

# Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Wednesday 13 September 2023  
Time: 2.00 pm  
Venue: Committee Room 2, Shire Hall

## Membership

Councillor Adrian Warwick (Chair)  
Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Sarah Boad  
Councillor Piers Daniell  
Councillor Sarah Feeney  
Councillor Wallace Redford  
Councillor Will Roberts  
Councillor Tim Sinclair  
Councillor Richard Spencer  
Councillor Robert Tromans

Items on the agenda: -

### 1. General

(1) Apologies

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

(3) Chair's Announcements

(4) Minutes of Previous Meeting

5 - 12

### 2. Public Question Time

Up to 30 minutes of the meeting is available for members of the public to ask questions on any matters relevant to the business of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Questioners may ask two questions and can speak for up to three minutes each. To be sure of receiving an answer to an appropriate question, please contact Andy Carswell (Democratic Services) at least two working days prior to the meeting.

### 3. Questions to Portfolio Holders relevant to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Up to 30 minutes of the meeting is available for the Committee to put questions to the Leader and Portfolio Holders on any matters relevant to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

<b>4. Sustainable Futures Strategy</b>	13 - 92
<b>5. Quarter 1 Integrated Performance Report</b>	93 - 126
<b>6. Treasury Management Update Quarterly Report</b>	127 - 144
<b>7. Cost-of-living support update</b>	145 - 204
<b>8. Annual Review of Community Pantries</b>	205 - 220
<b>9. Work Programme</b>	221 - 222
<b>10. Any Urgent Matters</b>	

**Monica Fogarty**  
Chief Executive  
Warwickshire County Council  
Shire Hall, Warwick

To download papers for this meeting scan here with your camera



## Disclaimers

### Webcasting and permission to be filmed

Please note that this meeting will be filmed for live broadcast on the internet and can be viewed on line at [warwickshire.public-i.tv](http://warwickshire.public-i.tv). Generally, the public gallery is not filmed, but by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area you are consenting to being filmed. All recording will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

### Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members are required to register their disclosable pecuniary interests within 28 days of their election of appointment to the Council. Any changes to matters registered or new matters that require to be registered must be notified to the Monitoring Officer as soon as practicable after they arise.

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.

This page is intentionally left blank

# Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 7 June 2023

## Minutes

### Attendance

#### Committee Members

Councillor Adrian Warwick (Chair)  
Councillor Parminder Singh Birdi (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Sarah Boad  
Councillor Piers Daniell  
Councillor Sarah Feeney  
Councillor Will Roberts  
Councillor Ian Shenton  
Councillor Richard Spencer  
Councillor Robert Tromans  
Councillor Tim Sinclair

#### Officers

Rob Powell, Strategic Director for Resources  
Charles Barlow, Delivery Lead - Localities  
Helen Barnsley, Senior Democratic Services Officer  
Ben Brook, Chief Fire Officer  
Andy Carswell, Democratic Services Officer  
Craig Cusack, Assistant Director - Enabling Services  
Sarah Duxbury, Assistant Director - Governance & Policy  
Steve Smith, Assistant Director - Commissioning Support Unit  
Paul Aitken, Customer Relations Officer  
Sue Parks, Quality Standards and Business Improvement Officer

#### Others Present

Councillor Andy Crump, Portfolio Holder (Fire & Rescue and Community Safety)  
Councillor Yousef Dahmash, Portfolio Holder (Customer and Transformation)  
Councillor Heather Timms, Portfolio Holder (Environment, Climate and Culture)  
Councillor Martin Watson, Portfolio Holder (Economy)

#### 1. General

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, particularly the new Committee members who were attending for the first time.

### **(1) Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Wallace Redford. Councillor Tim Sinclair was attending as a substitute.

### **(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None.

### **(3) Chair's Announcements**

There were no announcements from the Chair.

### **(4) Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meetings held on 22 February 2023 and 16 May 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

## **2. Public Question Time**

There were no questions from members of the public.

## **3. Questions to Portfolio Holders relevant to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

There were no questions to portfolio holders.

## **4. OSC Customer Feedback 22/23**

The Chair reminded members that a revised report had been circulated with the most up to date information, and thanked officers for providing the latest version.

Craig Cusack (Assistant Director, Enabling Services) introduced the item and stated the report indicated services were making positive progress. The number of complaints for service areas of relevance to the Committee had decreased and the overall volume of cases had gone down. The proportion of complaints being made to these service areas had increased, which was attributed partly to some people making multiple complaints. Craig Cusack drew members' attention to the fact that, annually, more cases were being handled solely by the Customer Relations Team, and this was helping to speed up resolution times for residents and improve the data held on the type of correspondence received and how they were responded to.

Councillor Tim Sinclair said he would have liked to have seen more detail on the CRM Dynamics. He said he had requested this at the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Sinclair asked if more detail and realistic timescales could be provided, and the benefits it would bring. Craig Cusack said the specific requirements of the CRM were being looked into, with the aim of being able to provide greater flexibility than the current system. He said the new Dynamics system would be able to be used to serve by the public in the autumn. This would include the system of submitting complaints and comments, the likes of which were summarised in the report to members. Members of the public would be able to log into a portal and see direct feedback from officers, and get responses much more quickly and easily. Responding to Councillor Sinclair, Craig

Cusack said an update on the scheduling of subsequent Dynamics modules would be made available to members at the relevant Committee. Rob Powell (Strategic Director, Resources) said the information was already available to members through the quarterly the Integrated Delivery Plan reporting and data on Power BI. It had been necessary to delay implementation until assurance work had been completed to show that the plans would support changes introduced through the now delayed Government adult social care reforms.

Councillor Sarah Boad asked if there was a breakdown of statistics on how residents had contacted the Council to make a comment, complaint or compliment. She said more services were being provided online and there was a possibility residents who did not have internet access were being disadvantaged. Paul Aitken (Customer Relations Officer) said no breakdown was available, but said there were still a number of ways residents could get in touch. For example they were still able to send in letters, and services could be accessed in libraries. Rob Powell said it was now possible for residents to borrow electronic devices from libraries, and the Council wanted to cater for everyone's individual preference. The Chair asked if a breakdown could be made available to members if this was not too onerous a task.

Councillor Sarah Feeney said she welcomed the section of the report on lessons learned, particularly as they were circulated back to the wider service area. Councillor Feeney said there could be some disputes that a resident would not have said qualified as a complaint, and asked how these were recorded. Craig Cusack said the complaints policy was being reviewed by Legal and any proposed changes were expected to be considered by Cabinet in October. He said officers were encouraged to resolve issues on the spot, as it was possible for a formal complaint to arise out of an issue not being dealt with in a timely manner. He said he hoped to be able to provide an update at a future meeting on how different complaints arose from different situations.

Members noted the contents of the report. The Chair thanked officers for bringing it to the Committee.

## **5. Q4 Integrated Performance Report**

The item was introduced by Steve Smith (Assistant Director, Commissioning Support Unit), who stated the report had been compiled by the Business Intelligence Team. He said there continued to be a consistent strong performance in areas of relevance to the Committee, which was particularly encouraging in light of the current volatile economic climate and challenges relating to staff capacity and workforce retention. Steve Smith said around three quarters of the performance measures under the Committee's remit were either on track or had already been met. He said there were significant challenges caused by an increased demand and funding levels for Special Educational Needs provision, which then had an impact on the High Needs Block on the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Fire and Rescue Service had challenges relating to incident response times, which had led to a re-evaluation of risk and resource management across the county. Significant risks included slowing in economic growth, high interest rates and high rates of inflation. Steve Smith said the emerging Government policy regarding adult social care reforms would also continue to be monitored.

Members' attention was drawn to the appendices of the main report, which outlined the key business measures and how Warwickshire County Council's performance compared against other local authorities. Performance against the Integrated Delivery Plan, management of the financial risk associated with the Fire and Rescue Service, and the key services' risks summary were all

also included in the appendices. Members were reminded they had access to this data through Power BI.

The Chair said members should thank officers for the work they were doing in light of challenging global circumstances.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sarah Boad, Steve Smith said 74 per cent of the items on the Integrated Delivery Plan were either on track or completed. This figure was 54 per cent for the key business measures. Steve Smith reminded members that the Integrated Delivery Plan covered a two-year cycle. It had incorporated Levelling Up and Community Powered Warwickshire, and had been formally adopted by Cabinet at its May meeting.

Councillor Sarah Feeney noted the Fire and Rescue Service's target relating to road traffic collisions, and asked if this could be met, was an area of concern, or an arbitrary figure. Ben Brook (Chief Fire Officer) said that the police would attend incidents that the Fire and Rescue Service were unable to get to. He said the figure had been produced as an average of the figures over the past three years; however, incidents were now rising and their severity was also increasing.

Councillor Tim Sinclair noted the percentage of respondents to the Your Say survey who had said they felt safe to be their authentic self, and said he felt this ought to be higher. He also noted high sickness absence rates in some service areas. On the first point Rob Powell said this had been an area of particular focus by the EDI team and stated his belief the figure of 79 per cent was in line with sector benchmarks, but should be seen alongside a number of other measures of the Council's inclusive culture. Several staff network groups had been involved as part of this, which looked at broader issues and the importance of creating the right culture to enable all colleagues to share their experiences and characteristics. Following a recent campaign there had been a significant increase in rates of staff disclosure of their protected characteristics. Regarding absence rates, Rob Powell said there was significant variation between services, with most services having lower sickness rates. Sickness levels in social care and business support were higher, which may reflect specific aspects of the work in these areas, particularly emotional or mental health-related reasons.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sarah Feeney regarding adverse Ombudsman determinations and why it was reported under the data and digital solutions section, Sarah Duxbury (Assistant Director, Governance and Policy) said there was a link between digitisation of the customer journey work, improvements being sought, and complaints – some of which ended up being investigated by the Ombudsman. Regarding performance, the cases were quite fact specific and any learning points that could be shared more generally across service areas would be considered in respect of adverse findings. In addition to these, learning points identified from Ombudsman reports relating to other local authorities were also circulated. This process sat with Legal Services, who maintain an overview of the Council's performance and would follow up with specific service areas as necessary.

In response to a query from Councillor Tim Sinclair about value for money green ratings, Rob Powell said external auditors had given green ratings to two of the three criteria used. These related to financial sustainability and governance. The third criterion, value for money, was amber as a result of the outcomes of the Ofsted local area inspection of SEND provision and the HMICFRS inspection of the Fire and Rescue Service.



Responding to a question from Councillor Ian Shenton about fire response times, Ben Brook said the current situation was crews were expected to attend an incident within ten minutes 75 per cent of the time. However there were parts of the county that had a higher risk of an incident occurring. A review was taking place to reconfigure the service, and consider how resources could be assigned to places that had a higher associated level of risk. This could help to reduce emergency response times by up to 30 seconds, which Ben Brook said could be crucial in a life or death situation. Councillor Andy Crump said a vast amount of evidence had been analysed and considered by members of the Community Risk Management Plan Assurance Panel. A consultation on reconfiguration of resources would follow with members. Councillor Crump said this formed an important part of the prevention and protection strategy. He said response times did not always lead to a positive outcome, recalling an incident where crews were able to attend within less than five minutes but by then it was already too late.

Councillor Ian Shenton asked about the performance at outturn against the budgets for Governance and Policy. Sarah Duxbury said the revenue position was mainly as a result of higher than budgeted external legal trading income, with services being provided to the Council but also to other public sector bodies. This was a positive outcome. This included other local authorities asking for help with legal services in areas such as child protection where there was a shortfall in available provision.

Responding to a question from Councillor Tim Sinclair about the information from the Warwickshire Outcome Measures, Steve Smith said this was used to identify priority areas, particularly in relation to Levelling Up and Community Powered Warwickshire, and inform the future work programme. It had the additional benefit of allowing officers to compare performance against other parts of the country. Rob Powell said the information had helped officers to create an evidence base that helped to support partnership working. He gave the example of the ongoing work with district and borough councils, and other public sector partners, to develop local levelling up plans, as these had been drawn extensively from the shared evidence base.

Regarding tackling climate change, Councillor Heather Timms said the goals were ambitious but the Council needed to be pragmatic in its approach to trying to meet them. Responding to a question from Councillor Ian Shenton, Sarah Duxbury said an element of the Sustainable Futures Strategy was aimed at shifting residents' behaviours and that consideration would be given to that and how the Council, residents and businesses, could be enabled to make more sustainable decisions around energy consumption. Steve Smith said an update report on the 2030 net zero plan and the Sustainable Futures Strategy would be going to Cabinet later in the month.

Members noted the contents of the report.

## **6. Social Impact Fund Progress Report**

The report was introduced by Charles Barlow (Delivery Lead, Communities and Partnerships Service). He reminded members the Social Impact Fund had been agreed by Cabinet in October 2021 to help build stronger communities. It had targeted geographical areas that had experienced higher than average instances of Covid and groups that had experienced increased rates of isolation, such as financial, social or health-related issues. Projects applying for funding needed to align to at least one of the Council Plan outcomes, one of the core themes of the Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy, and the Community Powered Warwickshire approach. Additional projects needed to help reduce climate change and support local biodiversity. The Fund had been

launched prior to the approach to Levelling Up being implemented. Revenue and capital funding was used on a 60:40 split.

Charles Barlow said 21 projects received funding; of those, 16 received capital funding which was required to be spent within 15 months of approval, and the remaining five received revenue funding that needed to be spent within 18 months. Most of the projects were on track to be completed on time. Two projects had been delayed but it was likely both would proceed soon. Charles Barlow said operation of the Fund was commissioned to the Heart of England Community Foundation, who had been able to signpost applicants to up to 50 different funding streams.

Members were told the Social Fabric Fund was due to be launched later in the month. Learning from the implementation of the Social Impact Fund had helped to inform the thinking of how it would work and improve embedding of the Community Powered approach to prioritise delivery of levelling up outcomes, primarily in the 22 Lower Super Output Areas as these were in the 20 per cent most deprived nationally. A further update report would be provided in early 2024.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sarah Boad, Charles Barlow said there had been 52 applications for funding. In response to Councillor Boad noting a large proportion of projects which were successful in their application were from Leamington Brunswick, Charles Barlow said this would be because there were higher Covid rates there at the time and the applications were stronger. Covid rates had been provided by Public Health. Charles Barlow said there had been a good geographical spread of applications.

Councillor Tim Sinclair noted some dummy text had been included in the summary of awards and asked if this could be updated. He also suggested the report could outline in more detail how the different projects were chosen, to pre-empt queries from members who noted that no projects in their ward had been successful in their application for funding.

Responding to a question from Councillor Sarah Feeney, Charles Barlow said fuller details of the impact the funding had had for the successful applicants would be provided in the next update report.

Members noted the contents of the report.

## **7. Work Programme**

Members noted the contents of the forthcoming work programme.

## **8. Any Urgent Matters**

There were no urgent matters for discussion.

## **9. Reports Containing Exempt or Confidential Information**

### **Resolved unanimously**

That the motion to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting be approved.

## **10. Exempt Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The exempt minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2023 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

The meeting rose at xxx

.....  
Chair

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**13 September 2023**

### **Sustainable Futures Strategy**

#### **1. Recommendation**

That the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments upon the Sustainable Futures Strategy and supporting action plan attached at Appendix 1 and 2, prior to final consideration by Cabinet in November 2023.

#### **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to review and comment on the final draft of the Sustainable Futures Strategy. It also provides an update on progress made since reporting to Cabinet in June 2023 and sets out the planned next steps for the Strategy prior to consideration by Cabinet in November. The draft Strategy and Action Plan can be found in Appendix 1 and 2 respectively.
- 2.2 The new Council Plan identifies Sustainable Futures as one of our top priorities as a Council and the draft Sustainable Futures Strategy has been developed to support this commitment. This was considered by Cabinet in October 2022. A public and stakeholder engagement programme was undertaken following the October Cabinet meeting, and feedback from this engagement programme has been used to finalise the strategy.
- 2.3 There has been wide engagement on the draft Sustainable Futures Strategy between November 2022 and February 2023. This has included public surveys, focus groups, and written submissions from the public and stakeholders. A series of expert panels have been engaged in August 2023.
- 2.4 Cabinet received a summary of the feedback available at that time and proposed next steps at its meeting on 15 June 2023. This included an update on the actions that are already progressing to support our climate change ambitions and the projects in development. An extract of the project progress and plans are included in Appendix 3.

- 2.5 In reviewing the feedback received, Cabinet supported further stakeholder engagement through a series of expert panels to take advantage of the strong willingness from a range of experts from business, public sector, academia and the wider community to work together to deliver on the Council's ambitions. These panels took place during August and were focused on transport, built environment, energy, and cross-cutting themes concerning how the Council works with partners and communities to deliver sustainable change fairly and affordably. They provided a strong sense of feedback and support for our direction of travel and provided significant opportunity to deepen partnerships and engagement.
- 2.6 The final version of the Sustainable Futures Strategy will take account of feedback received at all stages of stakeholder engagement, including the expert panels.

### **3. Draft Sustainable Futures Strategy**

- 3.1 In the Council Plan 2022 – 2027 we have committed to becoming a County with a sustainable future, which means adapting to and mitigating climate change and meeting net zero commitments. To deliver this, a Sustainable Futures Strategy (the Strategy) has been developed which addresses:
- Our commitment to be a net zero carbon Council by 2030
  - Leading Warwickshire in becoming net zero by 2050
  - Our biodiversity commitments
  - Commitments to support and deliver on the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs)
- 3.2 The Committee is invited to review the draft Strategy and action plan in Appendix 1 and 2.
- 3.3 Key features of the Sustainable Futures Strategy are:
- 3.3.1 The use of six delivery themes to focus activity and assign objectives and actions for both the 2030 and 2050 targets. These themes are:
- Transport;
  - Energy;
  - Built environment;
  - Resources, waste and circular economy;
  - Green economy and sustainable communities; and
  - Natural capital and biodiversity.
- 3.3.2 The adoption of delivery principles that are essential to having the right approach to implementation, together with strategic enablers that are essential components to ensure the strategy is both deliverable and affordable.

- 3.3.3 Clarity on what is and is not within scope of our 2030 Council carbon footprint, with an emissions reduction trajectory to 2030.
- 3.3.4 Alignment to WCC's approved Countywide approach to Levelling Up in Warwickshire, with Sustainable Futures being one of the four core elements of Levelling Up and defining what that means at county, place and community level.
- 3.4 The Strategy recognises that we cannot deliver the 2050 Warwickshire target alone and summarises the various levels of influence the Council has and the partnerships the Council maintains and establishes that will help to deliver on the ambitions of the Strategy, including engagement with residents, communities, and business. Furthermore, the Strategy recognises the need to secure governmental and regional funding and private sector investment to deliver on the objectives.
- 3.5 Delivery of the Strategy through its Action Plan will enable the Council to accelerate progress towards meeting our net zero carbon commitment for the Council by 2030 and the 2050 net zero commitment for Warwickshire alongside our approach to Levelling Up.

#### **4. Expert Panels**

- 4.1 The Expert Panels took place during August and focused on transport, built environment, energy and cross-cutting themes concerning how the Council works with partners and communities to deliver sustainable change fairly and affordably.
- 4.2 Each theme convened a face-to-face panel and a further virtual panel to engage as many key stakeholders as possible. Face to face sessions were took place at MIRA (Nuneaton), Garden Organic (Ryton) and Warwick University. The panels were attended by 69 individuals across a range of organisations, including some of our significant industries.
- 4.3 The panels reviewed ambitions and objectives from the Strategy, discussed a shared stakeholder delivery plan for Warwickshire, and reviewed delivery principles. There was significant engagement by those present and the outputs (which included commitments to shared actions ) will be built into the Climate Change Programme and Actions Plans supporting the Strategy..
- 4.4 The general feedback from all the panels was positive and there was strong support for the Council's strategy, and an agreement that the objectives and direction of travel is correct. There were offers of ongoing collaboration, further advice and guidance and a willingness to work and learn in partnership over the long-term.

- 4.5 In terms of specific activity for further consideration, the following are a summary of the panel discussions:

### **Buildings & Energy**

- Place based approach to local area energy planning to understand demand and growth in energy needs across the county.
- Supporting new infrastructure through planning and regulatory frameworks
- Working with National Grid on capacity building and planning ahead for future needs
- Retrofit deliver models for homes and businesses.
- Making best use of external funding sources

### **Transport**

- Progress on a decarbonised local transport plan
- Further investigation into alternative fuels including hydrogen, battery technology and fuel cells
- Providing transport connectivity and choices for all
- Investment in skills and employment opportunities

### **General**

- Workforce capability and skills investment, including apprenticeships opportunities.
- Supporting SME's to make changes, working with the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub,
- Taking a community powered approach to behavioural change, by finding small levers for change then scaling up activity, and providing routes to funding
- Sustainability impact assessment approach to decision making

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The financial implications have not altered since the June 2023 Cabinet Paper which confirmed that:

- 5.1.1 At the start of 2023/24 the Council's Revenue Investment Fund contained over £10 million revenue funding which will be topped up during the five-year period as our finances allow. The allocation of this funding is deliberately flexible and may be varied as bids emerge and are prioritised. The February 2023 budget resolution states that it is expected a minimum of £2 million will be allocated against each of the Best Lives, Sustainable Futures and Thriving Economy and Places blocks. In addition, the Capital Investment Fund currently has £90 million to invest in the Council's assets/infrastructure over the next five years. The revenue and capital funding for the delivery of the



Sustainable Futures strategy will need to be sourced from these Funds or from accessing external third party funding.

- 5.1.2 The initial actions in train (see Appendix 3) have an estimated revenue cost of £265k over the next two years plus £30k capital investment and £187k revenue from third party funding. Applications to the Revenue Investment Fund totalling £265k are expected to come forward for approval during Q3 once the work on the costs and expected benefits have been finalised. This demand will grow as new opportunities arise. In addition, several further schemes have been identified and it is expected that business cases for these will be prepared and brought forward for approval over the course of this financial year.
- 5.1.3 There will be significant capital and revenue implications in delivering the full action plan when it is brought forward for approval, which will inevitably and significantly exceed the Council's resources. There will also be savings which in the long term may outweigh the initial costs. A variety of internal, public, and private funding sources are expected to be required to finance these actions and seeking external funding will always be prioritised where it makes sense to do so minimising as far as possible the direct financial impact on the Council resources. We have created a Sustainable Futures Finance officer role from within existing resources with a specific remit to identify live and upcoming funding streams and assist in applications including co-ordinating joint partner funding bids. Potential funding sources have been established and mapped within the draft Strategy, but the full cost and likelihood of receiving that funding is not known. This will be understood progressively as the Strategy actions are developed in detail.

## **6. Environmental Implications**

- 6.1 These environmental implications have not altered since the June 2023 Cabinet Paper which confirmed that:
- 6.1.1 This Strategy and associated action plan will define our strategic direction in meeting the aims of our sustainable futures strategic priorities and establish what actions need to take place to accelerate progress towards our linked targets.
- 6.1.2 Delivering the associated actions to meet our 2030 net zero carbon estate target would result in emission reductions of 46% totalling 8,430 tCO<sub>2</sub>e and additionally require the removal of 9,816 tCO<sub>2</sub>e from the atmosphere through inseting and offsetting measures from 2030 and beyond calculated from our 2019 baseline. Refer to paragraph 4.2 (ii) (Projects in development) for an example of the difference between inseting and offsetting.

- 6.1.3 Delivering our net zero Warwickshire target in partnership with the public sector, residents, communities, and business, will result in emission reductions of close to 5,509,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2050 from our 2019 baseline following adoption of the fully inclusive greenhouse gas approach. Current national policy measures and technological assumptions project a gap of approximately 3,000,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. Closing this gap is reliant on large scale behavioural change, partnering, technological developments, and change in all sectors accelerated by government, regional and local policy and significant additional funding. The need for a joined-up approach is illustrated by the 18% contribution that emissions from motorway travel has to Warwickshire's carbon footprint (2019 figures), a network that is the responsibility of National Highways. The need to deliver insetting and offsetting measures may also play a part as full decarbonisation will not be realised in all sectors.

## 7. Timescales and next steps

- 7.1 All expert panels have now taken place and work is underway to analyse the outputs from those sessions.
- 7.2 This paper will be presented to all Overview and Scrutiny Committees during September 2023 and feedback will be used to inform the final strategy.
- 7.3 The final Sustainable Futures Strategy and 2030/2050 action plan are expected to be presented to Cabinet for approval on 9th November 2023

## Background Papers

1. Cabinet Report 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023, Sustainable Futures Strategy

## Appendices

**Appendix 1:** Draft Sustainable Futures Strategy

**Appendix 2:** Sustainable Futures Action Plan

**Appendix 3:** Project progress and those in development

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Sarah Stear Head of Climate Change & Sustainability & Matt Whitehead Programme Manager (Climate Change)	sarahstear@warwickshire.gov.uk mattwhitehead@warwickshire.gov.uk
Assistant Director	Steve Smith Assistant Director for Commissioning Support Unit	stevesmithps@warwickshire.gov.uk
Executive Director	Rob Powell	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk

	Strategic Director for Resources	
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Heather Timms Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate & Culture	heathertimms@warwickshire.gov.uk

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

Local Member(s): not applicable as this is a county wide report

Other members: Members of the Cross Party Climate Emergency members group: Councillors Birdi, Chilvers, Falp, Fradgley, Humphreys, Millar, Redford, Sinclair.

Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Councillors: Clarke, Warwick, Humphreys, Barker.

This page is intentionally left blank



# WARWICKSHIRE SUSTAINABLE FUTURES STRATEGY

# Table of Contents

<b>3</b>	<b>Foreword</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Introduction and Context</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Our Carbon Emissions</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>Strategy Aims</b> Where do we want to be in the future?
<b>18</b>	<b>Delivering Success</b> Opportunities Engagement and Partnership Governance
<b>22</b>	<b>Funding the Strategy</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>Key Themes</b> Transport Energy Generation Built Environment Resources, Waste & Circular Economy Sustainable Communities & Green Economy Natural Capital and Biodiversity
<b>55</b>	<b>Appendix A Terminology</b>
<b>56</b>	<b>Appendix B Key Trends</b>
<b>57</b>	<b>Appendix C Strategy Alignment</b>

*This document was approved in draft by Warwickshire County Council Cabinet on 13 October 2022.*

# Foreword

**Warwickshire County Council is committed to acting decisively to tackle climate change and the biodiversity crisis. Taking action now, so that Warwickshire is a County with a sustainable future, is one of our key strategic priorities. We have already started work towards our goals of reducing carbon emissions to net zero across the Council by 2030 and to support Warwickshire as a County to do the same by 2050 or earlier.**

**Climate change** is one of the most important issues facing the world. The continued burning of fossil fuels is affecting weather patterns around the world as well as causing devastating extreme weather events more locally, leading to flooding, heatwaves, drought and wildfires. These events pose a direct risk to Warwickshire's communities and economy.

At the same time, more than two-fifths of UK species, including animals, birds and butterflies, have seen significant population declines in recent decades. With thousands of acres of habitats lost to development, and pollution affecting our natural environment, the decline in **biodiversity** is impacting directly on our wellbeing and economic prosperity.

Our Sustainable Futures Strategy establishes our direction and priorities to reduce carbon emissions, support biodiversity and promote economic growth across our County.

Our vision is for a Warwickshire that is low in carbon with vastly reduced energy bills, that has landscapes with plenty of wildlife that people can enjoy and farms that provide us with local food, supported by a thriving sustainable economy and resulting in communities that are happier, healthier and empowered.

And our goal is simple; to make Warwickshire sustainable now and for future generations.



**Heather Timms,  
Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate and Culture  
Warwickshire County Council**

# Executive Summary

**This Sustainable Futures Strategy has been developed with three challenges facing the UK today in mind: *Climate Change, Loss of Biodiversity* and the *Cost of Living Crisis*. It aims to set out a framework, key action areas and principles for delivering the strategic priorities of being a County with a sustainable future, adapting to and mitigating climate change and achieving the nationwide target of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. We have committed to net zero carbon for our Council emissions by 2030 and net zero carbon for County emissions by 2050.**

Since 2005, County wide emissions have reduced by 24%. During this period, emissions from the transport sector have remained static, while emissions from industry, domestic and commercial buildings have been steadily declining.

Council related activities currently account for 19,500 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per year. To meet our net zero commitment, our emissions will have to be reduced by at least a further 29% by 2026 and 46% by 2030. Reductions are anticipated to occur primarily from transport (-28.5% by 2030) and building use (-17.5% by 2030). To meet these targets, immediate and decisive action must be taken. The actions and strategies within this document have been created to establish a clear pathway towards these goals.

To support this, our Strategy focuses on six key themes:

- **Transport:** We aim to reduce carbon emissions from the transport sector by 1,300 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030, through a transition to alternative fuels and the implementation of a more efficient staff travel plan. We plan to support further emission reduction through promoting integrated and place-based transport planning, supporting the uptake of active travel and zero-emissions vehicle ownership and transitioning to more sustainable fuel sources for commercial and freight transport.
- **Energy:** To maximise decarbonisation of the energy used by the Council, we are committed to identifying opportunities to increase the installation of renewable technologies on Council owned buildings and the volume of in-County renewable energy generation.



- **Built Environment:** Our goal is to reduce emissions from Council buildings by a minimum of 1,700 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030. We will increase our knowledge of energy use within our decentralised assets, decarbonising our natural gas heat supply where viable, identifying opportunities to co-locate with partners, undertaking further property decarbonisation feasibility studies and supporting renewable energy schemes.
- **Resources, Waste and Circular Economy:** Reducing waste and resource usage while supporting a transition to a circular economy are vital steps in moving towards a sustainable future. Following on from the existing National Resources and Waste Strategy, we aim to improve and increase educational campaigns and encourage behaviour change around consumption. We will also identify opportunities to use waste as a resource and work with manufacturers to promote the use of sustainable and reusable materials, extend product life and reduce packaging and single use plastics.
- **Sustainable Communities and Green Economy:** We are committed to supporting a green economy while providing environments that contribute to happy and equitable communities. While efforts to support a low-carbon economy have begun, we plan to intensify these efforts by prioritising investments where green economy principles are integrated, engaging more fully with our community and interest groups.
- **Natural Capital and Biodiversity:** Solutions to the global biodiversity and ecological crisis must begin at local level. This begins by recognising that economies are embedded in the natural environment, not external to it, and that nature itself should be viewed as a critically important asset. We plan to support these principles by developing a natural capital investment strategy, encouraging policies that prioritise environmental net gain, developing a natural capital account to manage our natural assets and by implementing an offsetting strategy for our tree planting targets.

Critical to our success in delivering our ambitions across these themes are our eight delivery principles and seven strategic enablers, ensuring effective change management, changed behaviours, accountable governance, appropriate engagement, and the right policies. Substantial financial investment will be required in the next decades for decarbonisation, with funding critical to enable actions. Aside from securing financial resources, we will need to consider opportunities for upskilling, redirecting resource and potentially increasing staffing levels in specific areas.

We recognise that it will not be possible to reduce emissions within the County to absolute zero, so it is therefore important to invest in a robust carbon offsetting strategy. We plan to establish a tree nursery to supply specific varieties of flora that thrive in the Warwickshire region. This will assist in meeting our tree planting targets of 566,000 new trees in Warwickshire, with the potential to increase this number even further.

Several actions in support of this Strategy should also result in wider benefits for our communities. For example, implementing reduction and efficiency measures in our own buildings and supporting the community to do the same will help to reduce energy costs. Throughout this Strategy, we have identified how individuals in Warwickshire can contribute to creating a sustainable and prosperous community. For example, by prioritising walking or cycling, improving home energy efficiency, reducing waste, buying sustainable, local products and produce, and taking an active role in the protection and enhancement of our natural spaces.

# Introduction and Context

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) recognises that climate change, biodiversity, the cost of living for households and increased costs for businesses are amongst the most important issues facing the UK today. The County's infrastructure assets and economy are under threat from the impacts of climate change, which if left unmitigated will cost the County far more in the long run than implementing mitigation and adaptation measures now. Our response to these issues on behalf of communities, businesses and Council services begins with the development of this Sustainable Futures Strategy.

The UN's [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (UN SDGs) provide a shared blueprint of peace and prosperity for both people and the planet, now and into the future. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. Whilst this Strategy has a strong focus on the reduction of carbon to mitigate climate change and meet net zero commitments, it also aims to achieve wider sustainability by aligning with the UN SDGs.

We have used six thematic areas in this Strategy to mitigate the effects of climate change, biodiversity loss and the cost of living crisis. They represent the areas with the most ability to make a difference: transport, energy, built environment, waste and circular economy, sustainable communities and green economy, and natural capital and biodiversity.





## Climate Change Crisis

There is a growing recognition that climate change is one of the most important issues facing the world. The resulting emissions from continued burning of fossil fuels has been causing a global warming effect which has altered weather patterns, melted polar ice and increased ocean acidification leading to changes in sea life, in addition to causing devastating extreme weather events which has led to flooding, heatwaves, drought and wildfires. These events pose a direct risk to Warwickshire's communities and economy.

In 2008 the UK Government created the Climate Change Act, which was updated in 2019 to commit the UK to Net Zero Carbon by 2050 (reducing emissions to 100% lower than the 1990 baseline). It has further committed to reducing economy-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 68% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) warned in 2018 that urgent action was needed to cut greenhouse gas emissions and limit global warming to 1.5°C above the pre-industrial baseline, to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change, including risks to food and water security.

In response to this required urgency and the known risks from climate change to our communities, in July 2019, WCC declared a climate emergency. Since then we have committed to becoming carbon net zero as an organisation by 2030, and to support Warwickshire County to become carbon net zero by 2050.

[Our Council Plan](#) (2022-2027) sets out a vision to make Warwickshire the best it can be, sustainable now and for future generations. A key priority of the plan is sustainable futures and climate change. It recognises that climate risks will disproportionately impact the poorest and most vulnerable. The transition to and beyond net zero and associated nature recovery must therefore be managed in a way that widens opportunities through the growth of high value, green-related business sectors and jobs.

“

People are rightly concerned, with the latest IPCC report showing that if we fail to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the floods and fires we have seen around the world this year will get more frequent and more fierce, crops will be more likely to fail, and sea levels will rise, driving mass migration as millions are forced from their homes. Above 1.5°C we risk reaching climatic tipping points like the melting of Arctic permafrost – releasing millennia of stored greenhouse gases – meaning we could lose control of our climate for good.

”

*Net Zero Strategy:  
Build Back Greener.  
October 2021. BEIS*



## Biodiversity Crisis

More than two-fifths of UK species, including animals, birds and butterflies, have seen significant population declines in recent decades. Contributing factors include thousands of acres of habitats being lost to development, the intensification of agriculture and the increasing effect of climate change. Pollution from sewage and agricultural run-off also continue to cause problems for natural areas such as streams and coastal areas. Together these are a significant problem, because decreases in biodiversity are directly related to declining wellbeing and economic prosperity.

The UK Government, along with many governments across the globe, responded in 2019 by declaring a biodiversity emergency. Globally, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) released a draft global biodiversity framework, to guide actions worldwide through to 2030, to preserve and protect nature and its essential services to people.

In order to achieve the framework, many other European countries will be following the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, with specific actions, commitments and tracking. The UK will instead be following the Nature Positive 2030 reports.

Warwickshire needs a strategy and vision of how to implement and deliver these evidenced requirements of how to live in harmony with nature. What are we aiming for locally? What are the focus areas we need to work on over the next few decades?

“

**Nature is in decline globally and in the UK. Between 1932 and 1984, we lost 97% of our species-rich grassland, five species of butterfly have disappeared from England in the last 150 years, and indicators showing the state of birds dependent on farmland stand at less than half their value compared to 1970.**

”

*Environment Bill:  
Nature and conservation  
covenants (parts 6 and 7).  
September 2021. DEFRA*



## Cost of Living Crisis

At the time of developing this strategy the UK is under pressure from a cost of living crisis. With inflation rising and the cap on energy bills being increased drastically, along with the impacts of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on fuel and food prices, huge pressures and burdens are being placed on families and businesses. There is significant concern for people's health (both physical and mental) and the ability of smaller firms to stay afloat with the soaring cost of energy. This crisis has also contributed to widening inequalities across the UK, further emphasising the need for Levelling Up on a local level.

This is a long-term Strategy to create a sustainable economy and communities, so it does not seek to address this crisis in the short-term. However, many of the objectives and actions identified will help to alleviate this burden in the long term through measures such as improving energy efficiency to reduce fuel bills, thus reducing fuel bills and addressing the *take-make-dispose* economic model which traps consumers in a constant state of needing to replace products.

“

**Our "consume-as-you-go" model, based on over-consumption as a premise for economic growth, has attained its limits at a high price for our planet, the worse-off among the population and future generations. Our consumption-based economic model needs to undergo a significant overhaul.**

”

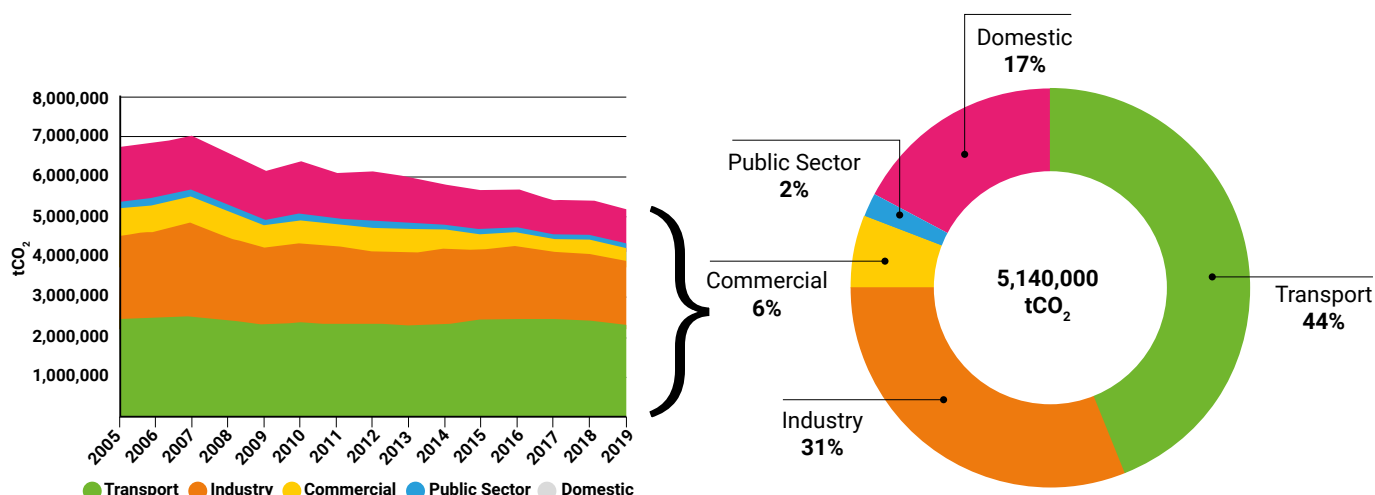
*Monique Goyens, Director General, The European Consumer Organisation*

# Our Carbon Emissions

## Warwickshire County-Wide Emissions

### Where we are now

Since 2005, the County's emissions have reduced by 24%, arriving at 5,140,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2019<sup>1</sup>. The biggest sources of emissions are from the transport and industry sectors, followed by the domestic and commercial sectors, with the public sector making up the smallest proportion of emissions. Transport emissions in the County have remained largely static whilst emissions from industry, domestic and commercial buildings have steadily decreased.



### Reaching our net zero 2050 target

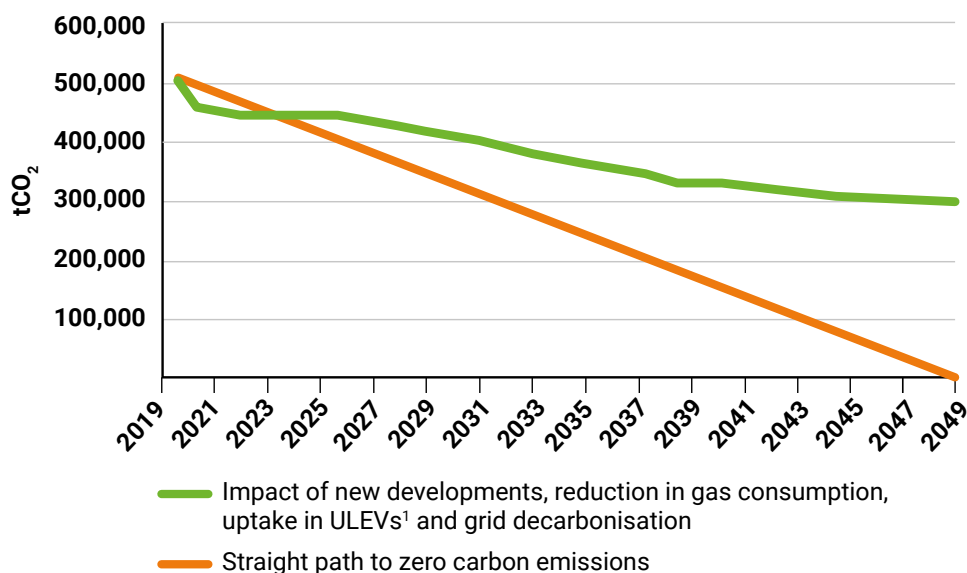
Our County-wide target to be net zero by 2050 is aligned with the UK's legal commitment to deliver net zero by 2050. We will need to accelerate our emissions reductions if we are to achieve this. We have currently mapped the impact on the County's emissions of:

- Grid electricity decarbonising as projected by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) – this will reduce emissions.

<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics)

- New housing and non-domestic developments currently planned to be built under the District and Borough Local Plans by 2050 – this will increase emissions.
- Heating technology projections for new housing and non-domestic developments, based on the National Grid’s Future Energy Scenarios (FESs), where the natural gas demand for heating in homes decreases by 18% by 2030 and 99% by 2050, and for heating in commercial and industrial buildings decreases by 11% by 2030 and 95% by 2050 (assuming a 2020 baseline) – this will reduce emissions.
- Likely decarbonisation of the transport sector as a result of national policies to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars, vans and HGVs – this will reduce emissions.

When this is compared to a straight-line pathway to zero emissions by 2050, it highlights there is still a need for the County to take greater, more ambitious action.



We will achieve net zero across the County through reducing emissions directly. However, it is anticipated that there will be a small percentage of residual emissions remaining in 2050 which we will look to balance through nature-based or other forms of greenhouse gas removals. We will explore and identify these as we progress towards 2050.

<sup>1</sup> Ultra Low Emission Vehicles



## Warwickshire County Council Emissions

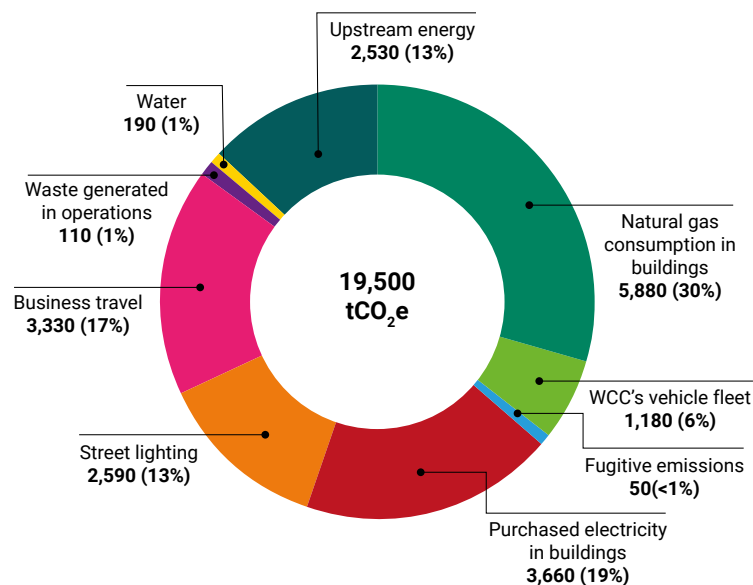
### Where we are now

Since 2014, we have reported on our emissions related to natural gas and electricity use in our buildings, electricity use for streetlighting and fuel use for our own vehicle fleet. We have seen a 63% reduction in these emissions between 2014 and 2020. This has primarily been due to the decarbonisation of grid electricity and the replacing of sodium bulbs in streetlights with LEDs.

