling a few occasions when help hasn't been offered whilst getting on the bus, and another stating that 'help cards' worked well with Stagecoach drivers being attentive to mobility issues.

Better Facilities at the Bus Stop

- 3.15 There was overwhelming consensus that bus stops need to be more inviting and offer shelter as a minimum. Improvements to bus stop lighting was also met with enthusiasm to increase the perception of safety while waiting. Seating was noted to be a 'nice-to-have' but not crucial, although one participant noted that the current slanted bench seating was not particularly useful for larger or disabled individuals.

Cheaper / Easier to Understand Fares

- 3.16 There was a mixed reaction to the idea of cheaper fares. One participant suggested that a zonal system would be beneficial given that the equivalent of a 5 minute walk cost £1.10 by bus, although their preference would be for free school travel.
- 3.17 It was noted that the even though cheaper fares would encourage patronage, operating costs still need to be met. One participant who ranked the overall bus service a 7/10 remarked that value for money was a 6/10.
- 3.18 Simplicity and convenience was a key issue, with multi-operator ticketing, flat rates and contactless payments being the preferred options.

"Contactless payment is the future"

- 3.19 Demand responsive travel was not met with any real interest as it was deemed to be no better than a taxi and would likely encounter a lot of initial teething issues, as well as potentially leading to increased emissions resulting from the need for a greater number of indirect routes to serve the demand.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 More comprehensive services were chosen as the top priority for two participants, with the other opting for lower and simpler fares. Better facilities at the bus stop was the second most important measure for two participants and third priority for the other; who chose better journey information as the second most important issue to tackle. Faster and more reliable services and integrated services were also on the priority list.
- 4.2 All users seemed to be looking to increase their bus usage overall and rated the services positively, but with room for improvement.

Title	Focus group with residents with non-physical, hidden disabilities
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Date	15/09/2021
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Author(s)	Phoebe Garside
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Project Code	3655
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Version	1
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1. Group Composition

- 1.1 Four participants attended this discussion group: three female and one male, with one individual present acting as a representative of people with learning difficulties in Warwickshire. All participants live in Warwickshire, around Nuneaton and Stratford, and have a range of non-physical, hidden disabilities. One participant also has a visual impairment. All participants have experience of using the bus in Warwickshire pre-pandemic to differing degrees of regularity. Group participants travel around Warwickshire for a range of purposes mainly to travel to community centres and for shopping and social and leisure purposes.

2. Nature of and Barriers to Bus Use

- 2.1 There is a relatively high level of bus use amongst all group participants, in part due to a lack of alternative transport options. All participants use buses on a daily or weekly basis.
- 2.2 Scores given for the bus service overall ranged from 5 to 9 out of 10. With more than one participant mentioning the sense of freedom and independence it gave them.

"I like the independence when I travel by myself"

- 2.3 Participants all used Stagecoach services and the reasons for travel were to meet up with support groups, shopping and visiting friends, and in the past to commute to work. Participants travelled either alone or with a support worker and were all happy to travel further afield by bus or train, at least theoretically.
- 2.4 There was very minimal bus travel during the pandemic, either imposed by care companies or from a personal fear from a personal safety perspective. All participants are now returning, or have returned, to the bus but are continuing to take personal safety measures to limit their risk to Covid-19 such as wearing masks and using hand sanitiser.

3. Views on potential improvements to bus services

Faster and More Reliable Bus Services

- 3.1 Participants were generally pleased with the reliability of the buses that they use given that they generally turn up on time and are relatively fast. It was noted that although improvements in this area would encourage increased bus patronage there are many factors outside of the bus operators control that could affect reliability and journey time.
- 3.2 One participant commented that she opts to be a car passenger on journeys to Leamington from Stratford as it's considerably quicker than by bus.

More Comprehensive Services

- 3.3 The idea of more comprehensive services was attractive to all participants. Both more destinations served, and more evening and weekend services were met with considerable enthusiasm.

"I can't visit my parents on a Sunday because the bus doesn't run; they only live on the other side of town"

- 3.4 The frequency of the current buses didn't come under any real criticism other than a comment that regular timetable changes are difficult to remember and adapt to. Buses were seen as running fairly true to the timetable and there was usually a 10-20 minute wait between them.
- 3.5 Sometimes participants simply don't travel to certain destinations as they aren't served by bus, adding to an increased feeling of reliance on others.

"I'd love to live in the countryside, but I can't get there"

Better Integrated Services

- 3.6 The main issue with current bus services for this measure was the removal of direct buses, such as the service from Nuneaton to Birmingham, resulting in journeys now involving taking two or more buses.

"More direct buses would encourage me to use them more"

Greener Services

- 3.7 It was agreed that reduced pollution and emissions was crucial for the future.

"We need cleaner air"

- 3.8 Although reduced noise pollution was generally seen as a positive attribute of electric vehicles, one participant raised concerns surrounding the silence of them in conjunction with her visual impairment.
- 3.9 One participant also voiced their anxiety surrounding the range of electric buses and whether they were at risk of being stranded if the battery died during a journey.

Better Journey Information

- 3.10 Real time information at bus stops was a popular idea with all individuals, both for its aid in planning and completing journeys and for the increased feeling of safety it would create.
- 3.11 All participants currently opt however for paper timetables (with the difficulty of frequently changing timetables echoed again) over online timetables which they say are difficult to find and use. Whilst one individual meticulously planned their bus journeys and always arrived at the bus stop at the advertised time on the timetable, another was far more relaxed about when they arrived at a stop to catch a bus, accepting that they might just have a longer wait ahead of them.

"I just turn up at the bus stop and hope [the bus] will turn up too"

- 3.12 The importance of both next stop displays and announcements was emphasised, especially for those who are visually or audibly impaired, as well as for people not familiar with the local area.
- 3.13 Whilst bus drivers were seen as smartly presented, their attitudes came under some criticism with complaints including: driving off before passengers have sat down; 'hard stares' when boarding the bus; a lack of help and a general absence of friendliness.

"They dress smartly but their attitude isn't so smart"

- 3.14 This was contrasted by the experience of the participant with a visual impairment who found the attitude of drivers to be extremely courteous and helpful. However, they still conceded that there was a marked disparity between the attitudes of bus drivers in Warwickshire compared to London, with London drivers being far nicer.

Better Facilities on the Bus

- 3.15 There was quite a lot of commentary on this topic, with cleaner vehicles/cleaner windows and a lack of audio announcements being the main remarks. The main concern was that the lack of bus cleanliness impacted on participants' awareness of where the bus was at on its route.

“Dirty windows mean you can't see where you're going and you might miss your stop”

- 3.16 Dirty bus exteriors were agreed to be a particular issue in the winter and there was a suggestion that buses should be cleaned each morning. It was also noted by more than one participant that there was sometimes a lot of rubbish on board local buses.
- 3.17 Audio announcements were again mentioned as particularly useful for the visually impaired, and whilst some drivers remember to alert people to the arrival of the bus at their stop many forget.
- 3.18 Charging facilities on buses were seen to be more useful than Wi-Fi. Although there was irritation that you had to bring your own cable to utilise the charging points, it was accepted that there are many different types of chargers and providing them all might not be practical.
- 3.19 The only participant who uses Wi-Fi on the bus expressed annoyance with the current amount of follow up marketing received after having to sign in and questioned why they needed his personal details at all.
- 3.20 Concerns were also raised about the aisle being blocked in case of emergency, with one participant recalling having seen multiple passengers arguing with the driver about the perceived lack of space at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 3.21 The need for ramps on buses and the bus pulling up to the same level as the pavement was mentioned by all participants.

Better Facilities at the Bus Stop

- 3.22 There was overwhelming consensus that bus stops need to be improved. The need for better seating and lighting was mentioned by all participants.

“Most plastic flip seats at the bus stop are broken and I have to use them because I have no other choice”

- 3.23 Hard standing surfaces was deemed necessary by participants with physical disabilities.

“The bus shouldn't have to stop on the grass verge because then you're at an awkward angle. And it could be slippery and muddy and if you have a balance and coordination issue like I have it's not the ideal place to get out”

- 3.24 Real time information at bus stops was mentioned again, as was the suggestion of a button to press that gave audible information, like at some train stations.


- 3.25 Increased lighting and CCTV would increase people's perception of personal safety, especially at night and this was raised as a point by the female members of the group.

Cheaper / Easier to Understand Fares

- 3.26 As all the group participants have a bus pass there was not much to say on this measure in terms of the value for money that local buses provide.
- 3.27 From interactions with other bus users, such as support workers, the participants were aware of a general request for simpler and more consistent fares across the network. Additionally, the knowledge of what the fare would be before travel was mentioned, with one person proposing a flat or zonal fare system.
- 3.28 Contactless payment was viewed as a positive thing for the visually impaired, although another individual pointed out that he only ever uses cash.
- 3.29 DRT was seen as a good idea as long as the service was accessible.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 There was no one option that all participants agreed on as the most important measure, however, better facilities on the bus and/or at the bus stop were ranked in everybody's top three priorities, with better information and more comprehensive services also being highly valued.

Title	Focus group with residents from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds	 a company of Royal HaskoningDHV
Date	16/09/2021	
Author(s)	Phoebe Garside	
Project Code	3655	
Version	1	

1. Group Composition

- 1.1 Six participants attended this discussion group: five female and one male. All participants live in Warwickshire, around Nuneaton, Rugby and Leamington, and range in age from 38 to 75. Four participants were regular Warwickshire bus users pre-pandemic and two were irregular or non- bus users. Group participants travel around Warwickshire for a range of purposes mainly to travel to work and for shopping and social and leisure purposes.

2. Nature of and Barriers to Bus Use

- 2.1 There's currently mixed bus usage amongst participants with two participants almost exclusively using cars, three using the bus regularly but less than once per week and one being a regular user with weekly usage. There had been very minimal bus travel amongst group participants during the Covid-19 pandemic. All participants who previously used the bus are now returning, or have returned, to the bus and feel comfortable about the safety measures in place.
- 2.2 There was a high level of active travel within the group, with many participants preferring to walk for short journeys, for both the physical and mental health benefits.
- 2.3 One of the main reoccurring reasons for not using the bus was the perceived level of effort required, particularly when compared with the car.

"I'd quite like to get the bus but I don't know where I'd start; the car is convenient"

- 2.4 This was echoed by multiple participants who wanted to use the bus but found the ease of car use more appealing. One participant enjoyed getting the bus when she was pregnant and unable to drive but now she says she is too lazy to bother.

"I find waiting for buses such a hassle"

3. Views on potential improvements to bus services

Faster and More Reliable Bus Services

- 3.1 Participants were fairly enthusiastic about this measure as a means of encouraging more people in Warwickshire to use the bus. There was a general feeling that reducing journey times by bus is a key factor in convincing non-bus users to use local bus services.

“The bus needs to be more comparable with the car”

- 3.2 There was some debate as to whether journey time or reliability was a higher priority, with the group split on this point. One participant stated that whilst both were important, it was more about improving connections between bus services and where they serve than the journey time and reliability factors. One participant recalled when she considered taking the bus back from a hospital appointment but in the time it took the bus to turn up at the stop her husband could have driven from her home and collected her.

More Comprehensive Services

- 3.3 The idea of more comprehensive services was attractive to all participants. Both more destinations served, and more evening and weekend services were met with considerable enthusiasm.

“Sunday and evening services would be really useful – especially to the hospital where car parking is expensive and difficult”

- 3.4 One participant pointed out that they didn't know how comprehensive the bus services were at current and so “more” is a relative term, but admitted that the provision of a more comprehensive network could only be a good thing.
- 3.5 One problem with current provision that was mentioned multiple times was that buses don't serve enough destinations.

“The buses simply don't go where I want to go”

- 3.6 Another reoccurring theme was that whilst it can be quite fun to travel via bus, especially for small children, it can often require a lot of thought, particularly if multiple buses are required and this makes it very unappealing; this contrasts with how “head-clearing” walking can be.

Better Integrated Services

- 3.7 There was a comparatively lukewarm reception for this option in general, although one participant was very enthusiastic about it and recalled how the transport links were so strong where she used to live in Kent, that they didn't need a car.

"The buses were so good we sold our car"

Greener Services

- 3.8 People were aware of both greenhouse gas emissions and air quality as the main transport related environmental issues but in general although it was agreed that this was an important measure for the future, there was a consensus that it would be expensive and take a long time and was therefore not such a priority measure in comparison to improving specific bus service attributes.
- 3.9 Multiple participants felt that transport decarbonisation is given a higher priority by our European neighbours. A more committed approach by Government was suggested by one individual, with another echoing this, citing how in other countries buses are actively advertised as an environmentally conscious action.

"People need educating on the problems"

Better Journey Information

- 3.10 This option was met with considerable warmth. Both paper based and app timetables were appreciated, although there was some concern that paper based timetables were still needed by some sections of the community.

"Not everyone has mobile data"

- 3.11 Apps were extremely popular as they could also be used to market nus services to irregular users.

"I use Uber because it keeps gently reminding me it exists"

- 3.12 Additionally, it was felt that the notifications that could accompany an app, such as CO2 saved would further encourage patronage.
- 3.13 There were mixed reactions to real-time information, with some participants being incredibly enthusiastic about it, and others preferring an app. One participant commented that if bus frequency increased there would be no need for real-time information or an app.

- 3.14 Next stops and on-bus announcements were also popular, especially to reduce the anxiety of irregular travellers.
- 3.15 Bus drivers' customer service came under criticism with comments about drivers not supporting the needs of those with poor mobility (e.g. not pulling up right to the pavement or moving off before people had sat down) and being generally unfriendly. A comparison was made with London bus drivers, with those in Warwickshire coming off decidedly worse.

Better Facilities on the Bus

- 3.16 There was very little appetite for this option.

"Bus stops are more important than on-bus facilities"

- 3.17 Only one participant showing any enthusiasm to increase priority seating for the elderly. It was mentioned that going forward people's perceptions of what is sufficient space on a bus is likely to have changed.

"People have gotten used to being by themselves in lockdown"

Better Facilities at the Bus Stop

- 3.18 There was a consensus that bus stops need to be improved, with lighting, seating and shelter. The order of importance of these three options was varied as the bus stops that some people use already have lighting and most people felt generally safe when waiting for the bus.

Cheaper / Easier to Understand Fares

- 3.19 Two members of the group have a bus pass and so have no real opinion on fares, except to say that younger people would surely like cheaper fares. This sentiment was echoed by the younger members of the group.

"You need to make the bus cheaper than the car"

- 3.20 It was also pointed out that as soon as you were travelling with more than one other person the car became far more economical to use.
- 3.21 There was a lot of enthusiasm for a contactless and capped card system like an 'Oyster' card. Not only would this be simpler and remove any additional thought from the process (especially for infrequent travellers) but a 'loyalty element' would also encourage patronage.

- 3.22 DRT was seen as a good idea for going to remote places, especially on under-utilised routes.

"I'd rather see fuller smaller buses than large empty ones"

However, some participants couldn't understand how it would work and whether it would be any more beneficial than a taxi.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 There was no unanimous priority action, however faster and more reliable services, better journey information, more comprehensive services and cheaper and easier to understand fares were mentioned by everyone. Greener services were also mentioned as a high priority but only by existing users.

Appendix D

Warwickshire BSIP Stakeholder Engagement Survey Questionnaire

The Government has earmarked £3 billion towards improving bus services throughout England. Following this announcement Warwickshire County Council is working closely with bus operators to develop an ambitious Warwickshire Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) aimed at encouraging more people to travel by bus.

The BSIP will set out Warwickshire's ambitions for bus service improvements and help secure a proportion of the funding to benefit people living, working and travelling in Warwickshire. A crucial element in developing the BSIP is gathering the views of stakeholders, to ensure the opportunity to improve the network is maximised for everyone's best interests.

Integrated Transport Planning Ltd (ITP) has been commissioned by Warwickshire County Council to support the development of the Warwickshire BSIP, and as part of this work we would be extremely grateful if you could take a few moments to complete this survey on behalf of your organisation to ensure the plans to improve services in the Warwickshire BSIP align with what people actually want, helping us understand the current views on the bus network and highlighting the priority order for improvements.

ITP is fully compliant with GDPR and the information you provide will only be used for purposes related to the development of the Warwickshire BSIP. If you have any questions about the survey please contact Jim Bradley at bradley@itpworld.net.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CLOSING DATE FOR RESPONSES TO THIS SURVEY IS 19th SEPTEMBER 2021

Q1: Please tell us in which role you're responding to this survey?:

- I represent a business or private sector organisation [Route to Q2]
 - I represent a voluntary sector organisation, charity or community group [Route to Q5]
 - I represent a public sector organisation [Route to Q5]
 - Other (please specify below) [Route to Q5]
-

Q2 In which district/borough of Warwickshire does your organisation have sites? [*Please select as many options as apply*]

- North Warwickshire
- Nuneaton & Bedworth
- Rugby
- Warwick
- Stratford-on-Avon
- Not applicable

Q3 How many people does your organisation employ?

- Micro (1 - 10 employees)
- Small (11 - 50 employees)
- Medium (51 - 250 employees)
- Large (251 + employees)

Q4 Do your employees generally work?

- Regular hours (e.g. Mon to Fri 9-5:30)
- Shift patterns (e.g. 12-hr day - night rotation)
- Both regular hours and shift patterns

Name:

Organisation:

Email:

Phone:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Feedback will inform the development of the Bus Service Improvement Plan to be considered by Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet. Subject to Cabinet agreement, the Bus Service Improvement Plan will be published at the end of October 2021.

Following on from this, the County Council and all bus operators in Warwickshire will form a statutory Enhanced Partnership setting out how we will work together to deliver the aspirations of the Bus Service Improvement Plan. This will require further engagement with residents, public sector, private sector and voluntary organisations, prior to the formal launch of the Enhanced Partnership and EP Scheme(s) in April 2022.

Privacy Statement

Here at Integrated Transport Planning Ltd, we take your privacy seriously. The information you provide will only be used for purposes related to the development of the Warwickshire BSIP and will be shared with our client, Warwickshire County Council. In some circumstances, we may use a third party to process the data, in which case the data will remain within the European Economic Area and be processed in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and other data protection laws. The data will be stored securely for the duration of the project and will then be destroyed. You have a right to request access to personal data we collect, and for it to be rectified, erased or restrictions placed on the processing of the data; you also have a right to data portability and to lodging a complaint with a supervisory authority. If you have any requests or queries in regard to your data, please do not hesitate to contact us at itpadmin@itpworld.net or on 0115 824 8250. You may also view the privacy statement on our website at www.itpworld.net/privacy-policy.



Integrated Transport Planning Ltd
Charles House
148 Great Charles Street
Birmingham
B3 3HT UK
+44 (0)121 285 7301

Integrated Transport Planning Ltd
Build Studios
203 Westminster Bridge Road
London
SE1 7FR UK
+44 (0)7498 563196

Integrated Transport Planning Ltd
1 Broadway
Nottingham
NG1 1PR UK
+44 (0)115 824 8250

www.itpworld.net



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Item x

Cabinet

14 October 2021

Submission to the EIP Inspector of Proposed Modifications to the submitted Minerals Plan 2018 and Next Steps towards Adoption**Recommendation(s)**

That Cabinet:

authorises the Strategic Director for Communities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning to:

- (1) propose draft Main Modifications to the submitted Warwickshire Minerals Plan to the Inspector and carry out any necessary public consultation on them;
- (2) take any other steps which he considers necessary or desirable to assist the Inspector to conclude his Examination and to enable Council to adopt a sound and compliant Plan (including making any further decisions as proposed modifications).
- (3) Submit the Proposed Plan (together with any recommended modifications) to Council for a decision on adoption.

1. Key Issues

- 1.1 The Minerals Plan was submitted for Examination in November 2019 following Cabinet and Council approval in July 2018 and a second Publication Consultation. At that stage only minor modifications could be foreseen to be required after the Examination. However, as part of the preparations for the Examination Officers had prepared some proposed changes to the wording of the plan to address issues raised following the publication consultation and to address questions raised by the Inspector prior to the Examination Hearings.
- 1.2 Hearings originally planned for June 2020 were delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions and eventually took place online in October 2020. At the hearings a number of matters were flagged up by the Inspector where the Council was required to consider further changes. The Inspector issued a post hearing note (Appendix 1) in which he requested that the Council carry out additional work before proceeding further and then set out the steps to be taken to consult on any proposed modifications to the submitted plan. It was

recognised that this work could also indicate that further changes could be required over and above those already submitted.

- 1.3 The Inspector's note contained three Matters for Consideration by the Council based on the concerns of participants that the chosen spatial option (Option 3a) has not been sufficiently evidenced, the basis for the calculation of the sand and gravel requirements may be outdated and a perceived lack of rigour in the assessment of some impacts relating to some of the sites. The Inspector believed that the participants concerns may have some degree of merit and therefore the Council needed to decide whether the submitted Plan could be made sound with modifications.
- 1.4 In response Officers and its consultants have carried out further work on the three matters raised. The conclusions were that the chosen spatial option delivering the plan requirements from a range of sites distributed throughout the county is the right one and that draft modifications can be made to support that view. The calculation is right to deliver the expected future growth including the ambitious plans of government to increase the level of housing in the county and elsewhere. Officers felt that the assessments were sound but there was scope to improve the level and depth of information and evidence and to present additional documents.
- 1.5 The post hearing work has taken some time to complete due to the nature and extent of the issues raised, and the need to involve the Council's independent consultants in the preparation of additional documents. In addition, there has been a need to consider the implications of the recently revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) and to prepare a detailed response to the Inspector. This work has now been completed.
- 1.6 The next stage in the examination is for the Council to bring all these changes together and to separate out potential "Main Modifications" (MMs) from "Additional or Minor Modifications" (AMs) and to propose MMs to the Inspector before consulting on them publicly (see Summary details in Appendix 2). MMs are changes which materially affect the policies set out in the submitted Plan whilst AMs do not affect the substance of the policies. The MMs address matters that were identified as issues or changes in circumstances since the Plan was submitted and comments arising from further Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessments.
- 1.7 The proposed MMs add more detailed policy requirements, in light of the further work requested by the Inspector and to bring the Plan up to date. They will not alter the extent of the 6 site allocations nor change the plan requirement for aggregates, but they will strengthen the policy requirements which seek to mitigate impacts on the environment and communities.
- 1.8 This report has been brought because the delegations given to officers and the Portfolio Holder in July 2018 do not authorise officers to propose modifications which materially affect the policies in the Plan.

- 1.9 The next stage is for the Inspector to check these proposed MMs and supporting documents, before requesting that the Council carry out public consultation on them, on his behalf, without prejudice to his final recommendations. He will then review any consultation responses before finalising his report and recommendations to the Council, confirming whether the Plan is sound and the final schedule of required MMs. This last stage closes his examination of the Plan. As part of his examination of the Plan, the Inspector may ask for further work outside the scope of the previous Council resolution. Therefore, Officers also request authorisation to carry out any further tasks required to advance the examination.
- 1.10 Members will ultimately approve the Inspector's final MMs and the adoption of the Plan at a future Full Council meeting. This report seeks a more extensive delegation than that given in 2018 in order to expedite the process leading to a report to Council and avoid further delays in the process leading to adoption of the Plan.

2 Options and Proposal

- 2.1 The Council has the following options to:
- (a) propose modifications (both main and minor) to the Inspector for subsequent consultation;
 - (b) not to propose main modifications but to rely on minor modifications covered by the 2018 Cabinet and Full Council delegation.
- 2.2 If the Council choose Option (b) then from the discussions held at Examination Hearings the Inspector is unlikely to confirm that the submitted plan is sound and the plan would have to be withdrawn and resubmitted incurring additional financial expenditure and generating lengthy delays and uncertainty for our local communities. The recommendation from Officers is therefore to proceed with Option (a).

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The preparation of the proposed modifications and their consideration by the Inspector and the final public consultation are all covered by the Infrastructure and Sustainable Communities existing approved revenue budget for 2021/2022.

4 Environmental Implications

- 4.1 The Council is required to prepare and adopt a Minerals Plan for the county in accordance with legislation and national policy. The Plan includes a strategy for supplying the minerals the county and others need to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy, and goods required for the next 10-15 years. It also includes a spatial dimension for the distribution of sand and gravel sites

across the county to meet the demand for Planned Growth in the county and elsewhere.

- 4.2 Minerals are a finite resource and can only be worked where they are found but there are adverse impacts arising from working and processing them on people, environment and transport and our climate. The Plan has sought to avoid and /or minimise the environmental implications for the county through the preparation of sustainable strategies supported by robust policies and independent assessments and careful selection of future sites. The Plan includes policies and measures to respond to net zero carbon emissions reflecting the delicate balance between the need for materials from natural resources and the impact on those resources both now and in the future.

5 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 If Cabinet approves this report, then the consultation could commence in early November and will last for 8 rather than 6 weeks at the request of the Inspector. This is due to the number of modifications and supporting documents such as a revised Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment required as part of the consultation.
- 5.2 However, the Inspector will need to check these proposed MMs and supporting documents before requesting that the Council carry out public consultation on them, on his behalf, without prejudice to his final recommendations.
- 5.3 In early 2022 he will then review any consultation responses before finalising his report and recommendations to the Council, confirming whether the Plan is sound and the final schedule of required MMs. This last stage closes his examination of the Plan. Now his report is likely to be available in Spring 2022 when the plan can be put forward for adoption.

Appendices

1. PSD 18 Inspector’s Post Hearing Note
2. Summarised Description of the Proposed Modifications

Background Papers

1. Draft Schedule of Proposed Modifications
2. Report and Minutes of Full Council 26th July 2018
2. Submitted Minerals Local Plan 2018

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Paul Wilcox	Email: paulwilcox@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel No. 01926 412538
Assistant Director	David Ayton- Hill	

		Email: davidayton-hill@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: (01926) 412267
Strategic Director	Mark Ryder	Email: markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: 01926 412705
Portfolio Holder	Wallace Redford	Email: cllredford@warwickshire.gov.uk

The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): None

Other members: None

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Examination of the Warwickshire Minerals Plan 2018

Post Hearing Advice – Main Modifications and Related Matters

Introduction

1. During the hearing sessions a number of potential main modifications (MMs) were discussed. Although some of these were provided in draft before the commencement of the hearing sessions (PSD16), there were many potential main modifications that arose during the course of discussions that related to most of the Main Matters discussed throughout the hearing sessions.
2. I understand that the Council has kept a running list of all of these and is currently working on a full draft. This note relates to the potential main modifications, both those contained in the draft schedule and arising in the hearing sessions that were discussed, but not confirmed, in those sessions. It also relates to matters that the Council should carefully consider and to the administrative arrangements relating to all potential main modifications. This is the position that I outlined to the Council in the final hearing session on 21 October 2020.
3. I am not inviting any comments about the contents of this note.

Matters for Consideration

4. During the hearing sessions, and in submitted statements, participants raised concerns that the spatial option chosen for sand and gravel extraction (Option 3a) was not sufficiently evidenced in the plan with regard to the location of sites in relation to future aggregate demand relative to planned growth. Participants also considered that the justification for pursuing Option 3a, as opposed to Option 1, was weak and insufficiently justified in the Plan and in the supporting documents.
5. In addition, concerns were expressed that the basis for the calculation of sand and gravel requirements over the Plan period may be outdated and potentially erroneous. The Plan was also considered to place an unnecessary and unquantified demand requirement for sand and gravel to be supplied to Coventry against a background of a recently adopted Local Plan that did not demonstrate a supply requirement from Warwickshire.
6. Whilst some of the background evidence and assessment methodology relating to the Sustainability Appraisal and the Site Assessment Methodology for allocating sand and gravel sites 2018 (SIAM) were made available prior to the hearing sessions, participants were concerned that there was a perceived lack of rigour in the assessment of some impacts in both documents that subsequently informed the content of the Plan.
7. Without prejudice to my eventual conclusion on the soundness of the Plan, the concerns raised by participants do appear to have some degree of basis. Consequently, the Council should carefully consider whether these concerns,

where appropriate, are capable of being addressed by the use of main modifications to the Submission Plan.

8. Should the outcome of those deliberations suggest that the above concerns are capable of being addressed as main modifications to the Plan then the guidance below is applicable.

Process

9. The Council should now prepare a consolidated schedule of all the potential main modifications, including those in response to the matters above and others identified during the hearing sessions. In doing so, the Council should also consider the need for any other consequential changes that might be required in connection with any potential main modifications.
10. I will need to see the draft schedule and may have comments on it. Although I will make no comment on matters of soundness, I will also need to agree the final version of the schedule before it is made available for public consultation.
11. The schedule should take the form of a numbered list of main modifications with changes shown by means of strikethrough to show deleted text and new text shown in bold or underlined (or both). It should also include a column that briefly explains the reasons for the main modifications to assist consultees. For clarity, it is best to group all the changes to a single policy together as one main modification.
12. Notwithstanding the Council's consideration of the issues identified above, it does appear that there are likely to be a considerable number of potential main modifications. In order to ensure that these can easily be understood and the effect on the content of the Plan demonstrated, the Council may wish to consider whether an amended version of the Submission Plan that contains all of the proposed main modifications should be produced and made available on the examination website.
13. The Council should also ensure that they have met the requirements for sustainability appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) by producing addenda to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and HRA of the Submitted Plan in relation to the potential main modifications, where necessary and as appropriate. I will need to see a draft of any addenda, or confirmation that the proposed main modifications have been assessed and do not necessitate any addition or modification to the existing SA or HRA. The addenda should be published as part of the public consultation.
14. The Council may also wish to prepare a list of proposed additional minor modifications. Any additional minor modifications are a matter solely for the Council. If the Council intends to make any additional minor modifications these should be set out in a separate document from the main modifications. If the Council intends to publicise or consult on any additional minor modifications it should be made clear that such changes are not a matter for the Inspector.

15. Advice on the required consultation on the proposed MMs is provided in Examining Local Plans Procedural Practice (in particular, see paragraphs 5.24 to 5.28). Amongst other things this states that the scope and length of the consultation should reflect the consultation at the Regulation 19 stage (usually at least 6 weeks). It should be made clear that the consultation is only about the proposed main modifications and not about other aspects of the plan. In addition, it should also be made clear that the main modifications are put forward without prejudice to the Inspectors' final conclusions. The Council will need to consider the most appropriate methodology for the consultation in light of any relevant Government Guidance relating to the Covid-19 pandemic that may be applicable at the time.
16. The Procedural Practice also states that the general expectation is that issues raised on the consultation of the draft MMs will be considered through the written representations process and further hearing sessions will only be scheduled exceptionally.

Consideration of potential main modifications

17. In accordance with the provisions of section 20(7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), the Council has formally confirmed that it wishes the Inspector to recommend any such main modifications that are necessary to make the Plan sound and legally compliant.
18. The views I have expressed in the hearing sessions and in this note on potential main modifications are based on the evidence before me, including the discussion that took place at the hearing sessions. However, my final conclusions on soundness and legal compliance will be provided in the report which I will produce after the consultation on the potential main modifications has been completed.
19. In reaching my conclusions, I will take into account any representations made in response to the consultation. Consequently, any views I expressed during the hearing sessions and in this note about soundness and the potential main modifications which may be necessary to achieve a sound plan could alter following the consultation process.
20. Should the Council consider that the matters identified above are capable of being addressed as main modifications to the Plan, it would be helpful if an indicative time frame could be provided when the draft main modifications are likely to be submitted to me.
21. Should any interested parties require any clarification on the content of this note then this should be made via the Programme Officer.

Stephen Normington
INSPECTOR

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APPENDIX 2

Summarised Description of Proposed Modifications to be Submitted to EIP Inspector

The Plan comprises a number of Chapters and set out below are the Chapter headings and details of the proposed changes. The Changes will take the form of either Main Modifications or Additional Modifications. The Inspector at the EIP wishes only to see the Main Modifications as these will form the basis of a forthcoming consultation.

Since the EIP in October 2020 the Government has issued a revised NPPF. Some of the changes made in the revision need to be reflected in the Plan.

Chapter 1 – Introduction – The changes here are updates and would be additional modifications.

Chapter 2 – Policy Context – explains where the Plan fits in with the NPPF and other plans. The change here is an update.

Chapter 3- Spatial Portrait – This is a description of the key assets and characteristics of the county which form the evidence on which policies and proposals can be formulated. The inspector has asked for further information on Planned Growth in the county to justify our approach to site selection and distribution in the county. This is being treated as Main Modifications. There are other changes in terms of updates on transport, flooding and the Habitats Regulations Assessment carried out to accompany this plan.

Chapter 4 – Minerals Context – This gives details of the minerals present and produced in the county and needs to be updated to reflect decisions taken by the authority on such sites as Kingsbury Brickworks.

Chapter 5 – Key Issues for Minerals in the County- During the preparation of the Plan 13 issues have been raised which need to be addressed by the policies and proposals. Some of these need to be updated or expanded/clarified to reflect the current position. These are being treated as Main modifications.

Chapter 6 – Vision and Objectives - As a result of the work required on Planned Growth and the preferred Spatial Option following the EIP some changes are needed to the list of “main settlements” in the Vision to reflect the current adopted plans of the Boroughs and Districts. There were also representations made that the Council were not acknowledging the need to contribute towards the planned growth plans of areas adjoining the county such as in the West Midlands conurbation. The county already exports materials to other areas and as done so for many years and accepts that its sites will need to continue this approach in the future.

Chapter 7 – Spatial Strategy and Preferred Site Options – This chapter gives details of the Council’s preferred locational strategy for sand and gravel sites, how it has assessed and selected the sites and how those sites meet the extra tonnage required over the next 10-15 years. There has been some criticism that the locational strategy lacks justification, and the assessment process lacks rigour. Officers together with its independent consultants have prepare Topic Papers explaining in more detail the evidence we have relied upon to justify our approach and summaries of those document now need to be incorporated into the plan so there are a number of changes here. Links to the revised HRA and updated and revised SA also need to be tied into this chapter.

This chapter also lists the preferred 6 sites and gives details of the specific allocation policies which contain the planning, environmental and transport requirements identified during the plan process to ensure the sites are generally acceptable before they come forward as planning applications to the Council for further refining and testing. As a result of further representations and work some additional requirements on such things as transport and landscape need to be added to the policies.

Chapter 8 – Core Strategy Policies – The original 10 policies reflected mineral specific issues and the general approach of the Council to supplying minerals from the county over the next 10-15 years. National planning policy and planning legislation requires the Council to plan positively indicating where and which scenarios it is likely to support in principle subject to acceptable planning applications. There have been some concerns expressed by the inspector that the Council has not anticipated all future scenarios and therefore does not have in place to deal with them. For example, coping with unforeseen demand, low supplies, and proposals coming forward outside the allocated areas. So, some changes are recommended to policies (and the justification text) MCS 1- 3 which deal with sand and gravel and hard rock supplies in the future to show how the Council could support/supplement future supplies should such situations arise.

Policy MSC4 deals with proposals for recycled aggregates operations. The Inspector was concerned that the assessment process was being left to another document the Waste Core Strategy. In his opinion the Minerals Plan should set out in detail how it is going to deal with all possible developer scenarios and should not leave that for another document. Changes are being proposed to address that concern. MCS 5 deals with the safeguarding of mineral resources and minerals infrastructure. The policy and text explain how the Council carries out its safeguarding responsibilities through the planning process. It needs updating and some further explanation of its operation in practice. There are no changes to MCS 6 which deals with brick clays but some updating of the text is required to deal with a new permission at Kingsbury Brickworks.

Building stone proposals are dealt with in policy MCS 7 and some changes are required to address the revised NPPF. Policies MCS 8 – 10 deals with coal and the various processes used to extract it whether from the surface or beneath the surface and shale oil and gas. National policy has changed significantly because of the climate change emergency making it unlikely that such proposals will come forward in the future. Your Officers believe that it would be still wise to have a policy framework in place but needs amending to reflect these new changes.

The Inspector has queried how the Council will deal with proposals for mineral plant required to process the raw minerals in the county when there is no specific policy so a new policy MCS 11 has been drafted to fill this vacuum building on the wording in the adopted 1995 Minerals Plan.

Chapter 9 – Development Management policies – The Plan has 12 policies to deal with a range of situations and impacts which planning applications will need to be judged against. There is some updating required to deal with changes in national policy and legal cases such as the impact on migratory fish species from the internationally protected designations in the Severn and Humber Estuaries which are linked to the county through the Rivers Avon and Tame respectively. There was also a lot of discussion at the EIP about the low level of information in the plan that would help developers formulate proposals and the public understand how policies would be interpreted by the Council, so changes are proposed. The revised NPPF also requires changes in the areas of AONB policy, biodiversity, trees, and flooding. These changes generally improve and strengthen the suite of policies used to judge and test proposals. For example, in DM 4 developers now must submit a

Community Consultation Statement with their applications to explain how their proposals and their implementation have been informed by consultation with residents.

Chapters 10 and 11 deal with Implementation, Monitoring and the Glossary and some changes are proposed here.

The Plan document is supported by a number of **Appendices** giving further information and some changes are proposed here particularly in terms of explaining how existing policies have been replaced.

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Cabinet

14 October 2021

A46 Strategic Link Road Consultation

Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Consider the feedback from the A46 Strategic Link Road consultation
2. Acknowledge that as set out in the recommendations of Cabinet in September 2019 a further report will be brought to set out the preferred scope of the new transport corridor

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In September 2019 Cabinet approved the development of the A46 Link Road scheme, requesting that reports were brought back to Cabinet to describe progress at key milestones.
- 1.1.2 This report describes the process and response of the public consultation and sets out the work completed to date in respect of the feasibility design and preparation of the Outline Business Case submission to the Department for Transport, and the proposed next steps.
- 1.1.3 The proposed A46 Strategic Link Road was initiated in the context of planned and anticipated residential and employment development sites in the area to the south of Coventry. Should these development sites be confirmed it is likely that highway infrastructure will be required for all modes of transport given the capacity of the existing network. This will include a greater emphasis on the opportunities for sustainable modes of transport provided by the establishment of this new transport corridor.

1.2 Public Consultation

- 1.2.1 The purpose of the public consultation was to inform stakeholders and residents about the need for and aims of the scheme, allowing them time to evaluate these and comment on the options. This would support the identification of the scheme scope, inform the outline feasibility design and DfT business case submission, the development of funding applications, and the initiation of site survey and data collection.
- 1.2.2 Within the consultation, the key aims of the scheme were set out as follows:

- To facilitate and support the housing and employment proposals contained within the Local Plans for Warwick District and Coventry City
- To support the growth aspirations of the University of Warwick (UoW), Stoneleigh Park and other key existing and proposed employment sites within the immediate area and wider A46 corridor in the context of the adopted Local Plans,
- To ensure the Coventry and Warwickshire area is well connected to the economic opportunities which will arise as a result of growth and development in the region including HS2 and associated growth at UK Central;
- To help reduce congestion in the A45 corridor which will allow further housing growth to come forward in North West, West and South West Coventry and parts of Warwick District; and
- To unlock land to help realise the opportunity for a number of strategic sustainable transport infrastructure improvements in the area, including a new railway station/interchange to serve the University of Warwick, improved access to Tile Hill railway station, bus priority and a network of pedestrian and cycle routes.

1.2.3 The scheme was presented through three main options:

- Option 1- to provide no new infrastructure,
- Option 2 - to provide a new link from A46 Stoneleigh junction to A429 Kenilworth Road
- Option 3 - to provide a new link from A46 Stoneleigh Junction to Westwood Heath Road.

Questions were asked around these options and the associated benefits and issues and also to gather views on transport priorities for the area.

1.2.4 The consultation took place between 30th November 2020 and 14th February 2021 and sought responses and engagement from a range of partners, stakeholders and people who live and work in, or visit and travel through, Warwickshire and Coventry. This was promoted using a range of channels including press releases, social media, and mail shots to residents in the surrounding area. Due to Covid restrictions it was not possible to offer face to face engagement opportunities. However, two online broadcasts were hosted which could be accessed live and as recordings. These enabled people to listen to proposals and ask questions. People were invited to feedback via a survey. This was primarily accessed online via Ask Warwickshire but could also be requested on paper or in an alternative format or language. People could also respond directly in writing or via email. A full report on the process and output of the consultation is contained in Appendix 1-3.

