



NOTICE OF MEETING

CABINET

TUESDAY, 26 JULY 2022 AT 12.00 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBER - THE GUILDHALL, PORTSMOUTH

Telephone enquiries to Democratic Services - Tel 023 9283 4870

Email: Democratic@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Information with regard to public access due to Covid precautions

- Following the government announcement 'Living with COVID-19' made on 21 February and the end of universal free testing from 1st April, attendees are no longer required to undertake an asymptomatic/ lateral flow test within 48 hours of the meeting however we still encourage attendees to follow the PH precautions we have followed over the last two years to protect themselves and others including vaccination and taking a lateral flow test should they wish.
- We strongly recommend that attendees should be double vaccinated and have received a booster.
- If symptomatic we encourage you not to attend the meeting but to stay at home. Updated government guidance from 1 April advises people with a respiratory infection, a high temperature and who feel unwell, to stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and they no longer have a high temperature. From 1 April, anyone with a positive COVID-19 test result is being advised to follow this guidance for five days, which is the period when you are most infectious.
- We encourage all attendees to wear a face covering while moving around crowded areas of the Guildhall.
- Although not a legal requirement, attendees are strongly encouraged to keep a social distance and take opportunities to prevent the spread of infection by following the 'hands, face, space' and 'catch it, kill it, bin it' advice that also protects us from other winter viruses.
- Hand sanitiser is provided at the entrance and throughout the Guildhall. All attendees are encouraged to make use of hand sanitiser on entry to the Guildhall.
- Those not participating in the meeting and wish to view proceedings are encouraged to do so remotely via the livestream link.

Membership

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (Chair)

Councillor Suzy Horton (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Chris Attwell

Councillor Kimberly Barrett

Councillor Darren Sanders

Councillor Lynne Stagg

Councillor Jason Fazackarley

Councillor Lee Hunt

Councillor Steve Pitt

Councillor Matthew Winnington

(NB This agenda should be retained for future reference with the minutes of this meeting.)

Please note that the agenda, minutes and non-exempt reports are available to view online on the Portsmouth City Council website: www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Deputations by members of the public may be made on any item where a decision is going to be taken. The request should be made in writing to the contact officer (above) by 12 noon of the working day before the meeting, and must include the purpose of the deputation (for example, for or against the recommendations). Email requests are accepted.

AGENDA

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interests

3 Record of Previous Decision Meeting - 21 June 2022 (Pages 9 - 22)

A copy of the record of the previous decisions taken at Cabinet on 21 June 2022 are attached.

4 GP provision in Portsmouth (Pages 23 - 32)

Purpose

In the light of recent media reports and concerns raised by residents regarding access to primary care provision to provide information on current primary care provision, the issues and challenges within the city, and the actions being undertaken to secure improvements and improve resilience.

5 Local Development Scheme

Report to follow

6 Tipner West Development

Report to follow

7 City Centre regeneration (Pages 33 - 78)

Purpose

1. To build on the previous City Centre reports and sets out how the Council's wider agenda to ensure that the City Centre and high street plans for economic development and culturally led regeneration continue to prosper, by accommodating the permanent and meanwhile growth this part of the

city needs and putting people back into the place.

2. The city centre area has for many years been a Council priority, defined in the current and emerging local plans as an area set aside for housing and economic growth, within the wider City Centre. A City Centre Masterplan was produced in 2012 and updated in 2020 to support the emerging Local Plan.
3. To provide an update on the Council's approach to improving the City Centre and highlights progress of delivery of the regeneration of the city centre, following the Cabinet Decisions taken previously in October 2021 and March 2022.

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet

1. **Note the high level of activity taking place in and around the city centre, as referenced in the report and appendices, along with the proposed stewardship role the council intends to play to ensure that the future activity and growth in this area is curated sensibly and can be delivered.**
2. **Agree to progress the recommendations and actions suggested in the Unlocking Your Place Potential (UYPP) Report in full.**
3. **Note the progress made by officers, on work delegated by Cabinet in March 2022, to determine an appropriate and achievable delivery strategy for the City Centre North (CCN) workstream.**
4. **Note the progress made by officers on land assembly as approved under the Cabinet and Full Council meetings in October 2021 and Cabinet in March 2022.**
5. **Note the progress made by officers on the development of a meanwhile strategy, following the production of a business justification cases for the proposals.**

8 Response to the Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel's recommendations regarding biodiversity (Pages 79 - 172)

Purpose

To set out the response of officers to the Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel's recommendations arising from a review into biodiversity enhancement in urban Portsmouth.

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet

1. **Thanks the panel for its work in undertaking the review.**
2. **Notes and supports the recommendations of the review, which are set out in Appendix 2 [to follow] to this report, together with the officer responses to the recommendations.**

9 Appointments to Outside Bodies and Member Champion Appointments

The purpose of this item is for Cabinet to consider appointments to represent the council on the below governing bodies of the outside organisations listed for the 2022/2023 municipal year and to appoint a LGBTQ+ Member Champion. These appointments are in addition to those agreed by Cabinet at its meeting held on 21 June 2022.

RECOMMENDED that Cabinet confirms:

1. any additional appointments to represent the Council on those outside organisations set out below for the 2022/23 municipal year; and

2. the named appointment of a LGBTQ+ Member Champion

Outside Body	Appointments made by Cabinet 21.06.2022	Nominations received
Elementary Education Act Trust Board (2 Appointments Required)	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson Cllr Ryan Brent	No further nominations received, following the request made by Cabinet on 21 June to approach the Labour and PIP Groups.
Port Advisory Board	Leader (ex-officio) Cllr Mark Jeffery Cllr Lynne Stagg Cllr Kimberly Barrett Cllr Judith Smyth Cllr Charlotte Gerada Cllr Daniel Wemyss Cllr Jason Fazackarley (deputy)	No further nominations received, following the request made by Cabinet on 21 June to approach the PIP Group.
Kings Theatre Trust Ltd (2 appointments required)	None, appointments deferred to allow selection interviews to take place with the Kings Theatre.	Cllr Mark Jeffery Cllr Lee Hunt Cllr George Madgwick Cllr Graham Heaney Cllr Linda Symes
LGBTQ+ Young People Member Champion	None, appointments deferred to allow the panel of young people to state a preference	Cllr Chris Attwell Cllr George Fielding Cllr Lewis Gosling Cllr Suzy Horton

The Council as company owner

10 Local Partnership's governance review

Report to follow

11 Exclusion of press and public

“That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985, the press and public be excluded for the consideration of the following item on the grounds that the report(s) contain information defined as exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972”.

The public interest in maintaining the exemption must outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information.

Under the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) England Regulations 2012, regulation 5, the reasons for exemption of the listed item is shown below.

Members of the public may make representation as to why the item should be held in open session. A statement of the Council's response to representations received will be given at the meeting so that this can be taken into account when members decide whether or not to deal with the item under exempt business.

(NB The exempt/confidential committee papers on the agenda will contain information which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. Members are reminded of standing order restrictions on the disclosure of exempt information and are invited to return their exempt documentation to the Local Democracy Officer at the conclusion of the meeting for shredding.)

Item 11	Paragraph
Hambrook Street (subsidiary company)	Appendix 1B

Appendix 1B - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

12 Council as company owner (Hambrook Street Ltd) (Pages 173 - 204)

Purpose

To set out and seek approval of the Business Case for the establishment of a subsidiary Company ("the Company") required for the operational phase of the Old Brewery, Hambrook Street ("the Site") redevelopment project being undertaken by Ravelin Housing Limited ("RHL").

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet

- 1. Approve the Business Case for the setting up of the Company.**
- 2. Delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the City Solicitor and S.151 Officer to set up the Company, appoint suitably qualified Directors and set up governance arrangements necessary for the Company to start trading with an obligation to report regularly to Cabinet on the Company's performance.**
- 3. Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and S 151 Officer in consultation with the Directors of the Company to agree a mortgage lending agreement to fund the property transfer.**

13 Ravelin group of companies - Quarter 4 update (Pages 205 - 218)

Purpose

1. The report is provided in line with the shareholders requests for further detailed reporting and the advice on good governance in local authority wholly owned companies.
 - i. The report will provide updates as follows: 1.2.1. To update the Cabinet on the City Council's ownership of shares in Ravelin Group Limited ("RGL") and subsidiary companies Ravelin Housing Limited ("RHL") and Ravelin Property Limited ("RPL").
 - ii. To provide key highlights from RHL on individual projects updating on activities undertaken during the fourth quarter (December 2021 to March 2022).
 - iii. To report on the companies unaudited Micro Entity Financial Statements, for the accounting period ending 31st March 2022.

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet, as shareholder, note:

- 1. and approve the Q4 2021/22 Quarterly Update report as submitted to Cabinet by the Company at Appendix One.**
- 2. and approve the financial accounts for the Company for the period ending 31 March 2022, at Appendix Two.**
- 3. the progress reported on the existing project at Brewery House, Hambrook Street.**
- 4. the appointment of the two Non-Executive Directors to RHL and the formal board meeting that was held for both RHL and RGL on 12th April 2022.**
- 5. that the engagement and collaboration of the Company with the Council on the Horatio and Leamington private Build-to-Rent units in Somerstown is progressing in-line with the approved development pipeline in the five-year business plan for the Company.**
- 6. the Director of Regeneration is no longer a board member of the Ravelin Group and has been replaced by the Acting Director for**

Property and Development in line with the decision made by the Board on 12th April 2022. The change allows the Director of Regeneration to act unencumbered in supporting the Shareholder in any required commercial decision making.

14 Treasury Management Outturn report 2021/2022 (Pages 219 - 230)

Purpose

To inform members and the wider community of the Council's treasury management activities in 2021/22 and of the Council's treasury management position as of 31 March 2022.

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet notes the actual prudential and treasury management indicators based on the unaudited accounts, as shown in Appendix B, (an explanation of the prudential and treasury management indicators is contained in Appendix C).

19 July 2022

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Coronavirus Risk Assessment for the Council Chamber, Guildhall

Date: 1 April 2022 (based on Living safely with respiratory infections, including COVID-19, 1 April 2022)

Review date: Ongoing

Author: Lynda Martin, Corporate Health and Safety Manager, Portsmouth City Council

Coronavirus Risk Assessment for the Council Chamber, Guildhall

Manager's Name and Job Title completing Risk Assessment:	Lynda Martin Corporate Health and Safety Manager	Risk Assessment Dept:	Corporate Services	Date:	1 April 2022	Signature:	
		Location:	Council Chamber, Guildhall				

Hazard	Who could be harmed and how	All controls required	How controls will be checked	Confirmed all in place or further action required
Risk of exposure to Covid-19 virus - Ventilation	Staff, contractors and attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no longer capacity limits for the Guildhall Chamber. We encourage all attendees to wear a face covering when moving around crowded areas of the Guildhall and the council chamber. The mechanical ventilation system works efficiently and the South Special Rooms Supply and Extract fans are fully operational during times when the Council Chamber is in use. Pedestal fans - positioned in each of the wing areas and along the back wall behind the pillars, maximum speed and modulation setting. 	Staff will ensure ventilation system and fans are operational.	In place
Risk of transmission of virus - Risk mitigation	Staff, contractors and attendees	<p>The Guildhall has the following measures in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face Coverings – as per government guidance, we encourage you to continue to wear a face covering whilst in the venue & crowded places especially when walking around the building. Enhanced Sanitisation & Cleaning – we will carry out enhanced cleaning procedures between meetings and we encourage you to sanitise your hands on entry and regularly throughout your visit at the sanitisation points provided. 	The Guildhall Trust and PCC Facilities Team to implement and monitor.	In place
Risk of transmission of virus - Hygiene and Prevention		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated government guidance from 1 April advises people with a respiratory infection, a high temperature and who feel unwell, to stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until they feel well enough to resume normal activities and they no longer have a high temperature. From 1 April, anyone with a positive COVID-19 test result is being advised to follow this guidance for five days, which is the period when you are most infectious. Although not a legal requirement attendees are strongly encouraged to keep a social distance and take opportunities to prevent the spread of infection by following the 'hands, face, space' and 'catch it, kill it, bin it' advice that also protects us from other winter viruses. Wash hands for 20 seconds using soap and water or hand sanitiser. Maintain good hygiene particularly when entering or leaving. Hand sanitiser and wipes will be located in the meeting room. No refreshments will be provided. Attendees should bring their own water bottles/drinks. All attendees should bring and use their own pens/stationery. Attendees are no longer required to undertake an asymptomatic/ lateral flow test within 48 hours of the meeting however we still encourage attendees to follow the Public Health precautions we have followed over the last two years to protect themselves and others including vaccination and taking a lateral flow test should they wish. It is strongly recommended that attendees should be double vaccinated and have received a booster. 	The Guildhall Trust and PCC Facilities Team to implement and monitor.	In place
Financial Risk	Staff, contractors and attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council meeting may need to be cancelled at short notice if the Covid-19 situation changes due to local outbreaks, local sustained community transmission, or a serious and imminent threat to public health. Technology in place to move to virtual council meeting if required and permitted by legislation. 	Financial commitments minimised wherever possible.	In place

Agenda Item 3

CABINET

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 21 June 2022 at 12pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (in the Chair)
Suzy Horton
Kimberly Barrett
Darren Sanders
Lynne Stagg
Jason Fazackarley
Lee Hunt
Steve Pitt
Matthew Winnington

70. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Councillor Chris Attwell sent his apologies.

71. Declarations of Interests (AI 2)

Councillor Pitt stated that he had to leave at 1:50pm.
Councillor Fazackarley that he had to leave at 2pm.

72. Record of Previous Decision Meeting - (AI 3)

The record of decisions from the previous Cabinet meeting held on 22 March 2022 was approved as a correct record

73. Exclusion of Press and Public (AI 4)

The confidentiality of the appendices 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 was upheld.

74. Provision of Waste Collection Services (AI 5)

Deputations were given by Mr Jerry Brown and Councillor Asghar Shah.

Colette Hill, Assistant Director (Neighbourhoods) introduced the report.

The Cabinet thanked the team and the previous Cabinet Member for Environment. In the discussion that followed, these points were clarified:

- In terms of bringing services in house, each service is looked at on a case-by-case basis.
- The in-house option gives more flexibility to the city.

DECISIONS

- 1. Waste collection services be brought in house.**
- 2. Noted the work to implement the decision to start immediately to ensure service continuity.**
- 3. Commended the work of the Portsmouth City Council waste management team and the contractor BIFFA municipal for their response to the pandemic in maintaining the city's collection services, noting the largely uninterrupted service delivery throughout the pandemic and additionally the impressive delivery of service**

improvements throughout the pandemic, including the roll out of additional food waste rounds.

- 75. Response to the Housing & Social Care Scrutiny Panel review of the Procedures and Performance of Portsmouth City Council and Housing Associations in Relation to Response Repairs and Maintenance. (AI 6)**
James Hill, Director of Housing Neighbourhoods and Building Services introduced the report.

During the discussion, the following comments were made:

- Many housing associations have an in-house repairs and maintenance service.
- The external contractors seem to be doing a better job than the in-house services.
- Although 99.6% of council residents who responded indicated that they were happy with the repairs service, it was noted that those unhappy with the service may not comment on PCC-led surveys. It is therefore important to make continuous improvements.
- It is hoped that the forum will help identify how the council and housing associations can improve. The Leader requested that the Ministry of Defence are invited to the forum as he is keen to that they improve their repairs service.

DECISIONS

- 1. Thanked the panel for its work in undertaking the review.**
- 2. Noted and supports the recommendations of the review, which are listed in section 4 of the report and responses of officers.**

- 76. Portsmouth City Council - Gas Contract - Update to the Report of March 2022 (AI 7)**
Andrew Waggott, Head of Energy introduced the report.

The Leader thanked Mr Waggott for briefing the Group Leaders on this issue and the Cabinet noted that this is the right course of action as it makes sense morally, ethically and financially.

DECISIONS

- 1. Considered the content of the report, particularly the breakage of the link between Gazprom M&T with the Russian state, which was made by the change in ownership of the single shareholder; from the Russian Federation to Gazprom Germania on 4 April 2022.**
- 2. Noted the change in control of Gazprom Germania, the parent company and single shareholder of Gazprom M&T, enacted by the German Government resulting in Gazprom Germania being under the control of the German Federal Network Agency 4 April 2022.**
- 3. Noted that Gazprom Germania is not directly placing orders for Russian gas.**
- 4. Noted that Gazprom Germania is not directly placing orders for Russian gas and is prevented from doing so, should it wish to, by Russian sanctions.**

5. **Noted the financial and legal risk, detailed within this paper and the paper of March 2022, associated with terminating the contract in June 2022.**
6. **Instructs officers in light of the changed circumstances not to terminate the contract with Gazprom M&T on or before 30 June 2022, in line with the contract conditions.**

77. Household Support Fund Report for Gold (AI 8)

Mark Sage, Tackling Poverty Coordinator introduced the report.

Cabinet noted that:

- The funding is short term and piecemeal which makes it difficult for councils to plan ahead.
- In the current round at least 30% must be spent on families with dependent children. This is not enough for the council to continue with the Free School Meals (FSM) holiday vouchers that started in December 2020. The number of families needing FSM is increasing.
- As the holiday vouchers cannot continue, the council is investing in expanding the well-established model that establishes positive relationships with the poorest families in the city.
- An increasing number of households are in financial hardship but are not quite eligible for the FSM.
- The government had taken away almost £18m per year support for people in financial hardship in Portsmouth with the £20 per week reduction in Universal Credit and is giving back £1.9m.
- This wide-ranging package includes support for food banks, pantries, housing support for people who are fearing eviction, money for pensioners, vouchers for children eligible for FSM is comprehensive but not enough.
- £100,000 will be spent on foodbanks and pantries but that may not be enough to meet demand.

DECISION

The report was noted.

78. Air Quality Quarterly Report (AI 9)

David Blythe, Programme Manager introduced the report.

The team was thanked for their hard work and the Cabinet noted that:

- The Portsmouth CAZ went live on 29 November 2021. The report covers the first quarter to the end of February 2022. Quarterly reports will be produced.
- Engagement with companies and individuals was excellent which resulted in a huge take up of government funding from the Clean Air Fund and 96% compliance from day 1.
- The government did not provide sufficient money to drivers to help buy Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles. Council officers were able to obtain an additional £1,000 from central government funding making the total WAV funding £5,000. A sunset period was granted as these type of vehicles take longer to order.

- The results on how successful the Clean Air Zones (CAZ) have been in reducing air pollution will be available at the end of the year. Defra has confirmed that the CAZ will need to be operational for a minimum of two years.
- Significant amount of work has been carried out including vehicle upgrades and the refuse collection fleet change diesel to HVO oil. There remains a lot to do.
- Despite not receiving the funding that was requested from government, the council has made significant progress.
- The work to improve air quality will continue across the council.
- Government funding should be sustainable to cover improvements to buses, walking, cycling, moving away from gas boilers.

DECISION

The report was noted.

79. Appointments to Outside Bodies & Member Champion Appointments (AI 10)

James Harris, Senior Local Democracy Officer introduced the report.

DECISIONS

Name of Body	Appointment
Aspex Visual Arts Trust (Registered Charity and Company)	Cllr Chris Attwell
Baffins Community Association (Registered Charity)	Cllr Abdul Kadir
Buckland Community Association (Registered Charity)	Cllr Jason Fazackarley Cllr Leo Madden
Building Control Partnership	Cllr Lee Hunt

Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee (BLASJC) (Linked with PATROL)	Cllr Lynne Stagg Cllr Scott Payter-Harris (Deputy)
City of Portsmouth Sports Council	Cllr Steve Pitt Cllr Lewis Gosling Cllr George Fielding
Eastney Area Community Association (Registered Charity)	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Education Advisory Board	Cllr Suzy Horton Cllr Terry Norton Cllr Ryan Brent Cllr Tom Coles
Elementary Education Act Trust Board	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson Cllr Ryan Brent
European Cities Twinning Committee	Lord Mayor Cllr Chris Attwell Cllr Lynne Stagg Cllr Lee Mason Cllr Lynda Symes
Farlington Marshes Management Committee	Cllr Steve Pitt Cllr Hugh Mason Cllr Graham Heaney Cllr Ryan Brent
Fitzherbert & Moody	Cllr Chris Attwell David Fuller
Fratton Big Local	Cllr Dave Ashmore Cllr Tom Coles (deputy)
Fratton Community Association	Cllr Dave Ashmore

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Community Foundation (Portsmouth City Council Community Fund)	Cllr Hugh Mason
Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Government Association	Cllr Darren Sanders Cllr Charlotte Gerada Cllr Lee Mason Cllr Matthew Atkins (Standing Deputy)
Hampshire Archives Trust - Annual Meeting	Jane Singh
Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust – Annual Meeting (Registered Charity)	Cllr John Smith
Hampshire Countryside Access Forum	Cllr Benedict Swann
Improvement & Efficiency South East (IESE) LGA representative	Cllr Darren Sanders
Improvement & Efficiency South East (IESE) LGA representative - Non Exec Director	Cllr Matthew Winnington
Key Cities	Cllr Steve Pitt
Landport Community Association (Registered Charity)	Cllr Cal Corkery
LGA Coastal Issues Special Interest Group	Cllr Ryan Brent
Lord Mayor of Portsmouth’s Coronation Homes - Board	Cllr Hugh Mason (Lord Mayor)

Maritime Archaeology Trust (formerly Hants & Isle of Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology).	Cllr Ian Holder
Mary Rose Trust (Registered Charity and Company)	Cllr Gerald Vernon Jackson Cllr Tom Coles Lord Mayor (Ex Officio)
Milton Village Community Association (Registered Charity)	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Motiv8 (Registered Charity)	Cllr Suzy Horton
New Theatre Royal	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Parking & Traffic Regulations Outside London (PATROL)	Cllr Lynne Stagg Cllr Scott Payter-Harris (Deputy)
New Theatre Royal Trust (Registered Charity and Company)	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Overlord Embroidery Trust Liaison Committee	Cllr Steve Pitt Cllr Chris Attwell Cllr Linda Symes
PATCH Ltd (Registered Company)	Cllr Chris Attwell Cllr Ian Holder Cllr Cal Corkery
PfSH (Partnership for South Hampshire) Joint Committee	Cllr Lee Hunt Cllr Matthew Atkins (Deputy)

Port Advisory Board	Leader (ex-officio) Cllr Mark Jeffery Cllr Lynne Stagg Cllr Kimberly Barrett Cllr Judith Smyth Cllr Charlotte Gerada Cllr Daniel Wemyss Cllr Jason Fazackarley (deputy)
Portsmouth & District Friendly Society Homes	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson Ben Dowling Cllr Cal Corkery
Portsmouth Fostering Panel	Cllr Kirsty Mellor
Portsmouth Plastic Free Coastlines Steering Group	Cllr Kimberly Barrett
Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust	Cllr Mark Jeffery
Project Integra Strategic Board	Cllr Kimberly Barret Cllr Dave Ashmore (Deputy)
PfSH Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Cllr Ryan Brent
SIGOMA (Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities admin by the LGA)	Cllr Lee Mason
Solent Forum	Cllr Hugh Mason
Solent Sea Rescue Organisation	Cllr Lee Hunt

Solent Transport Joint Committee (formerly known as Transport for S Hants - Joint Cttee)	Cllr Lynne Stagg
South East Employers	Cllr Steve Pitt Cllr Matthew Atkins
Southern Inshore Fisheries & Conservation Authority (formerly Southern Sea Fisheries Cttee)	Cllr Matthew Winnington
Southern Regional Flood & Coastal Committee	Cllr Mark Jeffery Cllr Judith Smyth (Deputy)
St Thomas's Cathedral Council	Cllr Chris Attwell
Stacey Community Centre Management Committee	Cllr Darren Sanders
Stamshaw & Tipner Community Centre Association (GMC)	Cllr Lee Hunt
Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education	Cllr Abdul Kadir Taki Jaffer Cllr Benedict Swann Cllr Asghar Shah
Southern Coastal Group & Standing Conference on Problems Associated with the Coastline (SCOPAC)	Cllr Mark Jeffery
The Guildhall Trust (Formerly Portsmouth Cultural Trust)	Mike Harris (CEO of Southampton City Council)

Tourism South East (Registered Company)	Cllr Linda Symes
Trading Standards South East Limited (known as TSSE)	Cllr Stuart Brown
Transport Liaison Group	Cllr Lynne Stagg Cllr Scott Payter-Harris Cllr Graham Heaney
Violence Against Women & Girls Task Group	Cllr Kirsty Mellor
Elizabeth Mary Claypitt Charity	Cllr Dave Ashmore The Vicar, St Mary's Church

Member Champions.

Heritage - Cllr Lee Hunt

LGBTQ+ & Young People - deferred to give the Young People a chance to interview the nominees and put forward their recommendation to Cabinet.

Armed Forces Liaison - Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson with Cllr Tom Coles as deputy.

Third Sector & City of Service - Cllr Stuart Brown with Cllrs Asghar Shah and Lee Mason as deputies.

Nature - Cllr Kimberley Barrett.

Women, Children & Domestic Violence - Cllr Kirsty Mellor

80. Modern Slavery Statement (AI 11)

Lisa Wills, Strategy and Partnership Manager introduced the report.

DECISIONS

- 1. Approved the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for the signature of the Leader and publication on the council's website**
- 2. Approved the programme of work set out in item 10 of this report.**
- 3. Full Council is asked to note the decision of the Cabinet to approve and publish the statement.**

81. King George V Playing Fields Development (AI 12)

Kelly Nash, Corporate Performance Manager introduced the report.

The Cabinet welcomed the report and the benefits that this development will bring to the city.

DECISIONS

- 1. Noted progress with the King George V Playing Fields Scheme and plans for continued development of the scheme.**
- 2. Delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Resources to authorise the entering into a grant agreement for the scheme that includes a clawback period (in the event that the facilities are no longer used for the activities the grant was awarded for) once the final terms and conditions of funding are known and**
- 3. Authorised the formal advertising of disposal of open space, which will be the result of granting a lease to an operator.**

82. TECS Scrutiny Panel Recommendations - A Review into the Accessibility of the Transport Network (AI 13)

Councillors Gemma New and Lee Mason, Chair and former Chair of the Traffic, Environment & Scrutiny Panel commended the report to the Cabinet.

Felicity Tidbury, Acting Assistant Director Regeneration introduced the report.

Members noted that many of the recommended actions were already in progress.

DECISIONS

- 1. Thanked the panel for its work in undertaking this review.**
- 2. Noted and supported the 40 recommendations of the review, which are listed in section 4 and appendix B of the report.**
- 3. Noted and supported the recommendations listed in 4.2.1 to 4.2.30 which are in progress and the responses from officers detailing how these are being met.**
- 4. Noted and supported recommendations listed in 4.3.1 to 4.3.10 and the officers comments that these be accepted and actioned only once funding and resources are identified.**

83. QA Emergency Ward Support (AI 14)

Ian Maguire, Assistant Director for Regeneration introduced the report.

In making the following recommendation, the Cabinet resolved that it regretted that government has not funded the NHS sufficiently to meet its needs.

RECOMMENDED that the recommendations of the report be approved namely to approve: The granting of £864,354.26 from Community Infrastructure Funding to Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust for the provision of infrastructure in accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) ("CIL Regs") to be funded from Capital Infrastructure CIL.

84. Milton Neighbourhood Plan (AI 15)

Rod Baily, Chair of Milton Neighbourhood Planning Forum gave a deputation in favour of the recommendation.

Ian Maguire, Assistant Director of Regeneration introduced the report and in response to questions, explained that the Langstone Campus already forms part of the allocated land for development. The Neighbourhood Plan provides updated guidance and makes it clearer as to how it could be developed. If it was decided at this meeting not to take the plan forward to referendum, to table a further modification, a consultation with stakeholders for a minimum of six weeks and with the lead-in to Cabinet there would be an approximate three months' delay.

Cabinet urged Milton residents to read all the documents and noted that the plan provides a range of protection for green spaces across Milton.

DECISIONS

- 1. Noted the progression of the Milton Neighbourhood Plan to this point.**
- 2. Accepted all modifications to the Milton Neighbourhood Plan recommended by the Examiner together with the officer's amendments, which provide additional clarity on the modifications made by the Examiner.**
- 3. Approved all appropriate actions to progress the Milton Neighbourhood Plan to referendum. A date for the referendum is set for 18 August 2022.**
- 4. Approved the proposed referendum area as indicated on the attached map.**
- 5. Approved carrying out the proposed referendum with associated costs and publicity (cost to be recouped from government grant).**
- 6. Thanked members of the Milton Neighbourhood Planning Forum for their hard work over the years and bringing this in such a fine form.**

85. National Bus Strategy - Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme (AI 16)

Peter Shelley, Bid Manager, Regeneration introduced the report.

It was noted that making them more reliable, comfortable and convenient by extending their operating hours, will encourage more people to take the bus and consequently fares will be reduced.

DECISIONS

- 1. Approved the draft Portsmouth Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme, for submission to the Department for Transport by 30 June 2022.**
- 2. Delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Transport and Transportation in consultation with the Director of Regeneration and the Section 151 Officer to agree any minor amendments to the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme that may be required to take account of future funding changes and policy announcements.**

3. Delegated authority to the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation in consultation with the Director of Regeneration for the implementation of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme as set out in this report.
4. Noted that the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme will be monitored through the Enhanced Partnership Board.

86. Urgent item: Council Tax Rebate (Energy Rebate) - Discretionary Fund. (AI 16a)

Chris Ward, Director of Finance & Resources introduced the report and in response to questions, explained that 75% of all eligible households have received their rebate. This includes all customers who pay by direct debits. The 25% who have not received it yet equates to approximately 20,000 households. Letters are being sent to households who do not pay by direct debit at a rate of 4,000 a week explaining what information they need to provide the council in order to receive the rebate. In the event, the information is not provided, a credit could be applied to the Council Tax bill.

DECISIONS

Approved option 3 and the associated Policy at Appendix 1.

Award £150.00 to each household in bands E-H receiving local council tax support on 01 April 2022. (Estimated cost £9,300). An application window be opened for two months, during which demand can be assessed. Applications will be open to:

- **Residents liable for council tax in properties banded E-H on 01 April 2022 in receipt of Pension Credit Guarantee Credit, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit, Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit or any other out of work benefit on 01 April 2022, where there is no eligibility to local council tax support. In this instance an application from the energy payer will be required.**
- **Households which are the energy payer occupying band A-D properties on 01 April 2022 that are excluded from payment under the core 'Council Tax Rebate' scheme. In this instance an application from the energy payer will be required.**
- **HMO households occupying band A-H properties that are excluded from payment under the core 'Core Tax Rebate' scheme. In the instance an application from the energy payer will be required.**
- **Recipients of local council tax support who attract funding from the core scheme, may be considered for top up support from any underspend from the 5 www.portsmouth.gov.uk Discretionary Fund once the application window has closed. This will be at the discretion of the Council.**

The meeting concluded at 2:15pm

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE
Leader of the Council

Agenda Item 4

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Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Title of meeting: Cabinet

Subject: GP provision in Portsmouth

Date of meeting: 26 July 2022

Report by: Jo York, Managing Director, Health and Care Portsmouth, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board / Portsmouth City Council

Wards affected: All wards

1. **Requested by**

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, Leader of the Council

2. **Purpose**

2.1.1 This is a briefing report in light of recent media reports and concerns raised by residents regarding access to primary care provision. The report provides information on current primary care provision, the issues and challenges within the city, and the actions being undertaken to secure improvements and improve resilience.

3. **Background**

3.1 ***National Context***

3.1.1 Every day, more than a million people benefit from the advice and support of primary care professionals – acting as a first point of contact for most people accessing the NHS. However, patient satisfaction with access to general practice is at an all-time low, despite record numbers of appointments offered and delivered.

3.1.2 Primary care teams describe being stretched beyond capacity. This has been further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has seen a rise in the numbers of patients requiring urgent medical care, an increase in an elective care backlog, and the need to divert capacity to meet the national Covid vaccination campaign.

3.1.3 As a result, the NHS is experiencing extreme pressures across numerous fronts, including: primary care; mental health services; community services; urgent and emergency care services; and elective care. All the while, staff morale is reported to be at a record low, with increasing staff sickness (compounded by fatigue and 'burnout'), increases in early retirement, and difficulties in filling key vacancies.

3.1.4 However, national developments are in train designed to support the NHS, its patients, and respond to the unprecedented challenges posed by the Covid-19

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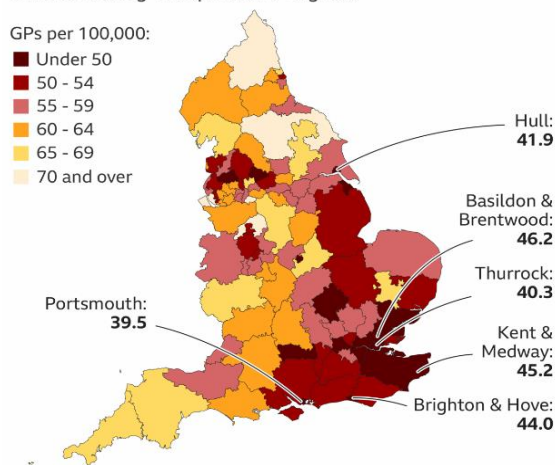
pandemic. This includes numerous developments and additional funding associated with the 'NHS Long Term Plan', and – specifically for primary care – the recommendations from the 'Fuller Stocktake Report', and the establishment and development of Primary Care Networks.

3.2 *Recent publications*

3.2.1 Recent reports in the media¹ have highlighted Portsmouth as an outlier in terms of the number of GPs working in general practice. The data referenced by this report was provided by The Nuffield Trust and was sourced from national workforce returns submitted by practices for April 2022. The data reflected 39.5 WTE GPs per 100,000 patients in Portsmouth and this was quoted as being the lowest in England.

The areas with the fewest GPs

Number of GPs per 100,000 patients in Clinical Commissioning Groups across England



A caveat should be applied to this data as many localities (and their GP numbers) were subsumed within larger Integrated Care System (ICS) organisational figures, limiting ability to accurately reflect comparisons across the country.

3.2.2 The Fuller Stocktake report was published in May 2022. At the heart of this report is a new vision for integrating primary care, improving the access, experience and outcomes for our communities, which centres around three essential offers:

- streamlining access to care and advice for people who get ill but only use health services infrequently: providing them with much more choice about how they access care and ensuring care is always available in their community when they need it
- providing more proactive, personalised care with support from a multidisciplinary team of professionals to people with more complex needs, including, but not limited to, those with multiple long-term conditions

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-61598158>

<https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/people/portsmouth-worst-in-the-country-for-patients-per-gp-as-demand-for-services-skyrocket-3717884>

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- helping people to stay well for longer as part of a more ambitious and joined-up approach to prevention

Our efforts to increase the clinical workforce and support good access and delivery of quality services should be aligned with the aims of the Fuller Report where appropriate.

3.3 Hampshire and Isle of Wight Context

3.3.1 Notwithstanding the difficulties with making comparisons, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight (HIOW) Integrated Care Board (ICB) has been able to source data for our neighbouring city of Southampton as well as the HIOW average. This reflects a comparably lower GP workforce in Portsmouth.

	No. GP WTE per 100,000 patients	No, of patients per WTE GP
Portsmouth	39.2	2,554
Southampton	49.9	2,003
HIOW average	53.7	1,862
England avg	43.6	2,280

4. Primary Care Provision in Portsmouth

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 There are currently 12 GP practices in Portsmouth and these are members of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) of which there are 5 in total. There have been 12 practice mergers since April 2013, which have supported practice resilience and helped avoid the very real threat of a practice having to relinquish its contract and force a dispersal of the patient list. This happened on just one occasion when the Queens Road surgery closed. There were 4 associated branch site closures in this time, all of which were approved following careful consideration of patient transport options and the general accessibility of the premises being retained. It is worth acknowledging that practices are independent contractors run by local GP Partnerships and there can sometimes be complex arrangements in place regarding estates and use of the buildings.

4.1.2 The Portsmouth Primary Care Alliance (PPCA), made up of member practices in the city, is commissioned to help support the sustainability of General Practice and delivery of services to support patient care. This includes the Acute Visiting Service, Clinical Assessment Service and extended hours. The PCNs are also supporting and strengthening the provision of services, most notably through leading on the delivery of the COVID vaccination programme.

4.1.3 Many practices managed to increase or at least maintain capacity through 2021-22 by outsourcing remote consultations and using new equipment and tools for more efficient working, through the NHS England Winter Access Fund.

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4.1.4 However, the impact of the pandemic and the ageing workforce, with practices finding it difficult to replace retiring GPs, has resulted in significant workforce challenges. This has been exacerbated by an increase in demand, in part due to COVID and the impact of the elective backlog.

4.2 Access to appointments

4.2.1 In terms of overall appointments offered and delivered within primary care, this has been increasing year-on-year. There was an understandable drop in 2020-21 due to the COVID pandemic (total of 943,000 appointments) compared to the previous year (1,037,000); this was due to less patients attempting to access primary care services during that time.

4.2.2 However, the figures for 2021-22 reflect that more patients opted to come forward for primary care services and practices delivered 1,003,000 appointments through a blended mix of face-to-face and remote consultations (in order to prevent the spread of covid infection). Work continues to assess the demand for primary care services, and the capacity of primary care to meet this demand.

4.3 Recruitment and retention

4.3.1 There are some very real challenges in terms of recruitment and retention of GPs in the city, as there are in many parts of the country. This has the potential to impact on practice resilience and therefore patient access. Some of the perceived barriers to securing additional workforce are:

- The coastal placement of the city which reduces the catchment area by 50% for any employer
- The high levels of deprivation and the challenges associated with this in comparison to some other parts of Hampshire
- The lack of space in some practices to accommodate Trainee GPs, and the ability therefore to recruit and retain them within the city

4.3.2 In addition to the recruitment difficulties for partners and salaried GPs, practices are also finding it challenging to secure locum GP cover. We are aware this is also the case in other areas, particularly for our neighbouring city, and we are currently exploring with HIOW Workforce Leads and practices why this may be the case.

5. Strengthening Primary Care Resilience

5.1 HIOW ICB strategy

5.1.1 The Primary Care Strategy developed by the ICB focusses on the following themes:

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- Primary care delivers high quality services
- Primary care is a great place to work
- Primary care is accessible to everyone
- Primary care responds appropriately to the needs of the population
- Primary care reduces inequalities and improves outcomes
- We deliver personalised care and encourage self-management
- We deliver integrated care especially for people with complex care needs

5.1.2 At Portsmouth place level we work with our ICB colleagues and wider system partners to take forward this strategy and the associated workstreams and activities, including the supporting digital agenda led by the local Commissioning Support Unit.

5.2 *Portsmouth Resilience and Improvement Plan*

5.2.1 A resilience and improvement plan has been developed in order to support the resilience of practices in terms of their primary care provision.

5.2.2 Activities undertaken at **individual practice** level include:

- Practices are innovating with better use of IT solutions where patients can comfortably access these, to free up GP time for face to face appointments where they are needed and improve patients' access to healthcare
- The use of telephone consultations can support patients where they have difficulty in reaching their practice but don't need tests or examinations to gain access to a GP or other healthcare professional.
- eConsult is increasingly popular with patients where they can ask questions of their practice via a messaging system. This reduces the use of face to face GP appointments for queries that don't require an urgent response. Local commissioners have supported practices with patient communications on how to use this mode of consultation appropriately. The ICB is now working with the eConsult provider to make it more user friendly, with plans to also further engage patients on this.
- Electronic Repeat Dispensing (eRD) where a 'batch' of prescriptions are authorised in advance, up to a year where appropriate, is increasingly used in Portsmouth with the highest achieving practice having nearly a quarter of their patients receiving medications this way. This means the patient only needs to go to their nominated pharmacy at regular intervals to collect their prescriptions. This negates the need for a patient to request their medications possibly each month and for the GP to sign each prescription freeing up what can be considerable time for increased face to face appointments.

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- Several practices reached out for support in 2021-22 under the national GP Resilience programme. Funding was granted to support protected time for reviewing service delivery, forward business and resilience planning, and helping embed new practice managers in their role. An element of the funding was also used to provide short term clinical cover for a practice suffering with resources issues due in part to staff illness. The process is underway for 22-23 with a significant number of proposals received from Portsmouth practices, which are currently being reviewed.

5.2.3 Activities planned / in progress at individual practice level include:

- All practices are embarking on a piece of work from August 2022 which involves utilising a new tool to review in granular detail demand and capacity data. This will enable practices to gauge how their current provision supports patient access needs and consider adapting as necessary. This will also allow the identification of practices that have resilience concerns, leading to focussed support from commissioner whilst enabling this to be flagged to system partners through the appropriate channels.
- Workforce session to be held with practices late July 2022 to discuss current approaches and any barriers to GP recruitment, advertising, and locum cover. HIOW Workforce Team to lead this and provide specialist advice and support, linking in with the Communication campaign on Portsmouth being a great place to work.