We have committed to achieve carbon net zero by 2030 for the following emissions sources:

- **Scope 1** – Direct emissions from assets we control: building gas/oil use, fuel use from vehicles we own
- **Scope 2** – Emissions from purchased electricity in our buildings and streetlighting
- **Scope 3** – Indirect emissions from the waste we generate, the water we consume, business travel and upstream energy

In 2019, these emissions sources equated to 19,500 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e. We have set this as our baseline from which to measure future progress towards our 2030 target. At present, some of these emissions are estimated using industry benchmarks, so we will also continue to improve the quality of primary data we gather.

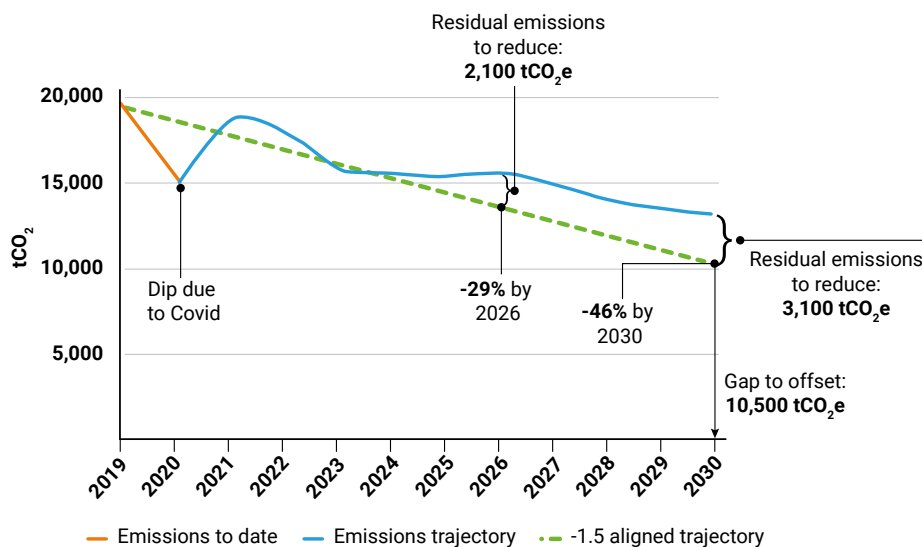


## Reaching our net zero 2030 target

To better understand the gap to meet carbon net zero by 2030, we have mapped the likely trajectory of the emissions in scope. This considers externalities including the projected impact of grid electricity decarbonisation and national policy banning the sale of new petrol and diesel cars, vans and HGVs.

Using the 1.5°C Sectoral Decarbonisation Approach (SDA) pathway from the SBTi Target Setting tool<sup>1</sup>, we have set targets to reduce emissions in scope of our 2030<sup>2</sup> target by 29% by 2026 and 46% by 2030. This SDA is a scientifically informed method for companies to set greenhouse gas reduction targets necessary to stay within a 1.5°C temperature rise above preindustrial levels.

To meet these targets, we will need to lower any residual emissions not reduced through externalities through the initiatives and actions outlined within this Strategy and the accompanying action plan. Whilst we will work to reduce emissions as far as feasibly possible by 2030, based on a target of 46% reduction, 10,500 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e annually would be required to be offset.



<sup>1</sup>[www.sciencebasedtargets.org](http://www.sciencebasedtargets.org)

<sup>2</sup>Note, these targets have not been verified by SBTi.

### Iterative updates to our targets

During the life of this Strategy, we will need to ensure we are using improved data as it becomes available.

We will also need to continually review the scope of the Council's net zero target to include our full Scope 3 footprint. This includes other sources of indirect emissions; for example, from the goods and services that we purchase and from our leased buildings.

We have already started initial work on our Scope 3 to understand where our target areas for reductions will be and plan to continue building upon this. As we have less control over these emissions, we will need to work with our contractors, suppliers and other partners to deliver reductions in these areas.

# Strategy Aims

**The aim of this Strategy is to set out a framework, key action areas and principles for delivering on the Council's strategic priority of *being a County with a sustainable future, which means adapting to and mitigating climate change and meeting net zero commitments.***

This is a draft Strategy. Public engagement is planned from November 2022 into early 2023 to capture views on our approach.

The scale and pace required to meet the 2030, 2050 and beyond 2050 targets is ambitious; business-as-usual activities within the Council and across the County are not going to be sufficient. This Strategy recognises that we need to do more and faster; it also challenges us to think outside the box, be innovative and to consider what powers of devolution we might need to enable us to deliver our objectives.

Whilst mitigating carbon emissions to keep the global temperature increase below 1.5°C, we must recognise that the effects of climate change are already being felt. As such our Climate Adaptation Plan, which is soon to be released, considers the impacts of higher emissions scenarios which would result in greater temperature increases.

This Strategy is based on current evidence and data. Areas such as technology and UK policy are constantly evolving; as new information emerges, we will adapt our actions appropriately.

2030  
Council carbon  
net zero

2050  
Warwickshire  
carbon net zero

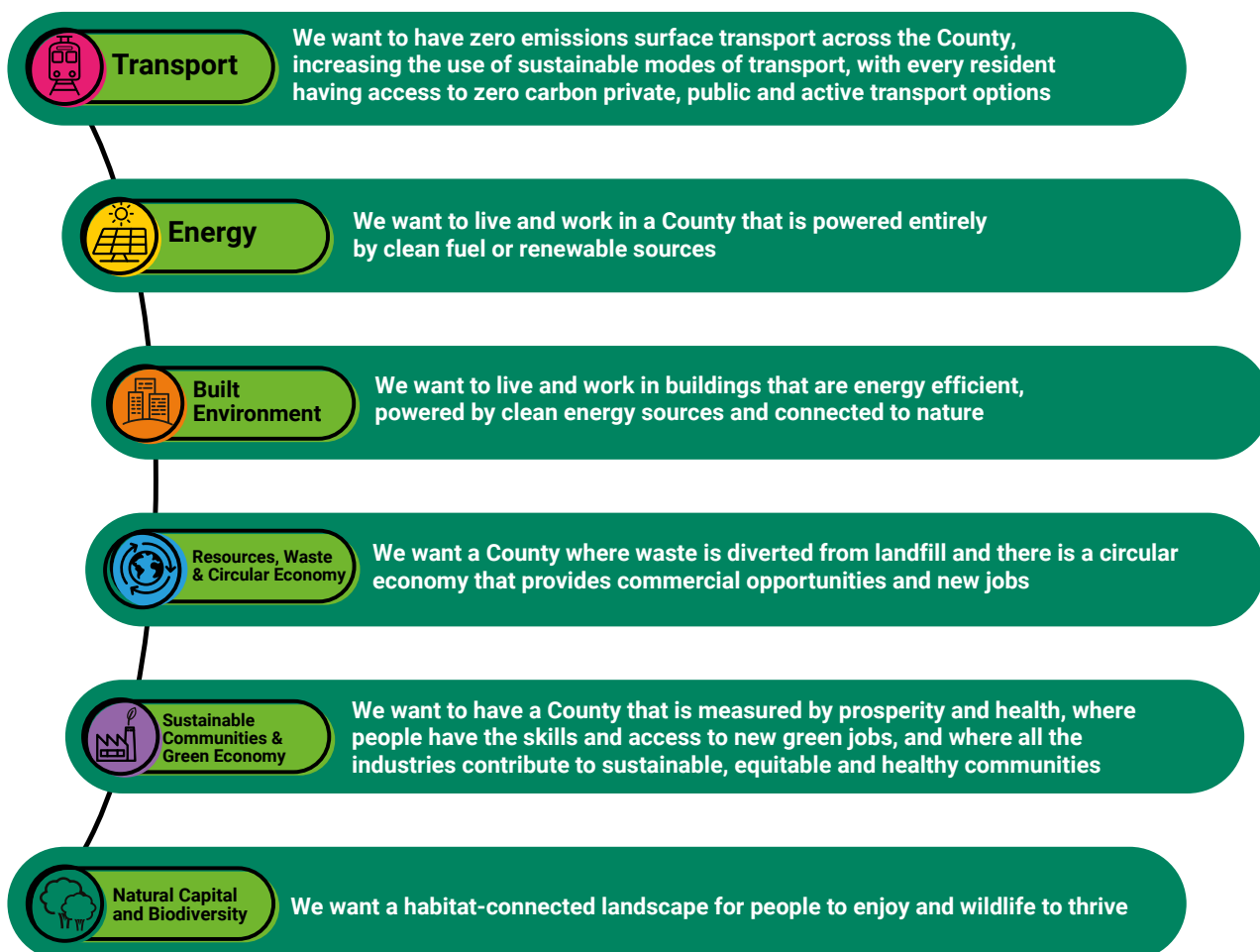
2050+  
Carbon  
surplus

“  
We want to make  
Warwickshire the best  
it can be, sustainable  
now and for future  
generations.”

Warwickshire County  
Council, Council Plan  
2022-27

## Where do we want to be – the future

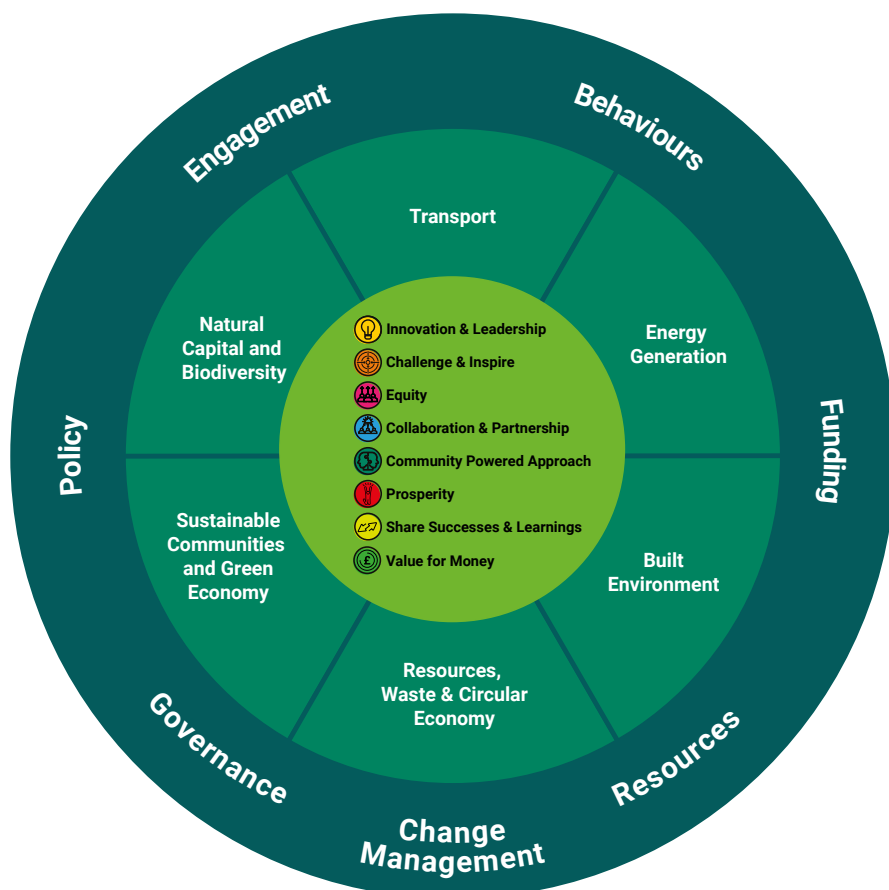
We are ambitious about what we want our future to look like. Within the next few decades, we want our County to be reimagined – low in carbon with vastly reduced energy bills, landscapes with plenty of wildlife that people can enjoy and farms which provide us with local food, a thriving sustainable economy and communities that are happier, healthier and more engaged. Our vision of the future is outlined below:



# Delivering Success

This Strategy uses six delivery themes to focus the Council's efforts and assign objectives and actions for both 2030 and 2050 targets. Critical to our success in delivering our ambitions across these themes are our eight delivery principles and seven strategic enablers. The need to engage communities and deliver actions through community powered action is critical and complex; therefore, this is addressed through both the delivery theme of 'Sustainable Communities and Green Economy', and the delivery principle 'Community Powered Approach'.

This Strategy is based on current evidence and data and is supported by comprehensive action plans. We recognise that technology and UK policy are constantly evolving and as such, we expect our action plans to be adapted as new information emerges. We will be using key performance indicators to track our progress against each of our six themes, and will continue to share this on our [www.warwickshireclimateemergency.org.uk](http://www.warwickshireclimateemergency.org.uk) website.



## Strategic Enablers:

-  **Effective change management**
-  **Changed behaviours**
-  **Adequate resource management**
-  **Adequate funding**
-  **Accountable governance**
-  **Appropriate engagement**
-  **The right policies**

## Delivery Principles

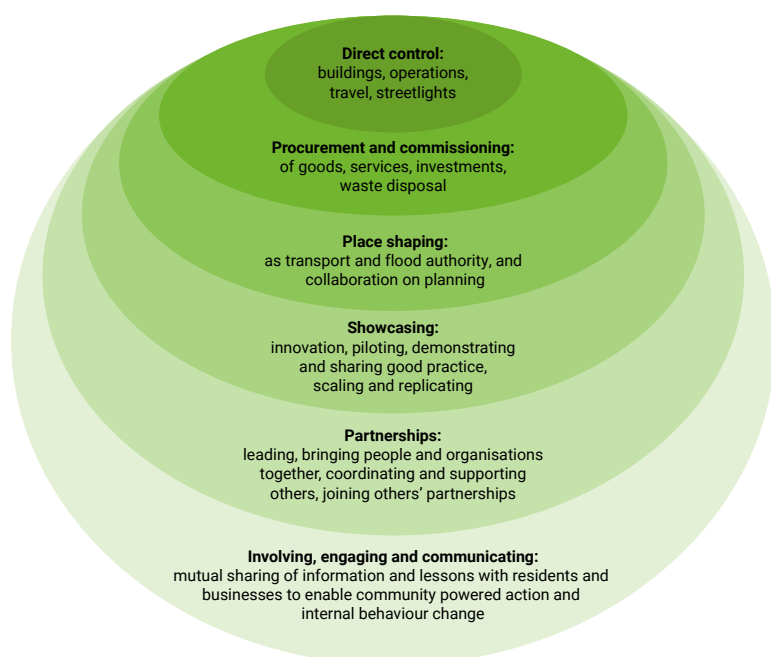
We will:

-  **Be innovative in our thinking and lead others on the journey**
-  **Not accept the status quo; we will challenge and inspire**
-  **Address climate change and biodiversity justly and equitably**
-  **Be collaborative and work in partnerships**
-  **Take a community powered approach**
-  **Emphasise prosperity as a focus for sustainable growth**
-  **Share our successes and learnings**
-  **Deliver a strategy that is value for money**

A green economy is broader than a low carbon economy; it aligns to the wider context of the UN SDGs. A green economy is an approach to sustainable economic growth with a central focus on reducing societal and environmental risks and ecological scarcities. It embeds climate adaptation into its construct. It transitions from the current 'growth-based' approach to investments, employment, and skills towards growth without degrading the environment, and the wellbeing and prosperity of citizens.

## Opportunities

This Strategy identifies opportunities for change in accordance with the Climate Change Committee’s six ‘spheres of influence’<sup>1</sup> that Councils have over carbon emissions, adaptation and wider sustainability objectives:



Broadly within WCC these can be split into three main action types:

**Direct Actions:** actions WCC can take that will directly reduce emissions, particularly significant in areas where we have direct control such as Council buildings

**Enabling and Showcasing Actions:** actions that WCC can take that will allow others to directly reduce emissions that they have control over and actions that show others what can be done

**Partnering and Engaging Actions:** actions WCC can take to promote collaboration and support regional delivery of ambitions through partnerships

<sup>1</sup>The Local Pathway to Net Zero, Local Government Association (2021)



## Engagement and partnership

Engagement and partnership are central to how this Strategy and associated action plans will work and are integrated into our Delivery Principles. The actions that will have the biggest impact on enhancing biodiversity, reducing emissions in Warwickshire and providing equity across our communities are not always within the gift of the County Council to enact.

Many of them will be the responsibility of the District and Borough Councils, Town and Parish Councils, Central Government, other public service providers or with businesses, landowners and residents. Providing a partnership, supporting and coordinating role between the District, Borough, Town and Parish Councils, and a central forum for businesses and residents is going to be key for the County Council and we will commit whole-heartedly to this role. To this end, following on from the Warwickshire and Coventry Climate Conference in March 2022, we have set up a Warwickshire Public Sector Net Zero Group. This group is a space for all of Warwickshire's public sector organisations to share best practice, collaborate to realise efficiencies, and build a sense of common ownership and shared responsibility, helping to turn the challenge into practicable, deliverable activities. We will also continue to engage and strengthen partnership working with local climate and community groups, with our neighbouring Councils, NHS, the West Midlands Combined Authority and with Central Government.

## Governance

Once this Strategy has been endorsed, we will establish relevant governance structures to monitor our progress and provide clear and transparent reporting mechanisms. Reporting will be incorporated into our Integrated Delivery Plan with named Assistant Directors responsible for the actions. We expect to review this Strategy every three years.

We recognise we may need to make some changes within our Directorates and services to align roles and responsibilities with the priorities of this Strategy, and to set ourselves up for delivery of the actions.

# Funding the Strategy

**Local authorities play an essential role in driving local climate action. WCC has significant influence over the key sectors, including energy and transport, which will need reform if we are to achieve net zero.**

Funding is a key aspect of our ability to deliver the Sustainable Futures Strategy and substantial financial investment will be required in the next decades for decarbonisation, with funding critical to enable actions. In addition to potentially borrowing from sources such as the UK Infrastructure Bank and Public Works Loan Board, we will be investigating and seeking to use a number of areas of funding available to us such as:

- Dedicated grant funding for work related to net zero, which is open to bids from local authorities. Key sources include Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme, Active Travel Fund, Green Homes Grant, Local Authority Delivery Scheme and All Electric Bus Town or City Scheme. Wider funding is also available that is targeted at other or more general outcomes, such as social or economic growth, but which require, encourage or allow the delivery of net zero objectives. Examples include the Towns Fund, Levelling Up Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which include criteria or statements designed to encourage local authorities to invest in projects that support the achievement of net zero.
- Additional funding opportunities linked to a potential devolution deal, allowing investment to be channelled towards our net zero and green economy ambitions.
- Funding leveraged from the commercial sector. This could be through developer contributions such as the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), or embedding net zero and circular economy requirements into public procurement. Furthermore, certain net zero investment opportunities have the potential to generate revenue for the Council which can be reinvested.
- Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations can derive funding for local projects from sources that would otherwise be unavailable to the private sector and businesses. This includes lottery and trust funding.

- Innovative funding solutions, such as Community Municipal Bonds (CMBs), which offer local people an opportunity to invest in net zero projects in a way similar to crowdfunding and to make a return from doing so. CMBs offer the potential of providing low-cost capital for Councils to deliver socially and environmentally positive outcomes. We will work with District and Borough Councils to understand the most effective way CMBs would work.
- For biodiversity, a natural capital investment approach coupled with grant funding will be required. The biodiversity net gain planning contributions capital already accrued through planning may be used. If public and private investment is directed towards habitat enhancements in strategic locations, they can also achieve other multifunctional nature-based solution benefits that are marketable, through programmes such as the Woodland Carbon Code.

In utilising these sources of funding, we have the opportunity to progress shared investments with partners and combined schemes. These have the potential to reduce overall funding requirements through economies of scale, affording us greater efficiency and buying power.

However, despite this range of funding sources, we recognise that there are a number of challenges. A combination of a funding squeeze following the 2008 financial crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic, inflationary pressures and a growth in demand for services has resulted in many local authorities' finances, including ours, being placed under pressure, which will limit our ability to invest in sustainable interventions.

The private sector will therefore have a key role to play with this transition, not only by reducing their own emissions, but through providing the funding for green and circular infrastructure at a local level, with investors being a source of long-term capital that can complement public funds. It will be imperative to support capacity building in the supply chain to ensure investments to support our net zero ambitions can be delivered.

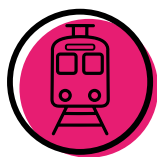
Partnership working between us, other local authorities, central government, and private businesses will be vital to delivering this strategy, realising the net zero vision, contributing to Levelling Up across Warwickshire and enhancing prosperity.

# Key Themes

**We have identified six key themes that are fundamental for achieving our strategic aims and aspirations. The following section looks at each theme and summarises what we have done, where we are going, and the gaps that need to be bridged to meet our objectives. The themes are presented separately but there is inherent overlap and synergy between them all.**

We have identified in detail our first phase actions to deliver those objectives that relate to our goal of reducing carbon emissions to net zero across the Council by 2030. These are outlined in our **Draft Action Plan**.

It is important to track and share our progress against these objectives and we will do so by using key performance indicators selected from the list of indicators shown for each delivery theme.



# Transport

## Context

**Transport is the largest source of carbon emissions in the County, accounting for 44% of emissions in 2019<sup>1</sup> (our baseline year). Whilst total emissions from the transport sector in Warwickshire have remained relatively static over recent decades, the proportion of emissions generated has steadily increased, due to a fall in emissions from other sectors.**

As the Transport Authority, we have a key role in enabling the County to reduce transport emissions. Not only will we need to lead the way by reducing the emissions from the Council's vehicle fleet, but we will need to prioritise options for more sustainable travel that can reduce private car use and inspire behaviour change across the County. In selecting options, we will need to reflect the different challenges and barriers for rural areas versus towns.

## Where we are now

### Council

**To date, we have reduced our own Council transport-related emissions by:**

- Investing in two electric cars for Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and 10 new school buses with solar panel arrays and battery storage to power ancillary services.
- Initiating a trial to pilot HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil) in non-operational fire appliances.

### County

**At a County level, we have supported the decarbonisation of the transport sector by:**

- Under the SAfER Schools Award (Sustainable Active Focussing on Environment and Road safety) we work with over 80 schools resulting in air quality and carbon benefits.
- Funding four active travel projects and four projects to implement EV charging points through the first round of the Green Shoots Community Climate Change Fund.

“  
85.5% of respondents ranked climate change/carbon emissions as a top three priority when thinking about transport and the environment.”

*(Local Transport Plan consultation)*

<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics)

- Commissioning a study to understand the scale of the decarbonisation challenge for the transport sector in Warwickshire and key priority areas.
- Committing funding towards on-street EV charging infrastructure.
- Exploring the potential use of hydrogen. Warwick District Council is establishing a Hydrogen Hub which will fuel Warwick and Stratford District Councils' refuse collection vehicles and may be used to fuel other heavier vehicles such as buses.

## What we have planned

### Council

- We are retaining our flexible agile working policy so that our commuting emissions remain low and we will continue to encourage staff to travel to and from work via more sustainable modes of travel where possible e.g., public transport, walking or cycling.

### County

- Continue to engage with the Government's strategy for EV charging and seek funding through government schemes for EV developments.
- Implement a pilot to assess the suitability of delivering on street, residential EV charging points using existing street lighting connections as part of a trial in 2022/23.
- Continue to investigate the development and implementation of rural charging hubs in Warwickshire.
- We are currently drafting our Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) which prioritises a shift in travel behaviours. As part of this, we are developing strategies on active travel, public transport, motor vehicles and managing space.

## Objectives

Objective	Potential Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Reduce Council emissions from business travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % total electric/low carbon Council vehicles</li> <li>• % of total journeys completed by green travel</li> </ul>
Reduce carbon emissions from Council fleet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % total electric/low carbon vehicles</li> </ul>
Improve capacity of EV charging, across the County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £ million Government funding secured</li> <li>• Number of chargers installed by type</li> <li>• Area coverage of charging points</li> <li>• % total electric/low carbon vehicles</li> </ul>
Encourage residents in Warwickshire to make green travel choices, through engagement and communication schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of campaign engagements</li> <li>• Number of people engaged with for their views and schemes</li> </ul>
Provide low emission public transport options to serve sustainable communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of bus fleet Euro 6</li> <li>• % of bus fleet low emissions</li> <li>• % of all trips made by bus and rail</li> <li>• Average time to a bus stop/ train station by active travel methods</li> </ul>
Reduce emissions relating to school transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of partnership projects completed</li> </ul>
Engage with key stakeholders, including District and Borough Councils and highways contractors, to reduce emissions in their areas of responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of partnership projects completed</li> <li>• % emissions reductions in District and Boroughs and third-party contractors through WCC support/partnership</li> </ul>
Support residents in Warwickshire to shift from cars to walking and cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £ of Council funding invested in walking and cycling projects</li> <li>• £ spent by Council in administering incentives</li> <li>• Number of joint projects implemented</li> <li>• Number of people completing cycling training</li> </ul>

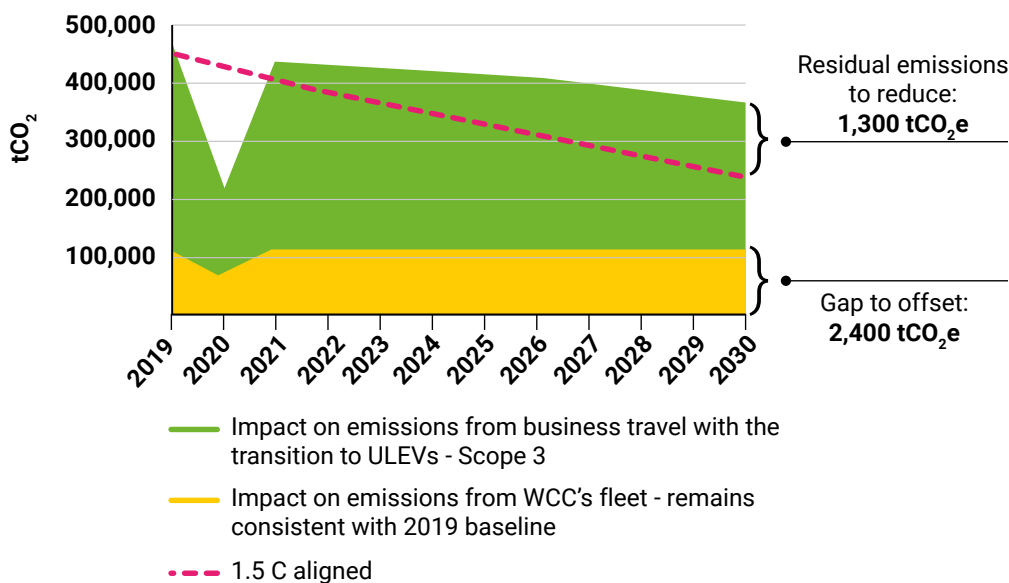
## Where are the gaps?

### Council

We have mapped how national policies banning the sale of new petrol and diesel car and van sales from 2030 and HGV sales from 2035/2040 will likely impact our business travel emissions. It has been assumed that emissions from the Council’s fleet remain consistent with the 2019 baseline. As a minimum by 2030 we will need to reduce our fleet and business travel emissions by approximately 1,300 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e in line with a science-based 1.5°C warming trajectory<sup>1</sup>, but where possible we will reduce emissions further and faster.

To close this gap, we will need to focus on a combination of the following:

- Upgrading our car and van fleet to EVs and continuing to investigate alternative fuels for our other vehicles, including fire engines.
- Implementing a staff travel plan to reduce business travel emissions.
- Assessing emissions related to the care sector and how we can support our staff and contractors to reduce those associated with travel for care work.



<sup>1</sup>Refers to emissions reduction targets developed to limit global average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels

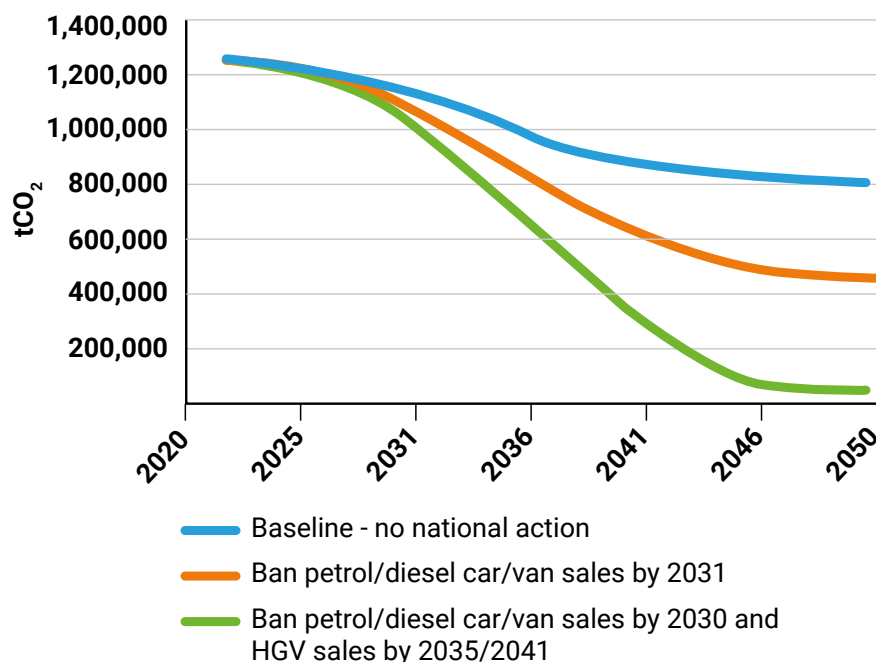


## County

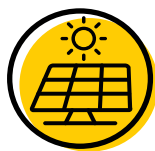
The national Government policies of banning petrol and diesel vehicles have been mapped to understand the gap to net zero associated with County-wide transport emissions. No other scenarios, such as modal shift, have been mapped at this stage. The graph indicates that a gap of 43,400 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e remains for the County to reach net-zero by 2050.

To close this gap, we will need to build on what is already outlined within Local Transport Plan 4 and link strategies to focus on:

- Promoting integrated and place-based transport planning and development.
- Supporting actions to increase the uptake of active travel by our residents.
- Continuing to support the increase of low and zero emissions vehicle ownership by investing in affordable and accessible public charging infrastructure.
- Investigating the use of alternative and future fuels to reduce emissions from commercial and freight transport. This includes the use of hydrogen as a transport fuel and working with industry to see what further opportunities are available, especially in the north east of the County where there are logistics and distribution headquarters.



You can help by choosing to travel by more sustainable modes of transport where possible e.g., using cycling or walking (especially for short distances), public transport or EVs.



# Energy Generation

## Context

**The UK Government has predicted that the electricity grid will decarbonise by 95% within the next 30 years. This means the electricity will be generated by sources other than fossil fuels such as wind, solar, and potentially nuclear.**

Right now the UK is experiencing a fuel crisis. In 2020, 14.3% of Warwickshire households were experiencing fuel poverty and this is predicted to rise over the coming months, bringing concerns that residents and businesses in Warwickshire will have to make extremely difficult choices.

As such, we not only need to move away from fossil fuels for the climate but also to provide ourselves with affordable energy and to improve energy security within our own borders.

Core to the UK Government's Net Zero Strategy is delivering zero carbon energy. So, to support the national grid decarbonisation ambition and to be a County that is powered by clean fuel, we must play our part in generating our own electricity, clean heat and provide more District heat networks. To assist in this goal, we will contribute by supporting clean energy and heat generation projects developed by the Districts and Boroughs Councils.

## Where we are now

### Electricity

- The County uses approximately 2,333,000 MWh of electricity per year. To support renewable energy generation across Warwickshire we launched the Solar Together Warwickshire Programme which planned for 509 installations of high-quality solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and battery storage. As of June 2022, 21% of these have been completed. We will continue to seek funding to maintain this programme. Through the first round of our Green Shoots Community Climate Change Fund, we have funded six PV projects.
- Additional Solar PV has also been installed at Elliot Park Innovation Centre, which has saved 36 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e between December 2021 and September 2022.

“

**84% of respondents said they were aware that renewable or zero carbon electricity can be purchased from energy providers.**

”

*(Voice of Warwickshire panel)*

## Heat

- Heat decarbonisation is another critical part of our route to net zero. It is early days in this area across the County, but heat pumps have been successfully installed at one of our fire stations and one of our care homes as alternatives to gas fired heating.
- At the County level, the Warm and Well in Warwickshire programme, delivered by Act on Energy, has been in place as a tool to support with private energy change queries and opportunities for change within homes and businesses.

## What we have planned

### Council

- We are currently planning to develop an Energy Policy and Energy Strategy for the Council and identify funding by the end of 2022 for the delivery of our first renewable targets anticipated from 2023 onwards.

### County

- We will continue to increase energy flexibility within the County and support the remaining 80% of installations under Solar Together.

You can help by, where possible, purchasing energy from renewable sources and taking opportunities for renewable energy installations on owned buildings. Act on Energy can be used as a resource to provide advice on potential options.

## Objectives

Objective	Potential Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree a revised Energy Policy and Strategy</li> <li>• MWh heat delivered through heat network</li> <li>• Number of buildings connected to heat network</li> <li>• tCO<sub>2</sub>e saved by heat networks</li> <li>• Total kilowatts peak (kWp) installed</li> </ul>
Identify and implement opportunities for District heat networks Countywide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MWh heat delivered through heat network</li> <li>• Number of buildings connected to heat network</li> <li>• tCO<sub>2</sub>e saved by heat networks</li> </ul>
Identify opportunities for hydrogen production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % energy replacement by hydrogen (as a comparison against total energy demand)</li> </ul>
Identify and implement community schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total kilowatts peak (kWp) installed</li> <li>• tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year saved compared to grid electricity</li> <li>• MWh of renewable heat installed</li> <li>• Number of installations</li> <li>• £ funding secured to allow delivery of first renewable energy scheme</li> </ul>
Engage with stakeholders (e.g. Energy Innovation Zones, Midlands Energy Hub, Energy Systems Catapult) for lessons learnt and joint partnership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of partnership projects identified</li> </ul>
Identify and implement opportunities for battery storage technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MWh installed storage capacity</li> <li>• tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year saved compared to grid electricity</li> </ul>
Facilitate the expansion of electrification of heating and transport by working with partners and accelerate take-up of smart energy systems and storage where feasible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negative impacts have a mitigation plan</li> </ul>

## Where are the gaps?

### Council

Going forward, it will be key to identify opportunities and undertake feasibility studies for the installation of renewable technologies on Council owned buildings and land, to help decarbonise the electricity the Council consumes. Furthermore, identifying funding and financing options, including crowdfunding and community energy funds, will play a key role in this decarbonisation goal.

### County

To help meet national grid electricity decarbonisation targets and support the decarbonisation of heating, we will need to continue to increase the volume of in-County renewable energy generation, encourage change to alternative heating networks, and understand and exploit the opportunities presented by the hydrogen economy. We will address this gap through studies and investigations into the opportunities available to us, particularly in addressing the objectives we have set out above.



# Built Environment

## Context

**Emissions associated with the built environment are a significant contributor to the County's emissions and make up 72% of our own scope 1 and 2 carbon footprint. The main challenge for the built environment, both domestic and non-domestic, is tackling emissions from heating and cooling, particularly in the use of natural gas. Constructing new and retrofitting existing buildings to minimise energy consumption and shift to renewable sources is vital to support the built environment to become net zero by 2050 and for us to meet our Council target to be carbon net zero by 2030.**

Addressing energy consumption and efficiency within domestic buildings will help to also tackle fuel poverty. Decreasing electricity demand will also provide energy security for the commercial and industrial sectors while reducing business costs.

## Where we are now

### Council

- We currently purchase 100% green electricity for our own buildings and have already undertaken some initial investigations to understand how we can reduce energy consumption by improving the energy efficiency of our buildings.

### County

- Through the first round of our Green Shoots Community Climate Change Fund, we funded nine projects to improve energy efficiency
- In 2021, we also launched the Warwickshire Property and Development Group (WPDG) to deliver new affordable and market priced homes and a range of commercial, mixed use and renewable energy opportunities across the County to support the County's decarbonisation journey.
- We have been replacing sodium bulbs with LEDs in our streetlights.

## What we have planned

### Council

- Continue the replacement of sodium bulbs in streetlights with LEDs.
- Whilst we have made a start on understanding the requirements of our buildings and what needs to be done, we will continue to refine and implement findings from studies already undertaken.
- Include emissions and energy performance as a potential consideration when deciding which surplus buildings to divest.

### County

- At the County level, more effort will be placed in developing partnerships, especially with the District and Borough Councils over the role of the planning and development process. The reality is that the biggest carbon reductions are going to occur by decarbonising existing and new houses, and as the Local Housing Authorities, the District and Borough Councils will play the lead role on this. It is expected that households most vulnerable to fuel poverty will be prioritised.

## Objectives

Objective	Potential Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year energy consumption of Council buildings</li> <li>• Reduction in natural gas consumption in Council buildings</li> <li>• tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year from Council buildings</li> <li>• £ million Government funding secured</li> <li>• Number of completed net zero audits</li> <li>• % of staff trained in energy efficiency, capability/ knowledge in fitting new technologies and retrofitting</li> <li>• % of total energy consumption covered by green tariffs</li> </ul>
Develop programme to reduce water wastage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavioural and maintenance programme established to reduce wasted water</li> </ul>
Minimise carbon emissions in any new WCC building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of new developments/buildings achieving net zero standards</li> </ul>
Support local private businesses to meet the net zero target	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £ grants provided to businesses</li> <li>• kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year energy consumption from commercial sector</li> <li>• Number of businesses participating</li> <li>• Number of partnership projects completed</li> <li>• % of new developments achieving net zero standards</li> </ul>
Support residential care to reduce carbon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £ grants provided to businesses</li> <li>• kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year energy consumption from care sector</li> <li>• Number of training events delivered</li> </ul>
Work in partnership with our Districts and Boroughs to minimise carbon emissions in existing housing and net zero in new housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % compliance amongst landlords reviewed</li> <li>• Number of homes retrofitted</li> <li>• Number of homes in each EPC band</li> <li>• Number of partnership projects completed</li> <li>• % of new homes achieving net zero standards</li> </ul>
Engage with partners to overcome current barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of changes, decisions, ideas taken forward through engagement</li> </ul>



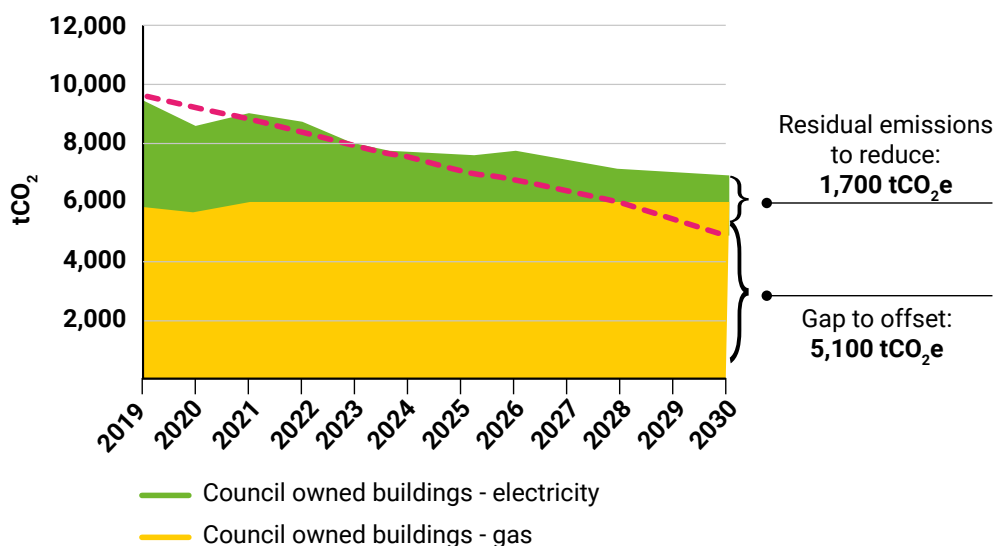
## Where are the gaps?

### Council

To remain in line with the 1.5°C science-based climate change trajectory, we must reduce our emissions from Council buildings' energy use by a minimum of 1,700 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2030. To close this gap, we will need to focus on:

- Addressing the current gap in our knowledge of energy use within our decentralised assets. This will enable us to develop a priority list of assets to be decarbonised.
- Post-2030 emissions associated with electricity use will continue to decrease as the grid electricity decarbonises. Whilst we must still have a focus on operating buildings efficiently, our main challenge will be decarbonising our natural gas heat supply.
- Undertaking further property decarbonisation feasibility studies to identify the best options for retrofit and building decarbonisation across our portfolio.
- Completing a review of all our owned or leased buildings with service areas to identify future needs, how this might impact energy use and our carbon footprint.
- Identifying increased opportunities to co-locate with partners.
- Using our estate to support renewable energy schemes.

### County

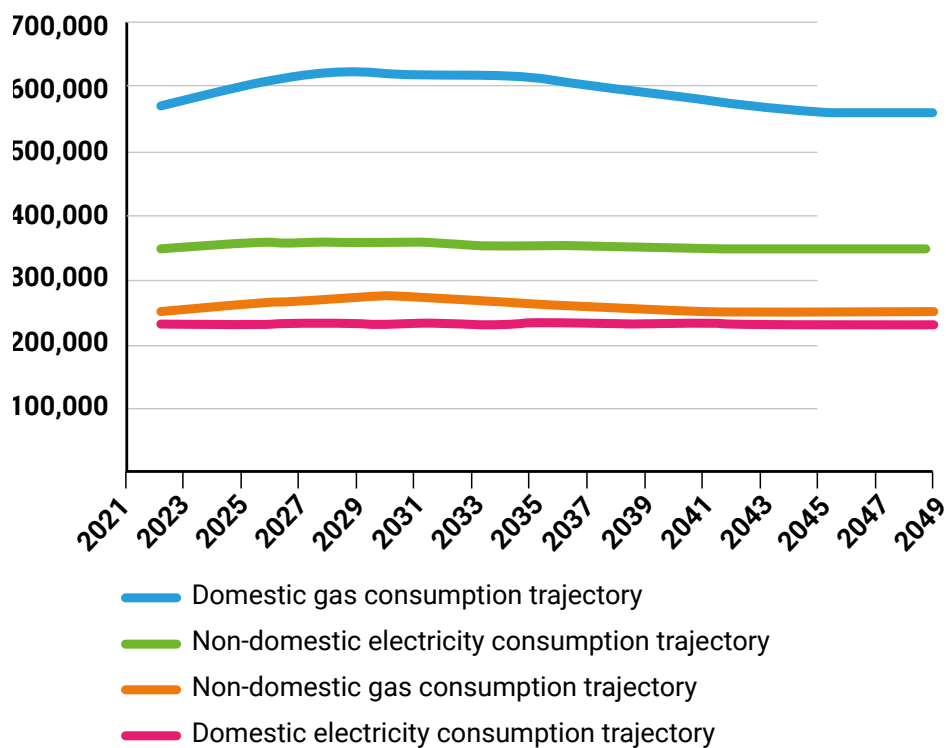


Scenario analysis has helped us understand our future energy use and associated carbon emissions based on national policies and our existing plans. Decarbonising heat (i.e., a replacement for natural gas) is a key priority.

To close the gap, we will need to focus on:

- Prioritising retrofit options e.g., fabric first approach, energy control and monitoring system, energy efficiency measures followed by heat and electricity changes.
- Encouraging behaviour change across the County, including working with District and Borough Councils, landlords and homeowners to support property retrofits that improve energy efficiency, with a particular focus on homes with high energy costs and households vulnerable to fuel poverty.
- Investigating setting up a task force of experts from local and national government, academia and infrastructure to drive the decarbonisation of heat.
- Working with planning authorities to create sustainable developments (such as 15-minute neighbourhoods) and setting ambitious net zero carbon policies and standards<sup>1</sup> for new builds that exceed Part L Building Regulations.
- Working with, supporting and encouraging local businesses to retrofit and implement new technologies which reduce reliance on natural gas.
- Continuing to liaise with District and Borough Councils to discuss how planning considerations can include options for climate change mitigation.