1.2.5 In Summary:

- 522 responses were received via the on-line survey;

- 63% of the respondents lived in the area covered by the consultation
- 98 written submissions were received, from a range of residents, businesses and stakeholders; and
- 201 individuals or organisations joined the two live broadcasts which took place in December 2020 and January 2021.

1.2.6 The key outcomes of the consultation are as follows:

- Around half of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with each of the options. Whilst Option 3 had the highest levels of agreement (39.5%), the highest proportion of respondents also strongly disagreed with this option (41.6%).
- Overall, just over 40% of respondents thought that all options would have a negative impact on their travel experience. But 39.1% felt the impact of Option 3 would be positive or very positive – a slightly higher proportion than for the other options.
- When asked overall which option they preferred responses were mixed with no clear nor apparent favourite. Over a quarter of all respondents (27.0%) stated that none of the proposed options were their preference.
- Those respondents who selected ‘none of the proposed options’ were asked what option(s) should be considered instead. The most common response was support for continued development of walking or cycling active travel options. Other common themes included improvements of specific junctions, public transportation improvements, and minor changes/alterations to aspects of Option 1, 2 or 3.

1.2.7 The outcome of the consultation shows a reasonably strong level of opposition towards the proposal of a road scheme alone from residents, who primarily live in the south Coventry and Kenilworth area. The reasoning for these responses varies and key themes are summarised in section 1.3.

1.2.8 The development of a broader view of improved travel choices in the area was supported by residents and included improved cycle and pedestrian facilities, development of Very Light Rail (VLR), improved bus services and a new rail station /transport hub.

1.2.9 The broad view of the written stakeholder consultees was more supportive. These were generally businesses, and private and public sector organisations in the local and wider area.

1.3 Key Themes and Proposed Response to the Consultation

1.3.1 In response to the feedback received during the consultation a number of key themes have been identified that are either a concern or priority from the

respondents. County Council officers have considered these concerns which are summarised in the table below:

Proposed Revisions to the Scheme as an Outcome of the Consultation	
Theme/Description	Response/Action
<p>Concerns regarding increasing congestion/traffic volume associated with the proposals</p> <p>Concerns Options pushes problems (e.g. congestion) to new areas</p>	<p>Work has been carried out to analyse the impacts of the proposed options. While overall network performance does improve, there are certain roads such as Westwood Heath Road, Coventry which would have additional traffic as a result of the scheme.</p> <p>Work will continue to find solutions to reduce the impacts of any proposed scheme. During the consultation alternative locations were suggested for the connection to the South West of Coventry. These options are currently being explored.</p>
<p>Environmental concerns associated with the proposals (e.g. pollution/air quality, noise, destruction of Green Belt land, wildlife, flooding)</p> <p>Suggestions that proposals will have a similar (negative) impact as per HS2</p> <p>General concern around climate change/climate emergency</p>	<p>Currently only a desk top study has been conducted into the effects on the local environment. As we are in the early stages of the scheme no specific surveys have been undertaken. The route of the scheme will be designed to minimise impact on trees and wildlife habitats, including the ancient woodland on Kenilworth Road and those to the south of the University of Warwick</p> <p>During the next stages of work surveys will be carried out to establish more detail regarding environmental impacts/issues. The scheme will include landscaping and habitat protection or replacement with the aim of maintaining or improving the biodiversity of the area. This will be tested and monitored through the planning process. The scheme will comply with all relevant legislation and current council policies.</p>
<p>Impact of option on sustainable travel/Support for continued development of sustainable/active travel options (e.g. walking/cycling routes, public transportation improvements)</p> <p>Concerns new road(s) are not the answer (and proposal options would push problems (e.g. congestion) to new areas)</p>	<p>The proposals include alternative modes of transport, with segregated cycle and footways, and provision for buses and Very Light Rail. The intention is to encourage active travel and the proposal is to enhance the existing provision. However, these provisions alone are unlikely to cater for the predicted travel demand resulting from residential and employment growth over time and therefore a joint solution is needed.</p> <p>Further design and modelling work is proposed to assess the impact of a 'sustainable transport only' solution. If the Strategic Link Road scheme does move forwards, sustainable transport measures will be a key aspect of the scheme. These will be</p>

	<p>designed to the latest Government guidance.</p>
<p>The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel/use of the area and how changes to the way people travel should be considered in any proposals and before any changes to the infrastructure are made</p>	<p>We are monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns across Coventry and Warwickshire. Home working is likely to become a more significant element of life for some professions that have previously been mostly office based, and this may impact travel demand during the peak periods; in this period however deliveries and off-peak travel have increased. It is worth noting that traffic levels are currently at 90% of the pre-COVID-19 levels when compared year on year.</p> <p>Sensitivity testing will be carried out to assess the proposals against previously predicted and currently expected travel patterns and this will be done in accordance with current Government guidance. Through the funding application process the needs of the roads are thoroughly assessed therefore the design of the road will be based on demand, which is independently reviewed by the funding bodies.</p>
<p>Impact of increasing population(s)/housing and/or commercial developments on the area meaning changes need to happen</p> <p>The role/impact of Warwick University on the area</p>	<p>The current local plans for Warwick District Council and Coventry City Council set out expectation in terms of residential and employment sites until 2029 and 2031 respectively. The proposals are to meet these demands. Any further development in this area would be subject to the planning process or be part of future versions of the local plans, which in turn would be subject to consultation and scrutiny.</p> <p>Warwick District Council are currently reviewing their local plan in conjunction with Stratford-on-Avon District Council, with a view to producing a joint South Warwickshire Local Plan. If any further proposals for the area result from this these will be reviewed as to the impact on the scheme. Until then the scheme will be designed to the known developments in the current local plans. Any additional devolvement proposals outside that process will be assessed if they are successful in securing planning permission.</p>
<p>Consideration given to minor changes/improvements to Options</p> <p>Specific junction improvements (e.g. roundabouts, exit/access points, road widening/narrowing, road lengthening/shortening)</p>	<p>Junction improvements have been proposed, to reduce the foreseen impact of the scheme. Work will continue to identify solutions to reduce these impacts further. If any additional improvements are required on review these will be considered as part of the scheme.</p> <p>Work is being undertaken to ascertain if alternative connections to the south west of Coventry are viable. During the next stages of work the scheme will be</p>

	refined to ensure the objectives of the scheme are met, taking into consideration the views of local stakeholders where possible.
Concerns that the proposals are a waste of money/resources.	An outline business case is being produced to confirm the scheme is viable. This will include the BCR (Benefit to Cost Ratio). This score will show whether the scheme represents value for money or not. If this is not strong, funding would not be secured, and the scheme would not be viable.
Impact on the quality of life and wellbeing of residents in the area	During the next stages of work surveys will be carried out to establish more detail regarding the effect of noise and air pollution. The scheme will be designed to have as little impact on local residents as possible, both during construction and once the scheme is complete.
Suggestions of survey/consultation bias	This consultation was based on the broad principles of the scheme. The aim was to understand people's key concerns, in order to help steer the design of the scheme. As such the finer details of impacts and issues were not included at this stage. The on-line survey was reviewed independently prior to going live. A further consultation will be held with greater detail of the scheme at the appropriate time. There will also be opportunity to comment further through the planning process.
Concerns regarding the modelling assessment/data/information presented Further data collection/evidence gathering required	We are currently in the early stages of the scheme. Only desk top studies have been conducted into the effects of the scheme. No specific surveys have been undertaken other than traffic. Modelling work has been undertaken using pre-Covid traffic count data and prediction of increased traffic based on known developments. Additional surveys and analysis will be undertaken as part of the ongoing design work. Including, sensitivity testing to assess the proposals against previously predicted and currently expected travel patterns in accordance with Government guidance.
Reconsideration and or postponement of proposals (in light of the COVID-19 pandemic)	We are currently in the early stages of the scheme, with the overall programme still a number of years away from possible construction. The scheme will take into account any changes due to Covid.
Importance of safety (e.g. reducing traffic speed, road/traffic calming measures)	Safety is a key aspect when designing any new scheme and assessing the impact of new proposals. As such this scheme will be designed to ensure public safety. The scheme will be designed to comply with all relevant design codes, guidance and best practice.

1.3.2 The Outline Business Case, which is part of the DfT funding application process is currently being produced to confirm if a scheme to provide a new transport corridor representing one of the options is viable. This work

assesses the viability through a number of factors including the BCR (Benefit to Cost Ratio). In response to the consultation results the OBC will also include an analysis of the opportunities for improved travel choices.

- 1.3.3 The completion of the OBC production, which will set out the presentation of all the options including one relating specifically to sustainable transport modes, is an important part of the process of building towards the development of a scheme. The completion and submission of the OBC will allow the DfT to determine if funding for continued development can be allocated to the scheme. This will allow the development of the scheme to incorporate an enhanced set of features for improved travel choices.
- 1.3.4 The options which were put forward in the consultation were the result of feasibility work carried out to date, based on an indicative design. If the scheme is successful in the next stage of the Department for Transport funding application process, the further work outlined above will be included in the next phases of work. During the detailed design of the scheme, those concerns outlined will be explored and the scheme modified as appropriate. This process will also include additional consultation exercises to gain further public and stakeholder views on the scope and detail of the proposed scheme and allow further modification of the scheme in response.
- 1.3.5 In response to the consultation analysis and with reference to the planned and anticipated residential and employment development sites in the area, it is proposed that the development of the scheme be continued to the submission of the Outline Business Case to the DfT. This submission will include a greater emphasis on the opportunities for sustainable modes of transport provided by the establishment of this new transport corridor.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The development of the A46 Strategic Link Road has, to date, been delivered jointly between officers from the County Council, Coventry City Council and Warwick District Council.
- 2.2 Initial funding for the scheme development has been obtained from the Department for Transport (DfT), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP). This funding has supported the work completed to date and part of the feasibility design stage, but it will not cover all the work necessary to prepare the scheme for implementation. Funding for the remainder of the detailed feasibility design, the detailed design and the construction of the scheme is still to be sought. If Cabinet continues to endorse the preparatory work proposed in this report, it will be managed so that the County Council is not at any stage committed to expenditure exceeding that covered by secured external funding without a further report having been brought to Cabinet.
- 2.3 The funding allocated to date is held by Coventry City Council for the scheme development, and will include costs for site investigations, feasibility design,

and the development of the funding applications. There is a risk that, should future approvals not be forthcoming, these costs will be abortive. However, these costs will be met by external funding already in place.

- 2.4 Funding secured to date for scheme development is currently forecast to be all be spent. This is not conditional on securing additional funding and will not have to be returned if additional funding is unsuccessful.
- 2.5 The proposed overall funding package for the scheme is as follows:

Funding Source	Amount (£)
<i>Scheme Development (funding secured and received)</i>	
CWLEP Growing Places/ Growth Deal (committed)	500,000
WMCA SOBC for Coventry South (committed)	200,000
DfT Large Local Major Scheme (committed)	1,250,000
TOTAL	1,950,000
<i>Design & Construction Potential Funding Sources Applications</i>	
DfT Large Local Major Scheme (OBC application to be submitted)	35,000,000
Homes England (Investable Proposition application currently rejected) further application to be made subject to Government spending review.	35,000,000
WMCA Devolution Deal (to be secured)	35,000,000
S106 Developer Funding (to be confirmed)	Est. 10,000,000

- 2.6 Applications for funding from external sources will be through each organisation's funding application template. There is a degree of similarity between these processes, and preparation of the overall project business case will follow the DfT Transport Business Case five case model.
- 2.7 The funding applications will be made by either Coventry City Council or by Warwickshire County Council. Where the application is made by the City Council, they will undertake the role of accountable body and will enter into a Grant Deed Agreement with Warwickshire County Council to set out the terms of funding transfer for the completed works and services. Where applications are made, both authorities will be required to confirm support of the application through endorsement by letter.
- 2.8 Initial cost estimates for the work currently anticipates a project cost of between £70m and £100million. This estimate will be further developed and refined as part of the detailed feasibility design stage. The estimate will include an allocation for contingency and inflation and will recognise the risk of increased works costs as a result of anticipated levels of construction in the area.
- 2.9 Further reports for Cabinet and, where required, Council will be prepared on completion of the detailed feasibility design (setting out the preferred scope of the new transport corridor) and the detailed design stages setting out the proposed funding package for the construction works, and the estimated cost of the scheme, in order to consider the continued development of the scheme

and, eventually, the inclusion of the scheme in the County Council's Capital Programme.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 The route of the scheme will be designed to minimise impact on trees and wildlife habitats, including the ancient woodland on Kenilworth Road and those to the south of the University of Warwick. Early desktop studies have been completed to ensure these assets are not impacted by the scheme. During the next stages of work environmental surveys will be carried out to establish more detail regarding the habitats along the route. The proposals for any infrastructure will also include landscaping and habitat protection or replacement with the aim of maintaining or improving the biodiversity of the area. This will be tested and monitored through the planning process, complying with current national policy and legislation.
- 3.2 The proposals include alternative modes of transport, with segregated cycle and footways, and provision for bus and Very Light Rail. The Councils want to encourage active travel and are proposing to enhance the existing provision. However, these provisions alone are unlikely to cater for the predicted travel demand resulting from residential and employment growth over time and therefore a joint solution is needed.
- 3.3 The scheme will bring performance and resilience benefits to the wider transport network on routes such as the A45, which plays a key role in linking local employment sites. This is expected to result in a reduction in air pollution, in areas that currently suffer from congestion from redirection of traffic as a result of introducing the scheme. During the next stage of design, the effects of noise and air pollution will be assessed in greater detail, with the intention of minimising impact along the route. Along with the additional sustainable transport improvements which are aimed at reducing the dependency on car journeys particularly where they can be avoided.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Outline Business Case for the scheme is currently being compiled and is programmed to be submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT) during autumn 2021. This document will make the case for the scheme and request continued support for the scheme from the Government.
- 4.2 A further report will be brought to Cabinet to set out the preferred scope of the new transport corridor, taking into account the development of the scheme to include and promote a range of sustainable travel options, the response of the DfT and other funding bodies, and any changes to the planning context in the area.
- 4.3 A letter of support from University of Warwick is included at appendix 4.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 5.1 If the scheme is successful in the next stage of the Department for Transport funding application process, the further work outlined in the Cabinet Report will be included in the next phases of technical work which will be carried out. During the detailed design of the scheme, the concerns highlighted by the consultation will be explored and the scheme modified as appropriate. This process will also include further consultation in order to gain public and stakeholder views on the detailed scheme and allow further modification of the scheme in response.
- 5.2 The current programme for the A46 Strategic Link Road is as follows:
- (i) Initial public consultation completed March 2021
 - (ii) Outline Business Case DfT Funding Application autumn 2021
 - (iii) Cabinet report setting out the preferred scope of the new transport corridor earliest Q1/Q2 2022
 - (iv) Public consultation on detailed scheme earliest 2023
 - (v) Cabinet report at detailed design stage
 - (vi) Full Business Case Funding Applications earliest 2024
 - (vii) Construction complete earliest 2026
- 5.3 These timescales are dependent on the successful completion of each previous stage and recognition made of dependency on processes and approvals of project partners, as well as delivery of other key construction projects in the area.
- 5.4 The programme will be kept under review as the project progresses.

Appendices

1. Appendix 1 – A46 Strategic Link Road Consultation Analysis Report
2. Appendix 2 – A46 Strategic Link Road Public Consultation Leaflet
3. Appendix 3 – A46 Strategic Link Road Consultation Q & A's
4. Appendix 4 – UoW letter.

Background Papers

1. WDC Cabinet report July 2021

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Paul Bentley	paulbentley@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Scott Tompkins - Environment Services	scottthompkins@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Mark Ryder Strategic Director - Communities	markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: 01926 412811

Portfolio Holder	Wallace Redford Portfolio Holder - Transport & Planning	wallaceredford@warwickshire.gov.uk
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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Councillors Redford, Cooke, Spencer, Drew

Other members: Councillors Clarke, Chilvers, D'Arcy and Fradgley

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A46 STRATEGIC LINK ROAD

CONSULTATION ANALYSIS REPORT

Author: Chloe Kinton

Date published: March 2021

Report produced by Business Intelligence, Commissioning Support Unit

BACKGROUND

The consultation on proposed plans for a new transport corridor between the A46 Stoneleigh Junction, University of Warwick and Westwood Heath in Coventry took place between 30th November 2020 and 14th February 2021. The consultation sought feedback on early stage scheme proposals and to get respondent views on transport priorities for the area: in particular, the three main proposed options along with some of the key benefits and issues associated with each option. Responses to the consultation were invited from a range of partners, stakeholders and people who live and work in, or visit and travel through, Warwickshire & Coventry. Feedback from the consultation will help inform and develop these indicative scheme proposals, taking into account the issues and concerns raised by residents, businesses and others who have an interest in the area and the area's transport network. This will be used to inform an outline feasibility design and business case submission to the Department for Transport (DfT), the development of funding applications, and initial site survey and data collection.

METHODOLOGY

A range of methods were used to gather views as part of the consultation. These included:

- An online survey on Ask Warwickshire using Citizen Space.
- A paper-based version of the standard online survey could be requested by telephone or email. Alternative formats and languages could also be requested.
- Comments in relation to the proposed changes to the parking management system could be sent directly to the Transport Design Services Team (via phone, post or email).
- Two live online broadcast events took place (17th December 2020 and 7th January 2021) where people could tune in via Microsoft Teams in order to learn more about the scheme and ask any questions. Copies of questions raised during the broadcasts were added to the supporting documents section of the online survey: 'Live broadcast 1 – Questions and answers' and 'Live broadcast 2 – Questions and answers'.

The duration of the consultation was extended to 10 weeks to allow people more time to respond following a large-scale leaflet drop to approximately 11,000 households in the area (in the hope of reaching as many people as possible during the Coronavirus pandemic). The survey received 522 responses in total (including any paper-based versions of the survey). In addition, a further 98 comments were received via email, post or telephone, and responses/statements were provided by a range of stakeholders including Kenilworth Town Council, Warwick University and West Midlands Friends of the Earth. This material (received via email, post and telephone) has been treated separately to the survey and has been incorporated into the qualitative analysis under the 'additional information' section and referenced accordingly. In total, 201 individuals or organisations (counted by unique IDs) joined the live broadcasts at some point (103 joined Broadcast 1 and 98 joined Broadcast 2).

This report is structured in three main sections. First, the key messages of the analysis on the A46 strategic link road consultation. The main section of the report presents the results from the consultation analysis which includes: about respondents, your journeys and preferences, your current experience in the area, your future travel in the area, thoughts on Option 1: 'No infrastructure improvements', thoughts Option 2: 'New link road to A429 Kenilworth Road', thoughts on Option 3: 'New link road to south of Coventry and University of Warwick', your option preference, and any other additional comments to the consultation (including feedback from email and letter correspondence) on the potential options. The final section presents the equality and diversity analysis.



KEY MESSAGES

- The survey received a total of 522 responses. 63.4% (n=331) of these were from residents living in the area covered by the consultation.

Journeys and travel preferences in the area

- The number of journeys made in the area has reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Around a quarter of all respondents (26.6%, n=139) were currently making journeys within the consultation area every day and a further quarter (25.5%, n=133) making journeys several times a week. In contrast, prior to the pandemic, 42.7% (n=223) of respondents stated they were making journeys every day – a 16.1 percentage point difference. Statistical testing suggests that this is a statistically significant shift in travel behaviour.
- The mode of transport used in the area has changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Car was the most frequently selected method of travel within the consultation area both currently and prior to the pandemic, and there has been little change with regards to the proportion walking (currently 40.8% (n=213)) and cycling (currently 33.7% (n=176)). However, use of public transport appears to be lower currently than before the pandemic: bus – 9.2% (n=48) currently, 21.5% (n=112) prior to the pandemic; and train – 9.0% (n=47) currently, 18.4% (n=96) prior to the pandemic. This is statistically significant and suggests that, whilst people appear to be travelling less frequently within the area, when respondents do choose to travel, they are less likely than they were before the pandemic to use public transport (bus, train) or taxi/private hire.
- Fewer respondents are currently travelling in the area in the traditional peak travel times. Just over half of all respondents (57.1%, n=298) currently travel Monday-Friday during the day (09:00am-16:00pm) which is a similar proportion to prior to the pandemic (52.9%, n=276). However, the proportion of people travelling in the Monday-Friday early morning rush (before 07:00am) has halved to 6.3% (n=33) from 12.6% (n=66); and the proportion travelling in the morning peak (7am-9am) and evening peak (4pm-6pm) have reduced significantly. These figures are statistically significant and indicate a momentous change in the day/time respondents are travelling.
- Transport related issues in the area that were most important to respondents were air quality and being able to easily and safely walk around the area. In total, 87.9% (n=459) stated that air quality was important (either very important or important) whilst being able to easily and safely walk or cycle around the area was considered either very important or important by over three quarters of respondents (77.4%, n=404). More than a quarter (27.6%, n=144) suggested that having a choice of options on how they travel was neither important nor unimportant, with a further 17.4% (n=91) stating this was either of little importance or unimportant.
- Walking and getting a train (23.9%, n=125) and walking and getting a bus (23.6%, n=123) were the options most frequently identified as active travel options already being used by respondents in the area. Interestingly, 44.3% (n=231) of all respondents suggested they would definitely consider Very Light Rail (a battery powered system accommodating 50-70 people similar to a tram). In contrast, over a third stated they would not consider cycling and getting a train (39.3%, n=205), would not get a bus and a train (36.0%, n=188) and would not use park and ride (parking a car and then using public transport to get to the destination) (33.0%, n=172).

Current experience in the area

- Currently, 41.6% (n=217) stated that connectivity (how easily you can get to different places) was either good or very good in the area. In contrast, 45.8% (n=239) felt that the availability of sustainable travel options (walking, cycling, public transport) in the area was either poor or very poor.
- Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that new transport infrastructure and services are needed in the consultation area. The highest level of agreement (agree or strongly agree) was for improved footpaths/walkways (74.3%, n=388) and improved/new cycleways (71.1%, n=371). In



contrast, over half (54.6%, n=285) disagreed (either strongly disagree or disagree) that new roads are needed, and almost a third (31.2%, n=163) disagreed (either strongly disagree or disagree) that a new railway station is required.

Future travel in the area

- Respondents were asked to consider whether they think they will be travelling differently in the future. In total, 59.1% (n=309) of all respondents suggested that they believe there will be no real change in their travelling habits in the future. However, a third (33.7%, n=176) stated that they think they will be travelling less than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. Just 5.2% (n=27) felt they would be travelling more.

Responses to proposed options

- Around half of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagree with each option (Option 1 (48.3%, n=252), Option 2 (54.6%, n=285) Option 3 (51.5%, n=269). Whilst Option 3 had the highest levels of agreement (39.5%, n=206 stated they agreed or strongly agreed with this option), the highest proportion of respondents strongly disagreed with this option (41.6%, n=217).
- For Option 1, 44.1% (n=23) and 42.7% (n=223) stated that congestion levels and air quality respectively would be slightly worse or much worse. However, across all six issues listed, 'about the same' was the most frequently selected response.
- For Option 2, 42.9% (n=224) and 34.9% (n=182) felt air quality and overall travel experience in the area respectively would be slightly worse or much worse. However, a third (32.2%, n=168) of all respondents stated that congestion levels would be slightly better or much better under this proposal.
- For Option 3, 48.7% (n=254) and 36.8% (n=192) felt air quality and overall travel experience in the area respectively would be slightly worse. However, almost half (46.4%, n=242) of all respondents stated that congestion levels would be slightly better or much better under this proposal.
- Overall, just over 40% of respondents thought that all options would have a negative (either negative or very negative) impact on their travel experience (Option 1 - 41.6%, n=217), Option 2 - 42.9% (n=224) and Option 3 - 44.6% (n=233)). Interestingly, 39.1% (n=204) felt the impact of Option 3 would be positive or very positive – a slightly higher proportion than for Option 1 (14.9%, n=53) and Option 2 (21.3%, n=88).
- In terms of respondents' comments, the most common responses were around concerns regarding increasing/exacerbating congestion/traffic volume, environmental concerns, support for sustainable travel options, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travelling habits.
- Responses to the sub-option elements of Option 3 were mixed. Whilst 40% (n=209) of all respondents agreed (either agreed or strongly agreed) with a connection into Kenilworth Road, 29.1% (n=152) disagreed (either disagreed or strongly disagreed) with this option. Restricting access for through traffic along Gibbet Hill Road was the element that received the highest level of disagreement – 38.9% (n=203) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this element.
- In terms of support for other developments in the area under option 3, construction of a Very Light Rail (VLR) route linking the area to central Coventry received slightly more support (51.5%, n=269) than the construction of a new rail station and interchange in the area (42.3%, n=221). Indeed, a third of all respondents said they would not support the construction of a new rail station and interchange.
- As part of the consultation, the local road network had been identified as needing improvement. Respondents were asked to read the information provided in the survey around six local junction improvement schemes and to state whether they agreed or disagreed with each of these. The most frequently selected option across all six schemes was 'neither agree or disagree'. Scheme 1 (Cromwell Lane/Westwood Heath Road Junction) had the most support (38.9% (n=203) of all respondents stated they either agreed or strongly agreed, whilst only 22.8% (n=119) either agreed or strongly agreed with Scheme 5 (Broad Lane/Job's Lane).
- Respondents were asked, on completion of the relevant questions on each of the three options, which option they preferred. The response to this question was mixed with no clear nor apparent favourite – 38.5% (n=201) preferred Option 3, 23.9% (n=125) preferred Option 1 and 8.8% (n=46) preferred Option



2. Over a quarter of all respondents (27.0%, n=141) stated that none of the proposed options were their preference.
- Those respondents who selected 'none of the proposed options' were asked what option(s) should be considered instead. The most common response was support for continued development of walking or cycling active travel options. Other common themes included improvements of specific junctions, public transportation improvements, and minor changes/alterations to aspects of Option 1, 2 or 3.
 - At the close of the survey, respondents were asked if they had any additional comments, suggestions or feedback that they would like to share regarding the proposed options. These included general comments in relation to the proposed changes, with many respondents returning to issues raised earlier in the survey. The most common response was around environmental concerns associated with the proposals (e.g. pollution/air quality, noise, destruction of Green Belt land, wildlife, flooding). Other common themes included development of sustainable travel options (walking and/or cycling), and the impact of HS2.



RESULTS – CONSULTATION ANALYSIS

ABOUT RESPONDENTS

Respondents were shown a map of the area (see map below) covered by the consultation and asked what their main reason was for completing the survey. Table 1 gives a breakdown of responses.

Map 1. The consultation area

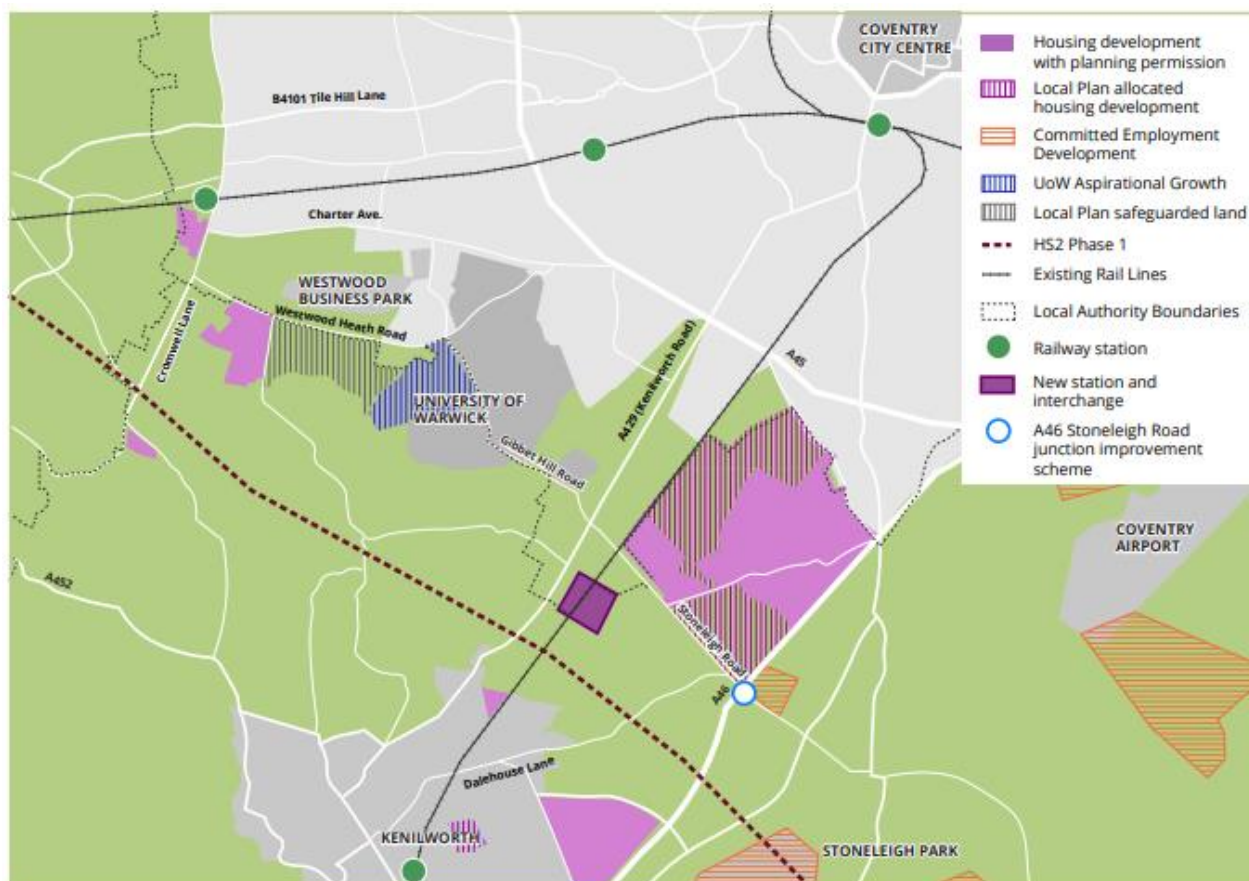


Table 1. Main reason for completing the survey

Reason for completing survey	Total
Live in the area covered by the consultation	331 (63.4%)
Own or represent a business based in the area covered by this consultation	2 (0.4%)
Work in the area covered by this consultation	57 (10.9%)
Commuter and travel through the area covered by this consultation	29 (5.6%)
Attend a university or college in the area covered by this consultation	18 (3.4%)
Regularly visit the area covered by this consultation	66 (12.6%)
Responding on behalf of an organisation or group in the area covered by this consultation	3 (0.6%)
Other	15 (2.9%)
Not answered	1 (0.2%)
Total	522



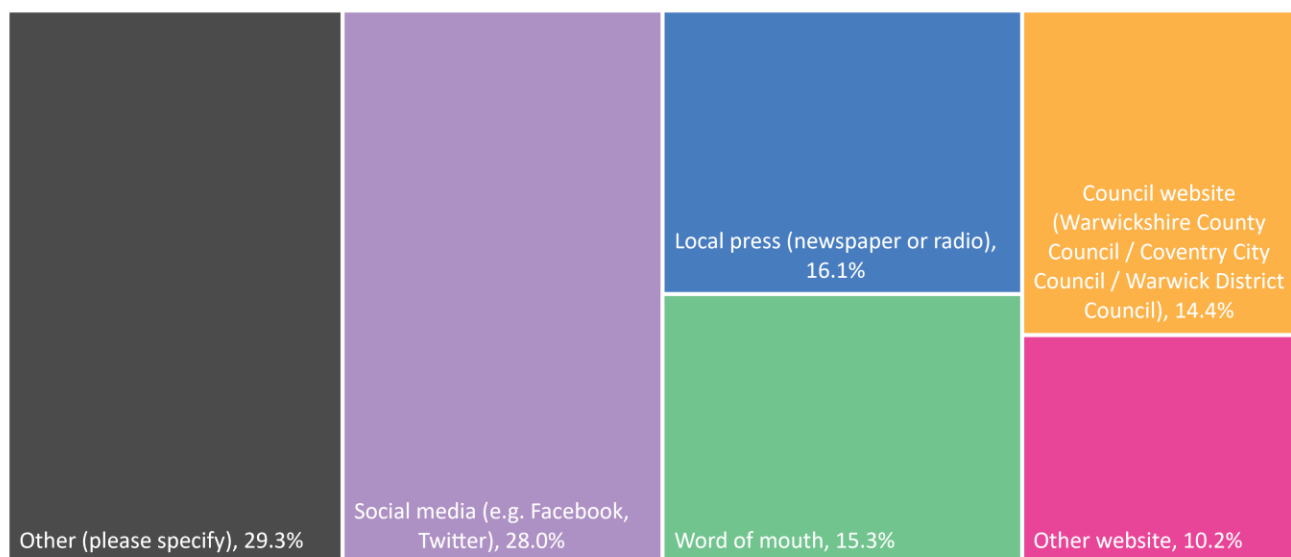
The figures in Table 1 indicate that 63.4% (n=331) of all respondents to the survey were residents living in the area covered by the consultation. In terms of respondents who answered ‘other’, this included respondents who stated that more than one of the options were applicable to them (for example, live *and* work in the area, live in a neighbouring area *and* a local Councillor).

Table 2. In which district or borough do you live (or your business, organisation, workplace, university or college is located)

Location	Total
North Warwickshire Borough	5 (1.0%)
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough	1 (0.2%)
Rugby Borough	6 (1.1%)
Stratford-on-Avon District	7 (1.3%)
Warwick District	310 (59.4%)
Coventry	167 (32.0%)
I do not live or work in Warwickshire/Coventry (but visit or travel through this area)	10 (1.9%)
Other	14 (2.7%)
Prefer not to say	1 (0.2%)
Not answered	1 (0.2%)
Total	522

Furthermore, respondents were asked to specify the district or borough in which they live (or the location of their business, organisation, workplace, university or college if this was the main reason for completing the survey). The results of this are presented in Table 2. As expected, the majority of respondents (91.4%, n=477) selected either Warwick District (59.4%, n=310) or Coventry (32.0%, n=167) – this is where the consultation area is located. In terms of those who answered ‘other’, several specified the specific town/village/road/postcode where they lived (e.g. Kenilworth) and three respondents said Solihull.

Figure 1. How did you hear about this consultation? (Select all that apply)



Respondents were also asked to state how they heard about the consultation. As shown in Figure 1, 28.0% (n=146) of all respondents stated they heard about the consultation via social media (such as Facebook, Twitter) and 16.1% (n=84) said they heard through the local press (newspaper or radio). Almost a third (29.3%, n=153) of all respondents stated they heard about the consultation from other sources. In total, 181 respondents specified the source(s) in the open text box and, of these, 111 (61.3%) stated that they received a flyer to their home address. The majority of those who received a flyer suggested it was an official consultation leaflet, however 20 respondents stated it was a leaflet from the Green Party. Furthermore, 28 respondents who commented (15.5%) mentioned receiving communications from the University of Warwick. Clearly, respondents heard about the consultation from a variety of different sources and some example quotations to illustrate this are presented below:

- *“Public consultation invitation leaflet through the door”*
- *“Via a local councillor also a leaflet posted through my door”*
- *“City Councillor”*
- *“Westwood Heath Resident Association newsletter”*
- *“Crackley Residents Association”*
- *“I was forwarded the Burton Green Parish update including links”*
- *“Neighbourhood Watch Group”*
- *“University of Warwick staff newsletter”*
- *“University of Warwick internal communication”*
- *“My employer told me about it”*
- *“CPRE, the countryside charity”*
- *“Green Party email”*
- *“Green Party circular”*
- *“Green View, Kenilworth Issue 21 Feb 2021”*
- *“From people we know”*
- *“Coventry online news”*

As part of the process, a large-scale leaflet drop took place in the area with the aim to reach as many people as possible during the Coronavirus pandemic. It should be stated here that there were three respondents who said they had not received the official information leaflet (either at the point they completed the online survey or too late to attend the first broadcast event). There was an issue with the initial leaflet drop in the area with some properties being missed. A further leaflet drop was conducted to those properties that were missed and the duration of the consultation was extended to 10 weeks (rather than the originally planned 8 weeks) to account for this. Also, a recording and copy of the questions and answers from each broadcast session was made available to anyone who missed the session (located in the supplementary documents section of the online survey):

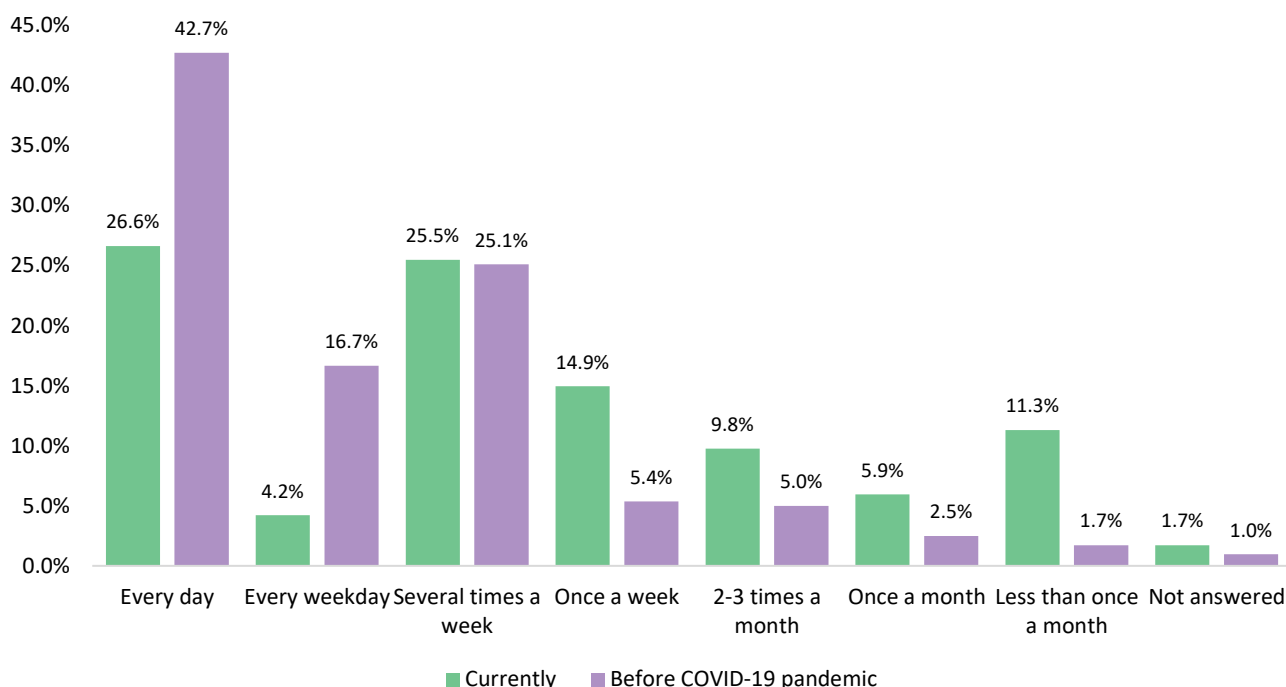
- *“A friend in Kenilworth who HAD received an information leaflet, which we STILL have not”*
- *“Post card notice from Council suspiciously arrived after the first consultation event was held”*
- *“Many people in Coventry have no idea about this proposed scheme. People I know in Kenilworth had information and details about the consultation directly delivered to their homes. I have not found anyone who has received such information and invitation to respond to the consultation in Coventry in this manner, to date. It is hardly a fair democratic process and supposed consultation if such a vast number of people have not been either adequately informed or given a fair chance to respond”*



YOUR JOURNEYS & PREFERENCES

First, respondents were asked how frequently they currently make journeys within the consultation area (respondents could select only one option). Using the same scale, respondents were then asked how frequently they made journeys within the area before the COVID-19 pandemic (again, respondents could select only one option). As Figure 2 shows, currently around a quarter of all respondents (26.6%, n=139) were making journeys every day and a further quarter (25.5%, n=133) making journeys several times a week. In contrast, prior to the pandemic, 42.7% (n=223) of respondents stated they were making journeys every day – a 16.1 percentage point difference. Statistical testing suggests that this is statistically significant shift in travel behaviour.