5.2.4 Activities undertaken at a **city-wide** level include:

- Delivery of conflict resolution training for practice staff, supporting reception teams and others in how to effectively and appropriately resolve any conflict with patients. This included how to recognise those that may be suffering from mental health conditions and how patients can be supported, whilst at the same time adopting a zero-tolerance policy in regard to any violent or abusive behaviour.
- Investing in estates development to ensure PCNs and practices have the clinical space to support more clinicians and other additional roles Draft plan developed and this work is on-going.
- Utilisation of Winter Access Funds via NHS England to bolster capacity through the Winter by investing in additional locum cover (where this could be sourced), remote consultations via national provider, and additional hours from existing clinical staff.

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- Utilisation of Security funding via NHS England to improve the security of buildings (e.g. CCTV, improved lighting) and the safety of staff (e.g. panic buttons, screens in reception).
- Investment into the Clinical Assessment Service (which validates and manages urgent, emergency, and primary care dispositions from NHS 111) during GP practice core hours, and out-of-hours, freeing up GP Practice staff to focus on demand from registered patients accessing their service.

5.2.5 Activities planned / in progress at a city-wide level include:

- Proposal developed by the Portsmouth Primary Care Alliance (PPCA) to host some portfolio GP roles to attract more clinicians to Portsmouth through creating varied and interesting roles within the city. The GPs would be able to rotate through the Alliance and general practice and receive appropriate support, with the aim of retaining their services within the city. The proposal is currently being reviewed and if formally approved this should commence in the Autumn of 2022.
- Utilisation of national and local funding to support improved retention, such as through -
 - reinvigorating the First 5 Group to support new GPs from completion of training to the first point of revalidation at 5 years. This should be up and running by September 2022.
 - Making best use of the national GP Retention Scheme, which is a package of financial and educational support to help doctors, who might otherwise leave the profession, remain in clinical general practice. There is currently 1 GP under this scheme and we are actively looking to see if we can increase this.
- Marketing and communications campaign in development – ‘Portsmouth as a great place to work’. This is being worked up by the integrated marketing, communications and engagement team in conjunction with practices. In the short term (4-6 weeks) there will be some social media promotion, internal comms and some of the messaging will be used in recruitment drives and advertisements for vacancies. Slightly longer term (2-3 months) there are proposals for a professional website which will provide an all-encompassing recruitment section dedicated to working in the city.

5.2.6 Activities undertaken at a **PCN** level include:

- PCNs in Portsmouth have very much followed the national direction of travel in employing additional supporting roles under the PCN contracts to alleviate pressure from GPs. These include:
 - 13 clinical pharmacists – who undertake medication reviews and tailor complex medication regimes to meet the patients' needs. These reviews

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can be time heavy for a GP and having this resource is highly respected by those patients receiving the service.

- 8 pharmacy technicians – who efficiently run the repeat prescribing processes in practice often linking in with community pharmacies and appliance contractors to solve patient issues in their supply of medications and increasing the use of electronic repeat dispensing described below.
 - 7 physician associates – who take on several roles previously provided by GPs freeing up GP time to attend to more complex patients where their skill and expertise is required.
 - 4 First Contact Physiotherapists – who provide care across a multitude of musculoskeletal problems.
- In addition to these front-line healthcare professionals there are many other roles such as dieticians, paramedics, social prescribers and care co-ordinators. These roles free up more time for GPs and nurses, whilst helping ensure patients are seen by the most appropriate Healthcare Professional first time. The recruitment support from within the ICB will focus on attracting more of these healthcare professionals to come into Portsmouth.
 - A marketing and communications campaign to promote these additional roles has been developed by the integrated comms team and will roll out from 18 July until 11 September. This includes billboard poster advertising across the city, radio and digital advertising, organic and paid for social media posts, photographs and videos of staff, engagement at community events and a dedicated section on the Health and Care Portsmouth website.
 - PCNs are currently providing medical input into an Enhanced Care Home Team, a Multi-Disciplinary Team providing proactive care to residents, ensuring their health and care needs are supported and managed before complications occur, reducing the deterioration of health and need for hospitalisation.

5.2.7 Activities planned / in progress at a PCN level include:

- PCNs have received training in using Population Health Management tools and will over the coming weeks and months use the data to support pro-active delivery of care to patients according to need.
- PCNs will be nominating a Health Inequalities Lead to support this work.
- PCNs will be taking on full responsibility for extended access from October 2022 and are currently working with the PPCA, the ICB and the patient population on finalising plans.

6. Additional Support from Portsmouth City Council

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- 6.1.1 We are aware that Portsmouth City Council Cabinet is keen to support efforts to increase the GP workforce and this is very much welcomed. Health and Care Portsmouth teams are working closely in terms of the commissioning of services linked to deprivation, and how patients can access services so that they are seen by the most appropriate healthcare professional first time, including the GP when required. There is also a healthy level of partnership working around how to maximise best use of local estates, including for specific localities within the city. Currently there are large-scale new builds that have either completed (i.e. UniCity practice) or are on the horizon following approval (i.e. North Harbour Medical Group Practice relocating to Highclere). There are also some smaller scale premises improvements underway across the city to help increase space within surgeries.
- 6.1.2 We acknowledge the offer from the Cabinet to explore further opportunities to support primary care provision. We look forward to the summit meeting scheduled for 4 August 2022 which will allow an opportunity for partners to contribute to the development of a robust plan for the city.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 7.1.1 This paper has outlined some of the challenges associated with the provision of primary medical services in the city, and the mitigating actions that have been undertaken, are in progress, or planned for the near future. Whilst these actions may support us with the recruitment and retention of GPs and the wider workforce, it is acknowledged that there is no easy fix, and we welcome the input of Portsmouth City Council and other stakeholders.
- 7.1.2 The Cabinet is asked to kindly receive this report, which will hopefully generate further discussions ahead of the summit meeting in early August.

Jo York
Managing Director
Health and Care Portsmouth
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board / Portsmouth City Council

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

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Title of document	Location
The areas with the fewest GPs revealed – BBC News online, 31 May 2022	https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-61598158
Portsmouth worst in the country for patients per GP as demands for services ‘skyrocket’ – The Portsmouth News online, 1 June 2022	https://www.portsmouth.co.uk/news/people/portsmouth-worst-in-the-country-for-patients-per-gp-as-demand-for-services-skyrocket-3717884
Next steps for integrating primary care: Fuller Stocktake report, May 2022	https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/next-steps-for-integrating-primary-care-fuller-stocktake-report.pdf



Title of meeting:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	26 July 2022
Subject:	Regeneration of the City Centre
Report by:	Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration
Report Author:	Ian Maguire, Assistant Director Economic Development & Anna Limburn, Strategic Project Manager
Wards affected:	Charles Dickens
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

1.1. This report builds on the previous City Centre reports and sets out how the Council's wider agenda to ensure that the City Centre and high street plans for economic development and culturally led regeneration continue to prosper, by accommodating the permanent and meanwhile growth this part of the city needs and putting people back into the place.

1.2. The city centre area has for many years been a Council priority, defined in the current and emerging local plans as an area set aside for housing and economic growth, within the wider City Centre. A City Centre Masterplan was produced in 2012 and updated in 2020 to support the emerging Local Plan.

1.3. This report is providing an update on the Council's approach to improving the City Centre and highlights progress of delivery of the regeneration of the city centre, following the Cabinet Decisions taken previously in October 2021 and March 2022.

2. Recommendations

That the Cabinet:-

- 2.1. Note the high level of activity taking place in and around the city centre, as referenced in the report and appendices, along with the proposed stewardship role the council intends to play to ensure that the future activity and growth in this area is curated sensibly and can be delivered.

- 2.2. Agree to progress the recommendations and actions suggested in the Unlocking Your Place Potential (UYPP) Report in full.
- 2.3. Note the progress made by officers, on work delegated by Cabinet in March 2022, to determine an appropriate and achievable delivery strategy for the City Centre North (CCN) workstream.
- 2.4. Note the progress made by officers on land assembly as approved under the Cabinet and Full Council meetings in October 2021 and Cabinet in March 2022.
- 2.5. Note the progress made by officers on the development of a meanwhile strategy, following the production of a business justification cases for the proposals.

3. Background

3.1. The City Council has recognised the importance of the City Centre in previous reports and having noted the challenges these economic and socially important spaces are facing the Council is proposing to take a more proactive approach to managing the Commercial Road High Street area.

3.2. The city centre is spatially defined in the "*City Centre Development Strategy*", (a link to the strategy is provided in the background documents) a plan showing the proposed masterplan area is available in appendix A. The strategy was recently consulted on as part of the Local Planning Authorities (LPA) regulation 18 consultation. The document was received during the consultation and broadly results in 3 distinct geographical locations, the Southern, Central and Northern City Centre areas and seeks to define how those spaces could be used to enhance the identity of each, encourage footfall and ultimately result in economic development that the City Centre needs.

3.3. As has been noted previously the changing nature of high streets was already evident, prior to the pandemic, with greater online retailing impacting on the viability of traditional retail dominated high streets. Since the pandemic there has been an acceleration in closures of retail units in the high streets with notable vacancies such as Burtons and Debenhams in Commercial Road highlighting the ongoing challenges for the city.

3.4. In response to all the challenges this High Street faces the Council is planning and currently supporting a significant number of projects, these were presented to Cabinet in March 2022 within a brochure that details how the City Centre is likely to evolve over the coming years; a copy can be found in appendix B. The City Centre Regeneration brochure highlighted how over 20 known projects and interventions are guiding the likely revitalisation and reimagining of the City Centre space. Principally this sees a rationalisation of the defined and understood City Centre.

3.5. This brochure shows a pipeline of both private sector development and regeneration opportunities, alongside a wide range of council led interventions and

projects, including proposals for cultural events and programmes, utilising the Future High Streets funding won for public realm improvements alongside the opportunities created by large scale development in the area and the hope of future Levelling Up Funding success.

3.6. As part of the Future High Street funding the council has benefitted with support from the Future High Streets Taskforce. Officers have engaged with the Taskforce, to ensure our High Street proposals meet their high standards and were pleased that in the latest report from the High Street Task Force the mentor supported our proposed plans. The latest "Unlocking your Place Potential" report is attached in appendix C.

3.7. Dr Jo Morrison, High Streets Task Force Expert, undertook the High Street Task Force's (HSTF) review of Commercial Road, made six recommendations in the Unlocking Your Place Potential (UYPP) report:

- Share the final version of this report with everyone that attended the Unlocking Your Place Potential meeting - **actioned**.
- Arrange an away day with a wide range of public sector, business and community leaders to review challenges facing the city centre and the feedback from the UYPP visit: **to be re-arranged, postponed from May to allow new portfolio lead to be appointed**.
- Form a new and comprehensive partnership structure to shape the strategy for the centre, oversee projects and coordinate plans and activity **to be actioned requires lead officer appointment**
- Your new partnership structure should then identify who will own or action the areas for improvement identified in your Fishbone Analysis **to be actioned following agreement from senior PCC leaders**
- A further recommendation is that the views and feedback of existing local residents and new local residents are regularly sought in order to help shape and validate the range of improvement plans over time **to be actioned**
- Our final recommendation is that the work and resulting outputs of the new partnership are published regularly and widely via a range of media. Doing so would help to foster an inclusive culture for the city centre communities **to be actioned**

3.8. Building on the UYPP report, a number of additional offers of support have been received from Cultural Place makers like Future Cities, the Design Council, who felt a Shared Vision for the City Centre was required and further offers of support from FHS Taskforce. All will be considered with the Portfolio holder shortly.

3.9. *Safer Streets 3 - £450,000* - targeted crime prevention to reduce violence against women and girls (VAWG) in public places, using crime data and Police Environmental Visual Audit.

- Mentors in Violence prevention pilot in schools and colleges (2 colleges, 3 schools in Portsmouth)

- Development of a network of safe spaces adjacent to public places (shopping areas, parks etc) where women and girls can receive a trauma informed response (10 venues in Portsmouth)
- Safe and strong artwork to be displayed around the city to raise the positive profile of women and girls as intrinsically valuable rather than objects to be desired (5 locations in Portsmouth)
- A local intelligence mapping service which will enable women to report concerns via text and then receive a follow up call from a local provider (city wide)

4. Southern City Centre

4.1. The southern part of the City Centre links the commercial High Street running north of the railway station and the main University of Portsmouth buildings around and south of Winston Churchill Avenue. This area benefits from significant and important heritage and cultural assets such as the Guildhall and Victoria Park. The interventions seen and expected in this area focus on this cultural and experiential offer, supporting the night-time economy in Guildhall Walk and the green infrastructure at Victoria Park.

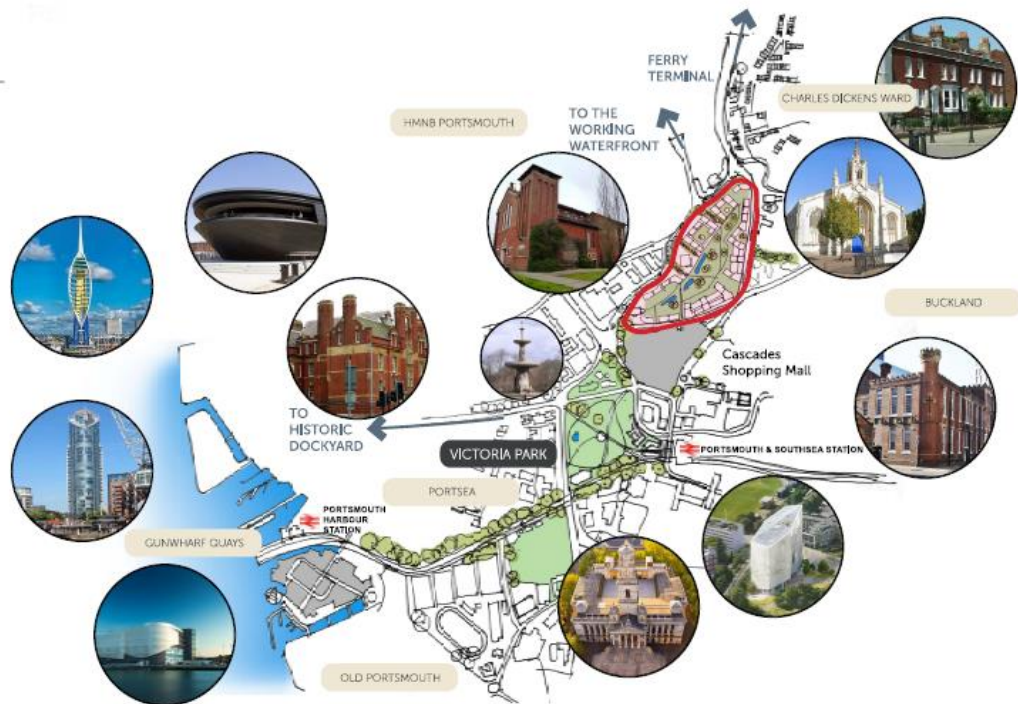
4.2. *Safety of women at night (SWaN) Fund - £100,000* - the following projects will be delivered in partnership with OPCC and IOW Council. Working across the city centre, this initiative will:

- 'Community in Motion' active bystander training for staff and support services working in the Night-time Economy (NTE) (100 people trained)
- Safe Spaces network at Night, building upon the Safe Space work above focused on NTE (5 venues in Portsmouth)
- 'With You' project working directly with women in the sex industry (focusing on two clubs, 5 massage parlours in Portsmouth)
- 'Stay Safe' pilot, led by Shaping Portsmouth to trial use of cloud-based technology to support those working in the NTE to get home safely (200+ licences issued to staff in Portsmouth venues)

4.3. The Council is also actively looking for more funding from the Levelling Up Fund, to support initiatives in the City Centre, focused on the Cultural threads across the city. The bid, if funded, will transform the area, increasing visitor numbers and ensuring that local people will have an attractive and safe place to engage with the city's culture and heritage with a sense of pride. We are asking for investment in three key assets:

- Cultural Spine - creating a safe and accessible gateway to the city's cultural heart, linking key cultural assets together and better connecting them to public transport and active travel options
- Guildhall Renaissance - A major overhaul and refurbishment of facilities to enable a broader range of events
- New Theatre Royal Regeneration - breathing life into a historic venue and ensuring its future.

Making Cultural Connections



5. Central City Centre

5.1. The central part of the City Centre contains the Cascades shopping centre and the main 'high street' at Commercial Road and Arundel Street. This area is retained to support town centre uses and shopping and retail.

5.2. There are a number of major projects proposed for this part of the City Centre, some of these re-developments that are coming forward include a number of high density proposals incorporating tall buildings.

5.3. Planning permissions have been recently granted in respect of the following:

- 56 Arundel Street - 22 storey building delivering 76 dwellings and commercial, granted September 2020 (19/01919/CS3). This has now lapsed.
- 12-28 Arundel Street - Part 7, 21 and 28 storey building delivering 591 student bedsits plus commercial, approved August 2021 (20/01464/FUL)

5.4. There are also existing applications awaiting decisions, like the Post Office building and land adjacent, which propose in the order of 176 dwellings and a hotel which are expected to be presented to Planning Committee later this year (20/00407/OUT and 20/00152/FUL).

5.5. Other schemes under advanced pre-application discussion - and subject to Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) - include:-

- The re-development of the former Debenhams store (up to 38 storeys) comprising dwellings, student rooms and commercial units; and
- The Matalan site adjoining the station (up to 33 storeys) comprising a mix of build-to-rent and co-living units and office/F&B uses).
- Negotiations continue in respect of land south of Catherine House.

5.6. The market continues to come forward with proposals for high density developments, notably high-rise, close to the City Centre and main railway station. All proposals bring with them a series of significant public realm enhancements which the planning team will need to ensure come forward in a suitably co-ordinated and consistent, complementary fashion.

5.7. Officers continue to liaise with The Department for Levelling Up, on the project change request. Funding has been received, the concept exists (Appendix 25 draft public realm plan attached in appendix D), and we anticipate a final decision from Levelling Up likely to follow in the next few weeks to allow progression to delivery.

5.8. The market has moved to its new location in the southern end of the precinct, allowing free space for the public realm improvement project mentioned in 5.7 above.

5.9. Phase two of the market relocation is now underway following significant delays due to covid restrictions and the impact of the pandemic on the traders, many of whom did not return to regular trading until May 2022. The strategy for the market is focused on staffing to encourage more traders to the market and to uplift the look and feel of the market in its new location, post covid. All of which aims to create new and exciting opportunities for street trading in the City Centre.

6. Northern City Centre

6.1. The northern parts of the City Centre will see the greatest change. Reflecting national and market trends the retail floorspace of the City Centre is reducing and this area will therefore primarily become a residential space, supported by public green space. This brings more activity into proximity of the City Centre's high street and night-time economy as well as creating more homes and opportunities to support transport and active transport improvements.

6.2. An outline planning application for a development masterplan is due to be submitted to the Local Planning Authority shortly. This development, at the northern end of the City Centre, is designed to breathe new life into the area and support the Council's aspirations for sustainable communities, better connectivity and greener travel. It will knit into current communities and provide substantial green open space for all. It will be pedestrian and cycle lead, with a revised network designed to improve air quality and the navigation within the City Centre.

6.3. This new development of c2,300 homes with 10,000m² of retail and employment, will have recognisable urban forms, with more formal facades creating

high class urban frontages. The residential units will be built to modern space standards and deliver sustainable living through opening up to the green spaces at ground floor, which will in turn anchor the new neighbourhood, blurring the boundaries between homes and nature.

6.4. Note that an update on project progress around land assembly and delivery strategy has been sent to the portfolio holder.

6.5. Charlotte Street and Unicorn Junction works under South East Hampshire Rapid Transport (SEHRT) programme are due to start later this year as part of a wider programme to improve bus travel times across the city. With the dualling of Hope Street planned to follow, subject to funding being secured.

7. City Centre Management

7.1. This breadth of opportunities however does bring with it a greater need to coordinate the diverse set of functions that the Council that are operating in the shared space that is our City Centre.

7.2. Due to the range of statutory and discretionary services undertaken by the City Council several different service areas are engaged across the Regeneration, Culture Leisure and Regulatory Services, and Housing Neighbourhood and Building Services directorates as well as our PFI with Ensign Colas. This is currently leading to a lack of place ownership and the potential for conflict, duplication, and wastage.

7.3. The Council has a stewardship role to ensure the success of this space and that needs to be recognised in order to reduce the risks mentioned, and to maximise the opportunities to deliver change and improvement in our City Centre. It has been proposed by officers that a City Centre Place Development Manager role is introduced, as a pilot programme for up to 3 years.

7.4. It is intended that this role would play a coordinating role with other service areas delivering statutory services in the City Centre space and would play a leadership role for the discretionary service delivery and events in this area.

7.5. It would also provide capacity to support new projects and programmes in the City Centre including bringing forward a potential new Business Improvement District.

7.6. A key benefit would also to act as a single point of contact to the businesses and stakeholder groups within the commercial heart of the City Centre to ensure they can play the best part in driving forward the inevitable change in this area.

7.7. Funding for this role would need to be identified, both for the initial pilot period and, ideally, in the longer term. A paper will be brought to the portfolio holder with proposals both on how best to use and fund the post, to be considered in due course.

8. Meanwhile Use

8.1. Meanwhile or temporary uses of Council owned assets are always be encouraged where possible and viable or where tangible economic benefits are anticipated. With that in mind the team are considering a range of meanwhile uses currently.

8.2. A proposal for meanwhile use of council owned land on Pye St/Pan St to create "Portsmouth Discovery Forest" is being considered. The proposal aims to provide a green space with over 200 trees grown locally, to be replanted in and around the City Centre and within the proposed new green lung of the CCN development site. The proposal could deliver a biodiversity study/education area, living walls and food growing with community uses. This will all support the development of Portsmouth's green corridors for wildlife, improving air quality, biodiversity, people's health and education, subject to the business justification case being approved. The team will also be engaging with local schools and interest groups to help manage and care for the space. This concept aligns with corporate priorities and Portsmouth's greening strategy. We are working cross directorate with public health, culture, leisure and economic development and housing to deliver the plans.

8.3. The Council let the vacant Sainsbury's building to the indoor skate park company last year for a period of 3 years with 6 month rolling breaks to allow the redevelopment to proceed when needed. While not fully open yet, it has opened to the public on a trial basis on a few occasions and is hoping to be fully open for the summer holidays.

8.4. A key part of the city's economy is SME's and currently a proposal to use the empty City Buildings, at the top of Commercial Road as an enterprise centre, with co-work and hot desk space is being considered. In addition to the main area, the Council will look to bring back the Playland unit, which is fire damaged. Proposals and business justification plans are under discussion.

8.5. In partnership with key stakeholder organisations, the Council is exploring meanwhile-use options for a number of sites across the city. Project examples include:-

- a proposed a start-up business support provision funded by a Housing Association.
- A separate, skills and welfare centre, targeting unemployed adults and young people is a proposed contractor led project building on successful project-based work piloted elsewhere in the country. The skills and welfare centre would bring together a range of businesses and contractors working in partnership with the council, charity, and welfare sectors to provide focused support to address skills gaps and move people into employment.

8.6. All projects are designed to complement existing service provision and maximise engagement with vulnerable groups. Both pieces of work are developments from the cross council social value work.

9. Engagement and Communication Strategy

9.1. The team continues to actively promote the wider City Centre vision, with regular update on the City Centre website and promotional material being developed.

9.2. The team continues to work closely with other projects and teams working on City Centre schemes, including SEHRT, Clean Air Zone, transport, property, the bids team and economic development, to coordinate on communications and engagement activity and present a cohesive narrative for the future of the City Centre.

9.3. It is anticipated that the Council working collaboratively with the University of Portsmouth to find ways to promote the opportunities in the high street and wider City Centre area using virtual tours and walk throughs alongside traditional methods, to ensure that more residents, stakeholders and businesses can be engaged.

9.4. The CCN planning application has been kept as flexible as possible and is based on the objectives set out in Portsmouth's emerging Local Plan and reflects the core policies of the administration, it also provides an opportunity to canvas residents on the proposed wider area improvements and how best to shape the spatial plans of the City Centre.

9.5. The community will be engaged with a view to how best to improve the High Street in a number of consultation sessions blending the need to consult on the reserved matters of the project with the wider improvements. On the CCN project residents, businesses and community stakeholders will have the chance to feed into plans for the central green space and public park, and the design codes that will help shape the look and character of new buildings.

9.6. We will set out a programme of activity that will draw on different forms of engagement, such as formal consultation, focus groups, roadshows, pop-up events, briefings, information sharing (media, council channels including social media, newsletters and Flagship) and school visits.

9.7. The focus will on be engaging with different groups in effective and meaningful ways, depending on the phase of the project, the topic and the stakeholders involved. We want to strike a balance between involving the community and oversaturating people with consultation. It will be important to work closely with other related projects and teams within the council.

10. Reasons for recommendations

10.1. The main body of the report gives specific details to the background of the recommendations all of which are considered by officers as important to ensure the Regeneration of the City Centre and its associated benefits.

10.2. The 2012 Local Plan requires updating to reflect current market trends for retail high streets and housing need and the recent Masterplan, the City Centre Development Scheme, identifies the City Centre North as a location for substantial housing growth along with associated employment floorspace. This opportunity formed part of emerging policy S1 consulted on in 2021 as part of the Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation.

10.3. The Cabinet has approved a range of decisions in both October 2021 and March 2022, which enable the various workstreams to be developed, these include:

- Approve the Land Assembly strategy for the City Centre Regeneration project
- Delegate authority to the Director of Regeneration and S151 Officer on the advice of the City Solicitor in consultation with the Leader to:
- Negotiate and complete acquisitions of legal interests, on the basis of a statutory Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Compensation Code, in land required for the delivery of the City Centre Regeneration scheme
- To procure and appoint specialist advisers for Land Referencing Agents and Specialist compulsory surveyors.
- To approve progress of all work necessary to establish a case for the CPO of land required for the City Centre Regeneration scheme.
- To approve in principle the use of CPO powers for the acquisition of the land (indicatively shown in in the redline and note that the making of any CPO order will be subject to further report to Cabinet confirming various criteria have been met. Within the decision, Cabinet note redline plan.
- Delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and the S151 officer to deliver meanwhile uses in all PCC owned assets where possible and viable to do so, to further support the economic recovery of the City Centre.
- Delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and S151 Officer on the advice of the City Solicitor in consultation with the Leader to investigate funding and delivery options including internal delivery and potential partnering options for the City Centre North Development.

11. Integrated impact assessment

See appendix E.

12. Legal comments

12.1. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Legal Services will continue to provide legal oversight and support to the project as it develops.

13. Director of Finance's comments

13.1. There are no direct financial implications as a result of approving the recommendations within this report.

13.2. The report suggests various requirements for funding for both revenue and capital initiatives. Each of these will be appraised individually and a request for funds will be agreed either within existing cash limited budgets or the approved capital programme. Alternatively, there may be a requirement to bid for additional corporate resources or access further borrowing that will need to be agreed by full Council.

13.3. Each of these initiatives will be financially appraised to ensure that they are affordable and sustainable on going from a revenue perspective.

.....
Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix A - City Centre Development Strategy - Masterplan Area

Appendix B - City Centre Projects Brochure

Appendix C - Unlocking your Place Potential Report by the Future High Street Taskforce

Appendix D - FHS Public Realm Improvement Plan - Commercial Road (Draft)

Appendix E - Integrated Impact Assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Cabinet Report October 2021	Regeneration of the city centre part thereof CPO resolution report.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk)
Cabinet Report March 2022	City Centre Regeneration report.pdf (portsmouth.gov.uk)
City Centre Development Strategy	https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Portsmouth-City-Centre-Development-Strategy-Jan-21_compressed.pdf

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
 Signed by:

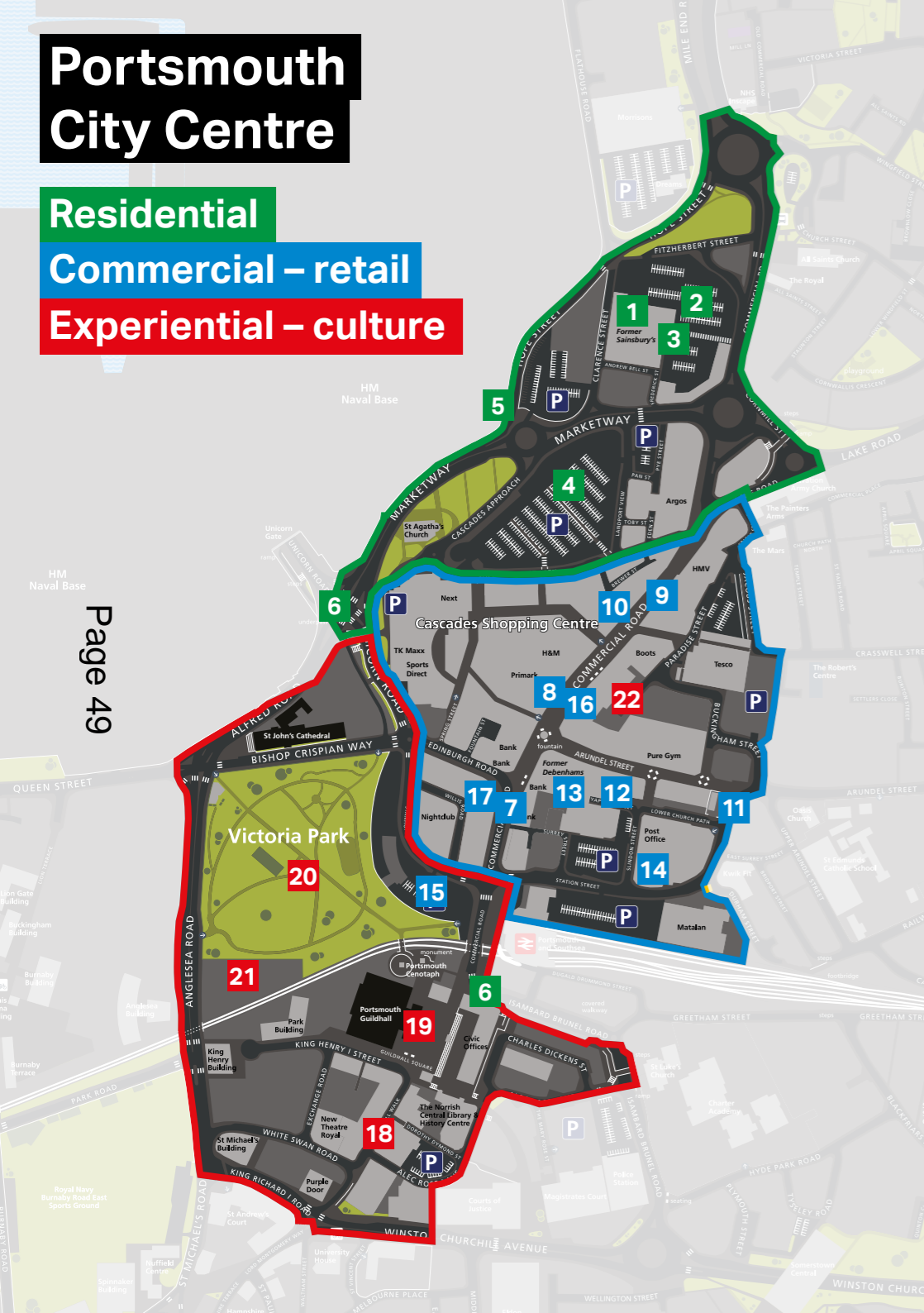
Appendix A - City Centre Development Strategy - Masterplan Area



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Portsmouth City Centre

- Residential
- Commercial – retail
- Experiential – culture



	Project	Owner	What are we doing?	
Regeneration – Residential (city centre North)	1	Sainsburys temporary building use	PCC	New indoor skatepark and community hub.
	2	Sainsburys temporary car park use	PCC	Covid testing site.
	3	Sainsbury redevelopment	PCC	Residential development with green public space.
	4	Tricorn redevelopment	PCC	Residential development with green public space.
	5	Improved city centre road	PCC	Cleaner air, less congestion, and prioritisation of public transport & cycling.
	6	Bus service improvements	PCC	Better journey times.
Commercial – Retail (city centre core/central area)	7	Market relocation	PCC	Phase 1 - repositioned and revitalised high street experience. Phase 2 - staff/traders licence review, rebrand, new display and layout, opportunities for new traders and for additional specialist 'event' markets by end of 2021.
	8	Future High Streets - Commercial Road building	PCC	Awarded funding to improve commercial/residential developments.
	9	Future High Streets - public space	PCC	Awarded funding to improve public space developments.
	10	University Practice GP relocation	Ext	Providing a new, enlarged GP practice to meet the needs of the City Centre communities.
	11	56 Arundel Street redevelopment	PCC	A modern 22-floor residential tower.
	12	'Fusion Student housing' Arundel Street redevelopment	Ext	A private development 28 storey residential tower for student housing and retained shops.
	13	Debenhams Commercial Road redevelopment	Ext	A private development opportunity for a tall building including new homes, hotel, shops and restaurant.
	14	Slindon Street redevelopment	Ext	A private development of tall buildings for private and affordable housing, and a new hotel and post office.
	15	Land south of Catherine House redevelopment	Ext	A private development of new homes, offices, shops and retail space.
	16	High Street premises of employment and skills inc Youth Hub	PCC	Supporting the cities' businesses and unemployed individuals. Placement in high street will change how we engage with our community/businesses in the future, widening engagement and overcoming barriers to ensure inclusion at all levels.
	17	City Centre co-working space	PCC	Need identified for co-working space and new co-retail space for independents.
Experiential (city centre south area)	18	Reopening High Streets	PCC	Welcome back project including micro site, engagement with businesses to upload information to the micro site, banners across the city, review of infrastructure and possible improvements.
	19	Guildhall renewal	PCC	Refurbishment and improvement of the Guildhall.
	20	Victoria Park Project	PCC	Park revival, restoration of historic monuments, and improvement to community facilities and engagement.
	21	UoP Victoria Park building	Ext	A new iconic university building including restaurant and roof terrace.
	22	Safer streets	PCC	PCC investment in public and community safety in targeted areas, e.g. street lighting and CCTV.

Address
Address
Address
Address

Telephone:
Email:

City centre regeneration

Overview of projects being delivered by Portsmouth City Council, private investors and partnerships in the area

Residential
Commercial – retail
Experiential – culture



You can get this information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 023 92xxxxx

Designed by: design@portsmouthcc.gov.uk • Published: September 2021 • Ref: 219.1

Project	What are we doing?
Business Liaison – city centre traders	Regular discussion with relevant invited guests from PCC - external support agencies, newsletter, e-bulletin.
City centre events	Christmas light switch-on events, summer activities, additional event style markets.
Trees and planning maintenance	Trees outside of Victoria park – Arundel Street and Commercial Road, liaising with Colas and Gristwood, and monitoring pruning schedules.
City centre market management	Exploration of new/additional event style markets, liaison with trading standards re regulation of sales, ensuring H&S of stalls, attracting new traders, upgrade of canopies, rebranding, electrical testing and maintenance.
Street cleansing	Regular cleansing schedule, monitoring of SLA and performance. <i>(Owned by PCC and External)</i>
Parking enforcement	Operate civil parking enforcement, and employs Civil Enforcement Officers to ensure parking schemes and restrictions are followed.
Trading Standards	Helps to protect residents from unscrupulous traders and consumer issues, and also help to ensure that businesses comply with the law.
Licencing	Responsible for regulation of street traders, charitable collections, licencing of alcohol, entertainment and gambling premises, and tables and chairs on the highway.
Food hygiene	In addition to enforcing food safety legislation, officers encourage maintenance of satisfactory food standards, offer technical advice to existing and prospective food business operators, and also provide information and access to training on food hygiene and labelling matters.
Community safety	Community warden patrols (daily on weekdays and at other times by demand). Team in uniform visible to the public. Proactive and reactive patrols.
Vacant unit response (inc. Pompey Heroes)	Liaison with vacant unit owners/property management with a view to adding vinyls to units whilst unoccupied, to help design out crime and lift the appearance of the area whilst properties are marketed or developed and then tenanted.
PCC Commercial landlord activity	Managing the space/agreements with third parties. This will continue to enable use of the buildings/space and continue to provide income.
Business Rates collection and Future BID	Explore potential of a Business Improvement District - City Centre Manager post to do this.

All owned by PCC except Street Cleansing

Unlocking Your Place Potential – Report and Feedback



Table of Contents

About the visit and this report.....	2
Portsmouth – Strengths	3
4Rs Framework and our method	4
Fishbone Analysis	6
Diagnosis of main barrier to transformation	7
Recommendations	8
High Streets Task Force Product Prescriptions.....	9
Appendix 1 – List of town attendees.....	11

About the visit and this report

The High Streets Task Force visited Commercial Road, Portsmouth on 17 January 2022 to undertake an *Unlocking Your Place Potential* diagnostic visit. Dr Jo Morrison was the High Streets Task Force Expert undertaking the visit.

The attendees representing Portsmouth can be found in Appendix 1.

The purpose of the visit was to diagnose the main barrier to your transformation. In other words, what problem, if not resolved now, will make it difficult for the town to change. To do this the Expert wanted to understand more about the challenges facing the town, your plans for transformation, meet key stakeholders, ask questions and tour the town.

As a result of the diagnostic process, the Expert has identified collaborative working as the main barrier to transformation in Portsmouth.

The rest of this report identifies the strengths of the town, the main barrier to transformation the Expert found, as well as clear recommendations the Local Authority and partners can action now to accelerate the transformation process. The report ends with a list of High Streets Task Force Products that the Expert has prescribed.

On behalf of the High Streets Task Force, may I take this opportunity to thank attendees who gave up their time to attend the meeting, and who contributed to a frank and positive discussion. Thank you to Steve Curtis for organising the session and Rebecca Alexander who led an informative and well-planned town tour.

From reading the feedback from the visit, and this report, I can see you have a lot going for you in Portsmouth City Centre – and many strengths both in the town and in your people. The High Streets Task Force is here to help you build on those strengths, and I hope you find it useful.



Matt Colledge

High Streets Task Force Project Director (interim)

Commercial Road, Portsmouth – Strengths

- ✓ Array of ambitious plans in the city centre
- ✓ Strong transport links
- ✓ Proximity to Victoria Park
- ✓ Proximity to seafront
- ✓ Weekly outdoor market (Thursday-Saturday)
- ✓ Mix of retail, hospitality and some consumer services
- ✓ Cascades shopping centre
- ✓ Guildhall and library
- ✓ Pedestrianised and accessible public realm
- ✓ Evidence of some partnership working
- ✓ Evidence of some community engagement
- ✓ Nearby residential including significant student accommodation

Portsmouth is an ambitious waterfront city, with remarkable heritage and countryside right on its doorstep. It enjoys a relatively large catchment within walking distance of the city centre and good rail and bus links. Its Commercial Road pedestrianised high street is the spine that connects Victoria Park, the railway station and the civic and cultural centre with city centre north (the site of a major regeneration plan). There is a large amount of development projects planned and being delivered in the area which, in combination, will lead to significant change over the next few years. In summary, the city centre has many strengths and opportunities to transform into a destination desired by residents, workers and visitors.

4Rs framework and our method

The aim of the Unlocking Your Place Potential workshop is for our High Streets Task Force Experts to identify the key barrier(s) to the improvement of your high street and recommend an appropriate strategic response. To enable our experts to do this in an evidence-based way, the High Streets Task Force uses the '4Rs' framework.

Research has identified 237 factors that impact on the success of the high street. However, it is too overwhelming to think of all these at once, so we have developed the '4Rs' framework to provide some structure to the incredibly complex practice of place transformation. Without a framework, it is easy to be drawn into so much detail that you cannot see the big picture.

When you simplify the process of renewal, the reasons why so many regeneration plans do not result in the changes people expect fall into four categories:

- The problems facing the centre were not accurately identified
- The plans were good but not enough changed
- The place changed but people's perceptions didn't
- There were fundamental issues with governance or the spatial layout of the place.

We looked at these problems and identified four strategies to address them: *Repositioning*, *Reinventing*, *Rebranding*, and *Restructuring*. So, the framework distinguishes between the processes of analysis and decision making (repositioning), effecting change (reinventing), communication (rebranding), and governance/spatial planning (restructuring).

More detail on each of the '4Rs' is set out in Figure 1 below.