<sup>1</sup>A cross industry initiative has been activated to develop a UK Net Zero Building Standard. [www.nzbuildings.co.uk](http://www.nzbuildings.co.uk)



You can help by improving the energy efficiency of your house through using energy responsibly and prioritising retrofit options where available.



# Resources, Waste & Circular Economy

## Context

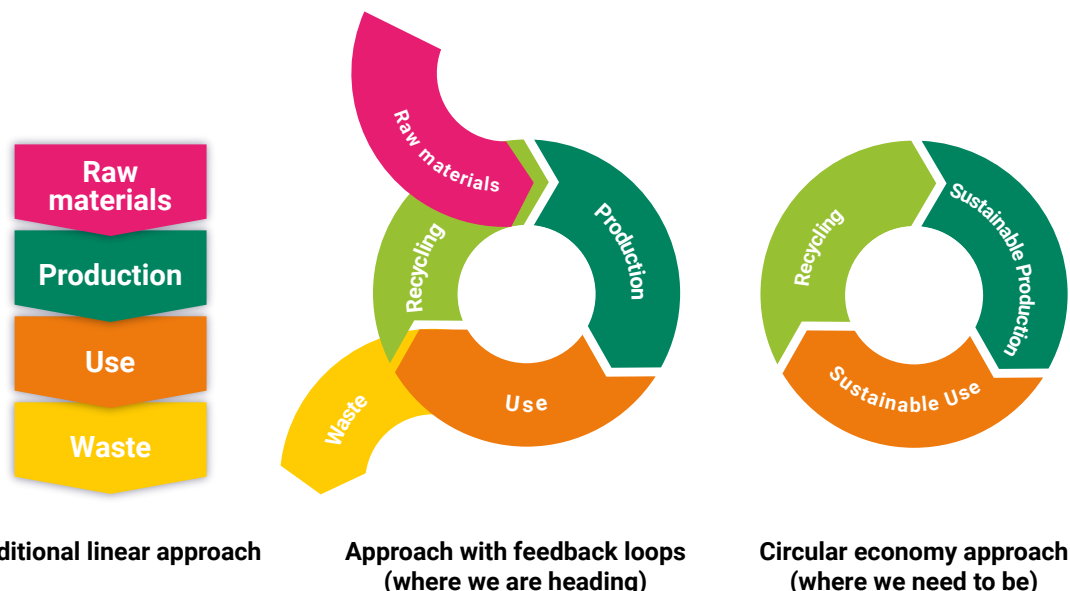
**We are the waste disposal and planning authority within Warwickshire. We adopt the waste hierarchy to prevent, reduce, reuse, recover and only then, dispose of our waste. But we want to go much further and adopt the principles of a circular economy.**

Circular economy principles move away from a linear *take, make, consume and throw-away* society, towards one that minimises waste and pollution, keeps products and materials in use for as long as possible and supports the regeneration and protection of natural resources.

The linear economy results in the production of cheap products that wear down easily and lead to a higher rate of disposal. This places consumers in a vicious cycle of continuously replacing cheap items. A circular economy looks to address this imbalance with a focus on better quality products that last longer and repair and return services for items that break or are worn out.

The circular economy considers the whole cycle of resources - design, manufacture, use, (e.g., repair cafes, resource exchange and second-hand shops), followed by operations for retaining resource value (such as recycling) at the end of life.

Combining waste management with economic design and innovation and by working in partnership with partners and businesses, we can also add social value across the County.



Traditional linear approach

Approach with feedback loops  
(where we are heading)

Circular economy approach  
(where we need to be)

## Where we are now

Much of the work we have done has focused on waste reduction. Actions we have already taken include:

- Considered the environmental and carbon impact of our waste services e.g., haulage services when awarding contracts.
- Procured a food waste recycling service at a facility that is dedicated to treating food waste.
- Given residents three options for green garden waste (pay for green bin kerbside collection; Council subsidised hot and cold composting bins; take to recycling centre) .
- Used energy recovery facilities to recover value from residual waste by producing electricity and heat, whilst aiming to send less than 10% of our total household waste to landfill.
- Holding quarterly meetings with Districts and Borough Councils on waste – the Warwickshire Waste Partnership.
- Establishing reuse shops or collection points at all our recycling centres.

## What we have planned

In the next two years we will be implementing the following emissions and waste reduction activities:

- Warwick and Stratford District Councils have moved to general waste collection every three weeks, with weekly separate food waste collection. We expect recycling within those Districts to subsequently increase and for residual waste to be minimised. Once the new collection arrangements have been evaluated, other Districts and Boroughs may consider a similar approach.
- Responding to the National Resources and Waste Strategy consultation to help central government shape the future of waste. The three core pillars are likely to be extended to producer responsibility, deposit return scheme and consistency in collections.
- Preparing and implementing a new Local Resources and Waste Strategy following publication of the National Strategy.

**You can help by reducing overall consumption and repairing your items rather than buying new. Consider where you purchase your items. Reduce single use plastic and buy local.**

## Objectives

Objective	Potential Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Reduce amount of waste per head to near zero to landfill by 2050	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total waste (kg) per household</li> <li>• Total waste (kg) per business</li> <li>• kgs of residual household waste per household</li> <li>• % household waste sent to landfill</li> <li>• Number of households receiving Waste Education</li> <li>• % of household waste re-used, recycled and composted</li> <li>• % of household waste re-used, recycled and composted at the household waste recycling centres</li> </ul>
Reduce Council building waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weight of waste (kg) reduced against previous year</li> <li>• % waste to landfill</li> <li>• % waste recycled</li> </ul>
Reduce emissions from collected waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tonnes of carbon emitted by the Council as a waste disposal authority</li> <li>• Tonnes of carbon emitted by the District and Borough Councils</li> </ul>
Drive ambition for circular economy approaches and reduction of waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of engagements with other Councils</li> <li>• 100% Circular Economy Roadmap delivered</li> </ul>
Support communities and residents to adopt circular economy approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of events per year and number of attendees at events</li> <li>• Number of training events</li> <li>• £ from grants delivered for circular economy initiatives (via community grants programmes)</li> </ul>
Support businesses to adopt circular economy principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £ from grants delivered for circular economy initiatives (via business grants programmes)</li> <li>• Number of events/hubs per year and number of attendees at events</li> </ul>
Council adopting circular approaches in procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % contracts which include circular economy specifications</li> <li>• % recycled content on new roads</li> <li>• % of Council spend on circular products and services</li> </ul>
Drive circular construction and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % projects/developments delivered with reclaimed and/or recycled materials</li> </ul>

## Where are the gaps?

Our future Local Resources and Waste Strategy, which will follow on from the National Resources and Waste Strategy, will provide details on how our circular economy objectives will be developed and implemented.

To fill the gaps, we will need to:

- Improve education campaigns to encourage behaviour change on reducing consumption.
- Work with our manufacturing businesses to change the approach to design, so that within our County we are using sustainable materials in the first instance; reducing the use of materials; remanufacturing products during use; designing for disassembly at end of life; and recycling where there is no preferred option.
- Work across all sectors to extend product life. As a Council we need to support reuse, sharing, redistributing, donating, repairing, and remanufacturing within our County. We will need to work with shops and businesses, as well as community projects, to provide the infrastructure and tooling to allow this to happen.
- Explore new business models. We will look at our business grants, loans and funding mechanisms to encourage new and innovative products e.g.: 'as a service' offerings, product renting, sharing, re-selling, or leasing.
- Treat waste as a resource. We will look for opportunities to use waste of any kind as a source for a new product.
- Encourage the prioritisation of resources that are renewable, non-hazardous, compostable and have minimal packaging.

We need to do all this whilst recognising that the population is growing and under current trends waste is predicted to increase.



# Sustainable Communities & Green Economy

## Context

**A sustainable community is one where people are supported to live healthy, happy, equitable and independent lives. A green economy supports sustainable economic growth with a central focus on reducing societal and environmental risks and embedding climate adaptation into its construct. This theme is based on the following principles:**

- All people are supported to create and enjoy prosperity. There is a focus on growing wealth for wellbeing (not just financial wealth but the full range of human, social, physical and natural capitals). People are supported to live active lifestyles with access to healthy, local, affordable food that is grown sustainably and with regenerative methods.
- Equity is promoted. It has a community powered approach – conditions are created for communities to help themselves and lessen the gap between the most and least capable. Equitable distribution of opportunity and outcome is promoted.
- Nature is safeguarded, restored and supported by an economy which invests in protecting, growing and restoring biodiversity, soil, water, air, climate and other natural systems.
- Sustainable consumption and production are supported, resulting in a low-carbon, resource-conserving, diverse and circular economy with local access to goods and services. Economic development enables economic growth without raising resource consumption.
- Communities are connected physically, digitally and with a sense of community spirit. No one is left in isolation, loneliness or in poverty.
- Accountable and resilient institutions are the cornerstone. This means institutions that are collaborative and coherent. It requires a joined up collaborative approach to amplify and maximise impact. In doing so, communities will feel a sense of democratic empowerment.



We want to see the development of new green jobs and technology, whilst supporting the 'greening' of our key priority sectors – automotive, manufacturing and engineering; tourism; and digital creative. We recognise the important role played by our farming community and want to encourage local, sustainable enterprise that supports healthy lifestyles<sup>1</sup> and diets.

This is a change from the status quo and will involve a shift in priorities.

*<sup>1</sup>Healthy lifestyles support economic growth through less premature death which increases the working age population. When people are healthy, absences in sickness decline and workers are less distracted by managing their conditions or those of loved ones.*

## Where we are now

- We have been delivering industry-based support across different programmes and finance schemes as part of the process for long-term business growth in Warwickshire (e.g. through the Warwickshire Recovery Investment Fund). Some of this support prioritises investment to energy efficiency and low carbon innovation.
- Our partnerships are vital in helping create regional change and expanding the boundaries and capabilities of Warwickshire businesses. For example, we have worked with Coventry City Council through the Innovation Programme to help businesses become more innovative and efficient. Additional work with Coventry is delivered through the Coventry and Warwickshire Green Business Programme, which promotes and supports energy efficiency measures.
- In addition to these partnership efforts, we have delivered a series of webinars to Warwickshire's small and medium enterprise businesses, to provide inspiration and practical support in their journey to net zero.
- The Community Powered Warwickshire programme, initiated in 2021, is being used as a pathway for harnessing the power of our communities to tackle inequality and social inclusion. This is being funded through the Warwickshire Social Impact Fund. A notable strength of Warwickshire is the ability for community action to make a positive contribution, especially noting the role of our active voluntary community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector. Community Power has been identified as a place shaping approach to help deliver on the Council Plan priorities of Vibrant Economy and Places, Best Lives and Sustainable Futures. We are taking forward the learnings from this to longer term community-led approaches.
- We are increasing resilience, adaptability, and mitigating climate change whilst using community powered initiatives in Warwickshire such as the Green Shoots Community Climate Change Fund.

## What we have planned

- We are and will continue to participate in the EcoSchools programme which empowers and motivates pupils to drive change and improve environmental awareness in their school, local community and beyond.
- Following the publication of our Countywide approach to Levelling Up, written in response to the Government's Levelling Up White Paper we will be supporting the most vulnerable communities and promoting regeneration in the right places. Partnering with District and Borough, and Town and Parish Councils is key to this.
- Under our current business support programmes, we will continue working with local businesses to promote and support a low-carbon County, and further support businesses to change their supply chains to more sustainable options.
- As the Administrating Authority of the Warwickshire Pension Fund, we will be implementing our Investment Strategy for our over 50,000 members, having regard to environmental factors in the operation of the Fund as expressed in Responsible Investment and Climate Risk Strategies. The Fund will consider divestment where engagement does not or cannot work. We have also recently updated our Procurement Strategy which through the Social Value strategic pillar seeks to secure wider benefits for communities, the economy and the environment and support our vision to strengthen communities across the County. The Fund will engage with our 206 active employers to influence and promote responsible investment, carbon reduction and other activities to fight climate change and to mitigate exposure to climate risk and its resultant impact on asset liability.

You can help by being engaged with us, by supporting businesses with a green ethos, and by being innovative to reduce consumption.

## Objectives

Objective	Potential Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Lead by example, procuring sustainably and supporting new green markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % contracts which include green economy specifications</li> <li>• % of Council spend on circular products and services</li> <li>• Number of of main contractors providing carbon emission data e.g., highways, property and social services</li> </ul>
Support businesses and communities to adopt a green economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of of public resources shared</li> <li>• Increase take-up of the Coventry and Warwickshire Green Business programme from 56% to 65% by 2023</li> <li>• £ from grants delivered for green economy initiatives (via community and business grants programmes)</li> <li>• Value of loans and grants funded by WCC</li> </ul>
Target business support for low carbon development, as well as minority and socially responsible businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of support provided to target groups</li> </ul>
Support economic growth of key sectors and help them transition to a low carbon economic model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £ of funding secured to advance transition to low carbon economic models</li> <li>• % growth of key business sectors</li> </ul>
Increase engagement (two-way) and partnership with community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of of engagements increased</li> <li>• Number of of changes, decisions, ideas taken forward made through engagement</li> <li>• £ spent on supporting EcoSchools</li> </ul>
Encourage increase in sustainable food production and access to local markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of of markets selling locally produced sustainable food</li> <li>• Number of of Council-owned farms producing sustainable food</li> </ul>
Integrate healthy diets into The Healthy Lifestyles Programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of of programmes delivered</li> <li>• Number of of people receiving programmes</li> </ul>
Increase direct access to Council support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of of people making contact with Council</li> </ul>

## Where are the gaps?

We have begun supporting a low carbon economy, but we recognise we need to do more. We will:

- Define a strategy and roadmap for adopting the sustainable communities and green economy principles aligning with the circular economy principles.
- Change the conditions by which we invest in, and support businesses, so that a green economy principles are prioritised, along with ensuring skills and training reflect the skills gap. We will engage with partners and educators to deliver specific skills and training opportunities to alleviate stress from technological unemployment.
- Convene stakeholders to scope transition pathways, and to generate shared commitment and effective partnerships. We need to engage more fully with community and interest groups.
- Leading by example by changing our procurement processes and priorities to support a green economy including low carbon, social equity, and increased biodiversity.
- Lead by example through ensuring our own companies take action to support green economy including the Warwickshire Property and Development Group, Educaterers and others.



# Natural Capital and Biodiversity

## Context

**Global threats to biodiversity and the climate emergency are two of the largest threats to humanity that require both local and global action. Biodiversity should be protected and enhanced because it provides the foundations for life on earth, supporting the provision of ecosystem services and socio-ecological resilience for humans. This was evidenced by The Dasgupta review on the 'Economics of Biodiversity' (2021) which recognised that the solution to the biodiversity emergency starts with recognising that economies are embedded within the natural environment, rather than being external to it. The review calls for transformative change in the way we think, act and measure success.**

More broadly, a natural capital approach is increasingly recognised as a way of viewing nature as an asset that should be protected given its critical importance to our own survival. The approach highlights the range of goods and services which make human life possible. Some of these are tangible – like water and food – while others are intangible, like clean air, a stable climate, and biodiversity. A natural capital approach focuses on these benefits and attempts to factor them into more balanced and sustainable decisions.

A natural capital approach underpins the UK Government's 25-Year Environment Plan and its underlying objectives. It also helps with monitoring the environment and ensuring the delivery of nature positive outcomes, including those required by environmental markets such as voluntary carbon markets. The UK Government has made continued efforts to promote the use of a natural capital approach by developing national accounts and disseminating evidence that can be used in decision-making.

## Where we are now

We have undertaken a number of initiatives related to natural capital and biodiversity including:

- In 2008 we published our Biodiversity Strategy "Working for Warwickshire's Wildlife".
- Our 2013 Sub-regional Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy set out evidence for the preparations of plans, policies and programmes to protect and enhance GI, while recognising the importance of GI in delivering multiple ecosystem services that contribute to our environmental, social and economic wellbeing.

- In 2014 we participated in Defra's Biodiversity Offsetting trial. Since then, we have set up the first Local Planning Authority-led mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) market and rolled-out the Warwickshire BNG metric . This has generated over £5 million of funding for the protection and enhancement of our natural assets.
- In 2016, an Ecosystem Service Mapping project was undertaken for Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull.
- We set up the initiative to plant a tree for every resident in Warwickshire alongside partners, amounting to around 566,000 trees by 2030.
- Published a Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund (NEIRF) report which explores potential funding mechanisms to support our environmental ambitions.

## What we have planned

**A key focus of our Strategy is to develop our philosophy for using our Biodiversity Investment Fund and for furthering recommendations in the NEIRF. Two key components of this investment philosophy will be:**

- New sites within Warwickshire should be chosen strategically to maximise habitat connectivity and benefit to wildlife, where long-term management can be secured.
- Using a small proportion of the fund to finance competitive prizes that incentivise emerging environmental pilots and markets that deliver multi-functional benefits.
- Our current biodiversity strategy (2008) should be updated to reflect new environmental legislation and enable us to remain agile in the face of future legislation.
- With clear timescales and targets for tree planting, we have committed to plant 566,000 trees by 2030. We are focused on delivering at scale by directly planting at least 20,000 trees by 2023, reaching a total of 352,000 by 2030, with the remainder planted in partnership with the District and Borough Councils and landowners. It should be noted that the target to deliver 566,000 trees may be increased due to incoming policy updates within the new Local Plan. We are also exploring the development of a Warwickshire-based carbon offset market, to support tree planting and alignment with the Woodland Carbon Code.

- The NEIRF strategy explored the potential for the development of further ecosystem services markets beyond biodiversity and carbon. It highlighted that an air quality market would be required, subject to significant research in appropriate mitigation measures and their estimated costs. The strategy also identified significant potential to develop a voluntary nutrient balancing market linked to agriculture. We are planning to explore the potential for mandatory or voluntary markets relating to these ecosystem services.
- We will continue to monitor and manage our GI assets and expect that the national BNG metric and market will supersede our current approach. Furthermore, we will be working with Natural England to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- We are planning to establish a tree nursery, enabling and ensuring the supply of trees to meet Warwickshire's 2030 tree planting pledges and replacement stock. This will include the added benefit of the ability to grow specific varieties of flora that thrive in Warwickshire and are resistant to pests and disease, have a low carbon footprint from reduced transport and the potential for the development of arboriculturist apprentices.



## Objectives

Objective	Potential Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
Support District and Borough Councils to become leading local planning authorities in embedding natural capital into decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of of WCC landholdings with natural capital accounts</li> <li>• County wide metrics for key ecosystem services</li> </ul>
Establish innovative environmental markets to achieve Environmental Net Gain and fund nature recovery and enhancements across the County by 2050	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of of pilot Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) schemes undertaken by 2030</li> <li>• £ secured for the provision and enhancement of ecosystem services</li> <li>• % increase in key ecosystem service provision by 2050</li> </ul>
Further develop plans and strategies in response to the enhanced 'Biodiversity Duty' on public bodies. Support people to understand the value of the natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plans are updated by 2024.</li> <li>• Number of of engagements increased - engaging with people to understand value of natural environment</li> <li>• Number of of changes, decisions, ideas taken forward made through engagement</li> <li>• Number of officers identified as formal biodiversity champions within each WCC department</li> </ul>
Provide strategies and plans for key sectors across the County to deliver measurable enhancement, increases, and protection of target habitats and species, as well as their connectivity, abundance, quality, and diversity by 2050	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % increase in coverage and connectivity of habitats in Warwickshire</li> <li>• Area of additional land purchased for habitat connectivity</li> </ul>
Manage, enhance and restore habitats across the County to increase land-based sequestration and contribute to net zero targets by 2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % increase in green space</li> <li>• Number of trees planted</li> <li>• Number of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e sequestered through habitats per year by 2030</li> <li>• of carbon credits created through the Woodland Carbon Code per year until 2030</li> </ul>

## Where are the gaps?

It is recognised that we still have a long journey ahead. We aim to be an example to other local authorities by delivering BNG, net zero, and environmental net gain, via the following objectives:

- Develop a natural capital investment strategy, including a roadmap in terms of how we manage our natural assets. It will outline our approach to investing in nature and biodiversity.
- Work with the District and Borough Councils to encourage policies into Local Plans that embed the idea of environmental net gain through maintaining and enhancing the provision of ecosystem services.
- Explore further funding opportunities to support tree planting initiatives and the development of further County-wide Payment for Ecosystem Services markets.
- Scope and design a pilot scheme for the high priority potential environmental markets identified in the NEIRF report.
- Develop and regularly update a County wide baseline natural capital account to monitor and manage our natural assets.
- Develop a robust plan for use by local developers, consultants and planners to transition from our BNG metric to the national mandatory BNG metric.
- Develop an offsetting strategy for our tree planting targets to determine their spatial scope and ensure they contribute to our 2030 net zero targets.

You can help by taking an active role in the protection and enhancement of natural environments and habitats when visiting natural spaces.

# Appendix A

## Terminology

<b>Absolute reduction</b>	Generally, 90% reduction from the baseline across Scope 1, 2 and 3.
<b>Biodiversity Net Gain</b>	A concept for development and/or land management that aims to increase biodiversity, using quantitative and qualitative approaches.
<b>Carbon Neutral</b>	Balance between carbon emitted and carbon removed from the atmosphere through investment in carbon offsets.
<b>Carbon Offset</b>	A reduction in GHG emissions – or an increase in carbon storage (e.g., through land restoration or the planting of trees) – that is used to compensate for emissions that occur elsewhere.
<b>Circular Economy</b>	A model of production and consumption which minimises waste through sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products for as long as possible. This aims to reach maximum efficiency in the use of finite resources as part of creating a sustainable, productive economy.
<b>Green Economy</b>	Broader than a low carbon economy; it aligns to the wider context of the UN SDGs. An approach to sustainable economic growth with a central focus on reducing societal and environmental risks and ecological scarcities. It embeds climate adaptation into its construct. It transitions from the current ‘growth-based’ approach to investments, employment, and skills towards growth without degrading the environment, and the wellbeing and prosperity of citizens.
<b>ISO14001 Environmental Management System</b>	Sets out the criteria for an environmental management system that can be certified to. This helps us as an organisation to make sure we are setting up and following an effective system for managing environmental factors.
<b>Natural Capital</b>	Stocks of the elements of nature, such as forests, fisheries, rivers, biodiversity, land and minerals. Stocks of natural capital provide flows of ecosystem services over time which produce a wide range of benefits.
<b>Natural Capital approach</b>	Framing nature as an asset, or set of assets, that society benefits from and attempts to assess, in qualitative, quantitative and monetary terms, the ability of natural assets to provide ecosystem services, in order to make them more visible in decision making. It enables a much clearer picture of what we stand to gain or lose when we make decisions about how to manage or consume natural resources.
<b>Net Zero</b>	Balance of carbon emissions and removals, focusing on ‘absolute reductions’ in operational boundaries prior to investments in external carbon removals.
<b>Sustainable</b>	Meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future generations.
<b>Prosperity</b>	Growing wealth for wellbeing (not just financial wealth but the full range of human, social, physical and natural capitals).
<b>Zero Carbon</b>	No emissions are produced from a product or service.

# Appendix B

## Key Trends

We have assessed the key trends within sustainability and climate change (including changes in demographics, technology, behaviours, and factors such as the Covid-19 pandemic) across the short, medium and long term and how they may impact the Council and the wider County. The assessment has provided input into our themes and actions as impacts to the Council and County.



### People Changes

**Changes in Behaviour**  
During the pandemic there has been an increase in active travel and sense of 'local' work and shopping

**Green Technology Jobs**  
Influence of climate change on the economy

**Changing Population Demographics**  
Risks of technological unemployment, impact to food supply and others



### Technology Changes

**Changes in Energy**  
The Energy White Paper (December 2020) provides an indication about how the government will address energy related climate change challenges

**Transport**  
Move towards electric vehicles

**Automation**  
Risks of technological unemployment, impact to food supply and others

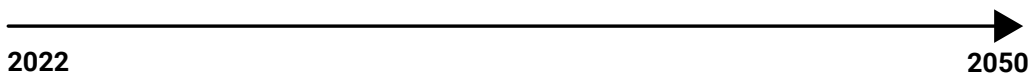


### Policy Changes

**Changes in Energy**  
New policy and strategic intents to influence response to medium-term challenges e.g. Climate Change Committee 6th Carbon Budget

**Waste Management**  
Encourage residents and businesses to participate in a circular economy, minimise waste, and maximise recycling and reuse

**Net Zero Carbon Target**  
Influence of climate change on the economy



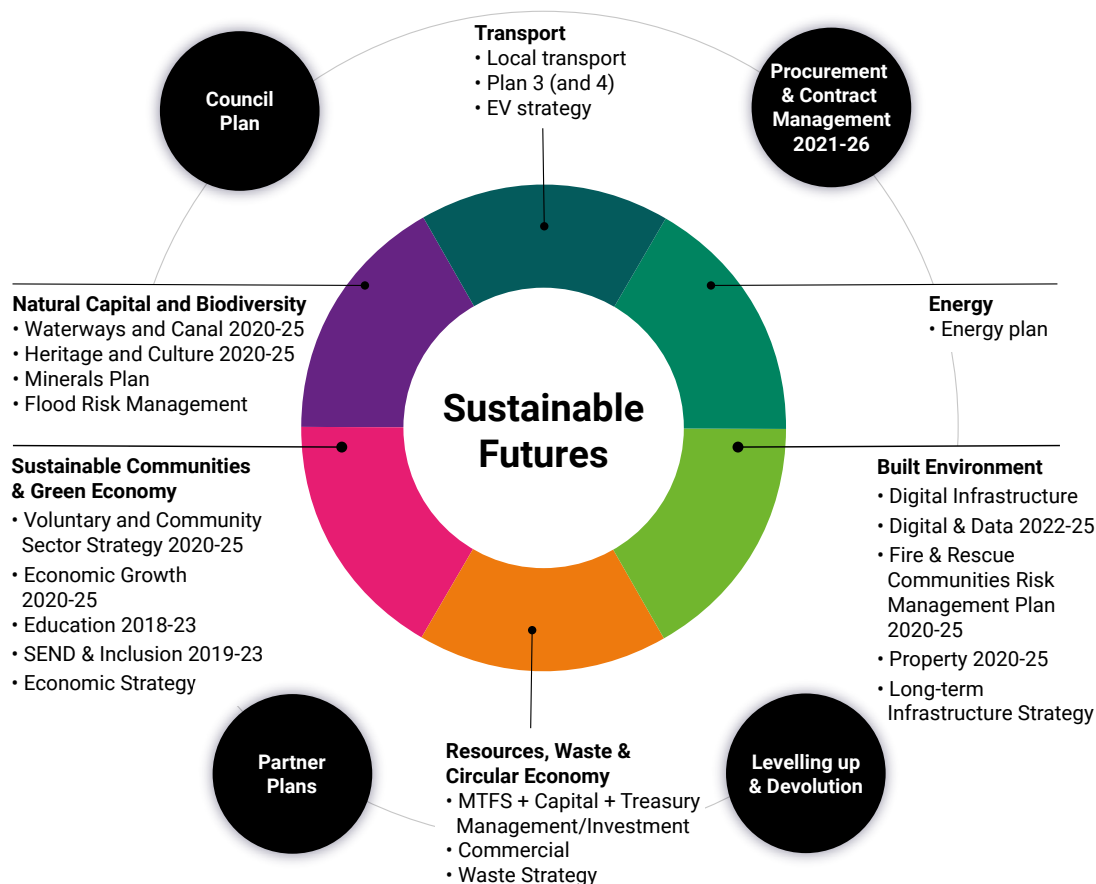
# Appendix C

## Strategy Alignment

### Warwickshire County Council policies, plans and strategies

**This strategy combines our ambitions related to climate change, biodiversity and creating a sustainable County while aligning with other key Council plans and strategies to support delivery.**

There is clear alignment between our Sustainable Futures Strategy and the Council's overall strategic framework and our delivery approach. Sustainable Futures is a key priority in the Council Plan (2022-2027) and we are committed to make Warwickshire the best it can be, sustainable now and for future generations. Both set out the strategic aims and aspirations to achieving net zero and tackling the global biodiversity crisis. This strategy is relevant to every part of the Council, and we are clear that we need to integrate sustainable thinking in all that we do. There is a natural link to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and we are committed to actions in support of these goals where they are relevant to our locality.



## Alignment with UK Legislation

This Strategy is comprehensively aligned with UK policies and strategies.

## Levelling up approach

In July 2022 WCC's Cabinet approved the Countywide approach to Levelling Up in Warwickshire. The intention of Levelling Up is to support communities and places, helping those that need it most to improve life outcomes across all aspects of life, including health, education and employment. The approach translates the national agenda for the County, creating a local definition that complements the 12 national missions set out in the Levelling Up White Paper. Sustainable Futures is one of the four core elements, defining what Levelling Up in Warwickshire means at County, place and community level.

This Sustainable Futures Strategy, and plans being developed by the District and Borough Councils, are critical to making this happen. We have built the Levelling Up approach into this Strategy by considering how we will work with communities and partners, in prioritising actions within the County and our access to funding.

## Local Councils and Partners

Working with Warwickshire District, Borough and Town and Parish Councils and our health partners is essential to becoming a net zero county by 2050. This Strategy aims to align their objectives and strategies with our own, so we are all moving in the same direction within Warwickshire. This Strategy identifies the importance of directing sustainable actions where there is more appropriate control. Therefore, in some themes, actions are about supporting and partnering with other Councils and organisations to deliver their ambitions through effective collaboration and sharing best practice.

## Wider regional alignment

Our County is well placed to work with wider regional partners including Coventry City Council and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, the West Midlands Combined Authority, local universities, the NHS and the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System, Warwickshire Police and others. To enable effective partnership working and use our collective powers, this Strategy reflects lessons learnt and opportunities from regional partners' strategies.



# WARWICKSHIRE SUSTAINABLE FUTURES STRATEGY DRAFT ACTION PLAN

This document includes our first phase planned actions to meet our goal of reducing carbon emissions to net zero across the Council by 2030. They are each aligned to the six key themes outlined in the draft Sustainable Futures Strategy. Actions will regularly be updated as progress is made and new ones are identified. Updates on this action plan will be shared via [www.warwickshireclimateemergency.org.uk](http://www.warwickshireclimateemergency.org.uk)

Theme	Activity Area	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Categorisation comment	Enabling Actions
Transport	Council Business Travel	Reduce Council emissions from business travel	Care worker travel - investigate options for better journey/visit planning to stop multiple cross County journeys every day and make visits more efficient. This will reduce emissions. Options could include a digital solution to plan journeys/visits. Also consider including contract conditions on external providers to have a plan to reduce inefficient journey planning	Short-Term	Reduction by 2030, as the increase of efficient care work travel will lead to a direct decrease of emissions associated with business travel	Funding Behaviours Engagement
Transport	Council Business Travel	Reduce Council emissions from business travel	Care worker travel - investigate ULEV and ZEV leasing schemes for care workers, and for contracting staff. Supporting both staff and contactors to change their vehicles will reduce emissions quickly and drastically	Short-Term	This will support the carbon reduction by 2030, as the increase of low carbon vehicles will lead to a direct decrease of emissions associated with business travel	Behaviours Engagement
Transport	Council fleet	Reduce carbon emissions from Council fleet	Replace end of life Council fleet with ULEV and ZEV and low carbon fuels	Long-Term	This will support the carbon reduction by 2030, as the increase of low carbon vehicles will lead to a direct decrease of emissions associated with business travel	Funding Resources
Energy	Council owned buildings	Develop revised Energy Policy and Strategy	Agree a new Energy Policy and Strategy with the objective of accelerating the implementation of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy generation expansion	Short-Term	A new Energy Policy and Strategy in place will provide policies, direction and procedures for how low carbon energy is to be generated and used within council buildings. This will indirectly contribute to decarbonisation of the Council's estate by 2030	Resources



Theme	Activity Area	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Categorisation comment	Enabling Actions
Energy	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Complete area mapping to identify opportunities for renewable technologies to be installed in Council owned buildings and land	Short-Term	Mapping activity must occur as it enables follow-on feasibility studies and ultimately directly contributes to carbon reduction by 2030	Funding
Energy	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Complete feasibility studies based on the results of the area mapping and generate a list of priority opportunities for renewable technologies	Medium-Term	Feasibilities studies must occur to support the development of options for the installation of renewable technologies	Funding
Energy	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Identify and seek to mitigate planning and grid connection requirements that may present a barrier to implementation of renewable technologies	Short-Term	Through the mitigation of potential barriers, this action will encourage the implementation of renewable technologies, in this way directly supporting the 2030 reduction target	Funding
Energy	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Identify funding and financing options including crowdfunding and community energy funds and create a prioritised list of options including timescales for seeking funding for renewable technologies. Develop renewable technologies implementation plan.	Medium-Term	The plan directly supports the implementation of renewable technologies which directly support the reduction of carbon for the 2030 target	Resources
Energy	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Feasibility study to identify solar PV potential	Short-Term	Identification of the most feasible ways to expand solar PV installations, will support effective implementation of further renewable energy generation, and directly supports the 2030 target	Funding

Theme	Activity Area	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Categorisation comment	Enabling Actions
<b>Energy</b>	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Work with internal stakeholders and construction partners to identify opportunities to incorporate low carbon electricity and heating systems in new buildings	Short-Term to Long-Term	New buildings incorporating opportunities for low carbon energy generation will directly contribute towards the 2030 target	Resources
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Define approach and scope for further energy efficiency audits and detailed decarbonisation plans of Council owned/occupied estate	Short-Term	A precursor for completing energy efficiency audits and implementation of actions which in turn support the 2030 carbon reduction target	Resources
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Complete energy efficiency audits and develop decarbonisation plans of the highest consuming Council owned / occupied estate and incorporate findings into decision making for Estates Master Plan (EMP)	Short-Term	A precursor for completing energy efficiency measures which directly supports the 2030 carbon reduction target	Resources
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Review findings of energy efficiency audits and implement decarbonisation plans (we would expect these to include fabric first energy efficiency approaches, lighting efficiency measures, low carbon heating, etc)	Short-Term	Actioning detailed plan to implement the previously identified efficiency measures, will reduce energy use and consequently carbon emissions associated with building use, thus directly supporting the 2030 reduction target	Resources Funding Significant costs for implementation
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Seek to reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Explore the impact of more flexible working and the opportunity to fully occupy available space (aligned with the existing building utilisation KPI)	Short-Term	Optimisation of energy consumption will lead to a direct reduction in carbon emissions associated with building used, therefore this action directly contributes towards the 2030 carbon reduction target	Resources

Theme	Activity Area	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Categorisation comment	Enabling Actions
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Seek to reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Identify opportunities to link upgrade works with other public sector retrofits including engaging with tenants to identify and bring forward targeted energy efficiency retrofits (e.g., through incentives, sharing energy savings)	Short-Term	Identification of the most feasible retrofit opportunities, will support effective implementation of these efficiency measures, leading to a reduction on emissions from building use	Engagement Resources
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Review scope of building management systems, and make updates if required	Short-Term	Optimisation of energy use in Council owned buildings will lead to a direct reduction of associated carbon emissions, and therefore directly supports the 2030 carbon reduction target	Funding Resources
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Develop programme to reduce water wastage	Medium-Term	Through a combined behavioural and maintenance programme we can reduce wastage resulting in carbon and cost savings	Resources Behaviours
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Review and refresh Mechanical & Electrical framework for maintenance contractors and maximise alignment with maintenance strategy and retrofit opportunities	Short-Term	Precursor to the following action	Resources Market conditions
<b>Built Environment</b>	Council owned buildings	Reduce carbon emissions from the Council's existing buildings	Work with suppliers in compliance with the framework, ensuring the new requirements are met	Short-Term	Ensuring that all contractors follow the new low carbon requirements, will lead to a direct decrease in the Council's Scope 3 emissions associated with purchased goods and services, which will indirectly support the 2050 reduction (not the 2030 because purchased goods and services is not part of the Council's baseline)	Conditional on achieving changes to maintenance framework action

Theme	Activity Area	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Categorisation comment	Enabling Actions
<b>Waste and Circular Economy</b>	Waste Authority	Reduce waste from Council-owned buildings	Introduce food recycling in partnership with the Council's waste contractor throughout all Council owned buildings	Short-Term	The outcome of this action will increase the proportion of Council's waste that will get recycled, and therefore directly contributes towards the 2030 target	Resources Behaviours
<b>Waste and Circular Economy</b>	Waste Authority	Reduce waste from Council-owned buildings	Develop waste strategy for worst-performing buildings including education campaign for staff	Medium-Term	Acting on the developed action plan for worst performing buildings will lead to a reduction of waste generated by the Council, directly contributing towards the 2030 target	Resources Behaviours
<b>Waste and Circular Economy</b>	Waste Authority	Reduce carbon emissions from managing municipal waste	Transition Council-owned waste vehicles from fossil fuel to alternative fuels (e.g., electric) in line with rest of council fleet	Medium-Term	This action will directly lead to a reduction of emissions associated with waste haulage done by the Council, thus directly contributing towards the 2030 target	Resources Funding
<b>Natural Capital and Biodiversity</b>	Environmental Net Gain	Encourage establishment of innovative environmental markets to achieve Environmental Net Gain and fund nature recovery and enhancements across the County by 2050	Seek to establish a local Warwickshire carbon offsetting market between the six Warwickshire Councils and developers where offsets are purchased directly from Woodland Carbon Code projects established in the County, this should be linked directly with all actions set out in the 'Sequestration and storage' activity area.	Medium-Term	Establishing a local carbon offsetting market will encourage the uptake of offsetting, which will support the 2050 carbon net zero target	Resources Funding Policy
<b>Natural Capital and Biodiversity</b>	Environmental Net Gain	Manage, enhance and restore habitats across the County to increase land-based sequestration and contribute to net zero targets by 2030	Establish a carbon offsetting strategy which identifies a shortlist of sites to develop initial schemes on	Short-Term	Establishing a carbon offsetting strategy will encourage the uptake of carbon sequestration, in this way contributing towards the 2050 target	Resources Policy

Theme	Activity Area	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Categorisation comment	Enabling Actions
<b>Natural Capital and Biodiversity</b>	Sequestration and storage	Manage, enhance and restore habitats across the County to increase land-based sequestration and contribute to net zero targets by 2030	Establish guidelines such as planting and management protocols that means any woodland establishment in the County is applicable for WCC credits	Short-Term	Action will lead to increased carbon sequestrations, contributing towards the 2050 target	Resources Policy
<b>Natural Capital and Biodiversity</b>	Sequestration and storage	Manage, enhance and restore habitats across the County to increase land-based sequestration and contribute to net zero targets by 2030	Identify emerging carbon markets for habitats besides woodland (e.g. for hedgerows, saltmarsh and soils) and where these habitats are located within the County. This will prepare the County for when these markets become active.	Short-Term	Action will lead to increased carbon sequestrations, contributing towards the 2050 target	Resources
<b>Natural Capital and Biodiversity</b>	Sequestration and storage	Manage, enhance and restore habitats across the County to increase land-based sequestration and contribute to net zero targets by 2030	Ensure the County's natural capital accounts are recording the annual sequestration rates of all habitats in the WCC portfolio	Long-Term	Action will lead to increased carbon sequestrations, contributing towards the 2050 target	Resources

This page is intentionally left blank

## Appendix 3: Sustainable Futures Strategy, Project Progress & Projects in Development

The information below is an extract from the June 2023 Cabinet Paper where an update on progress was provided.

### 1. Progress Update

- 1.1 In the November 2022 Sustainability West Midlands Local Authority Benchmark report, the Council ranked 7th out of 21 participating authorities, improving on the prior year's overall score. Of 10 themes, resource efficiency, natural environment, social equity and health were ranked 2nd, 4th, and 5th respectively.
- 1.2 With regards to progress towards achieving our 2030 net zero target, the period to 2021/22 has seen an 8% reduction in carbon emissions expressed as tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalence (CO<sub>2</sub>e) against our 2019/20 baseline. A reduced mileage from vehicles used by staff for business purposes and reductions in emissions associated with electricity for streetlighting and powering buildings have delivered the greatest reductions. This performance is in line with the trajectory required to meet our 2030 target. This has been aided by the impact of Covid-19 and it should be noted that reductions will become increasingly challenging over time. The largest single source of emissions is from the use of gas for heating buildings. Lower carbon technologies to either displace gas or improve efficiencies where gas is continued to be used will need large-scale capital investment and may present operational challenges. Solutions will need to begin to be rolled out over the next two years to meet an interim target of a 29% reduction in emissions against our 2019/20 baseline by 2026. The Council is developing a pipeline of projects designed to maintain progress against this target. It is proposed to publish progress against the Strategy and action plan on the Council's climate emergency website.
- 1.3 Actions to meet the Council's climate change commitment for net zero carbon emissions by 2030 has been published. Actions associated with delivering on our 2030 net zero commitment, alongside further actions to deliver on the Council's 2050 commitment and those in support of the delivery of the six strategy themes have been embedded into the Council's 2023-2025 Integrated Delivery Plan, agreed at Cabinet in May 2023. Direct staffing resourcing has also increased to support delivery.
- 1.4 **Transport.** Our work on the proposed New Local Transport Plan for Warwickshire (LTP4) (also on this Cabinet agenda) has reached final draft stage. With environment as a central theme, LTP4 is intended to provide travel options that will reduce reliance on private car usage and increase take-up of active travel, safe and convenient public transport and encourage a switch to electric vehicles. In addition to the health and air quality benefits this

will bring, this plan will be critically important in setting Warwickshire on the path to net zero carbon.

- 1.5 **Electric vehicle charging.** The Council has been allocated £3.295m capital to deliver electric vehicle charge points primarily for residents who do not have off-street parking. A dedicated strategy is in place and a policy officer has now been recruited to fully secure the grant. Subject to securing the grant, tranche 1 of the award will allow the Council to proceed to procurement in 2023/24 and delivery early in 2024/25. Numbers will depend on several factors with the current expectation being 300-350 charge points funded through the grant.
- 1.6 **Energy and renewables.** Work on developing a new Council energy strategy is well underway and will be presented to Cabinet for approval later this year. This is detailed in paragraph 4.3 (i). A part grant funded large scale solar installation at Eliot Park Innovation Centre started generating solar power in December 2021. When averaged over a year, 23% of the building's electricity demand is now from roof mounted solar which will continue to contribute to reductions in the Council's carbon footprint. A total of 42.8 tCO<sub>2</sub>e from the date of installation to May 2023 has now been saved.
- 1.7 **Green shoots phase 2:** 38 projects were allocated funding in November 2022 bringing the total to 107 funded projects across two phases utilising £1m fund after operating costs. There is a roughly even distribution of funding across all Districts and Boroughs in the County per head of population for Phase 1 & 2 combined (£1.50 - £1.60) except in Stratford which received a considerable amount in Phase 1. As of May 2023, there are 27 case studies on the Council's Climate Emergency website designed to inspire and engage.
- 1.8 **Tree planting.** More than 2,000 trees have been planted using the Local Authority Treescape Fund. These supplement the trees planted by community groups using the Green Shoots grant, not least the Leasowe Farm Children's Forest project which has planted 2,600 trees on 4 ha of land. During 2023/24 the target is to plant 60,000 trees (30 ha) as part of the Council's commitment to plant one tree for every Warwickshire resident by 2030. Support will be provided by two newly recruited officers until March 2025 using a grant secured from the Woodland Creation Acceleration Fund.
- 1.9 **Tree nursery.** 20,000 acorns have been collected from trees on the nearby highway and planted at the recently established tree nursery demonstrating minimal carbon impact. The project will provide the trees at a sustainable cost and availability with a reduced carbon footprint and expand on the genetic stock to support the tree planting project and provide climate resilient trees for the future. Over time, the nursery will be self-sustaining with income from tree sales.
- 1.10 **Waste and recycling.** The recycling rate for 2022/23 was 36.7%, rising to 45.6% when confidential waste is included. This exceeds the corporate target set in March 2020 to reduce residual waste by 30% by March 2023. A new waste target for 2023 onwards is currently being developed.