Figure 2. Frequency of journeys in the area currently and before the COVID-19 pandemic



Looking at responses by types of respondent, 38.4% (n=127) of respondents who stated they live in the consultation area suggested they were currently making a journey in the area every day, compared to 59.5% (n=197) prior to the pandemic – a 21.1% percentage gap (again, this is statistically significant). In addition, 45.4% (n=128) of those aged 18-59 years stated they made a journey in the area every day prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The equivalent figure currently was 27.0% (n=76). This reflects the current guidance to work from home where possible for many of the working aged population and perhaps indicates many University students did not return to the area following the Christmas break.



Figure 3. Change in journey frequency pre- and during the COVID-19 pandemic

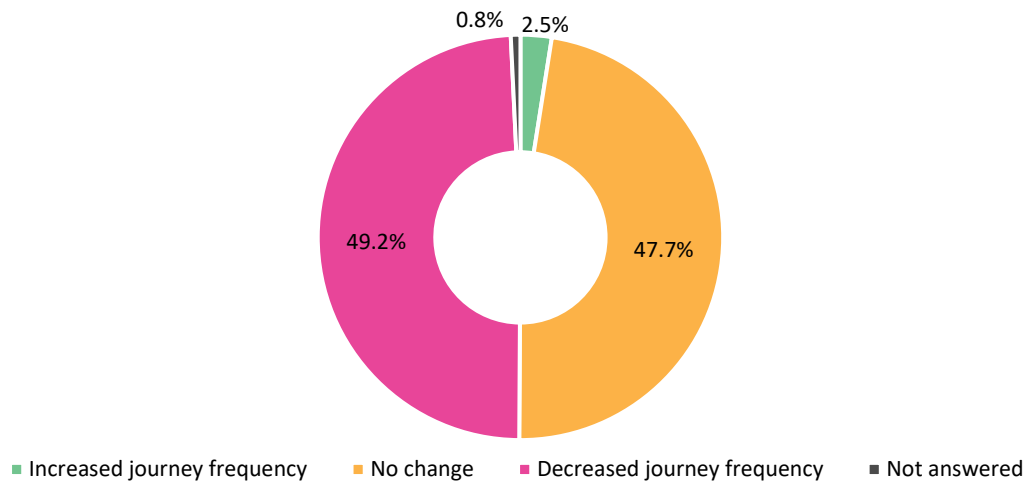
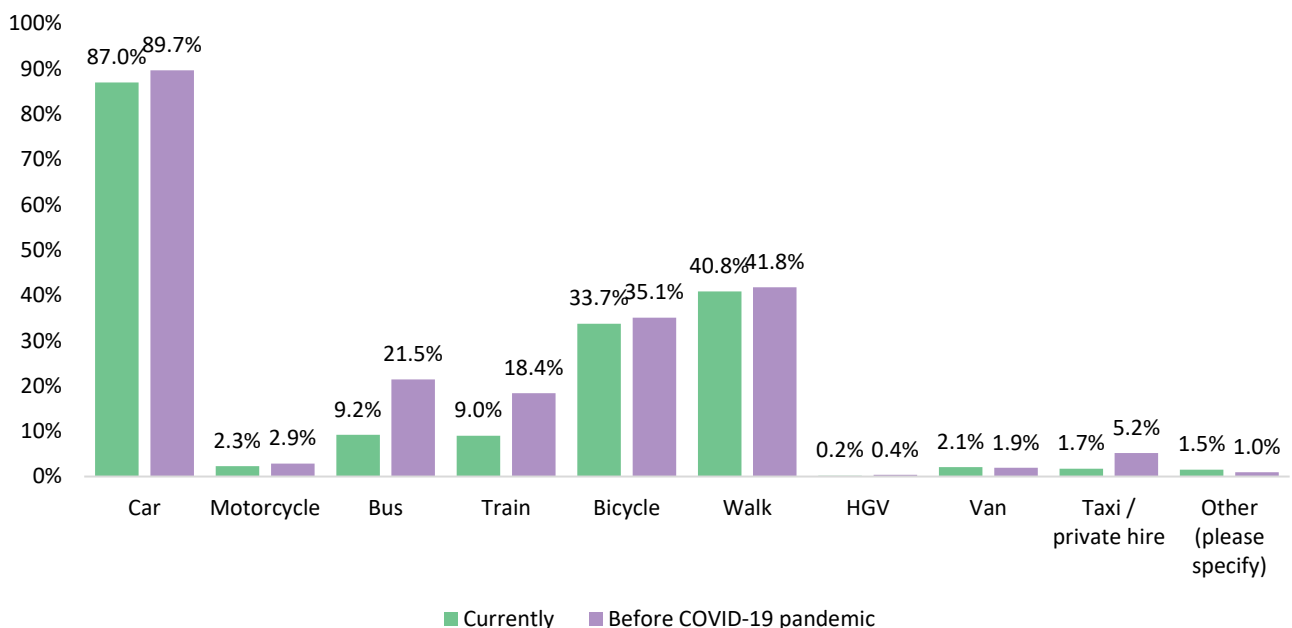


Figure 3 shows any change in journey frequency by respondents within the consultation area currently compared to prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst the survey was live, England’s second national lockdown came to an end and was replaced by a three-tier system (on 2nd December 2020) – Coventry and Warwickshire were under Tier 3 ‘very high alert’ with Government advice indicating people should avoid travelling outside of their area (other than when necessary e.g. school or work) and reducing the number of journeys where possible. England entered a third national lockdown on 4th January 2021 which included the Government closing schools and urging people to work from home. These restrictions were still in place at survey closure. This may well have, depending on when respondents completed the survey, influenced responses to this question. However, what is interesting here is that 47.7% (n=249) of respondents gave the same answer to both current and pre-COVID-19 journey frequency (suggesting no real change in the amount of travel within the area), whilst 49.2% (n=257) stated they were travelling less frequently now than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. Just 2.5% (n=13) stated they were travelling more within the area.

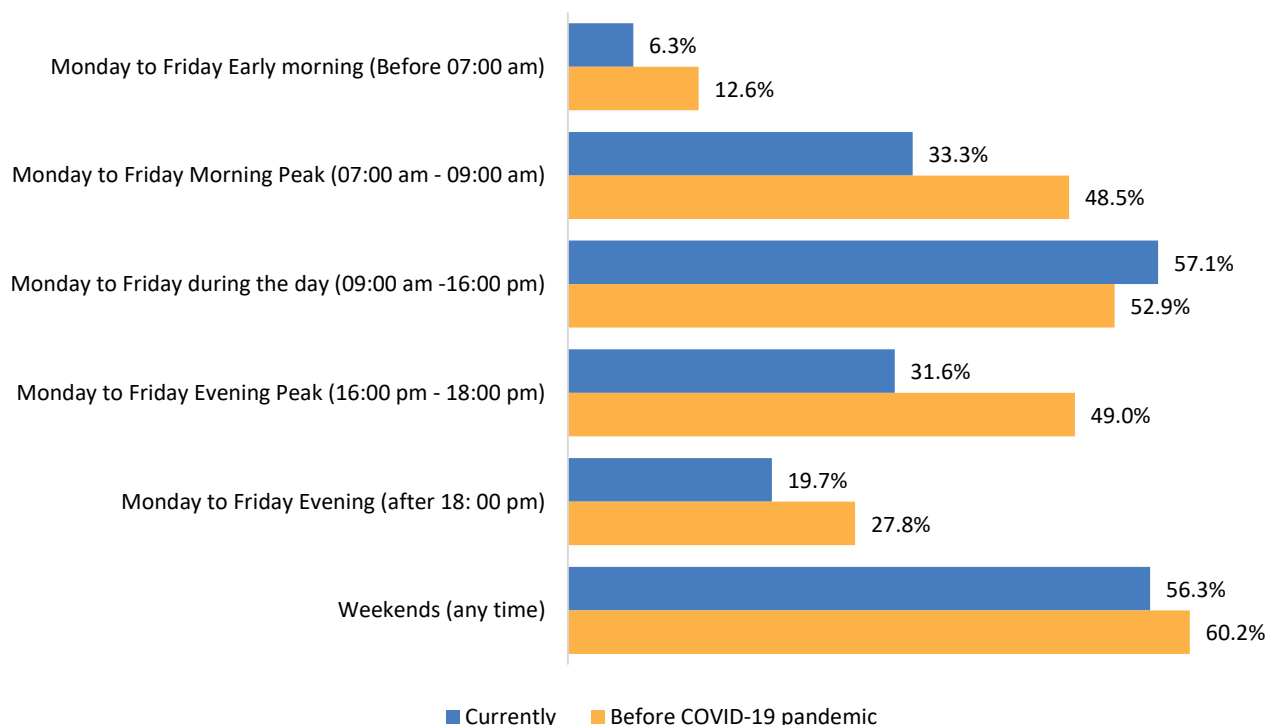
Figure 4. What types of transport did you use before the COVID-19 pandemic and do you currently use to travel in this area? (Select all that apply).



Respondents were asked what types of transport they currently use to travel in this area and what type they used prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (respondents could select all options that applied). As Figure 4 shows, 87.0% (n=454) currently use a car (the equivalent figure prior to the pandemic was 89.7%, n=468). Whilst car was the most frequently selected, 40.8% (n=213) currently walk and 33.7% (n=176) currently cycle. These figures are similar prior to the pandemic. Interestingly, use of public transport appears to be lower currently than before the pandemic: bus – 9.2% (n=48) currently, 21.5% (n=112) prior to the pandemic; and train – 9.0% (n=47) currently, 18.4% (n=96) prior to the pandemic. This is statistically significant and suggests that, whilst people appear to be travelling less frequently within the area (see Figures 2 and 3), when respondents do choose to travel they are less likely than they were before the pandemic to use public transport (bus, train) or taxi/private hire. This change is likely due to concerns around the risk of catching Coronavirus and Government advice to minimise mixing with other people. ‘Other’ answers during the pandemic included electric car, tractor, horse, running and references to changes in travel pattern(s) due to Coronavirus lockdown restrictions.

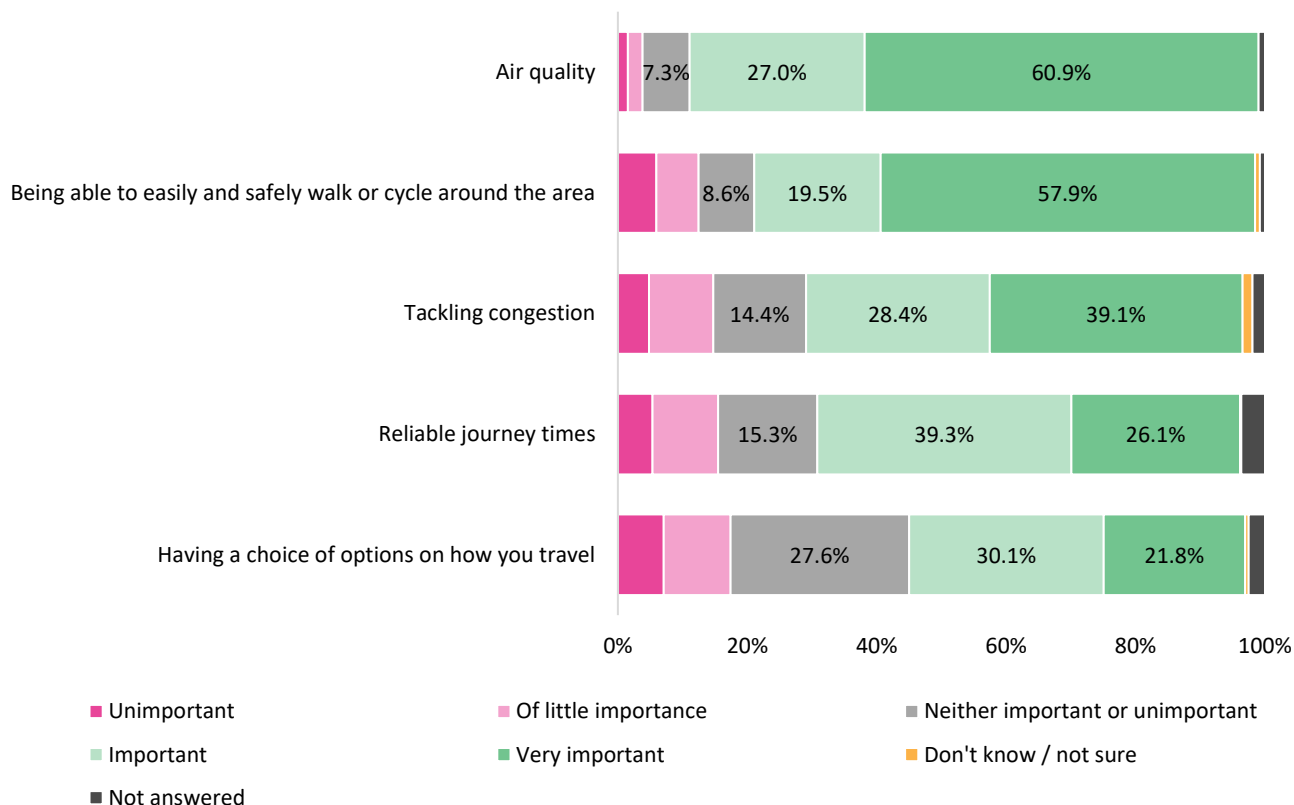
The next set of questions focused on time and day of most frequent travel. Using the same scale, respondents were asked to select all options that applied in terms of current travel and travel prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. As Figure 5 shows, just over half of all respondents (56.3%, n=294) currently travel any time at the weekend which is a similar proportion to prior to the pandemic (60.2%, n=314). Also, 57.1% (n=298) currently travel Monday-Friday during the day (09:00am-16:00pm) which is a similar proportion to prior to the pandemic (52.9%, n=276). However, the proportion of respondents travelling Monday-Friday during peak times has changed significantly compared to prior to the pandemic: early morning before 07:00am has halved to 6.3% (n=33) from 12.6% (n=66); 7:00am-9:00am has reduced from 48.5% to 33.3%; and 16:00-18:00pm has reduced from 49.0% to 31.6%. –. These figures are statistically significant and indicate a momentous change in the day/time respondents are travelling (fewer people travelling in the area during the usual pre- and post- work rush hour as fewer people are going into work, and less travel at weekends and evenings as leisure/hospitality options are closed)

Figure 5. Thinking about your most frequent journeys, what times of day do you currently travel and did you travel before the COVID-19 pandemic? (Select all that apply)



Respondents were asked to consider the importance of five issues on a scale of ‘unimportant’ to ‘very important’: tackling congestion, reliable journey times, air quality, have a choice of options on how to travel, and being able to easily and safely walk or cycle in the area. The results of this are presented in Figure 6 below. Indeed, 87.9% (n=459) stated that air quality was important (either very important or important). Being able to easily and safely walk or cycle around the area was also considered important (either very important or important) by over three quarters of respondents (77.4%, n=404). Interestingly, more than a quarter (27.6%, n=144) suggested that having a choice of options on how they travel was neither important nor unimportant, with a further 17.4% (n=91) stating this was either of little importance or unimportant.

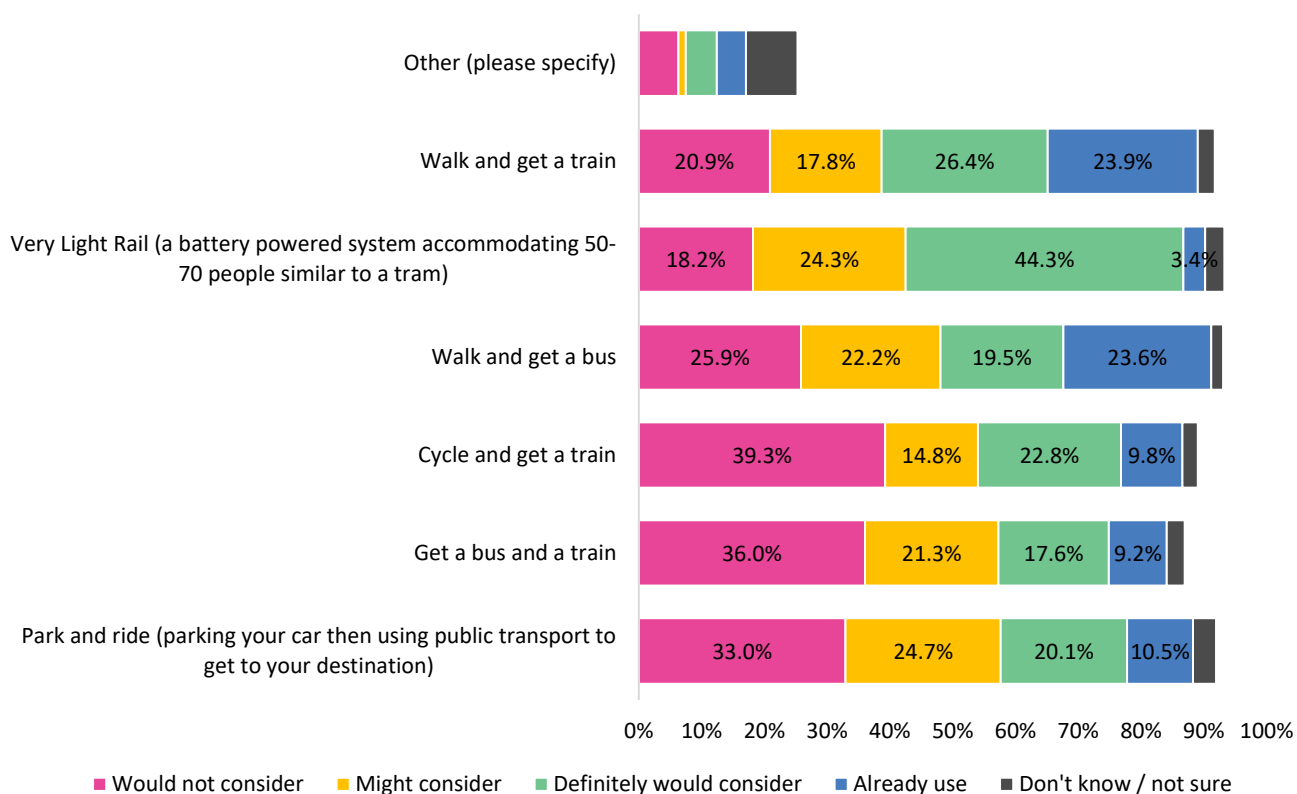
Figure 6. Thinking about this area, how important are the following issues to you?



In the final question of this section, respondents were asked, from a list of options, which active travel or public transport options they would consider using in this area now and in the future, if they were available. The results of this are presented in Figure 7. Walking and getting a train (23.9%, n=125) and walking and getting a bus (23.6%, n=123) were the options most frequently identified as already being used by respondents. Interestingly, 44.3% (n=231) of all respondents suggested they would definitely consider Very Light Rail (a battery powered system accommodating 50-70 people similar to a tram). In contrast, over a third stated they would not consider cycling and getting a train (39.3%, n=205), would not get a bus and a train (36.0%, n=188) and would not use park and ride (parking a car and then using public transport to get to the destination) (33.0%, n=172).



Figure 7. If available, would you consider using any of these active travel / public transport options in this area now and in the future?



In terms of those respondents who gave an 'other' active travel or public transport option, over half of all comments (n=43, 56.6%) focused on cycling. A number of respondents said that active travel or public transport wasn't an option with a car being the only means of transport. In total, 76 comments were received to this question and example quotations have been presented below to illustrate key themes identified:

- Cycling (including electric bikes):
 - *"I would cycle, a good cycle path would be great"*
 - *"Cycling all the way, given decent infrastructure for that"*
 - *"Cycle all the way"*
- Walking:
 - *"I regularly just walk, regular user of existing footpath network"*
 - *"Could walk into work if wasn't so polluted & proper pavement & crossings available"*
- Public transport (e.g. trains, buses):
 - *"Need to get trains at Kenilworth station again as soon as possible - not rail replacement bus"*
 - *"Better bus service (preferably electric) using existing roads combined with more incentives to leave your car at home"*
 - *"Drive and get a train; safety/security, convenience and avoiding adverse weather"*
- Car (including car share):
 - *"Car share"*
 - *"Car is the only viable option due to where I live - I would need to walk and catch two buses to reach the area, which would probably take three or four times as long"*

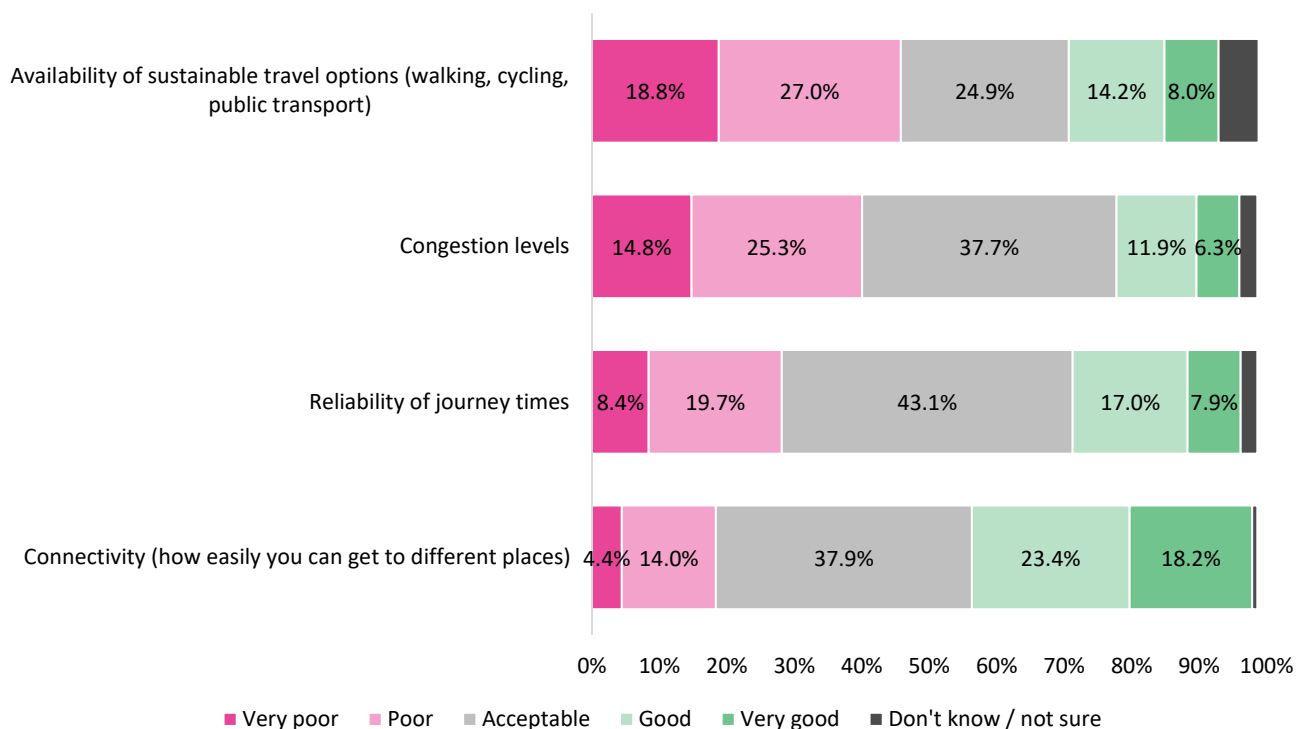


YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE IN THE AREA

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to answer questions relating to their current travel experience in the area. Again, it is important to note that for most of the time period the survey was live, England was under national lockdown restrictions due to the Coronavirus pandemic. This may well have influenced respondents' answers to these questions.

First, respondents were asked to think about their overall travel experience in the area and rate four issues (on a scale of very poor to very good) (Figure 8). Currently, 41.6% (n=217) stated that connectivity (how easily you can get to different places) was either good or very good. In contrast, 45.8% (n=239) felt that the availability of sustainable travel options (walking, cycling, public transport) was either poor or very poor. Interestingly, more than half (52.1%, n=147) of those respondents aged 18-59 stated that the availability of sustainable travel options was poor or very poor. Between a quarter and two-fifths of all respondents stated that they considered each of the four issues to be acceptable.

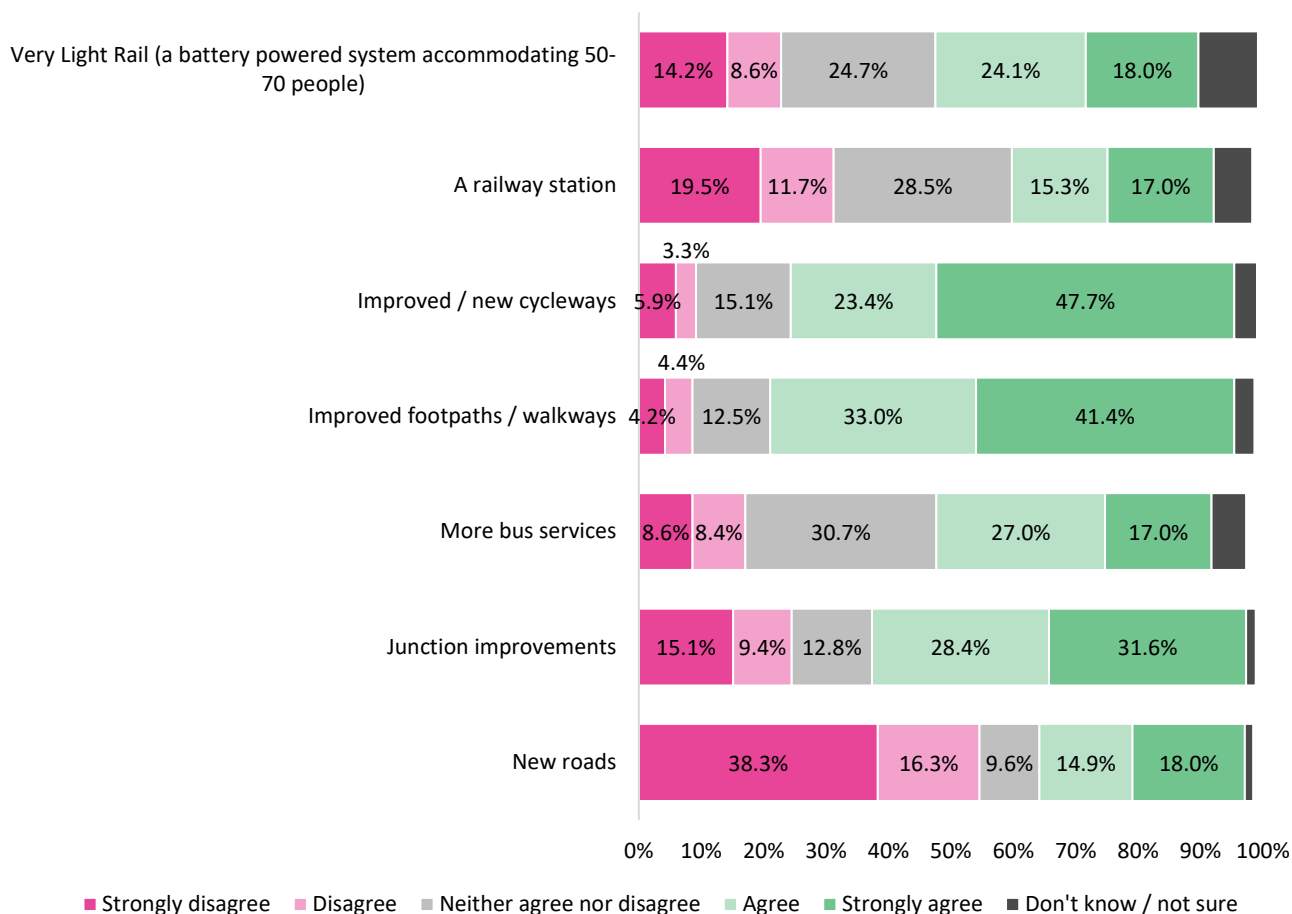
Figure 8. Thinking about your overall travel experience in this area, how would you rate the following?



Second, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that new transport infrastructure and services are needed in the consultation area. A list of new transport services/infrastructure was provided and the results of this are presented in Figure 9. The highest level of agreement (agree or strongly agree) was for improved footpaths/walkways (74.3%, n=388) and improved/new cycleways (71.1%, n=371). Indeed, the majority of comments (67.1%, n=51) in the previous section (if available, would you consider using any of these active travel / public transport options in this area now and in the future?) focused on cycling and/or walking options. In contrast, over half (54.6%, n=285) disagreed (either strongly disagree or disagree) that new roads are needed, and almost a third (31.2%, n=163) disagreed (either strongly disagree or disagree) that a new railway station is required.



Figure 9. Do you agree or disagree that the following new transport infrastructure and services are needed in this area?

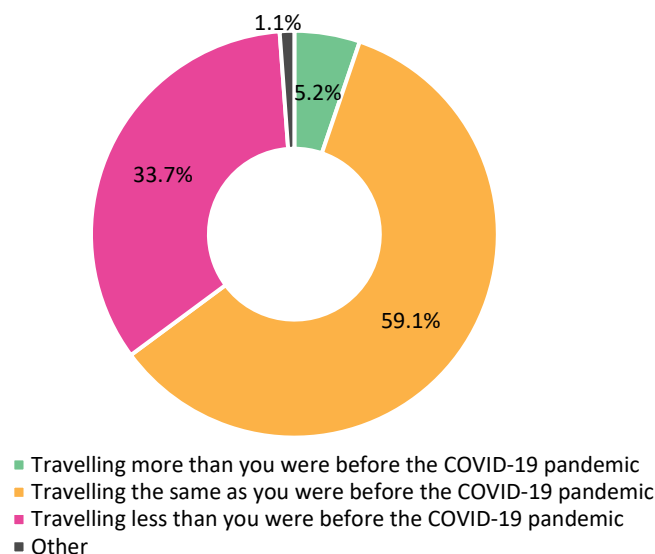


YOUR FUTURE TRAVEL IN THE AREA

Following this, respondents were asked to consider whether they think they will be travelling differently in the future. In total, 59.1% (n=309) of all respondents suggested that they believe there will be no real change in their travelling habits in the future (Figure 10). However, a third (33.7%, n=176) stated that they think they will be travelling less than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic. Just 5.2% (n=27) felt they would be travelling more. The findings of this question support the results presented in Figure 3 regarding journey frequency pre- and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of course, the results of this question do not help us better understand whether respondents will be travelling at the same time of day or via the same method of transport in the future. Interestingly, 39.0% (n=110) of those respondents aged 18-59 stated they think they will be travelling less in the future, compared to 23.9% of those aged 60 and over. This suggests that those of working age are potentially anticipating a long-term change in travelling (e.g. commuting) habits due to changes in working patterns or practice which will impact less on other age groups.



Figure 10. Thinking about your possible future travel in the area, do you think your travelling habits will involve:



Those respondents who selected 'other' to this question were asked to specify. In total, 49 comments were received (with some respondents taking the opportunity to give reason(s) as to why they had answered the way they had). The majority of responses focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and how this has, and may continue to, shape travelling patterns in the future. Example quotations are presented below to illustrate the key themes:

- Home working / (potentially) changed working patterns due to COVID-19 pandemic:
 - *"This is really dependent on decisions that haven't yet been made by my employer - there is a possibility that we will be permitted to work from home, however I'd still anticipate travelling into work at least 3/5 days"*
 - *"Ideally I plan to work partially from home and partially in the office. I eventually plan to cycle to work on the days that I am in work, however this is dependent upon reliable and safe cycle routes being fully implemented within the area. My workplace is currently too far to walk to, however I walk for most other things (e.g. food shopping). Car usage is likely to be limited to longer journeys (e.g. visiting family)"*
 - *I expect to work from home at least part of the time. And we will be going down from two cars in the household to one, so I will walk and cycle even more"*
 - *"Travelling more by foot and bike"*
 - *"Essential trips only and less inclined to use public transport during the pandemic"*
 - *"Likely to only travel into work 2 or 3 days per week, rather than 5 days a week. This is likely to be the case for a huge number of university staff, meaning that the assumptions around traffic increasing must be reviewed in light of changing working practices"*
- Environmental / health concerns:
 - *"The dual carriageway will destroy valuable countryside and the habitats of lots of wild animals. It will eliminate what remains of these spaces with the rest being destroyed by HS2. This space has been hugely valuable during the pandemic to allow walking without meeting hordes of people that flock to the Greenway and local parks, it will a huge detriment to people's mental health"*
 - *"We've proven we can all work from home. There is a climate emergency we should all pledge to travel less"*

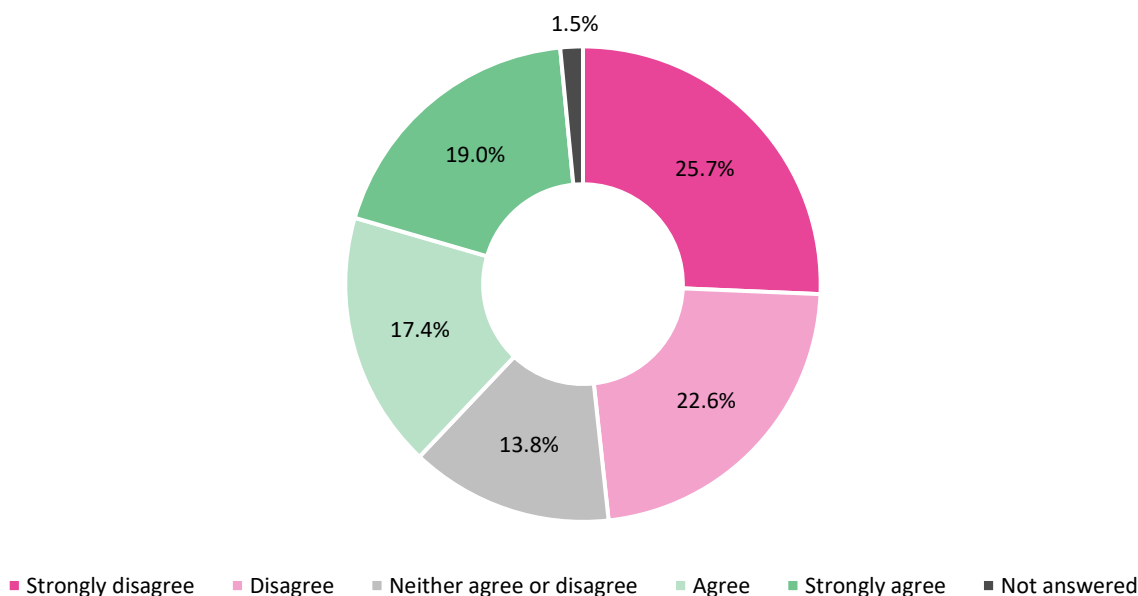


- *“At the moment cars are running cyclists and pedestrians off the road, polluting the atmosphere and contributing to ill health and obesity”*
- *“Safe cycle schemes that support good mental health, environment is more important”*
- Sustainable transport methods (walking, cycling, public transport etc.):
 - *“Would like to see less cars in the area e.g. going to the University and more sustainable and green options for travel to the university from Coventry, Kenilworth & Leamington”*
 - *“I expect less [travel] therefore, sustainable travel options to my place of work would be ideal as I wouldn't have to maintain a second car”*
 - *“Eventually plan to cycle to work on the days that I am in work, however this is dependent upon reliable and safe cycle routes being fully implemented within the area”*
 - *“I will think twice before getting into the car. I would like to be able to travel efficiently by public transport”*

OPTION 1: 'NO INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS'

Respondents to the survey were then directed to answer a range of questions related to each of the three option proposals. First, respondents were asked to consider Option 1: 'no infrastructure improvements'. In particular, to what extent they agreed or disagreed with this option. As Figure 11 shows, almost half of all respondents to this question (48.3%, n=252) disagreed (either disagreed or strongly disagreed) with Option 1. In contrast, just over a third (36.4%, n=190) agreed (either agreed or strongly agreed) with the option of no infrastructure improvements.

Figure 11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Option 1: 'No infrastructure improvements'?

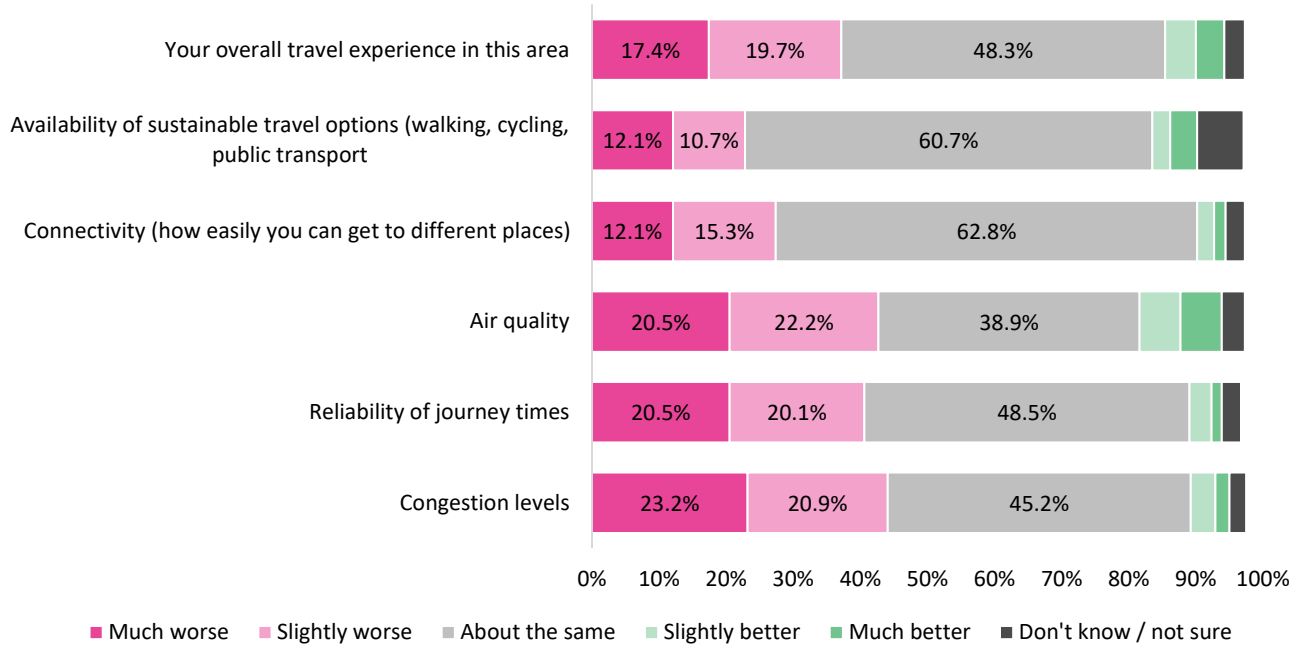


Next, respondents were asked to consider (on a scale of much worse to much better) what impact Option 1 will have on a range of issues. Across all six issues listed, 'about the same' was the most frequently selected response (see Figure 12). However, 44.1% (n=23) and 42.7% (n=223) stated that congestion levels and air quality respectively would be slightly worse or much worse if no infrastructure improvements were made. Just 4.2% (n=22) of all respondents stated they thought connectivity would be slightly better or much better due to Option 1. Indeed, a small proportion of respondents considered Option 1 would have a positive impact on the issues



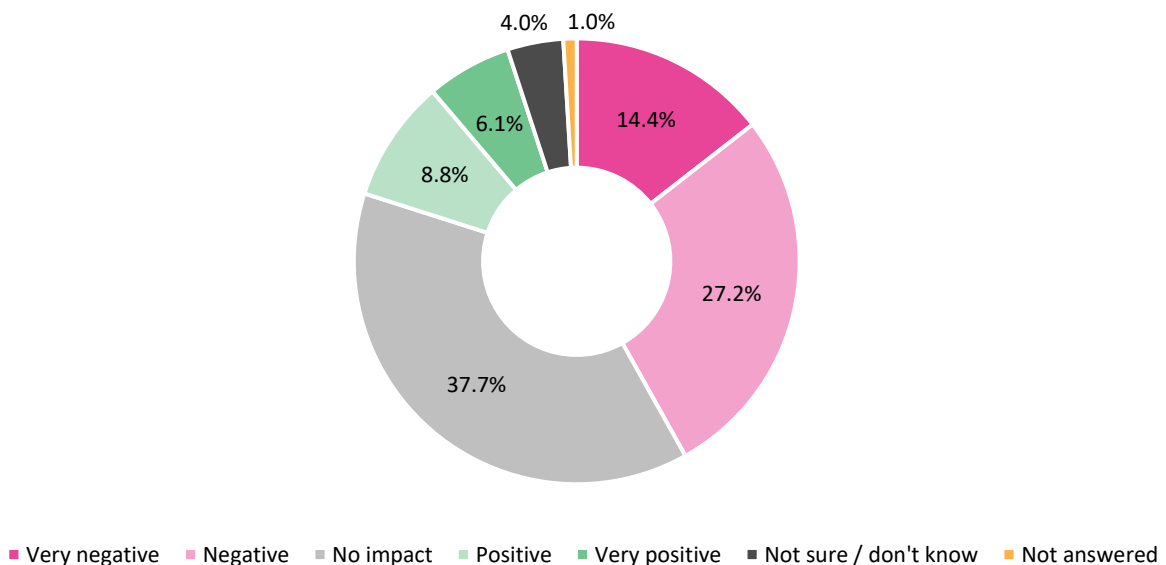
listed, although air quality was the area where the highest proportion of respondents thought that no improvements would make the area slightly or much better.