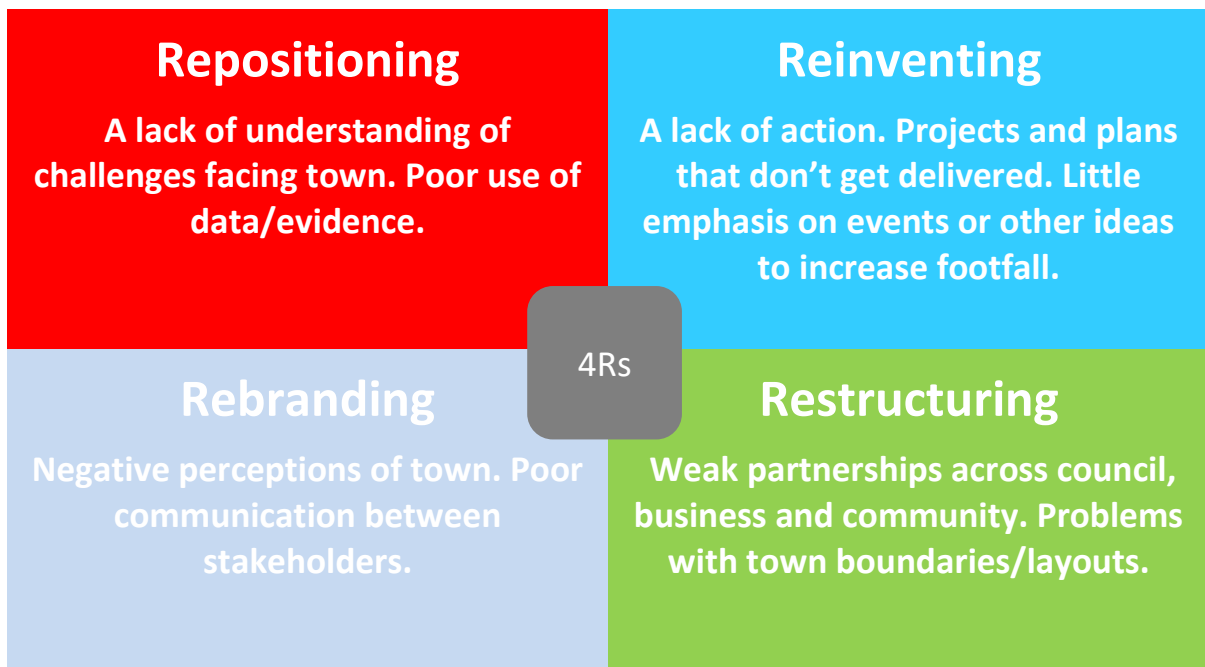


Figure 1: The 4Rs framework

Applying the 4Rs to Commercial Road

Although the town and its people have many strengths, we did identify a number of weaknesses. We have grouped these using the 4Rs framework – see below.

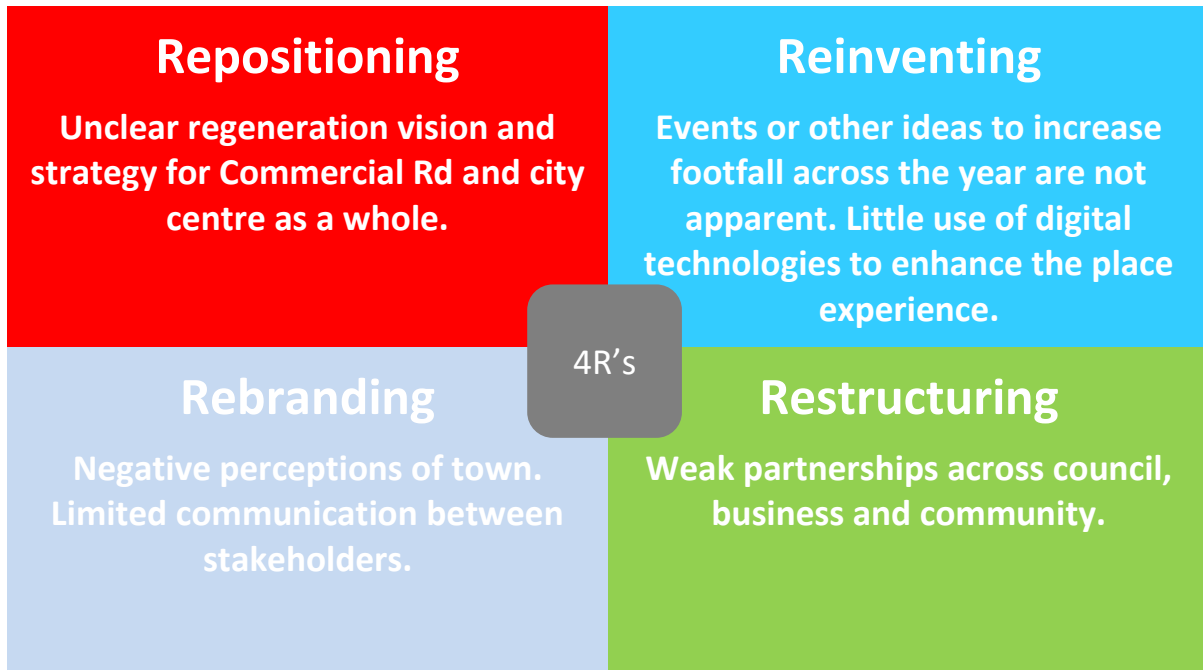


Figure 2: Applying the 4Rs Framework to Commercial Road

We used all the information we had to identify which of the descriptions above fitted the evidence we had collected. We collected this evidence from looking at your Expression of Interest to the Future High Streets Fund, the Unlocking Your Place Potential visit, including our meeting and discussions, and the in-person town tour. We also included the information we found out about Portsmouth from our desk research.

We then grouped each piece of evidence under the 4R headings of Repositioning, Reinventing, Rebranding and Restructuring. You can see our working on the Fishbone Sheet included in this report.

By classifying every clue, we could see how these are grouped and where Commercial Road, Portsmouth is facing major barriers. This then allowed us to recommend suitable strategies to overcome these (see Figure 2). These strategies are *ways of working*, rather than ‘magic bullets’ relating to any particular intervention in your town. As mentioned at the start of the Unlocking Your Place Potential visit, you are the experts in Portsmouth.

You can see the major barriers to your transformation in the next section.

Fishbone Analysis

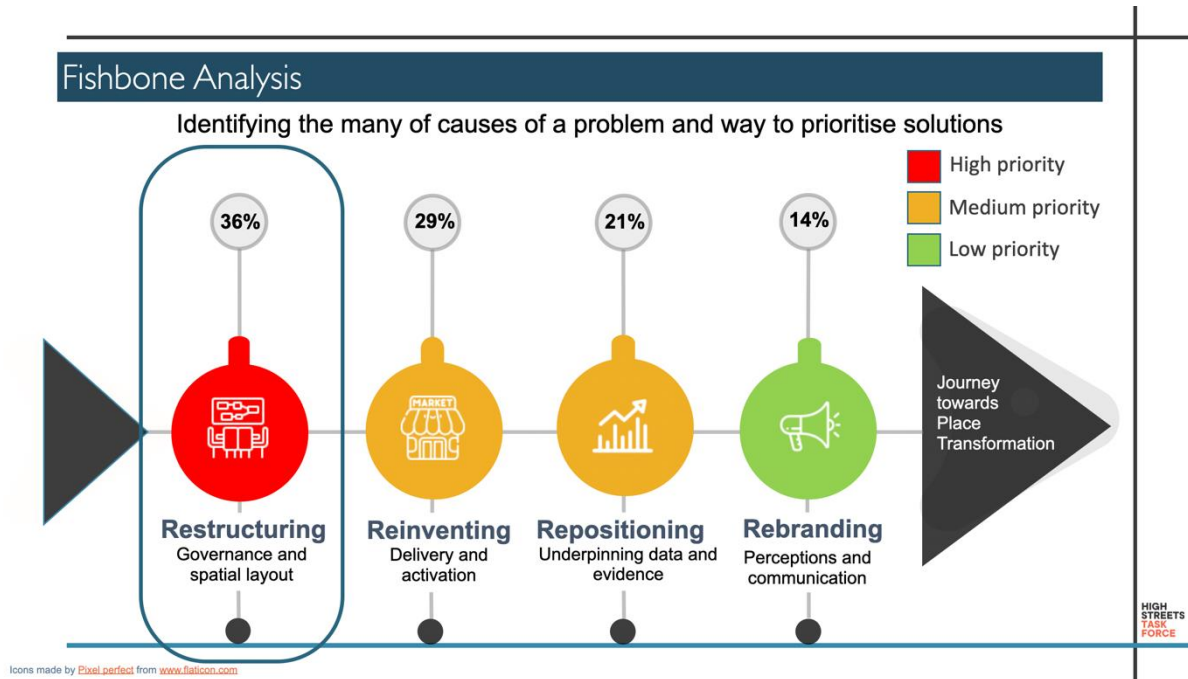


Figure 3: Fishbone Analysis

Diagnosis of main barrier to transformation

As a result of the diagnostic process, the Experts have identified multi-stakeholder collaborative working as the main barrier to transformation in Commercial Road, Portsmouth.

During the town visit, it was clear there is a wealth of regeneration activity and planning happening in and around the Commercial Road area, however, the activities are largely independent of each other, often undertaken by developers in isolation (i.e. not part of an overarching masterplan) and so lead to a fragmented and fluid environment.

Commercial Road is the 'spine' of the area, connecting all of the developments, and it is ultimately central to the human experience of living/working and moving through the locale –both now and in the future. As such, we believe there is a real opportunity for Portsmouth City Council to improve its collaborative working on Commercial Road by forging stronger partnerships and communications with business leaders and the wider community, e.g. the University, residents and civil society. This will enable a shared vision to be developed, which will provide consistency and inform future plans.

Stronger partnerships between council, businesses and the wider community will also build more capacity for making change in the city centre. A shared and more coordinated approach will ensure improved impact from investment and interventions, whether initially they are led by the public, private or voluntary sector.

It was clear from our meeting that the council has a great deal of enthusiasm for city centre transformation and many ideas about how to achieve it. However, at the meeting there were few attendees from outside of the council - suggesting a lack of collaborative working between multiple stakeholders. More frequent and open communication is needed, and we recommend restructuring your governance systems to facilitate a team approach to transformation, with council, business and the community working together to create and achieve the vision for the city centre.

Recommendations

To improve collaborative working, we are recommending a primary strategy of restructuring to consolidate your approach to place leadership. We understand it is not always easy to change cultures, structures and behaviours to work in a more collaborative way, so we are giving you immediate recommendations that if you adopt, will lead to some quick improvements.

1. Share the final version of this report with everyone that attended the Unlocking Your Place Potential meeting – as well as a wider range of key partners such as local resident representatives, major local employers (e.g. MoD and NHS), local businesses, cultural organisations and civil society groups.
2. Arrange an away day with a wide range of public sector, business and community leaders to review challenges facing the city centre and the feedback from the UYPP visit - consider how these may inform future coordination of place management partnership. Here, you could draw upon some of the participants at the workshop delivered to inform your successful Future of the High Street application.
3. Form a new and comprehensive partnership structure to shape the strategy for the centre, oversee projects and coordinate plans and activity.
4. Your new partnership structure should then identify who will own or action the areas for improvement identified in your Fishbone Analysis. You may want to structure working groups around the 4Rs – or it may be that your new group coordinates and ensures all the actions have a home and there is regular monitoring and reporting on progress.

The amount of new and planned city centre residential dwellings is sizeable and will impact upon the demands and experience of the area. A further recommendation is that the views and feedback of existing local residents and new local residents are regularly sought in order to help shape and validate the range of improvement plans over time.

Our final recommendation is that the work and resulting outputs of the new partnership are published regularly and widely via a range of media. Doing so would help to foster an inclusive culture for the city centre communities.

We hope these recommendations are useful. As we explained in the Unlocking Your Place Potential visit, you are the experts in Portsmouth City Centre, not us. Nevertheless, we have experience of working with many towns and cities around the country that face similar challenges – so when we undertake a diagnostic visit we are well trained in looking for strengths and weaknesses in the town's offer, as well as the structures and processes that manage and change the town.

High Streets Task Force Product Prescription

Based on our recommendations, we would like to offer you the following products. This has been decided after considering your key barriers to transformation and what we have concluded as the best way to help you achieve your transformation goals.

High Streets Task Force Products Prescribed:

Product prescribed	Rationale
<p>Mentor support</p>	<p>Commercial Rd is at the heart of the city centre and is the critical link between the north and south areas. There is a large amount of regeneration activity underway in the city centre, undertaken variously by Portsmouth City Council, private investors and partnerships. At the same time, despite its central location, the existing perception and experience of the of Commercial Road is poor.</p> <p>There is tremendous opportunity to create a vibrant, multi-dimensional and connected city centre. To do so requires an inclusive place leadership/governance structure.</p> <p>A mentor would be able to broker and mediate meetings with leaders from Portsmouth City Council and other stakeholders, developing a written partnership agreement for joint working.</p>
<p>Developing a Shared Vision</p>	<p>We have recommended that following the above Mentor support, Portsmouth city centre would benefit from a Developing a Shared Vision workshop. The above Mentor visit will be an opportunity to further discuss this product with you, to ensure that it is something that you will benefit from. If during the Mentor visit the need for the workshop is agreed, arrangements will begin to put this in place, and further guidance supplied.</p>

Online learning/resources

The HSTF has a range of helpful online learning resources to help you achieve change. In reviewing the Fishbone analysis, we recommend the following two online courses:

[Restructuring: building capacity, partnerships and assessing the need for spatial change](#)

[Repositioning: developing collaborative, inspiring visions that achieve change](#)

You can find more resources on the High Streets Task Force website:

<https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/resources/>

Next steps:

Please liaise with your Operations contact to make arrangements for the delivery of the next stage of your support. The Operation team are available to assist with any queries relating to the delivery of the above support, so please do not hesitate to get in touch if any aspect is unclear. More information about all of these products can be found on the HSTF website [here](#).

Appendix 1 – List of town attendees

Steve Curtis, Bid Manager, Portsmouth City Council

Rebecca Alexander, City Development Place & Markets Officer, Portsmouth City Council

Ian Maguire, Assistant Director of Planning and Economic Growth, Portsmouth City Council

Mark Pembleton, Economic Growth Manager, Portsmouth City Council

Claire Looney, Partnership & Commissioning Manager for Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services, Portsmouth City Council

Sarah Willett, Project Manager for City Centre North Development, Portsmouth City Council

Caroline Hopper, Business Assurance Lead - leading on Safer Streets, Portsmouth City Council

Anne Cains, Project Manager for City Centre North Development, Portsmouth City Council

Jason White, Comms & Engagement Officer Major Projects, Portsmouth City Council

Les Pink, CHG Holdings

Andrew Philip, Manager, Cascades Shopping Centre

Chris Worrall, Innovation Director, University of Portsmouth

Tim Clark, Agent, Vail Williams

NOTE: All dimensions to be checked on site prior to commencement of any work
 *** DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING ***
 Notify C.A. of any discrepancies before ordering materials.

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Seating module options

Potential location for seating module

Potential location for seating module

Potential location for seating module

Play Opportunity Marbles



Play Opportunity Sound



Play Opportunity Water Spiral



Play Opportunity Climbing



Play Opportunity Memory



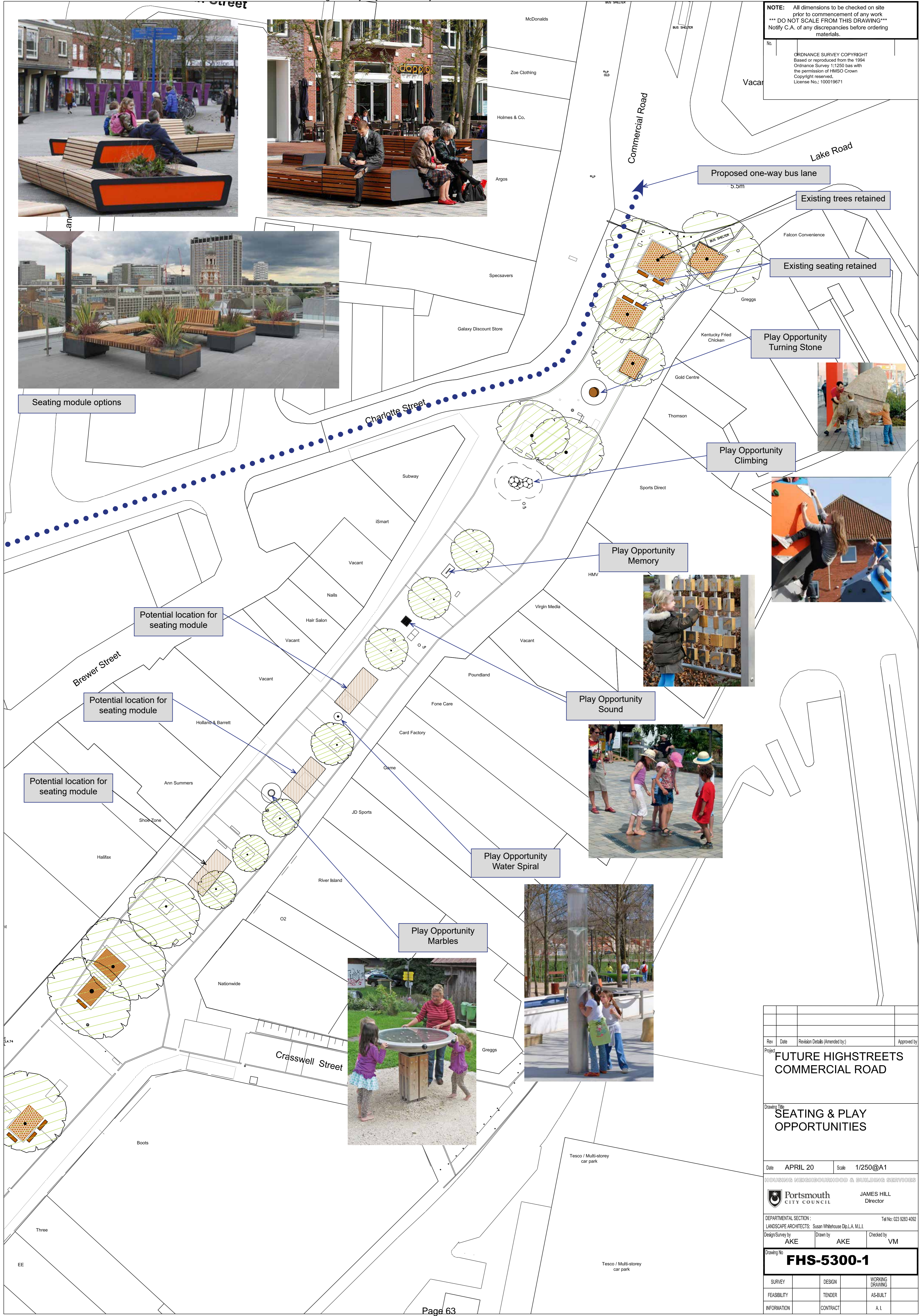
Play Opportunity Turning Stone



Existing seating retained

Existing trees retained

Proposed one-way bus lane
5.5m



Rev	Date	Revision Details (Amended by:)	Approved by
Project			
FUTURE HIGHSTREETS COMMERCIAL ROAD			
Drawing Title			
SEATING & PLAY OPPORTUNITIES			
Date	APRIL 20	Scale	1/250@A1
HOUSING NEIGHBOURHOOD & BUILDING SERVICES			
Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL Director		JAMES HILL Director	
DEPARTMENTAL SECTION: LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS: Susan Whitehouse Dip.L.A. M.L.L. Tel No: 023 9283 4092			
Design/Survey by	AKE	Drawn by	AKE
Checked by	VM		
Drawing No			
FHS-5300-1			
SURVEY	DESIGN	WORKING DRAWING	
FEASIBILITY	TENDER	AS-BUILT	
INFORMATION	CONTRACT	A.L.	

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Portsmouth City Centre North (PCCN)

Integrated Impact Assessment
(IIA)

May 2022

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Integrated impact assessment (IIA) form December 2019

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

The integrated impact assessment is a quick and easy screening process. It should:

- Identify those policies, projects, services, functions, or strategies that could impact positively or negatively on the following areas:
 - Communities and safety
 - Regeneration and culture
 - Environment and public space
 - Equality & Diversity - This can be found in Section A5

Directorate:

Regeneration

Service, function:

Major Projects

Title of policy, service, function, project, or strategy (new or old):

Portsmouth City Centre North (PCCN) will include the demolition of the majority of existing structures on site and the construction of a phased mixed-use scheme to enable the regeneration of the area.

Type of policy, service, function, project, or strategy:

- Existing
- New / proposed
- Changed

What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project, or strategy?

PCCN will provide up to 2,300 residential units, up to 10,000spm (GIA) of non-residential uses (Use Class E, F1 and F2) and associated servicing facilities.

Central to the project is the delivery of a new green open space for use by the city-wide community.

Has any consultation been undertaken for this proposal? What were the outcomes of the consultations? Has anything changed because of the consultation? Did this inform your proposal?

Public engagement event held 04/02/2022. The public were asked "Do you think the creation of a large, green park in the city centre north is a good idea?" 91% of those asked gave positive feedback on the green space. Static exhibitions were set up in 4 local community centres throughout the month of April. A city centre website has been created to direct comments and feedback to. The full public consultation will be held in Summer 2022.

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

A1 - Crime - Will it make our city safer?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce crime, disorder, ASB and the fear of crime?
- How will it prevent the misuse of drugs, alcohol, and other substances?
- How will it protect and support young people at risk of harm?
- How will it discourage re-offending?

If you want more information, contact Lisa.Wills@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-spp-plan-2018-20.pdf>

Please expand on the impact our policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

We are working alongside Hampshire Constabulary and security consultants Evolution and have created a security needs assessment outlining elements to be taken into consideration.

It is critical to ensure that our design principals focus on the development being safe for residents and visitors. In addition to that, we believe in the importance of enabling strong, inclusive communities where social and physical activity are encouraged as a way to prevent mental health issues and support people to develop in a healthy environment.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

A2 - Housing - Will it provide good quality homes?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it increase good quality affordable housing, including social housing?
- How will it reduce the number of poor-quality homes and accommodation?
- How will it produce well-insulated and sustainable buildings?
- How will it provide a mix of housing for different groups and needs?

If you want more information contact Daniel.Young@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/psh-providing-affordable-housing-in-portsmouth-april-19.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The plans for PCCN address the city needs for housing, with a large focus on health and well-being for a new sustainable community. We do not just want to build homes. We want to build a community that flourishes, and much thought has gone into how people can live in a more environmentally conscious way. We hope this will set the bar for future developments in Portsmouth.

The development will aim to be planning policy compliant in terms of the provision of mixed tenure housing, with the aspiration to be 70/30 split of affordable & private homes. 5% wheelchair accessible homes across all tenures with EV charging for each wheelchair accessible home. Home Quality Mark of 4 with the aspiration to achieve 5 stars. HEALTHY HOMES: access to daylight, sunlight, overheating mitigation. Please refer to sustainability documents.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

A - Communities and Safety

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

A3 - Health - Will this help promote healthy, safe, and independent living?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it improve physical and mental health?
- How will it improve quality of life?
- How will it encourage healthy lifestyle choices?
- How will it create healthy places? (Including workplaces)

If you want more information, contact Dominique.Letouze@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cons-114.86-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-proof-2.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

PCCN will promote health and wellbeing and good quality of life - delivering work, live and play in close proximity to high quality open spaces (green concept). It will include a large green space that will incorporate food growing areas, communal use & play areas. It will also improve cycle & pedestrian routes.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

A4 - Income Deprivation and Poverty - Will it consider income deprivation and reduce poverty?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it support those vulnerable to falling into poverty e.g. single working age adults and lone parent households?
- How will it consider low-income communities, households, and individuals?
- How will it support those unable to work?
- How will it support those with no educational qualifications?

If you want more information, contact Mark.Sage@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-homelessness-strategy-2018-to-2023.pdf>

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/health-and-care/health/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The proposal is to regenerate an area of the city to provide additional homes and create commercial space & opportunities for businesses which is anticipated to attract additional investment in the area, creating additional employment opportunities.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

A5 - Equality & Diversity - Will it have any positive / negative impacts on the protected characteristics?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it impact on the protected characteristics - Positive or negative impact (Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, age, disability, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, sex, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil-partnership, socio-economic)
- What mitigation has been put in place to lessen any impacts or barriers removed?
- How will it help to promote equality for a specific protected characteristic?

If you want more information, contact Gina.Perryman@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cmu-equality-strategy-2019-22-final.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

This programme is not envisaged to negatively impact on the equality groups, but we will ensure we obtain people's views, so these groups are not put at a disadvantage and get the opportunity to give feedback. We will be holding a full public consultation in Summer 2022.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

B - Environment and Climate Change

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

B1 - Carbon Emissions - Will it reduce carbon emissions?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
- How will it provide renewable sources of energy?
- How will it reduce the need for motorised vehicle travel?
- How will it encourage and support residents to reduce carbon emissions?

If you want more information, contact Tristan.Thorn@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cmu-sustainability-strategy.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The aspiration is for Portsmouth City Centre North to be a net zero carbon development. The proposal aims to achieve net zero operational carbon and explore routes to achieving net zero construction carbon.

The proposal aims to meet the LETI/RIBA 2030 Climate Change whole life embodied carbon targets and respective construction carbon emissions reduction targets.

Embodied carbon will be reduced by implementing circular design principles. For example, using principles of lean design, design for adaptability, prefer natural materials and follow building in layers principles wherever possible. A pre-demolition audit of the existing buildings and structures has been undertaken for Phase 1 and has identified 15,000 tonnes of materials for reuse, re-purpose and recycling which will be further investigated with the supply chain and contractors as the project progresses.

Design decisions include reduced parking for a car-poor development and limited excavation on site so that the carbon impacts of a basement could be reduced on Phase 1. The potential to use prefabrication and off-site manufacture will be further explored, as will a review of structural options, both will reduce embodied carbon impacts.

Buildings will be designed to reduce energy demand and consumption, with low carbon heat delivered through electrically led solutions. The strategy for Phase 1 proposed an ambient loop system using water and air source heat pumps for heating and domestic water. Overall, Blocks A and B within Phase 1 achieve circa 80% savings in carbon emissions over Part L 2013 and 50% improvement against Part L 2021.

On-site renewable energy generation will be provided by 1,000m² of roof mounted PV panels spread across Block A and B for Phase 1. This will minimise reliance on the electricity grid. Future phases will follow a similar approach.

Portsmouth City Centre North will prioritise low carbon transport modes. The site is served well by public transport, with Portsmouth's rail station within a 10-minute walk or 4-minute cycle. Fratton and Portsmouth

Harbour rail stations are within a 10-minute cycle journey. New pedestrian and cycling routes through the site are proposed and the public realm and landscape design aims to prioritise walking and cycling.

Transport infrastructure will be improved. A mobility hub will consolidate services such as car clubs, cycle hire schemes. Residents' homes will have cycle parking spaces (following HQM requirements) Charlotte Street will be widened to improve 2-way bus movement.

Portsmouth City Centre North will be a car-poor development, with the parking provision ratio starting at 1 space per 2 units (0.53), for Phase 1, to 1 space per 7 units (0.16) for private lease by the time the full masterplan is developed. All car parking spaces will be designed to install electric vehicle charging to all spaces. All these interventions will discourage motorised vehicle travel and promote active travel.

Residents will be encouraged to adopt low carbon modes of transportation and adopt the principles of the sharing economy. For example by setting up communal allotments and sharing the land for urban agriculture, by shopping locally as the masterplan will provide local shops and flexible spaces which could be used to support low carbon businesses and initiatives.

Reduction in emissions will be prioritised, however an offsetting strategy will be required to achieve net-zero. High-quality offset will be explored as the design develops.

The current use of site is a large surface car park with around 30% of the land consisting of buildings therefore refurbishing the existing buildings does not provide the housing volume and other significant benefits such as the green space as the development would.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

A whole life carbon analysis and the supporting environmental frameworks, such as BREEAM and HQM will be used to check impact of the development.

B - Environment and Climate Change

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

B2 - Energy Use - Will it reduce energy use?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce water consumption?
- How will it reduce electricity consumption?
- How will it reduce gas consumption?
- How will it reduce the production of waste?

If you want more information, contact Tristan.Thorn@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-portsmouth-plan-post-adoption.pdf>

<https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s24685/Home%20Energy%20Appendix%201%20-%20Energy%20and%20water%20at%20home%20-%20Strategy%202019-25.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The energy targets for PCCN Phase 1 for all buildings (residential and non-residential) is proposed as a 31% improvement to Part L 2013. The aspiration for in-operation Net Zero Carbon is a key consideration. Targeting Home Quality Mark 4-star rating on Phase 1 with an aspiration for 5-star rating. All electric strategy. Water Strategy in progress. Water reuse & harvesting to be investigated against whole life carbon impacts.

The Energy Strategy for Phase 2 (Plots 2-11) of the Proposed Development will incorporate energy efficient measures and low carbon and renewables technologies in line with those described within the Energy Strategy report to achieve comparable carbon emission reduction to those predicted for Phase 1 (plot 1).

The Phase 2 Energy Strategy will be based on all-electric heat pumps and will incorporate the use of renewable technologies to achieve predicted carbon emissions reductions against Part L 2021 comparable to Phase 1 of the proposed Development. As reserved matters applications (RMA) for the remaining plots within Phase 2 come forward, appropriate technology will be incorporated. This will allow for greater flexibility for each plot to respond with an energy strategy which will incorporate appropriate technology available at the time of development to take advantage of a decarbonised grid. The minimum improvement targeted for Phase 2 is 31% over the baseline emission rate against Part L 2013 in line with Phase 1.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

B - Environment and Climate Change

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

B3 - Climate Change Mitigation and Flooding - Will it proactively mitigate against a changing climate and flooding?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it minimise flood risk from both coastal and surface flooding in the future?
- How will it protect properties and buildings from flooding?
- How will it make local people aware of the risk from flooding?
- How will it mitigate for future changes in temperature and extreme weather events?

If you want more information, contact Tristan.Thorn@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/env-surface-water-management-plan-2019.pdf>

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-flood-risk-management-plan.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

We have undertaken a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) which confirms the risk of flooding from all sources, & the dwelling is not in a flood zone. The site is in a Flood Zone 1 and therefore is a low risk of flooding from all sources. The FRA includes allowances for climate change to be developed. The proposals have demonstrated the ability to achieve a minimum of Home Quality Mark 4 stars and a BREEAM Very Good.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

B - Environment and Climate Change

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

B4 - Natural Environment - Will it ensure public spaces are greener, more sustainable, and well-maintained?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it encourage biodiversity and protect habitats?
- How will it preserve natural sites?
- How will it conserve and enhance natural species?

If you want more information, contact Daniel.Young@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-solent-recreation-mitigation-strategy-dec-17.pdf>

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-portsmouth-plan-post-adoption.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The large green space will become part of Portsmouth's wider green corridor contributing to improved biodiversity. We have a biodiversity net gain of up to 45% (aspiration) and Urban Greening Factor (UGF) of 0.4 or better (aspiration).

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

B - Environment and Climate Change

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

B5 - Air Quality - Will it improve air quality?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce motor vehicle traffic congestion?
- How will it reduce emissions of key pollutants?
- How will it discourage the idling of motor vehicles?
- How will it reduce reliance on private car use?

If you want more information, contact Hayley.Trower@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/env-aq-air-quality-plan-outline-business-case.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

In line with the council's climate change strategy the proposal for PCCN is to reduce vehicular movements into the city, by creating more city centre homes & local workplaces & creating sustainable traffic links such as footpaths & cycle routes linking neighbourhoods. Air quality will be improved due to reduced traffic on site green spaces proposed & all electric energy strategy.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

B6 - Transport - Will it improve road safety and transport for the whole community?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it prioritise pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users over users of private vehicles?
- How will it allocate street space to ensure children and older people can walk and cycle safely in the area?
- How will it increase the proportion of journeys made using sustainable and active transport?
- How will it reduce the risk of traffic collisions and near misses with pedestrians and cyclists?

If you want more information, contact Pam.Turton@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/travel/local-transport-plan-3>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The City Centre Road seeks to enhance and optimise operation of the western corridor, seeking to manage general traffic in the area and through relocation and creation of new road space a comprehensive integrated sustainable travel network. The CCR will also promote one of the city's major regeneration projects by unlocking developable land and integrating sustainable travel into the development. This aim is to improve bus links and journey times and prioritises pedestrians and cyclists.

The CCR will integrate with the Council's wider strategies and policies defined in our LTP4, the City Project and the Local Plan.

The existing highway network in the vicinity of the site may be reconfigured, including road widenings, junction improvements, and dedicated transport lanes. Highway works adjacent to the site are not sought for approval as part of this planning application but are assumed to come forward in parallel with the construction of the Proposed Development. They include works comprising the City Centre Road (CCR) Scheme for which funding is being sought from the Department of Transport (DfT) via a Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) document (the 'SOBC works'), together with Portsmouth City Council public transport improvement schemes secured via the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) (the 'TCF works').

To facilitate the future vehicle access requirements for Phase 1 of the Proposed Development, a primary point of access will be provided along the southern boundary of the Phase 1 site area off Marketway via a left in, left out junction.

Under the full Proposed Development, the site will be supported via two primary vehicle access points which will be facilitated by the wider package of strategic highway works which seek to reconfigure the adjacent road network and promote priority to public transport, walking and cycling. Upon the implementation of the proposed strategic highway works, vehicle access into the site will be taken from the new Hope Street / Marketway signalised junction to the west, and new priority junction access via Commercial Road to the east.

The Phase 1 site area will provide new walking and cycling infrastructure which ties into the existing footpaths and cycling provisions on the adjacent network. Primary points of walking and cycling access into the site will be via Marketway to the south alongside the proposed vehicle access. North of the site, Phase 1 will link into the existing signalised crossing at Hope Street to facilitate future walking and cycling movements from Flathouse Road to link centrally into Phase 1. For Phase 2, walking and cycling access to the site will be provided at multiple points leading to a network of internal routes, as indicated in the Pedestrian and Cycle Access Route Network Parameter Plan.

As these highway improvement works are assumed to come forward in parallel with the Proposed Development, they have been considered, as appropriate, within the assessment of the Proposed Development presented in the ES. For the purposes of the assessments presented in the ES, the TCF works are assumed to come forward by the time Phase 1 is completed and operational (although Phase 1 is not reliant upon them), and the SOBC works are assumed to commence following the completion of Phase 1, and be completed by the time Phase 2 of the Proposed Development is completed. Phase 1 of the Proposed Development is not reliant upon the wider

strategic (SOBC) highways works being completed, whereas the assessments presented in the ES assume reliance of Phase 2 of the Proposed Development upon these SOBC works.

A programme of highways works is assumed to come forward alongside the construction of the Proposed Development. These do not form part of the Proposed Development but will be implemented in parallel, and as such will result in changes to the highway network in the vicinity of the site as the Proposed Development progresses. The highway works will commence with the implementation of a new bus lane westbound along Lake Road and the opening of an eastbound bus-only link between Charlotte Street and the northern part of Commercial Road (the SOBC bus only works). This will be supported by a new two-way bus only link between Unicorn Road and Charlotte Street, south of St Agatha's Church (the TCF works). These in combination create a new bus routing on the local highway with east-west buses traveling along Marketway and then south down Cascades Approach and onto Unicorn Road. In the west-east direction, buses will use the new Unicorn Road bus link and travel back along Charlotte Street to connect with Commercial Road. This will remain in place until the SOBC works, whereby Charlotte Street is widened to accommodate two-way traffic, on the southern boundary of the site. Works will also be undertaken along Hope Street, which will be widened to create a new two-lane dual carriageway running adjacent to the western Phase 1 site area boundary. These works will enable the subsequent closure of Marketway, which transects the site, and the removal of Cascades Approach and the Marketway roundabout. Finally, Lake Road and Commercial Road (along the eastern boundary of the site) will become a clockwise gyratory with dedicated public transport lanes. The extent to which temporary road, footpath and cycleway closures is currently unknown. Where required, statutory Local Authority (LA) temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consents will be obtained ahead of the relevant works commencing and the appropriate notice periods provided.

Due to the SOBC works being implemented by the time the Full Scheme is operational in 2041, this will greatly increase the efficiency and flow of traffic in and around the city centre. This is coupled with the fact that there will be a net reduction in trips added onto the network as a result of the development proposals compared to the existing land uses. The removal of trips from the overall network is likely to reduce to potential of accidents involving car drivers. It can be considered that there will be a direct long-term minor beneficial (not significant) effect on car drivers regarding accidents and safety.

The Full Scheme proposals will significantly enhance the baseline conditions regarding pedestrian and cycle permeability and environment. It is anticipated that there will be a direct long-term moderate beneficial (significant) effect regarding accidents and safety on pedestrians and cyclists.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

B - Environment and Climate Change

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

B7 - Waste Management - Will it increase recycling and reduce the production of waste?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce household waste and consumption?
- How will it increase recycling?
- How will it reduce industrial and construction waste?

If you want more information, contact Steven.Russell@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/mineralsandwaste/HampshireMineralsWastePlanADOPTED.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

We are currently working with colleagues in our waste and energy team to establish a waste management strategy for PCCN which also looks at the agenda of the city as a whole. Communal storage for waste & recycling facilities will be available within the residential areas also with a provision for bulky waste.

Construction waste will be minimised as much as possible in line with the waste hierarchy.

All detail available within the operational & site waste management strategy produced by Waterman.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

C - Regeneration of Our City

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

C1 - Culture and Heritage - Will it promote, protect, and enhance our culture and heritage?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it protect areas of cultural value?
- How will it protect listed buildings?
- How will it encourage events and attractions?
- How will it make Portsmouth a city people want to live in?

If you want more information, contact Claire.Looney@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-portsmouth-plan-post-adoption.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The effect of the Proposed Development on above ground-built heritage assets (HAs) was considered as part of the built heritage chapter of the Environmental Statement (ES) which assessed the likely significant effects on statutorily listed buildings, conservation areas, Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest ('RPGSHI') and locally listed buildings. This assessment was undertaken in accordance with the relevant statutory duty of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and supporting Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

The study area for this assessment, 1km radius from the centre of the site, was agreed during the EIA Scoping process with the LPA and Historic England (HE).

The design of the Proposed Development has been carefully considered to seek to mitigate any harmful effects on HAs. From the outset the massing was arranged to minimise effects on the settings of heritage assets that lie within or close to the site, with the tallest building located towards the centre of the site.

The Proposed Development will transform the site, delivering new homes and a park as well as public realm enhancements, making good post-war interventions and connecting the site back to the city centre in a more effective way to the benefit of the local area. It will return a network of densely developed blocks to the area. Whilst of a greater scale than the existing development on site, the Proposed Development will be similar in height to the post-war tower blocks and more recent commercial and residential towers in the city centre. The massing, as fixed by the Parameter Plans in conjunction with the Outline Design Code, is mindful of the site's heritage context and has been arranged to step down towards the heritage assets on or close to the site including the Church of St Agatha's on site to the south, All Saint Church to the north-east and Mile End Conservation Area and the listed buildings within to the north. The Outline Design Code will ensure the detailed design and materials of the new development coming forward on each plot is appropriate to its context.

St Agatha's sits on the site and there will be no direct effects on this church which will terminate the long linear park running through the centre of the site. There will be beneficial effects, of varying degrees, to the settings of the listed buildings (statutorily and locally listed) on or close to the site, as set out below (listed grade II unless noted otherwise). There will be no effect on any element of setting that contributes to the significance of any listed buildings beyond.

- Church of St Agatha, Marketway
- Charles Dickens Birthplace Museum, Old Commercial Road (grade I)
- Church of All Saints, Commercial Road
- Dock yard wall
- Horse Trough
- Nos. 379, 381 & 383, Old Commercial Road
- Nos. 387 & 389, Old Commercial Road
- Mile End Chapel Studio and attached wall & pier, Old Commercial Road
- No. 391 Old Commercial Road
- Nos. 395, 397 and 399 Old Commercial Road
- Railings and gates in front of nos. 393 to 399 Old Commercial Road
- Nos 377 and 385 New Commercial Road (locally listed)

Conservation areas

The closest conservation area to the site is the Mile End Conservation Area, a small part of the southern end of which lies within the site. The Proposed Development will on balance enhance this conservation area and its setting connecting it back to the city centre (the current road network and development on site act as a barrier between the two). It will not affect any identified or significant views of or from the conservation area, nor of or from the listed buildings within. There will also be enhancements (but to a lesser degree) to the setting of the Victoria Park Conservation Area. There will be a negligible effect on the setting of St Mary's Church Yard Conservation Area and Portsea Conservation Area and no effect on The Terraces Conservation Area.

Non designated heritage assets identified by the LPA

The two hospital plaques (at the entrance to the Sainsburys store on site) will be relocated on site in one of the later phases (location to be agreed). The loss of the 1894 elevation of the former Portsea Institute, Clarence Street is necessary to deliver the wider scheme. The facade will be recorded prior to its demolition and the photographic survey lodged with the local archives. A plaque will be placed with the repositioned hospital plaques setting out the history of the school and its association with the wider site. This will, however, result in harm in terms of the NPPF due to the loss of this non designated heritage asset. Paragraph 203 of the NPPF requires a balanced judgement in assessing harm to a non-designated heritage asset having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the heritage significance of the heritage asset. The loss of this façade (of low to negligible sensitivity) would result in harm, but this harm would be outweighed to a very large degree by the significant public benefits, (including heritage benefits), this scheme would deliver including up to 2300 new homes and a new park.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

C - Regeneration of Our City

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

C2 - Employment and Opportunities - Will it promote the development of a skilled workforce?