- 1.11 **Climate change adaptation.** Work has completed on two major reports which are published on the Council's Climate Emergency website. Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, Flood Risk Management, and Public Health have all now benefited from a process to assess climate change risk, establish new risk registers and develop action plans to better prepare these sensitive service areas to the impacts of climate change. This process will be rolled out to further service areas in 2023/24. Officers are engaging locally and regionally to discuss our priorities and to determine ways in which partners could help in accelerating adaptation.
- 1.12 **Marketing and Communications.** Since January 2023, the Council has produced a series of Sustainable Warwickshire podcasts to bring together an internal offer and external expert to discuss a topic related to the Sustainable Futures Strategy. Four have been produced and published to date.
- 1.13 **Climate Action Group.** Work continues to increase in-house engagement in sustainability. An established group of officers drawn from all parts and levels of the organisation meet and collaborate to help drive the Council to meet the Council and County net-zero targets. We are developing a proposal to take this to the next level by implementing carbon literacy training as detailed in paragraph 4.1 (vii).

## 2. Projects in development

- 2.1 A first phase of projects has been identified and it is planned to make applications to the Revenue Investment Fund in 2023/24 as follows;
  - i. **Low carbon fuel.** A phased 5-year rollout of a certified waste derived low carbon biofuel across our vehicle fleet. A small-scale trial has been successfully completed in the fire service. This provides the basis for moving forward with a larger trial on a range of core fleet vehicle types, initially costing £37k of project support over two years and £58k of revenue and £30k of capital costs in 2024/25. Early estimates suggest this fuel could be applied to 160 of our 200 vehicle core fleet. When fully adopted, this initiative alone could allow us to deliver a third of our estate carbon target ahead of 2030. Officers are in discussions with District and Borough counterparts to establish how a collaboration of this type will support them to meet their targets.
  - ii. It is acknowledged that biofuels present only a temporary solution. Additional work is ongoing to define, cost and establish a time-bound **plan to fully decarbonise our vehicle fleet** and funding of around £50k will be needed to develop a strategy and action plan to move our Council fleet to sustainable energy for delivery during 2023/24.
  - iii. **Detailed building retrofit surveys.** An application for revenue grant funding of £187k with a focus on decarbonising high consuming buildings with boilers over 10 years old has been made. Grants will be awarded in June 2023 with work to be completed by March 2024.

- iv. Some project management support, costing an estimated £20k, for developing a **plan to remove inefficient, high consuming boilers** from our building stock and replacing with cleaner alternatives.
  - v. **Support for schools to participate in eco-schools:** To further school engagement in climate change we are planning to fund 200 schools at the rate of 50 per year for them to participate in eco-schools and in parallel leverage a free first year subscription to take up a platform to score and act on sustainability. The tailored offer would seek to ensure even distribution of take-up across the County in support of our Countywide Approach to Levelling Up. This is estimated to cost in the region of £30k.
  - vi. **An offer to local SMEs** to take up a platform to score and act on sustainability. Sustainability actions are scored providing the potential for SME's to demonstrate performance and engagement to customers and clients. As per the schools offer, tailoring would seek to ensure even distribution of take-up across the County. Our first-year cost is £25k which covers 100 subscriptions, with an additional 100 added by each of the supplier and the sponsor taking the total to 300. Should this prove successful we propose to invest a further £20k in year 2.
  - vii. We have now introduced an introductory **carbon literacy** e-learning module which is being promoted for existing staff and all new starters. We are reviewing in person training. A range of options are being considered, one of which is an accredited offer to 250 officers and members costing circa £25k. We are also reviewing more substantive options which would involve employing a small team to deliver across the organisation at pace and provide training for our communities and as a traded service to businesses requiring an investment of an estimated £250k in year one.
- 2.2 The next phase of projects due for development in 2023/24 are;
- i. **Renewable energy plan.** To invest in exploring the installation of further renewables/energy technologies within buildings and land across the County estate.
  - ii. **Offsetting and inseting plan.** A review of options, viability and costs to close the gap between decarbonised emissions and residual emissions to reach net zero. Example options include inseting initiatives which take place within the boundaries of Warwickshire, a prime example being the tree planting project. The plan will also review offsetting options, initiatives outside of Warwickshire, which need to be considered within an overall plan.
  - iii. **A review of hydrogen for transport** to assess market opportunities, applications, barriers, costs and time horizons. This would link with the Council's fleet decarbonisation plan as well as delivering insight for Warwickshire-wide development opportunities.
- 2.3 Additional work planned or being delivered using internal resource is as follows;

- i. We are in the final stages of developing an **Energy Strategy** using existing internal resource. The strategy will establish a clear direction and action plan for sustainable energy management, how we plan to reduce, use, measure, and generate energy to support the council's net zero targets and ensure we meet all applicable energy legislation requirements. We intend the strategy will be brought forward for approval at Cabinet in July 2023.
- ii. We plan to explore opportunities to **target private domestic properties for energy efficiency improvements**, initially through a data driven work package delivered by Business Intelligence to determine clusters of poor energy performing properties and homeowners to work with.
- iii. **Greenshoots phase 3 or similar scheme**. Following on from the success of prior rounds of Greenshoots, we are considering options to run a further round in a financially sustainable way. One option to explore is the potential to leverage external funding and partner with a suitable organisation to assist in delivery and engagement.

This page is intentionally left blank

## Resources, Fire & Rescue Service Overview & Scrutiny Committee

13<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### Council Plan 2022-2027 Integrated Performance Report Quarter 1 2023/24

Period under review: April 2023 to June 2023

#### Recommendations

That the Committee considers and comments on the Quarter 1 2023/24 organisational performance, progress against the Integrated Delivery Plan, management of finances and risk.

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report is a retrospective summary of the Council's performance at the end of Quarter 1 (April 2023 - June 2023) against the strategic priorities and Areas of Focus set out in the Council Plan 2022-2027. All information contained within this report has been taken from the Quarter 1 Integrated Performance and Finance reports presented to Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> September. The paper sets out a combined picture of the Council's delivery, performance, HR, and risk.
- Performance is assessed against the Key Business Measures (KBM) contained within the agreed Performance Management Framework (PMF) in Section 2 and [Appendix 1](#).
  - Progress against the Integrated Delivery Plan is summarised in Section 3 and more fully presented within [Appendix 2](#).
  - Management of Finance is summarised in Section 4 and the summary dashboard is presented in [Appendix 3](#).
  - Management of Risk is summarised in Section 5 and more detailed information is presented in [Appendix 4](#).
- 1.2 This summary report and the detailed performance appendices provide the complete picture of the Council's performance enabling scrutiny and transparency for the organisation, partners and the public. It enables Overview and Scrutiny Committees the opportunity to consider performance within their own remits. All Members also have continual access to the Performance Management Framework using the [Performance Portal](#) in Power BI to further monitor performance on an ongoing basis.

The approach to strategic performance reporting continues to evolve. Members will be aware that there is a wealth of information and data, and we must use the analysis most relevant to our strategic priorities. At a

service level, there is also additional performance data which allows managers to manage the performance of the service day to day. In addition, nationally, Government is developing the role of the 'Office for Local Government' (OFLOG) and Warwickshire Officers are seeking to collaborate with OFLOG to ensure that a meaningful and useful data set is developed. We are keen to avoid an industry of performance reporting which might be burdensome and low value. As such, it is our aim that we streamline our performance data over the next year or so, to ensure that Members have the right and most useful performance data possible.

There are some key themes that emerged last year that continue to be highlighted in the Cabinet report, and are impacted by WCC's current operating environment, including:

- increasing demand and costs being reported in Children & Families Services, Adult Social Care, Home to School Transport and in the number of applications made through the Local Welfare Scheme;
- increasing demand is resulting in the capacity and workload issues which has a further impact on delivery across the organisation, evidenced through staff feedback and addressing this is acknowledged as a high priority for the organisation;
- difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff in a highly constrained national and local labour market were highlighted throughout 2022/23 and although overall there has been some improvement issues remain within specific service teams for example Children & Families, On-call firefighters, Waste & Environment, Schools, and Planning; and
- other services have specific challenges such as staff absence levels in Business & Customer Services, Children & Families and Adult Social Care.

Planned improvement activity to address these issues is described in section 4 of this report.

- 1.3 The 2023/24 PMF was agreed at the June Cabinet meeting and, of the 105 KBMs detailed in that PMF, 88 are available for reporting in Quarter 1. There are 31 KBMs within the remit of this Committee, and 28 KBMs available for reporting this Quarter. Table 1 below indicators the current assessment of performance.

Quarter 1	On Track	Not on Track
Status	61% (17)	39% (11)

Table 1

Table 2 below indicates the Direction of Travel (retrospective comparison), however, please note not all measures have a status e.g. where they are new and there is no previous baseline:

Quarter 1	On Track			Not on Track		
Direction of Travel	Improving	Static	Declining	Improving	Static	Declining
	27% (3)	55% (6)	18% (2)	18% (2)	18% (2)	64% (7)

Table 2

Table 3 below indicates the future projection forecast for the next reporting period:

Quarter 1	On Track			Not on Track		
Projection	Improving	Static	Declining	Improving	Static	Declining
	6% (1)	88% (15)	6% (1)	18% (2)	27% (3)	55% (6)

Table 3

- 1.4 At Quarter 1, with a refreshed PMF, the overall position is a slight deterioration from the Year End position in terms of %age but is continuing a consistently strong performance delivered against the PMF. This is an encouraging position against the continuing volatile, uncertain, and high-risk operating environment.
- 1.5 [Appendix 1](#) details information for all measures within the PMF, including reasons why some measures are not being reported. Detailed measure-by-measure performance reporting is accessible through the [Performance Portal](#).
- 1.6 The position is also positive in terms of delivery of the 67 actions set out in the Integrated Delivery Plan, with 74% being On Track, 25% At Risk or Compromised and 1% have yet to start, and it is these actions which are reported on in Appendix 2 on an exception basis.
- 1.7 At the end of the first quarter the services reporting to Resources and Fire and Rescue Services OSC forecast an overspend of £4.658m, equivalent to 6.5% of their combined revenue budget. Once planned transfers from earmarked reserves are accounted for the position alters to a 3% overspend. A £0.706m shortfall is forecast against the current year saving target of £1.942m. While Resources remain largely on track to deliver their approved capital programme for the 2023/24, the Fire and Rescue service is forecasting a £2m delay, representing 40% their planned capital spend for the financial year.
- 1.8 At the end of Quarter one, six of 19 corporate/strategic risks more directly relate to the remit of this committee and have a red (high) rating: economic growth slowing or stalling, negative results from commercial and investment activity, uncertainty about key external influences e.g. Government policy,

sustained inflation and cost of living pressures, not achieving sustainable futures commitments and successful cyber attack.

- 1.9 At a service level there are 7 risks that are rated red (high) and which at the same time have had an actual risk rating greater than their risk target for 3 quarters or more and are 3 points above target: insufficient resources to deliver the Council Plan and Priorities and increase in serious data breaches and/or backlog of Subject Access Requests within Resources. Within Fire and Rescue Services: cyber security, Emergency Services Network, National power outage, Protection Capacity and Reduced on call availability.
- 1.10 The wider national context remains a critical frame within which to view the Council's performance. The UK continues to experience the consequences of both significant political, global and macro-economic turbulence, including industrial action across many sectors, the legacy impact of the Pandemic, and the war in Ukraine. High inflation, rising interest rates and the resulting fiscal challenges are impacting the communities of Warwickshire.
- 1.11 Such an unprecedented combination of events at a global and national level creates a period of significant uncertainty and a very challenging financial outlook in the short- to medium-term. This volatility is impacting on the Council's resources, both financial and in terms of recruitment and retention, levels of demand, and the approach to developing national policy, particularly Adult Social Care reform, levelling up agenda, support or cost of living pressures and climate change Net Zero ambitions.
- 1.12 Performance reporting will continue to track and highlight the impacts of this operating environment on delivery and performance. Recent analysis has informed prioritisation of activity and resource allocation during the refresh of the Integrated Delivery Plan, which was approved at the May Cabinet, and the updated Performance Management Framework.

## **2. Performance against the Performance Management Framework**

- 2.1 The three strategic priorities set out in the Council Plan 2022 - 2027 are delivered through seven Areas of Focus. In addition to these, there are three further areas to support the Council to be known for as 'a Great Council and Partner'. The full performance summary is contained in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Comprehensive performance reporting is enabled through the Power BI Performance Portal as part of the Performance Management Framework. Where applicable, some performance figures may now have been updated on the Power BI reporting system. The number of reportable measures will change each quarter as the framework considers the availability of new data.
- 2.3 Notable aspects of positive performance for specific measures include:



- the number of people utilising WCC core settings with colleagues coming into the work settings more regularly, which has seen a steady month on month increase compared to the same period last year.
- 2.4 There are some emerging performance areas that are becoming apparent through the PMF this Quarter:
- Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service continues to find it difficult to achieve the agreed performance targets for appliance arrival time at incidents; the Service is working on a “resourcing to risk” analysis which is phased into 3 projects; Modelling, Development and Delivery. The initial modelling phase considers intervention times for a range of resource options and is due for completion in Nov 2023 and will inform more appropriate standards going forward to continue to keep the communities across the County safe from harm;
  - Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs % overspend compared to DSG recovery plan remains a challenge due to a variety of reasons including overspends on Independent School places and Specialist Resource Provision, causing significant pressure on the High Needs Block. Following the latest national data release, the trends in Warwickshire reflect a national picture. The Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Programme is being reviewed and refocused, and the Council is participating in the DfE’s Delivering Better Value programme;
  - the % of maintained schools with a deficit budget continues to deteriorate due to the impact of pay awards; rising costs of energy bills and increasing pressures on covering for absences and growing numbers of vacancies which schools have been unable to fill; 17.21% of maintained schools have a deficit budget compared to the same period last year (13.74%), albeit lower than the March 2023 position of 18.7%; and
  - the number of days sick absence per FTE (rolling 12 months) has seen a slight increase and is now reporting at 9.16 days per FTE and is over the target tolerance range of 8 days (+/- 1 day), although it is lower than the same period last year, which was at 9.22 days.
- 2.5 There are 22 measures of the 28 available for reporting, where there is enough trend data available to ascertain a Direction of Travel. 50% (11) of measures have a Direction of Travel that is On Track, the majority of which (9) are either improving or static, only 2 are declining. Conversely, the other 50% (11) are Not on Track, the majority of which (7) are declining.
- 2.6 All 28 reportable KBMs have a forecast projection from the responsible service for the forthcoming period. Of the measures that are forecast to be On Track at Quarter 1, 1 is forecast to improve further with 15 to remain static. Of the 11 that are forecast to be Not on Track, the following are forecast to decline further at the next reporting period. Full details can be found within [Appendix 1](#) and the [Performance Portal](#).
- % times a first fire appliance arrives at life risk of property incidents within agreed response standards;
  - % Net Variation of Outturn Forecasts to Revenue Budget (Whole Council);
  - % of maintained Schools with a Deficit Budget;

- Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs Block (HNB) in year forecast % overspend compared to the DSG Recovery Plan;
- No. of projects seeking member approval to changes in cost, time, scope or risk; and
- No. of documents being printed by the organisation.

2.8 A set of high-level, cross-cutting, long-term Warwickshire Outcome Measures, which the Council can influence but are not solely responsible for, are also contained in the Performance Management Framework. These are reported within a dashboard informing the ongoing State of Warwickshire reporting and includes Levelling Up and the Cost of Living metrics. A summary of position will be included in the Year End Integrated Performance Report.

### 3. Progress against the Integrated Delivery Plan

- 3.1 The Integrated Delivery Plan aligns priority activity from across all service areas against all Areas of Focus within the Council Plan 2022-27. The plan shows how activity across services collectively contributes to delivering these priorities.
- 3.2 Detailed information on the performance summary of the Integrated Delivery Plan is included at Appendix 2. A new Power BI reporting dashboard is now available and will enable Members to track progress by Service, status, Council Plan Area of Focus, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Portfolio Holder.
- 3.3 Of the 206 actions within the Integrated Delivery Plan, 67 are attributable to the Resources, Fire and Rescue OSC. There is positive progress this Quarter with 74% of activities being On Track to achieve their objectives within the set timeframes, 25% are At Risk or Compromised, with 1% yet to start. Any exceptions are covered in Appendix 2.

### 4. Management of Finance

- 4.1 The key metrics of financial management are summarised below with further information providing context available in Appendix 3 and in the Q1 Finance Monitoring Report presented to Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

Metric	Target	Service	Performance at Q1 2023/24
Performance against the latest approved revenue budget as measured by forecast under/overspend	On budget or no more than 2% underspent	Business and Customer Services	1.6%
		Commissioning Support Unit	1.7%
		Enabling Services	14.8%
		Finance	1.0%

		Governance & Policy	14.2%
		Fire & Rescue	(0.1%)

The headline revenue forecast at the end of the first quarter is £4.7m (5.4%) overspend however, specific funding has been set aside to be transferred from earmarked reserves. Once these factors are considered the adjusted forecast position is £2.6m (3.0%).

Performance against the approved savings target as measured by forecast under/overachievement	100%	Business and Customer Services	75%
		Commissioning Support Unit	100%
		Enabling Services	55%
		Finance	100%
		Governance & Policy	17%
		Fire & Rescue	100%
Performance against the approved capital programme as measured by forecast delays in delivery	No more than 5% delay	Business & Customer Services	0%
		Enabling Services	1.5%
		Governance & Policy	1.5%
		Fire & Rescue	39.7%

## 5. Management of Risk

5.1 Risks are monitored in risk registers at a strategic/corporate level and at service level. At a corporate level the following strategic risks relating to Resources and Fire and Rescue Services are currently rated as red (high risk):

- Economic growth slows or stalls;
- Negative results from commercial and investment activities;
- Uncertainty about key external influences e.g. Government policy;
- Sustained inflationary and the cost of living pressures;
- Not achieving our sustainable futures commitments; and
- Cyber attack is successful and systems and / or data compromised.

5.2 Mitigating controls are in place in respect of these risks and includes the Council Plan, a number of activities to protect and promote the local economy and a Medium-Term Financial Strategy planning process that is incorporating the risks of inflation. The Council is also developing a new Economic Strategy, Sector Growth Plans and the Sustainable Futures Strategy and Plan is to be agreed by Cabinet in Autumn 2023.

5.3 At a service level there are 43 risks recorded, which relate to Resources and Fire and Rescue Services. Key risks are highlighted where they are red risks (high risk) and also where a risk has been higher than the risk target for 3 quarters or more and is 3 points or more over target. To highlight the key risks a table of both red risks and risks significantly above target is provided at [Appendix 4](#). The risks that are both red and significantly above target are the most significant risks, which are:

- Insufficient resources to deliver the Authority's Council Plan and priorities (Finance);
- Cyber Attacks (Fire and Rescue Services);
- Emergency Services network (Fire and Rescue Services);
- National power outage and maintain statutory duties (Fire and Rescue Services);
- Protection Capacity (Fire and Rescue Services);
- Reduced on call availability (Fire and Rescue Services); and
- Increase in serious data breaches and/or backlog of Subject Access Requests (Governance and Policy).

5.4 Mitigating activities are in place in relation to these risks, for example employee training, recruitment, resourcing considerations and People Strategy, employee survey and pulse point feedback, two-year funding for protection capacity, improved ways of working, and medium-term financial planning.

5.5 Over the course of the summer period, the risk appetite statements will be refreshed along with other aspects of the process to ensure they are fit for purpose. There is also an opportunity to refresh the risk records to ensure that the most significant risks are captured at a strategic and service level. This will also ensure that risks are reflective of the priorities and Integrated Delivery Plan and that appropriate mitigations are in place. Over time this will influence the volume and value of risks presented.

## 6. Environmental Implications

6.1 There are none specific to this report.

## Appendices

Appendix 1 – [Quarterly Performance Report](#)

Appendix 2 – [Progress on the Integrated Delivery Plan](#)

Appendix 3 – [Management of Financial Risk](#)

Appendix 4 – [Management of Risk](#)

## Background Papers

Cabinet Report 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023

<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Vanessa Belton, Delivery Lead Business Intelligence, Performance, Planning and Quality	<a href="mailto:vanessabelton@warwickshire.gov.uk">vanessabelton@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Director	Steve Smith, Director of Commissioning Support Unit	<a href="mailto:stevesmith@warwickshire.gov.uk">stevesmith@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Executive Director	Mark Ryder, Executive Director for Communities Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources	<a href="mailto:Markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk">Markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk">robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio Holder	Cllr A Crump, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Fire & Community Safety Cllr Yousef Dahmash, Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation Cllr P Butlin, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	<a href="mailto:andycrump@warwickshire.gov.uk">andycrump@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:yousefdahmash@warwickshire.gov.uk">yousefdahmash@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk">cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>

This page is intentionally left blank

## 1 Resources, Fire & Rescue OSC Quarterly Performance Report Quarter 1

- 1.1 Detailed measure-by-measure performance reporting is accessible through the [Performance Portal](#).
- 1.2 The three strategic priorities set out in the Council Plan 2022 - 2027 are delivered through seven Areas of Focus. In addition to these, there are three further areas to support the Council to be known for as 'a Great Council and Partner'. These are detailed in the table below alongside the number of KBMs that will be used to assess delivery, and the number being reported this Quarter.

Area of Focus	No. of KBMs	No. of KBMs available for reporting this Quarter
Create vibrant places with safe and inclusive communities	8	8
Deliver major infrastructure, digital connectivity and major transport options	17	15
Promote inclusive, sustainable economic growth, successful business, good quality jobs and future skills	9	8
Tackle climate change, promote biodiversity and deliver on our commitment to Net Zero	7	4
Deliver our Child Friendly Warwickshire strategy - Happy, healthy, safe children	7	6
Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special educational needs and disabilities	21	13
Support people to live healthy, happy, and independent lives and work with partners to reduce health inequalities	21	19
A Great Council and Partner	No. of KBMs	No. of KBMs available for reporting this Quarter
Harnessing community power	3	3
Our people and the way we work	8	8
Using our data and digital solutions to improve service delivery	4	4

### 1.3 Key Insights for Quarter 1 2023/24

- 1.4 There are 31 KBMs in total that are in the remit of this Committee. Chart 1 details the reported status of the 28 KBMs which are being reported at Quarter 1. 61% (17) KBMs are On Track and 39% (11) are Not on Track.

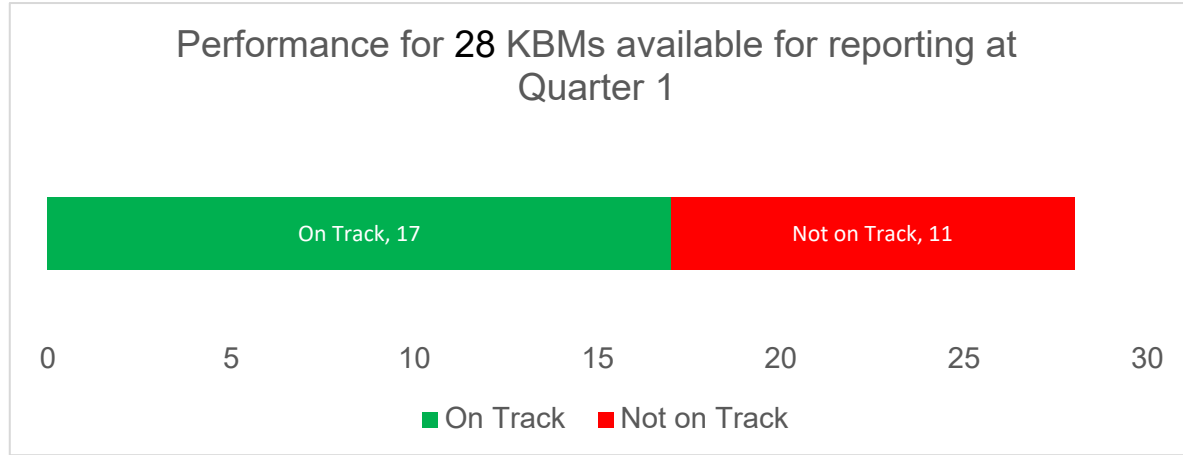


Chart 1

Chart 2 details the overall Direction of Travel, where trend data is available, assessing whether the performance has been improving or declining.

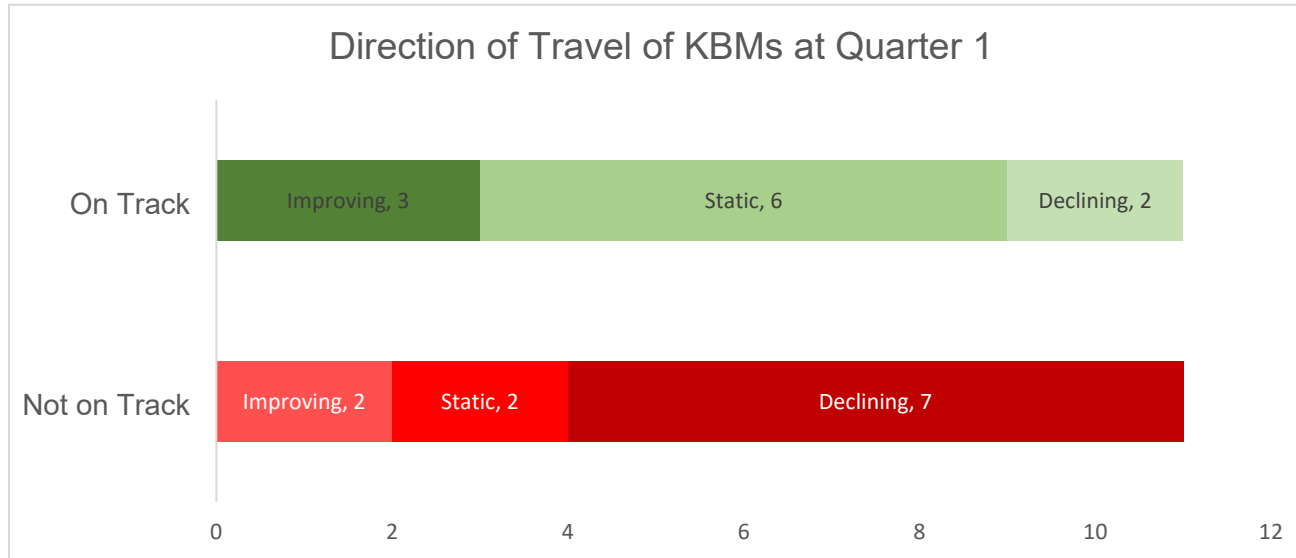


Chart 2



Chart 3 details the projected performance based on a Service forecast of the 28 reportable KBMs at the next Quarter.

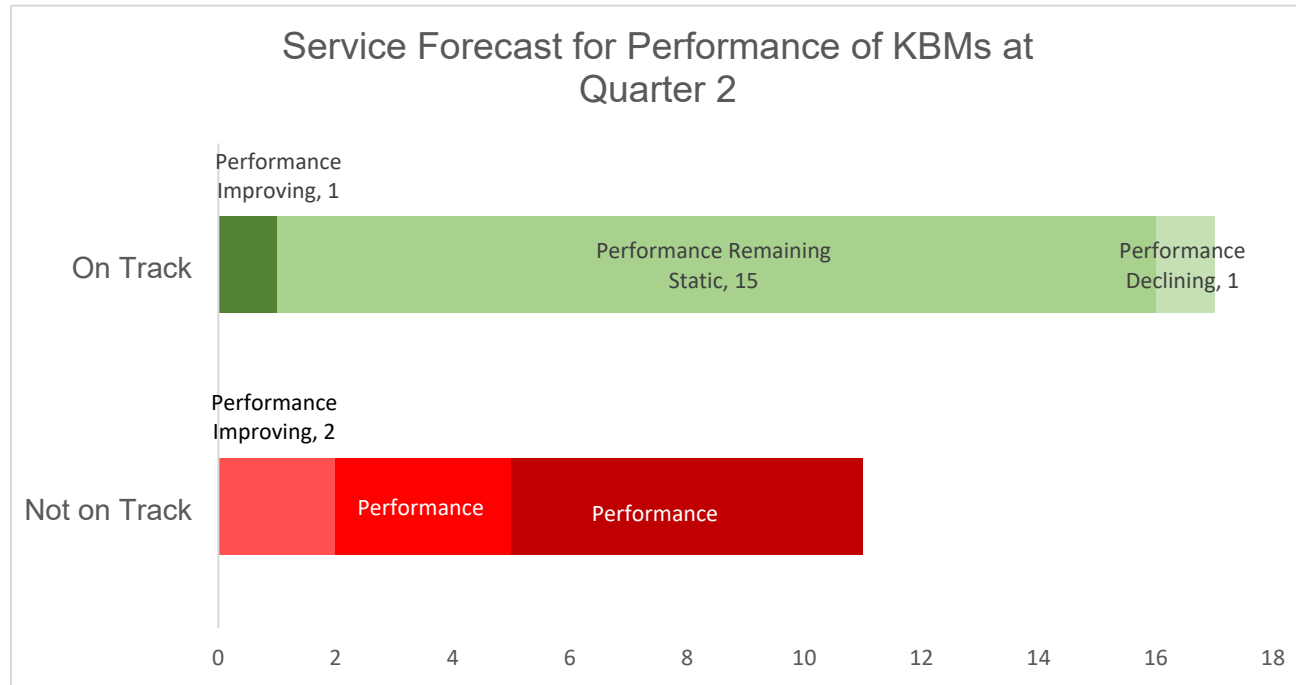


Chart 3

### Explanatory Notes on Summary Tables

The following sections provide an overview of current performance by Area of Focus. The measure summary tables are a representation of the tables in the full Committee report on Power BI and are interactive. Please note:

- data is being added into the system as it becomes available so new information may be in the reports since the writing of this Quarterly position report;
- measure names in the summary tables and where highlighted are all links to take the reader directly to the measure report page in Power BI which provides full detail on the measure including charted data, performance narrative, improvement activity, trends and targets if applicable;
- a measure status is included based on performance either against the target and polarity of measure or where there is no target on improving/ declining performance;
- Services provide a forecast of where performance is heading over the next reporting period, this is informed by local knowledge, improvement activity and trend information;
- where the measure status or projection is Not Applicable, this is due to exceptional circumstances regarding the measure such as it is setting a baseline this year, the Power BI report will provide the reason by measure;

- the Latest Figure column represents the most current data available including last quarter, previous year or longer if data is lagged, full details are on Power Bi report;
- not all measures have targets and the approach now is to have improving performance and targets where appropriate;
- Direction of Travel is an indication of whether performance is improving based on trend data where available; and,
- as the framework is more responsive there are annual or termly measures included on the tables with no reported data, this will be added as the relevant data becomes available e.g. attainment data from November.

### 1.5 Create vibrant places with safe and inclusive communities

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
No. of fire related deaths	1	N/A	Not on Track	Static	Not on Track Performance Remaining Static
No. of fire related injuries	10	N/A	On Track	Static	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% times a first appliance arrives at life risk of property incidents within agreed response standards	62.3	75	Not on Track	Declining	Not on Track Performance Declining
No. of Road Traffic Collisions attended by WFRS	89	N/A	Not on Track	Declining	Not on Track Performance Remaining Static

Overall performance in this Area of Focus is largely negative, with 3 of the 4 measures being considered Not on Track, this is a similar position reported at Year End. Projection for next reporting period is for the position to remain similar with all measures to either remain static or decline further.

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service continues to find it difficult to achieve the agreed performance targets for appliance arrival time at incidents and the measure is declining. The Service is developing a resourcing to risk programme of work which will establish resource requirements and prioritisation for Prevention, Protection and Response across the County.

Improvement activity for not achieving the target over 18 months with performance declining:

- % times a first appliance arrives at life risk of property incidents within agreed response standards

## 1.6 Deliver major infrastructure, digital connectivity and improved transport options

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
% of site specific business cases approved for Warwickshire Property & Development Group	0	100	Not on Track	Static	Not on Track Performance Improving
% Company Borrowing profile Warwickshire Property & Development Group	100	100	On Track	Static	On Track Performance Remaining Static
Gross Warwickshire Recovery & Investment Fund lending (£)	20,600,000	20,600,000*	On Track	Improving	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% of all capital schemes completed on budget	Annual measure due for reporting at Year End				
% of capital schemes completed on time					
No. of projects seeking member approval to changes in cost, time, scope or risk	189	N/A	Not on Track	Declining	Not on Track Performance Declining
% Delivery of projected output by Warwickshire Property & Development Group	0	0	On Track	N/A insufficient trend data	On Track Performance Remaining Static

\*Cumulative Year End Target

Performance within this Area of Focus is largely on track with 3 of the available measures reporting as On Track, with the projection to remain in a similar position over the next period. At this time there are no measures which need highlighting

## 1.7 Tackle climate change, promote biodiversity and deliver on our commitment to Net Zero

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
No. of documents being printed by the organisation	1,297,631	1,022,938	Not on Track	Declining	Not on Track Performance Declining
Total annual reduction in carbon emissions from Council related activities (tCo2)	Annual measure due for reporting at Year End				

At Quarter 1, only 1 measure is available for reporting with within this Area of Focus.

Improvement activity as performance is above target, continues to increase and is projected to decline further over the next reporting period:

- No. of documents being printed by the organisation

## 1.8 Through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special educational needs and disabilities

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block in year forecast overspend as a % of the in year High Needs overspend that is expected within the Dedicated Schools Grant Recovery Plan	79.86	0	Not on Track	Improving	Not on Track Performance Declining
% of maintained schools with a deficit budget	17.21	N/A	Not on Track	Improving	Not on Track Performance Declining

Both of the measures in this Area of Focus are Not on Track at Quarter 1, with both set to decline further over the next reporting period, however, they also have a direction of travel of improving, therefore it's an improving position compared to the trend information.

Improvement activity as performance is Not on Track and projected to decline further due to the impact of pay awards; rising costs of energy bills and increasing pressures on covering for absences and growing numbers of vacancies which schools have been unable to fill:

- % of maintained schools with a deficit budget

Improvement activity due to a variety of reasons including overspends on Independent School places and Specialist Resource Provision, causing significant pressure on the High Needs Block. Following the latest national data release, the trends in Warwickshire reflect a national picture.

- Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block in year forecast overspend as a % of the in year High Needs overspend that is expected within the Dedicated Schools Grant Recovery Plan

### 1.9 Support people to live healthy, happy, and independent lives and work with partners to reduce health inequalities

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
% of applications made to the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme which are supported	99	88	On Track	Static	On Track Performance Remaining Static

At Quarter 1 performance within this Area of Focus is positive with the one measure currently On Track set to remain static over the next reporting period.

Area of good progress as despite increases in demand in this area, performance consistently remains high:

- % of applications made to the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme which are supported

### 1.10 Harnessing Community Power

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
% of positive media coverage of WCC news releases, statements and campaigns	95	90	On Track	Static	On Track Performance Remaining Static
Total no. of community groups	9700	N/A	On Track	Static	On Track Performance Improving
Value (£) going into community groups	1546,000	N/A	On Track	N/A insufficient trend data	On Track Performance Remaining Static

Performance within this Area of Focus is within expected levels and projection for the next period is either to remain at similar levels or improve. At this time there are no measures which need highlighting.

## 1.11 Our people and the way we work

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
No. of Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) adverse determinations received	3	10*	On Track	Declining	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% Employee Engagement Score	76	78	On Track	N/A insufficient trend data	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% of staff agreeing that they are proud to work for WCC	80	75	On Track	Static	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% Employee Wellbeing score	77	75	On Track	N/A insufficient trend data	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% of staff agreement with "I feel safe to be my authentic self at work"	79	75	On Track	N/A insufficient trend data	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% of staff agreeing "The council's internal communication keep me informed of what the council is doing"	79	85	Not on Track	Declining	Not on Track Performance Improving
No. of days sick absence per FTE (rolling 12 months)	9.16	8 (+/- 1 day)	Not on Track	Declining	Not on Track Performance Remaining Static
No. of people utilising WCC core settings	302	N/A	On Track	Improving	On Track Performance Declining

\*Cumulative Year End Target

Performance within this Area of Focus is mixed, however where measures are Not on Track, the projection for the next period is either to remain at similar levels or improve.

Area of good progress there is a continued growth in use of core settings (unique individuals entering Shire Hall):

- No. of people utilising WCC core settings

Improvement activity due to a slight increase in the absence days, which is now just over the tolerance of +/- 1 day against the target of 8 days per FTE.

- No. of days sick absence per FTE (rolling 12 months)

## 1.12 Using our data and digital solutions to improve service delivery

Measure Name	Latest Actual	Target	Measure Status	Direction of Travel	Service Forecast for next period
% customer satisfaction level with the Customer Service Centre	88	85	On Track	Improving	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% Net Variation of Outturn Forecasts to Revenue Budget (Whole Council)	4.26	+/-2	Not on Track	Declining	Not on Track Performance Declining
% of green ratings against Value for Money (VFM) audit	67	67	On Track	N/A comparison of data points unsuitable	On Track Performance Remaining Static
% return on traded activity	105.1	100	On Track	Declining	On Track Performance Remaining Static

Performance within this Area of Focus is largely positive, with 3 of the 4 measures On Track and likely to remain in a similar position for the next period.

Improvement activity due to being Not On Track, with the Direction of Travel as Declining and Service Forecast to decline further over the next reporting period, further details of which will be presented in the Quarter 1 Financial Monitoring Report:

- % Net Variation of Outturn Forecasts to Revenue Budget (Whole Council).

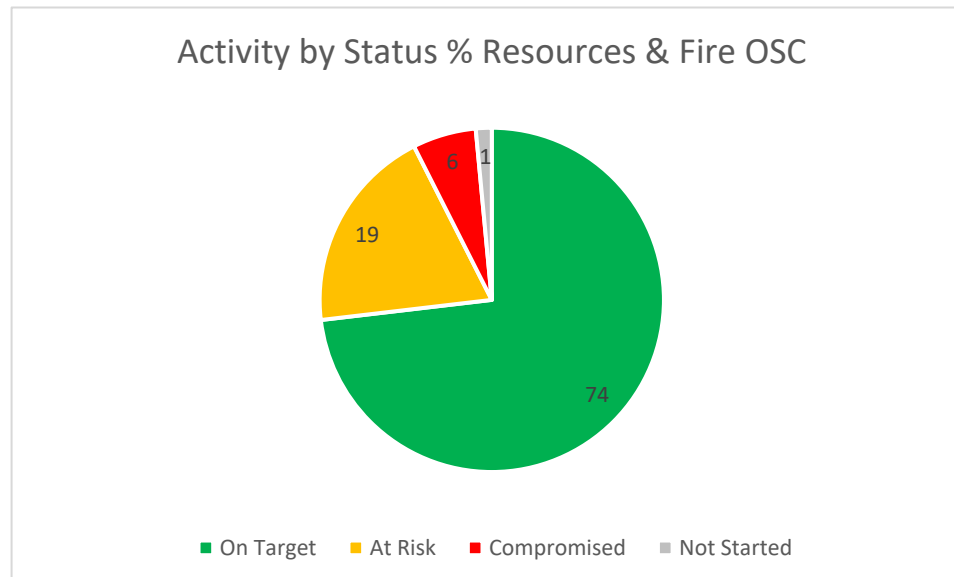
This page is intentionally left blank



# 1. Resources, Fire & Rescue OSC Progress on the Integrated Delivery Plan Quarter 1

## 1.1 Key Insights for Quarter 1 2023/24

Of the 206 actions within the Integrated Delivery Plan, 67 are attributable to the Resources, Fire and Rescue OSC. There is positive progress this Quarter with 74% of activities being On Track to achieve their objectives within the set timeframes, 25% are At Risk or Compromised, with 1% yet to start.



## 1.2 Create vibrant places with safe and inclusive communities.

Activity	Status	Narrative
Deliver our Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service (WFRS) 2-year improvement plan - <b>Deliver new firefighter training sites to upgrade our facilities.</b>	At Risk	The Kingsbury and Stratford sites are now complete. The Breathing Apparatus and Response point at Paynes lane in Rugby has secured planning permission. The project is now in construction pre tender stage, however the work undertaken to date has identified a likely variance in anticipated costs for the project. This will be kept under close review and be subject to value engineering.

### 1.3 Deliver major infrastructure, digital connectivity and improved transport options

Activity	Status	Narrative
Support our subsidiary property company, Warwickshire Property and Development Group to <b>provide flexible ownership models for priority workers with the first scheme/s identified.</b>	At Risk	This is still under consideration / understanding viability position and can only be progressed if viability established. within schemes as they present. Further work on 'Pipeline' continues to identify schemes.
Support our subsidiary property company, Warwickshire Property and Development Group to <b>identify land acquisition opportunities to support our plans for new homes, business development and growth in the county.</b>	At Risk	Further work continues with Officers and Warwickshire Property & Development Group to define processes, responsibilities, and accountabilities.
Support our subsidiary property company, Warwickshire Property and Development Group to <b>begin the Former Water Orton School Housing project.</b>	At Risk	Planning and local political questions have potentially delayed agreement of the scheme, but conversations continue with stakeholders.

### 1.4 Tackle climate change, promote biodiversity and deliver on our commitment to Net Zero

Activity	Status	Narrative
Develop and secure approval for a sustainable futures strategy, carbon reduction plan and costed action plan, engaging creatively with residents, partners and stakeholders, <b>to achieve the goal of being a net zero council by 2030.</b>	At Risk	Cabinet in June 2023 accepted the recommendation to continue engagement through holding expert panels in July and August to bring a final strategy to the OSC's in September and the final draft strategy to Cabinet in the Autumn 2023. A revised end date of October was established for Q1 reporting however it is highly likely this will slip to November.
Develop and secure approval for a sustainable futures strategy, carbon reduction plan and costed action plan, engaging creatively with residents, partners and stakeholders, <b>to achieve the goal of being a net zero County</b>	At Risk	Cabinet in June 2023 accepted the recommendation to continue engagement through holding expert panels in July and August to bring a final strategy to the OSC's in September and the final draft strategy to Cabinet in the Autumn 2023. A revised end date of

<b>by 2050 (informed by the UN Sustainable Development Goals).</b>		October was established for Q1 reporting however it is highly likely this will slip to November.
Develop and deliver on our plans to decarbonise our Council buildings with our carbon reduction target developed and agreed as part of our sustainable futures strategy and supported by our Energy Strategy.	At Risk	Consultant plans have been delivered identifying opportunities in Shire Hall. A plan for reducing satellite asset carbon is with the Sustainable Futures Team
Move forward with renewable energy initiatives to include <b>exploring opportunities with District and Borough Councils and partners to develop a scheme to support residents make choices and take action within their homes to become carbon neutral.</b>	Not Started	Once the current project to support home owners with renewables (Solar Together Warwickshire) is completed (expected Sept / Oct 23) options for further initiatives will be reviewed. Engagement with wider areas is ongoing via West Midlands Energy Hub.
Move forward with renewable energy initiatives to include <b>creating a 3-5 year plan for commercial renewable energy initiatives.</b>	At Risk	The review of landholdings and buildings will inform the direction of the commercial focussed work.