Figure 12. What impact do you think Option 1: 'No infrastructure improvements' will have on the following?



The next question asked what impact Option 1 would have on respondents' travel experience. Overall, as Figure 13 shows, over a third (37.7%, n=197) of respondents felt that Option 1: 'no infrastructure improvements' will have no impact. However, just 14.9% (n=53) stated Option 1 would be positive (either positive or very positive) whilst 41.6% (n=217) believed that it would have a negative (either negative or very negative) effect on their travel experience.

Figure 13. Overall, what impact do you think Option 1: 'No infrastructure improvements' will have on your travel experience?



The final question in this section asked respondents if they had any additional comments/details on the impact(s) of Option 1: 'no infrastructure improvements'. Analysis was undertaken and themes based on qualitative comments regarding Option 1 are presented in Table 3. In total, 229 respondents gave a comment to this question. Respondents seemingly took this first opportunity to comment on each/any of the three main options proposed (the pros/cons, their preference) rather than specifically focussing on Option 1 – this is reflected in the example quotations below. The overriding sentiment regarding Option 1 was mixed. The most common response was around concerns regarding increasing congestion/traffic volume – 32.3% (n=74) of respondents who left a comment to this question mentioned this in their response. Other common themes included: environmental concerns, support for sustainable travel options, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travelling habits.

Table 3. Themes based on qualitative comments regarding additional details of the impacts (positive or negative) of Option 1: 'No infrastructure improvements'

Theme / description	Count (%)	Example quotation(s) for illustration
Concerns regarding increasing congestion/traffic volume associated with the proposals	74 (32.3%)	<p><i>"Presumably with rising traffic, this option will simply let the existing problems worsen"</i></p> <p><i>"Option 1 means the area cannot grow. With all these new housing estates being built and expansion of the University, the traffic will increase with no relief"</i></p> <p><i>"Option 1 has been in place for the last several years and congestion has worsened"</i></p> <p><i>"Travel along Westwood Heath Road prior to Covid was very congested during rush hour and poor air quality. All proposals 1, 2, 3 etc will make this worse"</i></p> <p><i>"We live on the corner of Cromwell Lane and Westwood Heath Road. The situation is bad enough with traffic, noise and pollution without the impact of additional traffic" [this comment did not specify which Option(s) it was referencing]</i></p> <p><i>"There is already heavy traffic levels during morning and work times with inconsiderate drivers blocking off drive ways"[this comment did not specify which Option(s) it was referencing]</i></p>
Less impact on the environment than other options (e.g. pollution/air quality, noise, destruction of Green Belt land, wildlife, flooding)	61 (26.6%)	<p><i>"No new road is required - what is required are means to encourage those that may still need to travel to do so in an environmentally friendly manner"</i></p> <p><i>"This option will minimise the impact on the environment"</i></p> <p><i>"The retention of the green environment and hence biodiversity is of the utmost importance to me"</i></p> <p><i>"Option 1 means my air quality, hence my health, is not compromised. Likewise, noise pollution would not be as high"</i></p>



		<i>"Positive impacts of Option 1 are: cleaner air, keeping the rural nature of the area, conserving trees and wilder areas, preserving wildlife, keeping green spaces and avoiding building more housing, preserving the character and beauty of Kenilworth, slowing the spread of urbanisation. All of the above give tranquillity and support everyone's mental health"</i>
Support for (continued) development of sustainable/active travel options (e.g. walking/cycling routes, public transportation improvements) rather than changing the existing road network	58 (25.3%)	<p><i>"We should be looking to improve public transport and sustainable travel i.e. cycling/walking not providing new roads for cars. The area in question will already suffer from HS2 development"</i></p> <p><i>"This household would like to see improved sustainable travel options: cycle lanes, pedestrian walkways, light railway, improved EV charging infrastructure and more buses"</i></p> <p><i>"We need Option 1 to spend money on the proposed railway station, light rail, electric bus services and far better cycle network"</i></p> <p><i>"The problem with this consultation is that there is no option that would allow to keep the existing road network and improve the sustainable transport options only"</i></p> <p><i>"A switch to active travel (in particular a reliable bus service) would remove a huge amount of existing traffic. The issue here is not road capacity, but the fact that people are tied to their cars through habit and lack of suitable alternatives"</i></p>
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel/use of the area and how changes to the way people travel should be considered in any proposals and before any changes to the infrastructure are made	50 (21.8%)	<p><i>"People will be travelling less, with more working and studying from home"</i></p> <p><i>"Why do we need a new link road to Warwick University? We are discovering that more and more activities can be done online, there is less need for people to drive to work/university etc."</i></p> <p><i>"This option, along with the others, is dependent on future work and travel arrangements post Covid-19"</i></p> <p><i>"Right now, the commuting situation in the area covered is totally fine as a result of much reduced car traffic due to lockdown and home working. What is difficult to anticipate is how much of that will return post-COVID. I suspect/hope that commuting levels will not need to reach the same levels as we had before COVID, but it's very difficult to anticipate"</i></p>
Impact(s) of increasing population(s)/housing and/or commercial developments on the area meaning changes need to happen	42 (18.3%)	<p><i>"With the new housing developments... the current infrastructure may not manage well"</i></p> <p><i>"With more housing in the area congestion is likely to be worse if no changes are made"</i></p> <p><i>"Why agree to the housing without the infrastructure in place?"</i></p> <p><i>"There will probably be some negative impacts as the residential and industrial/commercial commitments come forward putting extra strain on the network"</i></p>



		<i>"There is so much new housing already given planning permission for this side of town that the current infrastructure cannot cope and is not futureproof"</i>
Comments relating to any/all of the proposed options (for example, comparing Option 1, Option 2, and/or Option 3, option preferences)	37 (16.2%)	<i>"We don't need this... You are pushing people away from living here because its turning into just roads, railways, and housing estates it's not nice anymore. Please stop building just for monetary gain"</i> <i>"Do nothing isn't an option, option 2 doesn't offer enough benefit but option 3 is so much to do and not for such a long time and we don't know if it will be needed"</i>
Consideration given to minor changes/improvements to Option 1	36 (15.7%)	<i>"There should be an option to improve current infrastructure such as junctions, add a railway station and VLR and see if that's enough"</i> <i>"Changes are needed, but with several minor changes, traffics issues can be improved"</i>
General positive comments towards Option 1	32 (14.0%)	<i>"If traffic levels peak at a lower level, as is very likely, then by definition things will improve by "doing nothing".</i> <i>"There will be some benefits from the already underway phase one junction improvement"</i> <i>"Option 1 is not a solution to the transport problems but it is better than making things worse by building another road"</i>
No benefit(s) / general negative responses associated with Option 1	22 (9.6%)	<i>"By definition "No infrastructure improvements" will see little change IF - and it's a BIG IF - the traffic returns to pre-Covid-19 levels"</i> <i>"This option seems like a universally dreadful idea"</i>
Suggestions that proposals will have a similar (negative) impact as per HS2 so option 1 is preferred	16 (7.0%)	<i>"The positive impact that HS2 will bring to the area has been greatly overestimated"</i> <i>"Much of the area in question has already been subject to destruction due to HS2 "development". Further infrastructure "improvements" will only have an additional negative impact on this countryside"</i> <i>"In view of the fact that the area will be extremely adversely affected by HS2, I feel that any alterations in the road structure would be overkill"</i>
The role/impact of Warwick University on the area	15 (6.6%)	<i>"Warwick Uni will continue to make the situation worse with its self-centred development plans that ignore, despite what they say, the local community"</i> <i>"The UoW continues to expand and enlarge its car parks, hence traffic will continue to increase"</i> <i>"The roads here are already too busy. With University campus growing and all the housing that has been approved the traffic will only get worse"</i>



Concerns that the proposals are a waste of money/resources so support for Option 1	14 (6.1%)	<p><i>"We should spend the money on improving flexible and remote working instead of this crazy rush hour phenomenon... To keep pouring money into a black hole that ruins our environment is not very clever. Same goes for that big white elephant called HS2"</i></p> <p><i>"Total waste of more money on infrastructure that's not needed"</i></p>
Impact on the quality of life and wellbeing of residents in the area	12 (5.2%)	<p><i>"We live close to the proposed road... You will absolutely destroy us mentally and emotionally if you go ahead with this"</i></p> <p><i>"In these times justifying expensive and nature-destructive transport projects of any kind (including the HS2!) is simply criminal. This is no way to care about your population and improve their quality of life. A way to improve our quality of life is to give us much more access to green areas, allotments and orchards"</i></p> <p><i>"Noise pollution and air quality would undoubtedly get worse with Option 1 and that would impact adversely on the health and wellbeing of those of us that live alongside the road"</i></p>
Suggestions of survey/consultation bias	11 (4.8%)	<p><i>"The survey questions appear to reflect the Council's predetermined objectives to allow unfettered developments in the area"</i></p> <p><i>"This survey is unprofessional and biased. You call a nasty road project an 'improvement'. You don't offer improved cycling and pedestrian access as a single option without cars"</i></p> <p><i>"The above questions are narrow in scope and weighted in favour of the scheme"</i></p> <p><i>"Clearly option one is not being taken seriously, so why bother putting it forward"</i></p>
Concerns regarding the modelling assessment/data/information presented	10 (4.4%)	<p><i>"The predicted housing needs are overstated and not justified"</i></p> <p><i>"The assumption of 25% increase in traffic is based on pre-Covid data. It is not possible to assess the impact of any of these options given the shift to new working practices. It may be that no infrastructure improvements are needed because people are commuting less and the traffic demand will actually stay static or decrease"</i></p> <p><i>"Guessing as to how much my travel arrangements will be affected is no better than your travel models based on pre-pandemic data which is clearly no longer appropriate"</i></p>

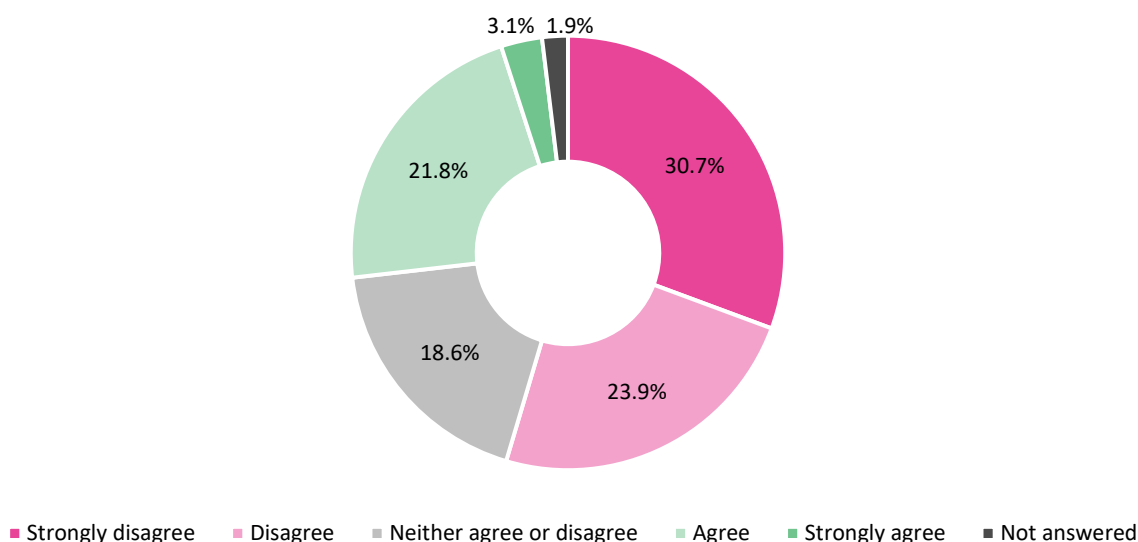
Other themes mentioned by a smaller number of respondents included: issues in/at specific locations (e.g. specific roads and/or junctions) (n=8), issues around train station(s)/connections (n=8), safety concerns (e.g. speeding) (n=6), concerns proposals would push congestion problems to new areas (n=5), and joined-up/collaborative thinking is required (n=4).



OPTION 2: 'NEW LINK ROAD TO A429 KENILWORTH ROAD'

Next, respondents were asked to consider Option 2: 'New link road to A429 Kenilworth Road. First, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Option 2. In total, more than half (54.6%, n=285) of all respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with Option 2.

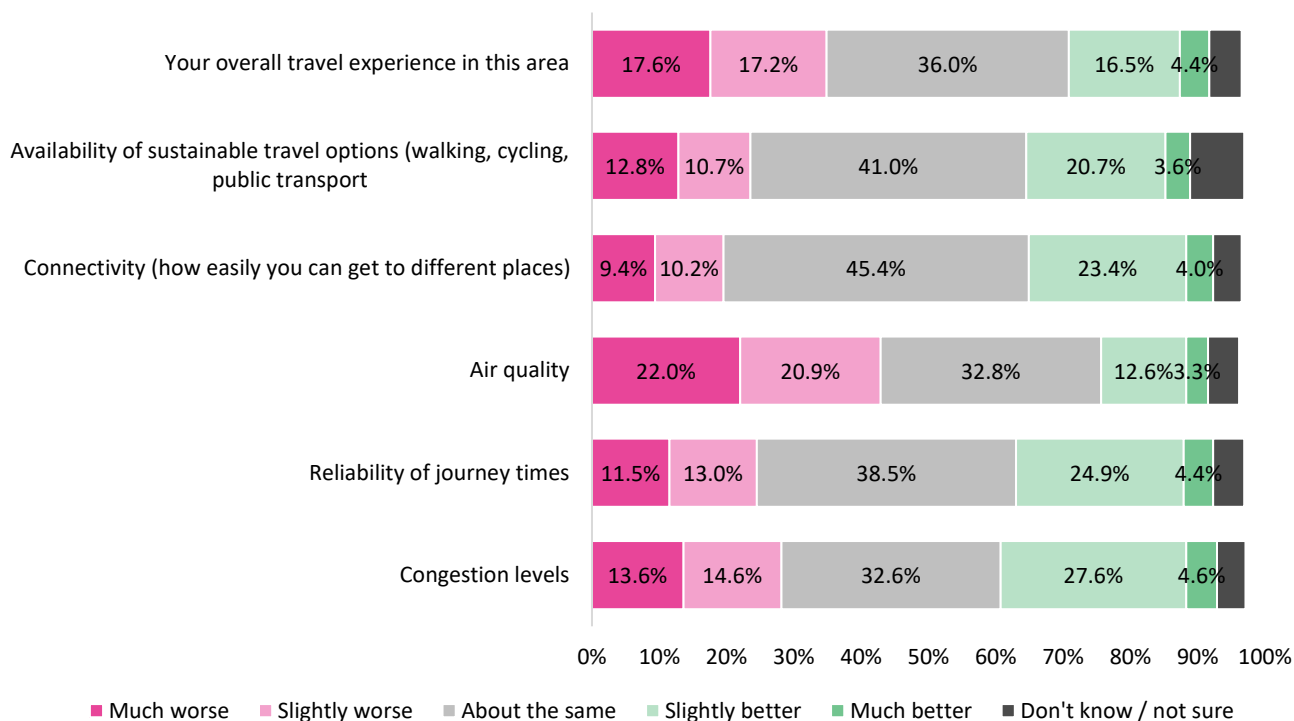
Figure 14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Option 2: 'New link road to A429 Kenilworth Road'?



Respondents were then asked to consider (on a scale of much worse to much better) what impact Option 2 will have on a range of issues. Figure 15 shows that 42.9% (n=224) and 34.9% (n=182) felt air quality and overall travel experience in the area respectively would be slightly worse or much worse under Option 2. However, a third (32.2%, n=168) of all respondents stated that congestion levels would be slightly better or much better under this proposal. As per Option 1, across all six issues listed, 'about the same' was the most frequently selected response.



Figure 15. What impact do you think Option 2: 'New link road to A429 Kenilworth Road' will have on the following?



The next question specifically focused on the impact of Option 2 on respondents’ travel experience. Figure 16 shows that, overall, 42.9%, (n=224) of all respondents think Option 2 will have a negative (either negative or very negative) impact on their travel experience. This was a similar figure to Option 1 (41.6%, n=217 stated Option 1 would have a negative or very negative impact). Interestingly, 21.3% (n=88) felt that the impact of Option 2 would be positive or very positive – a slightly higher proportion than the same figure for Option 1 (14.9%, n=53).

The final question in this section asked respondents if they had any additional comments/details on the impact(s) of Option 2. Analysis was undertaken and themes based on qualitative comments regarding Option 2: ‘new link road to A429 Kenilworth Road’ are presented in Table 4. In total, 269 respondents gave a comment to this question. As per the equivalent question for Option 1, respondents took the opportunity to comment on each/any of the three main Options proposed (the pros/cons, their preference) rather than specifically focussing on Option 2. The overriding sentiment regarding comments that specifically mentioned Option 2 was negative. The most common response related to Option 2 was that this option would not solve (and may even exacerbate) congestion in the area – 35.3% (n=95) of respondents who gave an answer to this question mentioned this in their response. Other common themes included: environmental concerns associated with the proposals, no benefit(s) / negative responses associated with Option 2, and concerns Option 2 pushes problems (e.g. congestion) to new areas.

Figure 16. Overall, what impact do you think Option 2: 'New link road to A429 Kenilworth Road' will have on your travel experience?

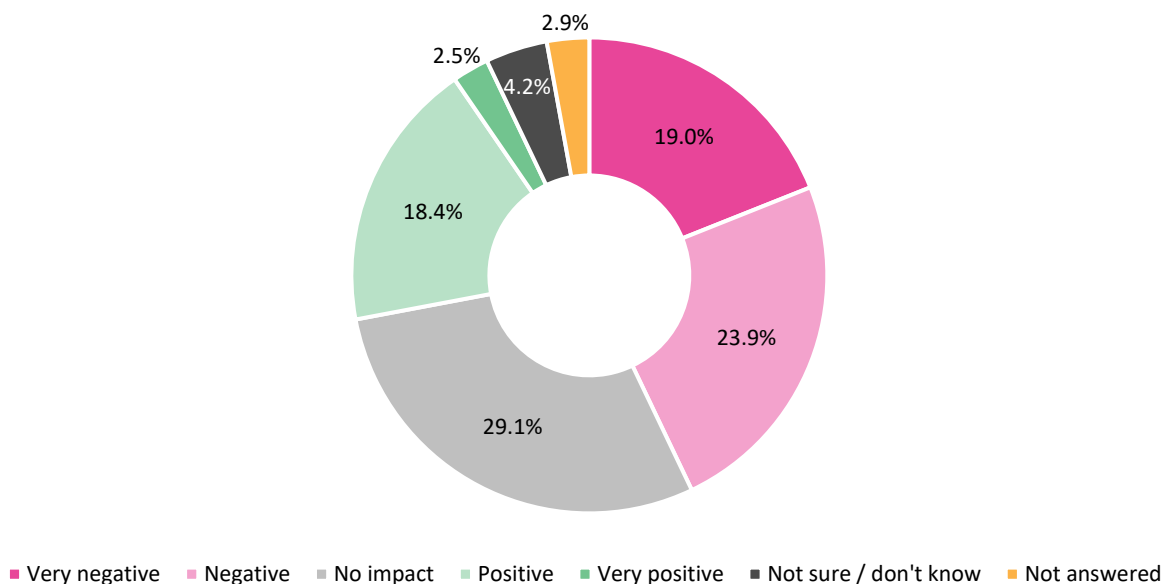


Table 4. Themes based on qualitative comments regarding additional details of the impacts (positive or negative) of Option 2: 'New link road to A429 Kenilworth Road'

Theme / description	Count (%)	Example quotation(s) for illustration
Concerns regarding increasing congestion/traffic volume associated with the proposals	95 (35.3%)	<p><i>"Years more of travel delays or diversions"</i></p> <p><i>"Will still be congestion at Kenilworth junction and around university"</i></p> <p><i>"Will increase traffic down Westwood Heath Road"</i></p> <p><i>"This would increase journey times for our most frequent journeys by making us drive further to the A46"</i></p> <p><i>"This plan would definitely create a much worse situation regarding travel on Westwood Heath Road for both ends!"</i></p> <p><i>"This option does not address the large traffic flow through the University"</i></p>
Environmental concerns associated with the proposals (e.g. pollution/air quality, noise, destruction of Green Belt land, wildlife, flooding)	66 (24.5%)	<p><i>"Have a detrimental effect on the ecology of the region, the flora and fauna, and also on the air quality of the surrounding area"</i></p> <p><i>"The new link would destroy a huge swathe of green belt and have a terrible effect upon wildlife."</i></p> <p><i>"Major loss of countryside that you CAN'T get back"</i></p>



		<p><i>"Building new roads will reduce air quality and have little impact on congestion. Adding more roads to combat congestion is like loosening your belt to combat obesity"</i></p> <p><i>"More roads means more motor traffic and more pollution and more CO2. This is the wrong direction of travel"</i></p>
No benefit(s) / general negative responses associated with Option 2	64 (23.8%)	<p><i>"Option 2 appears to offer minimal long-term improvements"</i></p> <p><i>"Opportunity missed, would be a complete waste of time. Delivers nothing"</i></p> <p><i>"This is option is clearly the "what's the point?" option - building half a bypass"</i></p> <p><i>"This only appears to be a half-way solution"</i></p> <p><i>"Negative, negative, negative - business case is fluffy at best - Based on aspirations"</i></p>
Concerns Option 2 pushes problems (e.g. congestion) to new areas	52 (19.3%)	<p><i>"This proposal simply diverts traffic towards Kenilworth, rather than to the University of Warwick and the business parks, so just creates a new bottleneck on the Coventry Road. Why?"</i></p> <p><i>"This proposal just shifts all the traffic to the A429 and effectively a dead end. The A429 is already a busy and important link road between Coventry and Kenilworth but it flows and works OK. This option is effectively pointless and would create problems"</i></p> <p><i>"This option will ease flow of traffic from A46 to A429 but then it will have nowhere new to go so it will make congestion on Gibbet Hill Road much worse"</i></p> <p><i>"It deals with half a problem and shifts from one spot to another. It's a bit of a daft option really"</i></p> <p><i>"Congestion will just be moved to the A429"</i></p>
Impact of option on sustainable travel/Support for (continued) development of sustainable/active travel options (e.g. walking/cycling routes, public transportation improvements)	47 (17.5%)	<p><i>"Consider more sustainable ways of travel, encourage less car use"</i></p> <p><i>"could you just build the cycleway? Also, much cheaper. New housing and business should not depend on road access - good public transport and walking and cycling infrastructure much more important, not just for air quality, also for peoples' health. We do not want to sit in cars all day, people care about climate change and loss of landscape to more roads"</i></p> <p><i>"Cycling and walking will be harder because of the road/railways to cross"</i></p> <p><i>"Local experience of new roads or widening of roads has shown that the council regularly fail to implement improvements to walking and cycling alongside these roads despite having a clean sheet to do so"</i></p>



		<i>"I believe the impact will be negative because the intention to link to existing cycle routes is flawed in that the existing cycle routes are not fit for purpose"</i>
General positive comments towards Option 2	20 (7.4%)	<i>"I believe that the addition of the link road helps mitigate the impact of the development off Stoneleigh Road without adversely impacting the existing infrastructure"</i> <i>"I am sure this will aid traffic flow considerably"</i> <i>"A new link road to join up with the Kenilworth road would be useful though it would need to be dual carriageway to have any effect"</i>
Comments relating to the proposed station/connectivity	19 (7.1%)	<i>"Agree this is a good idea if the station is built, this surely would help Uni staff/students access easily by rail/foot"</i> <i>"A railway station in this location is not required as it is not near to any residential or business area"</i> <i>"Why on earth would you build a train station on the Coventry to Kenilworth railway line, when the trainline only carries a few passengers. Kenilworth station is hardly used at all and the train only runs once an hour. Who would use the service, have you found any passengers to use it?"</i> <i>"There is a proposed new station on the old railway line very close to where HS2 crosses. An interchange station with HS2 would satisfy the many complaints that the current HS2 plans have no advantage to the Coventry and Warwick/Kenilworth at all"</i>
Concerns that the proposals are a waste of money/resources	16 (5.9%)	<i>"This option is a complete waste of money and would be a white elephant"</i> <i>"Load of rubbish, waste of money, traffic will increase"</i> <i>"First spend 10% of the money putting in new cycleways. Second encourage people to use them. Then see that the new road isn't needed. Use the £50m you save to improve other services"</i>
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel/use of the area (and how changes to the way people travel should be considered in any proposals)	14 (5.2%)	<i>"This must be reassessed in light of post-Covid working practices and associated traffic demand"</i> <i>"Now is not the time to be doing this, you should wait until you know exactly what the world/area will look like post-Covid and possibly post HS2"</i> <i>"Please don't build extra roads. The post-Covid world will mean fewer people going to the office so less congestion anyway. People want a sustainable life with less time spent on roads, more fresh air, more cycling and walking"</i>
Impact on the quality of life and wellbeing of residents in the area	12 (4.5%)	<i>"This will have a very negative effect on the quality of life"</i> <i>"Quality of life is reduced as no pleasure will be gained from cycling walking or driving as there will be nothing pleasant to look at"</i> <i>"This is depressing and affects my mental health"</i>



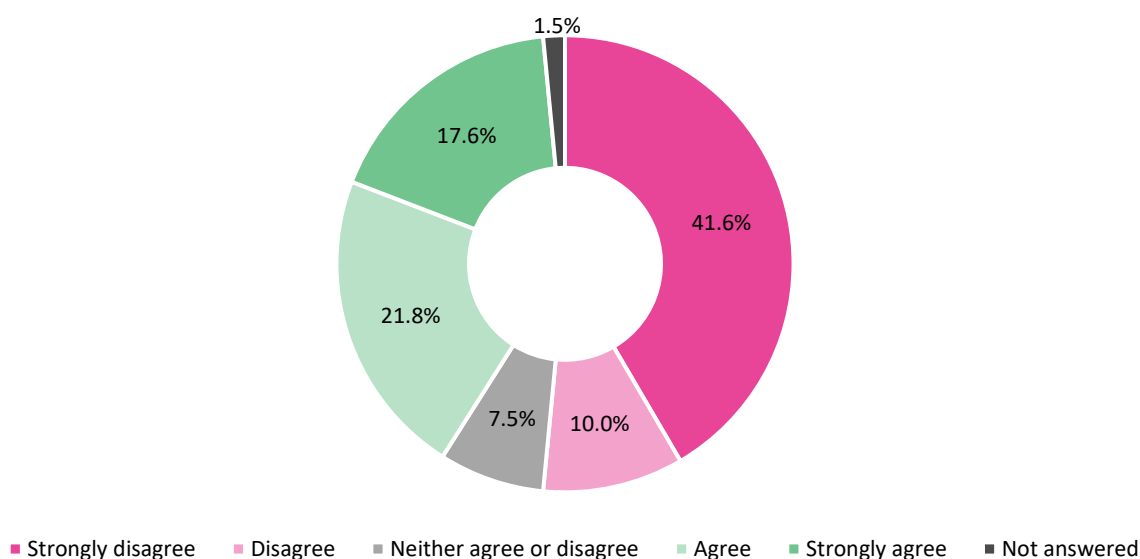
Concerns over safety (e.g. speeding)	11 (4.1%)	<p><i>“It would cut off some walking routes and cycle paths would become unsafe”</i></p> <p><i>“It doesn't seem that this improves anyone's ability to walk or cycle. At the moment there's no way I'd cycle up Stoneleigh Road because I'd just get flattened”</i></p> <p><i>“I would worry what this would mean for pedestrians and cyclists on Kenilworth Road”</i></p>
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Other themes mentioned by a smaller number of respondents included: Comments relating to any/all of the proposed options (for example, comparing Option 1, Option 2, and/or Option 3, option preferences) (n=10), disruption associated with proposal(s) (n=9), issues in/at specific locations (e.g. specific roads and/or junctions) (n=9), impact(s) of increasing population(s)/housing and/or commercial developments on the area (n=7), Concerns regarding the modelling assessment/data/information presented (n=7), the role/impact of Warwick University on the area (n=6), suggestions that proposals will have a similar (negative) impact as per HS2 (n=5), consideration given to minor changes/improvements to Option 2 (n=5), suggestions of survey/consultation bias (n=4), joined-up/collaborative thinking is required (n=3).

OPTION 3: 'NEW LINK ROAD TO SOUTH OF COVENTRY AND UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK'

Respondents were then asked to consider the final option, Option 3: 'New link road to south of Coventry and University of Warwick'. First, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with Option 3. In total, more than half (51.5%, n=269) of all respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with Option 3.

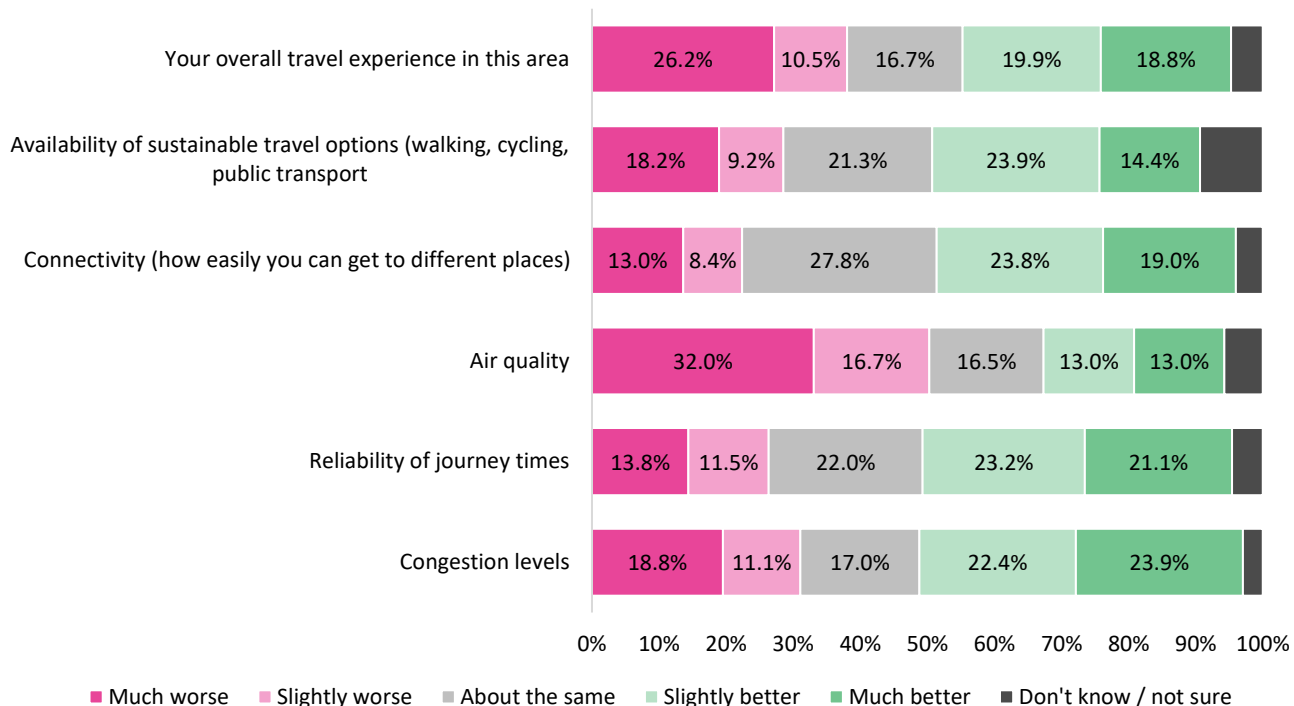
Figure 17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with Option 3: 'New link road to south of Coventry and University of Warwick'?



Respondents were then asked to consider (on a scale of much worse to much better) what impact Option 3 will have on a range of issues. Figure 18 shows that 48.7% (n=254) and 36.8% (n=192) felt air quality and overall travel experience in the area respectively would be slightly worse or much worse under Option 3. However,

almost half (46.4%, n=242) of all respondents stated that congestion levels would be slightly better or much better under this proposal.

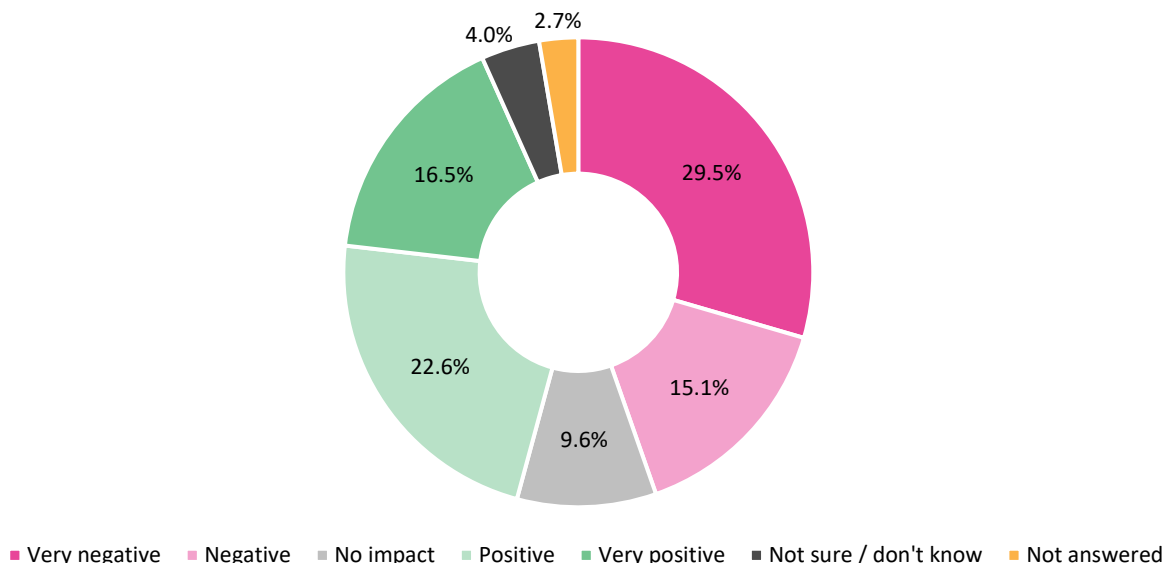
Figure 18. What impact do you think Option 3: 'New link road to south of Coventry and University of Warwick' will have on the following?



The next question specifically focused on the impact of Option 3 on respondents' travel experience. Figure 19 shows that, overall, 44.6%, (n=233) of all respondents think Option 3 will have a negative (either negative or very negative) impact on their travel experience. This was slightly higher than the equivalent figure for Option 1 (41.6%, n=217) and Option 2 (42.9%, n=224). Interestingly, 39.1% (n=204) felt the impact of Option 3 would be positive or very positive – a slightly higher proportion than the same figure for Option 1 (14.9%, n=53) and Option 2 (21.3%, n=88). Clearly, there was a very mixed response to Option 3.



Figure 19. Overall, what impact do you think Option 3: 'New link road to south of Coventry and University of Warwick' will have on your travel experience?



Respondents were then asked if they had any additional comments/details on the impact(s) of Option 3. Analysis was undertaken and themes based on qualitative comments regarding Option 3: ‘new link to south Coventry & University of Warwick’ are presented in Table 5. In total, 297 respondents gave a comment to this question. The overriding sentiment regarding Option 3 was mixed – some respondents were positive towards Option 3, whilst others expressed concern at this proposal (reflecting the results in Figure 19). The most common response related to Option 3 was generally negative/respondents considered Option 3 to provide no benefit – 43.1% (n=128) of those respondents who gave an answer to this question mentioned this in their response. Other common themes included: environmental concerns associated with the proposals, concerns regarding increasing congestion/traffic volume associated with the proposals, and support for (continued) development of sustainable/active travel options (e.g. walking/cycling routes, public transportation improvements).