In thinking about this question:

- How will improve qualifications and skills for local people?
- How will it reduce unemployment?
- How will it create high quality jobs?
- How will it improve earnings?

If you want more information, contact Mark.Pembleton@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-regeneration-strategy.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The proposal would provide a range of flexible use floorspace for commercial occupiers, offering jobs for local residents and new residents on-site.

During the demolition and construction phase the proposal would support an estimated average of 633 jobs on-site. This would include apprenticeships, work placements, and other career development opportunities contributing to the promotion of a skilled workforce. Conversations are currently taking place with PCC's education team to develop measures to enhance the impact of these opportunities for local residents.

Once fully operational, the proposal would generate an estimated 329 full-time equivalent employment positions at flexible commercial floorspace. As identified in the response to Question C3, the regeneration associated with the proposal would improve placemaking and result in additional expenditure and activity in the surrounding area, contributing additional investment and employment opportunities locally as well as much needed additional homes and commercial space for businesses.

The proposal would also be compliant with PCC policy requiring the production of an Employment and Skills Plan. This plan would present the employment and skills measures delivered by the proposal to maximise skills benefits for the local workforce.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

C - Regeneration of Our City

Yes

No

Is your policy / proposal relevant to the following questions?

C3 - Economy - Will it encourage businesses to invest in the city, support sustainable growth and regeneration?



In thinking about this question:

- How will encourage the development of key industries?
- How will it improve the local economy?
- How will it create valuable employment opportunities for local people?
- How will it promote employment and growth in the city?

If you want more information, contact Mark.Pembleton@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-regeneration-strategy.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy / proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts.

The proposal aims to regenerate the area with a view to attracting investment from and providing opportunities for local businesses. Existing commercial floorspace on site would be redeveloped, with up to 10,000sqm of flexible, modernised commercial and community use floorspace provided once operational. On-site, this would enable a wider range of businesses to occupy commercial floorspace and deliver jobs for local residents. The regenerative investment included in the proposal would also contribute to wider placemaking objectives and deliver additional footfall for local businesses to sustainably support occupiers and catalyse further investment from businesses and landholders in the local area.

Once operational, the proposal would generate more job opportunities than are currently supported on-site. Floorspace and facilities provided on-site would be flexible to respond to the changing demands of businesses

and residents locally and across the city. Additional footfall and expenditure by residents on-site in the local area would help provide sustainable investment in the local economy.

In summary the proposal would provide:

- Additional job opportunities directly on-site through the provision of flexible commercial floorspace.
- Additional expenditure in the local area by workers and residents.
- Regenerative investment redeveloping floorspace in an area with very high vacancy rates
- Improved placemaking, including through new routes through the site, the provision of a large quantity of green space on-site, and the redevelopment of existing deteriorating buildings on-site. This would aim to catalyse activity in the surrounding area and encourage business investment.

Demolition and Construction

Phase 1 would support approximately 1,060 new annual jobs on-site. Phase 2 would support approximately 633 new annual jobs on-site.

Job loss on site as a result of demolition and construction would incur 10 job losses in Phase 1, and 218 job losses in Phase 2 over the course of the demolition and construction period.

Complete and Operational

Chapter 14, Paras 14.158 to 14.164 – The Proposed Development would support an estimated 329 Full Time Employment (FTE) rolls, an increase of 101 (FTEs) compared to the baseline of 228 existing FTE's. When accounting for leakage, and displacement, this gross 101 FTE decreases to approximately 76 FTE's, of which 56 would be considered local jobs.

Chapter 14, Para 14.173 – The population arising from the Proposed Development, combined with the employment figures, would generate approximately £23.9 million spend each year in Portsmouth. Workers at the Proposed Development would be estimated to spend an additional £98,000 in Portsmouth each year.

How will you measure / check the impact of your proposal?

We will produce a procurement delivery scorecard which cover of the following KPI's: Solution quality, costs, supply chain, employment & skills, environmental sustainability, health & safety & outcome benefits.

Q8 - Who was involved in the Integrated Impact Assessment?

Sarah Willett, Project Manager

Anna Limburn, Strategic Project Manager

This IIA has been approved by:

Tom Southall, Assistant Director of Regeneration & Property

Contact Number:

07555 012510

Date:

18th May 2022

Agenda Item 8



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Title of meeting:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	26 July 2022
Subject:	Response to the Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel's recommendations regarding biodiversity
Report by:	Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services; Director of Public Health; Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Buildings; Director of Regeneration
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is to set out the response of officers to the Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel's recommendations arising from a review into biodiversity enhancement in urban Portsmouth.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Panel is thanked for its work in undertaking the review.
- 2.2. That Cabinet notes and supports the recommendations of the review, which are set out in Appendix 2 to this report, together with the officer responses to the recommendations.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel reviewed opportunities for biodiversity enhancement in urban Portsmouth.
- 3.2. On 13 October 2021 Full Council resolved that a review be undertaken.
- 3.3. The review was undertaken between 16 November 2021 and 22 March 2022 and included receiving evidence in person from:

- 3.3.1. Vincent Mount, Landscape Architect;
- 3.3.2. Trevor Mose, Head of Property and Capital Development, Portsmouth Hospitals' University NHS Trust;
- 3.3.3. Geoff Gleadle, Chair of Cosham Allotment Association;
- 3.3.4. Councillor Lynne Stagg, Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation;
- 3.3.5. Doug Gray, Grounds Maintenance Manager;



- 3.3.6. Ashley Humphrey, Allotments Supervisor;
 - 3.3.7. Councillor Darren Sanders, Cabinet Member for Housing and Preventing Homelessness;
 - 3.3.8. Ian McCormack, Energy and Environment Manager, University of Portsmouth;
 - 3.3.9. Zoe White, Green and Healthy Streets Co-ordinator;
 - 3.3.10. Phil Bentley, Head of Estate Services
 - 3.3.11. Richard Jones, Portsdown Hill Countryside Officer
 - 3.3.12. Chris Lycett, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust Officer
 - 3.3.13. Pete Roberts, Hilsea Lines Ranger
 - 3.3.14. Megan Carter, Strategic Project Manager
 - 3.3.15. Owen Peat, Ecology Associate, WSP
 - 3.3.16. Rachel Hudson, Portsmouth Friends of The Earth
 - 3.3.17. Andy Ames, Wilder Communities Officer, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
 - 3.3.18. Dr Hannah Rumble, Portsmouth Climate Action Board
 - 3.3.19. Steve White, Operations Manager, Colas
 - 3.3.20. Simon Pearce, Arboricultural Officer
 - 3.3.21. Councillor Kimberley Barrett, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Green Recovery
 - 3.3.22. Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration
 - 3.3.23. Simon Bateman, Lakeside Asset Manager
 - 3.3.24. Guy Mason, Coastal, Highways and Drainage Team Manager
 - 3.3.25. Lyall Cairns, Head of Coastal Partnership
- 3.4. Evidence also included written responses from:
- 3.4.1. Councillor Cal Corkery, Deputy Leader, Labour Group
 - 3.4.2. Councillor Robert New
 - 3.4.3. Councillor Terry Norton
 - 3.4.4. Councillor Hannah Brent
 - 3.4.5. A number of Portsmouth residents, including Australia Blocks residents' associations
 - 3.4.6. North Harbour Allotment Association, Longmeadow Allotment Association, Cotswold House Residents' Association, Eastney and Milton Allotment Association, Horsea Lane Allotments Association.
 - 3.4.7. Portsmouth Tree Wardens
 - 3.4.8. Charles Dickens Community Orchard
 - 3.4.9. The Tree Council
- 3.5. The Scrutiny Panel's review document can be found in full at Appendix 1.
- 4. Scrutiny Panel's Recommendations and Officer Response**
- 4.1. The scrutiny panel made 36 recommendations in total. The recommendations, with officer responses, can be found at Appendix 2.

5. Integrated impact assessment

- 5.1. An IIA will be produced for each specific scheme or policy change arising from the recommendations made, at such time as they are planned for implementation.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1. The Council has a statutory duty to conserve biodiversity under section 40 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Section 40(1) states that the public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. "Conserving biodiversity" includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat (Section 40(3)). "Public authority" means a local authority (Section 40(4)(c)).
- 6.2. Prospective amendments to the definition of the general biodiversity objective and local authorities' specific statutory duties in relation to biodiversity reporting are contained in sections 102 and 103 of the Environment Act 2021 although these have not yet been brought into force.
- 6.3. There are no legal implications arising directly from the specific recommendations and officer responses set out in the report, but legal support can be provided as may be necessary in connection with the implementation of recommended initiatives, including in relation to any of the contracts specifically mentioned.

7. Director of Finance's comments

- 7.1. Implementation of the various initiatives outlined in the appendices will be subject to available budget provision. Some initiatives may be financed from existing cash limits (revenue budget). Initiatives requiring capital investment will be subject to a satisfactory capital bid.

.....
Signed by:

Stephen Baily
Director of Culture, Leisure and Regulatory Services

.....
Signed by:
Helen Atkinson
Director of Public Health

.....
Signed by:
James Hill
Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services

.....
Signed by:
Tristan Samuels
Director of Regeneration

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Traffic, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel review into biodiversity enhancement in urban Portsmouth.

Appendix 2: Scrutiny Panel's recommendations and officer responses

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure and Economic Development

.....
Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment

.....
Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Housing and Preventing Homelessness

.....
Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and City Development

.....
Signed by:
Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care

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Portsmouth

CITY COUNCIL

TRAFFIC, ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY SAFETY
SCRUTINY PANEL

A REVIEW INTO BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT IN URBAN PORTSMOUTH

Date published: 22 March 2022

Under the terms of the Council's Constitution, reports prepared by a Scrutiny Panel should be considered formally by the Cabinet or the relevant Cabinet Member within a period of eight weeks, as required by Rule 11(a) of the Policy & Review Procedure Rules. However, due to purdah, consideration of this report will be deferred to the first Cabinet meeting in the new municipal year.

PREFACE

When the Transport, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel received the instruction from full council to perform this review we were very eager to get our teeth into it, though there were many who feared we wouldn't be able to complete it this year and so it risked being one of those ongoing reports that never reaches fruition. However, this was not the case and I'd like to thank my brilliant team of Councillors Matthew Atkins, Stuart Brown, Charlotte Gerada, Jo Hooper (until 30 November) who was replaced by Hannah Hockaday (from 14 December) and Leo Madden who have all left their politics at the door and really worked hard. At some points we were meeting weekly in order to get through all the information, and we also held a site visit around the city to see the areas of interest.

We had excellent levels of attendance, and when people couldn't make it, they sent in the standing deputies Councillors Ryan Brent, Graham Heaney and Judith Smyth who even took the minutes for our site visit and wrote them up for us to have as an appendix. This has been an excellent example of how cross-party working can benefit the city when we all pull together for a common cause.

This difficult challenge of course could not have been completed without diligent and intense officer support from Democratic Services and in particular Jane Di Dino who has worked hard to ensure that we have kept to schedule and turned around minutes and agendas at great speed.

I would like to thank all the officers, outside bodies, residents and others who have presented to us and you will find more details on them later in this report.

I highly commend this report to you and urge you to accept its recommendations that have been unanimously agreed by the committee and are essential for the current biodiversity emergency we are in.

.....
Councillor Lee Mason
Chair, Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel.

Date: 22 March 2022

CONTENTS

	Page
1. Purpose	4
2. Background	4
3 <u>Policies</u>	5
• The Greening Strategy	
• Planning	
4. <u>Allotments</u>	13
• Regulations	
• Rewilding of sites	13
• Inspections	14
• Pesticide use	14
• Contaminants	15
• Demand	15
• Biodiversity	16
5. <u>Council Practices</u>	17
• Greening initiatives	17
• Site assessments	18
• Work with schools	18
• Rewilding	19
• Grass cutting	19
• Sea defences	20
• Wildflower meadows	21
• Streets	22
• Grass areas	23
• Biodiversity	23
• Road verges	25
• Bus shelters	25
• Planters	25
• Trees	26
• Fruit Trees	30
• Hedges	31
• Parklets	31
• Green Fences	31
• Gardens and soil	31
• Removal of paving stones	33
• Community Engagement	33
6. <u>Residents' Associations</u>	34
7. <u>Council Properties and Land</u>	35
8. <u>Areas in the city</u>	36
• Portsdown Hill	36
• Milton Common and Eastney Beach	38
• Farlington Marshes	39

• Tipner West	40
9. <u>How other organisations manage their land</u>	42
• Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust	42
• University of Portsmouth	43
• Lakeside North Harbour	44
• The Land Along the Railway Lines	46
10. <u>Conclusions</u>	46
11. <u>Recommendations</u>	49
12. <u>Budget and Policy Implications of the Recommendations</u>	55

Appendix 1 – A list of meetings held by the panel and details of the written evidence received.

Appendix 2 - A glossary of terms used.

Appendix 3 - A list of wildflower meadows in Portsmouth

Appendix 4 - A summary of responses to the questionnaires sent to the Allotment Associations

Appendix 5 - notes from visits on 18 January 2022 to Portsdown Hill, Farlington Marshes, Milton Common, Eastney Beach and Tipner.

Appendix 6 - views received from Councillors, members of the public and organisations.

1. Purpose.

The purpose of this report is to present the Cabinet with the recommendations of the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel following its review into biodiversity enhancement in urban Portsmouth.

2. Background.

On 13 October 2021 Full Council resolved to request that Scrutiny Management Panel and the Transport, Environment and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee:

- Reviews all relevant policies and practices on urban biodiversity that might harm or undermine local ecosystems, such as grass cutting across the city, re-wilding on allotment plots to improve habitats for insects, including bees. In general, approaches should aim to positively contribute to re-wilding and support other approaches to re "greening" Portsmouth.
- Seeks views from residents, interested community groups and ward councillors.
- Report back with recommendations to Cabinet for consideration.

This review was undertaken by the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel, which comprised:

Councillor Lee Mason (Chair)
Matthew Atkins
Stuart Brown
Charlotte Gerada
Jo Hooper (16 November to 30 November)
Hannah Brent (from 14 December)
Leo Madden

The Standing Deputies were Councillors Simon Boshier, Ryan Brent, Graham Heaney, Ian Holder, Lee Hunt, Benedict Swann and Rob Wood.

At its meeting on 16 November 2021, the Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel (henceforth referred to in this report as the panel) agreed the terms of reference for the review:

This study will review all relevant policies and practices on urban biodiversity that might harm or undermine local ecosystems, such as grass cutting across the city, re-wilding on allotment plots to improve habitats for insects, including bees. In general, approaches should aim to positively contribute to re-wilding and support other approaches to regreening Portsmouth.

The review will:

- Provide a strategic overview of the current level of biodiversity set out in the council's policies.
- Indicate areas where improvements are required.
- Make recommendations on future focus.

The panel met formally to discuss the review on seven occasions between 16 November 2021 and 22 March 2022.

A list of meetings held by the panel and details of the witnesses and the written evidence received can be found in *appendix one*. A glossary of terms used in this report is in *appendix two*. The minutes of the panel's meetings and the documentation reviewed by the panel are published on the council's website [Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel meetings](#).

All Councillors were invited to write in with their views for this review. Written views were also welcomed from residents and community organisations.

3. Policies

The panel considered the following council documents:

Partnership for South Hampshire Green Infrastructure Strategy 2017-34.¹

Solent Mitigation Strategy 2017²

Wilder 2030: Hampshire & Isle of Wight Trust Strategy³

Portsmouth Local Plan and the biodiversity background paper - Biodiversity & Portsmouth (Portsmouth Local Plan 2038)⁴

Parks & Open Spaces Strategy 2012-2022⁵

Greening Strategy ⁶

Greening Strategy Update⁷

Greening Strategy - Future Review & Delivery⁸

The Greening Strategy

Councillor Darren Sanders, Cabinet Member for Housing & Preventing Homelessness reported that he and the administration are very pleased that this review is being undertaken and considers it vital to achieving the council's goals. A significant amount has been achieved including planting, by late 2021:

- 33,300 plants, shrubs and hedges
- 671 trees
- 257,000 daffodil bulbs

The Head of Estate Services added that these figures are reflective of the Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services (HNBS) Green and Clean efforts only, not the council as a whole.

The Team Leader Landscape Architect explained that the council's Greening Strategy incorporates many different themes on what can be done in parks, streets and gardens etc. This was drafted two years ago and provides an overview for what is possible. However, the council is mostly reactive at the moment to requests for rewilding/ greening of areas and does not have a clear overarching vision with regard to improving biodiversity.

¹ [S Hants Green Infrastructure Strategy 2017-2034](#)

² [Solent-Recreation-Mitigation-Strategy-December-2017.pdf \(portsmouth.gov.uk\)](#)

³ [HIWWT Wilder Portsmouth brochure](#)

⁴ [New local plan evidence - Portsmouth City Council](#)

⁵ [Parks & Open Spaces strategy 12-22](#)

⁶ [Greening Portsmouth Strategy - Cabinet 10 March 2010.](#)

⁷ [Greening Strategy Update - Cabinet 5 October 2010.](#)

⁸ [Greening Strategy - Future Review and Delivery - Cabinet Member for Climate Change & the Green Recovery 9 February 2022](#)

The Head of Estate Services added that speaking for his department, there is a written strategy under the heading of 'environment and sustainability'. That being - each Green & Clean area will produce a sustainable planting plan annually, to include: trees, shrubs, wild meadows and be open to ideas such as creating natural looking areas. The intention is to design planting improvements within the boundaries of the allocated budget or to seek out other funding routes such as CIL and grants. This has been the case since around 2017.

The approach includes:

- Removal of some of the large evergreen shrubs takes place across the estates to clear out mature plants that are past their best in terms of appearance and have little value in terms of visual appearance and landscape character. In many cases these shrubs have been heavily pruned around their base over the years, boxed into peculiar shapes, and have foliage growing around the top only, which looks unbalanced and unattractive.
- These plants provide little value for wildlife habitat (birds and insects, including bees) since they are non-native species.
- Our overall aim is to grass over most of these areas to open up visibility and make a smarter appearance, but we are also creating some wildflower areas and areas of spring bulb planting.
- There is an intention to replace some areas of planting with new shrubs and hedges where space allows or to make an attractive feature either using native hedge species against boundaries and fences, or using low-medium height mixed evergreen and herbaceous shrubs and perennials with colour and seasonal interest that will require less annual cutting and pruning than the existing large evergreen shrubs.
- Shrubs and hardy perennials are chosen for size, seasonal interest, textural and foliage character, flowering and colour. Though most of these are not native, many provide value for bees and insects throughout the year.
- Many trees are planted as part of these works. Trees offer long term habitat for birds and insects as well as all the other benefits to climate and healthy living. We aim to use a mix of native and non-native species to provide a range of tree sizes and qualities for the urban environment, some with flowering and leaf interest.
- These works require phasing to first clear and tidy, then plant up afterwards
- We believe this will create housing estates that feel fresher, lighter and more appealing to the residents.

As shown in the Greening Strategy, there are many means to improve biodiversity for example, introducing/ encouraging hedgerows, scrubland and woodlands. Fruit orchards have proved popular. These may not attract the most wildlife but encourage people to connect to nature, which is just as valuable.

The Green & Healthy Streets Coordinator explained the development of the Greening Strategy. In 2019 the Cabinet received reports on the development of Green Infrastructure for the city. At the same time, discussions around the

response to the climate emergency were developing; and the city was considering the responses to challenges around air quality.

It was therefore agreed that it would be sensible to develop a single approach to increasing the greenery in the city. The Greening Portsmouth strategy was approved in March 2020.

The focus of the work from the strategy has been to double canopy coverage in the city, 360 new trees in parks and open spaces, and 120 new street trees (net of replacements) every year need to be added for the next 25 years. However, the city is in the midst of a climate emergency and therefore planting has been significant over the past two years.

Housing has reported that over the last three years (not including this Winter's planting) they have planted 34,300 mixed plants, shrubs and 683 trees and 437,140 daffodil bulbs and wildflower meadows created across seven locations on housing land. Six wildflower meadows have been created on highways land. Parks and Open Spaces have reported that over the past three years 22 urban meadows/ wildflower meadows have been created and 13 areas of rewilding.

Over Winter 2021/2022, there are plans to plant 208 standard trees and 8,000 whips to create native hedges through the funding received from Forgotten Places and Trees for Cities. This is in addition to other planned programmes across directorates.

Therefore, planting has rapidly increased over a short period of time.

The council's Greening Strategy will naturally enhance the biodiversity of the city, but it isn't specific to this need and does not reflect on plant specific planting to protect and enhance the animals, insects and ecosystems.

However, we do know that the more plants and trees invested into the city of any kind, the more homes are created for a variety of insects and animal species. Creating greater biodiversity and a healthier ecosystem.

- As well as preserving trees and greenery in the city, the council needs to proactively take other measures such as enhancing lower-level planting (hedges and shrubbery).
- Private gardens can also be beneficial through helping to ensure that neighbourhoods are more resilient to some of the impacts of climate change, but also through the benefits they bring to local ecology and overall biodiversity in the area.
- It is recognised that some of the UK's declining wildlife species are now found more often in gardens than anywhere else. With gardens playing host to a range of species, they can be the main avenue through which people witness the natural environment day to day.
- A significant proportion of the city is covered by private gardens due to the highly built-up nature of Portsmouth, which equates to 17.7% of the entire area of the city.
- Many gardens are now completely paved over with artificial materials, and devoid of natural surfaces or vegetation such as trees and shrubs

The work plan in relation to greening and biodiversity includes the following:

- The council needs to continue developing a programme of communication and activity to make sure that everyone in the city understands the approach to trees and greenery and give people help and advice to play their own part.
- The team will consider how the information around the city about trees and greenery can be improved so that people can understand why these things are important and republish the Tree Charter for the city.
- A strong mechanism for gathering feedback will be created about where people think a "greening intervention" could be helpful and make sure that the council responds to ideas on a regular basis. This will help keep the action plan fresh and up to date.
- Our work with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust and the local community is helping us to support the community with our push to increase greenery, biodiversity and development of ecosystems.
- A dedicated senior communications officer is now in place who will lead on climate change/ green / carbon topics.
- The council has engaged St James hospital into a programme with Earth watch to plant trees and improve the biodiversity on their site.
- Our work with schools is also helping to increase greenery and education around biodiversity and ecosystems. Manor infant school is the latest project with a community planting day on Saturday 22 January - funded provided through our links with Trees for Cities.
- Our most recent project is to support new Horizons school with funding opportunities to create a greening project on their site, with landscape advice from Helen Bergin - Landscape architect.
- Our focus for Spring will be to engage more schools in greening and biodiversity. We are hoping to work in partnership with Trees for Cities who deliver an excellent funded schools' programme.

To measure success, the team will seek to baseline the council's current tree stock, greenery and open space, and reassess on an appropriate basis to benchmark:

- Number of trees
- Canopy cover
- Air quality
- Engagement levels
- Open space quality assessment

To further develop our duty to demonstrate our commitment to conserving and restoring biodiversity we can:

- Develop policies and strategies set out to work towards the council's declared Climate and Ecological Emergency and put them into practice - strategies that can be used and adopted by all directorates.
- Identify habitats and species in the city that are of national, regional and local importance and outline a plan of action for their protection, management and enhancement (some of this work has been done - geese at Great Salterns).

A clear biodiversity strategy would empower departments and ensure a consistent approach is applied so that all parts of the city receive support.

The grant for the planting of 208 standard trees and 8,000 whips year includes five years of watering and maintenance. After that time, a tree needs less frequent watering and is established. There will naturally be increased maintenance costs year on year. Service managers may need to discuss the budget needs with their directors and finance leads.

It is not yet known if the greening the city budget will continue each year. The focus will be on work that schools and communities can do to green their schools, gardens and outside spaces. Additional funding opportunities will continue to be sought.

Street trees are significantly more expensive to plant due to the costs through the Private Finance Initiative contract and due to the built-up urban areas, many trees do not survive unless the right type of tree pits are installed. Therefore, the focus is on areas where a significant difference can be made.

The council is working to encourage big landowners to take responsibility for greening their land. One example of this, is the hospital which has undertaken a successful greening project with support from the council.

Schools are supported to find funding opportunities. 600 whips have been planted at Manor Infant School. The council helped the school secure funding from the City Partnership Programme and the delivery is volunteer-led, and the school will maintain them. The Education Superzone Programme at Arundel Court School is a place-based approach to coordinated public policy and community action, aiming to reduce childhood obesity in one specific area. We are focusing on improving green spaces to encourage outdoor activity and safe spaces for children and families.

Redevelopment of Arundel Park was due to a safer streets initiative This project is a joint project with the police and crime commissioner with the goal of reducing crime and encouraging safety in the park, which aligns with the need to improve green space and support the superzone work.

A project is currently being explored where QR codes would be put up in parks linking to information about the plants and ecosystems.

The £35,950 funding from Forgotten Places included training development days for volunteers and free literature.

She would like to see improved communication with residents to encourage them to take ownership of greening their gardens or balconies or communal space. Wider education around that would make a significant difference. A fun and interactive Instagram campaign is currently being discussed that would show what steps you can take to make your garden more attractive to wildlife. This campaign and website pages with this information are being drawn up with the new Communications Officer.

Funding was applied for a joint project called The Journey of a Bee is underway with the University of Portsmouth to create a green wall on for Central Library. As bees need green areas to be close together in order to find enough food, this wall would be the starting point for a series of green areas throughout the city in areas with low air quality. Unfortunately, the bid was unsuccessful, and the costs are huge, so other ideas will be explored. Rather having green walls, self-sustainable plants could be encouraged to climb naturally.

The Head of Estate Services added that there is potential for green roofs to be put on bin sheds and shed roofs on HNBS land.

Councillor Kimberly Barrett, Cabinet Member for Climate Change & the Green Recovery explained that her role is different from other portfolios as it is more strategic which means that she is involved with other Cabinet Members' areas to discuss what they can do in terms of dealing with climate change and the green recovery. She finds this very interesting and helpful.

Although there is no budget for this portfolio, pots of funding pots are available. Anyone with an idea for a green project can apply for money from the Greening Funding pot.

When she took on this role, economic development and land use had changed and led to a decline in biodiversity. However, this situation has already improved with all the planting and initiatives that have been carried out since including:

- The planting of greenery and trees along the travel corridor in Southampton Road
- The development of an interactive green assets map
- Wildflower meadow planting
- The trialling of the first bio-retention facility (a rain garden) which is very low maintenance and attractive.

An update report on the Greening Strategy which came to her February portfolio meeting explained the council's clear ambition to improve the urban environment. One key target is increasing tree canopy cover by 400/500 per year for the next 25 years. Last year 1,600 trees were planted and even more should be planted this year. The strategy will be aligned with the emerging provision set out in the Environment Act 2021 and other relevant strategies including the Health & Wellbeing Plan 2020-2023 and the Portsmouth Local Plan (consultation will be carried out regarding regulation 18).

It is important that greening take place across the city, particularly in areas of high deprivation with not much green spaces. Health and the improving the environment go hand in hand.

She is open to suggestions on greening projects from residents and groups and acknowledged that the council can always do a bit better around community engagement. She has been speaking to Portsmouth Friends of the Earth and Portsmouth Climate Action Board to get an outside view.

Locations for planters are being sought in many areas including Eastney, Charles Dickens, Nelson and Fratton.

Biodiversity loss could be as harmful to our planet as climate change. She supports the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust's suggestion that the council declare a Nature Emergency. The declaration of a Climate Emergency has had a very positive effect in terms of starting discussions across directorates and targets being set.

There is no one big thing that the council could do that would make a difference; there are many small actions that would add up to make a significant difference.

The declaration of the Climate Emergency has triggered many important actions including the carbon audit and the carbon budget.

There are one or two officers in each department that she tends to approach in the first instance. If she were to have a wish list, having more officer time across all the departments and more funding would be high on it. She would also like more rain gardens and parklets.

An interactive map showing all the green infrastructure in the city is being developed.

The council will continue to lobby government explaining why Portsmouth must be treated differently because it has a high population density coupled with a high rate of long-term health conditions, poverty and deprivation so close working with public health is very important.

The process for responding to requests to green areas from community groups needs to be improved so that it is consistent regardless of which department owns the land.

Work has been done to ensure that the Local Plan has a strong policy regarding greening and health.

Planning.

The Assistant Director Planning & Economic Growth explained that all planning decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan and it is therefore that Plan, which is primarily made up of the Portsmouth Plan 2012, which dictates what can be required from developers. Policy PCS13 of the Plan requires all new development to ensure 'that development retains and protects the biodiversity value of the development site and produces a net gain in biodiversity wherever possible. Any unavoidable negative impacts on biodiversity as a result of development should be appropriately mitigated.' Greater protection and scrutiny is provided for proposed development on sites of local, national and international importance for nature conservation. This local policy ensures planning decisions meet the duty placed on all public authorities to have regard in exercising their function to the purpose of conserving biodiversity by s40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

This general duty is in addition to the duty imposed to comply with the 'Habitats Regulations' in respect of specific designated sites, such as the Solent Waters Special Protection Area (SPA). This regulatory requirement is that no planning permission can be granted for a scheme that is likely to have a significant effect on the designated site, whether alone or in combination with other projects unless it is directly connected with or necessary to the management of that designated site.

While strategic scale schemes, or developments in particular proximity to the SPA around Portsmouth, can have a direct 'likely significant effect' when considered on their own the requirement to consider all projects in combination with other projects has meant that Habitat Regulation Assessment is needed in respect of a large proportion of new development in Portsmouth. This applies primarily to residential development that increases the number of people living in proximity to the SPA.

When such development is combined this results in both increased recreational disturbance of wildfowl, including species for which the SPA is designated, and increased wastewater flowing into the SPA resulting in eutrophication and associated adverse impacts on the SPA and relevant species.

These significant effects therefore require mitigation before development can be granted planning permission and the cost of that mitigation is a requirement placed on developers. Recreational disturbance is managed through a range of mitigation measures collectively called the 'Bird Aware' programme, and eutrophication resulting from increased nitrates and phosphates is managed through the 'Interim Nutrient Neutral Mitigation Strategy'. Both these strategies require a financial contribution to developers to fund mitigation schemes to resolve the adverse effects resulting from the proposed development.

Finally, it can be noted that following the introduction of the Environment Act at the end of 2021, the government intends to change how biodiversity conservation and enhancement will be achieved through the planning system. Further secondary legislation is required before this new approach is introduced so full details are not yet known, but the Act makes provision for a requirement for a net gain in biodiversity to be a condition of all planning permission.

The Act also makes provision, subject to further legislation, for the general duty referred to above to be amended not just to conserve, but also enhance biodiversity and increase the obligations on local authorities to publish reports on biodiversity in their area. The regulatory and statutory regime for biodiversity within the planning process is therefore going through a very significant review and is likely to be significantly more beneficial to biodiversity and onerous on both developers and councils within the next few years.

The representative from the Portsmouth Climate Action Board (PCAB) explained that the Green Factor Scoring System holds developers to account to ensure they follow through with what they promise in their plans. This is being considered by other Planning Authorities.

The Wilder Communities Project Officer, the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (the Wildlife Trust) has a dedicated team of experts who work with local authority planning officers. All new developments should have an Environmental Impact Assessment included in their applications. He does not know if they all do.

4. Allotments

The Allotments Manager explained that there are ten sites in the city and one outside, near Rowlands Castle used by Leigh Park area residents.

He feels that the council's policies regarding allotments are about right.

Regulations

The rules and guidance are set out on the allotments section of the council website. New allotment holders sign a written agreement and receive a full set of rules.

Rewilding of Sites.

Up to 25% of a plot may be uncultivated but it must be managed so as not to be a nuisance to the other plot holders. The 25% can also include space for a shed or seating area. The 25% uncultivated rule was determined by the council and is clearly explained in the rules.

Information about rewilding is available from organisations including the Royal Horticultural Society.

The Chair of the Cosham Allotment Association (AA) explained that three or five plots at this site have been left to go wild in part and the weeds are causing problems for the neighbouring plot holders.

Some allotment holders claim that they are rewilding part of their plot. It would be useful if there was a clear definition of the term to differentiate this from simple neglect. This definition could be used across all sites.

The Chair of the North Harbour AA explained that they do not believe allotments should be included in re-wilding as there are more than enough people on the waiting list for them to be used in this manner, and there is plenty of natural re-wilding taking place when plots are not re-let promptly causing other plot holders problems.

The Chair of Milton & Eastney AA felt that re-wilding/ re-greening does not and should not, be associated with allotments. By their nature, allotments are already green sites in that there are many different types of plants/ vegetables/ flowers grown on individual plots which, when considered collectively, contribute immensely to the provision of a bio-diverse environment. Encouraging plot-holders to re-wild (grow grasses, weeds, wildflowers) is the first step leading to a dirty plot. It is also very inconsiderate to adjacent plot-holders who have to deal with the issue of rapidly spreading weeds/ grasses etc from re-wilded / dirty plots.

They are not against biodiversity but believe that, in the case of allotment sites, biodiversity and rewilding/ re-greening are, and should be treated, as separate issues.

The Chair of Long Meadow AA felt that the problem with rewilding plots is that of a weed spreading problem caused by seeds spreading throughout the area. Plot holders have enough problems with this as is, often being accused of dirty plots because of fast growing weeds, without close by plots being turned into weed havens.

Inspections.

The Allotments Manager informed the panel that he carries out the inspections of all the allotment sites and the rules are uniformly applied. He has a background in horticulture and has his own plot and therefore can understand the challenges that plot holders face. He listens to people to understand what they are trying to achieve with their plots. Each case is determined on its own merits.

Inspections are carried out mainly during Summer, normally from mid-March. All the sites are visited. Any holders with an unworked plot, receive a Dirty Plot Notice (DPN). The Chair of the Cosham AA explained that he accompanies the Allotment Manager during the inspection of the Cosham site and sometimes, rather than issue a DPN, the inspector asks him to nudge the plot holder. The inspectors are very fair as far as he is aware and are quite lenient.

The Allotments Manager explained that the plot holders are given 28 days to correct issues or to explain any extenuating circumstances. A follow up inspection is carried out after this time has elapsed. If the issues have been corrected, the plot holder is told that if there are any further issues in the following 12 months, they will be evicted. If the issue has not been rectified, they will receive a notice to quit letter. Their right to appeal is explained and they are given seven days to clear their property. The plot is then cleared and relet. He has a colleague who deals with the administration and Doug's team clears repossessed and vacated plots which is a big drain on resources.

Over the past three years 579 DPNs were issued, 92 plots were dispossessed from these and a further 59 were dispossessed for failing to work the plot properly within the following 12 months so total repossessions over the last 3 years were 151.

The issuing of DPNs was suspended during the pandemic due to shielding and restrictions between July 2020 and June 2021.

Pesticide Use.

The Allotments Manager explained that the use of pesticides on allotments is left to the individual. Slug pellets have been withdrawn now. People are expected to act responsibly and use as per the manufacturer's instructions. Pesticides sold to the public are premixed now which prevents some over-use. Most people only use them as a last resort. There are many more younger allotment holders now; they tend to be more ecologically responsible.

The Chair of the Cosham AA explained that most plots are gardened organically at this site. It is very environmentally friendly and has five active beehives.

He uses slug pellets on his plot as he has found the natural methods of discouraging slugs and snails to be ineffective. The strict rules regarding organic gardening are off-putting.

The Portsmouth Climate Action Board (PCAB) noted that gardeners are advised to create ponds for frogs and toads which will eat slugs. It was suggested that the council:

- Provide information to allotment holders (as part of their introduction pack) of the consequences for wildlife of using pesticides.
- Suggest alternative nature-based pest and disease control measures, including increasing habitat for frogs and toads (ponds).
- OR even better, introduce a wildlife-friendly policy on the allotments where only Soil Association approved herbicides/ pesticides are allowed.

Contaminants

The Allotment Manager informed the panel that tyres are sometimes used as planters and if they are left on vacated plots, the disposal is very expensive for the council. They should not be used for growing vegetables as there is a high risk that the tyre could break down and leach contaminants into the soil.

Demand

The three Milton sites	4.5 years
Hilsea Lane, Stamshaw	18 months- 2 years
Stamshaw & Tipner	2 years
Long Meadow	2 - 2.5 years
Moneyfields	2 - 2.5 years
Salisbury Road	2.5 years
North Harbour	18 months
Knowsley Road (7 plots)	24 people are on the waiting list.

Applicants indicate which site they would like; any/ all/ some or indicate their preferred plot. If they turn down an offer, they will be deferred on the list for 12 months, not just dropped to the bottom.

Demand for allotments has grown, particularly during the pandemic.

There is very limited scope for the creation on new sites. If one was identified, the water supply and facilities would need to be installed, the plots laid out and prepared. The costs would be very high. Much land has been contaminated in the past and so would not be suitable.

A 250m² plot will be divided into three when it is given back to the council. Smaller, more manageable plots are very popular with younger plot holders. The number of plots has increased from 1,600 (approximately 2010) to 1,800. Post meeting actual number is 1884 in Portsmouth plus 64 at Rowlands Castle.

The Chair of the Cosham AA explained that plots were originally approximately 10m x 20m and are now 10m x 12.5m. When they are given up, the council often splits them so that more people can have allotments. They cost approximately £65 per year.

Biodiversity

The Allotments Manager said that there is a lot of biodiversity on the allotments.

The Chair of the Cosham AA explained that the allotment holders at the Cosham site are receptive to rewilding and improving biodiversity but in his opinion, it is already very diverse.

The Chair of the North Harbour AA explained that members support biodiversity in principle and practice with many plots being totally organic and peat free. They have a healthy population of wildlife with a considerable number of birds and resident beehives on the site which belong to the Portsmouth Bee-Keepers Association. There is an abundance of other insect life on the plots and in some cases far too many blackflies and aphids.

They welcome the use of wildflower beds and landscaping in large green spaces like Port Solent Green where a good number could be introduced without detriment to the overall utility of the space and most beneficially on the "Motorway Hills" to the west of the M275. Consideration to regular grass cutting so that dog walkers can effectively clean up behind their dogs.

The Chair of Milton & Eastney AA explained that keen / experienced plot-holders are fully aware of the benefits associated with biodiverse environments and are quick to embrace new ideas from wherever they originate - be that TV, internet, books or magazine articles

The Chair of Long Meadow AA explained that many members already plant flowers on their plot to encourage bees, along with vegetables which require pollinating in order to produce i.e., beans, pumpkins, marrows and peas.

Some members encourage foxes to stay on site because of their catching and eating rats on site.

The Chair of Horsea Lane AA explained that quite a few allotments have ponds for frigs, newts, toads, dragonfly, damselfly. You can sit for hours and watch them dart about. We will be planting hawthorn on our perimeter to replace what the environment agency had cut down (1/4 mile of blackthorn, blackberry, hawthorn and elderberry trees and hedging).

A short questionnaire was sent to the city's allotment association Chairs to learn about members' views on biodiversity. Eastney & Milton, Horsea Lane and Long Meadow AAs responded (their responses are attached as appendix four). Their views can be summarised thus:

Some or most of their members took various measures on their plots to improve the soil, attract wildlife or improve biodiversity. In the communal area at Long Meadow, fences were used as frames for climbing plants.

In the communal areas of both sites, hedges were grown around the perimeter, the grass is only cut when it is more than 5cm long and left for more than two weeks in the summer. There is also a log pile in both sites' communal areas. There were no maintained wild areas nor any nesting boxes/ hedgehog houses.

Neither association was in favour of areas of rewilding on individual plots nor did they have any projects in mind to improve biodiversity of the site.

Both associations felt that there is a problem with dirty plots but would like more information about the role they can play in increasing biodiversity on their allotments and would like help/ advice or training on identifying biodiversity opportunities.

The Chair of the Cosham AA also explained that he would like to see food grown in communal spaces. This would make the city less reliant on imported food and be very good for the environment. A study carried out by Sheffield University concluded that if food was grown on community space, it would provide for 70% of the city's food requirements. He is a member of Incredible Edible online group where people grow fruit and vegetables in their own gardens and support each other.

He would like the council to plant wildflowers on roundabouts and verges.

5. Council Practices

Greening Initiatives

Councillor Cal Corkery explained that across the council estates in Charles Dickens ward there are lots of great examples of greening initiatives which promote biodiversity and tackle the climate and nature crises. Often these projects are led and maintained by the residents themselves resulting in a more locally rooted initiative with strong community buy in. For example, the Cornwallis Crescent community orchard and the Australia Close community garden. These kinds of projects should be supported and expanded where possible.

It is not always clear what residents are allowed to do and different advice seems to be given in different areas. He believes it would be useful to have clear and consistent guidance available to council tenants and leaseholders about exactly what they can do on their balconies and in other shared areas.

The Landscape Architect Team Leader noted that there are numerous initiatives being carried out and that bioersivity is at the forefront of many people's minds.

The landscaping team works very well with the Green & Clean Team within the Housing Department and the Parks Team in many areas. The teams are

very energetic and positive to requests from local people for greening projects.

Site Assessments.