### Using our data and digital solutions to improve service delivery.

Activity	Status	Narrative
Deliver initiatives to improve how users of our services can have a better experience of interacting with the Council. Our initial focus will be on improving the following - <b>Correspondence and Complaints: Change how we respond consistently across all our services to improve customer experience, using the new Customer Platform and revising the Complaints Policy.</b>	Compromised	Progress remains compromised at this point in time, however key resources have now been recruited and will be in place later in the year. Meanwhile, progress has been made with the delayed start to the new customer feedback system implementation, which forms the backbone to this piece of work.
Deliver the first horizon of our digital Roadmap to improve customer service and reduce cost through the redesign of services and	At Risk	Project is progressing well and meeting its current milestones. Amber status due to a potential resourcing gap for future stages of the

automation, specifically by: **Implementing a new Customer Platform system to handle all of our initial contact with those who contact the Council.**

Establish the Data Roadmap closely aligned to the Digital Roadmap that will ensure delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy: **Contribute to Data Ownership Audit and support delivery of any emerging recommendations.**

Establish the Data Roadmap closely aligned to the Digital Roadmap that will ensure delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy: **Implement new Master Data Management (MDM) tool.**

Establish the Data Roadmap closely aligned to the Digital Roadmap that will ensure delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy: **Via the Education Digital Board, improve the use of the Synergy system and improve data management practices across the Education service.**

Establish the Data Roadmap closely aligned to the Digital Roadmap that will ensure delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy: **Design and begin roll-out of a 'data literacy' programme for the organisation.**

project. This resource is in the process of being recruited and anticipate a move back into the green imminently.

Compromised

This workstream is probably around one month behind the original target date. Internal Audit have completed their initial draft report and this will be shared with stakeholders in mid-July.

Compromised

This workstream is probably around two months behind the original target date and will be implemented during summer 2023. Initial tests have been successfully completed and the tool will be rolled out more widely in the second half of 2023, enabling us to support more data-matching projects (e.g. Single View of the Child).

At Risk

The Education Digital Board have had an initial workshop to explore this. Further work is underway to fully understand it.

At Risk

This needs to be the next area of focus as we move into Horizon 2. Some specific activities have started (e.g. working with People Strategy & Commissioning to create a 'how to' guide for designing effective measures of performance for commissioned services.

## 1.7 Our People and the Way We Work

Activity	Status	Narrative
Strategic Development of Procurement, Contract Management and Quality Assurance: <b>Roll out of new approach to Social Value in procurement.</b>	At Risk	Social Value Guidance and training materials is all complete, but roll out delayed so it coincides with roll out of Procurement & Contract Management Strategy, Operating Model and How to Manual.
Strategic Development of Procurement, Contract Management and Quality Assurance: <b>Deliver savings in 3rd party spend set out in the medium-term financial strategy.</b>	Compromised	Commissioner post recruited to and started work. Quality & Contract Monitoring Officer roles also staffed. Detailed delivery plan in place and work ongoing to secure deliveries. This is a significant improvement on previous position so whilst 'Compromised' it is on a rapid improvement trajectory.

### The following projects are currently On Track

Activity
Deliver our Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service (WFRS) 2-year improvement plan - <b>Implement a new risk-based inspection programme.</b>
Deliver our Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service (WFRS) 2-year improvement plan - <b>Improve the understanding of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion across our Warwickshire Fire &amp; Rescue Service and implement the actions in our WFRS People &amp; Ethics action plan to include staff engagement, training and a review of fire station facilities.</b>
Deliver our Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service (WFRS) 2-year improvement plan - <b>Achieve a positive reinspection outcome by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire &amp; Rescue Services (HMICFRS).</b>
Develop an infrastructure strategy and create a supporting action plan that sets out our priority infrastructure opportunities and schemes across Warwickshire - <b>Confirm 3rd party specialist to deliver the strategy.</b>
Develop an infrastructure strategy and create a supporting action plan that sets out our priority infrastructure opportunities and schemes across Warwickshire - <b>Confirm implementation timeline.</b>
Support our subsidiary property company, Warwickshire Property and Development Group to <b>deliver the first scheme in Southam to create 9 business units totalling 42,000 square feet in support of our economic growth ambitions.</b>

Support our subsidiary property company, Warwickshire Property and Development Group to **complete Warton Allotments Housing project.**

Support our subsidiary property company, Warwickshire Property and Development Group to **begin the Top Farm Housing project.**

Deliver a refreshed and more strategic approach to managing our capital spend within the Council by implementing a new capital operating model to include: **Reviewing and enhancing our approach to capital decision making, assurance and risk.**

Deliver a refreshed and more strategic approach to managing our capital spend within the Council by implementing a new capital operating model to include: **Streamlining our capital systems and performance reporting.**

Deliver a refreshed and more strategic approach to managing our capital spend within the Council by implementing a new capital operating model to include: **Delivery of the capital element of the new Unit4 Cloud hosting project in September 2023 and associated process training/communications by end of December 2023.**

Move forward with renewable energy initiatives to include **investigating our approach to renewable energy as part of the development of the Energy Strategy.**

Move forward with renewable energy initiatives to include **reviewing current estate to identify additional PV opportunities.**

Move forward with renewable energy initiatives to include **having the plan for estate decarbonisation endorsed by Council/Cabinet.**

Identify projects and funding for a retrofit programme to improve energy efficiency of the Council's property estate.

Adaptation: Rollout of organisational climate change adaptation risk assessments and action plans in line with the 2022 piloted process for fire and rescue, public health and flood prevention.

Implement opportunities for further school engagement in climate change and achieving net zero through Eco Schools and other engagement tools.

Supporting those who need the most help to include: **Delivering the Household Support Fund Grant in 2023/24.**

Supporting those who need the most help to include: **Capturing learning from the operation of the Household Support Fund to inform a review of the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme (to include options appraisal and costed model).**

Embed a continuous improvement approach across the Benefits Assessment and Income Charging teams, which will support the on-going redesign of core processes: **Pilot approach by September 23 and fully embed by March 24.**

Embed a continuous improvement approach across the Benefits Assessment and Income Charging teams, which will support the ongoing redesign of core processes: **Significant redesign progress / improvement made by March 24.**

Finalise and roll-out with partners and communities a community powered approach (Warwickshire Stepping Forward) including: **Holding a 2023 'Big Conversation' event.**

Finalise and roll-out with partners and communities a community powered approach (Warwickshire Stepping Forward) including: **Delivering an Elected Member Peer Learning programme working with key delivery partners.**

Finalise and roll-out with partners and communities a community powered approach (Warwickshire Stepping Forward) including: **Making community power a central tenet of our Levelling Up pilots.**

Finalise and roll-out with partners and communities a community powered approach (Warwickshire Stepping Forward) including: **Through existing partnerships, build and embed a community powered way of working including Thriving Communities Partnership, Stratford's Social Impact Partnership, Health and Well-Being Board, ICS Place Boards and governance arrangements for local Levelling Up plans.**

Deliver the “ground breaker” Community Power projects: **Supporting local transformation and regeneration, including community capacity building around the Transforming Nuneaton programme, and the Levelling Up pilots in Mancetter South and Ridge Lane, Bar Pool North and Crescents, and Lillington East (and linking to the pilot in Rugby Town Centre being led by Rugby Borough Council).**

Deliver the “ground breaker” Community Power projects: **Unlocking the skills and time of Council staff to support communities, including continuation and development of the Community of Practice.**

Deliver the “ground breaker” Community Power projects: **Enabling collaborative working on highways, transport and road safety, , including modern Lengthsman Schemes, community work gangs, community information packs, safe and active travel champions.**

Deliver the “ground breaker” Community Power projects: **Combatting food inequality through the sustainable extension of the Community Pantry proof-of-concept.**

Create the conditions for greater volunteering and social action and provide tools to support the creation and development of Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector commissioned services.

Create and deliver a blended revenue and capital Social Fabric Fund to focus on community powered initiatives primarily in the 22 Levelling Up priority LSOAs.

Complete and implement the 5 Levelling Up place plans, joining up activity across agencies, targeting effort, and resetting the relationship with communities (specific actions from the plans picked up elsewhere in this delivery plan).

Deliver initiatives to improve how users of our services can have a better experience of interacting with the Council. Our initial focus will be on improving the following - **Social Media: Make recommendations on how we can best use social media to gain insight and feedback about issues or concerns raised about Council services.**

Deliver the first horizon of our digital Roadmap to improve customer service and reduce cost through the redesign of services and automation, specifically by: **Implementing a single Contact Centre Telephony Solution.**

Deliver the first horizon of our digital Roadmap to improve customer service and reduce cost through the redesign of services and automation, specifically by: **Working with Assistant Directors and the Commissioning Support Unit to identify opportunities that could benefit from process automation and recommending a programme to achieve the associated MTFs savings from 2024/25 onwards.**

Establish the Data Roadmap closely aligned to the Digital Roadmap that will ensure delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy: **Implement activities by Horizon 1 of the Data Roadmap.**

Establish the Data Roadmap closely aligned to the Digital Roadmap that will ensure delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy: **Design corporate Data Standards.**

Establish the Data Roadmap closely aligned to the Digital Roadmap that will ensure delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy: **Implement activities by Horizon 2 of the Data Roadmap.**

Establish the Data Roadmap closely aligned to the Digital Roadmap that will ensure delivery of the Digital and Data Strategy: **Support the roll-out and use of the Data Governance System, including the role of nominated 'data stewards'.**

Deliver Year 3 of “Our People” strategy action plan in 2023/24 and in particular our 5 key priority areas and including: **Strategic workforce planning - to enable us to better understand our future workforce needs, to include work on establishment control.**

Deliver Year 3 of “Our People” strategy action plan in 2023/24 and in particular our 5 key priority areas and including: **Recruitment and retention - to consider our recruitment and retention approach to include promoting working for the Council and addressing hard to recruit roles and staff retention.**

Deliver Year 3 of “Our People” strategy action plan in 2023/24 and in particular our 5 key priority areas and including: **Pay and reward - consolidate our employee offer and consideration of apprenticeships, career progression posts, leadership and development training**



Deliver Year 3 of “Our People” strategy action plan in 2023/24 and in particular our 5 key priority areas and including: **Equality Diversity & Inclusion - to include launching our approach to EDI and developing an approach to social mobility with partners, linked to Levelling Up.**

Deliver Year 3 of “Our People” strategy action plan in 2023/24 and in particular our 5 key priority areas and including: **Employee engagement - continue to look at creative ways to increase response rate, particularly in our community teams and to continue to build on our work supporting staff well-being and consolidate our ‘Thrive at work’ achievements.**

Develop a wider Estates Master Plan for the entirety of the Council’s estate across the County which provides options on its optimal use.

Strategic Development of Procurement, Contract Management and Quality Assurance: **Roll out of Procurement and Contract Management Strategy. To include standardising practice, upskilling staff delivering this activity.**

Strategic Development of Procurement, Contract Management and Quality Assurance: **Plan, support and deliver activity to ensure the Council is prepared for the new Procurement Act.**

Strategic Development of Procurement, Contract Management and Quality Assurance: **Improve procurement practice and culture against performance standards and the annual procurement pipeline.**

This page is intentionally left blank

## Management of Financial Risk

1. Performance against the latest approved revenue budget as measured by the forecast position at the end of the first quarter. Further information and reasons for variances can be found in the Quarter 1 Finance Monitoring Report.

Service Area	Approved Budget	Forecast Spend	(Under) /Overspend	% Change from Budget	Represented by:			
					Investment Funds	Impact on Earmarked Reserves	Remaining Service Variance	% change Remaining Service Variance from Approved Budget
	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m	£m	%
Business and Customer Services	19.976	20.296	0.320	1.6%	0.258	(0.112)	0.174	0.9%
Commissioning Support Unit	6.481	6.591	0.110	1.7%	(0.063)	0.000	0.173	2.7%
Enabling Services	25.532	29.302	3.770	14.8%	1.633	0.290	1.847	7.2%
Finance	6.374	6.435	0.061	1.0%	0.000	0.026	0.035	0.5%
Governance & Policy	2.963	3.385	0.422	14.2%	0.000	0.000	0.422	14.2%
Fire & Rescue	25.100	25.075	(0.025)	(0.1%)	(0.088)	0.000	(0.016)	(0.0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>86.426</b>	<b>91.084</b>	<b>4.658</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>1.740</b>	<b>0.204</b>	<b>2.635</b>	<b>3.0%</b>

2. Performance against the approved savings target as measured by forecast delivery

At the end of the first quarter Commissioning Support Unit, Finance and Fire & Rescue are reporting 100% delivery of their saving targets (7 schemes totalling £0.405m). Business and Customer Services are forecasting a shortfall of 25% on their target of £0.546m, Enabling Services forecasting a 45% shortfall on a target of £0.666m and Governance and Policy forecasting a shortfall of 83% on a target of £0.325m. The total shortfall across the three services is forecast to be £0.706m.

## 3. Performance against the approved capital programme as measured by forecast delays in delivery

Service	Approved 2022-23 capital programme	New projects in year	Net over / underspend	Total capital programme	Budget Reprofile	Delays	Forecast In year capital spend	% Delays
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
Business and Customer Support	0.511	0.750	0	1.261	0	0	1.261	0.0%
Enabling Services	16.074	0	0.001	16.075	0	(0.241)	15.834	(1.5%)
Governance and Policy	3.239	0	0	3.239	0.008	(0.049)	3.198	(1.5%)
Fire and Rescue	3.095	1.907	0	5.002	1.096	(1.987)	4.111	(39.7%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>22.919</b>	<b>2.657</b>	<b>0.001</b>	<b>25.577</b>	<b>1.104</b>	<b>(2.277)</b>	<b>24.404</b>	<b>(8.9%)</b>

**Enabling Services - £0.241m:**

- Development of Rural Broadband – (£0.022m). Reduced expenditure and corresponding reduction in income due to a vacant post in the CSW partnership team not yet being filled.
- Lillington Academy CTA Works (£0.219m). Delays have been caused by the need to fit a new electrical power unit on site.

**Governance & Policy - £0.049m:**

- Rationalisation of County Storage Facilities (£0.021m). Works delayed relate to the installation of interceptors and a retention of funds.
- Acquisition of land in Warwick (£0.028m). The budget phasing has been adjusted to allow for post occupation works.

**Fire & Rescue - £1.987m:**

- Fire & Rescue HQ Leamington Spa - £1.987m Leamington HQ Refurbishment is currently on hold whilst discussions take place and strategic decisions are made around the works required.

### Key Service Risks Summary

At a service level there are 43 risks recorded against services relating to Resources and Fire and Rescue Services. Key risks are highlighted which are red risks (high risk) and where a risk level has been higher than the risk target for 3 quarters or more and is 3 points or more over target.

Key Service Risks	Net risk is currently green or amber	Net risk is currently red
<p><b>Risk level has not exceeded the target for 3 quarters in a row</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 other risks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(Enabling Services)</b> Cyber attack is successful</li> <li>• <b>(Enabling Services)</b> Capital costs for Education Construction exceed basic need funding</li> </ul>
<p><b>Risk level has exceeded target for 3 quarters in a row and is currently more than 3 points above target</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(Enabling Services)</b> Your HR Stabilization isn't achieved to a level that optimizes benefits for all users/organizations</li> <li>• <b>(Fire and Rescue Services)</b> Control Room critical systems failure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>(Finance)</b> Insufficient resources to deliver the Authority's Council Plan and priorities</li> <li>• <b>(Fire and Rescue Services)</b> Cyber Attacks</li> <li>• <b>(Fire and Rescue Services)</b> Emergency Services network</li> <li>• <b>(Fire and Rescue Services)</b> National power outage and maintain statutory duties</li> <li>• <b>(Fire and Rescue Services)</b> Protection Capacity</li> <li>• <b>(Fire and Rescue Services)</b> Reduced on call availability</li> <li>• <b>(Governance and Policy)</b> Increase in serious data breaches and/or backlog of Subject Access Requests</li> </ul>

This page is intentionally left blank

## Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 September 2023

### Treasury Management Update Quarterly Report

#### Recommendation

That the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and endorses the Quarter 1 2023/24 Treasury Management Report.

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice for Treasury Management 2021 recommends that members be updated on treasury management activities at least quarterly. This report, therefore, ensures this Council is implementing best practice in accordance with the Code.
- 1.2 The Treasury Management Strategy sets out that Council delegates to Cabinet responsibility for receiving and reviewing monitoring reports and acting on recommendations in respect of treasury management activity.
- 1.3 Treasury activity has previously been reported half-yearly and at year end to Cabinet, and this will continue. Quarterly reporting to Overview and Scrutiny Committee will provide additional opportunity to have oversight and assurance regarding this part of the Council's financial activities.
- 1.4 This report intends to provide the Committee with a quarter 1 update on the treasury management position and activities of the Council. This is a new report driven by updates in best practice.

#### *Report Highlights*

- 1.5 Total borrowings reduced by £49 million following a decision to repay six Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) loans early. This early repayment makes the borrowing position more efficient.
- 1.6 A debt early settlement discount of £1.9 million was gained on the early settlement of the six PWLB loans. In line with accounting standards the gain will be spread over the next 10 years with £190,000 being recognized in the revenue account each year.
- 1.7 The average level of treasury investments across the quarter was £449m compared to the opening balance on 1 April 2023 of £457m, which reduced by

£67m, mainly due to the debt repayment towards the end of the quarter. This left a closing balance of £390m of treasury investments at the 30 June 2023.

- 1.8 Liquid funds (*funds that can be accessed very quickly*) decreased by £67m while fixed term funds increased by £37m. Again, the reduction was largely due to debt early settlement while the increase in fixed term funds reflects our first ever investments in the Housing Association sector, and divestments from a Santander bank deposit fund and a BlackRock variable net asset value investment.
- 1.9 Interest rates continued to move upwards during the quarter in response to high inflation and an increasing Bank of England (BOE) base rate. They are expected to remain elevated, and potentially increase slightly, in the short-term before levelling and falling back down slightly over the next few years.
- 1.10 Interest income on treasury investments of £4.44m was recorded during the quarter, against a budget of £1.17m. Whilst these significant additional returns are welcomed in the context of the wider council budget, there needs to be a degree of caution around how this influences the budget setting for returns, which are influenced by the level of cash available, interest rates and need for external borrowing. Locking in a high budget now may require a corresponding future budget reduction as reserves and interest rates drop.
- 1.11 The option in the approved Treasury Management Strategy to explore paying a three year £104m pension prepayment was not taken once the business case was further developed. In the context of higher returns on mainstream treasury management activity the MTFs benefits can be delivered through this core activity, which gives more flexibility over the accessibility of the cash, which would otherwise have been locked away through the prepayment.
- 1.12 The Treasury team completed training during the quarter which included formal training from CIPFA, as well as market updates and briefings from third parties. Team members also attended various conferences and networking events.

## **2. Annual Investment Strategy**

- 2.1 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2023/24, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy, was approved by the Council on 7 February 2023. In accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, it sets out the Council's investment priorities as being:
  - Security;
  - liquidity; and
  - yield.
- 2.2 The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper and prudent levels of security and liquidity, aligned with the Council's risk appetite. This is in line with the CIPFA Prudential Code,



which governs our Treasury Management activity. In the current economic climate, over and above keeping investments short-term to cover cash flow needs, there is a benefit to seek out value available in periods up to 36 months with high credit rated financial institutions.

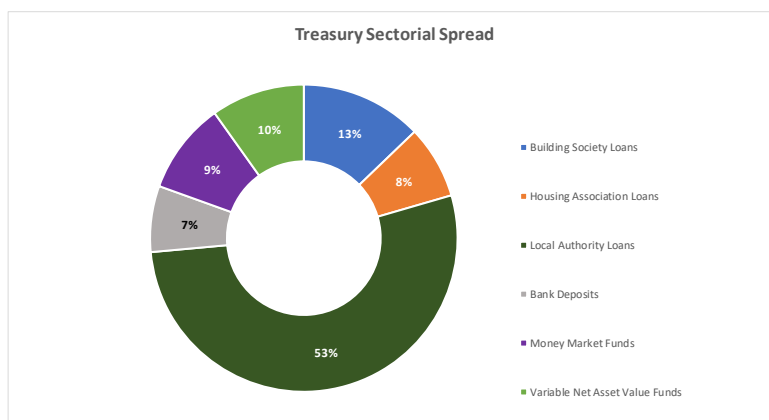
- 2.3 Investment returns continued to improve during the first quarter of 2023/24 and are expected to improve further if the Bank of England rate continues to increase over the next few months as anticipated by markets and economic commentators. However, the market is still volatile, and forecasts change on a daily basis.

***Creditworthiness***

- 2.4 There have been few changes to credit ratings of investment counterparties over the quarter under review. However, officers continue to monitor these, and other measures of creditworthiness to ensure that only appropriate counterparties are considered for investment purposes.

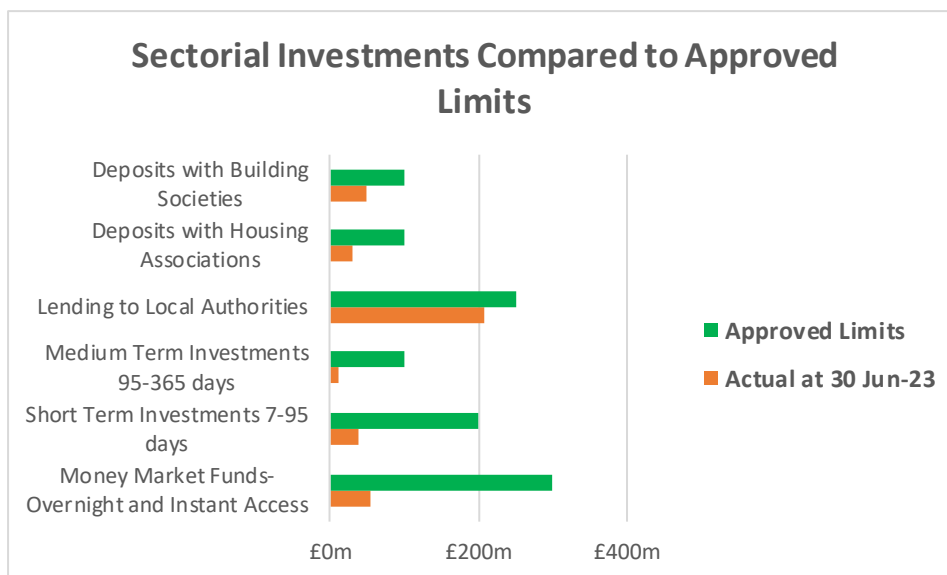
***Investment Counterparty Criteria***

- 2.5 The current investment counterparty criteria selection approved in the TMSS is meeting the requirement of the treasury management function. While the investment counterparty criteria selection included Housing Associations, we had not invested in any housing association until this quarter when we have placed three fixed term loan investments with three different housing associations worth £30m. This expansion is increasing the range of viable investment options open to us and reduces the investment concentration risk profile.
- 2.6 As spelt out in the approved 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy, we have continued to prioritize security and liquidity with yields being considered within these two parameters. The approach resulted in the Council’s treasury investments being spread across diverse sectors which exhibit strong security and liquidity features. The graph below illustrates which sectors and in what proportions where the treasury funds were invested as of 30 June 2023:



- 2.7 Local authorities and housing associations together held 61% of the Council’s treasury funds on fixed term loans with varying durations of up to January

2026. The counterparty and sectoral total investments were all within the limits set in the Treasury Management Strategy approved by the Council. The graph below illustrates how the sectorial exposures compared to the approved sector limits:



- 2.8 During the quarter a few local authorities issued Section 114 notices, and some were reported to be on the verge of issuing the distress notice. The Treasury Officers together with the council's treasury advisors Link Group, continued to monitor these developments closely in line with the Counter Party Credit Worthiness Policy contained in the Treasury Management Strategy to ensure no investment was placed with a financially distressed counterparty.

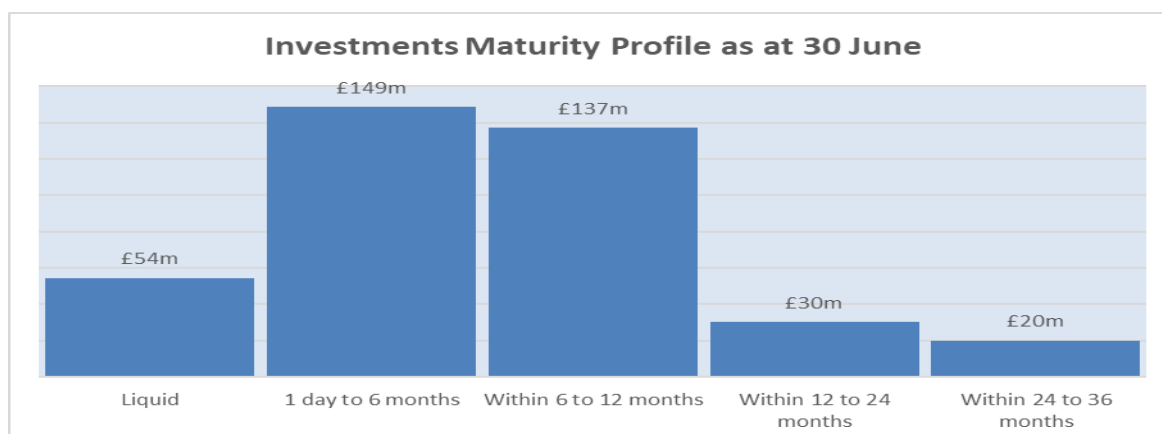
### ***Investment balances***

- 2.9 The average level of funds available for investment purposes during the quarter was **£449m**. These funds were available on a temporary basis, and the level of funds available was mainly dependent on the timing of precept payments, receipt of grants and progress on the capital programme.
- 2.10 Total investments balance reduced by £67m from the £457m at the end of the last financial year to £390m on 30 June 2023 mainly because of the amount applied towards the early settlement of the £49m PWLB loans. Over 73% (£287m) of the total treasury investments was managed in-house through fixed term lending to local authorities, housing associations and local building societies, while 27% (£105m) was externally managed through money market funds and special purpose variable net asset value funds.

Investment Type in £ Millions	Balance on 31 March 2023	Movement during Q1	Balance on 30 June 2023
Building Society Deposits	50	0	50
Housing Association Loans	0	30	30
Local Authority Loans	200	7	207
Bank Deposits	38	-11	27
<b>Managed In House</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>314</b>
Money Market Funds	112	-75	38
VNAV Funds	57	-19	38
<b>Externally Managed</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>-93</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>-67</b>	<b>390</b>

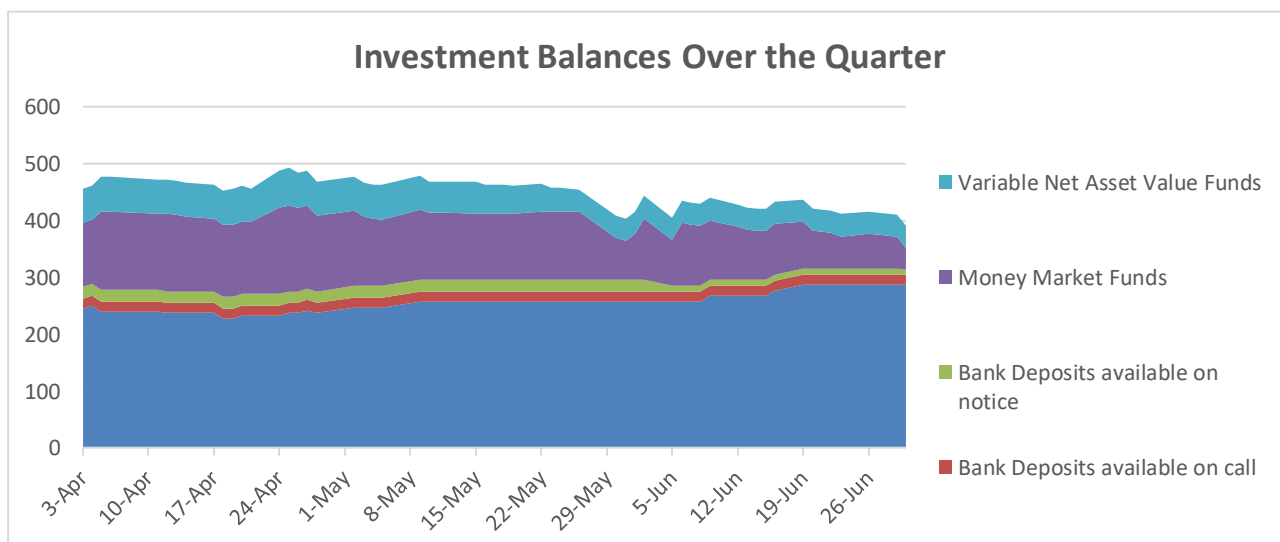
### ***Investments Maturity Profile***

- 2.11 With the bulk of the investment funds being held for financing the Council's capital programme the maturity profile of the investments depicted in the chart below tended to lean mostly to the short-term, with 87% of maturing within twelve months and only 13% maturing over 12 months. This is also in line with the prevailing market where borrowers and funds are reluctant to commit to long term securities as they will be tied to expensive debt/deposits when the long-term market expectation is that interest rates will begin to fall in the medium-term as inflation declines. The chart below illustrates the maturity profile of the investments at the end of the quarter:



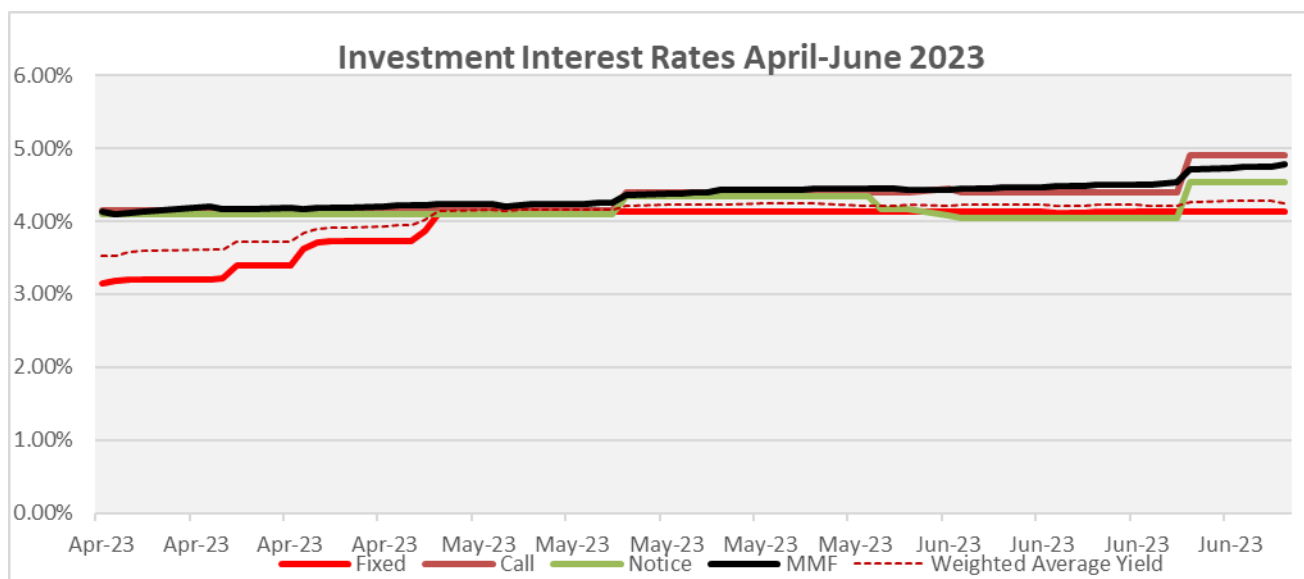
2.12 Total investment balances during the quarter averaged £449m and declined by £67m from the end of March, largely due to the early settlement of the £49m PWLB debt. The early repayment of debt, together with the overall reduction in the size of the investment portfolio, resulted in the reduction of the liquid money market funds which started the quarter at £123m and closed at £54m. The high liquidity at the beginning of the financial year had been planned to cover the potential pension fund prepayment which, was not ultimately proceeded with (see paragraphs 2.18 and 2.19).

2.13 As depicted in the chart below, all other investment types slightly reduced except for the investments in fixed deposits with local authorities, housing associations and building societies which increased from £250m at the end of last financial year to £287m at the end of the quarter. The decision to increase the fixed deposits category was anchored on locking in the current high interest rates longer to limit the investment portfolio's exposure to downward repricing of interest rates expected when inflation and the base rate begin to fall in near medium term.



**Investment Yield**

2.14 During the quarter market interest rates continued with the upward trend that started during the last months of the pandemic and continued to rise further due to subsequent global and national political and economic events. The Council's treasury investment yields responded in tandem with the maturing and liquid funds being reinvested at improving interest rates. However, long-dated fixed deposits that were placed during the low interest era and yet to mature, slowed down the upward trend of the portfolio yield as illustrated in the following graph where the solid red line reflects the lagging average yield from fixed deposits. All except one of these fixed term investments had repriced by the end of the quarter leading to an average fixed investment interest rate of 4.13% compared to 3.15% at end of last financial year and 0.46% at June 2022.



- 2.15 The increasing interest rates referred to above, together with adjustments to the mix of investments, resulted in treasury activities outperforming the budget after recording total income of £4.44m compared to a YTD budget of £1.17m. The interest income budget for the year was set up before the increase in interest rates. Whilst these significant additional returns are welcomed in the context of the wider Council finances, there needs to be a degree of caution around how this influences the budget setting for returns, which are influenced by the level of cash available, interest rates and need for external borrowing. Locking in a high budget now, may require a corresponding future budget reduction as reserves and interest rates drop.
- 2.16 The recorded £4.44m interest income represent an annualized yield of 3.96% on an average investment portfolio of £449m. The Treasury activities income was earned on investments that are managed inhouse and externally managed as shown in the table below:

Investment	Yield	Yield in £'000s	Budget Q1	Yield in %	Relevant Benchmark
<b>Managed In House</b>		<b>2,838</b>	<b>740</b>	<b>3.90%</b>	<b>3.74%</b>
Money Market Funds		1,150		4.28%	4.37%
Variable Net Asset Value Funds		451		3.64%	2.83%
<b>Externally Managed</b>		<b>1,601</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>4.08%</b>	
<b>Total Funds</b>		<b>4,439</b>	<b>1,172</b>	<b>3.96%</b>	

- 2.17 It is pleasing to note that the 3.90% yield on investments managed inhouse exceeded the 3.74% benchmark yield and the 3.64% yield on variable net asset value investments (VNAV) also surpassed the 2.83% benchmark yield. The 4.28% yield on externally managed money market funds marginally missed the 4.37% benchmark by less than 0.1%.

### ***Pension Early Payment***

- 2.18 The 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy included an intention to pay the Council's 3-year pension fund contributions for the valuation period 2023/24-2025/26 in one lump sum at the start of the valuation period, with the preference being to do this in April 2023. This would have resulted in the Council being given a discount of £6m compared to cash payments made at normal monthly intervals. In anticipation of this potential decision, and in order to act in a timely fashion, the Treasury Management Team maintained a larger amount of investments in more liquid money market funds a few weeks before year end through to early April.
- 2.19 Following exploration of the business case for the prepayment, the section 151 officer (Executive Director for Resources), in consultation with the Pensions and Finance teams, took a decision to not make the prepayment. Given interest rates on mainstream investments had continued to rise, the business case highlighted that an equivalent return could be delivered through core Treasury Management activity, with the added benefit of funds being more accessible than being locked away for three years by the pensions prepayment approach. The business case indicated that not making the early payment would result in an expected net yield of 4.4% over three years compared to the 4% yield for the early payment option. In monetary terms, the option of not making the early payment was forecast to yield £250,000 more than the early payment option. Following the decision, the cash has been invested with local authorities, housing associations, and building societies at rates that are actually earning more than the prepayment discount would have delivered, further justifying the decision.

### **3. Borrowing**

- 3.1 Total borrowing stood at £272m at 30 June 2023, compared to £321m at the start of the financial year on 1 April 2023. The reduction was because of the early repayment of some loans. No new borrowing was undertaken during the quarter ended 30th June 2023. It is anticipated that no new borrowing will be undertaken during this fiscal year.
- 3.2 While no new loans were drawn, due to market conditions around interest rates and gilt yields we were able to take the opportunity to repay prematurely some of our debt. Where normally we face sizable repayment penalties that prevent this, we earned a £1.9 million discount. The discount is in the background of the PWLB being able to re-lend the funds at interest rates higher than the loans were at. In the event when a PWLB borrower is to make an early settlement and the loan interest rates are higher than what is currently obtaining for PWLB loans, a premium will be payable instead of a discount.

3.3 The table below summarizes the loan early settlement transaction:

PWLB Early Repayment	GBP
Total Principal to be repaid	49,000,000
Discount	1,925,404
<b>Net Payment after discount</b>	<b>47,074,596</b>
Accrued interest to be repaid	315,956
<b>Total Repayment</b>	<b>47,390,552</b>

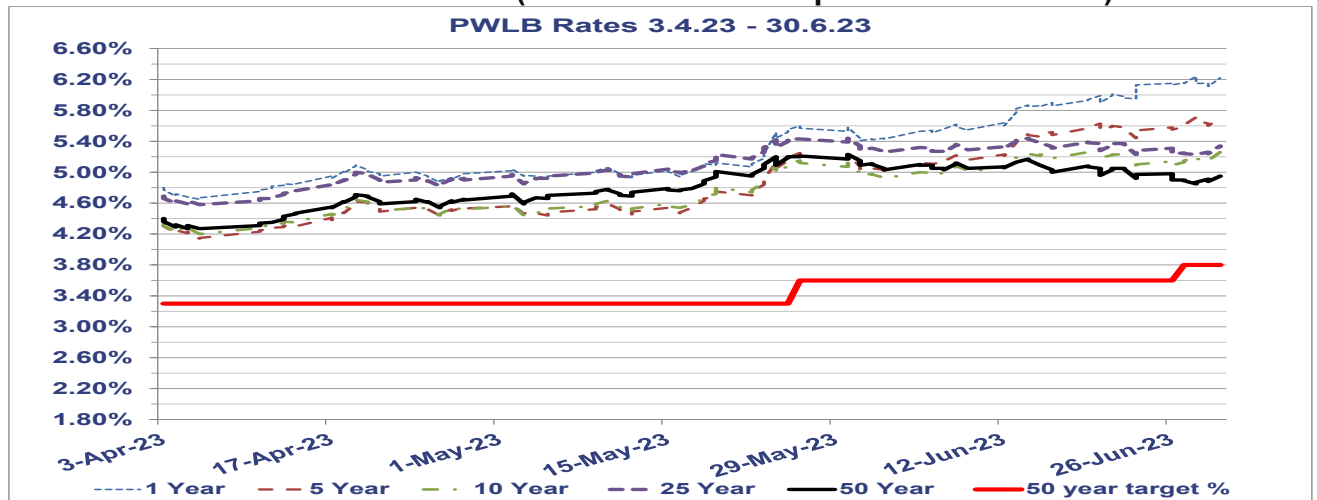
3.4 Another factor in the debt early repayment decision was that this reduced our over-borrowed position, moving the debt more towards our liability benchmark. The decision also reduced peak exposure to debt in loan repayments in future years (this can be seen in Appendix 1), which will allow us to re-profile this exposure more effectively as we take out future debt to finance our capital programme, thereby delivering on one of the borrowing objectives set out in the 2023/24 Treasury Management Strategy.

**PWLB maturity Certainty Rates 1st April to 30th June 2023**

3.5 Gilt yields and PWLB rates were on a rising trend between 1st April and 30th June.

3.6 The 50-year PWLB Certainty Rate target for new long-term borrowing started 2023/24 at 3.30% before increasing to a peak of 3.80% in June. As can be seen, with rates elevated across the whole of the curve, the Council’s advisors, Link Group, advised local authorities not borrow long-term unless in circumstances where an authority wants certainty of rate and judges the cost to be affordable.

**PWLB RATES 03.04.23 - 30.06.23 (note: the 1st/2nd April was a weekend)**



## HIGH/LOW/AVERAGE PWLB RATES FOR 01.04.23 – 30.06.23

	1 Year	5 Year	10 Year	25 Year	50 Year
<b>Low</b>	4.65%	4.14%	4.20%	4.58%	4.27%
<b>Date</b>	06/04/2023	06/04/2023	06/04/2023	06/04/2023	05/04/2023
<b>High</b>	6.24%	5.71%	5.28%	5.44%	5.23%
<b>Date</b>	28/06/2023	28/06/2023	20/06/2023	30/05/2023	30/05/2023
<b>Average</b>	5.32%	4.87%	4.78%	5.09%	4.82%
<b>Spread</b>	1.59%	1.57%	1.08%	0.86%	0.96%

***Debt rescheduling***

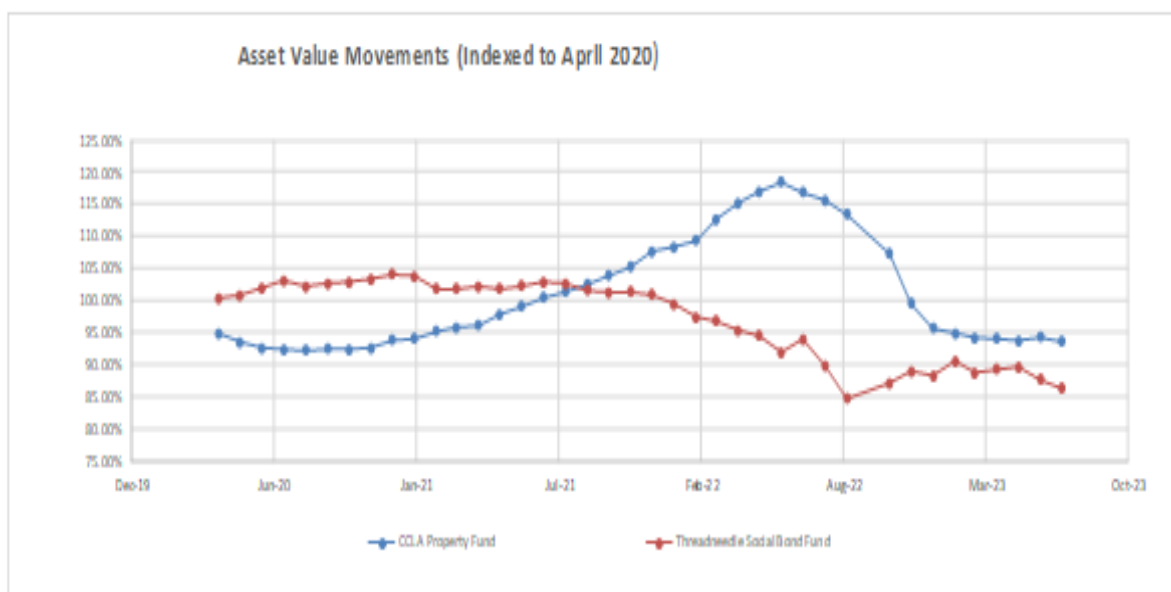
- 3.7 Debt rescheduling opportunities have increased significantly in the current quarter where gilt yields, which underpin PWLB rates and market loans, have risen materially. However, during the quarter under review, no viable opportunity was identified to reschedule the Council's PWLB debt.

**4. Variable Net Asset Value (VNAV) investments**

- 4.1 As noted earlier in the report, included in the treasury investments is £37.6m invested in variable net asset value investments. These are investments that are traded in a way like listed stock where the value of the assets held vary up and down dependent on the performance of the funds and or funded underlying assets. As at the beginning of the quarter the Council had investments in three separate funds namely, The Threadneedle Social Bond Fund, CCLA Local Authority Property Fund and the BlackRock ICS Sterling Liquid Environmentally Aware Fund. During the quarter, a decision was made to divest from the BlackRock fund and divert funds to fixed deposits where higher returns were prevailing. The remaining two funds have consistently paid good dividends.
- 4.2 During the quarter, the three funds earned £0.451m in income, equivalent to 3.64% yield on the average investment balance of £50m held during the period.
- 4.3 With respect to valuations, the two remaining funds had in the past gained significantly during the period of prevailing low interest rates as shown in the graph below. Having sharply reduced on the onset of the rising interest rates environment, the values of the two investments had somewhat stabilized but remained sensitive to the continuously increasing market interest rates and taking further accounting losses. While the CCLA unit price at £2.83 is 20% lower than its June 2022 peak price of £3.58, it remains 14% higher than the original purchase price of £2.48. Threadneedle, however, has lost value against the original cost. At £0.96 per unit the social bond unit price is lower than the £1.02 2014 purchase price. The Fund manager expects the valuations to improve when interest rates begin to fall in the medium-term and Treasury officers have decided not to divest in the short term to avoid the



current accounting valuation losses becoming a real loss in cash terms.