Table 5. Themes based on qualitative comments regarding additional details of the impacts (positive or negative) of Option 3: 'New link road to south of Coventry and University of Warwick'

Theme / description	Count (%)	Example quotation(s) for illustration
No benefit(s) / general negative responses associated with Option 3	128 (43.1%)	<p><i>"This is the worst of all three options... It has no merit whatsoever"</i></p> <p><i>"It potentially makes increased travel even easier and that will increase traffic and worsen progress against an ambition of sustainable services and economy. Therefore we strongly object and disagree to this option"</i></p> <p><i>"This is the most drastic option and will have a severely detrimental effect on the ecology of the area and on local resident's ability to walk in the area and enjoy the open countryside and fresh air."</i></p>



		<p><i>It will also have an adverse impact on local property prices and the demographic of the area"</i></p> <p><i>"The road is unnecessary"</i></p> <p><i>"Strongly disagree with a dual carriageway as in Option 3"</i></p> <p><i>"Option 3 is basically an additional link road to Warwick University from A46, this road would be of no use to locals... Not really much benefit"</i></p>
Environmental concerns associated with the proposals (e.g. pollution/air quality, noise, destruction of Green Belt land, wildlife, flooding)	120 (40.4%)	<p><i>"This will destroy a large area of Green Belt and completely destroy with the assistance of HS2 the green corridor between Kenilworth and Coventry"</i></p> <p><i>"It is astounding that the promoters of the project have seen the outcry generated by the environmental damage caused by HS2 and yet they intend to blight a second corridor in the same area"</i></p> <p><i>"Unnecessary long-term damage to ecology and the environment for a 1-5 year post construction traffic congestion gain"</i></p> <p><i>"It will spoil the only available fairly green option for commuting between Warwick/ Kenilworth and the University of Warwick... the level of noise pollution and air pollution will go much higher"</i></p> <p><i>"Air pollution from the A46 is already a health hazard in the summer, the new road will make it worse"</i></p> <p><i>"Ruination of local area. Destruction of woodland, wildlife, homes, farmland"</i></p>
Concerns regarding increasing congestion/traffic volume associated with the proposals	98 (33.0%)	<p><i>"Building new roads to ease congestion has been shown not to help in the long term"</i></p> <p><i>"Building new roads does not ease congestion, it sets a precedent that you're supposed to drive - they will fill up again"</i></p> <p><i>"I have never seen a road-building scheme that has resulted in less traffic and congestion. I imagine it will for a few months, and then it will attract more traffic, and we'll end up with more traffic on more tarmac, so the same density of traffic overall"</i></p> <p><i>"Only mildly addresses the traffic going to UoW and the business parks. Will cause congestion on Kenilworth Road. And the extra traffic from the housing development will make matters worse"</i></p> <p><i>"Congestion levels around Westwood Heath and surrounding areas would be made worse"</i></p>
Support for (continued) development of sustainable/active travel options (e.g. walking/cycling routes, public transportation improvements)	73 (24.6%)	<p><i>"Whilst there is benefit in having more cycle routes per se, these need to be planned intelligently according to need (i.e. the route one would take by bicycle is not likely to be the same as a car exiting a large trunk road such as the A46) rather than simply plonked alongside a road"</i></p> <p><i>"Consider non-road solutions instead"</i></p>



		<p><i>"Why isn't there an option to just build the sustainable transport infrastructure? Build a busway, cycleways, new station and VLR. Why hold us to ransom by only building this infrastructure if we accept the road first!"</i></p> <p><i>"From an active travel point of view this just doesn't solve the right problem, or enough of the existing problem. Are there not more cost effective, more environmentally friendly, more sustainable options than building this road?"</i></p> <p><i>"I would approve of the new road, but only if sufficient sustainable transport options are also included including cycle and pedestrian routes on both sides of the road, and a link to a rail connection"</i></p>
Concerns Option 3 pushes problems (e.g. congestion) to new areas	45 (15.2%)	<p><i>"Bigger roads invite more traffic. This has been seen every time there has been an 'improvement' and there is a knock-on elsewhere in the network"</i></p> <p><i>"Will just move traffic jams around"</i></p> <p><i>"This option will encourage significantly more cut-through traffic via Tile Hill Lane, Cromwell Lane, Banner Lane, Red Lane"</i></p> <p><i>"Option 3 will dump traffic onto roads in Westwood Heath, Burton Green, Tile Hill and possibly Cannon Park onto roads that are unsuitable and are already known to have problems at the moment. Rat running will become much worse as traffic finds its way onto and off the nice new dual carriageway and along small urban roads that have many subsidiary roads and driveways exiting onto roads such as Westwood Heath Lane, Cromwell Lane and Cannon Park Road"</i></p>
General positive comments towards Option 3	38 (12.8%)	<p><i>"While the improvement are taking place it will make things much worse, but it will be worth it in the end. With through traffic going on the new relief road, it will make Gibbett Hill Road quieter and easier to use. Travelling from A46 to A429 will become much easier"</i></p> <p><i>"This will address the unacceptable congestion surrounding the university and improve safety at the university which should be at the forefront of planning considerations"</i></p> <p><i>"This the only option worth considering to support both access and flow into the future."</i></p> <p><i>"This is the only option that will bring a high overall improvement to traffic movements in the area, by taking large amounts of traffic of Stoneleigh Road and Gibbet Hill Road that is accessing the University of Warwick and Westwood Heath business parks at peak times"</i></p>
Consideration given to minor changes/improvements to Option 3	32 (10.8%)	<p><i>"It would seem to be a better option to bring it [road] in to join with Westwood Heath Road lower down at the roundabout then through traffic can go through to the business park"</i></p>



		<p><i>"This will take a lot of the congestion away from the Gibbet Hill / A429 junction however I worry about a roundabout - this will likely need some traffic light management for people commuting along that road from Kenilworth to Coventry, or there will be tailbacks"</i></p> <p><i>"However, unless improvements are made to parking along Station Avenue, Tile Hill, and at Tile Hill Station, this proposal will draw in more through traffic to Tile Hill (esp. Station Ave.)"</i></p> <p><i>"The road needs to continue from the A46 past the university towards Cromwell lane as a dual carriageway, with improvements along Westwood Heath Road"</i></p>
Impact on the quality of life and wellbeing of residents in the area	20 (6.7%)	<p><i>"It would have a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of local people"</i></p> <p><i>"What were once wonderful views will be lost forever. This will mean our property will be devalued by many thousands, if not 100's of thousands of pounds"</i></p> <p><i>"This would have a negative impact on our mental health"</i></p>
Concerns regarding the modelling assessment/data/information presented	19 (6.4%)	<p><i>"What surveys have been carried out to see how much traffic is single occupancy car traffic? What incentives does Warwick university give for people to use other modes of mass transit?"</i></p> <p><i>"The numbers you quote 50 to 80 people per train is totally inadequate. Say 20 trains for an arts centre concert and 100 trains for an 8000 football gate. If it was 16000 = 200. Totally impractical as has been proved at the Ricoh with the station not able to cope so it doesn't operate"</i></p> <p><i>"Have you measured your traffic flows? If so the data needs to be made public"</i></p>
The role/impact of Warwick University on the area	18 (6.1%)	<p><i>"The University of Warwick needs to become less car dependent - not more. It does not need a link road"</i></p> <p><i>"The malevolent hand of the anti-social neighbour, the UoW, is obvious in this proposal as are the backroom discussions between this body and the Highway Authority. Ever since the A45 Relief Road and then this more recent A46 Link Road proposals were published, the road skirting the University, which has the most to gain, has been pushed further and further away from the University"</i></p> <p><i>"Having allowed the University to consistently encroach on and impede the through road, e.g. mixed space, whilst allowing expansion of the business park, it is time to do something"</i></p>
Suggestions that proposals will have a similar (negative) impact as per HS2	17 (5.7%)	<p><i>"I am totally against Phase 3 as this area has already been decimated by HS2"</i></p> <p><i>"So much destruction has already been inflicted on the area with HS2 that this would really need a lot of thought on how to cause the least amount of impact on the beautiful local countryside which is being eroded with each development project"</i></p>



		<i>"HS2 is having a dreadful impact, don't make it worse!"</i>
Impact(s) of increasing population(s)/housing and/or commercial developments on the area	17 (5.7%)	<i>"The extra traffic from the housing development will make matters worse"</i> <i>"They're will also be more traffic from the new developments at Balsall Common"</i> <i>"This option enables building even more huge housing estates, so yes there's a new road but there will be huge influx of new users = no change"</i>
Concerns that the proposals are a waste of money/resources	17 (5.7%)	<i>"No requirement – massive funds wasted"</i> <i>"In my view it is a complete waste of public funding"</i> <i>"Encouraging people to pile into a small area in their cars rather than looking for green alternatives is just a crazy waste of money"</i>
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel/use of the area (and how changes to the way people travel should be considered in any proposals)	16 (5.4%)	<i>"Covid 19 may well have a negative effect on student numbers in the future and this should also be taken into consideration"</i> <i>"The post-Covid world will mean fewer people going to the office so less congestion anyway"</i> <i>"Now is the wrong time to consult and this project should be paused until life resumes to the 'new norm' whatever that proves to be. Currently, most people are working from home, the University students are working online and not even in the area and we need to wait until there are accurate and realistic statistics available post Covid19"</i>
Concerns over safety (e.g. speeding)	14 (4.7%)	<i>"How are cyclists going to safely cross the new link? Overbridge? Underpass?"</i> <i>"I am particularly concerned about the safe provision for cyclists at road junctions"</i> <i>"To plan for a new major link road to join a two-lane road serving existing houses is madness. This can only increase the volume and speed of traffic on Westwood Heath Road... creating a major link road to join a suburban road is madness, increasing the risk to the lives of residents and their children"</i>
Comments relating to the proposed station/connectivity	14 (4.7%)	<i>"Surely a train station at the University with connections to Coventry, Kenilworth and Leamington would be better than encouraging more traffic?"</i> <i>"Needs the station and VLR included otherwise it's just more space for more cars"</i> <i>"An interchange station with HS2 would satisfy the many complaints that the current HS2 plans have no advantage to the Coventry and Warwick/Kenilworth at all"</i>
Disruption associated with proposal(s)	14 (4.7%)	<i>"Concerned about the impact of building work to make these changes"</i>

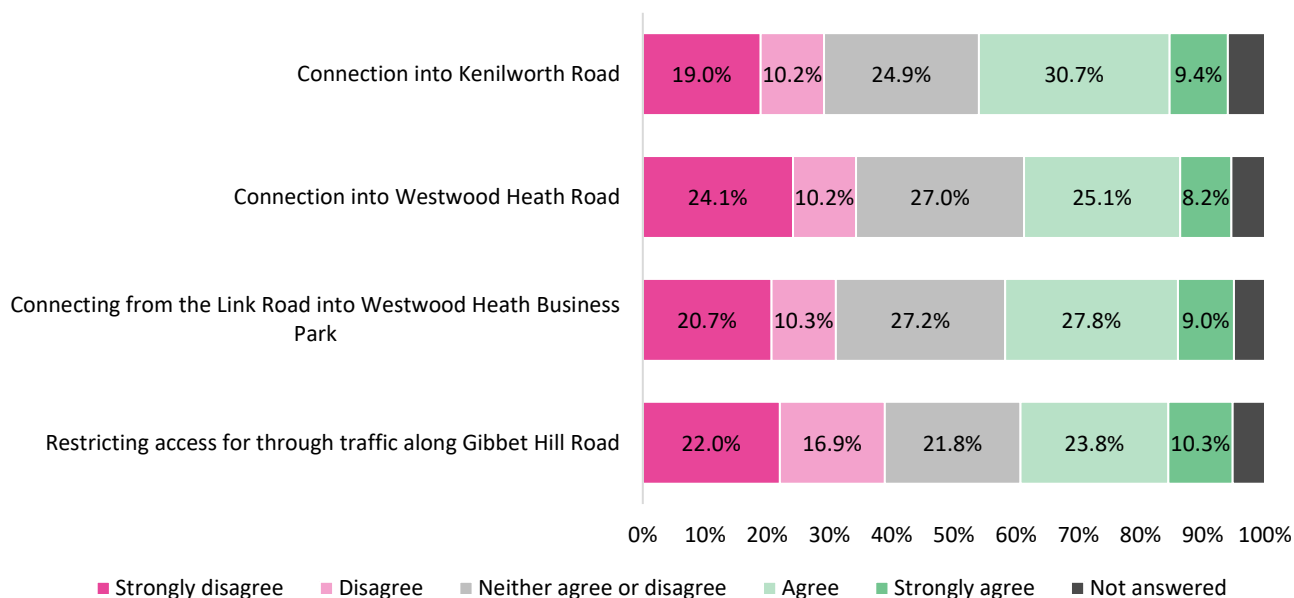


	<p><i>“The hugely negative impact on the disruption to local residents and devastation to the nature of the local environment seems of little concern”</i></p> <p><i>“The positive impact in 2027 will be negative by the huge inconvenience to people in the area while this work is being done”</i></p>
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Other themes mentioned by a smaller number of respondents included: Comments relating to any/all of the proposed options (for example, comparing Option 1, Option 2, and/or Option 3, option preferences) (n=10), issues in/at specific locations (e.g. specific roads and/or junctions) (n=10), suggestions of survey/consultation bias (n=6), joined-up/collaborative thinking is required (n=3).

The next section of the survey asked respondents to consider to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the listed sub-option elements included in Option 3: ‘New link to south Coventry and University of Warwick’. The results of this are presented in Figure 20 below. Clearly, responses were mixed. Whilst 40% (n=209) of all respondents agreed (either agreed or strongly agreed) with a connection into Kenilworth Road, 29.1% (n=152) disagreed (either disagreed or strongly disagreed) with this option. Restricting access for through traffic along Gibbet Hill Road was the element that received the highest level of disagreement – 38.9% (n=203) either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this element.

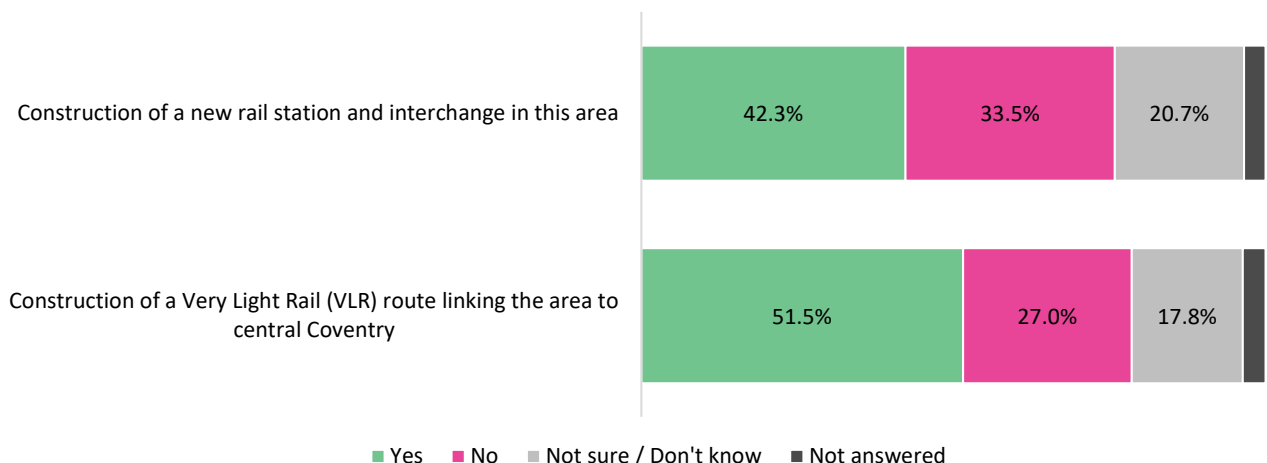
Figure 20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following elements which are included in Option 3: 'New Link to south Coventry & University of Warwick'?



In terms of support, construction of a Very Light Rail (VLR) route linking the area to central Coventry received slightly more support (51.5%, n=269) than the construction of a new rail station and interchange in the area (42.3%, n=221). Indeed, a third of all respondents said they would not support the construction of a new rail station and interchange (Figure 21).

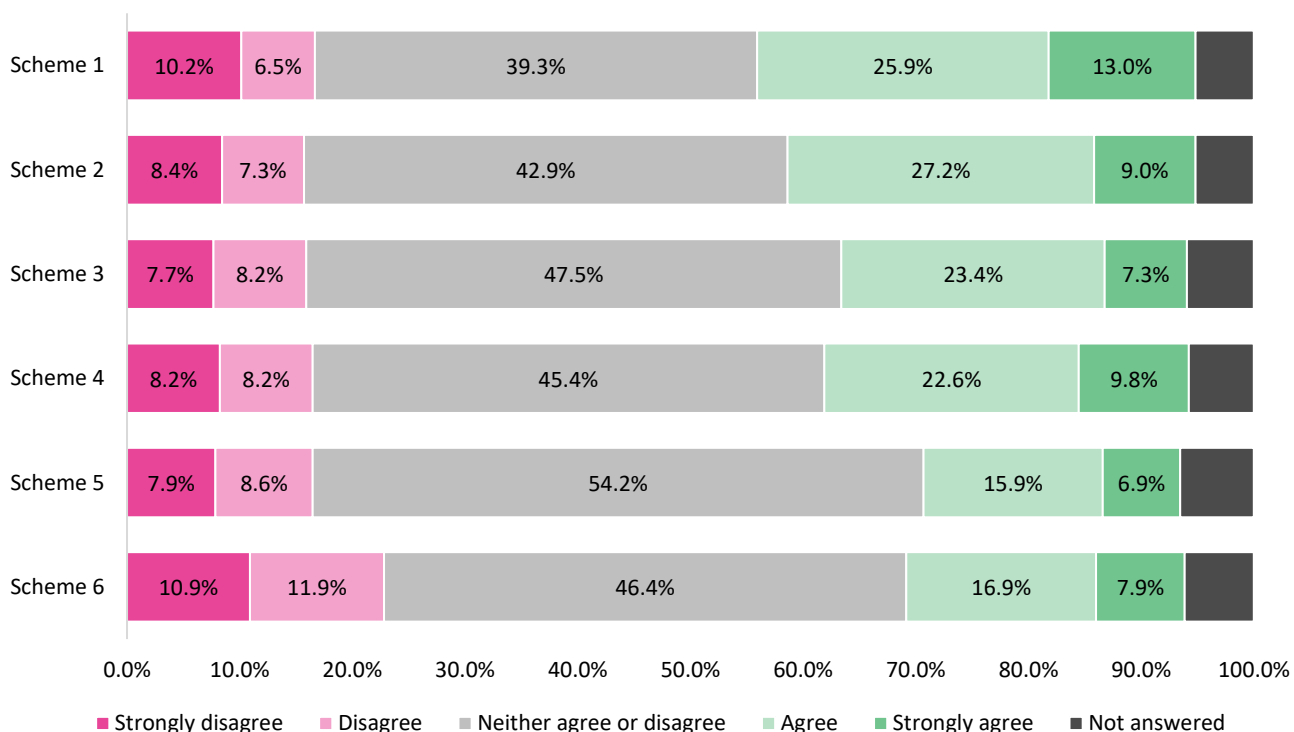


Figure 21. Would you support any of the following?



As part of the consultation, the local road network had been identified as needing improvement. Respondents were asked to read the information provided in the survey around six local junction improvement schemes and to state whether they agreed or disagreed with each of these. As Figure 22 shows, the most frequently selected option across all six schemes was ‘neither agree or disagree’. Clearly, 38.9% (n=203) of all respondents stated they agreed (either agreed or strongly agreed) with Scheme 1 (Cromwell Lane/Westwood Heath Road Junction) whilst only 22.8% (n=119) agreed (either agreed or strongly agreed) with Scheme 5 (Broad Lane/Job’s Lane). In contrast, 22.8% (n=119) disagreed (either disagreed or strongly disagreed) with Scheme 6 (Kings Hill Access Restrictions).

Figure 22. Some parts of the local road network have been identified as needing improvement as part of these proposals - please see the Local junction improvements schemes information below. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of these?



Finally, respondents were asked to consider any other locations on the local road network that they considered to be in need of improvement as a result of these proposals. Figure 23 shows that over a quarter (26.4%, n=138) answered yes to this question. However, almost half of all respondents (44.4%, n=232) were not sure/did not know and 19.3% (n=101) said no. Those who answered ‘yes’ were asked to provide details on specific roads in an open text box. In total, 180 comments were received (some respondents who did not answer ‘yes’ also chose to leave a comment). The majority of responses focused on the specific schemes (1-6). Example quotations presented are in Table 6 to illustrate the key themes raised by respondents.

Figure 23. Are there any other locations on the local road network that you think will need improvement as a result of these proposals? (Improvements might include, for example, capacity improvements, traffic calming etc.)

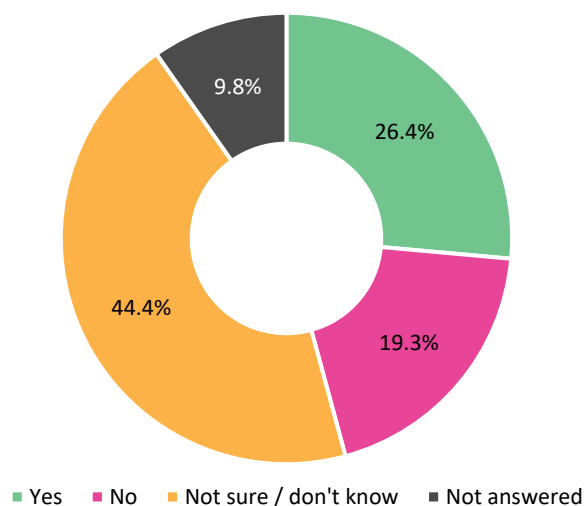


Table 6. Details on other locations on the local road network

Theme / description	Example quotation(s) for illustration
General comments on Scheme 1 – Cromwell Lane / Westwood Heath Road junction	<p><i>“Westwood Heath Road, Cromwell Lane junction will be a disaster waiting to happen, traffic already terrible and needs speed bumps as cars regularly travel at 50 plus mph on a 30mph road, plenty of kids live near junction”</i></p> <p><i>“Traffic calming on Westwood Heath Road and Cromwell Lane will be required as it will turn into a rat run which when considered alongside potential new building as well as existing residential could lead to accidents and potential loss of life”</i></p> <p><i>“These changes will lead to more traffic congestion and poor air quality on Cromwell Lane. It will be less safe to cycle and unpleasant to walk with increased traffic and noise”</i></p>
General comments on Scheme 2 – Cromwell Lane / Charter Avenue	<p><i>“The proposed junction improvements along Cromwell Lane will not improve traffic flow, and in fact will impede some specific traffic flows. For example, Scheme 2 will mean that turning right out of Charter Avenue towards Tile Hill Railway Station will be blocked by waiting traffic along Cromwell Lane”</i></p>



	<p><i>"If a bus turns into Charter Ave from Cromwell cars have to sit 20 metres back from the junction to allow them to turn, any improvement would be great"</i></p> <p><i>"Charter Avenue... University traffic blocks this roundabout at evening peak impeding local journeys. The proposals are likely to increase traffic at this junction"</i></p>
General comments on Scheme 3 – Cromwell Lane/Torrington Avenue	<p><i>"Torrington Ave, I like.... please do not mess with it"</i></p> <p><i>"The impossibility of improving the traffic flow from Cromwell Lane ongoing is totally ignored. The only conceivable cut through to the A45 is impossibly congested at all times of the day. The totality of this scheme just transports the congestion to a different area"</i></p> <p><i>"Cromwell Lane traffic calming and pedestrian crossing"</i></p>
General comments on Scheme 4 – Westwood Heath Road/Westwood Way	<p><i>"If measures along Cromwell Lane, Westwood Heath Road, Westwood Way are implemented as described, this will worsen the experience for active travel"</i></p> <p><i>"Junction of Westwood Heath Road with Station Road/Cromwell Lane - lots of commuters come into the Warwick Uni/Westwood Heath area from this direction. the existing split junction arrangement here is not safe"</i></p> <p><i>"Westwood Heath Road - 30mph speed limit for the whole length and traffic calming measures / speed cameras"</i></p>
General comments on Scheme 5 – Broad Lane/Job's Lane	<p><i>"Please do not add a roundabouts that has the same ridiculous set up as the A45/Broad Lane roundabout. Whoever thought it was a good idea to have traffic enter a roundabout in the right lane from Broad Lane and within 2 car lengths required them to be in the left lane to exit onto Broad Lane ... no wonder there has been several accidents there since the new island opened"</i></p> <p><i>"Broad Lane / Hockley Lane - Not appropriate to increase traffic. Will have severe adverse impact on active travel, particularly cycling"</i></p> <p><i>"Broad Lane.... perform poorly during rush hours now"</i></p>
General comments on Scheme 6 – Kings Hill Access Restrictions	<p><i>"Kings Hill Lane needs reviewing especially with the new housing planned"</i></p> <p><i>"The housing developments along the A46 and at Kings Hill will generate more traffic into/through Kenilworth - where have these impacts been assessed in the need for a new link road?"</i></p> <p><i>"For scheme 6, the current plans are to come from the Kings Hill development onto Stoneleigh Rd. This would hugely increase the number of cars coming onto Stoneleigh Rd. Our suggestion would be to link the new housing estate directly onto the new A46 roundabout and build the new link road from this roundabout as well"</i></p>
Other specific junctions/roads	<p><i>"There are several junctions in the area that have not been included, those around the north and west of Westwood Business Park, Tile Hill Lane and Station Avenue, Broad Lane and Banner Lane all of which perform poorly during rush hours now. Traffic trying to use these junctions is from the north of the plan area which only addresses movement from the south and east"</i></p> <p><i>"The junction between Cromwell Lane/Station Road and Duggins Lane will also need to be reviewed as this junction gets crowded at peak times"</i></p>



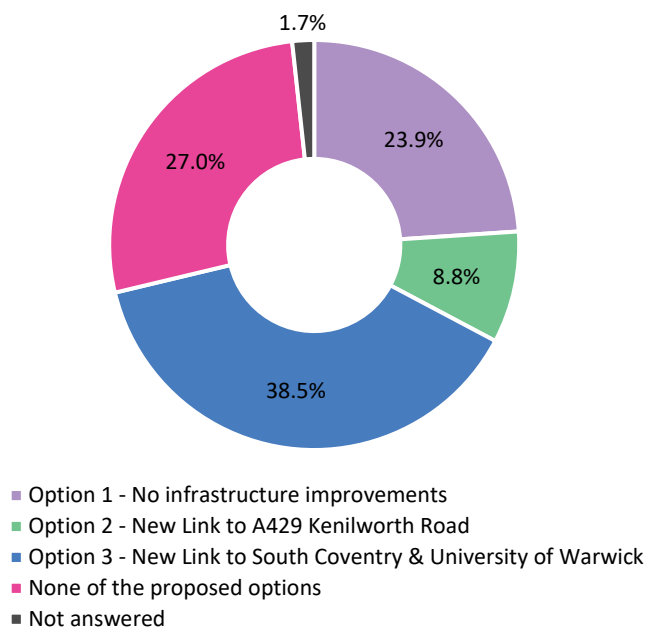
	<p><i>"If you are endeavouring to address rat run issues, I would like consideration to be given to alleviating traffic congestion through Stoneleigh. At present, we do get commuters cutting through Stoneleigh in order to avoid congestion on the A46 and get to Leamington Spa. Commuters often travel through the village at inappropriate speeds, queueing and causing air pollution and noise pollution"</i></p>
Consideration of sustainable travel options (e.g. walking, bicycles, non-road travel options)	<p><i>"Cycle lanes, cycle lanes, cycle lanes. Sustainable transport prioritised over more road-building in line with the authority's own recognition of the climate emergency"</i></p> <p><i>"All of these changes seem to be aimed as car journeys. What about starting with cycling and walking and see what can be incorporated for drivers, once sustainable travel has been designed? Make appealing polluters an afterthought rather than making sustainable travel and after thought"</i></p> <p><i>"Before any further money is spent on roads, cycling and walking infrastructure has to catch up which is in large parts not existing or in very poor condition. Car first is not the way to go forward"</i></p>
Road/traffic calming measures (including speed restrictions)	<p><i>"We already have too many poorly thought out road calming measures"</i></p> <p><i>"The ONLY effective deterrent is speed cameras but more is needed than just speed limit signs"</i></p> <p><i>"All these Options will increase traffic on the A429 and traffic calming, 20 mph limits, speed cameras, etc. will become even more essential for reasons of safety as well as noise and air pollution"</i></p>
Concerns regarding congestion and/or air pollution	<p><i>"If the new road will go further than Warwick University up to Westwood Heath Road it will vastly increase traffic up Cromwell Lane from both Red Lane and Hoggetts Lane and also from Tile Hill, causing a very severe negative impact on Westwood Heath Residents and residents in Cromwell Lane and Tile Hill as more traffic would come up both Cromwell Lane and Tile Hill Lane to use the extended road from Westwood Heath Road. This area is already totally congested and causes severe delays, congestion and poor air quality and this would be far worse if the road was extended to Westwood Heath Road"</i></p> <p><i>"Improving" roads leads only to more traffic and congestion, if not at the site of the 'improvement' there will be congestion elsewhere because of the increased traffic volumes"</i></p> <p><i>"This plan fails to connect the A45 and A46. It takes hideous congestion on Warwickshire roads and pumps it into Coventry roads"</i></p> <p><i>"The totality of this scheme just transports the congestion to a different area"</i></p>

YOUR PREFERENCE

Respondents were asked, on completion of the relevant questions on each of the three options, which option they preferred. The results of this are presented in Figure 24. The response to this question was mixed with no clear nor apparent favourite – 38.5% (n=201) of respondents preferred Option 3, 23.9% (n=125) preferred Option 1 and 8.8% (n=46) preferred Option 2. Over a quarter of all respondents (27.0%, n=141) stated that none of the proposed options were their preference (a further 1.7% of respondents did not answer this question).



Figure 24. Which is your preferred option?



Those respondents who selected ‘none of the proposed options’ to this question were asked what option(s) should be considered instead via an open text box. In total, 171 respondents gave a comment to this question (some respondents who stated their preference was for one of the listed options also chose to leave a comment in order to give more detail regarding their choice). The most common response was support for continued development of walking or cycling active travel options – 38.0% (n=65) of those respondents who gave an answer to this question mentioned this in their response. Other common themes included: improvements of specific junctions, public transportation improvements, and minor changes/alterations to aspects of Option 1, 2 or 3.

Table 7. If you have selected 'None of the proposed options' please tell us what option(s) should be considered instead.

Theme / description	Count (%)	Example quotation(s) for illustration
Development of sustainable/active travel options – walking and/or cycling	65 (38.0%)	<p><i>“Small improvements to current roads, large scale improvements to cycling infrastructure. It would take a lot of cars off the road if it was safe to travel between Leamington, Kenilworth and Coventry without the intimidation of cars”</i></p> <p><i>“Better and real cycling and walking options - not tokenistic signage with no real improvement”</i></p> <p><i>“Reducing traffic and car reliance and investment in cycling and pedestrian access”</i></p> <p><i>“People want a sustainable life with less time spent on roads, more fresh air, more cycling and walking. Please spend money on</i></p>



		<i>improving Kenilworth, Leamington, Warwick, Coventry and University cycling networks"</i>
Specific junction improvements (e.g. roundabouts, exit/access points, road widening/narrowing, road lengthening/shortening)	54 (31.6%)	<p><i>"Other, more acceptable options could be improvement of Crackley Lane and connection with Cromwell Lane. Possible improvement of Cryfield Grange Rd and connection of Cryfield Grange Road with Dalehouse Lane (though this may have a detrimental effect on residents of Cryfield Grange Road), or a new road following the same path as Cryfield Grange Road but further South, linking with an improved direct connection between Dalehouse Lane and the A46 Stoneleigh junction"</i></p> <p><i>"An A46 island at the university junction is all that is needed"</i></p> <p><i>"Spend the money on improving the existing local junctions as this will improve the traffic flow without building a new road. An example of how this has worked is the roundabout on gibbet hill/Kenilworth road/Stoneleigh road junction., which should have been done 20 years ago"</i></p> <p><i>"Widen Stoneleigh Road instead of creating a new road"</i></p>
Development of sustainable/active travel options – public transportation improvements (e.g. VLR, bus service, Park & Ride)	53 (31.0%)	<p><i>"Discouragement of car use and a major increase in public transport and very light rail"</i></p> <p><i>"Improve public transport links around the area instead - primarily buses"</i></p> <p><i>"I'd like to see the district council thinking really hard about sustainable transport and good public transport and putting that at the top of the agenda instead of just building more dual carriageways and saying "oh yes, there'll be a cycle track somewhere"</i></p> <p><i>"Adapting existing infrastructure – Park & Ride and VLR"</i></p>
Minor alterations/changes to aspects of Options 1, 2 and/or 3 (or the sub-options)	30 (17.5%)	<p><i>"Option 1 plus budget for Option 3 spend on sustainable transport improvements"</i></p> <p><i>"Option 1 'No infrastructure improvements' can be taken up if we are encouraged to live sustainably and within our means"</i></p> <p><i>"Option 3 without closing Gibbet Hill Road to general traffic"</i></p>
Importance of rail/station connectivity	27 (15.8%)	<p><i>"An Option that considers improved rail connection"</i></p> <p><i>"Need a rail station"</i></p> <p><i>"Improved public transport to these areas especially connectivity to nearby (Tile Hill) rail station - there is no direct connection from the train station to the uni/business park. It's about a 2 mile good 30 minute walk or less than 5 minute drive. In the interest of reducing carbon emissions train travel over car should be encourage for sites, such as these, so close to a railway station"</i></p>
Reconsideration and or postponement of proposals (in light of the COVID-19 pandemic)	23 (13.5%)	<i>"I feel a drastic rethink is needed given the changes in life and work patterns COVID is likely to have"</i>



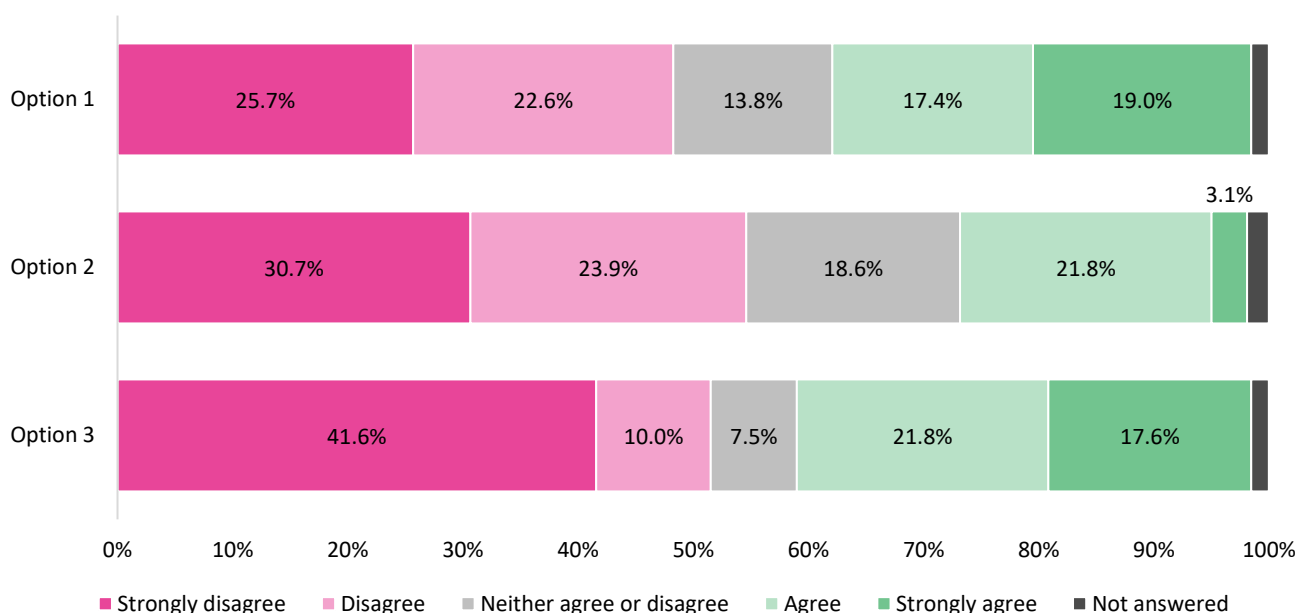
		<p><i>"Do nothing for at least two years pending the results of the Census and to see the longer-term effects of the Pandemic"</i></p> <p><i>"The project is premature and, probably, unnecessary in its present form and should be put to one side until the effects of Covid-19 are understood"</i></p>
General comments on the proposed options (Option 1, Option 2 and/or Option 3)	20 (11.7%)	<p><i>"Option 2 provides some benefit, but Option 3 seems half-baked... Sub-option 1 of Option 3 (close Gibbet Hill road) has merit"</i></p> <p><i>"The cycle route along Option 3 seems to make sense, although you'd have to safely be able to get to the Stoneleigh junction in the first place"</i></p> <p><i>"Don't mind new link road but only going to Warwick University BUT not extending to Westwood Heath Road (Option 3)"</i></p>
Concerns new road(s) are not the answer (and proposal options would push problems (e.g. congestion) to new areas)	15 (8.8%)	<p><i>"I worry that new roads only decrease congestion for a short period of time"</i></p> <p><i>"Proposals do not address congestion on A45 between Leamington Road and Broad Lane. Traffic forced to use rat runs on minor roads... Any further link to A452 would not alleviate A45 congestion"</i></p>
Further data collection/evidence gathering required	11 (6.4%)	<p><i>"If there is more flexible or home working then is the impact on road usage going to be accurately predicted by modelling based on pre-Covid assumptions?"</i></p> <p><i>"A new assessment of needs is crucial in light of new information... the data that all of these proposals is based on is out of date. Yes it will be a lot of work to review the options and prepare new proposals, but this is essential given the enormous cost involved"</i></p>
General concern around climate change/climate emergency	11 (6.4%)	<p><i>"The options for change do not address how they will contribute to responding to the climate emergency"</i></p> <p><i>"Consider changes to the existing options which are grounded in a need to mitigate climate change and reduce carbon footprint"</i></p>
Importance of safety (e.g. reducing traffic speed, road/traffic calming measures)	11 (6.4%)	<p><i>"A forward-thinking approach would prioritise creating safe and accessible cycle routes/paths"</i></p> <p><i>"Strict speed control"</i></p>

Other frequently mentioned comments included: no change (n=8), concerns that the proposals are a waste of money/resources (n=5), survey/consultation bias (n=4), attitudinal changes (e.g. attitude to commuting) (n=3), urban sprawl/land reclamation (n=3).

In order to summarise the findings to the survey and to further understand the results presented in Figure 24, the individual equivalent results for each of the three options have been presented in one chart. Figure 25 shows the breakdown of agreement for Option 1, Option 2 and Option 3. Whilst Option 3 had the highest level of agreement (39.5%, n=206 stated they agreed or strongly agreed with this option), 41.6% (n=217) strongly disagreed with Option 3.



Figure 25. Comparing levels of agreement: Option 1, Option 2 and Option 3



ANY OTHER FEEDBACK

At the close of the survey, respondents were asked if they had any additional comments, suggestions or feedback that they would like to share regarding the proposed options. Analysis was undertaken and themes based on qualitative comments regarding the A46 link road options are presented in Table 8. These included general comments in relation to the proposed changes, with many respondents returning to issues raised earlier in the survey. In total, 249 respondents gave a comment to this question. The most common response was around environmental concerns associated with the proposals (e.g. pollution/air quality, noise, destruction of Green Belt land, wildlife, flooding) – 20.5% (n=51) of respondents who commented mentioned this in their answer. Other common themes included: development of sustainable travel options (walking and/or cycling), and the impact of HS2.