Prior to development or greening of any area, he recommended that an assessment be carried out to consider:

- The needs of the location.
- The needs of the people and how they behave there.
- The possible negative impacts of the proposed measures on the existing ecology.
- The unique conditions and needs of the area and any mitigation measures that would be required.
- The size, aspect, wind conditions, sun exposure.
- The objective of the proposal.

Expectations must be managed from the start to avoid disappointment. For example, if more biodiversity were to be introduced on Southsea Common, it could change the character of the Common, and sometimes naturalised areas look quite messy, so this may not be desirable.

Native hedges, scrubland, woodland and wildflowers are not appropriate for all sites. They often need space to mature or fill out.

Councillor Stagg, Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation explained that planting the right plants, shrubs and trees for the right soil is essential so that they will thrive. Work needs to be done with the Planning Department to ensure the Local Plan clearly stipulates this.

Work With Schools

The Deputy Director of Children, Families & Education reported that where schools have engaged, it has been very well received. There is a lot of opportunity here and it fits in well with the curriculum and the work schools are doing to make children aware of their environment and climate change.

He recognised that schools are currently under a lot of pressure due to the impact of the pandemic and the number of children (and staff) who are absent, both in primary and secondary. This is the main barrier to engagement at the moment but hopefully this will improve as the peak of the latest wave of infections passes.

Some of the primary schools have very little space and no green space so this will limit their engagement. It does vary across the city.

The main point of contact will be the Headteacher, particularly in primary schools. There will not be a consistent approach due to the diverse mix of schools and Multi Academy Trusts that we have.

Communications have been good and the Education Service is more than happy to promote the work and support the engagement of schools through our weekly communications to schools (PEP bulletin and Friday message to Heads) and our monthly briefings with Headteachers.

The Landscape Architect Team Leader explained that many schools are already looking at greening their grounds and the council is working with the Tree Council to supply trees.

The Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation noted that in Iceland, all pupils take part in the weeding of the verges near their schools. Getting young children between 5 and 7 involved in planting is essential to spark a lifelong passion.

The Wildlife Trust has a good relationship with maintained schools via the council. It has encountered some hurdles when trying to engage with academies. The Wilder Portsmouth Programme will target schools this year. He is currently working with 8 or 9 schools. Next year the trust hopes to hold an event where a teacher and 4 pupils from every school will come together to explain what they want to achieve at their schools in terms of increasing biodiversity and greening measures. These aspirations will feed into an action plan for the city.

Rewilding

The Landscape Architect Team Leader suggested that the panel may wish to consider teasing out the difference between an area maintained to encourage biodiversity and areas that become neglected in this review. They can become areas where rubbish is dumped, or where it feels very overgrown and even unsafe in some instances.

Rewilded sites need regular monitoring and maintenance to make sure they are not becoming neglected or unsafe.

Grass Cutting.

The Grounds Maintenance Manager explained that 280 hectares of council land is mown. There are different regimes depending on the location and type of grass. The frequency has decreased over the years; it was average of 16 per year and is now 9-12.

The grass in parks and cemeteries are mown fortnightly. Grass in sports fields is cut as and when in Winter and fortnightly during the rest of the year.

Reducing the frequency of mowing, saves money and carbon emissions and also increases biodiversity.

The Landscape Architect Team Leader noted that sometimes there are simple steps to improving biodiversity e.g., mowing grass less often or leaving the verges uncut.

Some areas can thrive from human interaction, for example Eastney beach where the shingle vegetation is trampled or battered by people walking on/through.

The PCAB suggested that larger trials be conducted in a trial area reducing the grass mowing in parks and cemeteries. Close and frequent mowing of grass areas means they can become parched in warm / dry weather leading to bare soil. We see this on Southsea Common every summer, when it turns

yellow. Bare soil leads to the emission of carbon. Allowing grass to grow longer before cutting (every 3 or 4 weeks?) would lessen the risk of this happening. Andy Ames, the Trust offered to help by consulting Wilder Portsmouth users for the wildflower trial.

Sea Defences.

The Landscape Architect Team Leader explained that before sea defence work started at Hilsea Lines the importance of the area was investigated and how any impact on the ecosystem could be mitigated.

To meet the council's objectives regarding rewilding and improving biodiversity, more could be done to encourage departments and Colas to work together, in order to provide a more cohesive approach to biodiversity and greening.

The Coastal, Highways & Drainage Team Manager and the Head of Coastal Partnership submitted a handout that shows the enhancements in the flood defence schemes that support the environment and benefit the local community and explained that the Environment Agency is funding the defence work and it is incumbent upon the council to embed biodiversity improvement work in the business plans when submitting funding applications. It is not an add on. There are many aspects to this including tree replacement on a 4:1 basis, saltmarsh replanting, creating more than 60 tidepools at Southsea and North Portsea and the creation of a bird island in Langstone Harbour.

Although Southsea is not environmentally protected, it is still incumbent on us to minimise the impact of the works. There is a zero to waste target and 10,000s of lorry movements are saved.

There is tension regarding the need to control public access, especially when trying to combine increased public amenity and environmental improvements. They are working with PR to ensure they get it right when undertaking this work.

Opportunities to create wildlife corridors across the Solent are considered.

They are confident in being able to deliver the best scheme in not only Portsmouth but Gosport, Fareham and soon Chichester. This shows you can deliver an environmentally sound project of any size.

Textured Ecoformliner seawalls create habitat on the face of the seawall and is funded by the Environment Agency and the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee.

Bee posts are being integrated into the landscape and experts are consulted to ensure that the appropriate maintenance regime is in place.

It is important to note that enhancement of the public realm is a cost met by the Capital Budget, but most ongoing maintenance is revenue cost.

Environmental improvements elsewhere have been carried out including putting in drainage along the football pitches.

The feedback from residents has been very positive with 30,000 people on social media saying the works were fantastic.

The tidepools near Southsea Castle will be at different levels to create different habitats with different species. Ready-colonised lumps of rocks will be taken from locations and placed into the new rock armour to encourage rapid colonisation. Green hay has been trialled and proven successful.

The new bird island will be built subject to securing funding using broken out concrete from the flood defence work which is then covered with shingle and silt. The funding bid to the Local Enterprise Partnership has not been successful, and the production of an overarching council policy would assist with funding applications. The policy would cover how works would attract biodiversity.

This flood defence scheme is at the forefront of environmental protection in the region at strategic, tactical and operational levels.

Approximately 1,200 historic coastal landfill sites on the English coastline are potentially at risk from coastal erosion over the next 50 years but at this time no national funding is allocated to reduce or manage this increasing risk with climate change.

The scheme carried out at Salterns Quay has enabled a failing asset to be removed, create a new habitat in the Harbour within the previous footprint and reduce the cost of the project to reduce flood risk at Milton Common and protect the PCC historic coastal landfill by reusing chalk fill material from the redundant quay.

Political commitment to collaborate more in partnership at strategic level is required to ensure we deliver outcomes greater than the sum its parts. There are several organisations working on various objectives within our harbours where it is proposed we should be “stacking benefits” and “blending funding”.

Farlington Marshes flood defences need refurbishing. The plans are in the early stages of scoping a preferred option. It is hoped that the business case will be presented at the Environment Agency approvals panel in December and the works will start in 2024. The value of the works is estimated to be approximately £19m.

Wildflower Meadows

Wildflowers thrive in poor soil but need regular maintenance including cutting back at least once a year and the removal of other plants such as pernicious weeds (brambles, thistles). They may also need to be overseeded after the first year if the take-up is poor, and they become overly dominated by the more competitive species in the mix.

The landscape architect team training includes identifying biodiversity opportunities and objectives in the planning stages of a project. This is brought up by the client or the architects at a very early stage of projects.

The Operations Manager, Colas explained that they are responsible for grass cutting on verges and care is taken to ensure that it does not block sight lines for traffic. and that the programme of wildflowers is expanding every year. Wildflower areas may cost more than grass to maintain because of the need to oversee them every year and inspect them regularly. The cost can also depend on the area.

He suggested that it would be a great idea to bring all parties together about greening, biodiversity and wildflowers. The activity is currently disjointed.

The Grounds Maintenance Manager explained that in the last 4-5 years, 24 meadow areas have been created with colourful wildflower mixes covering 2,500m². A list of the council's 13 urban meadow areas are in appendix three.

There are three types of wildflower meadow areas: the first type is annual cultivated urban meadows with the colourful displays the other two types are annual meadows with cultivated cycle associated with farming (annual sow, cut down harrow self-seed) and then perennial wildflowers.

There is no formal monitoring of the areas. There have been no complaints therefore other areas will be considered.

The creation of wildflower meadows is not part of a council strategy. It is simply ad hoc. There are no specific policies regarding rewilding or urban meadows.

They are aiming to have an even distribution of urban meadows across the city.

The Cabinet Member for Housing & Preventing Homelessness stated that 4,220 m² wildflower meadows have been created in Lake Road, Princeton Road, Kingston Road and other areas.

PFOE noted that weeds, or wild plants, are important for biodiversity because they have evolved to support a broad range of native species. 75% of British insects can only feed on certain wild plants and if these not available the insects disappear.

The Portsmouth Tree Wardens (PTW) and Charles Dickens Community Orchards (CDCO) explained that perennial wildflowers suitable to the types of soil in our urban areas could be introduced. This would reduce mowing, energy costs and labour needed and create a more pleasant environment for local people.

Streets

The Landscape Architect Team Leader explained that streets in Portsmouth are underdeveloped in terms of biodiversity. There is one town in Germany, Freiburg, where many of the streets have trees in parking pays. It makes a huge green impact but is part of a much wider greening ethos. Most of the streets are wider than in Portsmouth, but not all of them.

Grass Areas.

Grass areas used for parking are not always the most effective because it is difficult for plants to grow through if they are heavily used or compacted. However, they can have a good effect on sustainable drainage because rainwater can penetrate its permeable surface and not run straight off into the drains.

Portsmouth Friends of the Earth (PFOE) stated that it would be hard to give a view on whether the plastic matting put on grass before areas are used for car parking are harmful to the soil. The national Wildlife Trust recommends the use of gravel, and the Royal Horticultural Society recommends that gaps are left and that cars are moved regularly. Generally, people want to do what is good for wildlife so ensuring information is easily available is crucial.

The Landscape Architect Team Leader explained that some plants (shrubs and perennials) are not native but are good pollinators so can still have value to bees and insects.

On some sites the opportunities may be rather restricted, but it is about exploring the opportunities for biodiversity. For example, at King George V playing fields proposals include artificial grass pitches and a new pavilion. There are many mature trees around the edge and some bats roost in the building but currently the biodiversity is rather low. This can be improved by some wildflower planting on soil mounds that use the excavated soil. The site is mainly used as playing fields so the uses/ needs must be balanced out.

The PCAB suggested that climbing plants for the perimeter fences and the greening of the buildings' roofs could be considered there

The council cares very well for its green, open spaces. There is room for improvement, but the Parks Team and Green & Clean do a good job in trying new methods to improve biodiversity. Even Colas have been trialling wildflower areas. But it would be good to capture this all together and be working better towards a collective vision rather than working in silos.

Clear parameters are required to ensure that rewilded areas and neglected areas can be distinguished. Thorough assessments at the planning stage are essential to prevent unintentional consequences on the local ecosystem.

It is important that the council and Colas are clear regarding wilding projects and also the spraying of weedkiller which is sprayed on pavements and the walls of forecourts. The review must be strategic in its approach. Rewilding is not always the best option to improve biodiversity. It may be useful to identify the common themes where the council can work in a consistent way city-wide. The proposal for a parking space to be converted into a parklet in Southsea has been supported by local businesses. Although planting trees in streets is a great long-term objective, streets tend to be narrow and people want to be able to park near home.

Biodiversity

The Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation explained that there is a clear distinction between biodiversity and greening. Both are important but

greening an area does not automatically lead to increased biodiversity. To increase biodiversity, the right conditions need to be created including ensuring that the soil is appropriate for the chosen plants.

She does not think the council does enough to create ecosystems.

The PCAB's view on biodiversity is that it is fundamental to us slowing down and being able to live with climate change. Biodiverse ecosystems are currently shielding us from many of the impacts of climate change in the future. In cities, this includes protecting us from flash flooding, the urban heat island and, of course, promoting our mental and physical health, making us more resilient. Ensuring cities are biodiverse is a win-win for any city.

The Wildlife Trust is asking all that Local Authorities including Portsmouth City Council declare a Nature Emergency Motion:

The council resolves to:

1. Declare that we are experiencing a nature emergency, recognising that:
 - a. Nature is in long term decline and urgent action must be taken to reverse this.
 - b. A thriving natural environment underpins a healthy, prosperous society.
 - c. The nature crisis and the climate emergency are intrinsically linked and that the impacts of the climate crisis drive nature's decline, while restoring nature can help to tackle the climate crisis.
2. Commit to embedding nature's recovery at the heart of all strategic plans, policy areas and decision-making processes.
3. Commit to tackling the climate and nature emergencies together and investing in nature-based solutions to climate change.
4. Develop and agree on an evidence-based strategy and action plan for nature's recovery and report on the progress made. This could be part of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
5. Set clear strategic goals for nature's recovery by 2030, for example, covering the following areas:
 - a. Committing to protect 30% of land for nature by 2030, in line with national and international commitments to biodiversity.
 - b. Increasing space for wildlife and long-term maintenance and expansion of a Nature Recovery Network.
 - c. Reducing pressure on wildlife.
 - d. Improving doorstep access to nature, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.
 - e. Supporting communities and businesses to make better decisions and take action to support nature's recovery.
6. Work with local communities and organisations to achieve the strategic goals, particularly engaging with disadvantaged and underrepresented sections of society.

Overall swift numbers have decreased but in some areas of the city they are doing well. We need to find out what they need and how we can provide that in the areas where their numbers are low. Bats are affected by light pollution and tend to be located in the East of the city. The council could consider using new streetlights that channel the light differently and makes it softer and so more bat friendly.

Wildlife areas could be tidy and have signs up explaining how important the patch is to wildlife, as clear messaging is vital to show positive changes and bring people on board.

He suggested that the Traffic & Transportation Liaison Group membership could be extended to various local green groups.

Councillor Hannah Brent explained that the immense greenery from our parks and tree lined roads provide a home to a range of insects which in turn feed a range of birds that will delight the ornithologist. The coastal landscape provides yet more sea life that need the range of conditions to survive and thrive, and in turn maintains a food chain leading up to the seals that we see sunbathing on the mud flats of Langstone Harbour.

The PTW and CDCO stated that rooftop gardens in the city and growing walls will all encourage biodiversity and reduce pollution by removing particulates. There could be an encouragement of beehives on roofs that would help pay for the maintenance costs of local trees. Help the local economy and provide a healthier source of food. More importantly protect the pollinators. Different types of habitats could be explored by introducing to some areas boggy areas or ponds creating a different habitat.

Road Verges.

The Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation requested that a continuous wildflower verge be created from the roundabout near Farlington Marshes to Milton. This could be created when the works to improve the shared pedestrian and cyclists' path has been completed. As part of this work to make the path safer, a hedge will be removed and in mitigation, a green fence will be erected in its place and more trees planted on the other side of the road.

Bus Shelters.

As old bus shelters are taken down, they will be replaced with new ones with green rooves as part of a rolling programme. The first ones will be installed in London Road. This is part of a rolling programme that will see bus shelters with green roofs installed all over the city.

The PCAB representative explained that green bus shelter roofs is her area of expertise and offered to help.

Planters

The Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation noted that in low traffic neighbourhoods, planters are used rather than bollards. The intention is to install planters in as many roads as possible.

Trees

The Sikh community recently planted hundreds of trees on the roundabout near Farlington Marshes.

She would like to see more trees along roads, but the maintenance cost is up to £5,000 per tree. Underground services cables and any possible nuisance from fallen leaves must also be considered.

It is important that the type of trees and their possible maximum height is considered before planting trees in residential roads to ensure that they do not block daylight.

A documentary called The Air We Breathe conducted an experiment where a busy road in Birmingham was closed for 24 hours and trees were brought in planters all along the road. Carbon dioxide levels reduced by approximately 58% and the trees had absorbed a significant quantity of particulates.

Weeds between paving stones along paths can be a trip hazard. The council is using less pesticides.

Rewilding generally is a great thing. In allotments, careful management is essential to prevent problems for neighbouring plots.

A new ecosystem could possibly be created in the road verge in the middle of the M27 near the port. It would require very little maintenance.

The large shadow that the new university building that will be built next to Victoria Park is a concern. Perhaps a woodland ecosystem could be created there that would thrive in the shade.

In Sydney, Australia there was a multistorey carpark with many plants hanging off the edges with a self-watering system. It was very attractive and absorbed lots of particulates.

The Operations Manager at Colas explained that they are responsible for all the infrastructure on the highway including trees. The trees are inspected every four years in accordance with the PFI contract to identify any issues including disease or overgrowing. Sometimes fallen fruit can cause issues for vehicles or pedestrians. Removal is always a last resort and replacements are planted between November and March. More care is taken to ensure that suitable tree species are planted in residential areas now.

Colas works closely with the council to ensure that clear information is sent to residents regarding trees and the way that they are managed. Many people think they have the right to light. Sometimes satellite television aerials are put up but have poor reception because of nearby trees. He offered to help support the council with any communication to the public. He is open to suggestions from the public which will be considered with the council's PFI team.

The PCAB noted that most cities are warmer than rural areas by 2-10 degrees. There can be a high mortality rate in summer especially during heat waves. Green spaces can help by releasing water which has a significant cooling impact which extends outside their boundaries.

Trees also provide shade and reflect light but need to be well-watered. Drought-resistant trees are being considered elsewhere but are not so good for biodiversity as they are not native. A mixture of species would be best.

PFOE suggested that the council should stop putting stop putting tarmac over street tree pits right up to the tree stump, remove tarmac from tree pits and stop killing weeds in tree pits unless an obvious trip hazard.

The PTW and CDCO explained that it would be good to stop tarmacking tree pits. During the last few years, we obtained permission to plant trees in tree pits and planted them. Shortly afterwards someone removed them and retarmacked. There needs to be greater communication between teams that carryout maintenance. The orchards have suffered some losses due to information not being passed from one team to another. When it should be recorded as part of the history of the area and subsequently passed on to the new team taking over. Whether it be a new contractor or otherwise.

Strimming around tree trunks should be carefully avoided, more damage is done by labourers doing this than anything else and this can set back trees many years. Greater care needs to be taken over strimming. The Head of Estate Services explained that this can be solved by the use of strimmer guards, installed on all the trees in HNBS. Strimming means no pesticide is used around the trees to kill grass and guards cost pennies each.

The PTW and CDCO explained that more native and heritage trees need to be planted in Portsmouth. A tree nursery to grow our own native trees in Portsmouth is needed. Propagating from our rare varieties.

We need to increase the tree canopy in Portsmouth we can do this by celebrating the Queen's platinum anniversary. More wildflowers on verges to encourage butterflies and birds. Great care should be taken in coming years to provide mulch for every tree planted so they can retain moisture and cope with the drier weather we are due because of climate change. A large pot of money needs to be put aside for future maintenance of all trees in Portsmouth. We need more tree canopy cover for future generations to survive in the coming years.

The National Tree Charter has become the Charter for Trees after 800 years. The PTW and CDCO have signed up to this agreement. It would be good if the council did this as well. The Local Portsmouth Tree Charter would need to include the Tree Wardens more in what is done and how communities of interest are kept informed of things like tree removals and tree preservation orders for our very rare trees.

Gardening competitions could be reintroduced into Housing services and across the city. Which helps people to take pride in where they live, improve the environment and keep people interested in wildlife.

Ownership of small micro plots by community groups to grow things in areas that are grassed currently would be a great idea. Removing some of the tarmac in urban areas will break up the landscape and allow the rain to soak away more readily, reducing flooding risk and urban runoff. Trees soak up water and pollution.

Biodiverse areas may look unmanaged because they are not trimmed and cut back as much as those neatly kept gardens some folks are used to. Perhaps some local guidance with the aid of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Trust and friends of the Earth could be made available to help with this.

The city should make more of valuing the trees and their contributions to the environment. Giving a listing and protection for the very rare varieties like the Black poplar we have in our city (there are only 7,000 in the country). The city could introduce trees which have add biodiversity and supply food for wildlife to the city. Such as Oak trees which support a large variety of wildlife. Also by having a variety fruiting trees or hedges. We also now have some very rare fruit trees incorporated in our orchard planting such as the Bardsey apple.

Larger trees should be valued more and have more protection such as (Tree protection orders) as they work harder for the environment. There could be designated community trees, orchards and fruiting hedges under these protection orders.

More could be made of the horticultural opportunities for careers in the city. Our very own National Tree Council Director of Science and Research, advisor to the Department for the Environment & Rural Affairs lives locally. More could be specifically offered through horticultural and national training with a career path into different areas.

The new Environment Bill November 2021 comes into effect shortly, so this will mean more people having to train in these areas so that Portsmouth city council will meet its legal obligations.

Above all we need to offer opportunities and incentives for residents in both private and rented accommodation to grow more trees at home. Perhaps free trees, resources and training working with the support of schools to help inform young people of the benefits to them in the future. Problems faced by residents and community groups are funding for trees, compost, mulch and moving large items from a delivery area to the site.

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The Arboriculture Officer explained that there are 27,000 trees on the system in many areas and come under different departments including cemeteries,

parks, asset management, property, social services, traffic & transportation and education (for schools with a Service Level Agreement with the council).

Most of the trees are inspected every four years; those in high-risk areas e.g., education sites are inspected every year. Any defects that are identified are actioned swiftly.

There has been a marked increase in people who are interested in tree planting.

The council's target is to plant 350 trees per year over 20 years. In the last two years, including this year, 4,000 trees have been planted. 1,600 of these were planted last year with help from Colas, the housing service and CDCO.

There is sufficient funding available for tree planting from the Trees for the City and the Tree Council. This money covers two years of watering which our contractors carry out. The Parks Team was awarded a considerable amount from the Tree Council which enabled the council to plant 400 whips on Great Salterns Field. He has engaged with the PTWs. The council is creating a corridor for nature from Baffins, Great Salterns and along the Eastern Road verges to Farlington. The Head of Estates Services explained that the Clean & Green have received approximately £70,000 for capital and revenue costs for trees planted on HNBS land.

The Arboriculture Officer explained that tree maintenance may be an issue in the future if budgets remain at the same level. He is not able to say how much will be needed in 10-30 years' time.

His team manages the trees on the East of the highway on Eastern Road. The management of the trees along the sea defences, near the Eastern Road does not come under his remit so he could not say why that had been flailed.

Trees are only removed if there is a risk to the public or is causing structural damage.

Trees in parks are inspected every two to three years for issues such as disease. There are not many ash trees in the city and very few cases of Ash Dieback disease. The elms planted are resistant to Dutch elm disease.

For the Queens Canopy Project, people will be asked to plant a tree in their gardens if they can. The council has identified some public areas in case they are required for tree planting.

The council is trying to plant a mixture of tree species that can cope with different conditions.

There is a big Black Poplar at the front of Portsmouth Cathedral but not many have been planted over the years because they require a lot of space. The council is looking at restoring the dense line of poplars in Great Salterns field.

The council is working on a database of tree coverage. I-tree software is very good as it shows the changes over time. The PTWs use Treezilla to plot the trees they plant.

Education is key to empower people to plant the right trees in the right locations.

The council uses a local nursery to source its trees as it does not have the space nor manpower to grow its own trees.

Fruit Trees

At the request of the PTW, the Tree Council wrote to the panel to say that Portsmouth is one of the most densely populated urban areas in the UK. It has a relatively low number of trees per resident, something that the PTW have been trying to improve over the last 20 years. The project that has been developed by the PTW and the CDCO, is to my knowledge one of the most exciting community orchard projects in the UK, because of its aspiration to bring suitable fruit trees to residents throughout the city, which builds on the rich heritage of the city and its connections through Dickens to fruit trees.

The scale of the communities' efforts is amazing with 60 orchards being designated and planted and over 899 fruit trees having been planted throughout the city over the last five years.

Speaking as part of the National Orchard Group, we know orchards are priority habitats under the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan. The reason they are special is that fruit trees are particularly good habitats for wildlife because they are "early senescent". This means they get 'old' relatively quickly and develop veteran features such as hollow trunks, rot holes, dead wood and sap runs. These features are important for over 400 species of saproxylic invertebrates that live on decaying wood. These include Stag Beetle, Violet Oil-Beetle, and the beautiful and very rare Noble Chafer beetle. It's not all about the decay either though, as fruit tree blossom is an important source of nectar for pollinating insects including bees, hoverflies and butterflies. Orchards can have ponds and hedgerows which provide habitat for amphibians such as great crested newts, birds and mammals, such as hedgehogs and voles. And because orchard trees are more widely spaced than trees in a dense woodland, they let in more sunlight which makes them particularly good for flying insects who need the warmth, such as bees and butterflies.

The orchards being created in Portsmouth also allows for community engagement with a huge range of people and communities, providing not only trees for biodiversity and climate change (both of which are vital), but also developing a source of free and community-based fruit available to anyone in the city. The natural bounty that is being created, has already been used to provide free food and fruit to foodbanks like Landport Larder, North End Pantry and community cafés.

The PTW and the CDCO stated that its groups and volunteers have been planting orchards and other trees in many different areas around the city. Planting fruit trees provides humans and animals alike with food and foraging opportunities, harvesting events and bringing the community together to learn

about and celebrate nature. As we have seen in the CDCO and Ark Dickens fruiting hedge. They give free fruit for local people will help those with a diminishing amount of finances to lead a healthier lifestyle. Where they can pick what they need from local trees. Communities will then invest themselves in looking after their local trees. When they can see what they will get out of it. Excess produce has been given out to the food banks and larders to help those most in need and provides an amazing source of support, which has been very appreciated.

Hedges.

The Wildlife Trust noted that hedge removal was highlighted as having a significant impact on the city's wildlife. Hedges absorb lots of carbon as well as been home to a wide variety of wildlife. Hedges and trees are both important. Many hedges were removed because they were considered untidy, or it was more convenient to build a wall instead. If we create the right environments, the wildlife will return

The PTW and CDCO stated that fruiting hedges should be allowed to grow 50cm per year until about 5' wide and allow the fruits to be harvested by animals and people. Not cut back harshly each year by the flail machine. There is a fruiting hedge in Hilsea planted by the Tree Wardens which has been growing for 12 years. It is not treated as a fruiting hedge by Colas, it is harshly cut back and is never allowed to fruit. It is just treated as a normal hedge.

Parklets

The Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation explained that parklets can bring lots of benefits to an area including increasing biodiversity and providing people with a green space to relax in. However, they can be very expensive.

Green Fences.

Green fences have wires to support the climbing plants and the one that will be erected on Eastern Road will help reduce the traffic noise for the residents at the caravan site. It will also give oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide and particulates.

Gardens and soil.

PFOE stated that according to the council's Assessment of Tree Cover, 31% of Portsmouth's trees are in private gardens. In some wards the percentage is even higher: Central Southsea 74%; Eastney & Craneswater 55%; St Jude's 49% and Drayton & Farlington 48%.

The council's policies and strategies need to acknowledge the important contribution of private gardens and streets for biodiversity in our city and celebrate the plants, insects and birds to be found in these spaces. Good practice information needs to be made readily available to Portsmouth residents and businesses because the choices made by individuals in their private space have an impact on our city's ecology

The importance of soils to biodiversity has been overlooked for far too long. Soil is home to 25% all living species on earth and improves drainage, acts as a carbon sink, and helps cool our city. PFOE suggests that very small

changes in forecourts and backyards, such as lifting one 60 cm x 60 cm paving slab to reveal the soil beneath and allowing plants to grow, will have a beneficial effect on biodiversity levels in Portsmouth. Removing the tarmac from around street tree-pits would also be beneficial. Many small changes add up.

PFOE suggested that a public communications strategy be developed to raise awareness about 'Natural Portsmouth.' Local residents and businesses need to understand the importance of our private garden forecourts and backyards for nature and the whole urban ecosystem in which we live. Where residents and businesses are considering whether to make changes to their forecourt, backyard or driveway surface, they should have easy access to information about (more) wildlife friendly approaches. If public transport and walking & cycling infrastructure were improved, car ownership would reduce, fewer front gardens would be paved over to make driveways and our city's ecosystem would benefit.

PFOE worked with schools and the Natural History Museum for its Bed & Breakfast for Bees campaign which encouraged people to:

- Have an untidy patch in their gardens for insects.
- Create a small pond with pebbles in it.
- Stop using pesticides.

An untidy area in your garden would be more beneficial to wildlife than a bee hotel. A small area in every garden would make a huge difference to the city's ecosystem.

The group has observed that the concreting over of front gardens has increased as has covering tree pits with tarmac right up to the tree trunk.

The Wildlife Trust explained that rather than telling people to remove their concrete driveways and plastic grass it is suggested that we need to look at what they could add to make the driveways etc better for them and for wildlife. More people connected to nature will mean more nature in our city which is not only good for nature but is good for the people who live here.

Hedgehogs are very rare now in Portsmouth. If you want a hedgehog in your garden, speak to your neighbours about everyone putting holes in your garden fences/ walls so hedgehogs can have a large territory to find food, water and shelter.

The Cabinet Member for Housing & Preventing Homelessness reported that residents are encouraged to make their gardens more wildlife-friendly and be more self-sufficient.

The PCAB noted that would be interested in developing, in partnership with the council, the university and the Wildlife Trust, a wildlife garden advice/support team that can respond to resident requests for help creating wildlife friendly gardens / organic food growing/ de-paving. This could also be offered to schools.

This scheme could be means tested so that those on low incomes are helped for free, funded by wealthier residents who could be charged. Volunteer groups like the Green Gym/ Urbond are very willing to help do initial clearance work, and residents could be guided about and supported with what to plant, how to maintain the garden etc.

The PTW and CDCO suggested that people could be encouraged to plant trees in their gardens to feed birds and help our pollinators. Maybe people could be encouraged to have green space on roofs to help wildlife.

Rooftop gardens in the city and growing walls will all encourage biodiversity and reduce pollution through removing particulates. There could be an encouragement of beehives on roofs that would help pay for the maintenance costs of local trees. Help the local economy and provide a healthier source of food. More importantly protect the pollinators.

Removal of Paving Stones.

The Grounds Maintenance Manager noted that removing paving stones on some paths could be considered to create meadow pockets in paving subject to any funding.

PFOE suggested that when changes are made to street layouts, for example new modal filters or build outs, these changes provide an opportunity for leaving a small unpaved area which could be planted with shrubs and flowers. This decision needs to be made at the time the street layout is changed, so it is essential that Transport and Planning Officers liaise about this potential well in advance or opportunities to green our streets will be missed.

PFOE strongly supports an experimental approach to increasing biodiversity in our streets. We are pleased to see that Colas has agreed to experiment with removing occasional paving slabs to plant wildflowers where these would not be a trip hazard.

Community Engagement.

The PCAB reported that it had invited residents near Marine Court Green in Eastney to see if they wanted to enhance the flora and biodiversity of green spaces where they lived. Residents from Marine Court Green, Eastney got in touch and asked if they could add some wildflowers, raised beds and fruit trees to the site. Negotiations with the council took a while but eventually a planting plan was formed, and permission given. A number of community groups attended the first planting event in September. Since then, liaison with the council has been really quick and helpful in deciding how the site can be developed. Another event was held in December where 20 dwarf fruit trees were planted and adopted by residents to commemorate loved ones who had passed recently. The council's greening coordinator is working on a protocol to make it easier for community groups to carry out similar schemes, without such a long initial wait.

The Wildlife Trust felt that engagement with the community is vital but can be a little piecemeal.

The Countryside Officer explained that engagement with local community groups who would like to plant in an area would be best controlled by a central body liaising with the Countryside Officers. This would ensure that the impact of the proposed projects on existing green sites is understood. Their local knowledge about the flora and fauna could help ensure mistakes are not made.

6. Residents' Associations.

A short questionnaire was sent to representatives of council residents associations and blocks. Two questionnaires were returned; from the representatives of was from the representative of Cotswold House and the Australia Blocks residents associations who reported that:

The residents at Cotswold House do not engage in any of the following activities:

- Growing plants or vegetables in tubs, containers, hanging baskets of planters, window boxes on their patio or balcony.
- Providing a water source for wildlife.
- Providing nesting boxes/ insect hotels/ bee blocks/ bird feeders on their patio or balcony.

No measures have been taken to encourage biodiversity in the communal areas.

In the representative's view, although residents in this block are not at all concerned about biodiversity, they have raised the issue of improving biodiversity and that it would be helpful for residents to receive more information the role they can play in increasing biodiversity opportunities and would like help/ advice and training on identifying opportunities. They do not have any projects in mind which would enhance the biodiversity of the site.

The representative commented that they had their own garden club that help with planting but got fed up with the council's garden team grass seeding the borders and cutting up the plants we planted. So, they decided to give up with planting the borders and wasting their time.

Some of the residents in the Australia blocks grow plants or vegetables in tubs, containers, hanging baskets or planters, window boxes on their patio or balcony, provide a water source, nesting boxes, insect hotels, bee blocks or bird feeders.

In the communal areas there is a space for residents to grow fruit and vegetables. There are also hedges and native tree or fruit trees and nesting boxes/ hedgehog houses/ insect hotels/ bat boxes or bird feeders. The grass is only cut when it is more than 5cm long and left for more than 2 weeks in the summer.

There is no maintained wild area for wildflowers or wild grasses and no log pile. Fences are not used as frames for climbers. They do not think about enhancing biodiversity when planting children's play areas.

The Chair felt that although residents have not raised the issue of improving biodiversity, they are quite concerned about it and it would be helpful for them to receive more information about the role they can play in increasing biodiversity in their outside spaces. They do not have any projects in mind which would enhance the biodiversity of the site.

7. Council Properties and Land

The Cabinet Member for Housing & Preventing Homelessness stated that his experience as champion for the CDCO project had seen him help them get permissions to plant on land owned by different parts of the Council. This is getting better due to the new appointments that encourage co-ordination. When appropriate, requests for areas on Housing land are agreed.

Housing Association tenants are not permitted to have mats or plant pots outside their front doors because of fire regulations.

In council blocks, a balanced approach is taken with regard to plants hanging over communal balconies; taking into account safety and whether there is a culture for planting in the block. A list stipulating exactly what is permitted would not be appropriate for all cases.

The council encourages residents to grow fruit and vegetables. It does not discourage people from taking ownership of some areas but does not proactively encourage them to do so. Cases are assessed on their individual circumstances.

Green walls in Grafton Street and Estella Road are being progressed. This is part of a wider plan to green key traffic corridors to cut air pollution. For example, trees and shrubs had been put into council blocks on Eastern Road Northern Parade, Kingston Road, Church Street, and various locations in Somerstown. Officers had also contacted Cosham councillors to discuss something similar on Southampton Row, as that is also a key traffic corridor. Councillors agreed to meet officers to discuss using Community Infrastructure Levy money, as had happened on Church Street in Charles Dickens ward.

The management of greening initiatives within Housing land falls within the Clean & Green Team.

As far as he is aware, a comparison of all local authority estates across the city in terms of greening has not been carried out and he is not sure the benefit it would bring, given the differences between estates. Housing Association properties have varying types of green measures and areas. Registered Social Landlords tend to be more remote since their operations were centralised.

Residents are encouraged to be more self-sufficient in terms of growing more fruit and vegetables which can be supported by the service Community Gardener role.

He is keen that living roofs be installed where possible.

In 2017 council officers changed their approach to planting e.g. planting long-term shrubs which has resulted in savings and requiring less maintenance.

Whilst the Leamington and Horatia Community Panel's aim is to ensure that the area is as green as possible whilst keeping the rents as low as possible, he recognised that this may not be feasible. York City Council has the largest Passive House Programme but is finding it difficult to fund that while delivering social rent levels.

The PassivHaus pilot in Havant runs alongside other measures to see if this type of design will work. He hoped it would, but wanted to be guided by the evidence.

The Head of Estate Services explained that the council supports residents having plants on balconies and outside their front doors where appropriate. There is no specific policy regarding this. Potential fire risks are considered and a 'managed use policy' is followed with each case being assessed on its own merits.

Where housing blocks have built in planters to communal balconies the service plants flowers in blocks - such as in Old Commercial Road where annual flowers are planted every year.

Wild meadows have been planted on housing land in various sites across the city by the service.

Most of the orchards and meadows are across the whole of the city.

He is very open to ideas for improving biodiversity in the city and installing beehives where possible. The first site is Gloucester Terrace, just off Kings Road, where the service is working with Portsmouth District Bee Keepers Association to build knowledge and experience before expanding further. Key considerations for additional beehives include risk associated to the bees swarming near houses / housing blocks, ASB risk, vandalism to the hive.

Green walls absorb carbon dioxide. Climbing plants have been planted on the garages in Graffton Street and Estella Road. It is important to mitigate the high levels of air pollution in this area with measures such as these. The carbon dioxide emissions will increase when the port becomes a free port. Air pollution affects the poorest people disproportionately.

Planting has been prioritised on key trunk roads throughout the city to improve air quality. Trees and shrubs have been planted along Eastern Road.

8 Areas in the City.

Portsmouth Hill

The panel considered the following management documents:

- Biodiversity on Portsmouth Hill.
- Portsmouth Hill Management Plan Non-Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI) 2022- 2026.

- Portsdown Hill SSSI Plan 2021- 2025.

The Portsdown Hill Countryside Officer explained that he is responsible the management of Portsdown Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is around 55 ha (the size of 70 football pitches) and extends from east of Fort Widley to west of Fort Southwick. The aim is to maintain a continuous sheet of flower-rich grassland with a mix of scrub and other habitats in a mosaic. He shares the maintenance of a similar area of adjacent open space land with the Parks Grounds Maintenance Team. His management emphasis on this land is conservation management whilst parks colleagues attend to amenity issues.

A wildlife survey written in the 1970s described the area as having a rich insect and plant life, but it was a shattered relic compared to how it was a generation before. The site was then abandoned to misuse and invasive scrub encroachment before restoration began in the 1990s. Recent surveys show the site is recovering well.

Portsdown is good example of species-rich chalk grassland. It is a much-diminished habitat, very rich in biodiversity. It is an important habitat for pollinators and a great variety of plants which in turn are essential food plants for the larval stage of numerous insects, allowing many species to complete their life cycle.

The non-SSSI land contains former agricultural fields, amenity grasslands and chalk pits areas which are managed to complement the habitats on the SSSI as well as generic open space for people to enjoy. Habitat management to sites along the hill is important as they provide vital connectivity for biodiversity along the hill. Mowing regimes have been changed to cut and clear or haymaking on many areas that were formerly under amenity mowing, a process that began in the late 1990s. Grazing is used to restore a former arable site to species rich grassland.

Seeds and green hay from the flower rich SSSI have been transferred to land undergoing restoration to encourage the reversion to a desirable habitat with locally adapted plants. Trees and shrubs have been translocated from elsewhere on Portsdown to establish hedges and tree seeds sown to facilitate natural scrub and woodland regeneration.

Portsdown is an urban fringe site with associated problems including, littering, fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour. Legitimate public usage is factored into the management. Attending to this is a drain on efforts to conserve the site.

Surveys show the hill is a biodiversity hotspot and compares well with similar sites, for example the National Nature reserves in the Meon Valley and adds to the offer of Portsmouth.

He engages with other agencies including Fareham Borough Council and the County Council and the Biodiversity Officer at Portsmouth Water about the managing adjacent land on Portsdown with a coordinated wildlife-sympathetic approach. Having an overarching plan for all the land including what is outside the Portsmouth boundary would have some mileage.

There is a healthy number of volunteers involved on this site, around 6,000 hrs of volunteers time a year. They are getting older, and it may be useful to encourage young people to join in. However, the number you can have working on tasks is limited to space, tools and the activity.

It should be a default that all land is managed for biodiversity and climate change mitigation unless there is a good reason for not doing so. It is important that the soil conditions on both the land and the adjacent areas are understood to provide an ecological overview of the whole area. There is good advice and case studies available, but the use of site-specific management options is necessary for the best outcome.

The Top Field at Portsdown Hill is a former arable site that is managed for conservation and public access. The soil is unproductive, thin and chalky and was chalk grassland in the 1960s. In 2010 when it was returned to the council's management, the soil conditions were evaluated, and it was found to be suitable for establishing species-rich grassland. Thus, it was eligible for Environmental Stewardship funding. Green hay and seeds from local plants were introduced, hedges and companion scrub blocks were planted in the same way. Owls, stonechats and skylarks occupy or use the site. Currently nine cattle graze the area a few weeks a year.

The blocks of scrubs provide diverse habitats. Hedges were planted along two sides that border the busy roads. The public open space does not need as much management. The wildlife complements the wildlife in adjacent sites. It would be very helpful if this approach could be incorporated into the council's policies.

If biodiversity is to be increased, it would be helpful to record the presence and abundance of at least some species and store the data on publicly viewable platform along with changes to show the work is effective. Surveying and recording should form part of the process of enriching biodiversity.