## 5. Non-Treasury Investments

- 5.1 In addition to managing the Council’s treasury investments and borrowings, the Treasury officers are also responsible for managing other non-treasury investments, undertaken in pursuit of achieving the council’s economic, commercial, and social objectives. Among the ongoing non-treasury investments the Treasury team is involved in are the Warwickshire Recovery and Investment Fund, the Warwickshire Property and Development Group, and a schools catering local authority trading company.
- 5.2 The non-treasury investments activities are reported and monitored at other Council governance forums and are not included in this report.

## 6. Environmental, Social and Governance

- 6.1 As stated in the Council approved Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS), the Council is committed to considering environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues, and has a particular interest in terms of climate change and pursuing activities that have a positive social impact.
- 6.2 In the TMSS, the Council undertook to ensure an understanding of the degree to which investments may contribute towards climate change and where appropriate, move cash balances to funds that have are ESG driven targets, or “green funds”, to ensure our investment is contributing towards tackling ESG issues, among other undertakings, with security and liquidity of investments taking precedence.
- 6.3 **Environmental:** The majority (73%) of the treasury investments outstanding at the end of this quarter (30th June 2023) were fixed-term deposits with other

local authorities, housing associations and building societies. Of these deposits, 66% by value were with local authorities, housing associations or building societies with a climate action plan.

6.4 **Governance:** Officers had to rely on credit rating for assessing governance alignment. Governance considerations are included as part of the credit rating process, such as whether the money market fund asset manager is suitably qualified, competent, and capable, and whether there is an experienced and credible senior management team and sufficient resources. Therefore, the high credit ratings suggest that there are robust governance procedures within the banks, building societies and money market funds in which the Council invested in the quarter.

6.5 **Social alignment:** It is assumed that other local authorities will largely align with the Council's objectives. They are likely to provide similar services to the communities within their area, and have similar objectives, such as promoting a thriving economy and supporting people to live their best lives. Similarly, the primary objective of most housing associations is to provide affordable housing, which aligns with the Council Plan objectives.

## 7. Financial Implications

7.1 The financial implications are detailed within the report and appendices.

## 8. Environmental Implications

The environmental implications are detailed within the report.

## Appendix

Appendix 1 – Investment and Borrowing Portfolio

Appendix 2 – Economic Update

## Background Papers

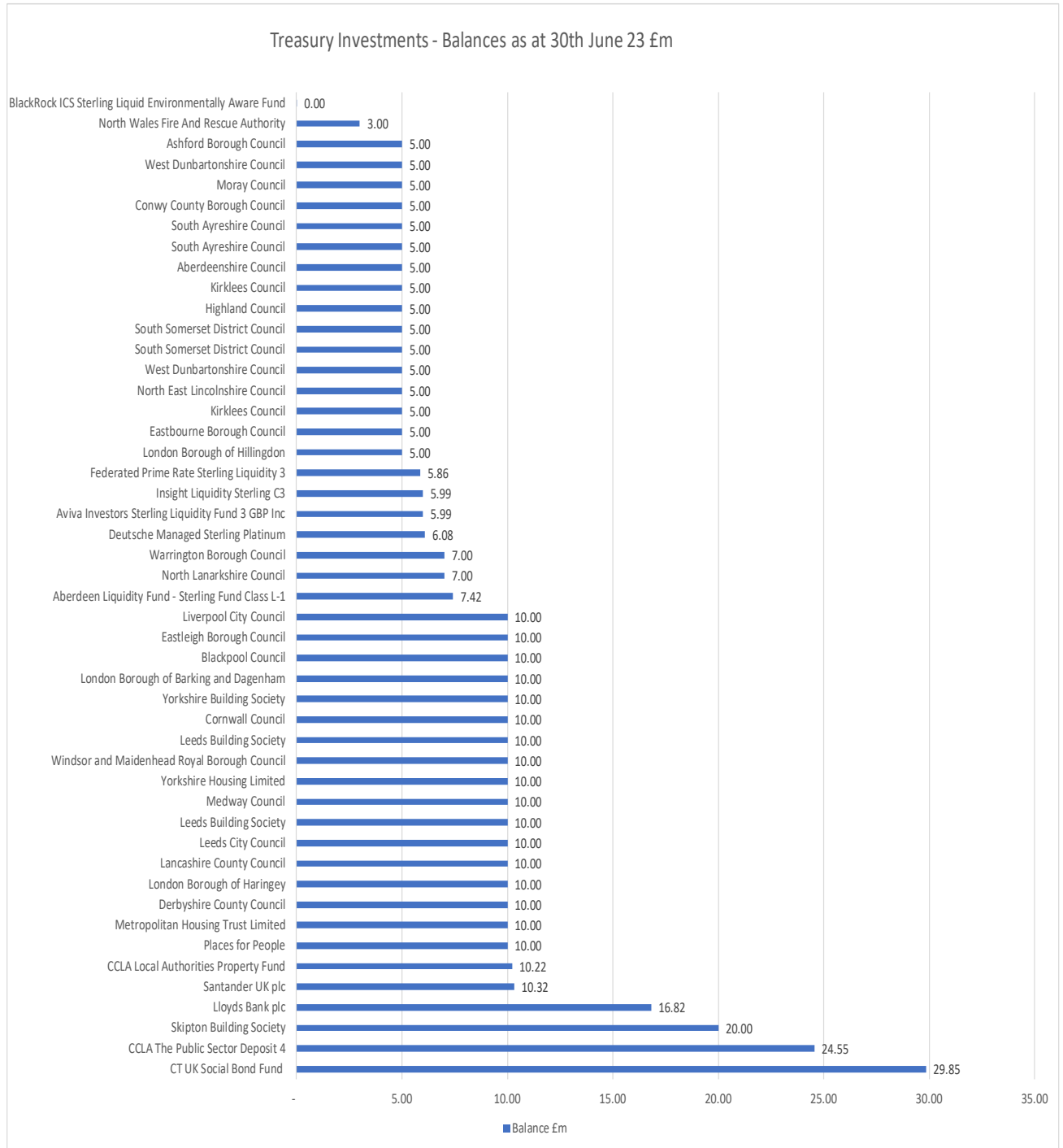
None.

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Makion Chiwade Emily Reaney Chris Norton	<a href="mailto:makionchiwade@warwickshire.gov.uk">makionchiwade@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:emilyreaney@warwickshire.gov.uk">emilyreaney@warwickshire.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:chrisonorton@warwickshire.gov.uk">chrisonorton@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Director	Andrew Felton Director of Finance	<a href="mailto:andrewfelton@warwickshire.gov.uk">andrewfelton@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Executive Director for Resources	Rob Powell	<a href="mailto:robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk">robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property	Peter Butlin	<a href="mailto:cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk">cllrbutlin@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>

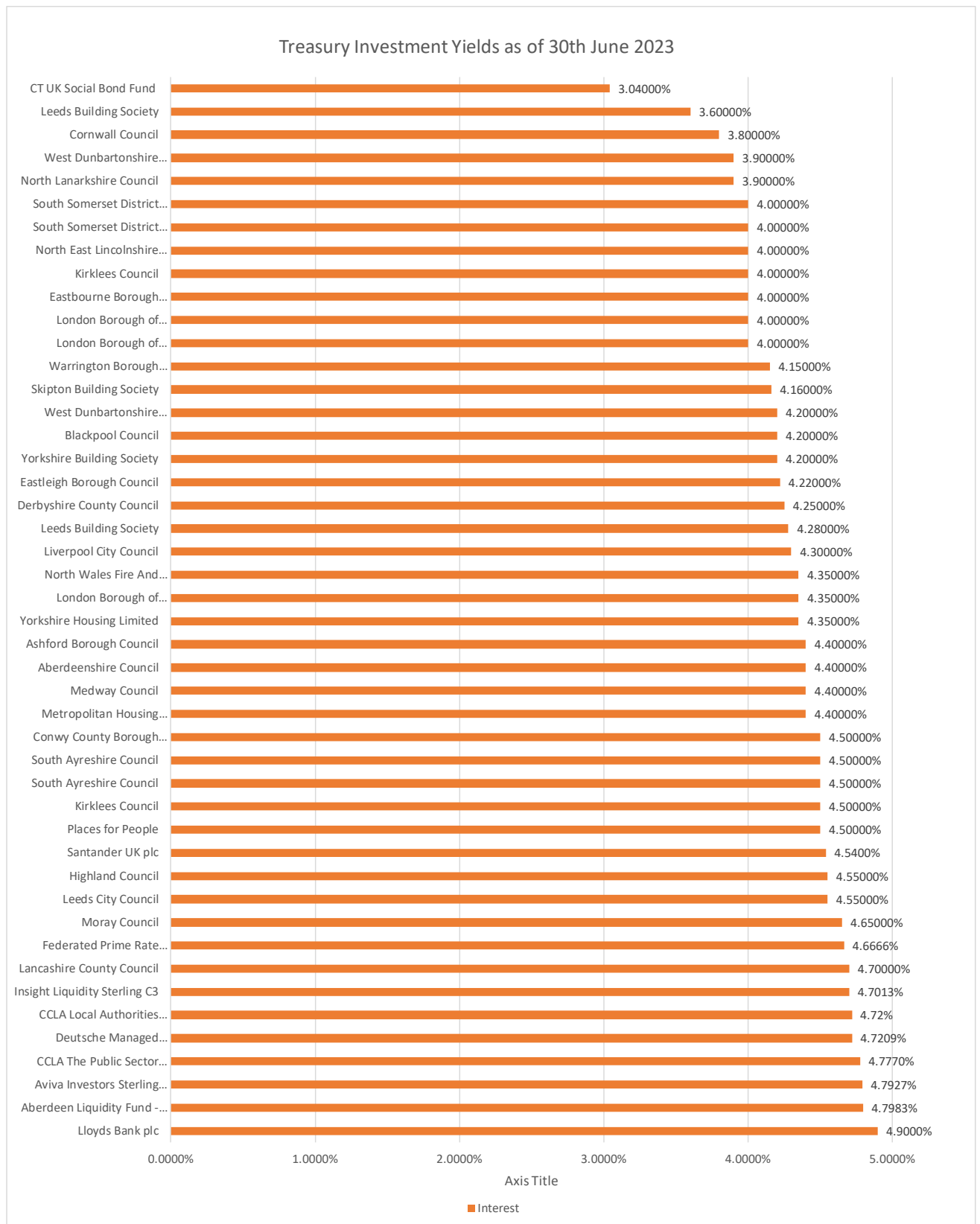
The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:  
Local Member(s): n/a

## APPENDIX 1: Investment and Borrowing Portfolios

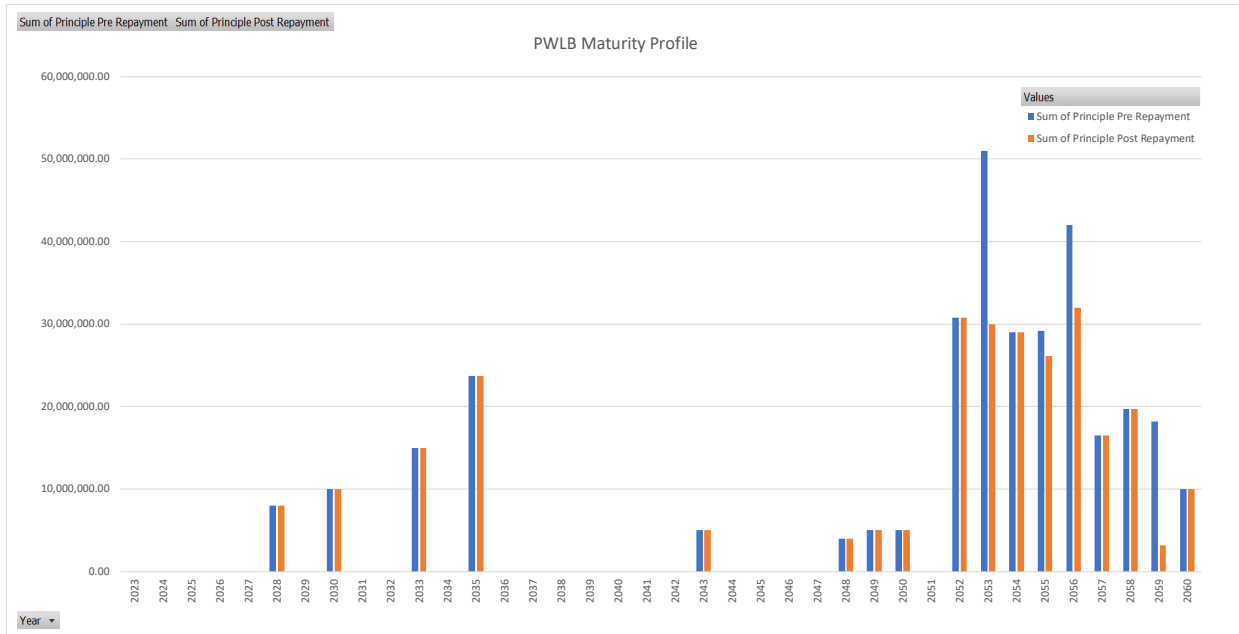
### Investments held as of 30 June 2023



Investment yield at of the 30 June 2023



Borrowing profile as at the 30 June 2023, compared to 31 March 2023.



## **APPENDIX 2: Economic Update (provided by Link Group)**

The first quarter of 2023/24 saw:

- Month on month GDP growth rising by 0.2% in April and falling by 0.1% in May.
- CPI inflation falling from 8.7% to 7.9% in June, having remained at 8.7% in both April and May. This negatively compares to both the eurozone and US where inflation 5.5% and 3% respectively.
- On a monthly basis the CPI rose by 0.1% in June 2023 compared to a rise of 0.8% in June 2022.
- The CPIH (consumer price index including owner occupiers' housing costs) declining to 7.3% from 7.9% in May.
- On a monthly basis, CPIH rose by 0.2% in June 2023, compared with a rise of 0.7% in June 2022.
- The reduction in inflation was largely driven by the drop in fuel inflation which was 22.7% down year on year.
- Core CPIH (excluding energy, food, alcohol, and tobacco) rose by 6.4% in the 12 months to June 2023, down from 6.5% in May.
- Unemployment slightly edged upwards by 0.2% to 4%.
- Interest rates rose by a further 75bps over the quarter, taking Bank Rate from 4.25% to 5.00%; with the most recent rise within the quarter announced on 22<sup>nd</sup> June. The central bank went further on 3<sup>rd</sup> August and raised the interest rate by a further 0.25 basis points to 5.25%.

### **Interest rate forecasts**

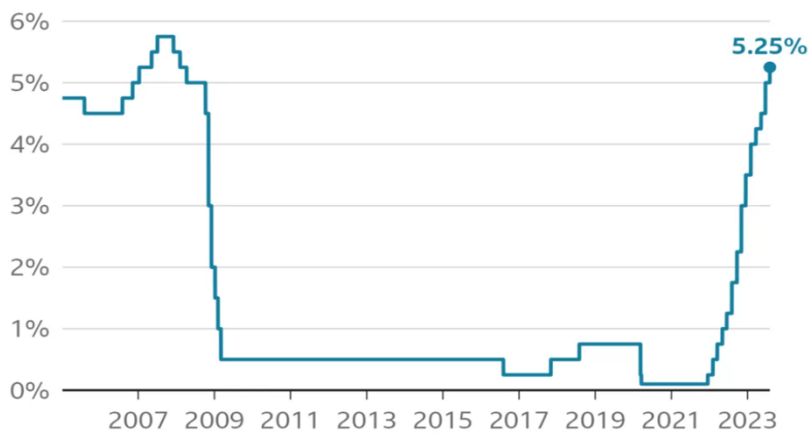
- The Council has appointed Link Group as its treasury advisors and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. The PWLB rate forecasts below are based on the Certainty Rate (the standard rate minus 20 bps) which has been accessible to most authorities since 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012.
- The latest forecast, made by Link on 26<sup>th</sup> June, sets out a view that both short and long-dated interest rates will be elevated for some little while, as the Bank of England seeks reduce inflation, against a backdrop of a robust economy and a tight labour market.
- Forecasts have steadily increased during the quarter as the data continued to spring upside surprises, and the Bank of England continued to under-estimate how prevalent inflation is. The Government has also noted that despite immigration increasing markedly, high levels of ill-health amongst the workforce has led to wage demands remaining strong until such time as there is a loosening in demand for business services.

### **Summary Overview of The Future Path of The Bank Rate**

- To tackle the post pandemic high inflation the Bank of England has raised interest rates from near zero to 5% end of the quarter and 5.25% on 3 August 2023.

- This has seen the Bank putting up rates fourteen times since December 2021 in the fight against soaring inflation, driving up borrowing costs for millions.
- The recent rises in the bank rate was a bold 0.75 basis points from 4.25% to 5% in June and another 0.25 basis points in early August.
- The graph below clearly illustrates the high interest rate environment the economy is currently under with many sectors including mortgaged homeowners being negatively impacted.

### UK interest rate rises to 5.25%



Source: Bank of England. Last update 03 August 2023

- The inflation slowdown recorded in June when the CPI dropped from the April and May stagnated 8.7% to 7.9% and lower than the market expectation of 8.2% means the Bank of England may be under less pressure to keep raising the interest rate.
- However, with the 7.9% inflation still way above the Bank's target of 2% the high interest environment is likely to continue with the Bank expected to raise rates by a more modest 0.25 percentage points at its next decision in July.
- The interest rate is expected to peak at 6%
- With the interest expected to peak at 6% the impact on borrowing and investment decisions is that the market will be more inclined to short term instruments avoiding locking into long term as they anticipate lower interest rates regime in the medium term after inflation target is met.



## Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13 September 2023

### Cost-of-Living Support Update

#### Recommendations

That the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on the progress and impact of the cost-of-living support initiatives put in place so far, and endorses the continuing approach to addressing cost-of-living pressures

#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In October 2022, Cabinet approved an approach to addressing cost-of-living pressures in Warwickshire and approved a funding package of up to £1million from the Revenue Investment Fund for a range of initiatives to support residents and communities. Cabinet delegated authority to the Executive Director for Resources to allocate this funding, in consultation with the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, and the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate, and Culture. £732,000 of the £1million has been spent or is committed to be spent as of 15 August 2023.
- 1.2 In October 2022, Cabinet approved the allocation of the Household Support Fund grant between October 2022 and March 2023, to be distributed through the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme. Subsequently, in April 2023, Cabinet approved the allocation of the £6.94million Household Support Fund grant between April 2023 and March 2024, to again be distributed through the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme.
- 1.3 Cost-of-living pressures continue to have a significant impact on residents and communities, and plans need to be in place for a further period of elevated prices, reduced household incomes, and increased housing costs.
- 1.4 Businesses have been hit hard by cost-of-living (and “cost-of-operating”) pressures. Inflation has pushed up the cost of energy and supplies, and a tight labour market has led to recruitment and retention difficulties and upward pressure on salaries.
- 1.5 This report describes the support initiatives invested in so far and their impact, effectiveness, value for money, and any lessons learnt. The report invites feedback on the proposed use of the remaining funding (£268,000 as of 15 August 2023) to support residents and communities through winter 2023/2024 and beyond. Final decisions will be taken by the Executive Director for

Resources, in consultation with the Leader, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, and the Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate, and Culture, in accordance with the delegated power given to them by Cabinet in October 2022.

- 1.6 This report gives an update on the Household Support Fund, which, alongside the Revenue Investment Fund package of support, represents much of the Council's investment in addressing cost-of-living pressures.
- 1.7 This report builds on the Team Warwickshire approach referenced in previous reports, recognising that the response to cost-of-living pressures in Warwickshire will be most effective through a collaborative multi-agency approach that draws upon the full range of partner contributions.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 The further package of support initiatives described in Appendix 1 can be funded through the remainder of the up to £1million Revenue Investment Funding approved by Cabinet in October 2022. There is £268,000 remaining as of 15 August 2023.
- 2.2 The further package of support initiatives described in Appendix 1 is separate to, although complements and adds value to, the support provided through the allocation of the Household Support Fund grant between April 2023 and March 2024, as described in Appendix 5.
- 2.3 Funding for the continuation of the Community Supermarkets (Community Pantries) beyond the end of March 2024 is not intended to be covered by the remainder of the Revenue Investment Funding approved by Cabinet in October 2022. Work is ongoing to develop options to sustain the Community Supermarkets.
- 2.4 The one-off nature of the resources being allocated means it is crucial that the support initiatives described in Appendix 1 proceed on an understanding of them being time-limited, and without creating dependency or ongoing need.
- 2.5 In recommending the use of the remaining Revenue Investment Funding as described in Appendix 1, officers will undertake further evaluation of each proposal before implementation, to ensure that it:
  - complements other initiatives and does not duplicate;
  - has a sufficiently robust evidence base to justify the intervention;
  - is an effective and justifiable use of the available funding;
  - maximises the scope for longer term sustainability;
  - has an appropriate exit strategy recognising that this is one off funding; and
  - undertakes an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure decision making processes are fair and no group is disadvantaged or discouraged from participating.

### **3. Environmental Implications**

- 3.1 The link between cost-of-living pressures and climate change is highlighted in the Council's Sustainable Futures Strategy. Long-term key elements of the Strategy will be critical to providing options and alternatives to current cost-of-living challenges, particularly in relation to securing sustainable energy supply and pricing.
- 3.2 All initiatives and projects supported by the funding streams referenced in this report are assessed against the Council's commitments to reducing climate change and increasing biodiversity. The Council will not fund anything deemed to be at odds with these commitments.

### **4. Supporting Information**

#### *Existing support initiatives*

- 4.1 A range of support initiatives for residents and communities, funded through the Revenue Investment Fund up to £1million, were put in place to cover winter 2022/2023, extending into spring and summer 2023, and some extending further still. These can be seen in Appendix 1, where comment is made as to their impact, effectiveness, value for money, and any lessons learnt. The initiatives fell into the six categories specified in the Cabinet report from October 2022.
1. Food poverty, including the extension of the community supermarkets (community pantries) proof-of-concept, support for food banks, and free school meals work.
  2. Fuel poverty, including support for warm hubs.
  3. Financial hardship, including investment in the Citizens Advice Telephony Service, and support for voluntary and community transport schemes.
  4. Keeping warm, including support for warm hubs, libraries' extended hours, and museums' extended hours.
  5. Information and advice, including the Warwickshire cost-of-living website, printed materials, broadcast advertising, and the November 2022 cost-of-living summit.
  6. Support fund: the Cost-of-Living Support Fund, which provided fast-track grants of up to £1,000 to local voluntary and community sector groups for projects and initiatives relating to cost-of-living support.
- 4.2 Appendix 2 provides an update from Citizens Advice on the new Telephony Service, referencing a 366% increase in telephone calls answered during the

service's first month of operation. Please note that names and certain other details have been changed to ensure anonymisation.

- 4.3 Appendix 3 contains case studies provided by Warwickshire Rural Community Council relating to some of the 80 plus community warm hubs established during winter 2022/23 as part of the charity's Winter Warm Hubs programme. Many of these hubs continue to operate and will play a crucial role during winter 2023/2024. Again, please note that certain details have been changed to ensure anonymisation.
- 4.4 Appendix 4 provides a list of the 98 recipients of funding from the Cost-of-Living Grant Fund, which provided quick turnaround grants of up to £1,000 for local voluntary and community organisations. In total £92,000 was awarded. In a first for the Council, each of the 98 awards came with a condition to link to the Family Information Service (FIS), reflecting the work of FIS in providing cost-of-living support to families, and the role of voluntary and community organisations in providing a conduit for this support.
- 4.5 Since April 2023, The Household Support Fund, providing help for the most vulnerable households around food, energy, and water bills, has provided:
- Cost-of-living payments to families/carers with children eligible for benefits related free school meals. In May 2023, automatic cost-of-living payments were issued: 19,392 eligible children and siblings were supported with £30 per eligible child for food support; total value £581,760.
  - Utilities support. In May 2023, £75 utilities' support payments were issued automatically to 11,406 households with children eligible for free school meals, total value £855,450. In June 2023, a countywide utilities campaign was open to Warwickshire residents by application, and an additional 1,049 vouchers were distributed with a total value of £78,675.
  - Welfare grants to community-led groups and initiatives with a total value of £107,740. Local projects have included essential hygiene products to families with new-borns, food hampers, slow cookers alongside support for healthy food preparation, essential home starter packs, and hot nutritious meals for vulnerable residents.

A round of automatic cost-of-living payments to families/carers with children eligible for benefits related free school meals took place in August 2023, and a further utilities campaign will take place in September 2023.

*Further support initiatives over winter 2023/2024, and beyond*

- 4.6 Any further range of local support initiatives must consider the national support measures that are in place and as described in Appendix 6.

- 4.7 Any further range of support initiatives must complement and add value to the allocation of the £6.94 million Household Support Fund grant between April 2023 and March 2024, as shown in Appendix 5.
- 4.8 In addition to investing in cost-of-living support initiatives, especially around the most vulnerable residents and communities, the role of the Council will continue to be one of convenor and coordinator of cost-of-living support across the County. Examples of this role include organising the cost-of-living summit in November 2022 and the upcoming cost-of-living event in October 2023, the Council's coordination of the multi-agency partnership group that has operated since November 2022, and the provision of frontline worker training for both internal and external (partner) staff.
- 4.9 The Council will continue to be evidence-led, both through data and the lived experience of communities and residents. It will target resource towards the residents and communities that need it most and allocate funding to optimise impact and deliver sustainable outcomes.
- 4.10 A further cost-of-living event in October 2023 will build upon the commitments to work collaboratively that came out of the cost-of-living summit held in November 2022, but with an even greater focus on practical delivery and outcomes for the most vulnerable residents and communities, strongly aligning to the countywide approach to Levelling Up and its core principles. The event, attended by representatives from across the public, private, and voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors, will take place at the CHESS Centre in Camp Hill, and will focus heavily on health outcomes and the importance of strong local economies in addressing longer-term cost-of-living changes.
- 4.11 Support initiatives over winter 2023/2024 will further embed a community-powered approach: involving communities and the wider voluntary, community, and social enterprise sector in decision making; working alongside communities to take practical action; and enabling communities to lead. The willingness and ability of communities to take the lead has been shown once again over the last 12 months, through the establishment of community-led warm hubs and other local cost-of-living support activities.
- 4.12 The Council will continue to work with partners beyond Warwickshire, such as Coventry City Council, the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board, and the West Midlands Combined Authority, to align and amplify cost-of-living approaches wherever possible.
- 4.13 The Council's communications, messages, and engagement will be clear, concise, and accessible. They will evolve and build upon the success of the countywide shared website [www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk](http://www.costoflivingwarwickshire.co.uk), as well as continuing to recognise the need for alternative communication and engagement methods including poster sites, broadcast advertising, and hard copy information.

4.14 Appendix 1 proposes a series of further, specific support initiatives over winter 2023/2024.

- There are repeat initiatives from winter 2022/2023, where these were effective and delivered a good return on investment.
- There are new initiatives reflecting identified gaps in support.
- Some initiatives from winter 2022/23 are not proposed to be repeated for winter 2023/2024, either because of changed circumstances, duplication with other initiatives, or because initiatives from winter 2022/2023 continue to cover winter 2023/2024.
- Funding to continue the Community Supermarkets (Community Pantries) beyond the end of March 2024 is not intended to be covered by the remainder of the Revenue Investment Funding and is subject to ongoing work on options to sustain the facilities.

4.15 The following table consolidates the proposed initiatives and internal support costs from Appendix 1.

<b>Proposed initiative / internal support costs</b>	<b>Value</b>
Food bank support fund	£30,000
Additional volunteer coordinator capacity, libraries	£15,000
Extend library and museum activities as warm hubs	£33,000
Further support for "You Can Online" project (laptop lending)	£20,000
Warwickshire Rural Community Council's "Winter Warm Hubs"	£30,000
Voluntary and community transport, medical and social journeys	£50,000
Cost-of-Living event October 2023	£5,000
Free school meals promotion work	£5,000
Family Information Service, Tackling Social Inequalities post	£40,000
<b>Subtotal initiatives</b>	<b>£228,000</b>
Marketing and communications	£3,750
Legal	£1,000
Business Support	£2,000
Communities and Partnerships	£7,500
<b>Subtotal internal support costs</b>	<b>£14,250</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£242,250</b>

4.16 In total, £242,000 of the remaining £268,000 is proposed to be allocated. This will leave a further £26,000 to be allocated in response to emerging pressures over winter 2023/2024, and if needed.

4.17 Sitting alongside the proposed support initiatives:

- The Warwickshire Food Strategy, approved by Cabinet in April 2023 and assisted by the countywide Food Forum, is expected to provide a shared, collaborative approach and a plan of action which agencies across the

sectors can commit to with key priorities for the short-, medium-, and longer-term. The Strategy aims to deliver a shared approach to better learning and understanding the root causes of food poverty and the cultural needs around food. This will enable us to decide and implement the highest-impact interventions. The Food Strategy and its Delivery Plan is accompanied by a £120,000 budget approved by Council in February 2023.

- The Warwickshire Financial Inclusion Partnership continues its aim of “Minimising 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.” The Partnership has been successful in delivering targeted interventions since its inception in 2008. Partnership activity has focussed on issues relating to child poverty, food poverty, affordable credit, affordable warmth, and welfare reforms / Universal Credit.

### *Support for businesses*

4.18 The Council’s Economy and Skills Service will continue to support businesses.

- The Small Capital Grants’ Programme, digital and creative grants, and working with intermediaries to provide advice and support to businesses.
- Exploring the potential of utilising the Warwickshire Recovery and Investment Fund to provide finance for investment in energy efficient and low-carbon equipment.
- Working with Coventry City Council to promote the Coventry and Warwickshire Green Business Programme and establishing the Council’s own Green Recovery Grant Scheme aimed at the retail, hospitality, and leisure sectors. This has provided free energy audits to 42 businesses and provided grants to six businesses towards the costs of energy efficiency improvements and low carbon adoption.
- The new Business Resilience Programme being commissioned in partnership with the Borough and District Councils, using funding from the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund. This will support businesses to tackle the impacts of existing and emerging events such as the Pandemic, cost-of-living pressures, Brexit, and the war in Ukraine.

### *Longer-term support*

4.19 The Council’s Community Powered Warwickshire programme will be an essential part of the response to longer-term cost-of-living pressures.

- 4.20 The countywide approach to Levelling Up in Warwickshire, approved by Cabinet in July 2022, is a fundamental part of the Council's longer-term response to cost-of-living pressures. The approach aims to tackle longstanding inequalities and disparities by working collaboratively with partners to focus effort on priority communities and places whilst recognising and protecting the strengths of other areas across the County. A key part of this work, already underway, is to develop local Levelling Up Plans with each Borough and District and Council, and a series of pilots to test different approaches to tackling inequality and disparity in a community-powered way.

## **5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps**

### **5.1**

- Deliver the further support initiatives described in Appendix 1 (September 2023 to March 2024).
- Work with partners to further evolve the Warwickshire cost-of-living website, and progress other shared communications activities (September 2023 to March 2024).
- Organise the cost-of-living event for October 2023.
- Ongoing work on options for the sustainability of the Community Supermarkets (Community Pantries) beyond March 2024 will come forward for consideration over Autumn 2023.
- Continue to work collaboratively with partners such as the Borough and District Councils, Health, Town and Parish Councils, and voluntary, community, and social enterprise sector organisations to ensure a coordinated offer supported by joined up delivery mechanisms and appropriate signposting to services (September 2023 to March 2024).

## **Appendices**

1. Appendix 1 - Existing and proposed support initiatives.
2. Appendix 2 - Citizens Advice Telephony Service update.
3. Appendix 3 - Warwickshire Rural Community Council Winter Warm Hubs Programme, case studies.
4. Appendix 4 – Cost-of-Living Grant Fund recipients.
5. Appendix 5 - Household Support Fund grant allocation April 2023 to March 2024.
6. Appendix 6 – Statistical background and national support measures.

## **Background papers**

None



	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Charles Barlow, Delivery Lead, Communities and Partnerships Service	charlesbarlow@warwickshire.gov.uk
Director	Kushal Birla, Director for Business and Customer Services	kushalbirla@warwickshire.gov.uk
Executive Director	Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Heather Timms, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate, and Culture	heathertimms@warwickshire.gov.uk

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

Local Member(s): None

Other members: Cllrs Adrian Warwick, Parminder Singh Birdi, Sarah Boad, Sarah Feeney, and Will Roberts.

This page is intentionally left blank

Activity	Responsible service	Investment winter 2022/2023 and source	Impact, effectiveness, value for money, and lessons learnt	Priority (and rationale)	Proposed one-off investment winter 2023/2024
Support for community supermarkets (community pantries).	Communities and Partnerships	£262,000 Revenue Investment Fund (RIF)	Very good outcomes, with 733 members and a total of 6,484 shopping baskets. However, we will need to continue investing in the Lillington, Camp Hill, and New Arley facilities in the short- to medium-term. Ongoing work on sustainability options will inform the Medium-Term Financial Strategy refresh.	High  (High profile project. Elements of community dependency within Lillington, Camp Hill and New Arley, which need to be managed. Three-year funding would enable the transition to a sustainable delivery model.)	£0  Any costs of sustaining the network will be part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy refresh process.
Create a support fund for the County's food banks, including support with energy costs, food costs, and the supply of other household essentials such as hygiene products.	Communities and Partnerships, Customer Contact Centre	£100,000 RIF	Circa £30,000 of funding was used for winter 2022/2023. Financial support for food banks mostly came from the Household Support Fund (HSF), but the HSF was unable to cover certain types of expenditure, including premises costs. For winter 2023/2024 this is a situation likely to be repeated. Therefore, if further funding were available for winter 2023/2024, it would seem sensible to set some aside to support the food banks and non-WCC funded food supermarkets (the dividing line between food banks and food supermarkets becoming increasingly blurred).	Medium  (HSF covers most food bank expenditure. Pressure on food banks for winter 2023/2024 likely to be equal to or greater than it was for winter 2022/2023).	£30,000

Develop additional volunteer capacity to support the operation of Libraries as warm hubs.	Libraries	N/A	<p>Experience indicates that we need capacity to grow the volunteer base to support the warm hubs. If further funding were available, a Volunteer Co-ordinator in place between September 2023 and March 2024 would be helpful.</p> <p>Libraries held 984 events between November 2022 and March 2023. There were 13,762 attendees. Feedback from staff raised concerns that due to lack of outreach capacity, the service wasn't reaching residents in greatest need. A Co-ordinator would be able to link with partners especially in priority LSOAs and encourage attendance to events and to encourage residents to volunteer and become involved in running the Warm Welcome Events, helping to facilitate activities. It is projected that with a Co-ordinator in post, a minimum of 49 additional events could be held which would result in approximately 1500 more attendees.</p>	High  (Flagship County Council response to cost-of-living pressures. Modest investment with a good return.)	£15,000
Extend library and museum activities as warm hubs, including activities for children and families. This is to include a marketing	Libraries	£25,000 RIF	Feedback has indicated that the lack of marketing and promotion meant some of the most vulnerable groups were not aware of the library and museum offer. If further funding were available, a timely seasonal campaign would address this issue and have long term positive benefits	High  (Flagship County Council response to cost-of-living pressures. Modest investment with a good return.)	£33,000 (to include additional marketing and promotional capacity)

campaign to ensure that the offer is known more widely.			on increasing library membership and usage.		
Further support the digital “You Can Online” project, for laptop lending to assist with overcoming digital exclusion / poverty.	Libraries	N/A	Further support for the project would allow it to expand further if additional funding were available.	Medium  (Good return on investment likely, links to wider digital inclusion work, good sustainability.)	£20,000
Funding to extend Warwickshire Rural Community Council’s “Winter Warm Hubs” project, providing warm places at community venues across the county	Communities and Partnerships	£30,000 RIF	Excellent return on investment over winter 2022/2023, supporting 80 community-led hubs, delivering 1,400 sessions, and 13,600 visits by Warwickshire residents. Additional benefits including wraparound care and signposting, and good sustainability with many of the hubs evolving into other ongoing activities. High investment priority for further investment for winter 2023/2024.	High  (High profile project delivering excellent return for a modest investment.)	£30,000
Support for voluntary and community transport schemes, medical and social journeys, including hardship funding, to be	Communities and Partnerships, Public Health	£50,000 RIF	Good return on investment over winter 2022/2023. For each of the 5 Boroughs/ Districts, funding was split: £2,500 for core/cost of living increases for the charities. £2,500 for volunteer costs and recruitment.	High  (Good return on investment. Schemes supporting vulnerable residents without access to other suitable means of transport to access	£50,000

distributed via the established Warwickshire Community Transport group/partnership.			£5,000 for associated journey costs (approximately 1,300 journeys supported directly or indirectly). If further funding were available for winter 2023/2024, recommend similar investment.	essential medical appointments and social support.)	
Additional capacity for Citizens Advice for debt, benefits, money management, housing, and employment advice.	Communities and Partnerships	£285,000 RIF	Excellent return on investment. 366% increase in telephone calls answered in the first month of operation, and 90% of enquiries dealt with by telephone Previous investment covered the period to March 2025, so no further investment needed.	N/A	£0
Small grants scheme for VCSE organisations and Town and Parish Councils to maintain or establish projects addressing cost-of-living-pressures. Projects excluding community-led warm hubs to avoid duplication with WRCC investment above, and excluding	Communities and Partnerships	£180,000 RIF	Circa £92,000 of the funding was used for winter 2022/2023, funding 98 projects. Although there was good return on investment, there was also some duplication with partners' funding schemes, including Boroughs/Districts.	Low  (Other funding schemes available to VCSE organisations.)	£0

projects funded through the HSF.					
Cost-of-Living Summit.	Communities and Partnerships	£5,000 RIF	Successful summit, circa 110 attendees. Outcomes included a collaborative offer of support for all Warwickshire residents, the combined cost-of-living website, and training for frontline workers. Second event planned for October 2023.	High  (We are committed to a further cost of living event in the autumn.)	£5,000
Exploration of free school meals automated registration.	Communities and Partnerships	£2,000, mostly Legal recharges met from existing service budget	Exploration concluded that as a Local Authority we do not have a lawful basis to automatically register eligible children for free school meals. Supplementary work focused on the promotion of free school meals and associated pupil premium. The cost of £2,000 was mostly Legal recharges, met from Communities and Partnerships budget. If further funding were available, it would make sense to continue the promotion work over winter 2023/2024.	Medium  (Continued promotion of free school meals needed to maintain current levels of take-up. Activities including webpage development, distribution of flyers in different languages, direct contact with parents on DWP and Mosaic lists, support for parents to apply, contact with schools, attendance at relevant meetings and parents' evenings.)	£5,000

Extension of Family Information Service, Tackling Social Inequalities post until March 2025.	Family Information Service	N/a	We have seen the positive impact of the pro-active Tackling Social Inequalities work over the last 18-months. This work actively encourages and enables families who can't, won't, and don't access services and support by removing barriers. Enhanced outreach and communications enable the Family Information Service to increase income and charity applications, and access to free school meals, childcare funding, and Healthy Start support.	Medium  (Key cost-of-living support, currently due to end March 2024, postholder likely to vacate before this. This funding will enable continuation of one of the three Tackling Social Inequalities postholders, keeping the expertise and momentum of the invaluable work that has been started).	£40,000
Subtotal					£228,000
High priorities					£133,000
Medium priorities					£95,000
<b>Internal support costs</b>					
Marketing and Communications recharges	Marketing and Communications	N/A	Shared website updating and maintenance, press releases, support for event(s), etc.	High  (Specialist Marketing and Comms support needed.)	£3,750 (15 days)
Legal recharges	Legal	N/A	Drafting and executing of contracts, specialist legal advice around, for example, free school meals, etc.	High  (Specialist Legal support needed.)	£1,000 (c10 hours)



Business Support recharges	Business Support	N/A	Support around meetings and events, monitoring and reporting activity, administration of grant schemes, etc.	High (Business Support needed.)	£2,000 (c125 hours)
Communities and Partnerships coordination costs	Communities and Partnerships	N/A	Co-ordination of all activity, internal and external partnership groups, members briefings, external partner briefings, reports to Committee and Cabinet, etc.	High (Co-ordination costs not budgeted for in Communities and Partnerships cost centres.)	£7,500 (30 days)
Sub total					£14,250
<b>Total</b>					<b>£242,250</b>

## RIF “budget,” £1,000,000

<b>Expenditure 2022/2023</b>	
Actual	£188,023
Total	£188,023

<b>Expenditure 2023/2024</b>	
Actual	£365,588 (includes £262,000 community pantries for 2023/2024, and Citizens Advice telephony service £59,375 (5x monthly payments))
Committed	£83,125 (Citizens Advice telephony service 7x monthly payments)
Total	£448,713

<b>Expenditure 2024/2025</b>	
Committed	£95,000 (Citizens Advice telephony service 8 x monthly payments)

Total	£95,000
<b>Total actual and committed expenditure</b>	<b>£731,736</b>

Adding the £242,250 to this figure produces a total of £973,986 (£26,014 remaining of the original £1,000,000 “budget”).

# **Meeting the Cost of Living Crisis: Citizens Advice Warwickshire Telephony Service**

---

**1<sup>st</sup> April - 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

**Working together in Warwickshire**

The logo for Citizens Advice, featuring the words "citizens advice" in white lowercase text inside a dark blue speech bubble shape.

**citizens  
advice**

## Why are we doing this?

We have launched the new service for a number of reasons:

- **To help meet rising demand:** Demand that had been increasing year on year has accelerated since 2020 due to the pandemic and then the cost of living crisis. The additional investment through Warwickshire County Council has enabled us to better meet demand through enhancing our telephone channel.
- **Deliver a better service to clients:** Data over 2021/22 and 2022/23 has shown that, on average, only 13% of calls are answered by the 3 CA's locally. The enhanced service will increase the number of people who are able to have their issues addressed by phone. This, in turn, will both reduce pressures on the 'front door' and also help prioritise face-to-face services for more vulnerable clients.
- **Acknowledge lessons learnt and demographic shifts:** Pre-pandemic, we were very much a face-to-face service. During the pandemic we were able to demonstrate that telephone advice could work. We also recognised that there was still a demand for face-to-face. The project enables us to balance our access channels better. Enhancing the telephony service also recognises that our client profiles are changing with more 'working age' enquiries from people for whom the phone service is cheaper and more convenient.
- **Efficient use of resources:** Removing multiple phone services with one single countywide service will ensure that our resources are maximised towards frontline delivery and flexible in their deployment. We also increase the likelihood of ensuring consistency across a population of approximately 600,000 within Warwickshire.

## The Model

Warwickshire County Council has provided funding until 31st March 2025.

The funding has enabled the recruitment of 2 Advice Services Managers and 5 part-time paid staff across Warwickshire. The service will be supported by 20 volunteers to deliver a Monday to Friday 10.00-2.00 service together with Out of Hours Provision one evening a week. This hybrid model of paid staff and volunteers has been approved by Warwickshire County Council and recognises that whilst we are volunteer led organisations, there is a need for paid staff to ensure coverage across all 5 days. It also acknowledges that all 3 organisations require more volunteers and that this will take time.

Our target for 2023/24 is 13,144 calls answered.

This is 10,000 more calls than were answered in the previous year. Whilst we will be monitoring this target throughout the year, the focus will be on quality and outcomes. The advice framework that has been adopted by the service is one where we will seek to resolve client enquiries at the point of access unless the nature of the issue or the client's vulnerability requires more specialist or face-to-face engagement.

In recognition that this is not a stand alone service, both the Debt Teams and Specialist Benefits Teams have agreed to support the service where complex issues are encountered. All 3 CEOs are actively committed to mainstreaming this service beyond 2025 and identifying and applying for funds on a Warwickshire-wide basis.