Table 8. Themes based on qualitative comments to additional comments/feedback related to the proposed A46 options

Theme / description	Count (%)	Example quotation(s) for illustration
Environmental concerns associated with the proposals (e.g. pollution/air quality, noise, destruction of Green Belt land, wildlife, flooding)	51 (20.5%)	<p><i>“The green belt is some of the only large wide areas left in Warwickshire, and the Greenway is a vital route as lockdown has shown many”</i></p> <p><i>“This consultation is biased towards a car-centric view that is not taking account of the needs of the environment or the majority of people who need to spend more time walking and cycling and less time driving in order to stay healthier and happier”</i></p>



		<p><i>"There is no reference anywhere in this consultation to the environmental impact of these proposals... The question and answer sheet states that " Design and construction will be sensitive to the environment", however there is nothing environmentally sensitive about a dual carriageway carrying heavy traffic"</i></p> <p><i>"Please consider just the measures that will benefit the environment, particularly the railway station, the buses, the walking, cycling improvements, and when time allows the tram from campus to city. I feel these could be achieved at lower cost than the road and without harming the precious bits of countryside nearby"</i></p> <p><i>"Preserve the natural / rural environment in the area"</i></p> <p><i>"It makes me so sad to think of our local wildlife and environment being messed with constantly. Completely irresponsible"</i></p>
Development of sustainable/active travel options - walking and/or cycling	49 (19.7%)	<p><i>"Sustainable transport and active travel must be front-and-centre of the new proposals. Anything else is unethical given the climate emergency we are facing and the limited funds available to councils"</i></p> <p><i>"Please put a priority on exploring the sustainable alternatives to road and car use"</i></p> <p><i>"I've seen the estimated cost of this new road circa £100 million. Spend just £10 million on cycle and pedestrian improvements in Coventry and Kenilworth and you could have sustainable travel infrastructure of the very best international standard"</i></p> <p><i>"Within any option it is vital that the provision of safe off-road cycle ways and walkways are included. This recent pandemic has highlighted the value of both cycling and walking to general wellbeing"</i></p> <p><i>"You have an opportunity to become a role model of how transport can be. Encourage cycling or walking. I would not oppose a network of responsibly placed cycle paths through the countryside"</i></p> <p><i>"The post Covid world is a cycling world. Wake up"</i></p>
Impact of HS2	47 (18.9%)	<p><i>"Work in conjunction with HS2 to minimise disruption. Plan route in conjunction ... to utilise similar/shared noise and visual impact reduction measures"</i></p> <p><i>"I see little use/advantage of connections being made to HS2 in this scheme which is a shame given the already devastating impact this is having on the local environment"</i></p> <p><i>"We understand the area needs to develop and these improvements are overdue and needed. Our frustration is living and working within what we call the HS2 A46 link road sandwich... Tried to sell commercial property on site but no one is willing to</i></p>



		<p><i>commit not knowing the location of the road and its impact on site"</i></p> <p><i>"These improvements are long overdue, but I don't understand why there is not full use of the HS2 route and a fast trunk road is not being built alongside all the way through to the NEC"</i></p> <p><i>"No clarification of how the junction with the A452 would relate to the road modifications due to building HS2 in that same Crackley Gap. Indeed to the whole problem of HS2 construction in the same area"</i></p>
The role/impact of University of Warwick	33 (13.3%)	<p><i>"There would be no need for the link road if the University was not in the area, so it should be reasoned that any link road has the university as its central destination, limiting impact on use of green land, or protected land as detailed in the plans for the Option 3"</i></p> <p><i>"The University of Warwick must not be allowed to dominate these issues"</i></p> <p><i>"The need for improved roads from the University and to reduce traffic through the University is understood. However, terminating on Westwood Heath Road is not a sustainable solution without properly addressing the impact on all the surrounding roads"</i></p> <p><i>"The University has repeatedly stated it is reviewing its plans as a result of the Pandemic with the impacts of remote learning as well as expressing its desire to be reduce its impact on the environment by reducing the number of cars on campus and enabling more sustainable travel. The Link Road therefore appears to contradict this message"</i></p> <p><i>"What contribution financially are Warwick Uni making? The reason for these changes are: 1. unnecessary destruction of green belt and 2. relentless expansion of the Uni, neither of which benefit locals in the slightest"</i></p>
Development of sustainable/active travel options – public transport (VLR, bus service, Park & Ride)	31 (12.4%)	<p><i>"Please consider just the measures that will benefit the environment, particularly the railway station, the buses... and when time allows the tram from campus to city"</i></p> <p><i>"Low cost innovative use of alternative transport to reduce congestion/emissions, eliminate need for further and create a city and university for the future. Permanent Park and Ride at Stoneleigh with VLR connection as used for graduations, should negate need for new roads... VLR connections to Birmingham area/HS2"</i></p> <p><i>"An integrated public transport system would be advantageous with local buses (or VLR) from the rail stations to employment / education hubs"</i></p> <p><i>"Rather than extend the road, build park and ride at A46 junction and light rail or tram into business park"</i></p>



Specific junction improvements (e.g. roundabouts, exit/access points, road widening/narrowing, road lengthening/shortening)	31 (12.4%)	<p><i>“Re-route and widen to single carriageway Crackley Lane and Bockendon Lane to new roundabout on Westwood Heath Road and dedicated entrance to University. Additional on-site parking at junction. From roundabout open access to Westwood Business Park for Cars/vans only. Alleviating pressure at Kirby Corner/Westwood Way”</i></p> <p><i>“Improve the existing road and junctions... simple, cheaper and doesn't impact green space”</i></p> <p><i>“If there's one thing I want to highlight it's the junction between the Greenway and the new road (just to the south of the university), which did not get any attention in this consultation. Please please please do this properly!”</i></p> <p><i>“Road widening and/or dualing should be looked at”</i></p> <p><i>“The road congestion caused at roundabouts over many years on the A46 eastern bypass by not providing fly overs should inform the junction of any link Road with the Kenilworth Road”</i></p>
Reconsideration and or postponement of proposals (in light of the COVID-19 pandemic)	28 (11.2%)	<p><i>“Given that nobody knows the long-term effects of the coronavirus on working from home, this survey should be postponed for at least a year. You cannot make decisions based on what may happen given that the 50 largest companies in the UK have indicated that they expect people to work from home after the pandemic. The link road may never be needed”</i></p> <p><i>“Due to the Pandemic I know of many University staff who have happily worked from home and have no intention of spending as much time on the campus as previously even if life returns to normal... Planning new infrastructure before these factors have been evaluated would be foolhardy in the extreme”</i></p> <p><i>“Reliance on vehicles will change as will ways of working as a result of technology and impact of COVID 19 pandemic these would render these plans null and void and certainly uneconomic”</i></p> <p><i>“As indicated before, much depend on the extent to which people will return to offices and workplaces as before COVID, or whether there are more permanent shifts in attitudes and abilities to working from home. If everyone returns to pre-COVID levels, then significant improvements are needed. If there is a more reduced return to these levels, then perhaps less drastic improvements and options would be satisfactory”</i></p>
Comments related to the railway station	25 (10.0%)	<p><i>“I don't see the point of a new railway station in the proposed location”</i></p> <p><i>“While not against the idea of a new railway station, I am sceptical about the likelihood of this being built within the next decade. It took years for the new Kenilworth station to be built”</i></p> <p><i>“There should be a significant lobby for an HS2 stop in this area, interlinked with the new Station”</i></p>



		<i>"If a station option is included it needs to be close to the University not where it is currently being proposed. Early planning of rail capacity and services linking this with Warwick and Leamington is important given the number of university students who live in this area"</i>
Concerns around funding/costs of proposals (considered a waste of money)	23 (9.2%)	<p><i>"The whole proposal of improvements to road and rail is, in my opinion, a complete waste of public funding"</i></p> <p><i>"Much of the current working from home will continue after the pandemic resulting in permanently reduced traffic levels. This scheme would be a costly white elephant"</i></p> <p><i>"The whole consultation is manipulative, designed to garner support for the most expensive Option 3. Maybe costings for all the options are included somewhere but I couldn't find them"</i></p> <p><i>"The money this will cost to deliver is simply not worth it and it should be redirected to more vital concerns. The traffic in this area is not at a sufficient level to warrant further road works"</i></p>
General negative comments towards proposals (e.g. Option 1, Option 2 and/or Option 3, sub-options)	22 (8.8%)	<p><i>"Please consider the needs and wants of local residents whose lives will be impacted severely and negatively by increased traffic volumes on suburban roads. Our quality of life and our safety is far more important than reducing what is now non-existent congestion elsewhere"</i></p> <p><i>"The whole area is in upheaval, wildlife, flora and fauna are being disrupted and spoiled for no good reason. The amount of people who will benefit from these improvements does not justify all the disruption and cost of this overall proposal. I am definitely against any of this going forward"</i></p> <p><i>"This consultation contains piteously little detail while bandying aspirations (VLR, Stadium, Uni access etc etc) as though they are facts. It is a sham and deceitful"</i></p> <p><i>"Building the road is not a strategic solution as it does not link up major road networks"</i></p>
Minimising congestion/rat running, moving congestion/issues to new areas	22 (8.8%)	<p><i>"I am concerned the proposals only relocate the whole problem to Westwood Heath Road and Kirby Corner"</i></p> <p><i>"Thought / investment must be given to how Westwood Heath Road will cope with the university traffic at peak times, otherwise the scheme will simply move the current congestion from Stoneleigh Rd to Westwood Heath Road"</i></p> <p><i>"If we cannot learn from previous schemes that more roads do not equal less congestion we are very short sighted as a generation"</i></p> <p><i>"In terms of supposedly easing congestion the scheme seems to be transferring congestion elsewhere"</i></p>
Concerns around housing/over-development	19 (7.6%)	<i>"I strongly disagree with the already planned Kings Hill housing development on the green belt. We'll be losing another green area"</i>



		<p><i>and it will lead to traffic increase and new development in a near future"</i></p> <p><i>"Any more building on the green belt should stop. More roads and housing developments will impact air pollution environmental damage and habitat loss none of which seem to be considered. I would rather be in a queue or add 10 mins to my daily journey than look at more housing estates and tree stumps!"</i></p> <p><i>"You state a 25% projected traffic rise in the next 10 years. So why are these figures NOT imposed on the housing development planning assessments prior to Planning approval? Their figures appear ALWAYS over-optimistic!"</i></p>
Lack of faith in consultation process/survey bias	16 (6.4%)	<p><i>"I have found many of the questions and options available to respond to in this consultation weighted and geared toward influencing the respondent to accept the proposals and options. The consultation and way the proposals are presented seem designed not to consider or question a range of fundamental areas of concern and issues. They are narrow in remit and design. It is as if the consultation has been deliberately designed to be so and purposefully aimed to steer public perception and thus responses. If it is not through deliberate intent it seems thus clearly designed by those who are so steeped in a particular and narrow way of looking at and assessing things and particular discourse that they appear to those analysing it from outside, as being trapped inside this set narrow agenda and view"</i></p> <p><i>"It is biased in the way the information is portrayed and in the questions being asked - they cannot be used to correctly infer anything meaningful"</i></p> <p><i>"With something this big a wider consultation area is required"</i></p>
Concerns regarding the modelling assessment/data/information presented	13 (5.2%)	<p><i>"The assumption that there will be 25% more traffic is unsound"</i></p> <p><i>"It would have been a lot easier to pass comment had some additional information been made available, namely; the future plans of the University - post Covid; the implications a 'stadium' will have on the area; more detail on the new station/ what it will consist of - Park and Ride?"</i></p> <p><i>"This consultation contains piteously little detail while bandying aspirations (VLR, Stadium, Uni access etc etc) as though they are facts... The need for the road is partly based on a population model that is known by everyone except the planners to be wrong and which is being challenged"</i></p>
Quality of life/wellbeing	13 (5.2%)	<p><i>"I feel confident in saying that such increased traffic, noise, air pollution would have a significant and adverse effect on our residents' and this communities' quality of life"</i></p> <p><i>"Quality of life will deteriorate during the years all these works will be taking place"</i></p> <p><i>"I do not think those who propose, design and implement schemes such as the A46 Link Road ever really consider the impact on</i></p>



		<i>mental wellbeing of continued destruction of countryside, of open spaces and of wildlife"</i>
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Other comments mentioned less frequently included: general positive comments towards proposals (Option 1, 2 and/or 3, sub-options) (n=7), disruption associated with proposals (n=5), joined up/collaborative thinking is required (n=5), invest in repairing current infrastructure (n=3), concerns over safety (e.g. speeding) (n=3).

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS & FEEDBACK

In addition, there were 98 emails, letters and phone call responses sent to the A46 Team. Whilst several comments were requests for further information and/or clarity around specific aspects of the consultation, the overriding sentiment of correspondence was negative (79.8% of comments were negative, just 1.2% positive and 19.0% neutral). The following concerns were raised (most of which were also key themes raised by respondents in the online survey):

- Environmental concerns (e.g. the development would increase pollution/affect air quality, concerns regarding Kenilworth's tree-lined conservation area/Green Belt status, increased litter, impact on wildlife, increased noise, increased HGV use).
- Concerns the proposals would just shift the problems (e.g. congestion) to different areas.
- The plans fail to consider residents in/around the Kenilworth area of the University of Warwick (poor junctions, increased traffic/congestion and the urban spread of Coventry/loss of Green Belt).
- Concerns regarding potential loss of allotment land at Westwood Heath due to proposed development.
- Suggestions that the household leaflet drop did not reach the required households (and/or not in time to attend the first online broadcast).
- Requests for clarity regarding the University Warwick's involvement/comments on the proposals. Furthermore, concerns regarding University of Warwick and Coventry City Football Club plans for a new stadium and the impact this may have on the area.
- Queries regarding aspects of the modelling assessment (for example, model methodology, outdated data, traffic/peak flow, access points, cycle/footpaths/pedestrian crossings, new housing developments).
- Suggestions that the questions/options in the online survey were bias towards Option 3.
- Concerns Option 3 (and some of the sub-options, such as the closure of Gibbet Hill Road) would increase rat-running / traffic volumes on specific roads.
- Queries regarding whether a new station would be utilised and would be better served by expanding services at Kenilworth station instead (also, consideration of HS2 in the area).
- Concerns that people with no/limited access to the internet will be disadvantaged.
- Long-term impact of home/remote working as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic on commuting and usage of road(s) in the consultation area needs reviewing.

Responses were also received from a range of stakeholders. These included: a joint statement from three Warwick District and Warwickshire County Councillors, University of Warwick, CEG Land Promotions III, Hallam Land Management Limited, IM Land, Pittaway family, Highways England, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), Cycleways, Bicycle Mayor for Coventry, Burton Green and University of Warwick Parish Council, Bubbenhall Parish Council, Kenilworth Town Council, Westwood Heath Residents Association (WHRA), Cannon Park Community Association, West Midlands Friends of the Earth, a technical note, and several letters from local residents. Their concerns included:



- Whilst there was support for Option 3 from some stakeholders, others suggested that Options 1 and 2 were considered to have been quickly discounted as not providing suitable benefit and the documentation/survey seeks to promote and advance Option 3.
- Concerns that there is no clear evidence (from other studies/examples) that Option 3 would fully meet all the stated objectives. Also, Census 2021 results should be incorporated into the work.
- The word 'strategic' should be removed from the title of the scheme.
- Suggestions that further detailed modelling and data gathering should be undertaken to fully understand the impacts of the proposals.
- Respondents state that there should be minimal impact of the A46 Link road on local residents – there are concerns that the link road would potentially exacerbate existing congestion issues at various sites/local junctions in the area. For example, residential developments (such as Kings Hill) would have a huge influence on the traffic in the area.
- A range of different suggestions to improve proposals / sub-options were put forward (for example, considering a bypass around Stoneleigh).
- Proposals are considered contrary to the rhetoric around the climate emergency, environment and sustainable growth (with suggestions that the link road will generate more traffic, increase pollution, impact on habitats, impact on drainage/flooding and be highly detrimental to the Green Belt).
- Proposals are considered to exaggerate the benefit to cycle use - sustainable options including public transport and active travel have not been considered as viable standalone alternatives to the road schemes.
- Concerns the new road alignment is intended to be of assistance to the University of Warwick (awaiting the publication of University of Warwick's 2029 Masterplan).
- Confusion regarding VLR / Coventry South Interchange station and any future stadium (and how this could/should link up with HS2 in terms of economies of scale/land).
- Suggestions that it is premature to be developing plans without knowing how employment numbers, working practices and travel will change post-Covid-19.
- Allow more time for greater communication and transparency between key stakeholders and local residents.



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ANALYSIS

The online survey asked respondents to complete information regarding equality and diversity. The results are set out in Table 9 below.

Table 9. Overall online respondent profile

Gender	Female	168
	Male	259
	Non-binary	2
	Prefer to self-describe	1
	Prefer not to say	68
	Not answered	24
Gender identity	Yes	423
	No	2
	Prefer not to say	72
	Not answered	25
Age in years	Under 18	0
	18-29	43
	30-44	102
	45-59	137
	60-74	136
	75+	40
	Prefer not to say	44
	Not answered	20
Long standing illness or disability	Yes	29
	No	422
	Prefer not to answer	48
	Not answered	23
Ethnicity	White-English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/ British	369
	White - Irish	7
	White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0
	Other White background	30
	Black or Black British - African	1
	Black or Black British - Caribbean	2
	Other Black background	0
	Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1
	Asian or Asian British – Indian	14



	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0
	Chinese	1
	Other Asian Background	2
	Mixed – White and Asian	1
	Mixed – White and Black African	0
	Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1
	Other Mixed background	2
	Arab	0
	Other Ethnic background	3
	Prefer not to say	66
	Not answered	22
Religion	Buddhist	3
	Christian	171
	Jewish	0
	Muslim	2
	Hindu	2
	Sikh	9
	Spiritual	5
	Any other religion or belief	6
	No religion	210
	Prefer not to say	89
	Not answered	25
Sexual orientation	Heterosexual or straight	342
	Gay man	12
	Gay woman / lesbian	0
	Bi / bisexual	10
	Other	4
	Prefer not to say	124
	Not answered	30



A46 Strategic Link Road Consultation



Overview

What the consultation is about?

These are exciting times for Coventry and Warwickshire, with an economy which has continuing potential for growth, top-class Universities and expanding communities all generating demand for travel across the area. In order to be able to help meet the needs of people wanting to travel, we want to share our plans for a **new transport corridor** between the **A46 Stoneleigh Junction, University of Warwick and Westwood Heath in Coventry**.

Plans are still in the early stages, with indicative scheme proposals identified. We want to share these proposals with you, to get your views on your transport priorities for this area. We are consulting on **three main options**, which are described in this consultation document, along with the some of the key benefits and issues associated with each option. The feedback that you provide will help steer the project to ensure that we work towards a **beneficial but balanced scheme** and that the resulting proposal **reflects the views of the local community and wider stakeholders** (recognising that there will inevitably be a wide range of individual views on the transport issues in this area).

The new transport corridor is part of the strategic long term plans for sustainable growth in this region. These plans include wider cycle networks for Warwickshire and Coventry and a new railway station and interchange with the potential to link road, rail, cycling and very light rail (VLR).

Please take the time to read the consultation document and accompanying Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) as they outline the general principles for the new transport corridor and indicative scheme proposals, which may help you to understand how these proposals could affect you.

Why are we consulting?

This consultation document provides information on the work that has been done to date and outlines the core options considered for the new transport corridor along with the potential impacts and benefits. Feedback from this consultation will help inform and develop these indicative scheme proposals, by allowing us to take account of the issues and concerns raised by residents, businesses and others who have an interest in the area and the transport network.

The online survey will ask you questions regarding the three main options, along with specific questions regarding local connections and changes.

We welcome your comments and questions on the proposals.

You can feed back in the following ways:

- Complete the online survey at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask
- Email: a46linkroad@warwickshire.gov.uk
- Write to us at: Communities Directorate, Warwickshire County Council, Shire Hall Post Room, Northgate Street, Warwick, CV34 4RL

If you need to request a paper copy of the survey or an alternative format of the consultation document, please email or write to us at the above addresses. Alternatively, you can call the project manager on 01926 418029.

Web broadcasts

Please tune in to one of the web broadcasts to learn more about the scheme and ask any questions you may have. Dates of these events are available on the consultation website.

The broadcasts will be live, with recordings available after the event. Access will be through Microsoft Teams via a web browser.

Questions should be submitted in a written format, either prior to the event via the email address above, or during the event via the comments function on Microsoft Teams. We will try and answer as many as we can during the event. For those questions we are unable to answer, responses will be available on the consultation page after the broadcast.

Setting the scene - Coventry and Warwickshire

Coventry and Warwickshire have some of the fastest growing economies within the West Midlands. An efficient transport network with sufficient capacity and resilience is key to maintaining and supporting further future growth. Investment in key infrastructure is needed on vital corridors, such as the A45 and A46, to improve connectivity and conditions for businesses and to encourage continued operation and investment in the area. This is exactly what a new transport corridor to the south of Coventry aims to deliver.

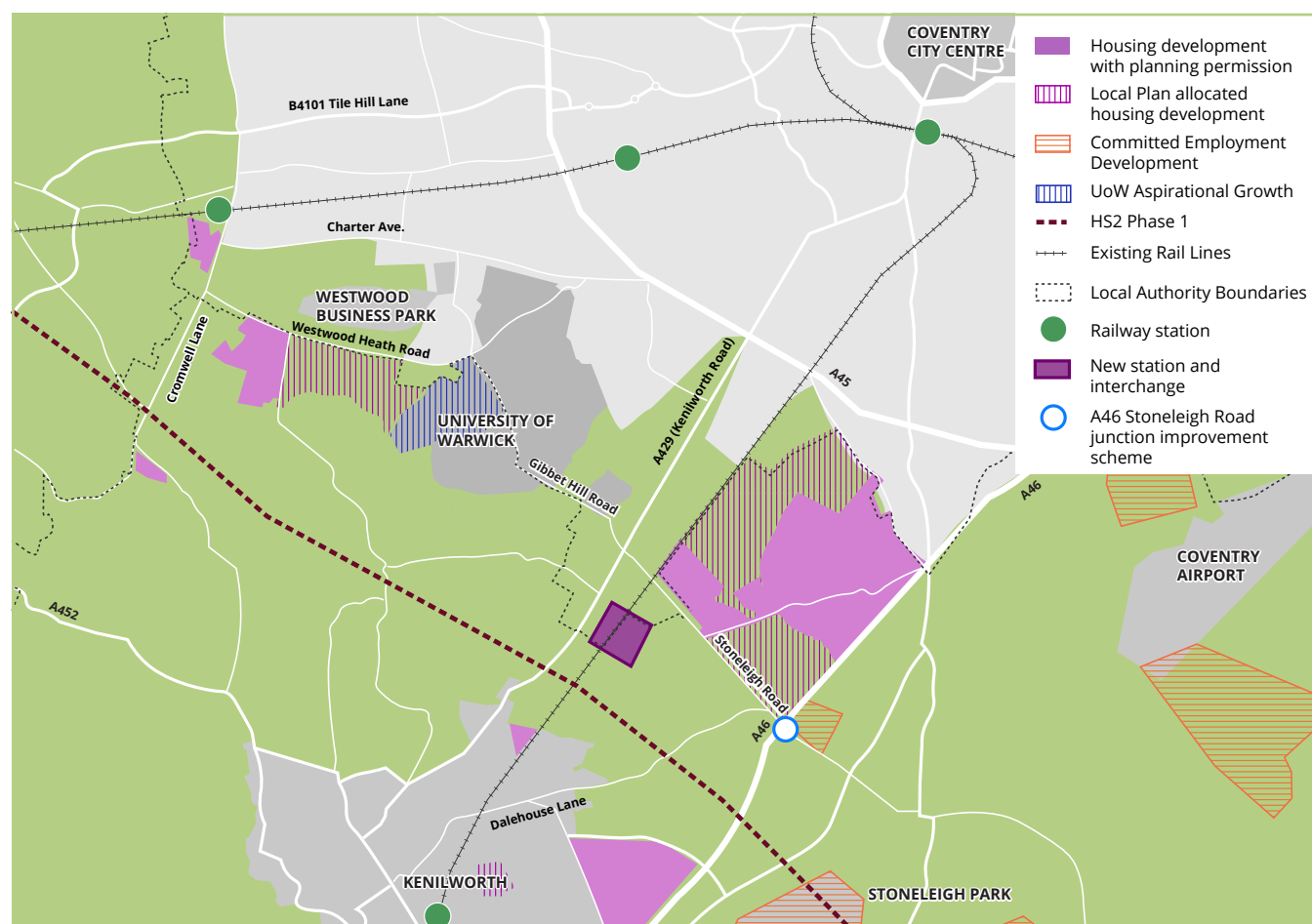
The consideration of a new transport corridor to the south of Coventry will investigate opportunities to improve access to University of Warwick and existing business parks, as well as linking to new and existing housing and employment, with the aim of reducing congestion on the A45 and A46. It also provides the opportunity to improve local connectivity whilst tackling local traffic issues, such as the rat-running of through-traffic on unsuitable local roads.

Planned future growth and development in the south of Coventry area

The A46 corridor has been identified for major employment growth, with committed or planned developments at Fen End, Whitley South, Coventry Airport, Ryton and Ansty. Additionally, there are also a number of significant housing developments proposed within the Warwick District Local Plan around Kenilworth and parts of south-west Coventry. These proposed developments will provide much needed housing for the area along with the additional employment opportunities.

The University of Warwick is one of the UK's leading universities with a reputation for excellence in research and teaching, innovation and links to business and industry, as well as being a major employer in and economic contributor to the wider area. Further development of the campus is required to meet the University of Warwick's aspirations for growth, particularly to continue to provide exceptional facilities for students to live and study, as well as to facilitate research and collaboration with industry and community partners. The University is currently developing plans for growth, looking to 2030 and beyond, in order to continue to create a dynamic environment for education and research.

HS2 will provide opportunities for further growth within the West Midlands, with plans to bring significant and diverse levels of employment to the areas surrounding Birmingham Airport and the proposed HS2 Interchange station.



Setting the scene - Coventry and Warwickshire

The A46 is a key link, both locally and more widely across the sub-region, providing vital business-to-business connectivity for companies such as Jaguar Land Rover and its supply chain. A major improvement scheme to upgrade the A46 Stoneleigh Road junction will soon be under construction and this will support improved access to and from the south of Coventry area, including to the University of Warwick and Stoneleigh Park.

Volumes of traffic are likely to rise, as a result of increasing demand for travel from proposed developments in the area, making the case for improving local infrastructure. Any increase in local congestion is also likely to impact the attractiveness of public transport services, including bus journey times and connections to rail services.

Therefore, in order to deliver a more sustainable transport network, infrastructure improvements are also essential to enable more journeys to be undertaken by public transport and active modes (such as walking and cycling). Improving connections to existing walking and cycling links, as well as unlocking the potential for a new station and interchange (enhancing access to buses, local rail services and active modes to the south of Coventry, will make it easier for people to travel by more sustainable methods.

Aims and objectives of the new transport corridor

The proposals for a new transport corridor explore the opportunities to transform connectivity and deliver economic and housing growth in the south of Coventry area.

The indicative proposals consider improving links between the upgraded A46 Stoneleigh Road junction and Westwood Heath, via A429 Kenilworth Road and the University of Warwick.

In order to be able to determine how successful these indicative proposals would be in delivering future growth aspirations and improvements to the transport network, the following aims and objectives of the new transport corridor have been developed.

Aims	Objectives								Key outcomes
	Maintain journey times on local network following wider A46 development growth	Support accessible economic development	Improve network resilience to provide consistent and reliable access	Improve accessibility to University of Warwick	Reduce severance by reducing traffic flows and improving walking & cycling links	Improve local air quality resulting from road transport in the area	Reduce rat running traffic on local roads	Enhance active travel by improving walking and cycling links in the south of Coventry	
Supporting access to key education, employment and growth sites in Coventry and Warwickshire	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves accessibility by road, bike and public transport to the University of Warwick, surrounding Business Parks and other employment areas to the south of Coventry. Supports the delivery of significant housing growth Provides new infrastructure to support the connectivity of the local cycle network serving Kenilworth and the south of Coventry area.
Support growth aspirations of the University of Warwick and the wider A46 corridor	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports major housing and employment growth in the south of Coventry. Improves access to the University of Warwick and consequently supports its growth aspirations.
Reducing congestion and improving journey times on the local road network	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduces congestion on the A46 and on key local roads. Provides additional connectivity and improves journey times on the A46, A45 and local road network. Reduces the inappropriate use of minor local roads (such as Crackley Lane) by rat-running traffic
Increase resilience of the network by improving journey times and providing better connectivity with the wider network	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances the resilience of the local transport network by reducing congestion, improving journey times and providing better connectivity with the A46 and key routes in the south of Coventry. Supports access to public transport and greater journey time reliability for public transport services in the local area.

New transport corridor - Proposed options

In order to respond to the aims and objectives for a new transport corridor, initial feasibility work has been undertaken to consider possible routes for a new link road, its connections to the existing highway network and the potential for associated active travel infrastructure improvements. To date, several options have been considered in the context of high-level constraints and opportunities, as well as ensuring proposals do not preclude the potential for future connections.

The outline plans have initially considered the local topography and environmental considerations, such as woodlands and local landowners. A desk-top study has been conducted to ensure major environmental impacts are avoided in the first instance and, where this is not possible, they are minimised. The new transport corridor will be routed so as to avoid ancient woodland as far as possible.

Options have also been initially assessed, using a transport model, to identify how the indicative proposals will likely be used and the potential impacts they have on the existing local transport network.

Potential scheme options will continue to be developed, using feedback from this consultation, as well as more detailed consideration of constraints and the assessment of impacts and opportunities.

Further development of the potential options will include more detailed environmental surveys which will identify environmental, ecological and other factors for consideration. The surveys will also help inform the scheme design development and the appropriate level of mitigation measures to be put in place, to minimise any impacts of the proposed new transport infrastructure upon the natural and built environment, as well as maximising opportunities for improving biodiversity in the local area.

The design and assessment will take into account all relevant legislation and guidance.

Taking advantage of and building on the opportunities provided as part of the proposed A46 Stoneleigh junction improvement, which will soon be under construction, we have developed the following options for a new link road between the A46 Stoneleigh junction, the University of Warwick and Westwood Heath in Coventry.

Three main options are currently being considered as part of this consultation, these are:

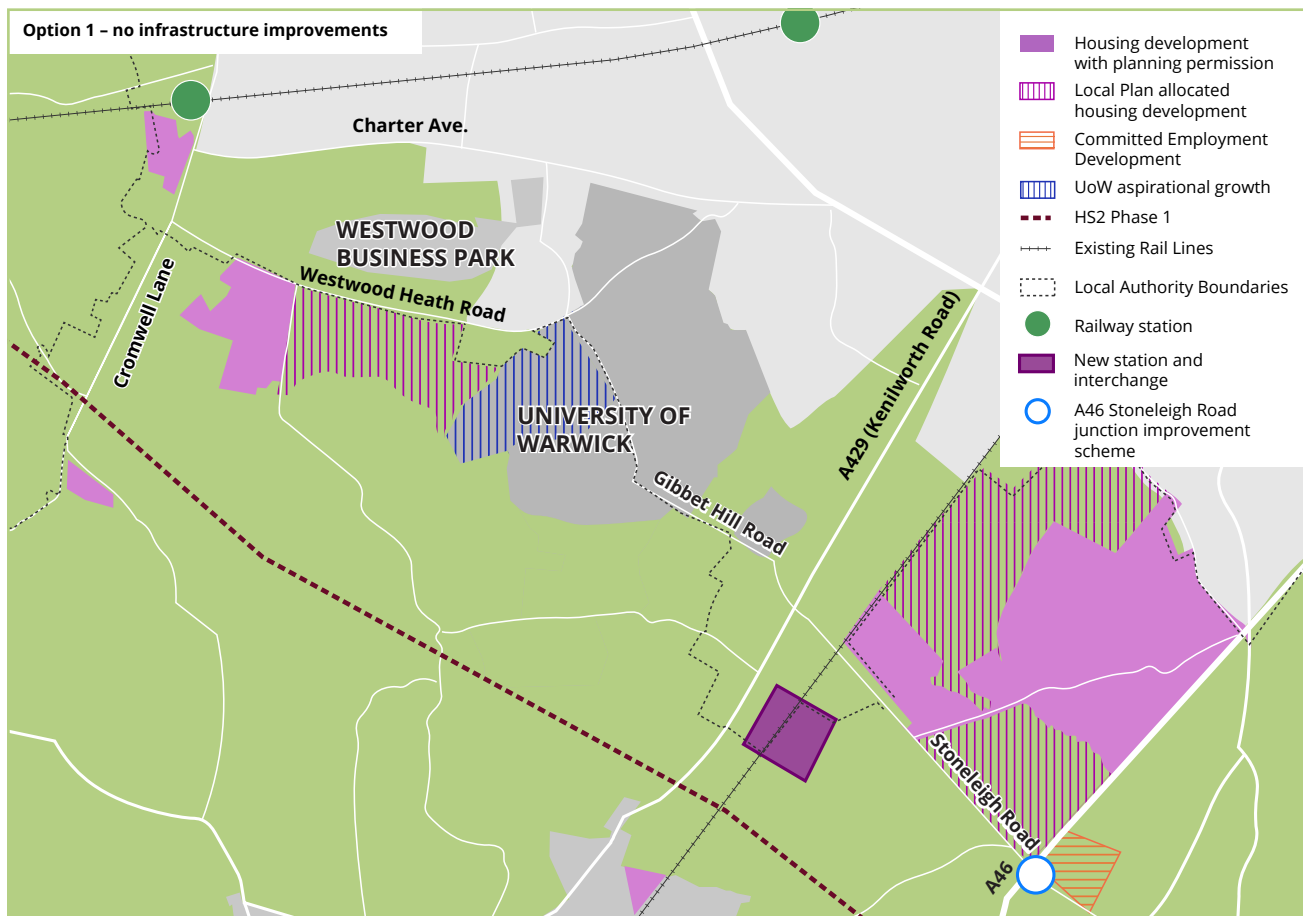
Option 1 - No infrastructure improvements

No additional infrastructure or new modes of transport will be provided, with the existing transport network remaining as it is currently. While there are no direct scheme costs resulting from this option, it does restrict the amount of investment in employment and housing growth that could be delivered and the associated economic benefits that could be achieved.

Whilst this option might minimise the additional travel demand on the network, it would also restrict the ability to meet the demand for new housing and to maintain the current strong position of the local economy. Alleviation of existing traffic congestion is unlikely, which will consequently impact people’s quality of life and health. In fact, journey times are predicted to increase without further investment in the transport network, particularly at peak times, with traffic volumes set to increase over the next ten years by up to 25%.

Therefore, without further investment, plans to increase the level of employment and residential development in this area will be limited by the capacity of the existing transport network. In particular, it is unlikely that additional journeys resulting from allocated Local Plan developments or future aspirational growth plans will be able to be accommodated.

These proposed developments are shown in purple, orange and blue below, which are a mixture of developments with planning permission, those allocated within the CCC and WDC Local Plans and the University of Warwick’s aspirational growth plans.



How it meets the objectives:		Key:	
Maintain journey times following wider A46 development growth	Reduce severance	Does not meet objective	Red
Provide accessible economic development	Improve air quality	Partly meets objective	Orange
Improve network resilience	Reduce rat-running	Fully meets objective	Green
Improve access to University of Warwick	Enhance active travel		

Option 2 - New link road to A429 Kenilworth Road

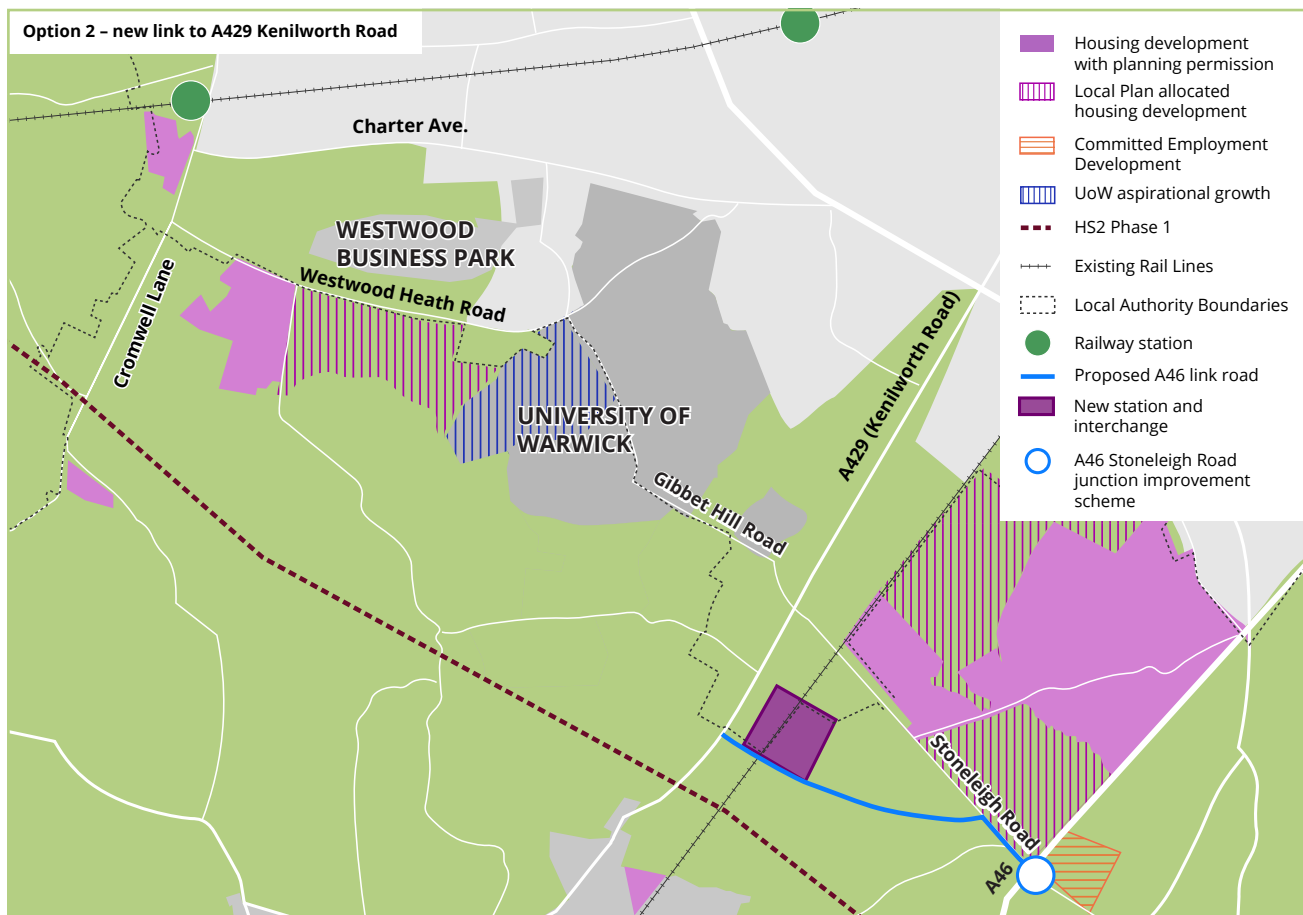
This option proposes to create a new link road between the upgraded A46 Stoneleigh Road junction and the A429 Kenilworth Road.

At the eastern end, the new link road would connect directly onto the improved junction between the A46 and Stoneleigh Road, with the addition of a left-in, left-out junction to the proposed King's Hill development. To the western end of new link road, a new roundabout would be constructed connecting to the A429 Kenilworth Road, with a possible additional connection to a proposed new railway station and interchange.

The new link road could be a single- or dual-carriageway road with segregated cycle and pedestrian facilities on one or both sides of the carriageway. Additional capacity could be made available for additional sustainable transport options, such as a possible dedicated bus lane, capacity for very light rail (VLR) and potential transport links into University of Warwick. This option would provide a partial bypass for Stoneleigh Road and Gibbet Hill Road, but through-traffic would remain on Gibbet Hill Road through the University campus as traffic from Westwood Heath would not be able to directly access the proposed link road. Option 2 proposals would also allow a future private connection providing direct access to the University of Warwick to be brought forward.

Initial analysis shows that Option 2 improves congestion and average journey times in the AM peak. However, during the PM peak, Option 2 still does not deliver sufficient changes to network performance. This may impact the delivery of housing and employment growth allocated within Local Plans as well as the aspirational growth of University of Warwick, particularly without further infrastructure improvements.

An indicative scheme alignment is included below.



How it meets the objectives:		Key:	
Maintain journey times following wider A46 development growth	Does not meet objective	Does not meet objective	Red
Provide accessible economic development	Partly meets objective	Partly meets objective	Orange
Improve network resilience	Fully meets objective	Fully meets objective	Green
Improve access to University of Warwick	Reduce severance	Reduce rat-running	Green
	Improve air quality	Enhance active travel	Green

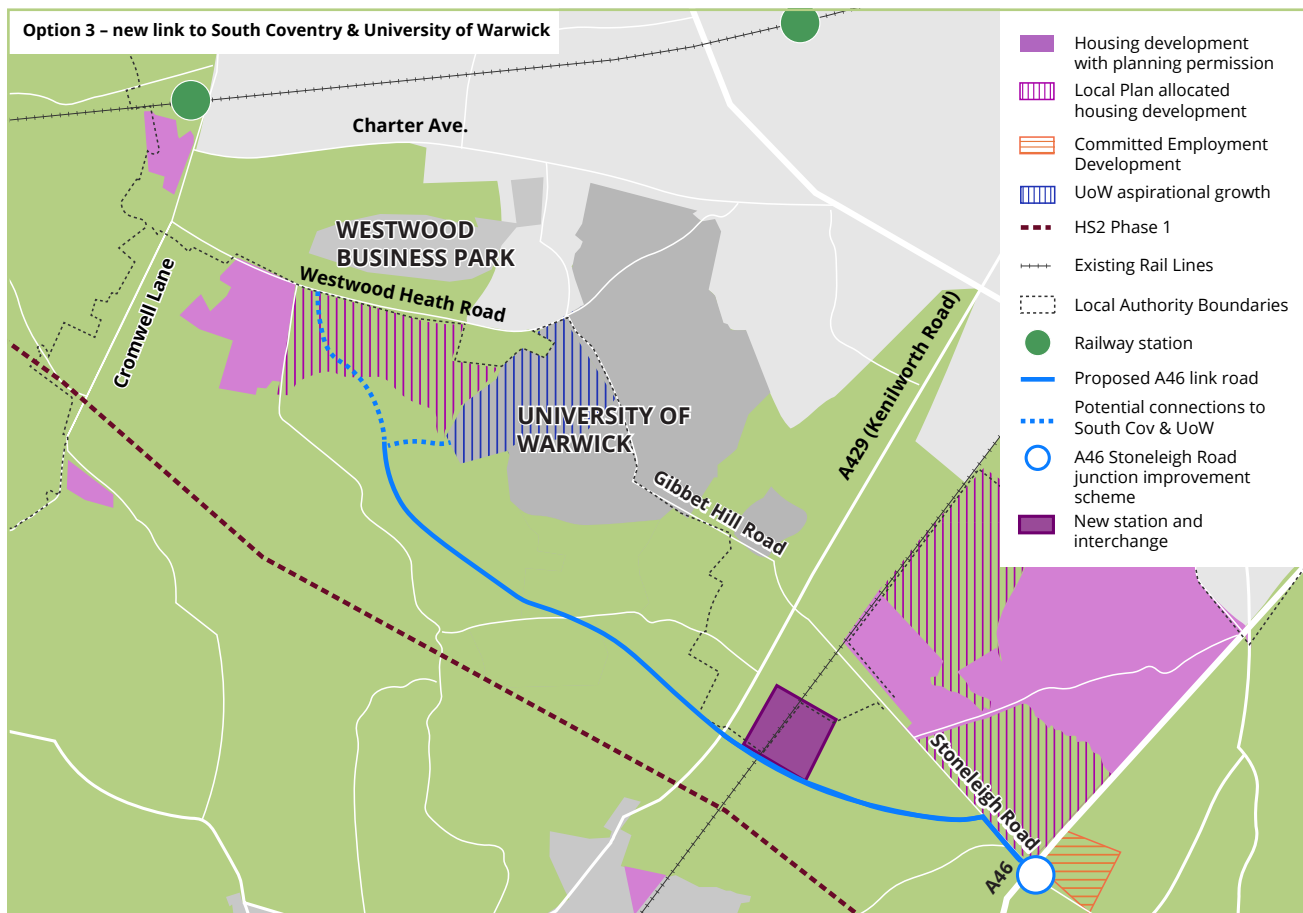
Option 3 – New link road to south of Coventry and University of Warwick

Option 3 would see a new link road constructed between the upgraded A46 Stoneleigh Road junction and Westwood Heath Road in Coventry, with a direct connection into the University of Warwick. The scheme would also include improvements to a number of local junctions within Coventry to help mitigate the predicted impacts of the scheme in that area of the city.