Changing management may not be popular with all. For example, long grass in areas that have been mown short for years can be interpreted as neglect and attract complaints as well as wildlife.

Utility firms and other agencies regularly approach with a requirement to maintain or install new infrastructure on Portsdown. These can threaten habitats or with suitable mitigation possibly improve the situation, provided suitable advice is given and heeded.

Milton Common and Eastney Beach

The panel considered the Milton Common management plan and the Milton Common restoration & management framework.

The Countryside Officer explained that he is responsible for other sites dotted around the city; a mosaic of habitats: dry land, shingle beach, plus fresh and saltwater areas all on the fringe of urban life. Public safety is the highest priority and many paths have been put in over the last few years.

It is just him and his team of volunteers; the Parks Service has an input but this tends to be limited to amenity areas and access issues. His budget is very limited.

Although having more paths encourages visitors to keep away from vulnerable habitat, education is key.

The sites do suffer from some youth interference.

All the sites around the city would work better if they were linked up to form corridors rather than islands. More could be done to involve private landowners with this.

Engagement with local community groups who would like to plant in an area would be best controlled by a central body liaising with the Countryside Officers. This would ensure that the impact of the proposed projects on existing green sites is understood. Their local knowledge about the flora and fauna could help ensure mistakes are not made. They were not consulted before the trees were planted on Horsea Island which were sourced from Holland rather than local nurseries. They were asked for input about the planting at Horsea Island at the time but were told that no one in the UK could supply the quantity required). These could have been infected by Dutch Elm disease. Dutch Elm is not the best example as it is already endemic in the country. Please note that the importation of any living plants brings with it the chance to introduce plant diseases which could have a detrimental effect on native species.

Generally, it is better to carry out natural regeneration of plants rather than bring in seeds. The local ecosystem is already adapted to them, and they fit into the food chain.

He feels that they work under the radar and what they do is not flashy.

Farlington Marshes

The Reserves Officer, the Wildlife Trust explained that Farlington Marshes (FM) is a peninsular approximately 120 hectares of reclaimed land in the Northwest of Langstone Harbour. It is quite a rare site for coastal grazing.

It is the most important of the three hubs in the area for overwintering wildfowl and waders. Many birds move around the three hubs during the day but all of them come to FM at some point to forage and roost undisturbed.

There are approximately 5,000 brent geese in Langstone Harbour and there were 2,000-3,000 on FM just after Christmas. Although lapwings, avocets and redshanks numbers have declined nationally, FM is a stronghold locally and has the largest number of lapwings chicks in the Solent.

People enjoy visiting the site and that connection through nature is important.

He is part of a small team that manages ten sites in the Solent area. The management of FM is the most intensive as it is a complex site. The nesting sites are protected from ravens and buzzards between late February and

June. The main form of management is grazing with 140 cows grazing in mid-summer so that the grass is the optimal length for the brent geese to eat.

Volunteers are mostly the active retired people; they are trying to recruit younger people.

The birds use a vast array of sites in the harbour, but FM is the key hub as it is the biggest and undisturbed. The brent geese also use the football pitches on Eastern Road which is ideal for them with the open ground and short grass.

Shrub control is ongoing. It is useful for attracting wildlife but most is cut on rotation.

Tipner West.

The Senior Regeneration Manager explained that this is an environmentally protected area with important intertidal and shore habitats. Any planning applications for development would have to show proof that there would be a 10% net gain for wildlife onsite and compensation land would be provided elsewhere.

If the area were to be developed, it would be very difficult to increase the biodiversity of the area by 10%. DEFRA and Natural England would assess the council's plans to ensure that the proposed measures would be effective. There is a well-established technical methodology and valuation process, known as the 'DEFRA Metric', now on version 3.0.

This is consistent between all developments applying the metric and is in widespread use as a 'standard' assessment method. This would be assessed by the ecological consultees through a planning submission.

There are numerous opportunities for a new development to encourage wildlife including installing bee towers.

The project will incorporate location-specific ecological objectives that address features within and surrounding the current site, but also offers opportunities to encourage new species and create new niches within the site.

Habitats within the site can be carefully zoned and managed for compatibility with use by people, ensuring that conflicts (which are currently widespread around Portsmouth and the Solent, notably dogs off leads and coastal birds) are managed out at the design stage so people and nature can better co-exist.

The large-scale opportunities for the creation of compensation land could be amazing. Investigations have been carried out to assess the feasibility of building a new intertidal island in the north of Portsmouth harbour. Undisturbed land like this would be very beneficial to wildlife and provide a habitat that has long been lost from Portsmouth Harbour, is in high demand by the bird species present and could be managed in the face of further climate change losses of this within-harbour habitat.

The new Horsea Island Country Park that is being developed also presents a very good opportunity to encourage wildlife to the area and represents a newer, developing area of habitat that can target the provision of more diverse habitats locally.

The intertidal mud area that is so important to wildlife will be lost to rising sea levels if no action is taken and new flood defences to protect the existing land mass and wider area are installed.

There are ecologists in the team that push developers to do the best they can for wildlife.

All the above measures will mostly benefit not just from their creation or establishment, but by being brought into planned and funded management over the long term with specific, measurable biodiversity objectives, in a way that many local habitats would only have such objectives as informal or less targeted or committed objectives. This kind of management is essential to the long-term success of any biodiversity outcomes. This needs to recognise that the current management of the wider development site does not deliver this; the nature benefits of the site are residual/incidental; the development would bring this into a formal objective approach.

The Environment Act is helpful, and the council will ensure that its emerging policies and Supplementary Planning Documents take this into account. To a certain extent, we are playing catch up as this is the first Local Plan for seven years.

The council does a lot to improve its existing assets. A balance here between noting that PCC does its best, but that the current biodiversity within the site is apparently incidental, rather than planned land use management for biodiversity in any significant sense. The development would have a much stronger focus on management for biodiversity outcomes, following construction phase disruption.

Councillor Barrett added that they are pushing the planning department to influence developers and tell them the high standards that the council expects.

In response to questions, Tristan Samuels, Director for Regeneration added that the area created in compensation would be located between the harbour and Chichester. Arun is the furthest point we are currently surveying.

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the council's response to climate change because it is not the responsibility of just one directorate; all of them do their bit. The directorates have different priorities.

When the Private Finance Initiative contract was set up with Colas 17 years ago, the Key Performance Indicators focussed on roads. The parks service's priority was that green spaces were safe for people to enjoy. A cultural change is happening to bring the focus to encouraging wildlife, but it will take time. This is not for the want of trying. This is a priority for directors but one of many.

9 How other organisations manage their land.

Portsmouth Hospitals' University NHS Trust.

The Head of Property & Capital Development, Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust (the Trust) explained that:

The Trust commissioned council landscape architects to design and project manage the development of an area on the south side of the site which is now called the Garden of Life. This was an exemplar project that is well loved by staff and patients.

Following that success, the council's landscape architects' team was asked what the trust could do to increase biodiversity around the whole site. Many opportunities were identified planting trees, hedgerows, wildflowers, creating more green spaces, biodiversity, microhabitats, green walls and green roofs. These have informed a biodiversity and greening strategy for the QA hospital site.

The Trust is keen to recognise the health benefits associated with biodiversity and is considering how people use the area as it has a connection to the broader wellbeing agenda. The benefits of people having access to green spaces are significant and hospital medics have undertaken a literature review with the Public Health team to draw together evidence of this.

Discussions are taking place with the Trust Executive, the hospital charity, staff and volunteers to get them involved. Donations of seeds and bird boxes have been made and the Hospital Charity is looking to support.

An implementation plan is being drawn up for the Executive and includes both short-term and long-term projects.

The Trust recognises that greening does not respect boundaries and therefore have been talking to the Portsdown Hill Ranger about how staff could access this adjacent nature reserve more easily during their breaks.

He does not know the Grow Wymering group or have connections to St Peter & Pauls Church and Wymering Manor but the Trust is keen to consider planting fruiting trees on the site and recognises their value for biodiversity.

He is not aware of any council policies that are hindering the Trust's ambition. It recognises a number of synergies with the council particularly in relation to greening and sustainability. The relationship between the council and the trust has grown over the three years that he has been in post.

The Trust recognises its responsibilities towards its staff's wellbeing and the environment.

Public Health and medics at the Trust have published research showing the health benefits of biodiversity.

Discussions are taking place with the hospital's grounds maintenance contractors about changing the cutting regimes to improve biodiversity

including reducing the number of times greenery is cut back and the leaves swept.

The value and quality of existing trees has been assessed as part of the strategy by the council's landscape team. Some flowering cherry trees have had to be removed as they were not in great condition. Others will be planted elsewhere. The biodiversity strategy will help ensure that a mixture of trees are planted in the right locations and there is a succession, not static landscape.

Green walls look amazing but require a considerable amount of maintenance. The location must be carefully considered due to the potential fire risks. In a carpark in Liverpool, a fire took hold very quickly by racing across the green wall. The green wall that was being considered at a carpark at the hospital has been removed from the proposals.

The strategy identifies many possible measures that could be implemented around the site, but the Trust will be mindful of the ongoing cost burden. The strategy will be kept under review.

The designs for a sensory garden at the side of the new ward block (for stroke and neurophysical rehabilitation services) are being finalised now. This would include tactile paving, steps, a rail alongside planting beds and sensory borders to support patients' recovery and provide enjoyment while they stay. It is hoped to start work in Spring 2022. The Trust will be submitting a Neighbourhood CIL application to support this work.

Staff would benefit enormously from being able to access Portsdown Hill during their breaks. A gateway is being considered and it is hoped that this will open in Summer.

The trust enjoys a good working relationship with the council. St Mary's Community Hospital is managed by Solent NHS Trust.

The University of Portsmouth.

The Energy & Environment Manager at the university explained that the university's Biodiversity Action Plan was produced eight years ago by the Hants & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust. It could be refreshed but the estate is mostly land-locked and so improving biodiversity and greening can be challenging.

The university is aiming to achieve BREEAM⁹ Sustainable Construction for design 'outstanding' rating for its new buildings which includes the biodiversity value of the space, the site selection, the impact of the building, the long-term eco management and other eco features. The design is assessed over the first year of the building in operation to confirm the rating.

In the park around Ravelin Sports Centre new planting includes wildflowers and herbs, 140 native trees plus bird & bat boxes and possibly beehives. The

⁹ Building research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method.

building's roof has wildflowers and solar panels. It is hoped that something similar can be included for the Victoria Building.

He works in energy, environment and waste management and has a good working relationship with the council. He would welcome working with the biodiversity team.

He was very receptive to the idea of students being involved in project work with the council including greening projects, a communication campaign or undertaking surveys. One such joint working that worked well was working with the council to improve street litter and recycling at student residences.

A section could be added to the digital student handbook about how they could manage their back gardens for wildlife (subject to approval) or contribute in other ways. Many staff also live in the city and therefore communication could also be targeted to them.

All unusable food waste at the university is sent for anaerobic digestion. All non-fresh products (tins, drinks) are given to the John Pound Centre for the 'food cycle' scheme. The university is always looking at ways to reduce food waste. Fresh food is packaged and provided to students in 'magic bags' via the 'too good to go' app at discounted prices.

Lakeside North Harbour

The panel considered the Lakeside North Harbour (LNH) Phase 1: Ecological Survey October 21 and the LNH Wildlife Pocket Map.

The LNH Asset Manager explained that the site was bought by the council in July 2019 and is an office campus with a hotel and car showroom. There are currently 55 companies leasing office space. The site is designated in the draft Local Plan for employment and potentially, where that is shown to be no longer viable, residential development. It incorporates four acres of land ready for development. It is an asset that creates an income for the council rather than a site for biodiversity. Its USP is that it is good for wellness and community. Its Corporate Social Responsibility/ Environmental, Social and Governance credentials are important for attracting companies. Campuses with blue and green space are in high demand by occupiers.

The ecological report stated that the site is a mixture of buildings, hardstanding, lake, semi-improved grassland, woodland, scrub, hedgerow and ditches with limited potential for species. The reality is that there is very little wildlife on site, mainly rabbits, bees (in ten hives) and geese. There are plans to put in a wildflower meadow, log piles, slatted compost areas, bird and bat boxes, insect hotels and more trees.

The border of the north carpark has hedgerows.

To the East, part of the development site has been bought by Guy Salmon to redevelop for a Land Rover dealership. In mitigation, 4.7 acres at the west end of the site is to be protected nature space, currently grass and scrub, is to be seeded with pale flax, managed and cut once a year.

The lake covers 19 acres and is fed by canals. An Archimedes screw pulls water to the ornamental lake on the north of the site. It is used for irrigation. The Portsmouth & District Angling Society manages the main lake, regularly monitoring salinity levels and fish stock. It is looking to introduce lilies, reeds and underwater cover that the fish can use as refuges.

The ecological report outlines what species could be introduced but the council is not necessarily looking to do that. The canals are considered too shallow and narrow for otters.

LNH is a Corporate Member of the Wildlife Trust.

These are some of the many initiatives that are organised:

- Walks in Spring and Autumn.
- Ten beehives which produce 110 pots of honey per year.
- The green waste is mostly composted.
- Signs will be introduced along the nature path informing people what animals they might see on their walk.
- Outdoor gym equipment.
- Vines to be planted in the Winter Garden - a south facing outside area surrounded on 3 sides by buildings.
- Green days where the tenants can join the landscape team in outside projects.
- They took part in the RSPB great big January birdwatch.
- Hedgehog hotels will be set up soon with two provided by the Eastleigh Men Shed Group.
- There will be tree planting to mark the Queens Green Canopy Jubilee celebrations in March.
- Presentations by the beekeeper in the schools' half term.
- The landscape contractors, Nurture, to give talks.
- The planting of a wildflower meadow on the Hillside scrubland with walks in May or June where occupiers can learn about the flora and fauna.
- Consideration is being given to applying for the Green Apple, Green Flag and Biodiversity Awards.

He reminded the panel that this is primarily an office campus which provides an income stream for the council and biodiversity is not a priority.

Many initiatives were in place before the council bought the site.

Campuses with blue and green space are in high demand by occupiers.

The day-to-day management is outsourced to Avison Young which has been commissioned to raise the profile of this campus. Nurture is the landscape contractors. It is the biggest single owned campus on the south coast.

It is not part of the public realm so linking it to green sites in the city would be difficult. It needs to be run separately.

The security of the site is an essential consideration for the occupiers and the gates are locked at night. They are mindful of possible access issues with

the travelling community. It is opened for park runs and the Victorious Festival etc.

The Director of Regeneration added that the management of LNH would comply with the council's policies for all council land. This would not cause a problem as it is already of a high standard that would be an example for others. It is grade A office space. The Civic Offices and Housing Offices are different commercial sites and are in different conditions. It is important that the council works all its assets wherever possible.

He agreed to investigate access for pedestrians from the footpaths where this had been limited by fencing during construction.

The land along the railway lines.

PFOE stated that the council would be in a strong position to liaise with Network Rail about the land along the railway lines. This corridor of land is very important to wildlife.

10 Conclusions

1. Portsmouth has a great wealth of biodiversity and is unusual for an urban authority in having 3 key areas of extremely high value habitat which are almost entirely unique in the UK:

Portsmouth Hill - one of the last areas of Chalk Down Grassland on the South Coast.

Farlington Marshes - managed like a low intensity marshland farm and nature reserve with areas of reed bed habitat, of essential value to the worldwide population of Brent Geese.

Eastney Beach (with potential expansion into the open space East of Fort Cumberland) - a surprisingly valuable and unusual area of vegetated shingle with a diverse range of native foreshore plants. The area East of Fort Cumberland is the last surviving section of foreshore scrubland on Portsea Island.

2. Additionally, the city's green spaces, although primarily amenity spaces, are in some cases well utilised and managed for biodiversity where possible. These number some 20 plus specific sites under the management of the City Ranger/Countryside Officer, many have specific management plans and have specific environmental challenges when balancing the needs of public amenity and biodiversity. Of particular interest are Milton Common and Hilsea Lines/Foxes Forest though many other sites have significant biodiversity enhancement potential if money, manpower and time were available. It should also be noted that the Coastal Defence works around the island have been at the cutting edge of biodiversity enhancement innovation on sea defences nationally and have enhanced Portsmouth foreshore areas with this work.

3. One anomaly in the city's green spaces is Tipner West on the site of the old firing range. This site, although subject to limited management, may arguably be among the most valuable biodiversity sites in the city, after the 'Top 3'. The shallow, sheltered bay and foreshore area on the south of the peninsula are extensively used by waders and Brent Geese traversing the Solent between feeding grounds. The grassy areas, are themselves used by the Geese for feeding. Unusual species such as the common lizard and at least one species of owl are found on the site and, due to an imported chalky outcrop of rock, there is even a population of rare bee orchids, among other natural wildflowers.
4. The above green sites in Portsmouth are all exceptionally well managed on a day-to-day level and congratulations should be given to the team at the Hampshire and Isle of Wildlife Trust responsible for Farlington Marshes, led by Chris Lycett, the Portsdown Hill Countryside Officer Richard Jones, and the City Ranger, Pete Roberts for their exceptional work and expertise in managing the sites. We should especially offer the thanks of the council to the small teams of volunteers from across the city that help with the management and maintenance of these sites - especially in the area of biodiversity enhancement.
5. We are pleased to note the amount of positive action that had been taken across the city in addition to our core green sites including but not limited to, tree planting, the creation of wildflower meadows and the work to support local groups in their greening projects.
6. Throughout the review the panel has been extremely impressed with the work, initiative and enthusiasm of officers across the council working in this area. It is clear that there is wealth of expertise and experience in the council that is ready to be used to maximise diversity gains in the city. In addition to those above, we particularly note the work of Vincent Mount and the Landscape Architects team, Ashley Humphrey the Allotments Manager, Lyall Cairns, Guy Mason and the Coastal Partnership for their work on the sea defences, Doug Gray and the Grounds Maintenance Team, Zoe White the Clean & Healthy Streets Coordinator, Phillip Bentley and the Neighbourhood services team, the Green & Clean team, Megan Carter, Senior Regeneration Manager, Simon Pearce, Arboriculture Officer and many more. Further thanks is given to all those who submitted evidence for the review and all of the fantastic individuals working and volunteering across the city in roles that make our city a greener and more biodiverse place to live.
7. On a council level, credit should be given to the members of the council across all parties for launching a variety of schemes across the city that aim to enhance biodiversity and for building on the work of the previous member, as well as acting on ideas provided by Ward Councillors. The panel is pleased to note the new Environment Act 2021 passed by parliament. This legislation aims to protect and enhance our environment and includes a range of new measures to increase biodiversity.
8. However, the panel heard repeatedly throughout the evidence gathering process that the main flaw with the current approach of the council is that

work is 'siloed' and too reactive. Biodiversity at Portsmouth City Council represents a patchwork of separate initiatives of differing value and impact. In particular, that different departments in the council rarely communicate their plans for biodiversity enhancement to one another or share ideas or best practice. Where there is cross-departmental cooperation it is often down to individual officers and not a deliberate part of the process of planning biodiversity enhancements. The Landscape Architects team do offer invaluable advice on biodiversity when schemes go through planning, but it is very rare for anyone to consult, for example the City Ranger, or the Portsdown Hill Countryside Officer, both of whom are experienced ecologists, on schemes which might have species crossover with our existing site-specific management plans.

9. As a consequence, there is some work and some schemes being delivered across the city which may not achieve best value for money or deliver the biodiversity enhancement sought. It was repeatedly emphasized to us that every potential site for biodiversity enhancement is different and there must be clear plan about what the goal of any new project is, and how it fits within the wider context of the city's natural habitats and species mix. Concern was raised about not always using native species. Best success for each site, even small-scale planting, will be achieved when its specific features are considered for how they most contribute to the overall habitat mix in the city and enhancements are planned based on how the site will interact with other nearby sites.
10. This issue of siloed working is also found in City Council engagement with private sector and third-party partners across the city. There are some excellent examples of best practice, such as the work of the Landscape Architects team in partnership with Trevor Mose the Head of Property at the Queen Alexandra Hospital on the hospital's new sensory garden. Together this kind of work can bring private realm land into wider biodiversity plans and 'multiply' the gains achieved. In contrast, the significant biodiversity work at Lakeside, despite it being a council owned corporate entity, seemed to be largely planned without any communication with council officers in order to incorporate it into wider plans for the city. Similarly, there seemed to be little evidence of the council engaging with either the Navy or University to try and involve those organisations and major landowners in citywide biodiversity planning.
11. The panel also has concerns that many residents are choosing to pave over or AstroTurf both front and back gardens and may not be aware of alternatives available.
12. The specific remit of the panel was to review council policy to ensure it was promoting biodiversity as far as possible and not obstructing it in specific cases. As will be seen in our recommendations, we did not find many specific issues with existing policy, though some recommendations are made in relation to the local plan and greening strategy, rather the problems we found related to a lack of policy and lack of overreaching strategy when it came to biodiversity in the city. At times there was also a lack of communication with residents about what they can do in their area to enhance biodiversity, as well as a lack of policy to respond to proposals

put forward by residents which identify specific spaces as candidates for greening and biodiversity enhancement.

13. Many respondents to the panel therefore felt that an over-arching biodiversity strategy would assist Portsmouth City Council, residents and residents groups and third party organisations in coordinating their efforts.
14. The specific issues which triggered this review - grass cutting programs and allotment rules on rewilding were not ultimately found to be significantly problematic, and therefore only limited recommendations are made on those points. Some issues were found with Colas mowing and pruning programmes, recognising that a one-size fits all is not appropriate for every site and needs to be altered to reflect the needs of the local community.
15. Grass mowing schedules are being kept under regular review by the Parks and Maintenance team, and they are experimenting with re-wilding in trial areas, however, this is potentially one of the examples where an over-arching strategy with a clear plan to enhance biodiversity is needed, rather than simply leaving large areas to grow wild.¹⁰ Mowing and verge maintenance around roads is the responsibility of Colas, and having a more clearly defined working relationship and a future plan to move towards economically efficient biodiversity initiatives with the city contractor is among the panel's recommendations.
16. Existing allotments appear to largely be functioning well. It is the view of the panel that the range of growing activity on allotments already contributes significantly to biodiversity in the city, as well as to health, amenity and local food sourcing, among many other community benefits. The panel is concerned that the demand for Allotment land far exceeds the supply. Therefore, it is not the view of the panel that rewilding of whole area of allotments is desirable - however it is clear and there could be better education and communication around how effective the use of specific biodiversity enhancement areas can be to allotments within the allowed 25% non-cultivated area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy and Communications:

1. **A Biodiversity Strategy be developed to cover all areas of the council's operations and the whole city.** An overarching policy be drafted and enacted that sets out the gestalt Biodiversity Vision & Mission for Portsmouth, with guidelines for best practice in city areas, streets and housing areas for biodiversity enhancement. A single strategy would encourage more joint working and also enables autonomous work to contribute to a common plan for a biodiverse city. The Biodiversity Strategy should contain plans for connecting green spaces and individual

¹⁰ It is not suggested this is happening at all at present - the point is that areas of unmanaged scrubland largely need to be avoided in Portsmouth as they tend to turn to bramble or similar monocultures with little biodiversity value.

initiatives through 'green corridors' to allow wildlife to move across the city.

- 2. Give a single officer responsibility for coordinating biodiversity programmes across the council in accordance with the biodiversity strategy.** Cllr Kimberley Barratt, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Green Recovery, seemed supportive of this idea and as it fits within the purpose of her portfolio we suggest that perhaps a senior strategy officer within that portfolio might be sensible choice. In future recommendations we will refer to this officer as the Biodiversity Strategy Officer.
- 3. Establish a Climate Change and Biodiversity Liaison Group in the council comprising representative officers with responsibility for biodiversity projects across each of the different departments.** The terms of reference would include meetings held in person at least quarterly, as the panel feels this will best enhance knowledge sharing, best practice and coordinated working. We recommend that where possible, the Chief Executive attend along with the Cabinet Member for Climate Change and the Green Recovery and opposition party spokespeople. The minutes should be shared with all Councillors.
- 4. Establish a Climate Change and Biodiversity Public Forum to allow representatives from residents groups and third party organisations to meet and discuss ways to contribute to the city's biodiversity strategy.** This also could fall under the Climate Change and Green Recovery Portfolio and be coordinated by the Biodiversity Strategy Officer. This body would meet at least bi-annually and allow the public, volunteer groups and charities to engage with the work of the City Council.
- 5. Develop a Biodiversity Public Communications Strategy to encourage residents to take action on biodiversity at home.** This will ensure the public receive consistent advice about how to contribute to the city's Biodiversity Strategy and also should be designed to encourage wider public engagement with biodiversity enhancement. It could include a range of members such social media campaigns, online education materials on how to enhance biodiversity in forecourts, gardens and balconies (perhaps even with links included in householder first contacts such as council tax or electoral role registrations), sharing examples of resident projects on the big screen in Guildhall Square and even competitions and incentives to encourage biodiversity enhancements at home.

6. **Consider the feasibility of establishing a central biodiversity database to register, monitor and assess biodiversity in the city.**

Allotments

7. **The subdivision of plots can continue where appropriate but should not be relied on as the sole strategy to create new allotments. Due to the health, community and social benefits, the council identify new sites where possible.**
8. **Develop an online Allotment Education portal for new plot holders to provide information to allotment holders on biodiversity enhancement on allotments, the use of pesticide alternative and on re-wilding part of their plot.** The education and provided by individual allotment associations is excellent but we believe a central source of information would assist less experience plot holders. Clear guidance on the important difference between a wild, overgrown plot, and a well-managed biodiversity focused 'wild' area of well cultivated plot would also assist in plot management. As would clear guidance on the use of environment-friendly pesticide-free alternatives for managing pests on allotments. The Allotment Manager is responsible for all allotments in the city so clearly there is not time within his role to do this work but there would be value in doing the work. Experienced volunteer officers of Allotment Associations emphasised their willingness to help educate new plot holders.
9. **Pesticide use be banned on council allotments.** We feel the impact on pollinators and neighbouring plot holders is too high and therefore pesticide us should be prohibited.

Joint Working

10. **Work with Colas to create a clear plan to update the city maintenance contract in relation to the care of verges, trees, bushes and other green areas so that opportunities can be found to both enhance biodiversity and make savings.** For example, to review grass cutting, de-weeding, the use of pesticides and approach to planting and maintaining greening to ensure it priorities supporting biodiversity. Representatives of Colas were open to this but felt the current approach was rather ad hoc and could be more coordinated.
11. **Continue to involve the public, schools, tenants, outside organisations and businesses in promoting biodiversity in the city and also to explore the possibility for suitable partnerships as appropriate.**
12. **Develop a clear and simple policy approach and a line of contact for residents of council Housing who wish to pursue greening and biodiversity projects in council owned communal areas around their homes.** Housing should display this policy on information boards in apartment blocks with information for tenants and leaseholders on what

steps they may take on their balconies and shared areas. Streamlining existing policies as needed.

- 13. Take a proactive approach to encouraging large private landowners in the City such as the Navy, the NHS and the University to work closely with the city council on how they can make biodiversity enhancements on their land as part of the city strategy.**
- 14. Engage neighbouring authorities in biodiversity planning on a regional level to maximise biodiversity gains across the Solent area.**

Streets, Planters and Trees

- 15. Phase out the use of pesticides and encourage businesses, residents and organisations to do the same too.** Evidence was given that pesticide use by the council was not excessive or extensive but the panel believe a continuing ambition of reduce it to zero is desirable. The programme for doing so should be reported to the appropriate Cabinet Member on an annual basis.
- 16. Pursue and encourage more on street greening as this is one of the best actions to take to enhance urban biodiversity.**
- 17. Ensure that greening goes beyond tree coverage and includes shrubbery, hedgerows wildflowers etc. as these diverse forms of planting have considerable impact on reducing carbon emissions and supporting biodiversity.**
- 18. Planting should prioritise native wildflowers, shrubs and trees in its parks, open spaces and any greening or biodiversity projects as this will help better support local ecosystems.**
- 19. When tree planting the council should have regard to native species, biodiversity and funding the lifetime maintenance of the tree, as well as resident concerns over street placement.** Trees are an important part of the biodiversity mix but are expensive. Copses of trees and a mixture of trees and hedgerows is also needed. Regard should be had to the value of small native species, and the removal and replacement of trees in alternative locations should be subject to clear and simple policy for concerned residents. Trees with shorter lifespans can provide valuable carbon capture. The council should adopt a flexible and practical policy on tree planting.
- 20. When planting new street trees, soil or the most appropriate permeable surface should be used at the base rather than tarmac, with wildflowers planted.**
- 21. Tarmac bases around trees should be removed from around tree pits and if replaced, replaced with a tree-friendly surface or let it go fallow.**

22. **Consideration should be given to signing up to the National Tree Charter.**
23. **Establish a plan for hedge planting and restoration around the city - working in partnership with schools and community groups where appropriate.**

Funding and Support

24. **Continued support should be given to the excellent work of frontline officers using their expertise to identify and trial biodiversity projects.** Nothing in this report should be taken as a substitute for the hard work and expertise of those officers working on the ground on Portsmouth's green sites.
25. **Consider raising the budgets of the City Ranger and the Portsdown Hill Countryside Officer and offering volunteer recruitment support and publicity if required.** Both of these roles operate on extremely small budgets and even small amounts of extra funding would allow them to make significant progress and trial new schemes in their areas of expertise.
26. **Consider the establishment of a support programme for residents groups wishing to set up community gardens and other gardening schemes e.g. Charles Dickens Community Orchard and Green Wymering.**

Greening Strategy and the Local Plan

27. **The renewed Greening Strategy planned for later this year should include express consideration of how greening projects should embed biodiversity enhancement as a key objective of all new schemes.** In future consideration should be given to how the Greening Strategy and the proposed Biodiversity strategy would interact and whether they should be combined into a single strategy or maintain separate but complimentary identities.
28. **The planning service should maximise ability of the new Local Plan to require biodiversity gains in new developments in line with the new Environment Act.**
29. **Include a policy in the new local plan to require developers to include flexible growing spaces in communal areas of land from residents of flats and apartments.**

Tipner West

30. **Consideration should be given to a significant reduction in housing proposed for the site, with no housing sited on the southern shore and bay area and the grassland areas of the site.** The habitat loss involved in even limited development will inevitably and irreparably harm biodiversity in that area, and it is not clear to the panel that this harm can

be mitigated or compensated. If necessary, then the city council should apply to the Secretary of State for a reduction in housing target as a result - and for a revision of the terms of the City Deal bid awarded for that area to reflect newer recent understanding of the importance of biodiversity and the damage of habitat loss.

- 31. Consider establishing a new wildlife reserve on Tipner West peninsula for the benefit and education of city residents, and the protection of wildlife in the city.**

Horsea Country Park

- 32. A biodiversity strategy be developed for Horsea Country Park (Nature Reserve) to fit in with the citywide strategy and this be disseminated to all Councillors.**

- 33. Council-owned sites in Portsmouth and Hampshire which have been procured for commercial purpose i.e. Lakeside North Harbour must still comply with both the letter and spirit of the council's policies and strategies on biodiversity and should ensure public access to areas of biodiversity on the sites.**

Future Ambitions

- 34. Consider how future plans for the city can work towards ambitious street greening with as many residential streets as possible containing green spaces and verges, as well as extensive tree planting and use of planter.** One respondent described to us the work in the German City of Freiberg to become 'Green City', making the most of its forest location. While parking and housing pressure may make this difficult in Portsmouth, the panel views this as a desirable long-term ambition, and recognises there are roads in Portsmouth where this can be pursued - contributing to green corridors in the city.

- 35. Biodiversity enhancement in the open space behind Eastney Beach at Fort Cumberland.** This area has the potential to be combined with the valuable area of shingle foreshore that forms part of the SSSI to maximise biodiversity gains and create a linked habitat of both foreshore and coastal scrubland.

- 36. Plan for the creation of a breeding and roosting island for waterfowl in Portsmouth Harbour.** These are expensive but can be a valuable way of providing habitat for birds in wetland areas and protect them from disturbance and predation.

12 BUDGETARY AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS.

The following table highlights the budgetary and policy implications of the recommendations being presented by the panel:

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
1. A Biodiversity Strategy be developed to cover all areas of the council's operations and the whole city.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	Link to existing, including Greening & Health Strategy. New policy.	Will require additional resource with appropriate expertise. New post, funding to be identified.
2. Give a single officer responsibility for coordinating biodiversity programmes across the council in accordance with the biodiversity strategy.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	Align with existing cross-council programmes - Greening & Health, Carbon Management & Climate Change for example. New policy and within the existing policy framework.	Will require additional resource with appropriate expertise. Staff time across council departments.
3. Establish a Climate Change and Biodiversity Liaison Group in the council comprising representative officers with responsibility for biodiversity projects across each of the different departments.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	Align with existing cross-council forums - Virtual Green Team for example. Within existing policy framework	Will require additional resource with appropriate expertise. Staff time across council departments.
4. Establish a Climate Change and Biodiversity Public Forum to allow representatives from residents groups and third party organisations to meet and discuss ways to contribute to the city's biodiversity strategy.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer. HNBS	Needs to be created. Housing Green & Clean Service promote to the council housing residents via HouseTalk and existing forums.	Will require additional resource

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
5. Develop a Biodiversity Public Communications Strategy to encourage residents to take action on biodiversity at home.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	Align with newly established communications framework for Climate Action and Greening.	Will require additional resource with appropriate expertise.
6. Consider the feasibility of establishing a central biodiversity database to register, monitor and assess biodiversity in the city.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	Existing Green Asset Register	Potential resource implications if existing databases were to expand.
7. The subdivision of plots can continue where appropriate but should not be relied on as the sole strategy to create new allotments. Due to the health, community and social benefits, the council identify new sites where possible.	CL&RS	Within existing policy framework	Capital funding will be required to establish additional allotment sites
8. Develop an online Allotment Education portal for new plot holders to provide information to allotment holders on biodiversity enhancement on allotments, the use of pesticide alternative and on re-wilding part of their plot.	CL&RS	Within existing policy framework.	Staff time.
9. Pesticide use be banned on council allotments.	CL&RS	New policy.	Staff time to administer, additional staff resource required to undertake alternative maintenance practices where pesticides are currently used.

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
10. Work with Colas to create a clear plan to update the city maintenance contract in relation to the care of verges, trees, bushes and other green areas so that opportunities can be found to both enhance biodiversity and make savings.	Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team	Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme	Additional expertise would be required to provide biodiversity input.
11. Continue to involve the public, schools, tenants, outside organisations and businesses in promoting biodiversity in the city and also to explore the possibility for suitable partnerships as appropriate.	Across council (inc. CL&RS, HNB and Regeneration.	Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team Single point of contact for community groups across the city greeningportsmouth@portsmouthcc.gov.uk	None so long as clear coordination roles and signposting pathways are agreed. Green & Healthy City Coordinator Role currently funded for fixed-term only. Staff time.

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
12. Develop a clear and simple policy approach and a line of contact for residents of council Housing who wish to pursue greening and biodiversity projects in council owned communal areas around their homes.	Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team	<p>Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme</p> <p>Single point of contact for community groups across the city greeningportsmouth@portsmouthcc.gov.uk</p> <p>Within existing framework Housing Green & Clean Services for council housing tenants.</p>	<p>None so long as clear coordination roles and signposting pathways are agreed.</p> <p>Green & Healthy City Coordinator Role currently funded for fixed-term only.</p>
13. Take a proactive approach to encouraging large private landowners in the city such as the Navy, the NHS and the University to work closely with the city council on how they can make biodiversity enhancements on their land as part of the city strategy.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	<p>Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme</p> <p>Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team</p> <p>Single point of contact for external organisations across the city greeningportsmouth@portsmouthcc.gov.uk</p>	<p>None so long as clear coordination roles and signposting pathways are agreed.</p> <p>Green & Healthy City Coordinator Role currently funded for fixed-term only.</p>

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
14. Engage neighbouring authorities in biodiversity planning on a regional level to maximise biodiversity gains across the Solent area.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	Emerging policy - Local Nature Recovery Strategy (Defra).	Resources may be required.
15. Phase out the use of pesticides and encourage businesses, residents and organisations to do the same too.	CL+RS, HNB, Regeneration / COLAS	Within existing policy framework	Additional funding required where alternative maintenance practices are more costly, less effective (and require repeat treatment) and/or more time consuming.
16. Pursue and encourage more on street greening as this is one of the best actions to take to enhance urban biodiversity.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team	None in short term - part of existing Green & Healthy City Coordinator role. Green & Healthy City Coordinator Role currently funded for fixed-term only

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
17.Ensure that greening goes beyond tree coverage and includes shrubbery, hedgerows wildflowers etc. as these diverse forms of planting have considerable impact on reducing carbon emissions and supporting biodiversity.	CL&RS, HNB, Regeneration / COLAS	Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team Green Asset Register captures planting data with a view to measure impact and carbon sequestration. Within existing policy framework	None in short term - part of existing Green & Healthy City Coordinator role. Green & Healthy City Coordinator Role currently funded for fixed term only. Greening measures funded through alternative use of existing revenue budgets, or new Capital allocations, CIL or external grants.
18.Planting should prioritise native wildflowers, shrubs and trees in its parks, open spaces and any greening or biodiversity projects as this will help better support local ecosystems.	CL&RS, HNB, Regeneration / COLAS	Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team Within existing policy framework	None in short term - part of existing Green & Healthy City Coordinator role. Green & Healthy City Coordinator Role currently funded for fixed-term only. Greening measures funded through alternative use of existing revenue budgets, or new Capital allocations, CIL or external grants.

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
19. When tree planting the council should have regard to native species, biodiversity and funding the lifetime maintenance of the tree, as well as resident concerns over street placement.	CL&RS, HNB, Regeneration / Colas	Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team Within existing policy framework	Resource implications likely with regard lifetime maintenance for specific PCC services. Greening measures funded through alternative use of existing revenue budgets, or new Capital allocations, CIL or external grants
20. When planting new street trees, soil or the most appropriate permeable surface should be used at the base rather than tarmac, with wildflowers planted.	CL&RS, HNB, Regeneration / Colas	Within existing policy framework	Greening measures funded through alternative use of existing revenue budgets, or new Capital allocations, CIL or external grants.
21. Tarmac bases around trees should be removed from around tree pits and if replaced, replaced with a tree-friendly surface or let it go fallow.	Green & healthy street coordinator.	Greening strategy	Additional resources would need to be identified.