# Warwickshire Telephony Advice Service

working together in  
Warwickshire



Following the successful awarding of Warwickshire County Council funding for 2 years for the delivery of a Warwickshire-wide telephony advice service, the new provision was launched on 3 April 2023. The contract is being delivered through a partnership between Bedworth, Rugby & Nuneaton Citizens Advice Bureau (BRANCAB), Citizens Advice South Warwickshire (CASW) and North Warwickshire Citizens Advice (NWCA). Funding was sought due to the increased demand for advice post-pandemic and with the cost of living crisis. In addition, delivery during/post pandemic has shown that a blended delivery of both face-to-face and telephone provision is the way forward and enhances accessibility to our services.

## Staffing

There are currently 2 Managers (1.6 FTE), 6 paid staff (4 FTE) and a bank of 46 volunteers who operate the adviceline when available, working across the three LCAs, with further volunteers currently being progressed through recruitment/training.

## Challenges

- Initial teething problems on CONNECT have been resolved
- We need to recruit more volunteers in order to answer the high demand of calls into the service. A new cohort of volunteers for Bedworth, Rugby, Nuneaton and North Warwickshire is starting in July and also scheduled for recruitment this year are 2 further cohorts for South Warwickshire and 1 further cohort for Rugby and North Warwickshire.

## Positives

- Staff and volunteers recruited to the telephony service have embraced the new service and hit the ground running, with a 366% increase in answered calls in the first month of April (723) compared to the previous month of March (155) prior to the launch of the telephony service.
- Debt Teams and the Specialist Benefits Team support the service where complex issues are encountered.
- 90% of clients are helped at the point of contact, with the majority receiving full advice. 10% are referred in to the relevant local Citizens Advice for more specialised support.
- An away day for the telephony team is scheduled for early July, topics to include employment law, quality, and reviewing the service to date.

# Warwickshire Telephony Advice Service

## Performance

The service is offered Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm. **2,427 calls were answered during Quarter 1. This equates to 77% of the total calls taken for the whole of 2022/2023 (3,144), and a 197% increase compared to the same period in 2022 (817).** Of the 2427 calls, 56% was answered by Bedworth, Rugby and Nuneaton LCA, 39% answered by South Warwickshire LCA and 5% by North Warwickshire LCA.

The following percentages show the geographic origin of callers:

**5% North Warwickshire**

**27% Nuneaton & Bedworth**

**18% Rugby**

**34% South Warwickshire**

**6% Out of area**

**10% Anonymous/not known**

## Feedback

Callers are encouraged by Advisers to stay on the line post call to respond to a short satisfaction survey. It can prove challenging to persuade clients to stay on the line for an additional couple of minutes, and we have no control over whether they do go on to complete the survey. However for those who have completed the survey during Quarter 1:

- **84% of clients reported they found it very easy or easy to access the service (151 of 180: BRANCAB 68% & CASW 16% (Other 16% dissatisfied)**
- **95% of clients reported they were very satisfied or satisfied with how the Adviser handled their query (165 of 174: BRANCAB 77% & CASW 18% (Other 5% dissatisfied)**
- **93% of clients reported they were very satisfied or satisfied with the information and assistance they received (156 of 167: BRANCAB 77% & CASW 16% (Other 7% dissatisfied)**
- **96% said they would recommend our service to others (Total count 164: BRANCAB 82% & CASW 18%)**

## Case Study 1 (Telephony)

### The client situation

Emily, a 46yr old single, is self-employed and runs an online business from home. She has been renting a two-bedroom house via a letting agency for five years and was issued a Section 21 notice five weeks previously. Emily had received the required two months' notice and had been actively looking to rent another property. However, she was struggling financially and was approximately £300.00 short of the funds required for the available properties. She stated that her earnings were low, which was further impacted due to spending a lot of time on property searches.

Emily wanted to know where she stood legally with the landlord and wanted to find another property to rent.

### How we helped

As Emily said she was very capable and IT competent, we gave her links to more information and advice on Section 21 notices.

Based on the information she provided about her level of income, we advised that she may be eligible for universal credit, housing element and council tax support which may top up her income. She was given the links to further advice and to complete a benefit check and work out her entitlement.

In addition, we gave her the contact details of local solicitors who specialise in housing law, particularly threatened homelessness and offered 30 minutes of free advice.

Emily was also given the contact details for the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Landlord Project, which are sometimes able to support customers with a one-off payment to help renters, and may be able to negotiate with the landlord to extend the notice period to allow her time to find a rental property.

**Emily was very happy with the information provided and said she would follow up on all the above information and get back in touch with us if she had further queries.**

## Case Study 2 ( Telephony)

### The client situation

Maria called requesting the opening hours of her local Citizens Advice office as she required help due to being off work sick. Our telephone adviser gave her the opening times information, explained our telephone advice service, and offered immediate advice, which Maria was happy to receive as it saved her from having to travel.

Maria is a single parent with two dependent young children, who live in a housing association property in South Warwickshire and works part-time 24 hours a week at a pharmacy where she has been employed for 18 months. Maria receives Universal Credit, Child Benefits and Council Tax Reduction. She has been off work since the end of January 2023 and is unlikely to be able to return to work for another few weeks. Maria was paid in full for two months by her employer while off sick and then received two months of Statutory Sick Pay(SSP). Her employer recently informed her that she is no longer entitled to receive SSP. Maria is now receiving standard rate Universal Credit for over 25 year olds, the child elements for her children and housing costs. Maria would be in receipt of more income if being paid SSP than the standard rate of UC by approx £90pm.

### How we helped

Page 168 We investigated with Maria if she had been off sick prior to this episode, as SSP can be linked to other times of sickness and if she was in receipt of any other benefits that may affect her entitlement, and if she had any other employment. As the answer to both of these questions was no, there was no valid reason for Maria not to receive SSP. She was given information on how to challenge this decision by writing to her employer for an explanation and then having the right to apply to HMRC Statutory Payment Disputes Team. Hopefully, this course of action will assist Maria in receiving the correct entitlement to SSP.

We also investigated Maria's benefit entitlement generally as she has had a change in circumstances, and we established that her council tax reduction appears to be still based on her income when she was working full time, so we advised Maria to make contact with the council tax reduction department in her local authority to recalculate her new council tax reduction award.

Maria was also being affected by the bedroom occupancy tax on her 3-bed housing association property. Maria stated that she required three bedrooms as one of her children had a disability, but the council had assessed the child's needs as low, so they had deemed her to be under-occupied. Maria stated she had to pay £67 per month for the extra bedroom, which she could afford while working, but it was difficult to find this money. Suggested Maria could try and apply for a Discretionary Housing Payment for this payment for a short period of time from her local council while she is off sick. We advised Maria on how to make this application at her local council.

**Maria will hopefully, after her call, receive a further £90 per month SSP, extra financial support with her council tax and help for the under-occupancy payment. Maria stated she felt the support she had received had not only helped her financially but she felt less stressed and able to cope with her current situation. She said her mental health and well-being had improved as a result of her seeking our help.**



# Warwickshire Citizens Advice

Monday to Friday 9.00am -5.00pm

0808 250 5715

---

Monday 5.00-pm to 7.00pm

0800 995 6047 (out of hours)

**Working together in Warwickshire**

**citizens  
advice**

This page is intentionally left blank

## **ALDERMINSTER WINTER WARM HUB**

### **Objective**

Alderminster Village Hall Management Committee wanted to set up a new weekly community café during winter to help residents affected by the rise in heating and living costs.

### **Summary**

The event was funded by a £500 Winter Warm Hub grant, without which it would not have run. Although the event organiser thought the main benefit would be helping with the cost-of-living crisis, it transpired over time that people's main reason for attending the hub was to enjoy social interaction with others.

People also enjoyed the free refreshments (coffee/tea and cake) and were happy to chat and meet new people, rather than engage in a wide range of activities. One person started a social history group, which created a lot of interest in family histories, and residents also enjoyed a visit from the British Motor Museum.

There was an average attendance of 15 with support from a weekly rota of four volunteers. More women attended than men, and the age range tended to be 65+. Regular attendees confirmed that the event helped to improve their wellbeing and reduced rural isolation.

The organisers also visited Shipston Winter Warm Hub before setting up their own hub and found their suggestions and practical tips very helpful.

### **Learning**

- The event organisers were pleased with the level of community engagement, and that many people continued to come on a regular basis.
- *“Even if only a few people come, it's worth doing”* – they would advise other potential hubs to *“go ahead and do it!”*

### **Outcome**

As the hub had only been planned to run for winter and the organisers had other commitments, the event only ran twice more after the end of March. However, they are looking to run a similar event again in the Autumn, although they feel they may want to “rebrand” it with more of an emphasis on being a social get-together.

## **ATHERSTONE WINTER WARM HUB – NORTH WARKS 50+ LUNCH CLUB**

### **Objective**

The Lunch Club has been running twice weekly at St Benedict's Community Hall, Atherstone, for several years, but the organisers wanted to provide more cost-of-living support to local residents and continue to provide them with a social meeting place. They were particularly keen to expand their community support via slow cooking courses, to help people save on energy bills and cook healthy affordable meals.

## Summary

The new Winter Warm Hub was funded by small grants allocated by WRCC totalling £500 and by the nominal subscription of £1 per session paid by attendees and other funds raised by the organisers, e.g., from ThinkActive for seated exercise classes run by Atherstone Leisure Centre. An average of 26 people plus five volunteers attended each lunch session over the winter period.

The largest group demographic was 65+, and mostly women although more men were starting to attend. Despite the name of the event, the lunch is open to all and some younger people with other vulnerabilities attend, if people are unable to afford to pay £1, they were still welcomed. Soup and sandwiches were provided to all, along with seated exercise classes, which attendees found helpful both physically and mentally. Bingo was also popular at the three-hour events.

Regular attendees looked forward to coming to the Winter Warm Hub (some came twice weekly) and said it was an important part of their week. *"I've made a lot of friends,"* said one, *"I live on my own and it keeps me active – there's lots of things to do!"* Volunteers also found it helpful to be able to check in with vulnerable people on an informal basis.

Attendees engaged positively with a visit from the British Motor Museum volunteers as well as with the energy advice and carbon monoxide alarms provided by WRCC. They are also looking forward to the upcoming slow cooking courses (4 sessions each) in June and July.

## Learning

- The organisers are keen to promote the event more widely to attract more local people, and are also interested in sharing learning and experiences with other Warm Hubs – they have already met up with Shipston Warm Hub.
- They commented on how important it was to listen to the community: *"Variety is important ...measure your work by how involved those attending want to be."*

## Outcome

Atherstone Warm Hub - North Warwickshire 50+ Lunch Club officially launched on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The Warm Hub organisers are also keen to secure additional funding for the event in the longer term.

## BAGINTON WINTER WARM HUB

### Objective

The Village Hall Management Committee wanted to create a new event to encourage residents to meet up and socialise one morning per week during winter. The need for social interaction was felt to be more important to residents than cost of living support, although this was also a consideration.

### Summary

The village community hub started running on a weekly basis from the beginning of

November 2022, funded by small grants of £500 from Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and a grant from Warwick District Council (WDC). Without Winter Warm Hub funding, this event would not have been set up in the first place.

Free hot drinks and hot snacks such as bacon and sausage sandwiches were served, and the event rapidly became popular with the local community. By the end of March 2023, there was an average of 28 attendees each week including seven volunteers.

The group demographic was at the older range of 65+, with many of those who attended living alone and valuing the opportunity to meet new people. Two regular attendees who lived on their own met for the first time at the Winter Warm Hub, even though they only lived 500m from each other - showing that living near other people in a similar situation does not necessarily prevent social isolation.

Residents enjoyed the informal social aspect of the weekly community café style event, which soon became an important part of many people's weekly routine. All those who provided feedback confirmed that the event has significantly helped their health and wellbeing.

The hub was also visited by local Parish Councillors and members of Warwick District Council (WDC).

### **Learning**

- The event organiser was surprised by how quickly the hub became an important meeting place for villagers, and how willing people were to engage with the hub.
- Volunteers commented: *"You can make new friendships whatever your age!"* and *"We get as much out of the Warm Hub as do the attendees."*

### **Outcome**

Baginton Warm Hub is due to be officially launched on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The Village Hall Management Committee is also keen to secure additional funding to support the event in the longer term.

## **LIGHTHORNE HEATH WINTER WARM HUB**

### **Objective**

Lighthorne Heath Village Hall Association was already running a weekly coffee morning at the hall and wanted to run another event to help more local residents affected by the cost of living. Ultimately, though, the event organiser felt that people's main reason for attending was to enjoy social interaction in a welcoming community space.

### **Summary**

The new Winter Warm Hub was funded by small grants allocated by WRCC totalling £500, and by some funds raised from Lighthorne Heath's existing coffee morning. Several people attended both weekly events, but new people also came to the Thursday Winter Warm Hub, including a young family. By the end of March 2023, average attendance was 13 with increased numbers attending the slow cooking sessions (see below).

The largest group demographic was 65+, and almost entirely consisted of women, except for a young father and the person leading the slow cooking sessions. Many of those attending lived alone and relied on their two weekly coffee mornings, plus the occasional community outing (using WRCC's Back&4<sup>th</sup> minibus service) to connect with each other.

The housing development at Lighthorne Heath currently has limited facilities, and many people have limited social interaction with other groups, so the Winter Warm Hub was seen as a way to start reaching out to more residents. This was the main reason for Trustgreen's community champion promoting the Warm Hub concept to the Village Hall Association. The event would not have been set up without Winter Warm Hub funding.

People felt the free weekly events helped with social skills. They also appreciated receiving energy saving advice, further helped by receiving slow cookers provided by the project (see below).

The hub was visited by Act on Energy, Healthwatch Warwickshire, Family Information Services, Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, and the British Motor Museum.

Trustgreen's Community Champion commented: *"It's been a privilege to work in partnership with WRCC and witness the community come together to establish a warm and welcoming permanent hub."*

### **Learning**

- The attendees are keen for more people to attend and are open to trying more new things such as arts and crafts and gardening activities.
- The slow cooking course (four sessions in March with ingredients also provided free of charge) was enjoyed by residents, a quarter of whom had never used a slow cooker. One commented that *"the demonstrations gave me confidence"* and another said that they *"liked new cooking ideas, with less meal prep and more time to do other things."* The next slow cooking course will follow a similar structure but will be aimed at attracting new people and will be held in the evenings/at weekends.

### **Outcome**

Lighthorne Heath Warm Hub officially launched on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023. The Village Hall Association has received a £1,000 cost of living grant from WCC and is also using some funds from the other weekly coffee morning to subsidise the event.

## **NEWTON REGIS WINTER WARM HUB**

### **Objective**

The Village Hall wanted to run a weekly "Heat and Eat" themed hub during winter, with the main objective being to create a new social meeting place for residents.

### **Summary**

Winter Warm Hub funding of £500 was needed to set up the event, and the hall also contributed to the costs. People enjoyed free hot drinks and biscuits/cake, plus soup and a roll. For a nominal charge, they could also enjoy a hot bake with salad and a hot pudding such as sponge or apple crumble.

By the end of March, average attendance at the hub was 30, with six volunteers running the event – there were more women than men, mainly from the 65+ age range. The organisers felt that residents' wellbeing was improved, and that the event did help support them with the cost of living even though the greatest benefit was from social interaction.

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service visited and arranged a number of home visits for vulnerable people as a result. Citizens Advice also visited the Winter Warm Hub and were approached for help and advice by several attendees. And residents appreciated the energy information packs and carbon monoxide alarms provided by WRCC.

### Learning

- *“Planning and organisation is very important,”* commented the organisers. *“Each volunteer needs to know their role and feel appreciated to ensure their continued support.”*
- The volunteers all found the experience very rewarding – *“seeing the community of all ages come together was heartwarming.”*

### Outcome

As the hub had only been planned to run for winter and there were insufficient volunteers to continue with the event after the end of March, the organisers chose not to continue. However, they may want to start a similar event up again next Winter.

## RUGBY WARM HUB - BENN PARTNERSHIP CENTRE

### Objective

The Benn Partnership Centre wanted to help support local residents with the cost of living and ran a free cooking course to build people’s confidence and prepare meals on a budget.

### Summary

The Winter Warm Hub cooking club ran over two months although people did not have to attend every session (unlike the shorter WRCC slow cooking course). There were seven sessions delivered in total (with free ingredients provided) including slow cooking, microwave cooking, hob cooking, and a final “bring and share” session.

There were an average of ten people attending sessions, predominantly women, and in most sessions people were encouraged to cook their own food at individual cooking stations. They could then either eat their meal there or take it home afterwards. This did not apply to the slow cooking session – instead, the chef gave a demonstration and attendees were able to take a cooker home with them to practice with the recipe provided.

Another session also focused on making sweet treats, including three types of fruit crumble, easy to make biscuits etc, and the chef created seven puddings which attendees were able to help make at a large communal table, as well as enjoy eating during the session.

The event organiser felt that the Winter Warm Hub significantly helped those attending as it not only helped them to learn to cook on a budget, but also helped people to socially interact with others in a safe, welcoming space. *“The recipe is just a starting point ... we want people to enjoy cooking, to be confident enough to try things out, and cook for themselves and their families,”* they explained.

### Learning

- The event organiser is keen to run more tailored cooking courses and “one off” sessions, e.g., for young families, teenagers, men etc.

- Apart from this hub, the majority of Winter Warm Hubs and other warm spaces in Rugby (there were nearly 60 in total according to Rugby Borough Council) appeared to struggle to attract a number of attendees during the winter.
- The cooking course is only one of the events run at the Benn Partnership Centre, with others including the Work Club, computer drop In, and wellbeing groups. The Centre Manager, Trustees and WRCC are keen to develop a Warm Hub community centre model where a range of events are already running, and where additional support can be provided via the Warm Hubs project.

### **Outcome**

The Rugby Warm Hub - Benn Partnership Centre is due to officially launch in June 2023.

### **ADDITIONAL NOTES**

1. WRCC provided all these Winter Warm Hubs with energy information packs including energy saving and home safety advice, signposting to other support services and contact details, plus guidance on signing up to the Priority Service Registration and carbon monoxide safety information from Cadent. Free carbon monoxide alarms were also provided.
2. During the project, Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) visited several hubs, and a member of the Gaydon crew confirmed that out of 30 direct referrals for home visits, over 90% had resulted from attending a community "Warm Hub" or warm space. However, from a recent discussion with WFRS, it appears that some of these were not WRCC Winter Warm Hubs and therefore it is more difficult to provide a useful case study regarding this.
3. From limited experience this winter and recent discussions with WFRS, it does seem that greater engagement and more positive outcomes can be achieved by Fire and Rescue teams visiting existing hubs in the community, rather than running hubs at fire stations (for a range of reasons).
4. WRCC plans to arrange a further meeting with WFRS to see if a more co-ordinated approach to visiting WRCC's network of endorsed Warm Hubs can be agreed.



## Round 1

Area	Name of organisation	Name of project	Amount awarded	Project description
North Warwickshire	Hartshill Parish Council	Community Food Bank	£468	Purchasing storage and a fridge for a small local food bank running from the reception area of the community centre to accommodate the recent increased demand for the service.
North Warwickshire	White Hart Community Group	White Hart Community Fridge support	£1,000	To support a community fridge in obtaining essential items and to cover the shortfall in overheads.
North Warwickshire	Kingsbury Aztecs Football Club	Aztecs community	£1,000	Supporting a football club with increased cost of pitch fees.
North Warwickshire	Arley Parish Council	Arley Community Support	£1,500	Provision of warm space with additional resources like food and household essentials
North Warwickshire	The Charity of Philip Stanyers and others	General Charitable Purposes	£1,000	To relieve conditions of need hardship and distress by making grants available to persons in the Parish of Kingsbury as constituted on 11th May 1909.
North Warwickshire	Jelly Beans Nurture Nursery Ltd	Secret Santa	£1,000	Prepare bespoke, tailored Santa Parcels for around 50 local families with high quality toys, games, books & sweets so all our children have something to open on Christmas Day. We aim to make them special and to include toys which meet the learning needs of our children but are also fun and will last.
North Warwickshire	The Woodlands Community Group	Luncheon club and social	£1,000	To provide lunches, social events, e.g., coffee mornings, bingo, days, and lunches out, social gatherings games cards dominoes etc.
North Warwickshire	Wood End Village Hall	Community Warm Room	£1,000	Providing a social environment which is well heated for residents to use for warmth

				in the midst of the energy and cost of living crisis. Along with this, hot soup and bread will be available with hot drinks for adults and squash, toast, and beans (or similar) for children with fruit to take home. To be offered twice a week depending on the needs of the residents.
North Warwickshire	Haddon Charity for Performing Arts	SEN & Mental Health Wellbeing Parent & Carer Support Group	£1,000	To provide a welcoming space/meeting hub each week where members of the local community and parents & carers of SEN children can meet up and share lived experiences and resources which will help to combat isolation.
North Warwickshire	LifeLines Arley Whitacre	CoL support	£1,000	We aim to operate a warm room across Ansley Common, Ansley Village, New and Old Arley, Birchley Heath and Over Whitacre to provide networking support for residents who have financial barriers to their wellbeing this winter. The aim would be to provide emergency support - warm space, food parcel, emergency vouchers for food, clothes, or energy and to work with families to engage with wider support and maximise incomes to fix longer term financial instability issues.
North Warwickshire	Old Salts Rugby Club	Warm Friends	£1,000	Sessions providing professional help and signposted professional support for cost of living and wellbeing interventions, ability related exercise and healthy living sessions, and hopefully fun and friendship, to all clients attending the event.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	The Coffee Stop at The Pit Stop	Community Coffee stop	£1,000	Providing a safe warm community space with snacks and meals available
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Nuneaton & Bedworth Healthy Living Network	Ediblelinks Sustainability/Improvement	£1,000	To extend the opening hours of Ediblelinks 2 afternoons per week for 3 months.

				Enabling more surplus stock to be collected, sorted, and redistributed into community use.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Team Seymour Boxing Club	Team Seymour Boxing Club	£600	Funds needed for new boxing headboards which must meet championship standards.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Attleborough Community Matters	Afternoon Teas	£1,074	Provision of afternoon teas to support our local older population who may be lonely and isolated (possibly even cold and hungry). We want to find a vehicle where they will feel included, cared for, and valued. We also want to use this to establish what else they may need that we could help them with. Several volunteers from Attleborough Community Matters will be in attendance to host and engage with those attending and establish any future needs.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Aspire in Arts	Youth Support Programme	£500	We aim to use this funding to help ease the pressure of the cost-of-living crisis by providing items such as food, baby food and milk, nappies and even clothes to those young people most in need. These will be distributed through our youth drop-in sessions and any referrals from other youth support/ family organisations.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Nuneaton Men and Women in Sheds	Nuneaton Men and Women in Sheds	£1,000	We aim to bring people together to stop them thinking they are on their own. We encourage people to work together on personal projects and help with group projects that benefit the wider community. We have already this year, with the help of everybody been able to complete some fantastic projects locally and it really has helped bring the group together.

Nuneaton and Bedworth	Nuneaton and North Warwickshire Equestrian Centre	Cost of living for expanding community project	£800	We have recently applied to WCC grant fund to create a Community Space, where people can come and engage in Community Activities. This could include Craft Groups, Art groups, Sewing & Needle craft also IT groups for the local community. In addition to this we could offer the room to wider groups to provide a safe space for specialised activities e.g., Therapy and Counselling. Nevertheless, less due to the rising costs of living specifically Electricity costs at the centre. We are applying for support to help meet the increase in electricity/ heating which will enable us to ensure that the new communal space will be warm, safe, and welcoming for new community groups.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	The British Gurkha Veterans Association	Gurkha Warm Lounge and Activity Hub	£1,000	Opening up a community space two days a week to offer a warm place where residents can meet others and get involved in new activities. It will be like a hub where people can get help from volunteers with anything cost of living related. We want to also link with as many services as possible inviting organisations in to have a chat to them or promote the help on offer to them during the winter months.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Volunteer Friends	Community Support	£350	Provision of 30 food hampers and distribute to those needing the additional support during these challenging times. Our hampers will include fresh items such as fruit and vegetables, toiletries, and some items with a longer shelf life.

Nuneaton and Bedworth	Stockingford Community Centre	Warm Wednesday Club	£1,000	Wednesday mornings 10 – 12, a warm place where members of the local community can come to chat, play games, do puzzles, read magazines, make warm hats, and have a free mug of soup and a roll, hot drink, and cake. There will also be information for them signposting them to other services to help them with the cost-of-living crisis.
Rugby	OCD SUPPORT - Rugby	OCD SUPPORT - Rugby	£1,000	OCD SUPPORT is an informal support group for anyone suffering with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month at the Benn Partnership Centre from 7pm until 9pm and are free to attend (minimum age 16).
Rugby	Rugby Borough Football Club	Disabled Football	£1,000	Rugby Borough wish to invite local disabled children from schools in the community to learn and enjoy playing football. Mental wellbeing plays a big part in football and so we wish to support this factor.
Rugby	Bilton Evangelical Church	Family Food Bags - School Holidays	£1,000	To provide children of primary and infant age, who qualify for Pupil Premium, with lunchtime food for the school holidays
Rugby	New Directions	Social inclusion and empowerment to take part in social activities	£300	Provision of respite care sessions tailored to individuals' interests with aim of reducing loneliness and isolation and easing financial pressures on families on low income.
Rugby	Rugby Christian Life Centre	Slow Slow Cook Cook Slow	£960	Project aims: to share the cost-effectiveness of using a slow cooker for family meals, at a time when food and electricity is expensive. Parents who attend a session will receive a slow

				cooker, prepare a meal, take it home and cook their family meal.
Rugby	Rugby Sikh Community Association	Enter stress free zone	£1,000	Our project will lift our communities' self-esteem and promote happier time ahead. We would like to build and strengthen our ethnically diverse community. We will deliver various activities to combat and tackle present crises and how to live and cope this situation.
Stratford	STREET ARTS PROJECT	STREET ARTS PROJECT	£1,000	Our organisation supports those who are experiencing homelessness, mental health challenges, social isolation, vulnerability, and poverty. We work alongside the professional agencies in the town and Stratford District Council to provide emergency items and food to the above profile of community.
Stratford	Great Alne Parish Council	Great Alne Good Neighbour Group and Young People's Group	£1,000	A project to set up a warm space, a youth club, and an after-school club.
Stratford	Elderberries Community Group	Elderberries Community Group	£1,000	Elderberries is a weekly activity/social group for older people in and around Alcester. The purpose of this application is to provide funding to re-start the provision of a 2-course hot meal, which was provided to an average of 40 attendees each week pre-pandemic.
Stratford	Salford Priors Parish Council	Salford Priors Warm Hub & Community Café	£1,000	Providing a warm safe space offering a friendly and inclusive welcome for all ages of the community plus an outreach team to visit those that cannot get to the hub. Providing free refreshments and warm food. A welcoming space to assist with mental wellbeing support and signposting. The grant would be used to support the

				work of the hub and the outreach team collecting and visiting residents across the seven settlements of the parish.
Stratford	Alcester Town Council	Cost-Of-Living Hub	£1,000	Alcester Town Council wish to offer a cost-of-living support hub for families four times over the next six months. The focus will be on providing a hot healthy lunch while bringing everyone together to share in activities and access to free food as well as support services.
Stratford	Stratford on Avon Methodist Church	Henley Community Fridge	£1,000	Henley Methodist Church is seeking funds towards the cost of setting the project up to purchase necessary equipment and cover the additional costs incurred by the church to install shelving/storage units at a local community fridge.
Stratford	Henley in Arden Community Library	Chatter and Natter	£1,000	Opportunity to come to the library for coffee/tea and for customers to get together and chat.
Stratford	Net Zero Stratford	Community Kitchen at the Ken Kennett Centre	£1,000	The proposal is to establish a Community Kitchen in the Clopton area of Stratford, at the Ken Kennett Centre. This is located on Justins Avenue, in one of the poorest areas in Stratford. The Kitchen will be open one evening a week, and will use surplus food, donated by supermarkets and other food providers.
Warwick	Young People First	Christmas Support	£1,000	We are supporting 65 families with the provision of Christmas meal and Santa's grotto, Christmas hampers and food parcels.
Warwick	Chase Meadow Community Centre	Winter Food Provision	£1,000	Provision of warm space and food.
Warwick	Campion School	Hardship Fund	£1,000	We raise money for our families within our school community to support them with

				hardship. This may be food, clothing, contribution towards fuel bills.
Warwick	Girlguiding Warwickshire	Insurance Grant	£1,000	Covering the cost of insurance for our camping equipment for the next 5 years.
Warwick	Parenting Project	Family Wellbeing	£1,440	We are responding to requests from Parents with preschool children to provide a group session, where they are able to come with their children to access a activity/play based session, also have access to Family Wellbeing Facilitator who is able to support them, offer advice, signposting and make referrals with respect to their mental health, wellbeing, financial and housing difficulties.
Warwick	Transforming Communities Together Warwick /Together for Change	Cost-of-Living Food Voucher Scheme	£1,000	Warwick Warm Spaces is an initiative led by Transforming Communities Together Warwick supported by Warwick District Council and the Warwick Community Network to coordinate, support, and promote the establishment of Warm Spaces within Warwick. The project aims to provide food vouchers to the warm spaces users for them to purchase food at local cafes and restaurants.
Warwick	Helping Hands Community Project	Weekly support group with hot lunch for homeless and vulnerably housed men	£1,000	We would like to provide a weekly hot meal for our Elijah's rest support group for homeless and vulnerably housed people in Warwick and Leamington. The group currently meets on a Tuesday morning in our downstairs room, and we have 20 men attending. Clients have the time and space out of their chaotic lives to make friends, and think about their aims and aspirations, and small steps they can take to move towards them.



Warwick	Otra Cosa Network	Latinas in Warwickshire	£1,000	<p>Our aim is to continue supporting the Latin American community who live in and around the towns of Warwickshire. We are the lead charity in the area representing this invisible community that faces challenges in relation to isolation, mental health and well-being, access to services, language barriers, and employment. The project aims to work specifically with the diverse group across the county that has a particular equalities interest. The aim of our work intended through this project will seek to highlight the specific group needs, concerns, and aspirations, which we expect will vary between individual groups.</p> <p>The project aims to provide a range of support encouraging residents to return/begin to engage with activities that support the development of resilience and well-being and establish a sense of social connection.</p>
Warwick	Crown Routes Project Lillington (Community Cafe & Support services ran by Brunswick HUB)	Emergency Chilled food bank project - Lillington Families	£1,000	We would like to link in with Lillington School to provide families that they identify as 'in need' with chilled food bags to help support the cost of living and making sure the children are getting what they require to supplement their educational needs.
Warwick	1st Warwick Gates Brownies	Providing the Girlguiding programme	£1,000	Brownies are the Girlguiding group for 7–10-year-olds. Our programme is based on 6 themes: Be Well, Know Myself, Express Myself, Skills For My Future, Have Adventures & Take Action. Within these themes, we provide varied opportunities to

				help our young members reach their full potential in life.
Warwick	Baby Basics Warwick	Baby Basics Warwick	£1,000	<p>100 Moses Basket Starter Pack Project - for the most vulnerable Mums and their babies in Warwickshire.</p> <p>These starter packs provide the items needed for Vulnerable Mums and their new-born Babies in the first few weeks of life. These Moses baskets provide a Safe place for babies to sleep - essential for the baby and for the Mum's mental health.</p> <p>The Moses basket is packed full of toiletries, nappies, bedding and pre-loved clothes and bedding. Baby Basics Warwick is a volunteer-led project aiming to support new mothers and families who are struggling to meet the financial and practical burden of looking after a new baby.</p>

## Round 2

Area	Name of organisation	Name of project	Amount Awarded	Project description
North Warwickshire	Hartshill Parish Council	Hartshill Community Café	£1,000	Hartshill Community Cafe runs from Hartshill Community Centre every Tuesday providing fresh, home cooked hearty meals at a very low cost.
North Warwickshire	Polesworth Swifts JFC	Support Mental Wellbeing through Football	£800	We are looking to improve our education and opportunities for children through football. Football is well known to improve social skills and support mental wellbeing. We want to increase this and provide

				<p>more education to coaches and players "it's OK to not be OK."</p> <p>The funding will be used to put our coaches on FA courses for Mental Wellbeing and create new education courses based on bullying / mental health.</p>
North Warwickshire	Arley Community Centre	Warm hub games afternoon	£1,000	<p>We currently run a warm hub on a Thursday and would like to provide a light touch cafe and a games afternoon for people to be able to have a light lunch and a cuppa with others whilst trying the hand at old favourites such as scrabble, darts, dominoes, cards, and draughts.</p>
North Warwickshire	Dordon Parish Council	How to Cook	£1,000	<p>To provide cooking lessons for all parish and neighbouring residents. The idea is that the How to Cook lessons will both teach basic cooking skills and possibly base menus on that week's fresh food delivery to the Community Food Store, which would then be gifted to the clients attending the How to Cook classes.</p>
North Warwickshire	Time Out Support Services	Time Out Fruit, Veg & Meat - Spring 2023	£1,000	<p>This fund will compliment Time Out's successful Winter Warmer scheme where fruit &amp; vegetables are distributed based on a 'hub collection point' central to the community. The funds will be used to provide meat to each vulnerable household we support in the rural villages of Hurley and Wood End. This fund will help approx. 100 households, up to 250 individuals.</p>
North Warwickshire	Old Salts Rugby Club	Water Orton Wellbeing and Fitness	£1,000	<p>To provide daytime age and ability related fitness sessions aimed at providing weekly social contact and friendship, and</p>

				core strength and mobility exercise accompanied by refreshments.
North Warwickshire	Coleshill Food Pantry	Coleshill Food Pantry	£1,000	Based on a not-for-profit membership system, those who are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis or are in food poverty can access and choose food items to feed themselves and their family.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	IAR CIC	IAR Community Warm Hub	£1,000	IAR Community Warm Hub provides a safe environment to encourage individuals to engage with other members of the community to tackle their social exclusion, mental health, and addiction issues.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Ask Katie..... (at Stockingford Community Centre)	Ask Katie...	£1,000	A hygiene bank serving the areas of Stockingford, Blacktree and Grove Farm. In addition to conventional personal hygiene products in plastic packaging we will also have a range of zero-waste and reusable products. In addition to supplying personal hygiene products to people we hope to put on events such as a "pop-up salon" providing wash/cut/blow dry and tea-parties to help people switch to plastic free products.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Chilvers Coton Scout Group	COL Reduction 2023	£1,000	We run activities and experiences for 50+ young people in an increasingly deprived area of Nuneaton. We have noticed a drop off in engagement for our activities due to increased costs of activities and reduction in available money for their average family. This programme will be to reduce or eliminate the costs of our activities for 2023. We will target 4 activities this year Our District Camp in May, Strategy in June,

				Evolution in July, and Group Camp in September.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Nuneaton Christian Fellowship	Tea, chat, and a little Exercise	£500	To combat loneliness and mental health in the area. A lot of groups haven't started again since the covid pandemic. The area has a high demographics of elderly which by talking to the new GP surgery round the corner was something that needed to be combated in the area!
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Park Lane Primary School and Nursery	Park Lane Warm Space	£1,000	Park Lane Primary School is in an area of deprivation and wants to support the local community in as many ways as possible. Providing a warm space for the elderly is very important to the staff and students at Park Lane.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Race Leys Junior School	Race Leys Warm Spaces	£1,000	In our pursuit in giving back to our community, we would like to explore the option of making our Cafe (Mad Hatters Tea Room) a warm space for the elderly. This space will be open daily each morning from 8.15 until 9.30 and then 2.30 to 3.30 on a Friday. On top of these hours, we would also like to host special events during the day such as knitting groups, arts and crafts, card games and much more.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Nuneaton Christian Fellowship	Oasis Café (Thursday mornings)	£500	We provide free tea, coffee, biscuits, and cake to local residents for part of the morning. For the last hour we serve soup and filled rolls with a suggested contribution of £1.00 for this part of the meal. Conversations are just as important as the simple meal that is provided. A few people share their problems with me, and others and we try to give them ideas to

				make the issues become more tolerable or even solved.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Tourettes Action West Midlands	Tourettes Action West Midlands	£720	We are a support group for families and individuals affected by Tourettes Syndrome in the West Midlands. We meet at Stockingford Community Centre in Nuneaton monthly. These meetings are suitable for adults, teens, and children affected by affected by TS and their families.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Nuneaton and Bedworth Unit 616 of the Sea Cadet Corps	Home hub	£1,000	To provide a safe and warm space where families can come together, use our facilities. We have toilets and showers, a kitchen and food available.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Keresley Community Library Ltd	Replacement of water heater to ensure sustainability of community building	£692	The current water heater in the library is, we believe, the original one from when the building was constructed in 1964. It has now failed. We would like to replace with an instant hot water heater.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Growbaby Bedworth/Nuneaton	Growbaby Bedworth/Nuneaton	£806	To support families with children of 0-5 with the offer of free clothing and equipment.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	The Bulkington Volunteers	Bulkington Pop Up Food Bank	£1,000	The pop-up food bank is set up in St James Church for one Saturday per month. Residents from Bulkington and surrounding areas can come and select from a wide variety of tinned and dried food and a selection of fruit and vegetables.
Nuneaton and Bedworth	Nuneaton Foodbank	Providing food to local people in food crisis	£1,000	We don't think anyone in our community should have to face going hungry. Our request is for money to help us continue with our mission, providing food and support to local people who are referred to us in crisis.

Rugby	Health Exchange Birmingham	Pets As Therapy	£800	A community group coming together to meet dogs, have tea, socialise, find support and advice from Social Prescriber of Rugby and looking at trying to develop the group to provide activities such as board games, boccia, indoor darts etc with hope to provide a service twice a month
Rugby	St John the Baptist Hillmorton	Hillmorton Hub and Warm Space	£750	We hold a weekly social event offering companionship, warmth, and a soup lunch. We also offer computer access, support in completing forms and applications for Universal Credit, PIP etc. We offer Job Club support. Visitors have opportunities to play tabletop activities, but most choose to chat and support each other.
Rugby	Community Welcome CIC	Community Welcome - Community Active	£1,000	Community Welcome provides a rolling provision of sporting activities, training sessions and fitness sessions for asylum seekers and refugees in the community. In addition to these sessions, we have provided participants with the necessary kit to participate at activities.
Rugby	Long Lawford Methodist church	Energy Cost Support	£1,000	To continue using the building to offer services to the community, we need support to cover the increase in Energy costs which have grown 300% in the past year.
Rugby	Ukrainian Community in Rugby & Surrounding Areas	Cost of Living Grant for Ukrainian Community	£1,000	Helping towards cost of living for all Ukrainian families, who have left Ukraine due to the war, and settled in Rugby.
Rugby	Rugby Sikh Community Association	Promoting stress free zone	£1,000	Our project will increase awareness to the ethnically diverse communities about present crises and we will be able to support and give them advice about how

				to deal with the issues for example about keeping warm and how to prepare meals and to avoid food waste. We will create a safe working environment in the community.
Stratford	Southam United Charity	Covid 19 Food Voucher Scheme	£1,000	Provide food vouchers to residents with little or no income.
Stratford	Orangemabel	Warm Hub	£1,000	A warm hub offered every Tuesday mornings alongside a 'Chatty Cafe' particularly aimed at anyone who feels lonely, isolated, or just feels in need of a welcoming space. Complimentary Hot drink & treat is offered. Local services / volunteers sit and chat.
Stratford	Southam Church & Community Project	Cost of Living Advisor	£1,000	The Graham Adams Centre Cost of Living Project aims to provide support for those in need in the Southam area. We will continue to fund a Community Advisor for one day a week based at the Graham Adams Centre providing individual appointments to give advice and support with benefits, debt, energy, and housing, signposting to other support available locally and completing referrals as appropriate.
Stratford	Bishopton Community Centre	Bishopton Social	£1,000	The project is an extension of the warm hub, providing social activities and food aimed to help people with cost-of-living pressures in the most deprived community within Stratford District. This will take the form of a weekly social at Bishopton Community Centre which supports the Stratford Mount Pleasant East LSOA area amongst others.



Stratford	Jan Brzechwa Polish Saturday School in Stratford upon Avon	Meetings with arts and crafts in Stratford upon Avon	£970	This project supports the community by providing free artistic and creative activities for children between the ages of 7 and 12. The project involves a series of 8-afternoon meetings, during which participants can develop their artistic skills. With the rising cost of living, many parents struggle to afford paid extracurricular activities for their children, which are essential for their personal growth and development.
Stratford	Polish Club Warwickshire	My city-worth visiting and living	£990	My project aims to enable children in a difficult financial situation due to rising living costs to discover cultural and natural attractions in their place of residence. Due to the increased cost of living, many parents need help to afford to go on vacation or even pay for attractions in their local area. Children who do not have the opportunity to experience local attractions may feel excluded or inferior. The project aims to level the playing field for children in difficult financial situations compared to children whose financial crisis has not worsened.
Stratford	Clopton Community Action Group	Clopton Community Social	£1,000	The project is an extension of the Warm Hub at Ken Kennett Centre aiming to help people with cost-of-living pressures in the third most deprived community within Stratford District by offering social activities, food, and advice.
Stratford	MEN'S SHED STRATFORD UPON AVON	Men's Shed Survival	£1,000	Men's Shed Stratford Upon Avon has been at risk of complete closure for over 18 months.

Stratford	Lighthorne Heath Scout Group	Scout Inclusion	£260	Enabling children from families that due to size or low income to attend scout meetings and activities.
Stratford	Lighthorne Heath Village Hall	Warm Hub continuation	£1,000	We partnered with WRCC for a winter warm to support the community through the cost of living and fuel crisis. We want to continue to open up weekly as this is a vital service to many people. We have just got a digital grant to make the hub a place where people can use the internet and learn how to use the to get support.
Stratford	Stour Health and Wellbeing Partnership	Shipston Community Warm Hub	£1,000	Due to Shipston Winter Warm Hub's success, we will run this event as a permanent WRCC accredited Warm Hub from April. The grant will help support our provision of a warm, welcoming, inclusive community space, with free refreshments, activities, and support.
Stratford	Parochial Church Council of St. James' Church Alveston	The Big Community Knitted Christmas Tree	£1,000	The purpose of the project is to knit the communities of Alveston and Tiddington together, offering a warm and comfortable space for people to get together to enjoy doing something creative. We are holding 'Woolly Wednesdays' on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month. This is being hosted by Alveston Youth Hostel Association and we meet in one of their downstairs meeting rooms.
Warwick	Shree Krishna Resource Center	Improving mental wellbeing	£1,000	To help the elderly people in our community get together who are lonely, widowed and no have anyone to talk to. A chance for these likeminded people to get to together and meet each other. Talk to each other and help their mental health.

Warwick	Warwick Polish Saturday School	Be together with arts and crafts	£970	<p>This project supports the community by providing free artistic and creative activities for children between the ages of 7 and 12. The project involves a series of 8-afternoon meetings, during which participants can develop their artistic skills.</p> <p>With the rising cost of living, many parents struggle to afford paid extracurricular activities for their children, which are essential for their personal growth and development. This project aims to provide an opportunity for children from financially struggling families to participate in creative activities that will help them develop their artistic skills, socialize, and build self-confidence.</p>
Warwick	The Sikh Cultural and Sports Community Centre - Leamington and Warwick	Installation of new boiler	£1,000	<p>The current boiler in the elderly room club is over 10 years old and in need of constant repair. The boiler is used for heating and hot water and the main users of this facility are elderly. During the afternoon, the room can have 50+ members using this premises.</p>
Warwick	Parenting Project	Parent Mentoring	£1,000	<p>To cover the cost of training for Parent Mentors to support mental health and wellbeing as well as signposting to other organisations for advice and support.</p>
Warwick	2nd Whitnash Guide Unit	Financial Support for 2nd Whitnash Guides with hall rent and uniforms	£686	<p>We're asking for financial help in support of our Whitnash Girlguiding Unit and to support our members who are struggling with the cost of living and keep the Unit open. Our request has been triggered by escalating costs to run the Unit on a weekly basis.</p>

Warwick	Whitnash Youth Club	Luncheon Club	£1,000	To offer the local elderly community a free lunch once a week within the local Civic Centre
Warwick	The Polish Centre	Supporting Polish Community in Leamington Spa with cost of leaving	£990	Our project aims to provide support with a cost of living to the Polish Community in Leamington Spa. 60 families from our community expressed an interest in receiving support due to financial difficulties. We hope to deliver food parcels to families.
Warwick	11th Leamington Brownies	Improving access to youth services - Girlguiding at Dale Street Brownies	£577	Assisting girls in families on benefits and low income to access Dale Street Brownies which combats social isolation and promotes mental wellbeing through Girlguiding UK's programme. We offer girl-only safe space, and are for all girls and women, which particularly appeals to families who sometimes cannot afford our termly fee.
Warwick	Compassionate Kenilworth	Emergency Food Voucher Scheme	£1,000	To provide emergency supermarket vouchers to individuals & families in need of emergency food. We are well placed to identify those in food need, working alongside many partners. This project complements other food projects we are already running.
Countywide	Together for Short Lives	Cost of Living Emergency Support Fund	£1,000	An emergency fund helping families with terminally ill children who rely on life saving machinery cope with the increase in energy costs.