At the eastern end, the new link road is proposed to connect directly onto the improved junction between the A46 and Stoneleigh Road, with the addition of a left-in, left-out junction to the proposed King's Hill development. It would continue to the A429 Kenilworth Road, where a new roundabout would be constructed connecting to the A429 Kenilworth Road, with a possible additional connection to a proposed new railway station and interchange. From the A429 Kenilworth Road, the new link road could then connect to Westwood Heath Road, as well as providing an opportunity for direct access into the University of Warwick.

The new road would be a dual carriageway with segregated cycle and pedestrian facilities on one or both sides of the carriageway, until the junction with University of Warwick. At this point the link road would reduce to single carriageway road with continued segregated cycle and pedestrian facilities provision. Additional capacity could also be made available for additional sustainable transport options such as a possible dedicated bus lane, capacity for very light rail (VLR) and potential direct transport links into University of Warwick.

Initial analysis demonstrates that Option 3 would likely result in a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network, during both AM and PM periods. Therefore, it is likely to reduce congestion and deliver network-wide benefits, as well as more localised benefits along critical parts of the network, such as the A45 and A46. These improvements in local network performance and connectivity may support the delivery of housing and employment growth allocated within Local Plans as well as the aspirational growth of University of Warwick.

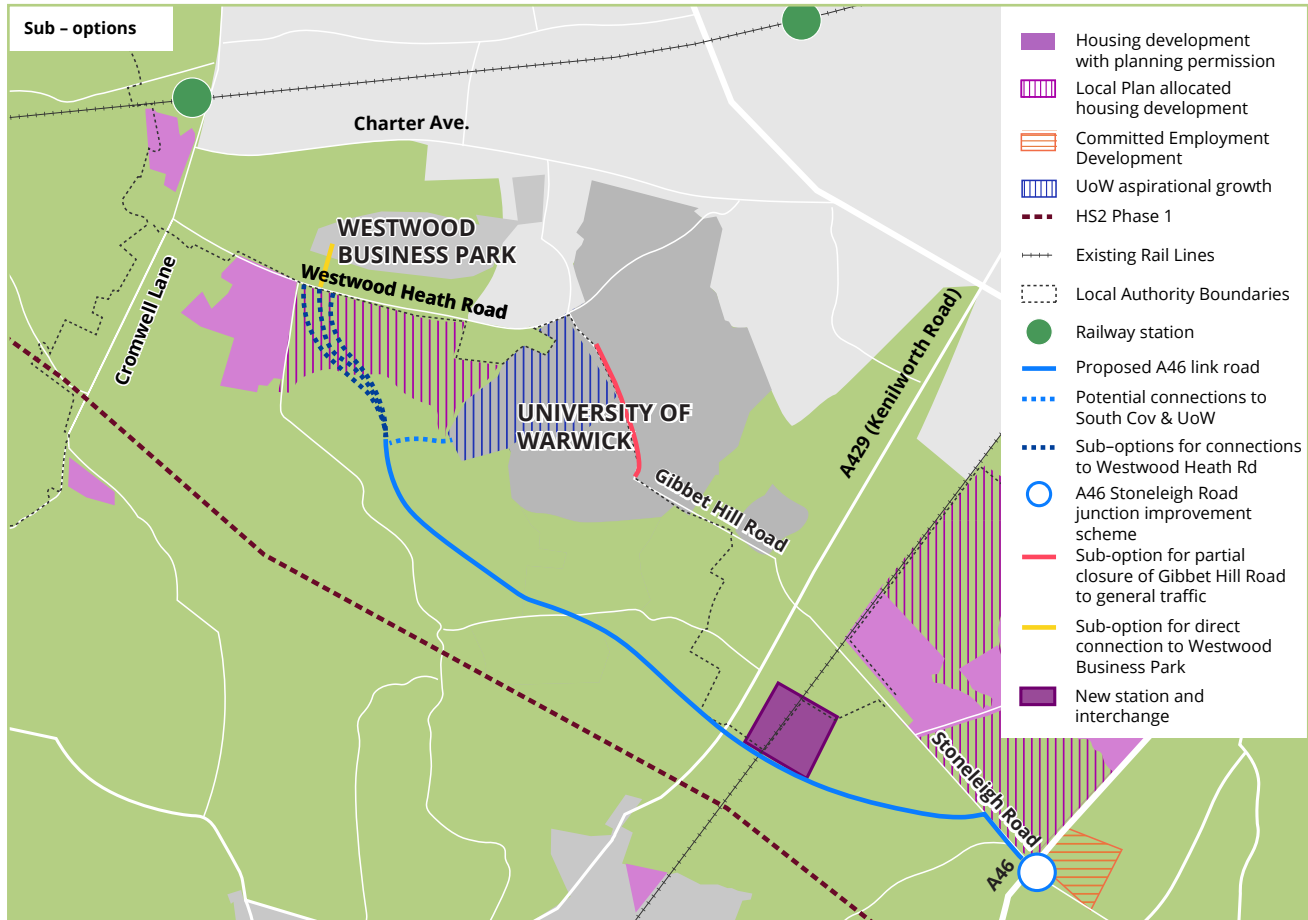


How it meets the objectives:		Key:	
Maintain journey times following wider A46 development growth	Reduce severance	Does not meet objective	Red
Provide accessible economic development	Improve air quality	Partly meets objective	Orange
Improve network resilience	Reduce rat-running	Fully meets objective	Green
Improve access to University of Warwick	Enhance active travel		

Sub - options

If Option 3, a new link road to south of Coventry and University of Warwick, is selected there are a number of sub-options that are also being considered.

Indicative sub-option proposals are outlined below.



Gibbet Hill Road

Option 3 proposes a new link road between the A46 Stoneleigh Junction, A429 Kenilworth Road, the University of Warwick and Westwood Heath Road, which could enable a section of Gibbet Hill Road (shown in red) to be closed to general through-traffic. This could facilitate the repurposing of this section of road for use by public transport, pedestrians and cyclists only.

General through-traffic would be able to use the higher-standard link road, which provides a more attractive route from Westwood Heath Road to the A429 and the A46. Additionally, university traffic would be able to access the campus using the new connection from the proposed link road, rather than from Gibbet Hill Road.

Views would be welcomed on whether this sub-option should be considered further as part of the package of measures.

Sub – options

Westwood Business Park

Option 3 proposes a new link road between the upgraded A46 Stoneleigh junction, A429 Kenilworth Road, the University of Warwick and Westwood Heath Road. This also provides an opportunity to deliver a direct link into Westwood Business Park. However, it should be noted that HGVs would not be able to use this new access and would need to continue to use the access off Kirby Corner Roundabout.

Whilst a link into the Business Park would provide relief to sections of the local road network from general traffic, especially Kirby Corner Road, it also has the potential to have an impact on existing properties and communities.

Views would be welcomed on whether this sub-option should be considered further as part of the package of measures.

Westwood Heath Road

Analysis indicates that connecting the proposed link road into Westwood Heath Road (Option 3) results in wider benefits to the transport network. However, it is recognised that there are likely to be community concerns over the impact of such a connection.

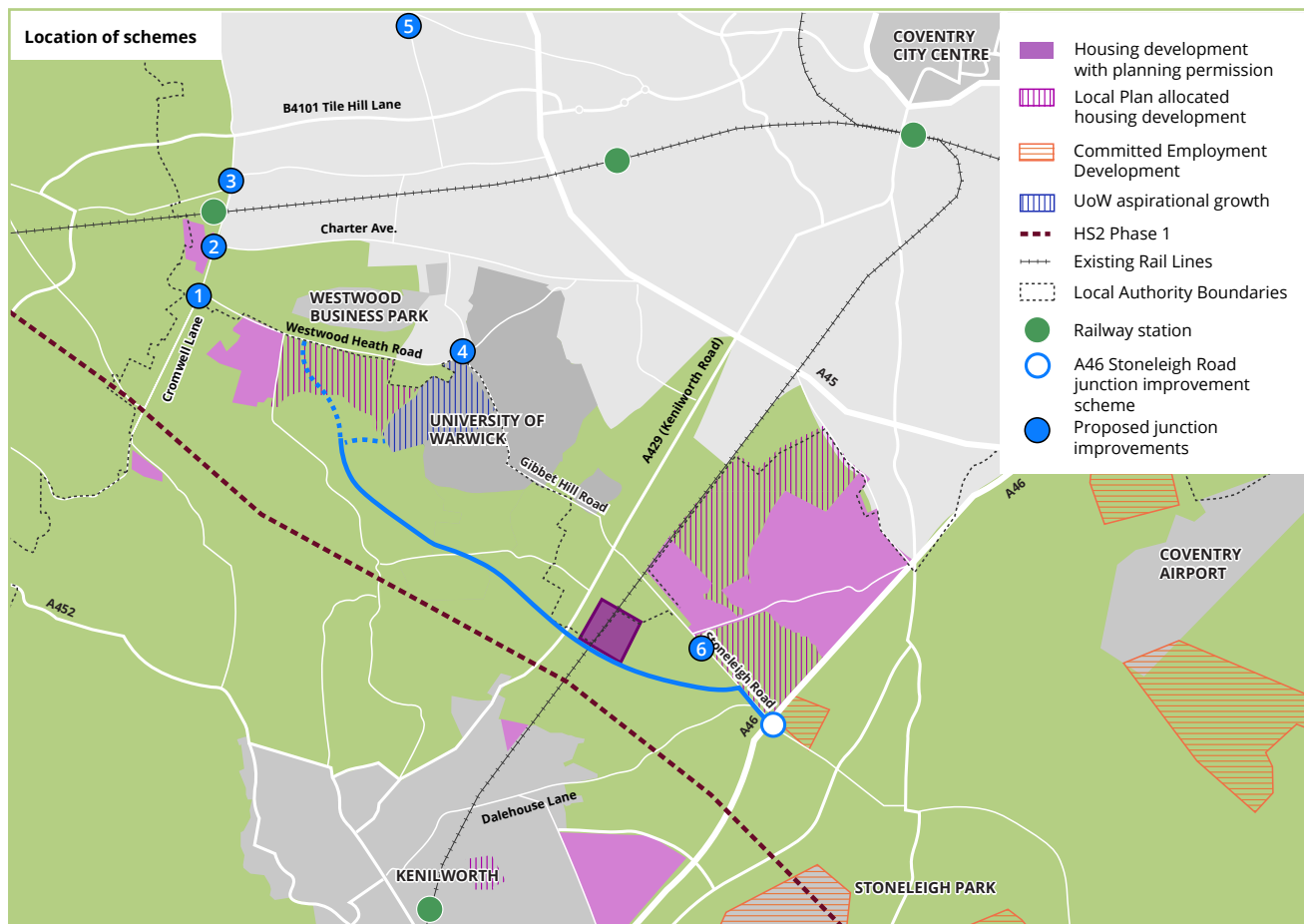
Your views on whether the link road should connect to Westwood Heath Road would be welcomed.

If such a proposed link is delivered, there are a number of locations where the connection could be made on Westwood Heath Road (dark blue dashed lines on the above plan).

Again, your views on the location, and type, of junction would be useful.

Local Junction Improvements

The link road will inevitably alter traffic flow patterns on the surrounding local network. Following initial analysis, it is expected that overall congestion will decrease in the local area. However mitigation may be required at specific locations where congestion has the potential to worsen as a result of the link road. The locations of the proposed junction improvements are outlined below. If any additional locations requiring improvement are identified during further scheme development, these will be considered as part of the ongoing assessment work.



Scheme 1 – Cromwell Lane/Westwood Heath Road Junction

This scheme proposes the adjustment of the junction to form a mini-roundabout. The scheme maintains the two-lane entry on the Westwood Heath Road approach, which is to be delivered as part of an existing scheme with planning permission identified at this junction.

Scheme 2 – Cromwell Lane/Charter Avenue

This scheme proposes the implementation of a 30-metre right-turn lane on the Cromwell Lane northbound approach to the junction.

Scheme 3 – Cromwell Lane/Torrington Avenue

This scheme proposes the installation of a 50-metre right-turn lane on the Cromwell Lane northbound approach to the junction.

Scheme 4 – Westwood Heath Road/Westwood Way

This scheme involves the provision of two-lane entry and exits on the Westwood Heath Road arms to the roundabout, to enable the east-to-west and west-to-east movements to be made in two lanes.

Scheme 5 – Broad Lane/Job's Lane

This scheme proposes the implementation of a 30-metre two-lane section on the Job's Lane approach to the junction.

Scheme 6 – Kings Hill Access Restrictions

This scheme allows Kings Hill traffic to travel to/from the site via Stoneleigh Road, however through-trips on Stoneleigh Road will remain banned.

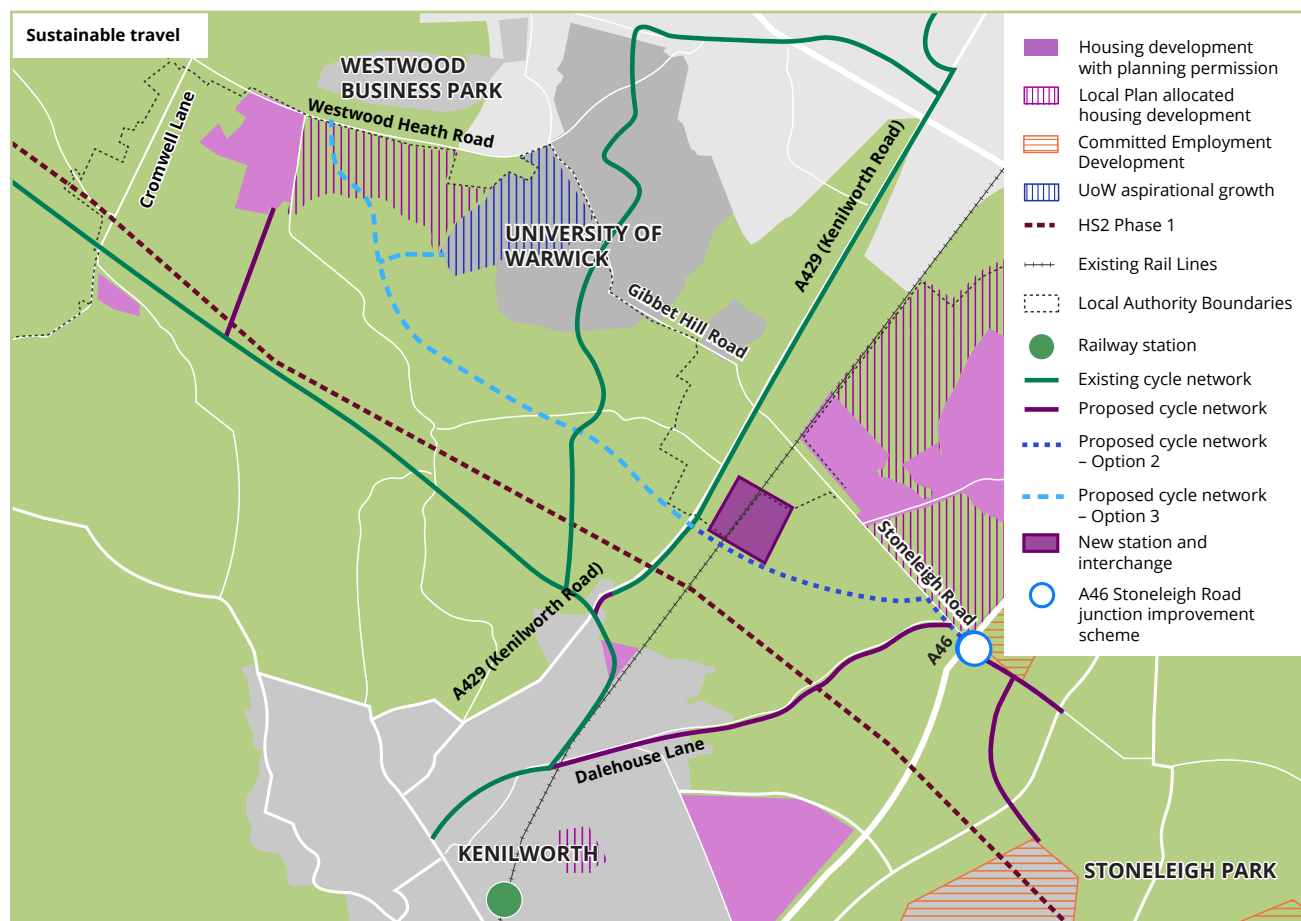
Sustainable travel

The new transport corridor aims to facilitate travel by safe and reliable modes of transport, encouraging people to choose to travel more sustainably and reduce journeys by car. As well as enabling more sustainable access for future developments, the new transport corridor creates opportunities for a potential vital link with very light rail (VLR) and other future transport infrastructure plans.

The new transport corridor provides the opportunity to improve sustainable transport connectivity in the south of Coventry area, including public transport access and walking and cycling infrastructure. In particular, the new link road offers the ability to provide segregated cycle and pedestrian facilities on one or both sides of the carriageway. Potential scheme designs are still being developed, with the level of sustainable travel connectivity dependent on which option is progressed.

Option 2 proposes improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure between the A46 Stoneleigh Road junction and the A429 Kenilworth Road, connecting into existing routes and other proposed cycle projects in the area. Option 3 proposes improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure between the A46 Stoneleigh Road junction, the A429 Kenilworth Road, University of Warwick and Westwood Heath Road. It would also provide connections to existing routes and other proposed cycle projects in the area, as well as into proposed housing and employment growth areas. A sub-option of Option 3 could further improve public transport, walking and cycling access to the University of Warwick, by enabling a section of Gibbet Hill Road to be repurposed for bus, pedestrian and cycling access only.

The new transport corridor, by linking to other proposed cycle projects within the area, ensures the delivery of safe spaces for sustainable journeys to be made and connections to the wider area.



Additional capacity could also be made available for enhanced public transport interventions as part of Options 2 and 3, such as a possible dedicated bus lane, capacity for VLR and transport links into University of Warwick. This also provides opportunities in the future for new and more environmentally friendly modes of transport to be used on the new transport corridor.

Early feasibility work is underway into a possible new railway station and interchange between cycle, rail, bus and VLR services, which could be located close to the proposed link road, where it crosses the existing Coventry to Leamington railway. The potential new railway station and interchange is being developed separately from this A46 link road proposal and is therefore not the subject of this consultation. However, it should be noted that a new railway station and interchange is unlikely to be brought forward without access improvements resulting from the proposed A46 link road.

Timeline/Next steps

Outline Business Case and Feasibility Design Winter 2020/ Spring 2021		Full Business Case and Detailed Design Summer 2021 – Summer 2024			Construction Complete Late 2024 - 2026/27		
2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collate consultation feedback • Refine package of measures to be brought forward • Outline Business Case application • Detailed feasibility design • Early environmental surveys • Report to Cabinet 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed design (including mitigation) and costing of preferred scheme • Further consultation on preferred scheme • Preparation of legal agreements (CPO, agreements with Statutory Bodies) • Preparation of planning application and other statutory process/orders • Preparation of procurement package • Preparation of Full Business Case application for funding bodies 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award main works contract • Construction 		

These timescales are dependent on the successful completion of each previous stage and the recognition that progress is reliant on the processes and approvals of key stakeholders, as well as the delivery of other key construction projects in the area.

The programme will be kept under review as the project progresses.

The scheme development has been approved by both Warwickshire County Council and Coventry City Council. Initial funding for the scheme development has been obtained from Department for Transport (DfT), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (C&WLEP), including for this consultation and an Outline Business Case. This will support applications for the funding of further scheme design and development to Full Business Case stage. The successful submission of the Full Business Case application leads to securing funding for construction.

Various funding applications are being sought to fund the construction of the scheme, and once the proposals have been developed further, funding for scheme delivery will likely be sought from bodies such as the Department for Transport, Homes England and the West Midlands Combined Authority. Additional funding is also likely to be sought from development growth in the area.

Questions and Answers form 17th December 2020 Broadcast

1. Can you explain what the University of Warwick Aspirational Growth area is on the plans for the Options?

The hatched area shown as Aspirational Growth represents the land that is owned by the University and is shown here to demonstrate the potential relationship between the new transport corridor and the land available to accommodate future growth of the University should this be aspired to by the University. Any proposals in this area would need to come forward as part of a Local Plan review given that the land currently falls within the Green Belt and would be subject to the usual planning processes.

2. If we have further questions who do we contact?

If you have any question or comments on the scheme please email a46linkroad@warwickshire.gov.uk

3. There was some talk about extending the consultation period as there was an issue in informing parts of the community. Is this going to happen?

Additional leaflets have been sent out to residents informing them of the consultation. This includes all areas directly affected by the scheme. We have extended the consultation to 14th February 2021 to ensure these people have a suitable opportunity to take part in the survey.

4. How does the proposed road interact with Cryfield Grange Road?

Under the current proposals it is envisaged that a new bridge would be constructed to either take the proposed link road over or under Cryfield Grange Road. There are no proposals to have a junction here.

5. Will additional cycle paths be provided during the construction of the roads, and remain after the road construction is completed?

The proposals include a segregated cycleway along the entire length of the new road, connecting into the existing cycle network where possible. During construction no new cycle paths will be available, but it is intended that access will continue to be available for any existing routes. A plan of the existing cycle network along with future proposals is shown within the consultation documentation.

6. Has an option to connect the new road to Kirby Corner roundabout rather than Westwood Heath Road been considered?

The early design considered and discounted a number of connections in the Westwood Heath area. During the next stage of the design this option will be reconsidered, with an initial assessment to identify the viability of this option and the impacts on local roads, properties and travel movements.

7. How will the new road cross the A429 Kenilworth Road?

The proposed link road in either option 2 or 3 would include a junction with the Kenilworth Road. It is likely that this would be a roundabout, and this would also

allow for a connection to a possible future transport interchange. The survey asks for views on this connection with Kenilworth Road.

8. Given that a large number of people have been missed off the initial leaflet drop, please can we have another broadcast call in January to cater for those who may have missed the opportunity to join this one.

A broadcast is scheduled to take place on 7th January 2021. A recording of the broadcast on 17th December 2020 is available on the consultation page. If there is sufficient demand, consideration will be given to holding another broadcast.

9. New roads generate more congestion, not less. This is proven via many examples. Why are the Councils not considering alternate modes of transport to support growth?

The proposals include alternative modes of transport, with segregated cycle and footways, and provision for bus and Very Light Rail. The Councils' want to encourage active travel and are proposing to enhance the existing provision. However, these provisions alone will not cater for the predicted travel demand resulting from residential and employment growth over time and therefore a joint solution is needed. These developments will generate travel demand regardless of whether the link road is built.

10. The link road heavily affects residents of Cryfield Grange Road residents and Kenilworth Road. Yet your consultation makes no reference whatsoever to them. Why as Coventry residents and taxpayers have we been totally 100% overlooked / disregarded?

We are aware that these proposals will affect a number of people along the route. The aim of this consultation is to set out the strategic case for new infrastructure and to use the feedback to inform any proposals that are taken forward. We will be undertaking more specific consultation with residents and businesses in the area, and discussing the details of the proposals, if they are taken forward.

11. Will the proposed station allow for a future HS2 station, in the same location, by safeguarding appropriate land?

There are no proposals for an HS2 station in the Coventry South/ Kenilworth area, as this area will be served by the HS2 Interchange station near the Airport/NEC and at Curzon Street in Birmingham. The proposed station in our plans is located on the Leamington Spa to Coventry line.

12. Can you tell us how you will mitigate the loss of trees and habitat as a result of this work please? We have already lost a huge amount of wildlife habitat due to the Stoneleigh roundabout work and HS2.

The route of the scheme will be designed to minimise impact on trees and wildlife habitats, including the ancient woodland on Kenilworth Road and those to the south of the University of Warwick. Early studies have been completed, and during the next stages of work environmental surveys will be carried out to establish more detail regarding the habitats along the route. The proposals for any infrastructure will also include landscaping and habitat protection or replacement with the aim of

maintaining or improving the biodiversity of the area. This will be tested and monitored through the planning process.

13. Do we think there is a genuine need for a train station when we have 3 stations already within a 4-5mile radius in Coventry, Kenilworth and Tile Hill? What are the likely timescales for the proposed rail station? Is this being built for the new sports/football stadium in this area and also to attract new business development on the adjacent green field sites between Coventry and Kenilworth?

A new station would take several years to bring forward, and it is likely that this would be outside of the timescale of the development of a link road. Early feasibility studies are being undertaken by WCC and Midlands Connect to identify the need for a new station, which is likely to be linked to increased housing and employment in the area and to clarify the infrastructure improvements that would be required to support its provision and to support improved rail services on the Coventry to Leamington line. This work is being developed separately and will be brought to the public at an appropriate point in the project development process. For any new railway station, a robust business case needs to be made including consideration of the potential patronage and the impacts on existing stations. If the business case does not identify that the new station is justified, then it would be unlikely to secure funding to go ahead.

There is no link between the station proposal and the stadium proposal (see response to the following question). A new station would, however, serve planned development such as the 4,000 houses at King's Hill, providing residents of that development with more direct access to the rail network.

14. Where is the new Football Stadium planned? Is this being considered in your plans?

We know as much information regarding the football stadium proposal as has been made public. Currently there is no planning application and exact site details have not been made available. There have been no discussions between the University, the football club and the three Councils in regard to the stadium proposal, and no stadium proposal is included within any of the relevant Local Plans. Should more information become available on the stadium, this will be assessed against the proposals.

15. Will there be park and ride from the new railway station to the University and Kenilworth?

Details of what the station scheme will comprise of are still in the early stages of development. As it stands there is a desire to have some park and ride element, as well as interchange with other modes of travel, such as bus, Very Light Rail and bike, providing onward travel options between the station and the University campus.

16. Are council taxes going to be reduced for impacted residents given the significant impact this will have for many years before and after?

No changes to council tax will be linked to this scheme.

17. Covid 19 has been a massive game-changer. Many firms are now putting in place hybrid working arrangements where employees can elect to work from home or in an office environment significantly reducing the number of individuals travelling on a daily basis and thereby traffic congestions and public transport needs. How has this radical and very recent change been taken into consideration in your planning considerations? The world has moved on and I fear the Council will be investing unwisely in development?

Any link road rationale should be based on forward looking 10year+ long term initiatives (eg age of technology, use of internet teaching / meetings witnessed during Covid, hardly any traffic during term time, etc), rather than outdated 30-40y highways assumptions just moving traffic from Stoneleigh Road to Westwood Heath area ? (as seen with the mistakes at TGI Friday roundabout once the airport roundabout was opened up)

We are monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns across Coventry and Warwickshire. Home working is likely to become a more significant element of life for some professions that have previously been mostly office based, and this may impact travel demand during the peak periods; in this period however deliveries and off-peak travel have increased. It is worth noting that traffic levels are currently at 90% of the pre-COVID-19 levels when compared year on year, and there is also evidence of some switching from public transport to car where people have that option. Sensitivity testing will be carried out to assess the proposals against previously predicted and currently expected travel patterns and this will be done in accordance with current government guidance.

18. The proposed junction improvements on Cromwell Lane are clearly inadequate to support the additional traffic that Option 3 proposes. How will the Councils address this?

The junction of Westwood Heath Road and Cromwell Lane is already a dangerous junction though fortunately not in terms of deaths and serious injuries. What enhancements are planned to deal with inevitable traffic volume increases at this junction?

The Cromwell Lane / Westwood Heath Road junction is expected to carry more traffic than at present as a result of the proposed link road, particularly in option 3, and this junction has been identified as one of a number which will require improvements in order to allow for different traffic flows. The current proposal at this junction is for the installation of a mini roundabout, but this will be reviewed and further detail developed as the scheme progresses. The intention is to maintain a two-lane entry on the Westwood Heath Road approach, which is expected to be delivered as part of an existing planning condition identified at this junction.

19. I live in Westwood Heath and work at UoW. Will there be cycle lanes to allow local people to avoid the car congestion?

Yes - and we are currently working with the University to further improve cycle routes through the campus linking Westwood Heath with cycle routes towards the city centre.

20. What compensation packages will be in place for residents and will there have to be compulsory purchase orders for the options you have outlined?

Residents, where property value is affected as a result of pollution or disturbance from the use of any new or altered road, are entitled to claim compensation under the terms of the Land Compensation Act 1974. Residents and businesses, where land is required for the scheme will also be compensated and it is likely that Compulsory Purchase Orders will be made. Any negotiations for land will be developed under a shadow CPO process in order to ensure a fair result for those affected.

21. How would the access road onto the Westwood Business Park work as it does not appear wide enough to allow the 2-way flow of traffic, HGV or not?

An additional connection into Westwood Heath Business Park has not yet been designed and at this stage the consultation is seeking views on this possible connection. It is expected that a connection here would only be for cars and light vehicles, with HGV's continuing to use the current access given space constraints.

22. A very light railway was mentioned, does this mean trams?

Coventry City Council is collaborating with Warwick Manufacturing Group, Transport for West Midlands and Dudley Council to apply innovative research and development to the urban light rail sector. The aim is to create a reliable, frequent, environmentally friendly, battery driven hop-on hop-off transport system that will work in small to medium sized towns and cities at a fraction of the cost of a traditional tram.

A pioneering world first, VLR will operate autonomously at a high frequency to provide a turn up and go service. There will be no unsightly overhead cables and the track will be able to be laid without the need to relocate utilities which can be time consuming and expensive. VLR aims to provide a real alternative to the car and it is anticipated that a route would link the University campus with the city centre.

23. Given the University of Warwick (UoW) will be the main beneficiary to the scheme and they own much of the land in option three, how are they contributing to the overall funding? How much is being funded by taxpayers money?

The overall option 3 route is expected to cost in excess of £70million, and a number of public and private funding sources are likely to contribute to this total. The results of this consultation will feed into applications for funding from a number of sources including West Midlands Combined Authority, Department for Transport and Homes England. It is likely that developments coming forward in the area will provide some private sector funding towards the scheme, but the combination of these sources has not yet been determined.

24. What width of land does a double carriageway, along with bus lanes, cycle ways, walkways on both sides actually take up?

A standard dual carriageway is 7.3m wide in each direction, with additional space for hard shoulder and central reserve, the total width of the road will be around 31m. The preferred width for segregated cycleway and footway is 5m, and an allowance will need to be made for earthworks and landscaping. As an indication around 50m

width should be assumed, but this will depend upon a range of factors and the precise figures will not be known until after detailed design of the scheme has been completed.

25. Is it appropriate that the work is being done at the same time as the disruption for the delayed HS2 works? It seems that residents of Stoneleigh and those living on Dalehouse Lane are suffering because of both sets of works.

The Councils aim to minimise disruption caused as a result of any infrastructure works. Large parts of this scheme would be away from the existing road network, and as such would only directly impact of the road network during some parts of the construction where connections would be made into the existing network. During the design and planning of any works we will continue to engage with HS2 Ltd to ensure that the construction traffic as a result of both projects are taken into account, in order to minimise impacts and construction traffic as far as possible.

26. Doesn't this mean complete suburbanisation across the former green belt between Coventry and Kenilworth?

The current local plans for Warwick District Council and Coventry City Council set out expectation in terms of residential and employment sites until 2029 and 2031 respectively. These are detailed further in the consultation documentation. Further development in this area would be subject to the planning process or be part of future versions of the local plans, these would be subject to consultation and scrutiny.

27. You said that you would avoid the HS2 safeguarded area, but this extends almost to the Coventry boundary on the A429. Does the new design by BBV for this area now include provision for a new road junction which would presumably have to be a roundabout?

Our proposals sit outside the HS2 safeguarded area, although this does leave limited space for the proposed junction at Kenilworth Road. It is expected that this would be a roundabout. This would be a separate junction to any proposed by HS2 to access their works.

28. Will the track have to be increased to two lines before the station for the VLR goes ahead?

VLR does not sit on the existing rail network, this would be constructed in the existing and proposed road network similar to a tram. Feasibility studies are currently being undertaken to identify the need for a railway station and this will include a review of whether the existing single-track line would need to be doubled. The current single-track line does restrict the number of rail services and freight services that can operate between Leamington and Coventry and doubling the track would enable more services to be run.

29. Why do the Councils believe it's appropriate to dump huge amounts of traffic on Westwood Heath and Burton Green in order to provide a bypass for Stoneleigh Road and Warwick University?

The initial analysis shows that option 3 proposals would be likely to result in a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network, during

both morning and evening peak periods. This is expected to reduce congestion and deliver network-wide benefits, along with localised benefits on critical parts of the network such as the A45 and A46. These improvements in local network performance and connectivity could support the delivery of housing and employment growth allocated within Local Plans as well as the aspirational growth of the University of Warwick.

We recognise there are community concerns over the impact of the connection into Westwood Heath Road and have asked for views on this in the consultation survey. Currently analysis does show an increase in traffic along Cromwell Lane, but it is expected that this will be reviewed, and further improvements made during the next stage of design.

30. How are you accounting for additional noise and air pollution in the residential areas around Westwood Heath and Burton Green?

The Westwood Heath link proposal would seem likely increase congestion and pollution (noise and air) on Cromwell Lane. Hard to see how that can be mitigated. Please explain how quality of life will not deteriorate for residents of Cromwell Lane.

It is expected that air pollution should be reduced in areas that currently suffer from congestion from redirection of traffic as a result of introducing the scheme. During the next stage of design, the effects of noise and air pollution will be looked at in greater detail, with the intention of minimising impact along the route. The overall scheme intends to provide additional sustainable transport improvements which are aimed at reducing the dependency on car journeys particularly where they can be avoided.

31. Will there be ways to easily cross the road on foot / by bike, for example if traveling from Kenilworth to UoW?

The intention is to have active travel links as accessible as possible; our aspirations are to have pedestrian and cycle facilities on both sides of the road with crossing points at appropriate locations.

32. What are the plans to push option 3 routes through to link with A452 at Balsall Common or linking to A45 through Burton Green?

Are there any ideas thoughts or plans to extend this project by for instance extending beyond Westwood Heath Road to link to the A45 or to run parallel to HS2 to link up with the A452 and the NEC area?

A possible future phase link has been set out in the Connecting Coventry strategic transport programme, approved by the City Council in 2017, and forms part of the Coventry South package. However, at this time, no works are being undertaken to develop this proposal further, and this position will be reviewed should the need arise in the future.

33. Surely the government desire for all car users to be electric cars will reduce pollution levels - not sure this has been considered in the sensitivity analysis?

Use of electric vehicles is not currently part of the standard analysis for highway schemes, although it is expected that this will be introduced by the Department for

Transport over time. Increasing use of electric vehicles would reduce the level of pollution on roads over time, which is why both Coventry and Warwickshire are progressively increasing the number of EV charge points across their respective areas.

34. Have you have considered:

a) Reducing demand by re-developing Westwood Business Park as residential accommodation? I believe one plot has already been converted to student accommodation.

The suggested change of use of Westwood Business Park is not something that has been considered, the Business Park is allocated as an employment site within the Local Plan.

b) Raising the efficiency of Stoneleigh Road / Gibbet Hill Road? One idea would be to move some of the university's car parking to the Stoneleigh Road / Dalehouse Lane junction and implement a frequent bus service from there to the University. A high-quality cycleway along Stoneleigh Road / Gibbet Hill Road would add flexibility. There are airports where the car parks are accessed by bus from the terminal buildings, why not adopt the same approach here?

Engagement with the University of Warwick, in order to understand any proposals for the operation and development of the campus, is an important part of the scheme development process. Many of the traffic movements in the area start or end within the campus and the surrounding employment areas, and changes to travel patterns impact on the existing and proposed road network. The future proposals for a transport interchange near the A429 Kenilworth Road could include park and ride as suggested.

35. Why do you not give more consideration to the current road infrastructure having added the roundabout at the Canley Fire Station helping direct traffic in/out of the University and may be a one-way system to leave the University via Gibbet Hill road and Stoneleigh Road?

Options have been considered which look at improving the existing highway infrastructure, and in recent years there has been significant expenditure on the A45 to improve junctions along the length of the route through Coventry. There are no further options to enhance capacity other than through grade separation of junctions, which would be expensive and would involve significant numbers of properties. The intention of this proposal is to provide improvements to existing junctions to improve capacity and direct traffic. This scheme is being brought forward as the most viable overall solution.

36. What are the plans to mitigate against the existing and future rat-run traffic through Burton Green via Hodgetts Lane, Red Lane, Cromwell Lane in the short, medium and long term? This option appears to increase the potential traffic through Burton Green significantly - which is already very bad at peak times? It will become even more of a rat run - how can this improve our environment?

As part of the impact analysis of delivering the link road, a review of the impacts on routes surrounding the northern end of the Link Road has been undertaken.

A further potential benefit that the Link Road is intended to deliver is to reduce the volume of traffic rat-running on rural routes between Kenilworth and the University. Given the coverage of the model it has not possible to review all rural routes, however it has been possible to review changes in link flows on Crackley Lane and Cryfield Grange Road, two routes where it has the potential to significantly reduce flows.

During the next phase of work the model area will be expanded as necessary to include the impacts on other identified parts of the network.

37. Highways England state that the proposed Link Road is on the Local Road Network, why is it described as "strategic"?

The Link Road is being described as strategic as it has strategic importance to the local authorities in terms of recognising the importance of the delivery of the local plans to the economic prosperity of the wider area, specifically in terms of housing and employment growth.

38. Please explain how Option 3 will provide relief to the A45? Does this assume that growth in traffic will use Cromwell Lane, Banner Lane and Westwood Heath Road?

Our analysis has shown a journey time saving in both the morning and evening peak periods along the A45. This analysis also suggests that east to west routes such as Tile Hill Lane, Torrington Avenue and Charter Avenue will not experience any notable changes in traffic flows with the link included. However, the analysis does highlight that a predicted increase in traffic to the north of the Link Road itself are Westwood Heath Road (to the west of the Link Road), Cromwell Lane, Station Avenue and Pickford Green Lane.

39. The proposed closure of Gibbet Hill Road under Option 3 Sub Option is likely to have a significant impact on the local highway network linking Kenilworth Road to Charter Avenue via Cannon Hill Road. Local commuter and shopper traffic between Gibbet Hill Road, Moreall Meadows, Cryfield Grange and Stoneleigh Road would be more likely to use the local network rather than diverting around the new link road. Any comments?