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
22. Consideration should be given to signing up to the National Tree Charter.	CL&RS,	Greening Strategy Application made to become Tree City of the Work through the Arbor Day foundation. Signing up to National Tree Charter on Green & Healthy City work programme Within existing policy framework	Staff time.
23. Establish a plan for hedge planting and restoration around the city - working in partnership with schools and community groups where appropriate.	CL&RS, HNB, Regeneration / Colas	Within existing policy framework	Additional capital and revenue funding will be required (to offset hedge removals accepted as budget savings).
24. Continued support should be given to the excellent work of frontline officers using their expertise to identify and trial biodiversity projects.	CL&RS, HNB, Regeneration / Colas	Within existing policy framework	Staff time. Projects funded through alternative use of existing revenue budgets, or new Capital allocations, CIL or external grants.
25. Consider raising the budgets of the City Ranger and the Portsdown Hill Countryside Officer and offering volunteer recruitment support and publicity if required.	CL&RS	Within existing policy framework	Additional capital and revenue funding will be required (to offset hedge removals accepted as budget savings)

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
26. Consider the establishment of a support programme for residents groups wishing to set up community gardens and other gardening schemes e.g. Charles Dickens Community Orchard and Green Wymering.	HNB Biodiversity Strategy Officer	Housing Green & Clean Services - building on the work of the Community Gardening role. Greening Strategy. Green & Health City work programme. Green & Healthy City Coordinator / Virtual Green Team. Within existing policy framework.	Potentially requires additional resource if community gardens expand.
27. The renewed Greening Strategy planned for later this year should include express consideration of how greening projects should embed biodiversity enhancement as a key objective of all new schemes.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.	Greening Strategy	Additional biodiversity expertise will be required to provide appropriate input.
28. The planning service should maximise ability of the new Local Plan to require biodiversity gains in new developments in line with the new Environment Act.	Regeneration Directorate: Planning Services.	Biodiversity Net Gain is already included in current drafted 'Regulation 18' Local Plan.	No additional resource implications

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
29. Include a policy in the new local plan to require developers to include flexible growing spaces in communal areas of land from residents of flats and apartments.	Regeneration Directorate: Planning Services	Allotments, as part of Green Infrastructure provision are already encouraged in the current drafted 'Regulation 18' Local Plan any required increase in this type of open space would be a revision to the current draft	If an increase in open space is required this will require additional resource (staff time, consultancy) to assess implications for wider spatial strategy and delivery of other needs.
30. Consideration should be given to a significant reduction in housing proposed for the Tipner West site with no housing sited on the southern shore and bay area and the grassland areas of the site.	Regeneration Directorate	The future development options for the Tipner West site will be set within the emerging Local Plan. Large areas of undeveloped or grass land are not included within current drafted 'Regulation 18' Local Plan, current 2012 Development Plan, or 2013 City Deal	If areas of Tipner West are excluded from housing delivery this will require further additional resource (staff time, consultancy) to assess implications for wider spatial strategy and delivery of other needs
31. Consider establishing a new wildlife reserve on Tipner West peninsula for the benefit and education of city residents, and the protection of wildlife in the city.	Regeneration Directorate	The future development options for the Tipner West site will be set within the emerging Local Plan. A wildlife reserve is not included within current drafted 'Regulation 18' Local Plan, current 2012 Development Plan, or 2013 City Deal	If further areas of Tipner West are excluded from housing delivery this will require further additional resource (staff time, consultancy) to assess implications for wider spatial strategy and delivery of other needs

Recommendation	Action by	Policy Framework	Resource Implications
32.A biodiversity strategy be developed for Horsea Country Park (Nature Reserve) to fit in with the citywide strategy and this be disseminated to all Councillors.	HNB, CL&RS, Regeneration	Within existing framework - Waste Management & Parks Services.	None
33.Council-owned sites in Portsmouth and Hampshire which have been procured for commercial purpose i.e. Lakeside North Harbour must still comply with both the letter and spirit of the council's policies and strategies on biodiversity and should ensure public access to areas of biodiversity on the sites.	Regeneration Directorate: Property Services	All assets of the Council are managed in accordance with its adopted policies and strategies. Any changes to applicable strategies would be dependent and consequent on whatever biodiversity strategy that may arise from recommendation 1.	Any change in public access or land use within this commercial asset will likely have significant impact on the income that can be generated from it and the potential for the site to provide new development. Public access needs to be restricted to protect the commercial operations of the assets. Where public access will have a negative affect on the commercial operation of the site access will be restricted. Increasing and managing public access would most likely increase operational costs.
34.Consider how future plans for the city can work towards ambitious street greening with as many residential streets as possible containing green spaces and verges, as well	Green & Healthy Streets Coordinator	Greening Strategy Green & Healthy City work programme via Virtual Green Team	None

as extensive tree planting and use of planter.	Biodiversity Strategy Officer.		
35. Biodiversity enhancement in the open space behind Eastney Beach at Fort Cumberland.	CL&RS	Within existing policy framework	Enhancements funded through new Capital allocations, CIL or external grants
36. Plan for the creation of a breeding and roosting island for waterfowl in Portsmouth Harbour.		The waters below the mean high water level in Portsmouth Harbour are not in the control, either by ownership or regulatory oversight, of Portsmouth City Council. Development within these areas cannot therefore be included in any policy framework.	Additional resources, in officer time for partnership working, as well as any proposed capital projects and revenue implications would be required.

Meeting Date	Witnesses	Documents Received.
<u>16 November 2021</u>	Vincent Mount, Landscape Architect	<p>Scoping document.</p> <p>Links to a range of policy documents.</p> <p>Written submissions from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor Cal Corkery • Councillor Robert New • Councillor Terry Norton • Councillor Hannah Hockaday
<u>30 November</u>	<p>Trevor Mose, Head of Property & Capital Development, Portsmouth Hospitals' University NHS Trust.</p> <p>Goff Gleadle, Chair of the Cosham Allotment Association.</p>	
<u>14 December</u>	<p>Councillor Lynne Stagg, Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation.</p> <p>Doug Gray, Grounds Maintenance Manager.</p> <p>Ashley Humphrey, Allotments Manager.</p>	<p>Views from Mathilde Chanvin, Portsmouth resident.</p> <p>A list of the council's urban meadow areas (attached to this report as appendix three).</p>
<u>11 January</u>	<p>Councillor Darren Sanders, Cabinet Member for Housing & Preventing Homelessness.</p> <p>Ian McCormack, Energy & Environment Manager, University of Portsmouth</p> <p>Zoe White, Green and Healthy Streets Co-ordinator</p> <p>Phil Bentley, Head of Estates Services</p>	<p>The council's Greening Strategy and subsequent update that was considered at Cabinet on 5 October 2021.</p> <p>Allotment Dirty Plot Letter.</p> <p>Portsmouth Allotments & Leisure Gardens Rules.</p> <p>Allotment notice to quit template.</p> <p>North Harbour Allotment Association questionnaire responses.</p> <p>Long Meadow Allotments' Association questionnaire responses.</p> <p>Cotswold House Residents' Association views.</p>

Meeting Date	Witnesses	Documents Received.
18 January	<p>Site visits: Portsdown Hill with Richard Jones Portsdown Hill Countryside Officer</p> <p>Farlington Marshes with Chris Lycett, Hants & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust Officer</p> <p>Eastney Beach with Pete Roberts Hilsea Lines Ranger.</p> <p>Milton Common with Peter Roberts, Hilsea Lines Ranger.</p> <p>Tipner with Megan Carter, Senior Regeneration Manager and Owen Peat, Associate, Ecology, WSP.</p>	
<u>25 January</u>	<p>Rachel Hudson Portsmouth Friends of the Earth.</p> <p>Andy Ames, Wilder Communities Project Officer, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust</p> <p>Dr Hannah Rumble, Portsmouth Climate Action Board</p> <p>Steve White, Operations Manager, Colas</p> <p>Simon Pearce, Arboriculture Officer.</p>	<p>Information regarding the planning regulations from the Assistant Director Planning & Economic Growth.</p> <p>Eastney & Milton Allotment Association questionnaire responses.</p> <p>Views from Jane Shepherd, resident.</p> <p>Plus attached to the 25 January 2022 minutes as appendices (circulated on the day) views from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portsmouth Friends of the Earth • Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (Nature Emergency Motion) • Portsmouth Climate Action Board
1 February	<p>Councillor Kimberley Barrett, Cabinet Member for Climate Change & the Green Recovery.</p> <p>Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration Megan Carter, Senior Regeneration Manager</p> <p>Richard Jones, Portsdown Hill Countryside Officer</p> <p>Chris Lycett, Reserves Officers, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.</p>	<p>Portsdown Hill - biodiversity. Portsdown Hill Management Plan non SSS8 2022- 2026. Portsdown Hill SSSI Plan 2021- 2025.</p> <p>Milton Common Management Plan Milton Common Restoration & Management Framework Eastney Beach & Milton Common Information</p> <p>Information regarding support for schools</p> <p>The Australia Blocks residents'</p>

	<p>Pete Roberts, Ranger Simon Bateman, Lakeside Asset Manager</p> <p>Guy Mason, Coastal, Highways and Drainage Team Manager</p> <p>Lyll Cairns, Head of Coastal Partnership</p> <p>Andy Ames, Wilder Communities Project Officer, Hants & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.</p>	<p>associations - completed questionnaire</p> <p>Plus attached to the minutes, the following additional information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood defences. • Bee posts - maintenance, food sources, nesting habitat, the benefits of pollinators and the Nest Pollinator Strategy.
<p>22 March</p>	<p>Report signed off by the panel.</p>	<p>Views from T Jones, resident</p> <p>Views submitted by the Portsmouth Tree Wardens & the Charles Dickens Community Orchard.</p> <p>Views submitted by the Tree Council.</p> <p>Information regarding driveways from the Assistant Director Planning & Economic Growth.</p> <p>The Greening Strategy - Future Review & Delivery report that was considered at the Cabinet Member for Climate Change & the Green Recovery's meeting on 9 February 2022.</p> <p>Questionnaire from Horsea Lane Allotments Association.</p>

GLOSSARY

Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services	HNBS
Special Protection Area	SPA
Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust	The Wildlife Trust
Allotments Association	AA
Dirty Plot Notices	DPN
Portsmouth Climate Action Board	PCAN
Portsmouth Tree Wardens	PTW
Charles Dickens Community Orchard	CDCO
Portsmouth Friends of the Earth	PFOE
Site of Special Scientific Interest	SSSI
Portsmouth Hospitals University NHS Trust	The Trust
Lakeside North Harbour	LNH
Culture, Leisure & Regulatory Services directorate.	CL&RS

APPENDIX THREE

List of the council's urban meadow areas.

Site	Pockets	Total areas
College Pk - NE corner circle bds	2	28
Althorpe Drive - grassed areas crossing point - 4 sections	4	114
Copnor Bridge Shrub Bed 2 beds south side of the bridge	2	91
Prison Corner	1	22
Tamworth Park + 20sqm memorial planting	3	46
Hempstead Green	8	299
Portsmouth Road, Cosham	2	150
Bransbury Park 20m2 memorial planting	3	20
Zetland Field - Zetland/ Fitzherbert Rd mound	1	20
Bransbury Grds	2	110
Clarendon Gardens, Southsea	3	75
Western Prd	4	189
Pembroke Triangle - vandalised memorial	1	3
Pier Rd RAB planters	7	5
Rock Garden Frontage	5	123
Southsea Castle - Moat (Create wildflower area to left of bridge in moat).	1	60
Ladies Mile - western strip length of wall (3 colour mix cosmos with height)	1	97.5
Canoe Lake 'dig for victory' bed area 2019	1	36
St James Green	1	395
Kingston Recreation Ground - Play area (perennials)	3	0
Lake Road, Buckland	4	288
Mills Road, Stamshaw	2	108
Milton Pk (within West contract)	2	175
Queen Street, Portsea	1	245
2,399.5m		

APPENDIX FOUR

Responses to the questionnaires sent to Chairs of Allotment Associations.

In your experience what proportion of allotment holder members of your association:

	Eastney & Milton	Horsea Lane	Long Meadow
Add compost to soil (helping to increase earthworm activity and improve soil life)	Most	Most	Most
Rotate vegetable crops (to maintain nutrient balance)	Most	Most	Most
Grow a range of fruit, vegetables and herbs (to offer nectar to bees/ other insects throughout the seasons)	Most	Most	Some
Have fruit/ orchard trees on their allotment (to offer nectar to bees/ other pollinators)	Some	Most	Some
Grow companion plants (to reduce disease and increase pollination)	Some	Some	Some
Include a pond/ pond in a pot to provide shallow water (for wildlife)	Some	Some	Some

	Eastney & Milton	Horsea Lane	Long Meadow
Provide food and shelter for wildlife in autumn (e.g. leaves raked into netted container)	Some	Most	Some
Avoid the use of chemicals and pesticides	Most	Some	Some
Provide nesting boxes/ insect hotels/ bee blocks/ bird feeders	Some	Most	Some
Avoid the use of peat-based compost	Some	Most	Some
Have a log pile or bug houses (to provide a home to insects/wildlife)	Some	Most	Some
Include a maintained wild area within their allotment for wildflowers and/ or wild grasses?	Some	Most	Some

In Communal Areas.

	Eastney & Milton	Horsea Lane	Long Meadow
Use fences as frames for climbers/ ivy (to create wildlife havens)?	No	Yes	Yes

	Eastney & Milton	Horsea Lane	Long Meadow
Grow hedges around the perimeter of the site?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cut grass only when it is 5cm+ long (leaving it for more than 2 weeks in summer)?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Have a maintained wild area?	No	No	No
Have a log pile?	Yes	No	Yes
Provide nesting boxes / hedgehog houses?	No	Yes	No

Thinking about your association and its allotment holder members.

	Eastney & Milton	Horsea Lane	Long Meadow
Is your Association in favour of areas of rewilding on individual plots?	No	No	No
Do you feel that there is a problem with dirty plots?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do you think it would be helpful for your members to receive more information about the role they can play in increasing biodiversity on their allotment?	Yes	Yes	Yes
Would you like help/ advice/ training on identifying biodiversity opportunities?	Yes	Yes	Yes

	Eastney & Milton	Horsea Lane	Long Meadow
Are there any projects you have in mind which would enhance the biodiversity of your site?	No	Yes	No

Notes taken during the visit to countryside sites by the panel on 18 January 2022 by Councillor Judith Smyth.

In attendance Cllr. Lee Mason, Cllr. Matt Atkins, Cllr. Hannah Hockaday, Cllr. Judith Smyth, Cllr. Leo Madden (until lunch time)

1. **Portsdown Hill** – 500 ha of which 110 ha is managed as PCC open space. Richard Jones who manages the team at Portsdown hill, took us to see three specific environments and explained the opportunities and challenges of the site. It is a SSSI and one of very few chalk grasslands left in the UK. 60 notable plants including orchids and gentians. Birds and slow worms. Infestation by scrub, holm oak, cotoneaster is removed. Annual grazing by horses or cattle helpful. Regular grass cutting and fertilisation of the soil is being reduced (e.g. top field). Neighbouring landowners could do more to improve their chalk grassland but do not affect the site adversely. Site popular with dog walkers and families. Mostly keeping to the paths. Occasional challenges of fly tipping.
2. **Farlington Marshes** - 120ha. Chris Lycett manager employed by the RSPB met us and took us for a walk to the lake and told us about the site. Purpose of the SSSI is to maintain role as the biggest overwintering and transit site for water and wading birds. Grazing marshes have to be 'farmed' to keep them open. No 'wilding'. Flat grassland preferred by Brent geese, curlew etc. Cattle grazing in summer months. Keeping scrub at bay. Mammals discouraged as they eat eggs. Ravens eat chicks. Huge drop in Lapwing and Curlew – being built up again.
3. **Milton common**. Peter Roberts manager of countryside services (22 sites) took us for a short walk explaining that Milton common was the city tip and still characterised by lumps and bumps from cars, machines and concrete not far below the surface. Public encouraged to keep to pathways. Contrasting grass cutting regimes clearly showed the different approaches of the parks team and countryside teams. A variety of wildlife and sea birds, species rich. New sea defences being constructed along the coast. New paths created to discourage so many people to use the coastal path where they disturb wildlife. Have to control spread of bramble scrub, not enough depth of soil to grow good trees, methane fires from time to time.
4. **Eastney beach** - Peter Roberts explained the importance of this place. Very wide shingle bank (hence delay in need to build sea defences). There is a slow increase of vegetation among the shingle especially towards the west. Protected sea kale, sea holly, red valerian. Not much work to do apart from annual removal of holm oak seedlings, brambles and invasive species growing just below the sea wall by the road where rubbish can accumulate. Fort Cumberland area is an important remnant of coastal heathland and will need some protection when and if redevelopment of the fort is started. This is a fragile environment and could be destroyed by over

intensive use for example it is not a suitable place to locate a marine activity centre and any major extensions to the caravan park should be resisted.

5. **Tipner firing range-** Megan Carter and her colleague (ecologist from WS Atkins) met us and took us for a walk round to the eastern point. Not yet officially part of the coast path but used by dog walkers etc. The intertidal creek just south of the peninsula is very special ecologically with several layers of different organisms and needs to be protected and preserved. The intertidal area varies considerably around the site. We talked about the possible extent of housing and the development of a green marine industrial estate using deep water accessible to the north of the peninsula. Megan explained the investigations that had been done into the feasibility of building a new intertidal island in the north of Portsmouth harbour to replace the environment that would have been lost if the extended Lennox point scheme were to be built. It was acknowledged that some wildlife – hares and foxes would be lost if there were houses built on the firing range.

Comments received from Councillors, members of the public and organisations.

Hilsea

Councillor Robert New informed the panel that the Hilsea Lines and north Portsea sea defences are home to some of the city's finest bio-diversity and habitats from the tall trees of foxes forest to the rushes and coastal habitats.

Copnor

He added that Copnor is home to unique soft marsh-like settings and hidden lakes, providing further large green spaces. College Park contains many bee-friendly plantings and is a much-loved green space on the east side of the city, along with other large green spaces in nearby Baffins.

The new linear park that Penny Mordaunt MP secured funding for will be the biggest linear park of its kind and will further enhance, protect and connect our communities with the natural world. The opportunities to enhance our biodiversity with this project has huge potential, scope and scale. If Portsmouth City Council gets it right. It is my hope that they will consult with all members throughout the project life: from the current proposals to boots on the ground.

Cosham

Councillor Hannah Brent sent in her views before she joined the panel, to state that Cosham has an abundance of nature for residents to enjoy such as forest walks close by at Foxes forest / Hilsea Lines, a variety of stunning habitats at Farlington Marshes, and local parks providing not only green space for exercisers, dog walkers and children.

The ponds beneath the chalk cliffs are a rare home for protected newts. A great environment around Lakeside with the marshier environment encouraging more life.

Green areas have been enhanced in Cosham and around the city with the planting of wildflowers, and cherry trees in Cosham Park which help the pollinators and bees that humanity wouldn't survive without. These aspects are not only important for nature to thrive but for people to appreciate in the surrounding area of their homes. They also provide a vital soak away to reduce the prevalence of flooding and any loss of the green environment that is so vital impacts that and creates further risk of flooding of homes.

Drayton & Farlington

Councillor Terry Norton explained that biodiversity is one of the most precious and important things we have. In Portsmouth we tend to think of it as something that's just nice to look at, and enjoy spending time in, but it's so much more. Nature means a lot to the residents of Drayton and Farlington (the greenest ward in the city with 1.8 trees per resident) for us it provides more than scenery. Our community value the natural ecosystems around us and encourage the development of Biodiverse practices. One area of interest for the ward is bees who are vital to bio diversity. There are 130,000 plants for

example for which bees are essential to pollination. We therefore support the inclusion of wildflower meadows within our community. A resident recently stated "Bees are more important than poultry in terms of human nutrition" an interesting point."

Portsmouth Hill

Councillor Hannah Brent noted that the view of Portsmouth Hill whilst great hides a far more important gem. The unique conditions are why much of it is SSSI, with the mixed habitat providing a home for many lifeforms. It highlights how bio-diverse our wonderful city is, the carefully managed environment and mix of uses ensure a wide range of environments and therefore species. If it was all left to turn to gorse or forest this unique environment that has developed since humans first inhabited the land would be lost.

Views from T Jones, resident

I would just like to say that I think it is important to increase communication with people about the importance of trees whether these are in a back garden or in a park or on the streets. I see so many being cut down in peoples gardens, maybe because people think they have a negative impact on buildings or walls, but this may not be the case, if people knew how important trees are then maybe they would be willing to live with them more rather than cut them down.

We really need to look after and protect the trees we already have for so many reasons, including biodiversity. And its important to plant new ones and have really good after care so they survive.

Also, I see that alongside the railway lines the greenery is being cut down....and wondered why this is? This area is so important for wildlife. Is there some way the council can work with the railways to protect these habitats?

And I wanted to say I believe all spraying of pesticides should stop, I have heard that the council sprays the paths and areas of the allotments, which I believe should stop.

Information submitted by Jon Stokes, Director of Trees, Science & Research, Tree Council.

At the request of the Portsmouth Tree Wardens, I am sending you some information about how The Tree Council regards the fruit tree planting that is happening in Portsmouth.

Portsmouth is one of the most densely populated urban areas in the UK. It also has a relatively low number of trees per resident, something that the Portsmouth and Southsea Tree Wardens have been trying to improve over the last 20 years. The project that has been developed by the Tree Wardens and The Charles Dickens Community Orchards, is to my knowledge one of the most exciting community orchard projects in the UK, because of its aspiration to bring suitable fruit trees to residents throughout the city, which builds on the rich heritage of the city and its connections through Dickens to fruit trees.

The scale of the communities efforts are amazing – with now 60 orchards being designated and planted and over 899 fruit trees having been planted throughout the City over the last 5 years.

Speaking as part of the National Orchard Group, we know orchards are priority habitats under the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan. The reason they are special is that fruit trees are particularly good habitats for wildlife because they are "early senescent". This means they get 'old' relatively quickly and develop veteran features such as hollow trunks, rot holes, dead wood and sap runs. These features are important for over 400 species of saproxylic invertebrates that live on decaying wood. These include Stag Beetle, Violet Oil-Beetle, and the beautiful and very rare Noble Chafer beetle. It's not all about the decay either though, as fruit tree blossom is an important source of nectar for pollinating insects including bees, hoverflies and butterflies. Orchards can have ponds and hedgerows which provide habitat for amphibians such as great crested newts, birds and mammals, such as hedgehogs and voles. And because orchard trees are more widely spaced than trees in a dense woodland, they let in more sunlight which makes them particularly good for flying insects who need the warmth, such as bees and butterflies.

The orchards being created in Portsmouth also allows for community engagement with a huge range of people and communities, providing not only trees for biodiversity and climate change (both of which are vital), but also developing a source of free and community-based fruit available to anyone in the city. The natural bounty that is being created, has already been used to provide free food and fruit to foodbanks like Landport Larder, North End Pantry and community cafés.

I hope this information is useful in helping you to develop your biodiversity and other strategies over the next few years, and on behalf of The Tree Council I would like to express our enthusiasm for the work that is being carried out in the city to bring people, wildlife and trees together through the exemplary use of orchards. Long may it continue and we will continue to support wherever we can.

Views from the Tree Wardens for Portsmouth & Southsea and the Charles Dickens Community Orchards.

Our groups and volunteers have been planting orchards and other trees in many different areas around the city. We have noticed a lack of wildlife corridors in some areas particularly in the North End area where it is densely populated. Some areas lack the easily accessible local park or small green areas others have. This leads to a lack of wildlife corridors. Maybe some thought could be given to finding some disused land or brownfield site in North End that could be changed into a local amenity. With wildlife at the heart of it.

On occasions we have seen the removal of large shrubs which provide a habitat to the local birds and wild animals that enables them to thrive and shelter in cold weather.

Planting fruit trees provides humans and animals alike with food and foraging opportunities, harvesting events and bringing the community together to learn about and celebrate nature. As we have seen in the Charles Dickens Centre

orchards and Ark Dickens fruiting hedge. They give free fruit for local people will help those with a diminishing amount of finances to lead a healthier lifestyle. Where they can pick what they need from local trees. Communities will then invest themselves in looking after their local trees. they can see what they will get out of it. Excess produce has been given out to the food banks and larders to help those most in need and provides an amazing source of support, which has been very appreciated.

Perhaps people could be encouraged to plant trees in their gardens to feed birds and help our pollinators. Maybe people could be encouraged to have green space on roofs to help wildlife.

Rooftop gardens in the city and growing walls will all encourage biodiversity and reduce pollution through removing particulates. There could be an encouragement of beehives on roofs that would help pay for the maintenance costs of local trees. Help the local economy and provide a healthier source of food. More importantly protect the pollinators.

Different types of habitats could be explored by introducing to some areas boggy areas or ponds creating a different habitat. Perennial wildflowers suitable to the types of soil in our urban areas could be introduced. This would reduce mowing, energy costs and labour needed and create a more pleasant environment for local people. More wildflowers on verges please.

Fruiting hedges should be allowed to grow 50cm per year until about 5' wide and allow the fruits to be harvested by animals and people. Not cut back harshly each year by the flail machine. There is a fruiting hedge in Hilsea planted by the Tree Wardens which has been growing for 12 years. It is not treated as a fruiting hedge by Colas, it is harshly cut back and is never allowed to fruit. It's just treated as a normal hedge.

Resident initiatives should be given priority and supported to encourage ownership of their local environment and community trees.

It would be good to stop tarmacking tree pits. During the last few years, we obtained permission to plant trees in tree pits and planted them. Shortly afterwards someone removed them and retarmacked. There needs to be greater communication between teams that carryout maintenance. The Charles Dickens community orchards have suffered some losses due to information not being passed from one team to another. When it should be recorded as part of the history of the area and subsequently passed on to the new team taking over. Whether it be a new contractor or otherwise.

Strimming around tree trunks should be carefully avoided, more damage is done by labourers doing this than anything else and this can set back trees many years. Greater care needs to be taken over strimming.

More native and heritage trees need to be planted in Portsmouth.

A tree nursery to grow our own native trees in Portsmouth is needed. Propagating from our rare varieties.

We need to increase the tree canopy in Portsmouth we can do this by celebrating the Queen's platinum anniversary. More wildflowers on verges to encourage butterflies and birds.

The reduction of pesticides in the city would be good and perhaps use some other chemicals that biodegrade quickly such as industrial vinegar and bicarbonate of soda. Which is far less harmful to the environment.

Great care should be taken in coming years to provide mulch for every tree planted so they can retain moisture and cope with the drier weather we are due because of climate change.

A large pot of money needs to be put aside for future maintenance of all trees in Portsmouth. We need more tree canopy cover for future generations to survive in the coming years.

The National Tree Charter has become the Charter for Trees after 800 years. The Tree Wardens and the Charles Dickens Community Orchards have signed up to this agreement. It would be good if Portsmouth City Council did this as well, declaring how the council means to go on. The Local Portsmouth Tree Charter will need to include the Tree Wardens more in what is done and how communities of interest are kept informed of things like tree removals and tree preservation orders for our very rare trees.

Gardening competitions could be reintroduced into Housing services and across the city. Which helps people to take pride in where they live, improve the environment and keep people interested in wildlife.

Ownership of small micro plots by community groups to grow things in areas that are grassed currently would be a great idea. Removing some of the tarmac in urban areas will break up the landscape and allow the rain to soak away more readily, reducing flooding risk and urban run off. Trees soak up water and pollution.

Biodiverse areas may look unmanaged because they are not trimmed and cut back as much as those neatly kept gardens some folks are used to. Perhaps some local guidance with the aid of the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Trust and friends of the Earth could be made available to help with this.

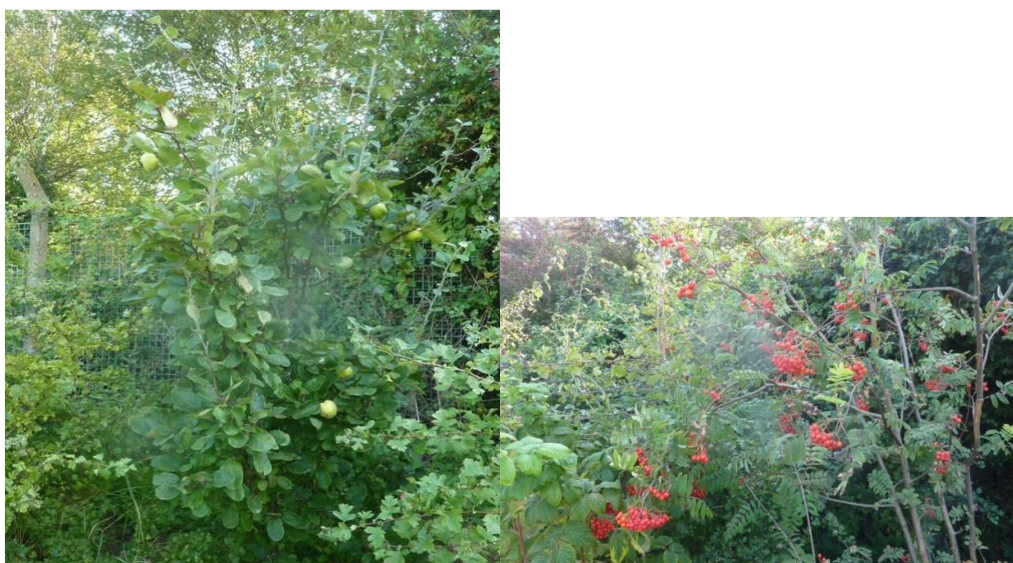
The city should make more of valuing the trees and their contributions to the environment. Giving a listing and protection for the very rare varieties like the Black poplar we have in our city (there are only 7,000 in the country). The city could introduce trees which have add biodiversity and supply food for wildlife to the city. Such as Oak trees which support a large variety of wildlife. Also by having a variety fruiting trees or hedges. We also now have some very rare fruit trees incorporated in our orchard planting such as the Bardsey apple. Larger trees should be valued more and have more protection such as (Tree protection orders) as they work harder for the environment. There could be designated community trees, orchards and fruiting hedges under these protection orders.

More could be made of the horticultural opportunities for careers in the city. Our very own National Tree Council Director of Science and Research, advisor to DEFRA lives locally. More could be specifically offered through horticultural and national training with a career path into different areas.

The new Environment Bill November 2021 comes into effect shortly, so this will mean more people having to train in these areas so that Portsmouth city council will meet its legal obligations.

Above all we need to offer opportunities and incentives for residents in both private and rented accommodation to grow more trees at home. Perhaps free trees, resources and training working with the support of schools to help inform young people of the benefits to them in the future. Problems faced by residents and community groups are funding for trees, compost, mulch and moving large items from a delivery area to the site.

I have included some pictures of the fruiting hedge in Hilsea planted by the Tree Wardens. The pictures below demonstrate the damage done by the flailing machine to the fruiting hedge.





Views from Jane Shepherd, resident.

There are green spaces and places for trees that are going unidentified. The Council has an open invitation for residents to suggest places for trees but they don't seem to have planted many and it's going at a snail's pace. For many of us it's easy to forget that we can suggest spots for trees or wilding, life gets in the way and there's no quick mechanism to feedback. My idea would be to have volunteer biodiversity scouts in each ward who can look out for opportunities and feedback to the council. They could have some basic training or info sheets, and do an audit of their patch.

Views from Mathilde Chanvin, Portsmouth

Please find my personal views about the current policies around greening in Portsmouth for the meeting held on Tuesday 14th December 2021.

I am a resident of Portsmouth since 2012 and I call this place Home. As a nature lover and an active member of various local environmental groups (Portsmouth and Southsea Wildlife Watch, Zero Waste Portsmouth, Wilder Portsmouth, and rewilding Brambles school and nursery), I have witnessed an increase / took part in amazing local actions and initiatives to improve/create green spaces and enhance biodiversity protection across the city. These initiatives, combined with the progress made by the City Council on various occasions (beautiful wildflower beds in Milton or Bransbury parks, new trees planted across the City) are to be celebrated.

There is an improvement, but I personally believe that more can be done, and especially with companies working with PCC about managing our green spaces. We are in desperate need of more green spaces in Portsmouth. We need more verges, grass, wildflower, and green corridors for bees and butterflies and other wildlife to thrive. Any action counts if we want to stop the disastrous effect of climate change on biodiversity.

I would like the panel, and especially Colas, to listen to local communities when they complain about the verges being cut in the parks and our "weeds" being cut and spread right in our front door (it happens every time in front of my house (especially on Earth Day in 2021!) although I have put a sign to leave it! – see pictures below), the grass being mown in cemeteries. I feel really concerned about the weed cutting and whether pesticides are used to get rid of the plants in our streets. Pesticides are harmful to us, wildlife (especially pollinators) and plants and I hope there is a way to stop using it all together.



My front wall with “weed growing” space and sign featured in the Wild Life magazine (Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust). – March 2021



My front wall empty of grass and soil due to Colas’s intervention – April 2021. There is nothing more beautiful than a poppy growing and blossoming within the crack of a street pavement. Such a pleasure for our eyes and a fantastic pit stop for a bee. Here are some poppies flowering in Spring time in my street.



Having green bus shelters, more trees and wild plants in the streets, wildflowers beds in streets, each roundabout or across cemeteries, or letting the flowers and “weeds” grow wherever it is possible (street and allotments) would be such an improvement to make our city, my home, a better place to live, breath and walk, and for biodiversity to thrive.

I wish that Colas would just leave the weed growing if people wish to keep them thanks to signs. Local communities, groups, councillors, employers, we all need to be on board to protect the existing and increase biodiversity space across Portsmouth. Let’s work and collaborate together for a Wilder Portsmouth.

Chair of North Harbour Allotment Association.

1. We support Biodiversity in principle and practice with many plots being totally organic and peat free.
2. We have a healthy population of wildlife with a considerable number of birds, we also have resident beehives on the site which belong to the Portsmouth Bee-Keepers Association.
3. There is an abundance of other insect life on the plots and in some cases far too many blackflies and aphids.
4. We do not believe that allotments should be included in Re-wilding as there are more than enough people on the waiting list for them to be used in this manner, and there is plenty of natural re-wilding taking place when plots are not re-let promptly causing other plot holders problems.
5. We welcome the use of wildflower beds and landscaping in appropriate place large green spaces like Port Solent Green where a good number could be introduced without detriment to the overall utility of the space and most beneficially on the "Motorway Hills "to the west of the M275.
6. Consideration to regular grass cutting so that Dog Walkers can effectively clean up behind their dogs.
7. Finally, I wrote a considerable time ago about the restricted access to Port Solent Green Space for Wheelchair users and less able walkers who cannot climb over stiles and the reclamation of the area which was fenced off to enable the MOD Fence to be renewed and as far as I am aware has not been restore to the original boundary.

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Agenda Item 12

Title of meeting:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	26 July 2022
Subject:	Business Case for the establishment of a Council owned Subsidiary Company to own and operate the Old Brewery, Hambrook Street
Report by:	Director of Regeneration
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. To set out and seek approval of the Business Case for the establishment of a subsidiary Company ("the Company") required for the operational phase of the Old Brewery, Hambrook Street ("**the Site**") redevelopment project being undertaken by Ravelin Housing Limited ("**RHL**").

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that Cabinet;
 - 2.1.1. Approve the Business Case for the setting up of the Company.
 - 2.1.2. Delegates authority to the Director of Regeneration, in consultation with the City Solicitor and S.151 Officer to set up the Company, appoint suitably qualified Directors and set up governance arrangements necessary for the Company to start trading with an obligation to report regularly to Cabinet on the Company's performance.
 - 2.1.3. Delegate authority to the Director of Finance and S.151 Officer in consultation with the Directors of the Company to agree a mortgage lending agreement to fund the property transfer.

3. Background

- 3.1. On the 28 February 2019, Cabinet approved the Business Case for the establishment of Ravelin to act as a property development company for the Council.
- 3.2. On the 14 September 2020, the Leader approved the Business Justification Case to redevelop the Site, subject to the approval of the S.151 Officer and Director of France. This subsequently approved the transfer of the Site to RHL.
- 3.3. On the 10 August 2021 the S.151 Officer approved the Business Case from RHL to re-develop the Site. The Business Case worked on the assumption that upon practical completion of the development, a City Council wholly owned subsidiary company ("the Company") would be set up. The Company would itself borrow from



the Council the cost of acquiring the developed Site from RHL. RHL could then re-pay its debt to the Council, whilst the Company would re-pay its debt to the Council over the long-term through rents and other costs reclaimed from residents purchasing or renting the residential units.

- 3.4. The Council obtained tax advice which provided advice that it would be more favourable for the Company to be directly owned by the Council, rather than indirectly as a subsidiary of either Ravelin Group Ltd or Ravelin Housing Limited.
- 3.5. For the Council to set up a trading company it must by law consider and approve a business case in relation to the specific subsidiary company. This paper therefore sets out the business case for the Company and seeks approval from Cabinet for its establishment.

4. Why the Company is needed

- 4.1. The proposed business case sets out the requirements for a new company to be formed called 'Hambrook Street Ltd'. The Company is to be a wholly owned company; limited by shares. Portsmouth City Council will be the sole shareholder owning 100% of the Company.
- 4.2. The Company will be established to hold and operate a single property 'The Brewery' of Hambrook Street, Southsea PO5 3BE.
- 4.3. An options appraisal has been undertaken to assess alternative options to setting up this company:

Option	Details	Pro's	Con's	Conclusion
Option One	Continue to hold and manage asset within Ravelin Housing Ltd	No costs associated with setting up new company, saving circa. £20k Maintains use of RHL as branding to build on reputation. Simpler and less administrative therefore more efficient.	Precludes RHL from being able to recover its VAT on construction costs which would be circa £700k+ additional unbudgeted cost to RHL as opposed to a cost of approx. £20k new company set up cost and property transfer.	Discounted
Option Two	Sell asset back to PCC	None	Would result in a financial loss to the Council in borrowing	Discounted



			<p>receipts. The Council would take on the operational risks and acquire the property at higher market value than it originally sold it so would have a longer payback period.</p> <p>PCC would not be able to hold the asset for private rental purposes and income generation only and so would not see a return on the investment and the development would not meet its intended purposes.</p>	
Option Three	Dispose of asset at on practical completion, do not hold	<p>No operational risk to increases in management costs; income and profit and loss in the event of high inflation and recession.</p> <p>Early capital receipt to pay off loan to Council.</p>	<p>May not achieve value required to pay back debt and cost of development, RHL could be in a negative equity position. Would also not have proven the operational model to enable crystallisation of the developed asset value.</p> <p>Would still need to set up a separate holding company to enable marketing and contracts for the operational model to be established and negotiated.</p>	<p>Investment position to be reviewed at the end of the construction period, with updated valuation and investment analysis to assess viability before proceeding with any disposal to new Company</p>



Option Four	Set up subsidiary company	<p>Tax efficient for RHL.</p> <p>Enables RHL to pay off its debt to the Council and reduce its debt obligations to facilitate future pipeline of developments.</p> <p>Potential to sell the asset and the Company as a fully operational model to quickly leverage a capital receipt.</p>	<p>Duplication and additional cost of legal work to transfer the asset into a new company.</p> <p>Administrative, requiring additional reporting and management of another company.</p> <p>Does not utilise and develop the RHL brand.</p>	Preferred option
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5. The objectives of the Company

- 5.1. 'Hambrook Street Ltd' will own, operate and maintain the Site in accordance with the Hambrook Street Ltd Business Plan, **Appendix One**. It will explore the option of contracting out to third parties for the lettings management and maintenance/facilities management services required as part of the asset management against the option of direct employment to fulfil the functions required. However, the Company would enjoy all the risks and rewards of ownership in a tax efficient structure.
- 5.2. The Company will periodically assess and report on the investment performance to inform whether to continue to hold the Site for income generation and capital growth or dispose to realise the value and return a capital receipt and profit back to its Shareholder.
- 5.3. The Company expects to achieve a gross profit from year one, and a net profit in year 15.
- 5.4. The Company's objectives are:
 - 5.4.1. To deliver a housing solution using an alternative delivery model focused on build to rent and affordable private rent markets. A key objective is to acquire the developed site and then hold, operate and maintain the asset;



- 5.4.2. To remain financially viable and commercially sustainable;
- 5.4.3. To ensure efficient landlord services are archived to include housing management and maintenance;
- 5.4.4. To maintain "The Brewery" to a standard that meets tenants' reasonable expectations, protects shareholder reputation and shareholder investment in the Company;
- 5.4.5. To be an example of how a Build to Rent product could operate in the City of Portsmouth to help attract further investors to the City;
- 5.4.6. To maximise capital value and create a saleable asset should the generation of a capital receipt become a priority for the Shareholder.
- 5.5. Performance against the Company's values and objectives will be monitored via periodic engagement surveys with key stakeholders.
- 5.6. Performance will be monitored through achieved occupancy rate, tenant turnover, waiting lists for accommodation and reviews. Periodic inspections and audits will be undertaken of the supply chain to ensure industry standards and contract obligations are being met.
- 5.7. The investment model requires periodic investment analysis, reporting and market engagement to inform any investment recommendation to dispose of the asset. This in turn will indicate whether the operational model has achieved its objectives and values based on its attractiveness to the market.
- 5.8. Furthermore, the Company targets to:
 - 5.8.1. Let all 17 Units by June 2023;
 - 5.8.2. Maintain a minimum 95% occupancy for the first 5 Years;
 - 5.8.3. Be cash positive for the first 5 years;
 - 5.8.4. Maintain the property with a view to maximising the capital value;
 - 5.8.5. Periodically assess the investment value of the operated asset and crystallise the investment opportunity and dispose of the asset at the optimum time to give the maximum reward to the Company and its Shareholder;
 - 5.8.6. Demonstrate best practice with tenants needs;
 - 5.8.7. Be compliant with emerging residential management regulations and standards and strive to uphold best practice.
- 5.9. **Governance**
 - 5.9.1. Governance of the Company will be detailed in the Articles of Association, of the Company. However, as a company wholly owned by the City Council there will likely be additional reporting requirements and restrictions placed on the Company Acts such as:
 - A requirement to report quarterly on the performance of the Company to the Shareholder



- Restrictions on the appointment of Directors, require Shareholder approval, refer to Section 6 for further details on Directors.

5.9.2. Restrictions on the ability to borrow any money other than the City Council.

6. The investment and other resources needed from the Council for the Company

- 6.1. The Council must by law recover the costs of any accommodation, goods, services, staff or any other thing that it supplies to a company it sets up to trade.
- 6.2. The Company will be financed via a mortgage loan from Portsmouth City Council.
- 6.3. The Company will not employ direct employees.
- 6.4. The Company will be run by 3 Directors who will likely be Council employees at senior and Director level but could be external independent individuals. The skills required by the Directors should ideally include financial directorship, investment management experience and residential or facilities management experience. Further details relating to the company governance is set out in the Business Plan at **Appendix One**.
- 6.5. A further Council employee will perform the role of Company Secretary, undertaking statutory governance procedures and administration for the Company, to be appointed by the Company Directors once in post.
- 6.6. Additionally, the Company will require support from 2 further Council Officers to provide commercial property support and financial management accounting, which will be provided within existing team structures and will not generate new roles.
- 6.7. All Council employees performing functions for the Company will be engaged individually under a contract between the Council and the Company, where time related costs of the employee will be recovered from the Company.
- 6.8. The services of the Company include property management, facilities management, asset management, valuation, insurance, service charge management, legal advice and procurement will most likely be provided by third parties under contract and service level agreement. The option to directly employ will be considered as part of the assessment into the most cost-efficient way to operate the Site. The costs for the services engaged will be met by the Company in accordance with the agreed contractual terms. The costs for the services will be met from the income received from Tenants occupying the residential properties.