Countywide	Equality and Inclusion Partnership (EQUIP)	Improving Community Connections	£1,001	The Improving Community Connections project will support better online access. Using mobile Tablets, EQUIP will connect our current services to a new service, providing data cards to people who are struggling with access to affordable online connectivity.
Countywide	Citysave Credit Union	Citysave's Financial Guidance and Educational Project	£1,000	To deliver financial education and guidance to the residents of Warwickshire. Teaching them about Credit Unions, budgeting, and giving them knowledge to make better financial decisions in the future.

This page is intentionally left blank

## Appendix 1 - Proposed allocation of grant:

Type of Support	Allocation (£)	Method of Distribution	% of Allocation
<b>Food</b>		<b>£2,322,318.00</b>	<b>33%</b>
Cost of Living payment 1	£538,749.00	automatic	
Cost of Living payment 2	£538,749.00	automatic	
Cost of Living payment 3	£546,840.00	automatic	
Cost of Living payment 4	£546,840.00	automatic	
Cost of Living payment 1 - siblings	£13,950.00	by application	
Cost of Living payment 2 - siblings	£13,950.00	by application	
Cost of Living payment 3 - siblings	£13,950.00	by application	
Cost of Living payment 4 - siblings	£13,950.00	by application	
Food applications	£95,340.00	by application	
<b>Energy and Water</b>		<b>£4,088,648.00</b>	<b>59%</b>
Cost of Living payment 1	£862,890.00	automatic	
Cost of Living payment 2	£862,890.00	automatic	
Cost of Living payment 3	£1,053,108.00	automatic	
Cost of Living payment 4	£1,053,108.00	automatic	
Cost of Living payment 1 - siblings	£11,760.00	by application	
Cost of Living payment 2 - siblings	£11,760.00	by application	
Cost of Living payment 3 - siblings	£14,112.00	by application	
Cost of Living payment 4 - siblings	£14,112.00	by application	
Utilities Campaign (June)	£33,075.00	by application	
Utilities Campaign (Sept)	£33,075.00	by application	
Utilities Campaign (Nov)	£44,100.00	by application	
Utilities Campaign (Mar)	£44,100.00	by application	
Fuel applications	£49,028	by application	
Water bills applications	£1,530	by application	
<b>Essentials linked to Energy and Water</b>		<b>£25,780.00</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
Hygiene	£1,380	by application	
Planned Need (fridge/freezer etc)	£21,900	by application	
Warm clothing allowance	£2,500	by application	
<b>Wider essentials</b>		<b>£1,250.00</b>	<b>0.02%</b>
Broadband	£250	by application	
Other	£1,000	by application	
<b>Grants</b>		<b>£180,000.00</b>	<b>3%</b>
AOE	£50,000.00	welfare grant	
Community groups / D&B's / Breakfast Clubs	£130,000.00	welfare grant	
<b>Admin</b>		<b>£327,998.00</b>	<b>4.7%</b>
Welfare Resource	£293,798.00		
Ctalk 0800 call costs	£32,000.00		
Communications support	£1,000.00		
Consumables (print & postage)	£1,200.00		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£6,945,994.00</b>		

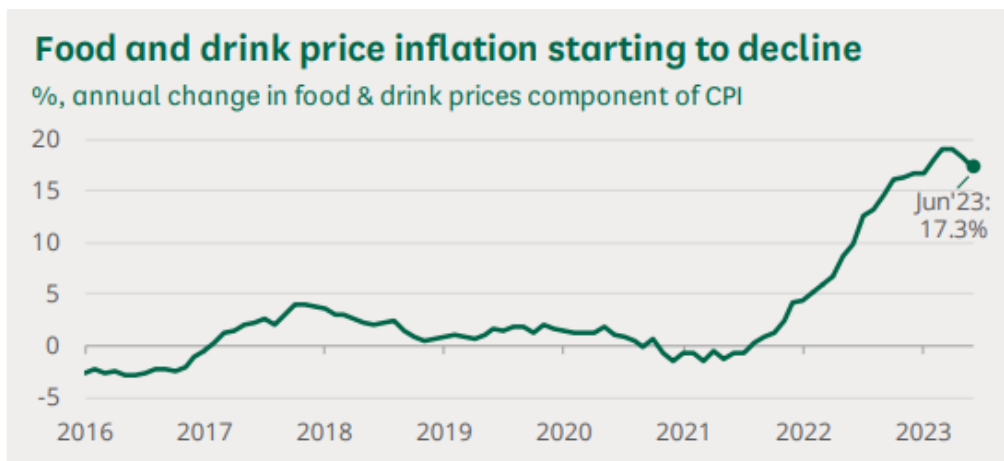
This page is intentionally left blank



## Statistical background and national support measures

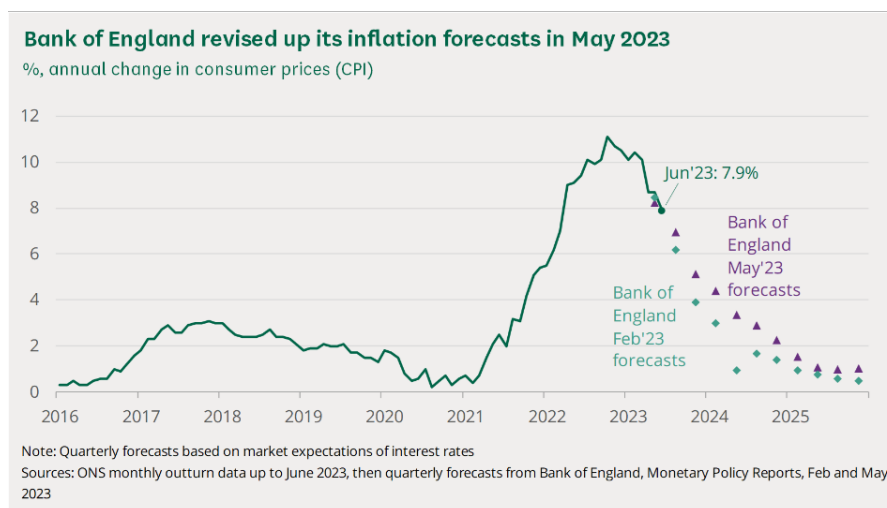
### *Statistical background*

- 1 Figures indicate that the cost of living increased sharply across the United Kingdom during 2022. The annual rate of inflation, measured as a percentage annual change in the Consumer Price Index, peaked at 11.1% in October 2022 (Office for National Statistics).
- 2 Core inflation, which excludes the energy and food components of the Consumer Price Index, remains high, although it reduced slightly in June 2023, from 7.1% in May, to 6.9% in June, remaining at 6.9% in July (Office for National Statistics).
- 3 The May 2023 Bank of England forecast expects inflation to further reduce in 2023, to 5.1% in the final quarter. However, a slowing or falling inflation rate means that prices are rising more slowly than before, not that prices are falling. Food prices were 17.3% higher in June 2023 compared to the same time a year earlier, domestic gas prices were 36% higher, and domestic electricity prices were 17% higher (all Office for National Statistics).
- 4 In March 2023 the Office for Budget Responsibility forecast post-tax household income to fall by 4.3% during 2022/2023.
- 5 Bank of England interest rate rises, up to 5.25% in August 2023, have led to higher mortgage costs for many households, and higher private rentals as landlords seek to pass on higher costs to tenants.
- 6 The combined impact of raised food and energy prices, reduced household income, and higher mortgage costs, is still not fully understood, but there is local evidence of resulting hardship, including from Citizens Advice, which is reporting an increase in enquiries across all areas of Warwickshire.
- 7 The Department for Energy, Security and Net Zero, in its most recent Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics, estimates that nationally 13.4% of households are in fuel poverty (calculated using the “Low Income Low Energy Efficiency” metric). It further estimates that by the end of 2023 the figure will be around 14.4% of households. Historically, the percentage of Warwickshire households in fuel poverty has been around 1% higher than the national average, partly driven by the rurality of large parts of the County. Applying 15.4% to the County’s 250,000 households equates to 38,000 in fuel poverty, with many more at risk of entering fuel poverty.
- 8 The Bank of England Monetary Policy Report from May 2023 reports food prices being 17.3% higher in June 2023 compared to June 2022 (chart below refers).



- 9 The Bank of England Monetary Policy Report from May 2023 reports domestic gas prices being 36% higher and domestic electricity prices being 17% higher in June 2023 compared to June 2022.
- 10 County Council School Census data shows a 1.7% increase in pupils eligible and claiming a free school meal in May 2023 (20.9%) compared to May 2022 (19.2%).
- 11 The Institute of Fiscal Studies reports that, with recent interest rate increases, the percentage of households nationally spending more than a fifth of their income on mortgage payments is set to increase to 60%, compared to 36% of households in March 2022.
- 12 Latest Citizens Advice Warwickshire figures indicate a 15% increase in residents helped in the financial year 2022/23 compared to 2021/22. The top 5 advice issues across the County in 2022/23 were: 1.) benefits and tax credits; 2.) debt, 3.) utilities and communications; 4.) financial services and capability; and 5.) Universal Credit.
- 13 The consumer group Which? reported through its consumer insight tracker that in mid-July 2023 the number of people missing payments on essential household bills such as energy, phone and water was as high as it had been over winter 2023/24. Around 2.4 million households missed at least one bill payment in the month to mid-July and 770,000 failed to make a mortgage or rent payment.
- 14 67% of businesses report some form of concern for their viability because of cost-of-living pressures, although the nature of these pressures has changed over the last 12 months. Initially, pressures came largely from the increased costs of materials and energy, and the manufacturing and hospitality sectors were especially impacted because of their intensive use of energy. According to the July 2023 Business Insights and Conditions Survey, less than 10% of businesses now report energy prices as their *main* concern, although energy prices remain a *significant* concern for many businesses, especially after withdrawal of the Energy Bill Relief Scheme in March 2023.

- 15 The biggest pressure currently facing businesses is the increased cost of borrowing, which long-term is likely to impact growth. Small and medium-sized enterprise commercial loans track slightly above mortgage interest rates and in the last 12 months have increased from an average of 2.9% to an average of 7.1%. Variable repayments will be significantly impacted by continuing interest rate increases. Some of the Council's partners report a slowdown in appetite for loan programmes, and conversely an uptick in appetite for grant funding, the availability of which has significantly reduced since the end of most European funding streams.
- 16 Businesses continue to struggle with the impacts of a tight labour market, finding the recruitment and retention of staff an issue. While job vacancies have dropped slightly, recruitment is still cited as an issue, contributing to annual wage inflation of 7.2%.
- 17 Although inflation has reduced in recent months and the Bank of England forecast expects inflation to reduce further towards the end of 2023 (chart below refers), food and energy prices are expected to remain high. This will mean continuing demand for services and long-lasting implications for service delivery.



### *National support measures*

- 1 The Energy Price Guarantee that capped typical energy bills at £2,500 and was maintained until the end of June 2023. From July 2023 until the end of March 2024, households will pay the lower of an Ofgem Price Cap or an Energy Price Guarantee set at £3,000.
2. Households on means tested benefits are receiving an additional £900 Cost-of-Living Payment.
3. Pensioner households are receiving an additional £300 Cost-of-Living Payment.

4. People on non-means-tested disability benefits are receiving an additional £150 Disability Cost-of-Living Payment.
5. There is a 5p cut in fuel duty (extended from 2022/23).
6. There is a permanent increase to the amount someone can earn before National Insurance Contributions (NICs) are charged.
7. In June 2023, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, principal mortgage lenders (covering 75% of the market), and the Financial Conduct Authority agreed a range of support measures for people struggling with mortgage payments, including:
  - A delay to homes being repossessed within 12 months of a first missed mortgage payment.
  - Customers approaching the end of a fixed-rate mortgage deal being offered the opportunity to “lock in” a deal up to six months’ ahead.
  - Customers being given the opportunity to switch to an interest-only mortgage for six months or extend their mortgage term to reduce their monthly payments and switch back to their original term within the first six months, both options without a new affordability check or affecting a customer’s credit score.
  - Support for customers who are up to date with payments to switch to a new mortgage deal at the end of their existing fixed rate deal without a new affordability check.

**Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee  
13<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

**Community Pantries Proof of Concept**

**Recommendation**

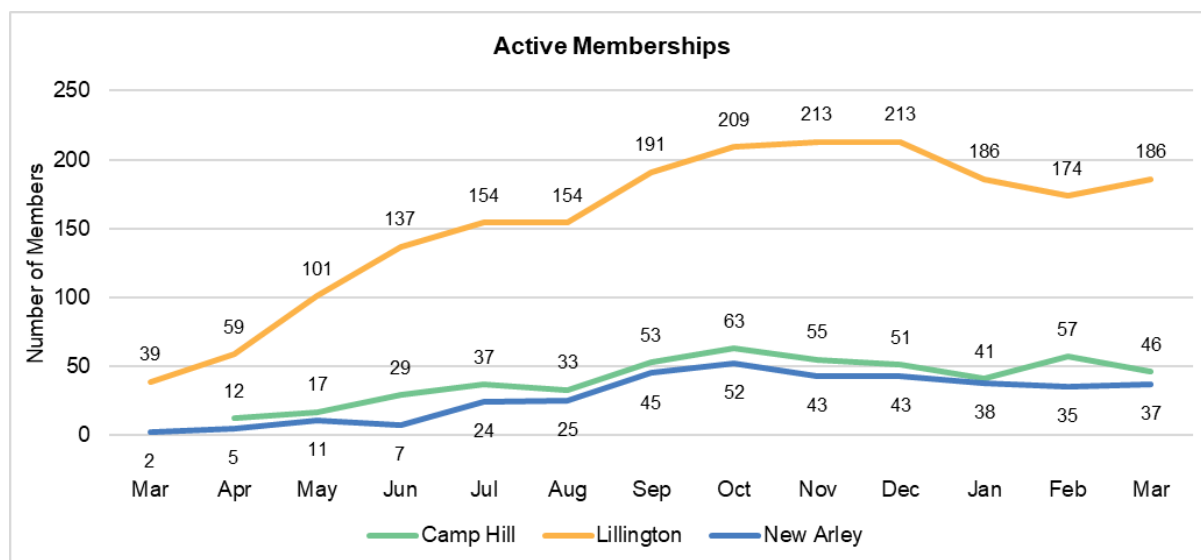
That the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on the progress made on the Community Pantries Proof of Concept that has taken place between March 2022 and March 2023 so as to help shape the future options to be brought to Cabinet before the end of this calendar year

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1. In March 2022, Warwickshire County Council commissioned Feed the Hungry to undertake a proof-of-concept project around community pantries which met the needs of rural and urban communities. The pantries were intended to help people move beyond immediate food crises (which the the Food Bank model addresses) in an empowering and community-led way. The Feed the Hungry team have extensive experience of setting up static provision, but as part of the proof of concept wanted to also trial a mobile offer in more rural areas where a static provision would be more challenging to provide.
- 1.2. The pantries provide access to food based on a membership fee (currently £5 per visit). This provides a dignified shopping experience of quality food for people who live in crisis, backed up by a 'wrap-around' family support offer by Citizens Advice and Warwickshire County Council's Family Information Service. The pantries provide access to other essential items such as toiletries, clothing, and cleaning products. Memberships are for a duration of six months but can be renewed for an additional six months if further support is needed.
- 1.3. There are three community pantry sites: Lillington, Camp Hill and New Arley, which went live during March/ April 2022:
  - Lillington Community Pantry: based in the Adult Education Centre, Pound Lane Lillington (Thursdays and Fridays 11am – 3pm)
  - New Arley Mobile Pantry: based in the Arley & St. Michael's Community Centre (Thursdays 11am – 3pm)
  - Camp Hill Mobile Pantry based in the church hall associated with St Mary and St John Church (Fridays 11am – 3pm)
- 1.4. The community pantries at Lillington, New Arley and Camp Hill have now been open for a year and have seen a steady increase in membership applications

and usage. Figure 1 shows the active membership per month, the number of active memberships is calculated as the distinct count of members that have attended the pantry they are registered with per month. For Lillington, the number of active members peaked at 213 during November and December 2022, while for Camp Hill and New Arley, active memberships reached their peak during October, with 63 and 52 members.

**Figure 1: The number of active memberships per month for each of the three pantries.**



NB for those viewing in black & white  
 Top line = Lillington,  
 Middle line = Camp Hill,  
 Bottom line = New Arley

- 1.5 All three pantries are regularly supporting a higher number of families than was originally budgeted for (100 per week for Lillington and 20 per week for each of Camp Hill and New Arley).
- 1.6 Table 1 below highlights the number of activities undertaken by pantry members over the 12 months, and clearly shows the increase in demand over each quarter.
- 1.7 As well as food parcels members can purchase toiletries and cleaning products. To help members budget and ensure they have access to food over time, they can build up credit and purchase vouchers in advance.
- 1.8 Since the opening of the pantries the current data includes the following:
  - Number of members = 733
  - Number of members no longer needing support = 341
  - Number of food parcels bought = 6,484
  - Number of members who have become volunteers at the pantries = 18

- Number of members engaged with Citizens Advice = 207
- Amount of debt members have received advice on = £152,296
- Amount of debt members have been supported to have written off = £20,645
- Amount members have been supported to gain in income maximisation = £172,039

**Table 1: Membership Metrics for the three Community Pantries 2022/2023**

	New Arley				Camp Hill				Lillington			
	Q1	Q1-Q2	Q1-Q3	Q1-Q4	Q1	Q1-Q2	Q1-Q3	Q1-Q4	Q1	Q1-Q2	Q1-Q3	Q1-Q4
<b>Number of members</b> (and new members joined during the quarter)	14	55 (+41)	74 (+19)	<b>83 (+9)</b>	52	96 (+44)	134 (+38)	<b>153 (+19)</b>	202	340 (+138)	434 (+94)	<b>497 (+48)</b>
<b>Number of food parcels bought</b>	26	268 (+242)	632 (+364)	<b>965 (+333)</b>	95	365 (+270)	765 (+400)	<b>1127 (+362)</b>	594	1,702 (+1,108)	3,129 (+1,427)	<b>4,392 (+1,263)</b>
<b>Number of toiletries bought</b>	0	21 (+21)	53 (+32)	<b>53 (±0)</b>	100	166 (+66)	189 (+23)	<b>189 (±0)</b>	54	162 (+108)	269 (+107)	<b>371 (+102)</b>
<b>Number of cleaning products bought</b>	0	18 (+18)	52 (+34)	<b>52 (±0)</b>	14	23 (+9)	39 (+16)	<b>40 (+1)</b>	53	163 (+110)	265 (+102)	<b>378 (+113)</b>
<b>Number of vouchers bought<sup>1</sup></b>	5	12 (+7)	29 (+17)	<b>31 (+2)</b>	7	17 (+10)	52 (+35)	<b>65 (+13)</b>	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Number of special purchases<sup>2</sup></b>	25	119 (+94)	244 (+125)	<b>369 (+125)</b>	25	93 (+68)	138 (+45)	<b>262 (+124)</b>	271	509 (+238)	737 (+228)	<b>804 (+67)</b>
<b>Number of members who no longer need support</b>	0	3 (+3)	13 (+10)	<b>37 (+24)</b>	0	12 (+12)	42 (+30)	<b>88 (+46)</b>	0	57 (+57)	122 (+65)	<b>216 (+94)</b>
<b>Number of members who become volunteers</b>	0	0	1 (+1)	<b>2 (+1)</b>	0	3 (+3)	5 (+2)	<b>5 (±0)</b>	0	7 (+7)	7 (±0)	<b>11 (+4)</b>

<sup>1</sup> Vouchers are a form of credit a member can buy in advance, which can help members budget and ensure they have access to food over time.

<sup>2</sup> Special purchases usually refer to bundles of toiletries, with individual items priced at £0.50 each. This measure shows the number of items that were bought.

- 1.8 Supporting members to move forward with their lives is key to the pantry model. Originally the time frame for this was 6 months but this has been extended to 12 – 18 months due to the complexity of issues members presented with and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis challenges. Reasons why members no longer need support include the following:

### **Lillington Pantry**

- A large number of Ukrainian families joined for a short period when they first arrived in the local area. They were linked up with English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) lessons and checked whether they have applied for Universal Credit (UC). As these members rarely have the same housing and utility costs as other members, they needed support for a shorter period. Some have returned once they have moved on from their sponsors' house and into their own accommodation.
- Member's situation has improved, through finding work or another change in circumstances and that they no longer need to access the food provision.
- Member has passed away.

### **Camp Hill and New Arley Pantries**

- The membership lapsed
- The member experienced an improvement in circumstances, such as:
  - The member has found employment
  - The member's benefits were maximised
  - The member's debt was addressed
- The member has moved out of the area covered by the pantry
- The member failed to engage with wrap-around services
- The membership was terminated by the pantry (continued poor behaviour and rudeness to staff and volunteers)
- The member passed away.

### **1.9 Wrap-around services**

Citizens Advice has supported pantry members with over 700 appointments over the first year of operation, through a variety of pre- booked and drop- in appointments

- Lillington Community Pantry works alongside Citizens Advice South Warwickshire (CASW), and CASW support pantry members on two days a week, engaging with 84 members
- New Arley Community Pantry works alongside North Warwickshire Citizens Advice (NWCA), with NWCA supporting pantry members one day a week engaging with 45 members



- Camp Hill Community Pantry works alongside Bedworth, Rugby and Nuneaton Citizens Advice (BRANCAB), with BRANCAB supporting pantry members two days a week, engaging with 78 members

Across the three pantries, Citizens Advice has engaged with 207 members. Members have received advice on debt totalling £152,296, members have been supported to have £20,645 of debt written off and members have been given support and advice to gain a total of £172,039 in income maximisation.

The Family Information Service has engaged with 62 members. The Service has supported them on a wide range of support including housing, childcare, special educational needs and disabilities.

**Table 2: Wrap-Around Services provided at the Community Pantries**

Cumulative Numbers	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/Total
No of Clients Engaged				
Lillington	28	45	64	84
New Arley	17	19	39	45
Camp Hill	19	49	60	78
Debt Addressed (1)				
Lillington	£8,281	£15,248	£29,443	£96,246
New Arley	£0	£3,800	£19,161	£28,595
Camp Hill	£3,599	£14,817	£16,500	£27,455
Debt Written off (2)				
Lillington	£6,920	£4,892	£16,345	£20,000
New Arley	£0	£1,400	£15,860	£0
Camp Hill	£1,300	£915	£12,000	£645
Income Maximisation (3)				
Lillington	£37,065	£64,379	£48,866	£77,167
New Arley	£8,705	£39,866	£8,573	£24,595
Camp Hill	£3,473	£51,957	£83,003	£70,277
<b>Top Issues</b>				
<b>Lillington</b>	Benefits, Charity Goods, Health, Housing	Benefits, Charity Goods, Health, Housing	Benefits, Housing, Charity Goods, Health	Benefits, Charity Goods, Housing, Health
<b>New Arley</b>	Benefits, Relationships, Financial Capability	Benefits,	Benefits, Universal Credit,	Benefits, Financial Capability,

Cumulative Numbers	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4/Total
<b>Camp Hill</b>	Energy costs, Debt, Universal Credit	Financial Capability, Utilities  Council Tax Arrears, Energy price hike, Correct benefits not received	Charitable Support  Personal Independence Payments (PIP), Universal Credit, Housing Issues	Utilities  Applications and appeals (for PIP, Universal Credit, Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Attendance Allowance), Foodbank & Fuel Vouchers, Universal Queries

<sup>1</sup> Debt Addressed refers to a plan or debt solution being put in place to help the client manage their debt.

<sup>2</sup> Debt Written Off includes all debt that the service supports someone to write off such that they are no longer liable for the debt. E.g., DRO

<sup>3</sup> Income Maximisation refers to any financial gain recorded within the period, either projected or confirmed. A financial gain can include (but is not limited to) benefits and tax credits (including back payments), compensation, rent rebates, insurance pay-outs, court/ tribunal awards, grants and redundancy pay awards. It can include one-off payments and regular income. Income gains are annualised in accordance with National CA methodology

### 1.10 Members are also signposted to a wide range of agencies for advice and support including:

- Housing advice
- Family Information Service for brokerage support
- Bereavement counselling
- Support with gardening upkeep and garden clearances
- Advocacy with utility companies
- Advocacy on housing issues
- Support for furniture and white goods
- Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme
- Act on Energy
- Debt Team Specialists

As well as the above data, the case studies in the appendices (Appendix 1: Case Studies of Pantry Members, Appendix 2: Citizens Advice Case Studies, Appendix 3: Family Information Service Case Study, Appendix 4: Community Pantries Member Feedback) detail how the community pantries have impacted members' lives, including improvements to mental health, energy and/or food security and support with ongoing issues with children and finances.

## **2. Financial Implications:**

2.1. Funding for the proof-of-concept 2022 – 2023 was allocated from Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) (£306,749). This funding was allocated as follows:

- £199,949 for Lillington Community Pantry and £55,000 for the Mobile Pantries in New Arley and Camp Hill. Out of this £25,000 was allocated to capital costs of setting up the project, with the remaining funding being used for the running of the three sites
- £41,800 was allocated to the Citizens Advice for provision of wrap around services
- £10,000 was allocated for rental of the community centres in Camp Hill and New Arley

2.2 The funding for the second year (March 2023 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024) has been identified from the Cost-of-Living one-off budget and is £262,000 (£45,000 for Citizens Advice, £10,000 for two community centres rental). Funding for Citizens Advice is administered through a grant agreement.

2.3 Continuation of the pantries would create a further financial pressure for the MTFs, although this is anticipated to be phased out over a period of time, potentially 3 years.

## **3. Environmental Implications**

None

## **4. Supporting Information**

4.1 The Community Pantries proof of concept has been a successful project. Demand for services at all three locations have surpassed the capacity stated in the grant agreement and continue to increase, intensified by the ongoing cost-of-living challenges.

4.2 The wrap-around services have engaged with people who they would not normally have come into contact with. Members are presenting with more complex issues and need longer and/or multiple appointments to address their issues.

4.3 The case studies in the appendices show the positive impact the service is having on pantry members, including improvements to mental health, energy and/or food security and support with ongoing issues with children or finances.

4.4 As the project is a proof of concept, it allowed those involved the flexibility to test out different services and options, all have provided refreshments and an informal meeting area with visits from the mobile library service and the Warwickshire Rural Community Council (WRCC) mobile barista van. The largest pantry is Lillington, situated at Pound Lane and has access to both inside and outside space, various activities were trialled, including summer fetes, affordable credit options with CitySave, budgeting and money management courses and a Breakfast with Santa event.

4.5 The pantry managers have fed back that the project has been well received and supported at the three sites. They regularly receive referrals from outside of the locations of the pantries and signpost to other services for support. All sites have introduced waiting lists because of the high demand, currently only Camp Hill has an active waiting list.

## **5. Next Steps and Timescales**

5.1. The Council has extended the funding for the Community Pantries Project for a further 12 months, up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Feed the Hungry, commissioned to deliver the services are currently working with Council officers on a Community Pantries Sustainable Options paper, which will be submitted to Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

5.2. Options will include a three-year transitional plan to transfer the pantries into local, community ownership, with tapering costs over a period of three years.

### **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1: Case Studies of Pantry Members**

**Appendix 2: Citizens Advice Case Studies**

**Appendix 3: Family Information Service Case Study**

**Appendix 4: Community Pantries Member Feedback**

## **Appendices: All Names in the Appendices have been changed to ensure anonymity**

### **Appendix 1: Case Studies of Pantry Members**

#### **1. Pantry One**

**Candy** first visited us in September 2022. Candy is a single mother to young child. When she first visited us, Candy was facing low income due to working shifts whilst also looking after her young child. This meant that due to her zero hours contract she had inconsistent incomes, making it difficult to know what was coming in and going out.

In the period of us knowing Candy, she has faced some challenges. In February, Candy had an injury which meant she was unable to work. She spoke to Citizens Advice as she was not receiving sick pay from her employer. With her unable to return to work, due to her injury, she found herself applying for Universal Credit. We were able to refer her to speak to Citizens Advice and work with her to speak to her employer but also do a benefit entitlement check.

During this period of time, Candy experienced a lot of anxiety and stress, and therefore spent time with the team in the cafe area at the Pantry but also volunteered with the Pantry. This gave Candy an opportunity to spend time with the rest of the team and take her mind off the circumstances she was facing. This was essential for Candy at this time.

Sadly, for Candy, the chaos didn't stop there. In this time, she split up from her partner, found herself needing to sell her house and move out, all whilst being on little to no income and waiting for Universal Credit to come through. She had outgoings she was unable to pay, an injury which required surgery and a child who needed taking care of.

This led to a further referral to Citizens Advice to register for home choice and start the process of finding a council property for herself and her child. Obviously with physical, financial and emotional stress taking its toll, we again provided as much emotional support as possible. Although this is ongoing, Candy knows that the pantry is a safe place for her to come to for professional advice from Citizens Advice but also a place where she can feel supported whilst she deals with the upheaval of these significant life changes.

We first met **Madeleine** in August 2022. Madeleine discovered the pantry whilst searching for local support online. When we first met Madeleine, we could see she was financially stressed and anxious about the future. Madeleine is a full-time carer for her parents. This means that Madeleine is providing around the clock care and support for her parents. Although her parents were taking on some financial responsibility, their savings were also rapidly depleting.

Madeleine has always been very independent, especially since the passing of her husband some years ago, therefore Madeleine struggled with the idea of being on Universal Credit, let alone asking for support for food. Although she reached out for support, with her seeking advice from the team about low level support such as discounts on water bills through 'The Big Difference Scheme' and also the Broadband discount, she did not purely want to use the pantry as a member but also wanted to give back.

Since Madeleine joined as a member, she has also become a regular part of our team. She volunteers on a weekly basis, and has also helped with events. She has explained that this is her time to escape from the caring responsibilities and give something back. In December, she spoke with one of the team to return her card, explaining that the pantry was a "lifesaver in an extremely sticky patch", and although she still has periods of financial instability, she is no longer in a crisis point, and therefore decided she no longer needs to use the service. However, we are grateful that she is still a key volunteer and wants to continue to support the pantry as and when she can.

#### **2. Pantry Two**

**John** is a single man in his fifties. He lives alone with no dependants. He is claiming Universal Credit. John used to work, but in recent years, his health has prevented him from working. As he does not drive and is reliant on public transport, which is limited, he feels isolated.

When John joined the pantry, he was quite reserved. As the weeks passed by, he began to open up. Citizens Advice were able to help him sort out his benefits and deal with a few other issues. John then started volunteering, making teas and coffees for the members. He would chat with the members whilst they waited or just sat in the hall enjoying a brew and a natter. With the Pantry, it provided John with a social setting where he felt of use once again, and part of a community

**Outcomes delivered:**

- Improved Mental Health and improved self-esteem
- Energy security
- Food security
- Citizens Advice assistance with resolving money issues

**3. Pantry Three**

**Coco** was originally referred to the pantry via the Foodbank. Recently widowed, Coco lives in a privately rented house, and her financial circumstances had taken a nosedive. During her initial visits, she was working closely with the advisor from Citizens Advice, who was able to help Coco navigate through and resolve her benefit issues. Coco very quickly utilized our facility of paying credit on her account, when her Universal Credit was paid, thus ensuring access to food during the following month. Visit after visit she would stay and started to help out at the Pantry.

Coco then became one of our first volunteers at Pantry Three. Volunteering at the pantry has given Coco some purpose after the loss of her husband. Coco enjoys interacting with the members, making a brew, and assisting the members with their shopping. Coco has now managed to get her benefits in order, and has successfully applied for PIP with the invaluable help from Citizens Advice.

As a long-term resident of the local area, Coco used to be a member of the church when it was opened. Coco has joined one of the groups now run in the church hall and is a regular at one of the Church's clubs.

**Outcomes:**

- Improved Mental Health
- Improved Social activities
- Energy Security
- Food security
- Citizens Advice has helped in improving her financial circumstances, and assistance with ongoing issues.
- Now volunteering within the community

## **1. Appendix 2: Citizens Advice Case Studies**

### **1. Lillington Pantry**

The service provided by Citizens Advice South Warwickshire (CASW) at the Lillington Community Pantry fulfils a community need, assisting Pantry customers with a wide range of issues and improving their wellbeing.

CASW supports the Community Pantry with two advisers, who both enjoy working here. There is always an exciting buzz about the place, and it is always busy. The Pantry staff refer their customers where they think we might be able to help, mostly via a shared spreadsheet of appointments. CASW also accepts “drop-in” customers where time allows and there are a few ‘frequent flyers’ who they have seen several times.

The issues Citizens Advice assist with are quite varied - in addition to the usual Personal Independence Payments (PIP) / Attendance Allowance (AA) / Universal Credit queries. It has advised on issues as diverse as divorce, helping clients with European Union Settlement Scheme, Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) entitlement and housing disrepair issues involving the Housing Ombudsman. It also offers budgeting advice and “managing your money” chats, where appropriate. It is probable that many clients assisted at the Pantry CASW service would not otherwise have sought assistance from a centralised CASW service.

**Jasmine** was referred to CASW at the Lillington Community Pantry.

Jasmine lives with her retired husband and adult child in their owner-occupied property. Jasmine is aged below state pension age, husband receives the new state pension. Jasmine’s child is in their twenties, has a low income and receives Universal Credit. Jasmine says that the household is struggling financially, and this is affecting mental health.

Jasmine wanted some advice on what benefits as a household they could claim.

#### **What did CASW do:**

Provided bespoke advice to Jasmine about the benefits that as a household they would be eligible for.

#### **What was the impact on the client:**

Jasmine was pleased with the explanation and the possibility of their eligibility as a household.

Jasmine had not been aware of some of the benefits they were entitled to and was able to take action as a result.

#### **Outcomes achieved for the client:**

Jasmine’s household will receive additional benefit payments and reduced income tax in tax year 23/24 amounting to a maximum of over £3000:

#### **Feedback from Citizens Advice Worker:**

In Addition to the General Comments above, here are some keynotes:

1. Most Pantry customers who receive advice from CASW in situ there have multiple issues, with some complex cases involving various agencies.
2. The CASW service comprises a drop-in facility and an appointment booking process, administered

by Pantry staff. The no-show count for appointments in Q4 was 5%.

3. CASW include “managing your money” discussions with Pantry customers who seek advice about Benefits, with an Income/Expenditure check when permitted.
4. The Health issues include completing Personal Independence Payments (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) forms with clients.
5. The Housing issues include assisting customers with DHP claims.
6. The Charity issues include issuing Food Bank and/or Fuel Bank vouchers.
7. Debt write-off excludes unknown outcomes from Debt Relief Order applications administered by a specialist Debt Team after a MECC referral

## **2. New Arley Pantry:**

Client was referred via Community Pantry. They are 75 years old and live alone in a property that they own outright. Client receives State Pension and Pension Credit. Client also receives a small amount from their late spouse’s private pension. Client has no savings and is not in any debt. Client came to the Pantry as they wanted advice regarding their energy bills doubling in cost and also not being able to cook meals properly due to their cooker being broken, client was unable to repair/replace it due to her low income.

The adviser completed a benefit check to ensure the client was in receipt of entitled benefits. Adviser also identified the client had a number of health issues and was not claiming any disability benefits.

The client was referred to an Energy Advisor who looked into the client's energy bills and provided them with a Carbon Monoxide Monitor. Adviser made a charity application on behalf of the client for a cooker. Client was awarded a £300 cooker from a local grant

### **Impact on client:**

Client was extremely happy, as they are able to cook proper meals. The adviser also advised the client about Attendance Allowance and a follow up appointment was made to complete the form. The client was awarded Attendance Allowance.

Client stated that they were grateful for help and increase in monthly income due to Attendance Allowance, they felt less anxious about increasing costs to keep warm

### **Feedback from CA worker:**

- This quarter the issues raised have demonstrated clients’ concern about energy costs - help with utilities is now in the top three of issues clients are helped and supported with.
- Three clients were provided with free fuel vouchers and supported with budgeting and income maximisation.
- Local clients are accessing advice and support from Citizens Advice via referrals from Community Pantry and from other agencies using St Michaels on a Thursday afternoon (CAVA and Warm Hub

## **3. Camp Hill Pantry:**

It is common in many relationships that one partner is found responsible for handling the household finances and administration, i.e. paying of bills, organising household maintenance, liaising with banks, Building Societies, Local Councils etc. The problem is that when that partner is no longer there it can leave the remaining partner in a very vulnerable position with not knowing what to deal with or what the situation is regarding prioritising issues etc.



We had such a situation at Camp Hill where a client walked in and reservedly walked up to my table. When asked if we could help them, they became very negative in their approach. They were very emotional and tearful.

**What did BRANCAB do:**

I asked the client to sit down which they reluctantly did, and we slowly but surely engaged in conversation. The client said that their partner of many years passed away in November 2022 and they organised everything to do with the house and finances, the client said that they were struggling with issues such as Rent, Council tax etc. Their partner's funeral had been sorted but the client said that they need to come to terms with the daily issues. The client lives in a private rented building and is in receipt of State pension with no other income.

I felt at that stage that they client had had enough, and I suggested that we meet next week to go through a Benefit check to establish whether they are entitled to any further income. The client wasn't sure about this but after I explained the ethos of the benefits check they were fine with it.

**Impact on the client:**

We met the following week and the client was far more relaxed, we went through the Benefits check and established that they were eligible for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. I explained the ethos of the Severn Trent Big Difference Scheme (BDS) and they expressed a wish to apply.

The following week the client had obtained a local Council Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support form, which they had completed on their own and brought it in to be checked over; it was fine. They also brought in the information for the BDS application which was passed on to the relevant Team.

Client then took the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support form to the Council Offices for processing, and they are awaiting the result.

Client now shows more confidence and although all of their emotional problems haven't gone away they are able to sort their daily issues out. The client was very grateful for the assistance.

**Feedback from the CA worker:**

The Community Pantry at Camp Hill is now well established and serving the Community well with many people returning to take advantage when the need arises. Generally when talking to the members they do try to manage without it but with the continuing worry of the unpredictable energy increases and other rising costs they feel that they are needing to use the Pantry. I am still heartened by the "Community Spirit" encompassed within the Pantry and people sit around having a "Cuppa" and sharing their "good bits" and their woes; it is a good atmosphere there.

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) were recently distributing free basic Insulation Kits which we were handing out at the Pantry. These consisted of two Energy Saving lightbulbs, insulating foil for placing behind radiators and some Draughtproofing strip to seal gaps around doors and windows. The kit also included a leaflet providing instructions on how to fit the items and also giving some good energy saving tips.

The response to this was really encouraging because no one refused the kits and the people I spoke to showed a genuine interest in how to save money and stay warm.

It was a good initiative that worked as does the Pantry

### **Appendix 3: Family Information Service Case Study**

The Family Information Service (FIS) Team are developing relationships at the three community pantries and working towards our aim of attending each pantry monthly. Although Q4 has been challenging for us in terms of staffing (we need to prioritise staffing our helpline and we have been carrying vacancies, which we have now recruited to), we have been able to attend multiple sessions across the three pantries. At each session, we speak to many individuals, which resulted in seven FIS referrals for Lillington, three FIS referrals for Camp Hill members, and two FIS referrals for New Arley pantry members. This means that the parent was contacted by a member of the FIS team to offer ongoing support, which can relate to a large range of subjects, such as Housing, Finance, Childcare, Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and many more.

In addition to the parents we have spoken with directly at the pantries, the FIS team ensure that they network with the professionals at the events to ensure that they understand the role of FIS so that they can make appropriate referrals to the team when we are not there.

**Sherry** is a regular at one of the Pantries and the team suggested to her to speak with the Family Information Service to see what support could be offered to her.

Sherry is on a low income and not currently working as her pregnancy is complicated. Her ex partner is also currently going through the Courts process for Domestic Violence offences. She is worried about finance and asked for support to get baby essentials.

The FIS Officer made a Baby Basics referral and a Citizens Advice referral for benefit and Child Support Agency (CSA) support. The FIS Officer also gained consent for a Brokerage referral to get some baby essentials and also some mental health support. She is already in contact with other support agencies.

#### Appendix 4: Community Pantries Member Feedback

“The place is amazing  
I’ve made loads of friends.”

“This place is a great life line of help for  
people in Camp Hill and loads of support. It  
helped me a lot.”

“All Community Pantry workers [are]  
pleasant.  
Food variety [is] very good.  
Nothing negative to say.  
Even [name of volunteer] is ok :) “

“It helped [me] massively through  
[a] hard time and [a] time of need.  
[I’ve] been help[ed] [by] many  
professional[s] within the  
community centre and always  
[have] been pointed in the right  
direction by [the] lead of the pantry.  
I can’t thank everyone for all the  
support. “

“This pantry hub is the thing that has  
kept me and the many people who  
I’ve met going through this very cold  
snap. The people who run it are all  
very friendly and so helpful. I look  
forward to Thursdays because I know  
I’m going to see people and have a  
good natter and hot drinks [and]  
biscuits. The CAB have even sorted  
me a brand new cooker. It’s lovely to  
be able to cook a roast dinner for my  
grandkids. I couldn’t believe it when it  
arrived. I will always be thankful for  
the support that I have had. The most  
friendliest people ever.“

## Background Papers

**None.**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Report Author	Louise Richards	<a href="mailto:louiserichards@warwickshire.gov.uk">louiserichards@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Director	Kushal Birla	<a href="mailto:kushalbirla@warwickshire.gov.uk">kushalbirla@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Executive Director	Executive Director for Resources	<a href="mailto:robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk">robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Heather Timms	<a href="mailto:heathertimms@warwickshire.gov.uk">heathertimms@warwickshire.gov.uk</a>

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

Local Member(s):

Cllr Boad - Lillington

Cllr Humphreys - New Arley

Cllr Beetham - Camp Hill

Other members:

Cllr Warwick,

Cllr Birdi,

Cllr Roberts,

Cllr Feeney

**Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme 2022/2023 – September 2023**

Item / Lead Officer	Report detail	Date of next report
Public Question Time/Questions to the Portfolio Holders / Work Programme	Standing items for every meeting.	* Standing item
Council Plan 2020 – 2027 Performance Report	Council Plan 2020 – 2027 Performance Report	* Standing item
Inflation Contingency Fund	To be reviewed on a quarterly basis	Standing item from 22 February 2023
Estates Masterplan Update	To consider the future of the WCC estates portfolio	TBC
Library Membership for Children and Young People	To receive a report on encouraging greater use of libraries by children and young people	13 December 2023
County Councillors' Grant Fund 2020-23	To review allocation of County Councillors' grant funding for the period 2020-23	13 December 2023
VCSE Sector Support Services Progress Report	To receive an update report on the support being provided by the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector	13 December 2023

**Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Work Programme 2022/2023 – September 2023**

Warwickshire Property and Development Group Performance Update	To review the performance of the Warwickshire Property and Development Group	13 December 2023
Warwickshire Waterways Strategy Progress Report	To review and comment on the Waterways Strategy	13 December 2023