In our analysis the downgrading of Gibbet Hill Road has a significant impact on the network. Its closure along with the proposed link road is showing a reduction in journey times across the local network. The scheme does impact on particular junctions as set out in the consultation documentation, and junction improvement measures are proposed to reduce this impact.

40. I can see that it makes sense for a Link Road to 'link' to the A46 dual carriageway to the south. I cannot see how linking to narrow residential roads at the northern end can bring anything but extra traffic and congestion there. How will this be managed if all you are planning to do is improve existing junctions at Westwood Heath Road/Cromwell Lane? Where does the extra traffic dissipate to?

Overall analysis of the road network shows a general improvement in journey times and congestion levels. However, without the proposed junction improvement projects on the junctions along Cromwell Lane there are some localised impacts on queueing. It is expected that traffic is mostly either travelling from the Tile Hill area

and the A45, the University and the business parks or from the A46 and towns to the south.

41. A lot of the preamble related to the "A46 Corridor" (and continuance out to the East); how is this related to the short spur that is called a link road?

The A46 corridor is vitally important to the current and future growth of the Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region. It is a key corridor for growth and has been subject to a range of improvements in recent years including M40 Junction 15, the Stanks Island near Warwick, the Tollbar End and TGI Friday junctions near Coventry, and the junction improvements on the A46 at Stoneleigh and at Binley which have both just begun. The A46 corridor will form a key role in the economic recovery and future growth of this area.

The Link Road will provide an improved connection with the University, business parks and south Coventry area supporting the overall aims for the sub-region.

42. The consultation document talks about the scheme supporting growth driven by HS2. Please explain.

Our proposals will help the local road network performance, connectivity and resilience, which in turn support the delivery of housing and employment growth allocated within Local Plans as well as the aspirational growth of the University of Warwick.

The delivery of HS2 Phase 1 is expected to provide further opportunities for growth within the West Midlands, with plans to bring significant and diverse levels of employment to the areas surrounding Birmingham Airport, the NEC and the proposed HS2 Interchange station (generally referred to as 'UK Central').

43. If you don't do or consider Phase 3 how can it be a 'link' road?

These proposals provide an additional link between the A46 and the South of Coventry which would effectively replace the existing local roads which are unsuitable for the volume of traffic that they currently carry.

Ends.

Questions and Answers from 7th January 2021 Broadcast

- 1. From my understanding you are planning to construct the road over the existing Coventry/Leamington Spa railway line. This will involve millions of tons of suitable material to construct the embankments and also on the other side of the Kenilworth Road. How are you going to get the material and transport it to the work site? Could you not go under the railway line as HS2 are doing?**

The concept design currently proposes that the road will go underneath the railway line. During the next stages of design this proposal will be reviewed, and a decision made balancing the best option to fit within the site constraints such as topography, along with the budget. The movement of construction traffic, including the transportation of materials to and from the site will form an important part of the scheme development with a view to minimising disruption as a result of traffic movements.

- 2. How are you going to connect the cycle paths on the road onto NCN Route 52? You have not mentioned this in your plans and will Route 52 remain open during and after construction?**

National Cycle Route 52 runs from Kenilworth to Coventry mostly on what is currently agricultural land, crossing Cryfield Grange Road and running through the University. The overall intention is for active travel links to be as accessible as possible including pedestrian and cycle facilities on both sides of the road with crossing points at appropriate locations, along with connections with the existing cycle network including NCN 52. The exact details of these will be set out in the next phase of work.

- 3. Will you be installing road lighting on the road?**

The need for lighting on the Link Road has not yet been determined, and this will be developed as part of the next stage of design in accordance with highway design standards.

- 4. Will the new station be dependent on the railway line being increased to two tracks from Coventry to L/Spa?**

Feasibility studies are currently being undertaken to identify the need for a railway station including a review of whether the existing single-track line would need to be doubled throughout. The current single-track sections of line restrict the number of passenger and freight services that can operate between Leamington and Coventry and doubling the track would enable more services to be run as well as making it easier to accommodate a new station.

5. How will vehicles and cyclists access the station. From the Kenilworth Road?

A roundabout junction is proposed between the A429 Kenilworth Road and the Link Road, it is expected that an arm of this roundabout will provide access to a new station or transport interchange. This access would also incorporate provision for pedestrians and cyclists, with suitable connection to existing facilities on the A429 and the proposed footway and cycleway facilities along the route of the Link Road.

It will require traffic lights on A429 a roundabout will cause more congestion?

A roundabout junction is currently proposed between the A429 Kenilworth Road and the Link Road, and this layout would facilitate the access to the proposed railway station / interchange. However, the most appropriate form of junction will be reviewed as part of the next stage of the design process based on more detailed surveys and modelling work. At this stage, therefore, the form of the junction could be either a roundabout or signals.

6. Why is the road a dual carriageway? Wouldn't a normal road be sufficient? What are the expected traffic flows on this link in each direction? How tidal is the flow comparing AM and PM directions?

The standard of road (dual carriageway or single carriageway) will be dependent upon the traffic flows that are forecast to use the road. For the purposes of the consultation, it is currently proposed that the new Link Road would for the most part be a dual carriageway, as this option also takes into account an element of future proofing. The size and type of the road to be constructed will be designed based on the expected demand, and a decision about the type of road will be made as part of the next stage of design. The traffic flows vary depending on which option and sub option is in operation, these are outlined in the traffic model report in section 5.40 onwards.

7. One of the stated aims of the Link Road is to reduce rat running on Westwood Heath Road/Cromwell Lane and Tile Hill Lane, but the Traffic Modelling shows that the traffic flow along these roads will actually increase. Why does the consultation document show this aim as being met for Option 3?

One of the stated aims for the road is to reduce rat running on local roads. The traffic modelling undertaken to date shows that roads such as Crackley Lane and Cryfield Grange Road will see a reduction in traffic flows. There are also reductions in flow along Stoneleigh Road and Gibbet Hill Road. This modelling is also showing a general increase in network performance for the area of study. It is expected that there will be an increase in traffic along Westwood Heath Road and at the junctions along Cromwell Lane, resulting from the re-distribution of traffic currently using other routes to access the A45 directly. As part of the broader scheme we have set out mitigation measures to reduce the effect of this changes. Further work will be carried out to ensure the most suitable improvements are proposed.

8. Please can you give more details about flood mitigation measures for the scheme?

We are still in the early stages of the scheme with only feasibility design carried out. This has involved using desktop studies to inform the design. If we progress with the project, moving into next stages of design we will look at the specific issues such as watercourses and floodplains along with other environmental factors.

9. Part of the justification for this scheme, is to support the increase in housing requirements. However, the ONS data used by the councils to determine the need for additional housing has been discredited and is being investigated by the UK stats authority, so doesn't this investigation need to be completed first

A challenge, led by CPRE and involving a group of local politicians was made to the UK Statistics Authority on 13th November 2020 regarding population projections and mid-year population estimates for Coventry. On 3rd December 2020 a response was sent by the UK Statistics Authority confirming that they will be undertaking a review of the population projections and population estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and how they are used. The response does however confirm that it is not within the remit of the UK Statistics Authority to regulate operational decisions made by government or local authorities, nor to form a judgement on decisions about government policy. The response letter indicates that the UK Statistics Authority aim to update on their progress in early 2021.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expects local authorities to follow the standard methodology for assessing local housing need, set out by the Ministry Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). The standard method uses a formula to identify the minimum number of homes expected to be planned for, in a way which addresses projected household growth and historic under-supply. It identifies a minimum annual housing need figure.

On 16th December 2020 MHCLG set out a revised standard methodology for local authorities to follow including the specific use of the ONS 2014 population projections. Warwick District and Coventry will continue to use the standard method as published by MHCLG for the basis upon which to consider housing needs within our respective administrative areas.

10. To follow up from an offline question, it was stated that the detailed work on Air Quality (etc) has not yet been undertaken, however the consultation document for "Option 3" shows the objective of "Improving Air Quality" as being fully met by Option 3. How can this have been assessed?

The consultation information sets out the broad expectation that air quality will be improved as a result of the introduction of Option 3 because it is expected that air pollution would be reduced in areas that currently suffer from traffic congestion. During the next stage of design, the effects of noise and air pollution will be looked at in greater detail, with the intention of minimising impact along the route. The overall

scheme intends to provide additional sustainable transport improvements which are aimed at reducing the dependency on car journeys where these can be avoided.

11. There is no mention of climate change or carbon footprint in this scheme. Why is such a major problem being ignored? I thought this was a recognised emergency? What is the carbon cost of the projected increase in capacity, including phase 3? Both the construction and long-term carbon cost please?

This consultation aims to consider the principles and need for new transport infrastructure, with the results informing future design work. No work has yet been undertaken to calculate a carbon footprint for the proposal. Designs will be completed in accordance with the relevant legislation.

12. Will the VLR require two separate lanes to operate and how will it cross the Kenilworth Road at the proposed roundabout?

Information about VLR is available at: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/verylightrail>
No detail has yet been developed on the precise routes upon which the VLR will run, although one of the core design principles is that the VLR will operate on two tracks where possible to ensure that vehicles can pass each other without having to wait to access a single track section. Similarly, no detail has yet been developed on how VLR would cross individual junctions, as the junctions involved will be dependent upon the route taken.

13. On the consultation survey it states that the access from the link road to Warwick university is optional. Does this mean that the link road could be built terminating on Westwood heath without ever building the access road to the university from the link road?

As part of the proposals for the overall Link Road, a link into the University has been shown as potential or optional. Any link into the University's road network would be a private connection and would require an agreement with the University. The agreement is not yet in place, and whilst it is unlikely that a scheme would be brought forward connecting into Westwood Heath Road without a link into the University it is not possible to show this as a definite connection prior to formal agreement.

14. The scheme talks about facilitating part of the supply chain to JLR, but if the proposed link is from the A46 to Westwood Heath, surely this will not take any HGVs off the A45 through Coventry, which are a major cause of pollution and congestion.

The scheme will bring performance and resilience benefits to the wider transport network on routes such as the A45, which plays a key role in linking JLR sites in Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry and its broader supply chain.

15. Specifically, how does the A46 Link Road impact the development of the employment opportunities of the A46 Corridor?

The scheme supports the 'A46 corridor' which is vitally important to the current and future growth of the Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region. It is a key corridor for growth and has been subject to a range of improvements in recent years including M40 Junction 15 (Longbridge), Stanks Island near Warwick, the Tollbar End junction near Coventry, and the junction improvements on the A46 at Stoneleigh and at Binley (TGI Friday) which have both just begun construction. The A46 corridor will form a key role in the post-COVID-19 economic recovery and future growth of this area, supporting improved access to the University and its business parks and wider South Coventry area.

16. Based on the current COVID-19 lockdown has any modelling for future traffic been taken into account? A large number of companies will move much more to home working after the current crisis eases.

The impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns across Coventry and Warwickshire is being monitored. Home working is likely to become a more significant element of life for some professions that have previously been mostly office based, and this may impact travel demand during the peak periods; in this period however deliveries and off-peak travel have increased. On-going local monitoring suggests that in some locations traffic levels are currently at 90% of the pre-COVID-19 levels when compared year on year, and there is also evidence of some switching from public transport to car where people have that option. Sensitivity testing will be carried out to assess the proposals against previously predicted and currently expected travel patterns and this will be undertaken in accordance with government guidance.

17. The Kenilworth Road spinney is a conservation area, so will this all be retained with this scheme and the development of a station?

The route of the scheme will be designed to minimise impact on trees and wildlife habitats, including the ancient woodland on Kenilworth Road and woodlands to the south of the University. Early studies have been completed, and during the next stages of work environmental surveys will be carried out to establish more detail regarding the habitats along the route. The proposals for any infrastructure will also include landscaping and habitat protection or replacement with the aim of maintaining or improving the biodiversity of the area. This will be tested and monitored through the planning process.

18. There is much work being done on infrastructure. However, this appears more of a blind alley than a link, direct to Warwick University at the expense of the local area. Was the University involved in drafting this consultation process/documentation?

The University were not involved in developing this consultation process or preparing the associated documentation. The University were however given an opportunity to view and comment on the documents during their finalisation.

19. How will the works for this link road coordinate with the already significant amount of work for HS2? This is important for local residents not only the current prep works but for the main construction phase. Both schemes will 'squeeze' through the Crackly Gap and will create a major impact for local residents over several years.

During the development and construction of any project the Councils' aim to minimise disruption caused as a result of infrastructure works. It is expected that large parts of construction for this scheme would not be on the existing road network, and as such direct impacts of the road network during some parts of the construction would relate to access and provision of connections into the existing network. During the design and planning of any works we are, and will continue to, engaging with HS2 Ltd to ensure that the construction traffic as a result of both projects are taken into account, in order to minimise impacts and construction traffic as far as possible.

20. Road building and junction widening is sized to take a peak load for a few hours a day. This takes more money and land than if the traffic was spread more evenly. Wouldn't it be more cost effective to reduce the peak load? Have you looked at doing this? For example, by congestion charging, encouraging more flexible working hours, home working and much cleverer shared transport?

21. Your plan is very much business as usual. This is what we've been doing since before the 1950s, each time with the claim that a new road would reduce congestion. This has never succeeded beyond the temporary and local. Traffic grows, the congestion gets shuffled to the next constriction, and each year sees more people driving further & sitting in cars for longer. This is a failed policy and a failed strategy. It makes traffic congestion and pollution worse and worse. We clearly need a new approach. When are you going to start? Why not scrap this plan and start now with positive and creative solutions? Please stop digging and lead us out of this mess.

As part of the modelling work undertaken for the initial work on this scheme, the potential to cater for future travel demand solely through sustainable measures such as cycle routes, pedestrian facilities and public transport services has been looked at. The provision of improved routes for pedestrians and cyclists is an important element of this scheme, and work is already underway to improve cycle routes connecting the Westwood Heath and University of Warwick areas with Coventry city centre through other investment. The Very Light Rail project being developed by the City Council is also aimed at providing a public transport system that would support sustainable access to locations such as the University.

It is also worth noting that the University of Warwick has a strong commitment to promoting sustainable travel to the campus, and the Councils recognise this. Car share schemes, car clubs and bike share schemes all operate, or are about to be introduced, within the area, alongside bus services. It is also recognised that home working and flexible working all have a role to play in reducing peak period travel.

Notwithstanding these initiatives, significant traffic congestion has been routinely experienced on the local road network (in pre-COVID-19 conditions), and even with

travel planning initiatives the University's current masterplan was estimated at resulting in an additional 16% of traffic on the local road network.

In summary, whilst the measures such as flexible working, home working and car share will help, the assessments undertaken to date do not indicate that they will reduce peak period travel demand to the extent needed to eliminate the need for further investment in the transport network.

22. I read all the info prior to responding to the survey. I could not find ANY info relating to the impacts anticipated for KENILWORTH, even though the new proposed junction for the new link road & the A429 Kenilworth Road is much closer to the town than the current roundabout at Gibbet Hill, so is likely to have tail-backs into Kenilworth or otherwise impact the town with increased noise, traffic pollution etc. Why is there no consideration of impacts on Kenilworth; and What does the modelling suggest that those impacts might be?

23. Why haven't you mentioned Kenilworth?

A key aim of the development of the Link Road proposal is to improve the traffic flows on the A45 through Coventry, there are also benefits to be gained by the residents and businesses within Kenilworth through the provision of an alternative route to the A46 and to and from the south of Coventry. The traffic models have focussed on impact of a new road on areas of Coventry where there are known traffic impacts. As the project develops the traffic model will be broadened and other locations considered.

Some routes coming out of Kenilworth have been included in the modelling such as Coventry Road, where it is showing a benefit in queue length particularly at the junction with the A45. Those additional areas that have been raised as a concern during the consultation will be reviewed.

24. Believe me - if you live here you know that there is plenty going on. How does this increase capacity when it goes to residential roads?

The initial analysis shows that option 3 proposals would be likely to result in a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network, during both morning and evening peak periods. This is expected to reduce congestion and deliver network-wide benefits, along with localised benefits on critical parts of the network such as the A45 and A46.

We recognise there are community concerns over the impact of the connection into Westwood Heath Road and have asked for views on this in the consultation survey. Currently analysis does show an increase in traffic along Cromwell Lane, but it is expected that this will be reviewed, and further improvements made during the next stage of design.

25. If the University is going to be a major beneficiary of any road, will they be making a financial contribution to construction and ongoing maintenance costs?

The University, amongst other potential developers in the area, are likely to be expected to make a contribution towards the scheme as part of planning processes linked to planning applications.

You keep referring to this as a Link Road, where is it actually linking to? Isn't it actually a blind alley?

The new road will link the A46 with the South of Coventry. This is expected to reduce congestion and deliver network-wide benefits, along with localised benefits on critical parts of the network such as the A45 and A46.

26. Commuters travelling between Kenilworth and Coventry already experience long delays due to the volume of traffic coming off the A46 and travelling towards the University. All the options proposed will only make the congestion worse if you have a roundabout on the A429-what is needed is smart traffic lights which can monitor and facilitate the flow of traffic between Kenilworth and Coventry.

Our modelling work to date has simulated a roundabout at the Kenilworth Road Junction. This is not showing an increase in congestion at this junction or along the A429. Following the consultation options will be reviewed and the most appropriate junction design will be brought forward.

27. I understand Kenilworth Road is to rise up to go across the HS2 line once built, will a dual carriageway be at ground level as it is now, or is it proposed to dig down and make the new road lower, so the Kenilworth Road still travels over any dual carriageway as well as the HS2 line?

Our proposals are to create a connection with Kenilworth Road as part of the scheme. The proposed new road would match the new levels of Kenilworth Road.

28. The objectives of the scheme seem to contradict the transport and mobility aspirations of the University of Warwick's Development Masterplan. Why is this?

This scheme is being brought forward by all three local authorities, it is aimed at addressing current congestion issues and help bring forward the local plans. While the University is a beneficiary of the scheme, the proposals are not aimed solely at supporting their plans. The University will be a key stakeholder in the development of any proposal, and we will work with them to ensure that these proposals and their future growth aspirations present a consistent plan particularly around sustainable transport links.

29. Is there a list of the key dates?

Outline Business Case and Feasibility Design Winter 2020/ Spring 2021		Full Business Case and Detailed Design Summer 2021 – Summer 2024			Construction Complete Late 2024 - 2026/27		
2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collate consultation feedback Refine package of measures to be brought forward Outline Business Case application Detailed feasibility design Early environmental surveys Report to Cabinet 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed design (including mitigation) and costing of preferred scheme Further consultation on preferred scheme Preparation of legal agreements (CPO, agreements with Statutory Bodies) Preparation of planning application and other statutory process/orders Preparation of procurement package Preparation of Full Business Case application for funding bodies 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award main works contract Construction 		

These timescales are dependent on the successful completion of each previous stage and the recognition that progress is reliant on the processes and approvals of DfT and key stakeholders, as well as the delivery of other key construction projects in the area. The programme will be kept under review as the project progresses for construction.

30. What is the justification for even greater expansion of the University? Over recent years we have seen a massive expansion of the university footprint eating into greenbelt and local amenity and environment.

The University plays an important role in the sub-regional and local economy. The University is preparing its plans for the future and information is available on the University website:

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/estates/developments/our_future_campus/

31. Without Phase 3 this isn't a link road

These proposals provide an additional link between the A46 and the South of Coventry which would effectively replace the existing local roads which are unsuitable for the volume of traffic that they currently carry.

32. We understand that "Phase 3" is not being considered at the moment, can you advise us of the reasons for this. Surely Phase 3 is an integral requirement for deciding a route for Phase 2

33. Could we be reminded please where Phase 3 is expected to terminate, as this could have a significant impact also on the amount of traffic that uses the road if this was to go ahead?

34. There was an aspiration to connect this road further, possibly to the A452 at Balsall Common, or the A45. Has this been ruled out now?

35. I'm sure Warwick University will welcome this proposal as they may be able to achieve a long term aim? To close Gibbet Hill Road. Surely what is needed, is a new road from the A46 through to Hallmeadow Road (Balsall Common) not this proposal? A new 'Coventry South relief road' perhaps?

The Coventry South Transport Package that was approved by the City Council in 2017 does include proposals for a phase 3 for the link road, connecting to either the A45 or the A452 to the west of the city. No work has yet been carried out to develop the phase 3 scheme, as this would lie predominantly within the Solihull area, and would need to be developed in partnership with Solihull. The potential impact of future development in the areas of Coventry, Solihull and Warwick District to the south and west of Coventry on travel demand is recognised, and it is likely that the Councils will, in partnership with Solihull, need to review how this travel demand is to be managed. Such a review is likely to include the need, or otherwise, for new transport infrastructure to the south west of the city.

36. What is the Committed Employment Development site to the east of the A46/Stoneleigh Junction?

This is the proposal for a new Rugby Farmers Market for Stoneleigh Park which has planning permission.

37. How will the A429 cycle way into Coventry be improved? It is currently not user friendly.

There are no current plans to improve this route as part of the Link Road scheme. If a need is identified as part of the consultation this position will be reviewed.

38. Will the various public transport options be integrated with respect to their timetabling? If someone commutes via public transport their onward connection if any, should be convenient to encourage use of public transport

The various public transport schemes proposed in the consultation document are on differing timeframes for delivery, however the principle of facilitating an active travel approach which may include a number of different types of transport is something that the three Authorities are keen to develop. However, once in place the aim will be to ensure that all forms of public transport are integrated as far as possible.

39. I understand there is mention of a dual carriageway with light rail and possibly even separate bus lanes, so how many lanes could this road actually end up being?

The proposed layout for the link road is a dual carriageway with segregated pedestrian and cycle routes, other options will need to be considered during the next stages of design to take into account the potential for bus and VLR routes. The development of these options will consider the effectiveness of additional facilities against land take and construction cost, taking into account consultation feedback.

40. All I am hearing is your aspirations. How can we comment without any info!!!

The aim of this consultation is to gather views on the strategic case and the need for new infrastructure, we will use the feedback to inform any proposals that are taken forward. We will undertake more specific consultation with residents and businesses in the area, and discussing the details of the proposals, if they are taken forward.

41. Will HGV's be directed up Kenilworth Road to access this new roundabout and road, as this will have a significant impact on residents?

The new road is expected to form part of the principal road network, so this would form part of the roads that HGVs may use in the same way as the A429 Kenilworth Road does now.

42. Surely there would need to be a roundabout or improvement on Westwood Heath Road if it joined near Crackley Lane?

Both a roundabout and traffic lights are being considered as a potential connection between the Link Road and Westwood Heath Road.

43. The link road only seems - even with Option 3 - to benefit the Westwood Business Park, the safeguarded land and an area of already permitted housing, and unless the connection between Gibbet Hill Road and Kenilworth Road is severed, it will not benefit the University or adjoining communities.

The initial analysis shows that option 3 proposals would be likely to result in a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network, during both morning and evening peak periods. This is expected to reduce congestion and deliver network-wide benefits, along with localised benefits on critical parts of the network such as the A45 and A46. The downgrading of Gibbet Hill Road has a significant impact on this.

44. Will there be a written transcript of this presentation, to assist hearing impaired residents?

Yes, please send an email to us at a46linkroad@warwickshire.gov.uk. A copy of the script will also be posted on the project website.

45. How do the dates fit in with the UoW aim to have a stadium open in 2025?

We are not aware of any specific dates for the stadium plans. We know as much information regarding the football stadium proposal as has been made public by the University and the football club. Should more information become available on the stadium, this will be assessed against the proposals.

46. The sub options (of Option 3) of closing and/or downgrading Gibbet Hill Road and Stoneleigh Road would have a significant impact on access to the residents of Gibbet Hill and Stoneleigh Road. What is the justification for these sub options given the traffic relief improvements purported by the main relief road?

The initial analysis shows that option 3 proposals would be likely to result in a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network, during both morning and evening peak periods. This is expected to reduce congestion and deliver network-wide benefits, along with localised benefits on critical parts of the network such as the A45 and A46. The downgrading of Gibbet Hill Road has a significant impact on this. Residents of Gibbet Hill Road and Stoneleigh Road would also, of course, benefit from significantly reduced traffic flows on their residential streets.

47. Further, there's considerable investment being proposed now, which would have offered excellent connections for the Kings Hill housing (both already permitted and allocated) to the A46. Why was this route not brought forward as the primary access for the Kings Hill development, rather than connecting that via local Coventry roads?

The King's Hill development has come forward as a separate planning application based on the existing highway network within Coventry and Warwickshire. Future phases of the site could benefit from the delivery of the Link Road and the strategic connections it brings, particularly to the A46.

48. The basic idea of a south west loop around Coventry would seem to have some merit. But this proposal essentially just takes traffic from the A46 and dumps into the quiet residential area of Westwood Heath, and Tile Hill, which seems completely wrong. I understand that there has always been a full western loop, through to A45 west of Coventry in the plan; why is this not being completed first?

A future phase forms part of Coventry City Council's strategic transport programme as part of the Coventry South package, and would be expected to link to either the A45 or A452. This larger project is not being developed as it is not currently part of the Solihull Local Plan and therefore has no remit for further investigation. The proposals being brought forward in the A46 SLR scheme, do show a wider benefit for the local road network. Cromwell Lane / Westwood Heath Road junction is expected to carry more traffic than at present as a result of the proposed link road, particularly in option 3, and this junction has been identified as one of a number which will require improvements in order to manage different traffic flows.

49. Won't the road be rather behind the build of the first part of the Kings Hill Estate, surely that won't solve the earlier congestion problems of a new estate.

Construction of the proposed road will follow the early stages of development at King's Hill, based on an assumed build out rate. These early stages would not be expected to generate sufficient traffic to require additional highway capacity.

50. The presenter has just admitted that the traffic modelling will increase the traffic on Westwood Heath Road. this is completely unacceptable.

51. Ref John Seddon's response on rat running: Option 3 includes the mitigations that he mentioned, and the traffic flows still increase to problem levels, GEH>5, rather than solving them

Traffic modelling does show an increase in traffic along Westwood Heath Road and at the junction with Cromwell Lane. We are proposing mitigation measure to reduce this impact. As part of the consultation we value your input and strongly recommend completing the survey to have your say.

52. After the pandemic it is projected that 57% of employees will continue to work majority from home - given your consultancy and projections are based pre-Covid it feels like this project is moving forward more for the sake of it and to be seen to building a more 'efficient' network rather than the actual need for it. Has any statistical modelling been done post pandemic and if so, please publicly share this?

53. How are you going to do traffic studies in the current Covid 19 world?

Traffic may never be what it was, unless the stadium is built.

We are monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns across Coventry and Warwickshire. Home working is likely to become a more significant element of life for some professions that have previously been mostly office based, and this may impact travel demand during the peak periods; in this period however deliveries and off-peak travel have increased. It is worth noting that traffic levels are currently at 90% of the pre-COVID-19 levels when compared year on year, and there is also evidence of some switching from public transport to car where people have that option. Sensitivity testing will be carried out to assess the proposals against previously predicted and currently expected travel patterns and this will be done in accordance with government guidance.

54. How will you cross Finham Brook?

A new bridge will be constructed at Finham Brook as part of the A46 Stoneleigh junction improvement works which are now under construction.

55. Why are the 3 sub-options for the link to Westwood Heath Road all broadly the same?

There is limited scope for differing these connections, given the proposed route of the road, the topography and existing constraints.

56. Would there be any measures taken on the dual carriageway to mitigate noise for nearby residents?

In the development of new highway infrastructure full consideration would be made of the impact of the construction and operation on the local environment, this relates to noise and other potential impacts such as air quality and visual impact. In order to develop the scheme a noise model will be prepared to compare the current and future noise levels. The design of the infrastructure will include noise mitigation measures where this is necessary.

As part of the detailed design work all environmental impacts including noise will be considered. Either through the design of the road, or mitigation measures the impact from noise will be reduced as much as practical.

57. Pollution and traffic levels on Gibbet Hill Road are very high. One scheme appears to increase this load.

Our modelling is not showing an increase in demand on Gibbet Hill Road as a result of the scheme. This traffic is being diverted to the proposed link road. Option 2, by not providing a link through to Westwood Heath Road, would require Gibbet Hill

Road to remain open, which would mean that less traffic would be removed from it when compared to Option 3.

58. What sort of landscaping would there be to reduce the impact on the area?

We are currently in the early stages of this scheme, and only desktop study work has been carried out on the environmental aspects. If we move forward with the scheme, the next stage will be detailed design, where environmental and ecological surveys will be carried out and used to inform the design work, both from a highways and landscaping point of view.

59. Based on John's comments if traffic is coming to access the link road rather than the A45 wouldn't it make sense for the Link Road to go into the Kirby Corner Road junction?

The early design considered and discounted a number of connections in the Westwood Heath area. During the next stage of the design this option could be reconsidered, with an initial assessment to identify the viability of this option and the impacts on local roads, properties and travel movements.

60. The additional traffic and junction widening schemes make the existing road network more hostile to people walking or cycling. What are you going to do, as part of this scheme, to make cycling easier, quicker & safer on the affected roads? Will there be segregated space for cycling on the affected roads and junctions?

Where existing facilities for cycling and pedestrian are in place these will be maintained as part of any junction improvements. If no facilities are in place, they will be considered as part of the junction design to ensure they are safe for all users. There will be segregated facilities for pedestrians and cyclists along the link road, and separate proposals are being brought forward for improved cycle routes in the Westwood Heath and University area of the city.

61. Would traffic be able to get on and off the carriageway at this junction in both directions?

There are a number of junctions proposed along the Strategic Link Road, travelling from the A46 Stoneleigh Junction:

- Dalehouse Lane – this is currently a roundabout and is expected to remain as such.
- King's Hill Lane – this junction is expected to be amended to a left in, left out junction, using the Kenilworth Road and Dalehouse Lane roundabouts for u-turning movements.
- A429 Coventry Road – this junction is expected to be a roundabout
- University Link Road – this junction is expected to be a roundabout

Detailed proposals for these junctions will be developed as part of the feasibility design in response to further development of the traffic models and in response to the outcome of the public consultation, as such there may be some changes to the final junction types.

62. Are the proposed routes for the VLR available for people to view?

Please follow this link to see the available information on VLR.

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/verylightrail> Currently, the routes for the VLR network have not been developed in any detail.

63. Will the HS2/ Cov-Leamington bridge have provision for the latter to be two track?

It is our understanding that construction of HS2 Phase 1 in this area will allow for the future widening of the Coventry to Leamington rail line.

64. What are the further phases currently on hold??

The Phase 3 which is currently on hold refers to an extension to the Strategic Link Road which would connect with either the A45 or the A452. This project is not being developed as it is not currently part of the Solihull Local Plan and therefore has no remit for further investigation.

65. The Traffic Modelling report doesn't state which way the flows are at the Peak Hours AM and PM. Please can this information be provided?

The modelling work to date only takes into account overall flows so this additional data would not be available at this time.

66. We moved here because it was semi-rural - are there plans to protect any of the green spaces?

Any development in the area to the south of Coventry (both within Coventry and Warwick District) will be brought forward through the statutory planning process. This process considers all issues relating to a new development in balance with each other including retention of green space. Any new highway infrastructure would be developed to be sympathetic to the existing landscape and would be required to include mitigation for any loss of green space.

The current local plans for Warwick District Council and Coventry City Council set out expectation in terms of residential and employment sites until 2029 and 2031 respectively. These are detailed further in the consultation documentation. Further development in this area would be subject to the planning process or be part of future review of the local plans, these would be subject to public consultation and scrutiny by an Independent Inspector.

67. New land for employment has been mentioned. Where are WCC looking at developing on land in the area covered by the Link Road?

The areas for development are set out within both the Coventry and Warwick District local plans, as identified on the maps in the consultation documents.

WCC are considering plans to develop land adjacent to the junction of the Link Road with the A429 Kenilworth Road in order to bring forward a new transport interchange and rail station in the future. There are no further proposals being developed beyond the indicative allocations for land use as set out in the Warwick District Local Plan, an element of employment land is anticipated as part of the King's Hill development,

as part of the UoW interim masterplan, and as part of the safeguarded land should that come forward in the next local plan.

68. The leaflet refers to "a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network". Can you say more about what this would be? Who would benefit from this and by how much? And who will lose, and by how much? And how long before traffic growth puts travel times back to the current state?

The initial analysis shows that option 3 proposals would be likely to result in a substantial reduction in journey times across the local network, during both morning and evening peak periods. This is expected to reduce congestion and deliver network-wide benefits, along with localised benefits on critical parts of the network such as the A45 and A46. This analysis also suggests that east to west routes such as Tile Hill Lane, Torrington Avenue and Charter Avenue will not experience any notable changes in traffic flows with the Link Road included. However, the analysis does highlight that a predicted increase in traffic to the north of the Link Road itself are Westwood Heath Road (to the west of the Link Road), Cromwell Lane, Station Avenue and Pickford Green Lane.

This modelling work has been conducted up till 2034, beyond this date we cannot accurately predict flows.

69. One of the options involves closing access through the main University for motorists. This may result in many residents from the Gibbet Hill area choosing to use Cannon Hill Road to access the Cannon Park shopping centre. Have you assessed this impact and consulted with residents in this area?

The option to close through access on Gibbet Hill Road, as part of the overall proposals, has been assessed through the traffic model and shows an overall improvement in the operation of the network. It would be the case that residents from the Gibbet Hill area would need to find an alternative route to destinations at Cannon Park, and this would be likely to be by Cannon Hill Road or via the A45. A separate scheme is already being designed by the City Council for traffic management measures to deter rat-running traffic on Cannon Hill Road and consultation is expected on this in the near future. The need for any further measures would then be identified as part of this scheme, and any such measures would then be developed and consulted upon as part of the next stage of design.

70. Can you show the local houses on your maps?

The images presented as part of the consultation show an indicative scheme which does not include local detail. As a feasibility alignment is developed, detail including houses will be added to the plans and further discussions will take place with affected land and property owners in the area.

71. Will there be any Bus or VLR link between Tile Hill Station and the proposed new station?

The project to develop a new station to the south of Coventry will also consider how the station is integrated with other facilities in the area, no detailed work has been undertaken on this as yet.

72. Have traffic studies been conducted to see if the expected traffic demands this scheme supposed address can be displaced to alternative means i.e. VLR, conventional rail, bus, cycling and walking. This will need improvement of the infrastructure of these means, but would it not be cheaper and less disruptive.

73. Have you investigated demand management options? If so, which, and with what result?

It is not envisaged that active travel and public transport can solely address the issues. To date modelling work has only been undertaken using traffic modelling, using current traffic and travel data along with predicted increases.

We are monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on travel patterns across Coventry and Warwickshire. Home working is likely to become a more significant element of life for some professions that have previously been mostly office based, and this may impact travel demand during the peak periods; in this period however deliveries and off-peak travel have increased. It is worth noting that traffic levels are currently at 90% of the pre-COVID-19 levels when compared year on year, and there is also evidence of some switching from public transport to car where people have that option. Sensitivity testing will be carried out to assess the proposals against previously predicted and currently expected travel patterns and uses and this will be done in accordance with government guidance.

74. Much of the talk around road building assumes that more roads generate more economic activity. There is an implied link between employment and car traffic. Where is your evidence for this? Clearly if you build roads then that influences the choices people make on how, where and when they travel. That is also true for canals and railways and airports and, as the Netherlands proves, good cycle paths. There are other factors, of course, but employment and travel patterns will follow the spending. Growth in employment or educational activity does not depend on car traffic - it depends on good access and, increasingly, virtual access. Can you provide evidence that this road is the only possible solution?

There is a strong link between economic growth and the demand for travel by all modes, and this has been established for many decades. A stronger economy results in a higher level of travel demand. There is also a strong link between any land use development involving human activity, be it residential, employment or educational, and travel demand. Changes to economic activity, or changes in land use such as a new residential development, will always result in changes in travel demand patterns. Very few journeys are made for the sake of the journey (exceptions are, for example, a trip on a heritage railway). As per previous

responses (Q20 etc), other modes of travel are being considered as part of this scheme, and any business case will need to demonstrate the need for the scheme in whatever form it takes, including predictions of travel demand patterns by all modes. The business case to potential funders such as the Department for Transport will need to provide the evidence that the transport infrastructure for which funding is being sought will provide good value for money and will serve an identified need.

75. If you are trying to encourage people to use more active travel methods, why would cyclists/pedestrians want to use paths next to a dual carriageway? Wouldn't Stoneleigh Road and Gibbet Hill be better options for cyclists?

Cycle and pedestrian facilities are proposed adjacent to the Link Road in order to provide a corridor for a variety of modes of travel. There are also a number of other on- and off-road facilities in the area including Stoneleigh Road and Gibbet Hill Road, it is our intention to provide as many options as possible for cyclists and pedestrians in the area. There are numerous examples of new roads being built without provision for pedestrians or cyclists, only for pedestrians and cyclists then to adopt them as new transport corridors, requiring retrofit of suitable facilities at greater cost. It is also now Government policy that all new roads should provide suitable facilities for pedestrians and cyclists to promote walking and cycling, and all three Councils have similar policies to provide good walking and cycling routes as an integral part of any new transport scheme.

Paul Bentley
Team Leader | Project & Programme Management | Design Services | Environment Services
Warwickshire County Council
Communities Directorate
Shire Hall Post Room
Northgate Street
Warwick
CV34 4SP

23 August 2021

Dear Paul,

Re: A46 Link Road

I write regarding the A46 Link Road (Phase 2) project.

The University of Warwick currently has 28,390 students and 7389 staff, 60% of whom live in Coventry and Warwickshire. It is one of the major employers in the region. The University is planning for an overall growth in student numbers and build on the success of previous years. Improved transport connections are crucial in supporting this growth and the University is committed to working with Warwickshire County Council and other local authorities to ensure these are delivered.

Our most recent figures show that the University generates an annual economic impact of £1bn to the regional economy and supports a further 9,425 jobs locally. The University's regional strategy is to play an even greater role in the economic, cultural and social growth of our region. This includes:

- the £40m+ redevelopment of Warwick Arts Centre will lead to projected footfall of nearly 400,000 visitors per year for live events, film and the Mead Gallery. Warwick Arts Centre is already the largest in the Midlands and one of the largest in the UK outside London. The audience is overwhelmingly local people (not students) with 80% of attendees currently coming from Coventry and Warwickshire (around 50% from Warwickshire) so access from the South is very important. 22,831 school-age children participated in Warwick Arts Centre creative learning activities.
- Warwick Conferences. The latest pre-covid figures (2018-19) show 195,000 delegates attending events (day visitors and additional overnight visitors are not included in these numbers).
- The University will be developing key buildings as part of its refreshed campus masterplan. This will include the Science Precinct, a world-class approach to building connections within the Science Faculty, co-located working with innovative science businesses and engagement with the public. In addition, significant numbers of people connect with our research every year through public lectures, exhibitions and other activities.

Professor Stuart Croft
Vice-Chancellor & President
University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 8UW UK
T +44 (0)24 765 74951
E: S.Croft@warwick.ac.uk
www.warwick.ac.uk

Again, improved transport links will be crucial in connecting local people and businesses with the University.

The University is supportive of Warwickshire County Council's plans for the A46 link road as a multi-modal highway and recognises this as a critical part of wider transport infrastructure improvements around the University's main campus. The University would make the following further points:

- That the University is committed to sustainable growth and transport infrastructure that enables connectivity across the West Midlands and nationally to/from major transit hubs and cities. We would ask Warwickshire County Council to look at how to maximise the sustainability of the A46 Link Road including supporting provision for cycling, walking, etc.
- That the A46 Link Road should support and connect with other sustainable transport modes, including the proposed University railway station and Very Light Rail (VLR) network.
- That a very large proportion of vehicles (approximately 50%) currently using Gibbet Hill Road are travelling through campus to other destinations. The University would ask that the impact of through traffic on local road networks and local residential areas is fully assessed as part of the ongoing business case and design process.

Without improved sub-regional and regional transport links, the University's growth will be hampered. This will have a wider impact on the regional economy and in turn our local communities. The University is therefore supportive of the A46 Link Road.

Yours faithfully,



Professor Stuart Croft
Vice-Chancellor and President

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