7. Any risks the business might face and how significant these risks are

- 7.1. **Funding Costs** - The UK is experiencing extremely high inflation costs currently and the Bank of England has indicated that they intend to use Interest rates to tackle inflation which means that potentially rates could increase to 3% to 4% in the short term. The Company has already agreed that any lending will be on fixed rate basis and will conclude the financing documents as soon as possible to ensure the lowest rates possible are secured.
- 7.2. **Funding Availability** - Changes to the PWLB and Treasury Management Rules could mean that the Council's ability to invest in the Company could be hindered if more draconian measures are put upon them. It is unlikely however that these new measures would come in prior to January 2023 when the loan is due to be taken.



- 7.3. **Rental Income** - The Company relies solely on rental income to raise revenue, changes in market forces and the introduction of a Government imposed rent cap could affect the ability of the Company to maintain this revenue. The Business Plan assumes a modest growth of 2% in rental value and as Hambrook will not be a registered social landlord it is in effect protected from the Government policy as a private company.
- 7.4. **Capital Growth** - At the moment, the UK has seen a significant increase in the value of both rental yields and sales growth. However, the UK house market is cyclical in nature and the market is just starting to see the value of house growth turn. In March 2022 house growth was 3%, in April prices reduced by 0.3%.
- 7.5. **Increased Costs** - Inflation is likely to top approximately 7% - 10% in autumn 2022 and this remains a significant risk to the Company business plan as could see increases to operational costs and overheads. The Company will seek to mitigate this through procurement.
- 7.6. **Capacity** - Hambrook Street Limited is unlikely to employ any staff directly and more likely to commission staff from the Council to manage the third-party contractors on the Company's behalf. However, this is a relatively new venture and the Company will need to be satisfied that the Council have sufficient skill and expertise to provide services to it and assess the most cost effective way of operating.
8. **The expected financial results of the business, together with any other relevant outcomes that the business is expected to achieve**
- 8.1. **Taxation**
- 8.1.1. **Corporation Tax**
- 'Hambrook Street Ltd' will pay Corporation Tax on any profits it makes. All operating and debt costs will be deductible for Corporation Tax Purposes.
 - Repayment of Debt finance is not deductible for tax purposes.
- 8.1.2. **Stamp Duty**
- When the Site is acquired from RHL, no Stamp Duty will be payable by RHL or the Company as the transfer of the freehold is between two associated companies. This will be reassessed prior to any transaction in case of any changes to legislative position.
 - Note: the companies (RHL and 'Hambrook Street Ltd) are not in the same group but are associated as they have the same Shareholder.
- 8.1.3. **VAT**
- When the property is acquired from RHL this will be the first transfer of a residential property and therefore will be treated as Zero Rated for Taxation purposes.
 - The only income that the Company will receive is that of rental income from its tenants, this essentially means that it is unable to recover any input tax on its operating expenses.



- The Company will not need to register for VAT as its taxable turnover is below the £85,000 current annual threshold. This is on the assumption the Company turnover is achieved from VAT exempt rental income.

9. Reasons for recommendations

- 9.1. RHL will complete the conversion and achieve practical completion of the Site in March 2023. Ahead of this date it is critical to the business justification case and the financial modelling that the cost of the operational management for the asset is known. The asset will need to be revalued to obtain revised market rent information and revised freehold values to enable the cash flow for the development to be reforecast. A key component of the financial models is understanding how the asset will be managed from a lettings and facilities management perspective and under what terms those contracts will operate. In order to engage with the market and commence the procurement process for this, the appointing company needs to be confirmed. It is not possible to undertake procurement exercise for this work as RHL and then establish the contracts under a different company.
- 9.2. Additionally, in order to comply with the terms of the facilities agreement with the Council, RHL is expected to repay its loan as a single bullet payment at the end of the construction period on the basis that the asset will be transferred into another subsidiary Company. Should this not occur then RHL will need to obtain further funding to cover the VAT liability it would then incur and undertake a new application for funding at higher cost from the Council which will have a negative impact on the future lending ability for RHL and the business case the Council approved for the development as referred to in Section 3 of this report.
- 9.3. The establishment and registration for a new subsidiary company if approved by Cabinet in July will take 2 months to establish. It is anticipated that a 3-month procurement and tender programme will be undertaken for the operational contracts for the site. These will then be agreed and marketing campaign established to launch the asset for letting enquiries with the intention to secure pre-lets 3-months prior to the anticipated practical completion.
- 9.4. The completed asset will be re-valued by RHL for freehold sale prior to practical completion and the investment model re-run to assess and confirm that holding the asset and transferring to the Company provides the best financial return to the Council.

10. Integrated impact assessment

- 10.1. An integrated impact assessment has been completed and is at **Appendix Two**.
- 10.2. The assessment indicates that the proposed change will deliver good quality homes, will help to reduce energy and encourage businesses to invest in the city, supporting growth and regeneration.

11. Legal implications

The power to trade - Council's ability to incorporate a company to trade

- 11.1. The provision of property management services (as to be undertaken by the Company) can be undertaken by the Council as being incidental to its housing,



- regeneration or investment powers, or under the general power of competence under s1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 11.2. Where the purpose of the activity is for commercial purposes, then the Council must do so through a Company (section 95 of the Local Government Act 2003) to ensure that the Council is not put in a more favourable position (for example in relation to taxes) than those with whom it is able to compete in the market.
- 11.3. Operating through a company is subject to conditions as set out in the *Local Government (Best Value Authorities) (Power to Trade) (England) Order 2009* ("the Order"). The conditions are that the Council must;
- 11.3.1. prepare and approve a business case in support of the proposed exercise of that power; and
- 11.3.2. ensure that it recovers the costs of any accommodation, goods, services, staff or any other thing that it supplies to the company in pursuance of any agreement or arrangement to facilitate the exercise of the power conferred.

Ownership and Governance

- 11.4. The Company will be wholly owned by the Council. The executive function of "shareholder" in relation to the Company will be the responsibility of the Council's executive (i.e., cabinet), either to an individual portfolio holder or Cabinet collectively. In relation to the Council's other companies, responsibility sits with Cabinet collectively.
- 11.5. The Council will not run the Company, that will be the responsibility of the board of Directors. The Directors will run the Company in accordance with the powers granted to them through the company's constitution (for example its articles of association and shareholder agreement if required).
- 11.6. It is proposed that the Directors of the Company are Council Officers. Company Directors have statutory duties to act in the best interest of the Company (not the Council) and therefore the Council should be cogent of issues around conflict of interests concerning those officers who it appoints as Directors, to enable the Council, the Company and those Officers to address and manage any conflicts identified. Remuneration of Directors who are also Council Officers should not be through the Company due to the restrictions in s117 of the Local Government Act 1972 and so any additional duties the Council requires such Officers to undertake should be graded and remunerated through the ordinary Council job evaluation process.
- 11.7. The Council should also be satisfied that the Directors it appoints are suitably skilled and qualified with sufficient knowledge and training in relation to the role of a Company Director.

Holding the Directors to account

- 11.8. The Shareholder is responsible for holding the Directors of the Company to account, to ensure they are performing satisfactorily and protecting the investment of the Shareholder.



- 11.9. The Council should appoint a Shareholder representative who will act in effect as the client Officer to the Company to act as the conduit between the Council and the Company. To be clear, this role does not discharge the Shareholder function (unless such functions are delegated to the Officer by Cabinet, which it may wish to do in relation to certain minor, inconsequential or urgent decisions required of the Shareholder by the Company) but simply act as a conduit through which matters can be brought to the attention of the Shareholder for decision or oversight.

Subsidy control

- 11.10. The Council will need to ensure that the financing of the Company fits within the subsidy control (formally state aid) obligations on the Council.

12. Director of Finance's comments

- 12.1. The reasons for the Council establishing a Local Authority Company to operate The Brewery development are set out within the Business Plan attached at **Appendix One**.
- 12.2. The Council will, subject to an updated valuation at the time of purchase, through a mortgage loan agreement, lend to Hambrook Street Ltd to enable the Company to purchase the property from Ravelin Housing LTD, another Council owned Company.
- 12.3. In the event of Company failure, the Council's financial risk is limited to the Shareholding within the Company. The loan will be made to Hambrook Street Limited with a legal charge attached to the property ensuring that if the company defaulted on the loan, the property would revert back to the Council as primary creditor.
- 12.4. The establishment of this Company was always envisaged when the Council originally agreed to lend funding to Ravelin Housing LTD to purchase the property from the Council, develop and convert into residential flats. This report is merely allowing the next stage of that business case, in order that the Company, Hambrook Street LTD, can become incorporated.

Signed by: _____

Appendices:

- **Appendix One** - Business Plan - Hambrook Street Limited
- **Appendix Two** - Integrated impact assessment

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:



Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by on

.....
Signed by:

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The Brewery, Hambrook Street Redevelopment

Business Plan for formation of company 'Hambrook Street Ltd'

Author	Wayne Layton
Date Produced	18/03/2022
Date Last Updated	14/07/2022

Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	4
2. Background	4
3. Purpose of the Company	4
4. Company Values	5
5. Company Objectives	5
6. Potential Customers	5
7. Affordable Homes policy	6
8. Targets	6
9. Return to Shareholder	6
10. The Programme	6
11. Company Structure	7
12. Delivery Model	7
13. Taxation	7
Corporation Tax	7
Stamp Duty	7
VAT	7
14. Risks	8
15. Governance	8
16. Financial Projections	9
Appendices	9

Executive Summary

1. Hambrook Street Ltd ("the Company") will acquire the property 'The Brewery' Hambrook Street ("the Site") from Ravelin Housing Ltd ("RHL").
2. The Company will be a private limited company that is 100% debt funded from Portsmouth City Council, as lender and principal shareholder of the Company.
3. The Companies core purpose is to hold the asset of 'The Brewery' and to maintain and manage the asset during its occupational phase.
4. The Company will assess the most cost effective and efficient way to manage the asset. This could include direct management options or procurement of third parties to perform the functions of the lettings management and maintenance/facilities management for the site. Procured services will be engaged under contract using service level performance agreements. Council Officers working under a contract will carry out the day-to-day activities of the Company, including if applicable, procurement of third-party services, contract management, financial processing and accounting.
5. The Company will periodically review the investment performance of the asset to analyse and advise the shareholder of the optimum time to crystallise and leverage the value from the investment to provide a capital receipt and profit return to its shareholder. It is anticipated that this will occur in year 10.

Business Plan - Hambrook Street Limited

1. Introduction

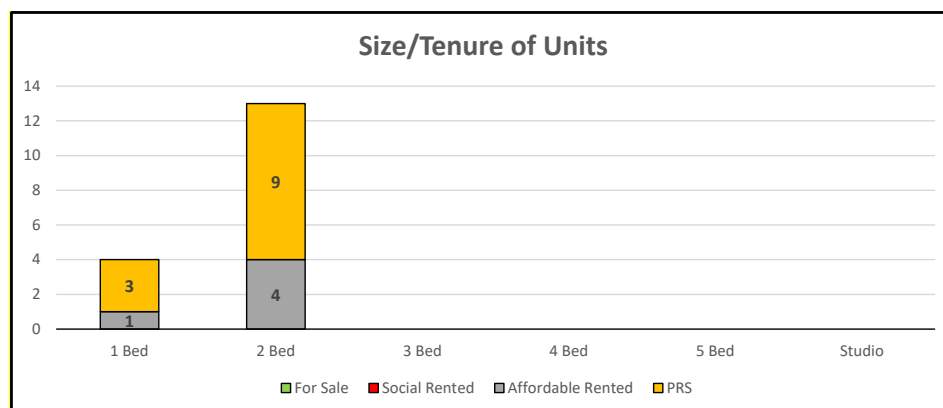
The building is a former Brewery that is currently being converted into 17no flats for the purposes of being rented on the private market as a build to rent product. It is intended that three out of the 17 units will be let as affordable private rent, capped at 80% of the market rent.

The objectives of the Company are to ensure the operational status and functions of the Site; ensuring high quality standards are achieved for the product and services experienced by the tenant. Alongside this, financial return to the Company's shareholder must be achieved to, as a minimum, be in line with the business case to develop the asset, approved by the Ravelin Housing Ltd (RHL) Board and Shareholder at Cabinet in September 2020.

2. Background

In August 2021, RHL a wholly owned company of Portsmouth City Council, approved a business case to acquire, convert and redevelop 'The Brewery' into 17 residential build to rent apartments. RHL's purpose is to complete projects that deliver regeneration and economic growth within local communities whilst satisfying the need for housing, using non-traditional approaches. As set out in the business plan for the development, RHL's focus is on the construction phase, once completed the Business Plan set out that the Site would be sold and transferred to a separate subsidiary company. It is proposed company 'Hambrook St Ltd' will be that subsidiary company and focus on the operational phase only, not the construction.

The below figure shows the mix of units being proposed and their tenure within the Brewery development.



3. Purpose of the Company

The Company will own, operate, and maintain the Site in accordance with this Business Plan and the Business Case. It will assess the most cost effective and efficient method of operating the Site. This could include direct management or procurement of third parties to provide lettings management and maintenance/facilities management under contract to fulfil the functions required. However, the company would enjoy all the risks and rewards of ownership in a tax efficient structure. The Company will periodically assess and report on the investment performance to inform whether to continue to hold the Site for income generation and capital growth or dispose to realise the value and return a capital

receipt and profit back to its Shareholder. It is forecast that the investment will be debt positive and, in a position, to return a profit after year 10.

The Company expects to achieve a gross profit from year one, and a net profit in year 15.

4. Company Values

The way the Company will operate is an essential part of the Business Plan and Business Case. The Company will strive to become a highly regarded proprietor in the City and seek to be:

- A trusted partner of its shareholder Portsmouth City Council;
- A trusted private sector landlord providing quality homes and services that are sought after by investors;
- A business that operates with integrity and treats tenants, contractors and partners with respect and monitors performance with engagement surveys.

Performance against these values will be monitored via periodic engagement surveys with key stakeholders. Performance will be monitored through achieved occupancy rate, tenant turnover, waiting lists for accommodation and reviews.

Periodic inspections and audits will be undertaken of the supply chain to ensure industry standards and contract obligations are being met.

The investment model requires periodic investment analysis, reporting and market engagement to inform any investment recommendation to dispose of the asset. This in turn will indicate whether the operational model has achieved its objectives and values based on its attractiveness to the market.

5. Company Objectives

The Company's objectives are:

- To deliver a housing solution using an alternative delivery model focused on build to rent and affordable private rent markets. A key objective is to acquire the developed site and then hold, operate, and maintain the asset;
- To remain financially viable and commercially sustainable;
- To ensure efficient landlord services are archived to include housing management and maintenance;
- To maintain "The Brewery" to a standard that meets tenants' reasonable expectations, protects shareholder reputation and shareholder investment in the Company;
- To be an example of how a Build to Rent product could operate in the City of Portsmouth to help attract further investors to the City;
- To maximise capital value and create a saleable asset should the generation of a capital receipt become a priority for the Shareholder.

6. Potential Customers

As of December 2021, the UK Buy to Rent ("BtR") stock stood at 70,800 completed homes with a further 41,200 under construction. Looking at the pipeline of UK residential developments BtR will represent just under 4% of the private rented sector.

No specialist BtR schemes have been developed in Portsmouth to date, this development will be the first to be developed. Albeit this development is small in scale and will consequently not demonstrate the full spectrum of residential amenity areas and concierge that may be experienced on larger scale BtR developments.

The build to rent market is a sub-set of the private rented sector. It is aimed at those for whom home ownership is unrealistic but access to social or affordable housing is unlikely; for those where flexibility and mobility is valued; with above average incomes

Young professionals no longer make up the largest group living in the private rented sector, having been overtaken, marginally, by 35–49-year-olds. This age group is expected to show the biggest growth in households in the private sector over the coming years, with difficulty in obtaining a mortgage deposit to buy a home remaining a hurdle.

7. Affordable Homes policy

The Company will let 3 (out of the 17 units) as affordable private rented units. The units will be of the same quality and standards as private market units (tenure blind) but be at 80% of the market rent. The provision of these units will be legally protected under the S106 planning agreement and condition. The management of the units will be incorporated into the overall asset management of the Site. Lettings management policies could look to prioritise local residents and key workers.

8. Targets

- To let all 17 Units by June 2023;
- To maintain a minimum 95% occupancy for the first 5 Years;
- Be cash positive for the first 5 years;
- To maintain the property with a view to maximising the capital value;
- To periodically assess the investment value of the operated asset and crystalize the investment opportunity and dispose of the asset at the optimum time to give the maximum reward to the Company and its Shareholder;
- To demonstrate best practice with tenants needs.

9. Return to Shareholder

As well as maintaining good quality homes for its tenants and a return to its Shareholder the Company will:

- Ensure that profit from income is first used to meet its debt liability to the Council;
- Monitor investment performance of the asset to inform decision making on whether to continue to hold the asset for income generation or dispose of the asset for capital receipt and return, if third-party investment needs to be leveraged quickly to release equity for Portsmouth City Council;
- Maximise income and efficiency of property management services;
- Prioritise repayment of debt before paying dividends.

10. The Programme

'The Brewery' is currently under construction by Ravelin Housing Limited. The development should be completed and ready for occupation by March 2023.

Following practical completion, it is proposed that 'Hambrook Street Ltd' will purchase and acquire the freehold of the Site from RHL. It is anticipated that marketing for occupiers would commence from December 2022 so that residents could begin to commence occupancy as soon as practical completion is achieved. It could be that some residents may be in occupancy at the point of completion but is forecast to be fully let within 3 months of practical completion.

11. Company Structure

The Company will have one Shareholder, Portsmouth City Council.

The company will be financed through a Mortgage loan from Portsmouth City Council.

The Company will have three Directors

Thomas Giles Southall

Wayne Paul Layton

To be confirmed

The skills required by the Directors should ideally include financial directorship, investment management experience and residential or facilities management experience.

12. Delivery Model

The services of the Company include property management, facilities management, asset management, valuation, insurance, service charge management, legal advice and procurement will most likely be provided by third parties under contract and service level agreement. The option to directly manage will be considered as part of the assessment into the most cost-efficient way to operate the Site. The costs for the services engaged will be met by the Company in accordance with the agreed contractual terms. The costs for the services will be met from the income received from Tenants occupying the residential properties.

13. Taxation

Corporation Tax

'Hambrook Street Ltd' will pay Corporation Tax on any profits it makes. All operating and debt costs will be deductible for Corporation Tax Purposes.

Repayment of Debt finance is not deductible for tax purposes.

Stamp Duty

When the property is acquired from RHL no Stamp Duty will be payable by RHL or the Company as the transfer of the freehold is between two associated companies. This will be reassessed prior to any transaction in case of any changes to position or legislation.

Note: the companies (RHL and 'Hambrook Street Ltd) are not in the same group but are associated as they have the same Shareholder.

VAT

When the property is acquired from Ravelin Housing Ltd this will be the first transfer of a residential property and therefore will be treated as Zero Rated for Taxation purposes.

The only income that the Company will receive is that of rental income from its tenants, this means that it is unable to recover any input tax on its operating expenses.

The Company will not need to register for VAT as its taxable turnover is below the £85,000 current annual threshold. This is on the assumption the company turnover is achieved from VAT exempt rental income.

14. Risks

- **Funding Costs** - The UK is experiencing extremely high inflation costs currently and the Bank of England has indicated that they intend to use Interest rates to tackle inflation which means that potentially rates could increase to 3% to 4% in the short term. The Company has already agreed that any lending will be on fixed rate basis and will conclude the financing documents as soon as possible to ensure the lowest rates possible are secured.
- **Funding Availability** - Changes to the PWLB and Treasury Management Rules could mean that the Council's ability to invest in the Company could be hindered if more draconian measures are put upon them. It is unlikely however that these new measures would come in prior to January 2023 when the loan is taken.
- **Rental Income** - The Company relies solely on rental income to raise revenue, changes in market forces and the introduction of a Government imposed rent cap could affect the ability of the Company to maintain this revenue. The business plan assumes a modest growth of 2% in rental value and as Hambrook will not be a registered social proprietor it is in effect protected from the Government policy as a private company.
- **Capital Growth** - At the moment, the UK has seen a significant increase in the value of both rental yields and sales growth. However, the UK house market is cyclical in nature and the market is just starting to see the value of house growth turn. In March 2022 house growth was 3%, in April prices reduced by 0.3%.
- **Increased Costs** - Inflation is likely to top approximately 7% - 10% in autumn 2022 and this remains a significant risk to the Company business plan. The Company will seek to mitigate this through procurement.
- **Capacity** - Hambrook Street Limited is unlikely to employ any staff directly and more likely to commission staff from the Council to manage the third-party contractors on the Company's behalf. However, this is a relatively new venture and the Company will need to be satisfied that the Council have sufficient skill and expertise to provide services to it and assess the most cost effective way of operating.

15. Governance

Governance of the Company will be detailed in the Articles of Association, of the Company. However, as a company wholly owned by the City Council there will be additional reporting requirements and restrictions placed on the Company Acts such as:

- A requirement to report quarterly on the performance of the Company to the Shareholder
- Restrictions on the appointment of Directors, require Shareholder approval, refer to Section 6 for further details on Directors.
- Restrictions on the ability to borrow any money other than the City Council.

16. Financial Projections

The financial projections that relate to this Business Plan can be found in Appendix One of this report

Appendices

Appendix One - Financial Projection and Market Context in relation to the Business Plan

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Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)

Integrated impact assessment (IIA) form December 2019

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

The integrated impact assessment is a quick and easy screening process. It should:

- identify those policies, projects, services, functions or strategies that could impact positively or negatively on the following areas:
 - Communities and safety
 - Regeneration and culture
 - Environment and public space
 - Equality & - Diversity - This can be found in Section A5

Directorate:

Regeneration

Service, function:

Investment

Title of policy, service, function, project or strategy (new or old) :

Ravelin Housing Ltd Business Plan
Ravelin Housing Ltd Investment Plan

Type of policy, service, function, project or strategy:

- Existing
- New / proposed
- Changed

What is the aim of your policy, service, function, project or strategy?

To establish a new management company 'Hambrook Street Ltd' to hold and operate the completed conversion of The Brewery, Hambrook Street. The company will be a standalone company wholly owned by Portsmouth City Council as principal

Has any consultation been undertaken for this proposal? What were the outcomes of the consultations? Has anything changed because of the consultation? Did this inform your proposal?

No consultation has been undertaken with the public or third parties. Consultation has only been undertaken with finance and legal directorates at Portsmouth City Council.

A - Communities and safety

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

A1-Crime - Will it make our city safer?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce crime, disorder, ASB and the fear of crime?
- How will it prevent the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances?
- How will it protect and support young people at risk of harm?
- How will it discourage re-offending?

If you want more information contact Lisa.Wills@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-spp-plan-2018-20.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How will you measure/check the impact of your proposal?

A - Communities and safety

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

A2-Housing - Will it provide good quality homes?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it increase good quality affordable housing, including social housing?
- How will it reduce the number of poor quality homes and accommodation?
- How will it produce well-insulated and sustainable buildings?
- How will it provide a mix of housing for different groups and needs?

If you want more information contact Daniel.Young@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/psh-providing-affordable-housing-in-portsmouth-april-19.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

Quality private rented accommodation will be delivered as a build to rent model along with affordable private rent units. The accommodation will be held and managed as a block as a private landlord to disrupt the local market

and deliver alternative housing delivery options.

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

Via an approved business case and plan. Ongoing monitoring of service contracts and providers, continual monitoring of financial performance and investment appraisal along with stakeholder engagement and monitoring key statistics such as tenant satisfaction, waiting list, tenant turnover, void rates.

A - Communities and safety

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

A3-Health - Will this help promote healthy, safe and independent living?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it improve physical and mental health?
- How will it improve quality of life?
- How will it encourage healthy lifestyle choices?
- How will it create healthy places? (Including workplaces)

If you want more information contact Dominique.Letouze@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cons-114.86-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-proof-2.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

A - Communities and safety

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

A4-Income deprivation and poverty-Will it consider income deprivation and reduce poverty?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it support those vulnerable to falling into poverty; e.g., single working age adults and lone parent households?
- How will it consider low-income communities, households and individuals?
- How will it support those unable to work?
- How will it support those with no educational qualifications?

If you want more information contact Mark.Sage@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-homelessness-strategy-2018-to-2023.pdf>
<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/health-and-care/health/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

A - Communities and safety

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

A5-Equality & diversity - Will it have any positive/negative impacts on the protected characteristics?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it impact on the protected characteristics-Positive or negative impact (Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, Age, disability, race/ethnicity, Sexual orientation, gender reassignment, sex, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership,socio-economic)
- What mitigation has been put in place to lessen any impacts or barriers removed?
- How will it help promote equality for a specific protected characteristic?

If you want more information contact gina.perryman@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cmu-equality-strategy-2019-22-final.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

B - Environment and climate change

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

B1-Carbon emissions - Will it reduce carbon emissions?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
- How will it provide renewable sources of energy?
- How will it reduce the need for motorised vehicle travel?
- How will it encourage and support residents to reduce carbon emissions?

If you want more information contact Tristan.thorn@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cmu-sustainability-strategy.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

B - Environment and climate change

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

B2-Energy use - Will it reduce energy use?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce water consumption?
- How will it reduce electricity consumption?
- How will it reduce gas consumption?
- How will it reduce the production of waste?

If you want more information contact Triston.thorn@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-portsmouth-plan-post-adoption.pdf>

<https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s24685/Home%20Energy%20Appendix%201%20-%20Energy%20and%20water%20at%20home%20-%20Strategy%202019-25.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

The Brewery, Hambrook Street has been designed to provide block heating and water management services. It will incorporate caps to water consumption for each apartment, energy saving solutions to lighting in communal areas and heating provided by air source heat pumps. No gas will be provided on site.

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

The asset will be held and management operational costs monitored. BREAM and EPC certificates will be obtained on completion.

B - Environment and climate change

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

B3 - Climate change mitigation and flooding-Will it proactively mitigate against a changing climate and flooding?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it minimise flood risk from both coastal and surface flooding in the future?
- How will it protect properties and buildings from flooding?
- How will it make local people aware of the risk from flooding?
- How will it mitigate for future changes in temperature and extreme weather events?

If you want more information contact Tristan.thorn@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/env-surface-water-management-plan-2019.pdf>

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-flood-risk-management-plan.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

B - Environment and climate change

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

B4-Natural environment-Will it ensure public spaces are greener, more sustainable and well-maintained?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it encourage biodiversity and protect habitats?
- How will it preserve natural sites?
- How will it conserve and enhance natural species?

If you want more information contact Daniel.Young@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-solent-recreation-mitigation-strategy-dec-17.pdf>

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-portsmouth-plan-post-adoption.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

Page 202

B - Environment and climate change

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

B5-Air quality - Will it improve air quality?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce motor vehicle traffic congestion?
- How will it reduce emissions of key pollutants?
- How will it discourage the idling of motor vehicles?
- How will it reduce reliance on private car use?

If you want more information contact Hayley.Trower@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/env-aq-air-quality-plan-outline-business-case.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

B - Environment and climate change

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

B6-Transport - Will it improve road safety and transport for the whole community?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users over users of private vehicles?
- How will it allocate street space to ensure children and older people can walk and cycle safely in the area?
- How will it increase the proportion of journeys made using sustainable and active transport?
- How will it reduce the risk of traffic collisions, and near misses, with pedestrians and cyclists?

If you want more information contact Pam.Turton@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/travel/local-transport-plan-3>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

B7-Waste management - Will it increase recycling and reduce the production of waste?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it reduce household waste and consumption?
- How will it increase recycling?
- How will it reduce industrial and construction waste?

If you want more information contact Steven.Russell@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://documents.hants.gov.uk/mineralsandwaste/HampshireMineralsWastePlanADOPTED.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

C - Regeneration of our city

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

C1-Culture and heritage - Will it promote, protect and enhance our culture and heritage?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it protect areas of cultural value?
- How will it protect listed buildings?
- How will it encourage events and attractions?
- How will it make Portsmouth a city people want to live in?

If you want more information contact Claire.Looney@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/pln-portsmouth-plan-post-adoption.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

C - Regeneration of our city

Yes

No

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

C2-Employment and opportunities - Will it promote the development of a skilled workforce?

In thinking about this question:

- How will it improve qualifications and skills for local people?
- How will it reduce unemployment?
- How will it create high quality jobs?
- How will it improve earnings?

If you want more information contact Mark.Pembleton@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-regeneration-strategy.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?

Page 205

Is your policy/proposal relevant to the following questions?

C3 - Economy - Will it encourage businesses to invest in the city, support sustainable growth and regeneration?



In thinking about this question:

- How will it encourage the development of key industries?
- How will it improve the local economy?
- How will it create valuable employment opportunities for local people?
- How will it promote employment and growth in the city?

If you want more information contact Mark.Pembleton@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or go to:

<https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/documents-external/cou-regeneration-strategy.pdf>

Please expand on the impact your policy/proposal will have, and how you propose to mitigate any negative impacts?

This will be the first build to rent development to come forward in the city. Whilst the development at Hambrook Street is small at only 17 units it will deliver high quality accommodation and levels of service as a single block management and landlord. This will encourage further development and investment in the City for residential build to rent.

How are you going to measure/check the impact of your proposal?
Periodic engagement with investors and fund managers to assess the investment value against expected industry standards.
Continued discussion and engagement with developers to encourage further investment.

Q8 - Who was involved in the Integrated impact assessment?

Regeneration

This IIA has been approved by: Tristan Samuels

Contact number:

Date:

Agenda Item 13



Title of meeting:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	26 th July 2022
Subject:	Ravelin Group of Companies - Quarter Four December 2021 to March 2022 update report
Report by:	Regeneration
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The report is provided in line with the shareholders requests for further detailed reporting and the advice on good governance in local authority wholly owned companies.
- 1.2. The report will provide updates as follows:
 - 1.2.1. To update the Cabinet on the City Council's ownership of shares in Ravelin Group Limited ("RGL") and subsidiary companies Ravelin Housing Limited ("RHL") and Ravelin Property Limited ("RPL").
 - 1.2.2. To provide key highlights from RHL on individual projects updating on activities undertaken during the fourth quarter (December 2021 to March 2022).
 - 1.2.3. To report on the companies unaudited Micro Entity Financial Statements, for the accounting period ending 31st March 2022.

2. Recommendations

That the Cabinet, as shareholder is: -

- 2.1. To note and approve the Q4 2021/22 Quarterly Update report as submitted to Cabinet by the Company at **Appendix One**.
- 2.2. To note and approve the financial accounts for the Company for the period ending 31 March 2022, at **Appendix Two**.
- 2.3. To note the progress reported on the existing project at Brewery House, Hambrook Street.

- 2.4. Note the appointment of the two Non-Executive Directors to RHL and the formal board meeting that was held for both RHL and RGL on 12th April 2022.
- 2.5. Note that the engagement and collaboration of the Company with the Council on the Horatio and Leamington private Build-to-Rent units in Somerstown is progressing in-line with the approved development pipeline in the five-year business plan for the Company.
- 2.6. Note the Director of Regeneration is no longer a board member of the Ravelin Group and has been replaced by the Acting Director for Property and Development in line with the decision made by the Board on 12th April 2022. The change allows the Director of Regeneration to act unencumbered in supporting the Shareholder in any required commercial decision making.

3. Background

- 3.1. On 28 February 2019, Cabinet approved the business case for the establishment of RHL to act as a property development company for the Council.
- 3.2. On 15 December 2021, Cabinet Sub-Committee approved the Ravelin Housing Limited five-year Business Plan and Investment and Development Plan.
- 3.3. On 12 April 2022, the City Council entered into a Shareholders' agreement with (a) Ravelin Group Limited and (b) Ravelin Housing Limited which sets out that the group of companies has been established for commercial and profit-making purposes, to carry out the business in accordance with the agreements and that the parties had entered into the agreements to regulate the manner in which the companies carry out their business.
- 3.4. The Shareholders Agreements set out details for the reporting requirements of the Company which includes the need to submit to the Council a quarterly project update report on activities and a report on financial accounts.

4. Reasons for recommendations

- 4.1. The reports in Appendix One and Two are required of the Companies under their respective Articles of Association (i.e., their own constitution) and the Shareholder Agreements with the Council.
- 4.2. The reports have been scrutinised by the Director of Regeneration, the Director of Finance and S151 Officer on behalf of the Council. The Officers are comfortable that the companies are operating within the parameters of the Business Plan approved by the Cabinet in December 2021 and have no concerns to raise in relation to their performance.
- 4.3. Although disappointing to note the delays to the target date for practical completion of the Brewery, Hambrook Street, it is accepted that this is due to unforeseen circumstances. Therefore, Council Officers are content that the project remains on track and within budget and will continue to keep progress under review.

5. Integrated impact assessment

- 5.1. An integrated impact assessment is not required as the recommendations do not directly impact on service or policy delivery. Any changes made arising from this report would be subject to investigation in their own right.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1. The Council are sole shareholder for Ravelin Group Limited, a dormant parent company which is the 100% owner of:
- Ravelin Property Limited (Dormant company i.e., not trading)
 - Ravelin Housing Trading Company (Trading)
- 6.2. The aim of this report is to ensure that Cabinet, on behalf of the Council, acting as Shareholder, is kept fully apprised of its investment in the companies, the progress of its activities and can understand the risk of the activity to the Council.
- 6.3. The Directors of RHL are required by their Articles of Association to ensure that they run the Company in accordance with the Business Plan approved by Cabinet in December 2021. This report, therefore, is an opportunity for Cabinet to hold the Directors of RHL to account for their performance.

7. Director of Finance's comments

- 7.1. There are no direct financial implications because of approving the recommendations within the report.
- 7.2. The Council are the sole shareholder for Ravelin Group Limited, the ultimate parent of Ravelin Group of Companies. The Ravelin Group of companies includes:
- Ravelin Group Limited (Dormant Parent Company)
 - Ravelin Property Limited (Dormant)
 - Ravelin Housing Trading Company (Trading)
- 7.3. The Council have in this quarter entered two borrowing agreements, called a Facility Agreement with Ravelin Housing Ltd for the funding of the business. The first agreement is for working capital (i.e., to enable the company to finance the everyday expenses of RHL). The second agreement is for specific developments (the development at Hambrook Street). The funding arrangements for Hambrook Street were released following approval of the Business Justification Case presented at Cabinet on 14 September 2020 conditional on approval of the Business Case by the S.151 Officer and the Director of Finance. Both Officers subsequently approved the Business Case and the Council entered into the Facilities Agreement to enable the development to commence.
- 7.4. The Shareholder is content that the assumptions in the Hambrook Street Business Case were robust and at this point in the project appear to be accurate and the City Council is confident that the development will be delivered within budget and that the Council will be able to recover the money lent to the Company.
- 7.5. The Council have reviewed the Company's accounts and are confident that the Company is financially stable at this point.

Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix One - Ravelin Shareholder Update Report Q4 2021-22

Appendix Two - Ravelin Financial Statements for period ending 31 March 2022

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....
Signed by:



Quarterly Shareholder Update Paper - Q4 December 2021 - March 2022

For Cabinet Meeting: 26th July 2022

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. This is a report of the Ravelin Group of Companies for the December 2021 to March 2022 quarter, approved by both Ravelin Housing Limited during a board meeting held 1st July 2022.
- 1.2. To update the Shareholder at Cabinet on the activities of Ravelin Group Ltd (RGL) and subsidiary companies, Ravelin Housing Limited (RHL) and Ravelin Property Limited (RPL), with financial accounting reported to 31st March 2022.

2. Background

- 2.1. Portsmouth City Council owns all shares in Ravelin Group Ltd and its subsidiary companies RHL and RPL.
- 2.2. The shareholder has appointed 3 Directors to RGL. A further 2 Directors have been appointed to RHL in addition to 2 external Non-Executive Directors (NED). The NEDs are not affiliated with the City Council as employees. The Directors of the company carry out the day to day running of the business with the Council, as shareholder, to have oversight of the company.
- 2.3. The business of Ravelin is to acquire, own, develop, build, manage, rent and sell land and property for commercial and profit-making purposes, in line with its approved business plan.
- 2.4. On 15th December 2021 Portsmouth City Council approved at Cabinet Sub-Committee the companies 5-year Business Plan and Investment and Development Plan, which sets out the growth strategies; pipeline of sites for development; it's investment criteria; budget and financial projections for the next 5 years.
- 2.5. As part of the Shareholders Agreement between Portsmouth City Council, Ravelin Group and Ravelin Housing Ltd the Company is to provide a quarterly highlight report, which is the basis of this paper.
- 2.6. RPL remains a dormant company.

3. Performance against Business Plan

The business plan sets out the planned activity program for RHL over 5-10 years. This report is providing an update on tranche one of the planned program.

3.1. Hambrook Street

3.1.1. Background



The conversion of the former Brewery on Hambrook Street will deliver 17 build-to-rent one and two-bedroom apartments, with 3 units being available as affordable private rent.

3.1.2. Programme

The project was awarded to principal contractor Ascia under a JCT Design and Build contract and the works are 64% complete in a 78-week programme. A delay of 3 months has been awarded as a result of a number of concealed asbestos findings which were separately notifiable to the HSE, resulting in works being delayed. Completion is anticipated for March 2023.

3.1.3. Financial

The contract was awarded to Ascia and whilst some additional costs have been approved, the project remains within budget with the additional cost falling within the contingency. The additional costs are a result of delays from the asbestos notifications and client improvements to the specification to enhance the end product and quality of finishes.

3.1.4. Management

A proposal will shortly be presented to the Shareholder recommending that a subsidiary company be formed called Hambrook Street Ltd.

The purpose of this company, subject to shareholder approval, is to acquire the developed asset from RHL and hold and manage the asset during its operational phase. The Council will be the sole shareholder for the company.

3.2. Horatio and Leamington



Collaboration with the Council on the development of Horatio and Leamington is ongoing. RHL continue to focus on opportunities to acquire and develop 'Block B' which could deliver up to 205 private rent or build-to-rent apartments.

The focus for the next quarter is to develop a business case to acquire the site. A business case can then be presented to the board and shareholder for consideration in November 2022.

Alongside this, a planning application for Block B will be prepared with the City Council for submission in October 2022.

3.3. Future pipeline

In line with the approved business plan, opportunities are to be explored with Portsmouth City Centre regeneration projects.

4. Financial Performance

Currently, RHL has one approved and active project, the conversion of the Brewery, Hambrook Street. This is funded through a Facility Loan agreement from Portsmouth City Council.

The accounts report a £1.39m loss in the year ending 31st March 2022. This is in line with the original business case as the sale of Hambrook Street will be the only form of trading income the company will receive which will be received once the project is completed in early 2023.

There are currently no concerns that the project will not be delivered within the approved Facility Agreement and Business Case parameters.

4.1. Annual Accounts Summary

The unaudited accounts up to 31st March 2022 of Ravelin Housing Ltd and Ravelin Group Ltd are attached at **Appendix One**.

Ravelin Group whilst incorporated is not a trading arm and therefore the accounts for this Company are prepared on a dormant basis.



4.2. Audit of Company Accounts

There is no requirement for Ravelin Housing Ltd's accounts to be formally audited. The company's turnover is less than £10.2m, the Companies assets are less than £5.2m and they have no employees.

The company are happy for the accounts to be audited by the shareholders internal auditors if they so wish.

The Ravelin Housing Ltd board approved the accounts and this report, during the board meeting held on 1st July 2022. Subject to Cabinet approval the accounts will then be submitted to Companies House for the 1st January 2023 deadline.

5. Governance

5.1. Non-Executive Directors

Andrew Tice and Jon Boast have been formally appointed and registered as Non-Executive Directors of Ravelin Housing Ltd.

5.2. Board Meetings

On 12 April 2022 Ravelin Group Ltd and Ravelin Housing Ltd held a formal board meeting.

On 1st July 2022 Ravelin Housing Ltd held a formal board meeting.

Ravelin Housing Limited
Unaudited Micro Entity Financial Statements
For the period ending 31 March 2022

Ravelin Housing Limited

Unaudited Micro Entity Financial Statements

Company registered number: 12644895

Period ending 31 March 2022

OFFICERS**Directors**

Thomas Southall

Wayne Layton

Registered Office

Civic Offices

Guildhall Square

Portsmouth

England, PO1 2AL

Ravelin Housing Limited

Unaudited Micro Entity Financial Statements

Company registered number: 12644895

Period ending 31 March 2022

This report was approved by the board of directors on 1st July 2022 and signed on behalf of the board by:



Wayne Layton - Director

Ravelin Housing Limited

Unaudited Micro Entity Financial Statements

Company registered number: 12644895

Period ending 31 March 2022

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Fixed Assets	0	0
Current Assets	29,472	1
Prepayments & accrued income	0	0
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(669,428)	0
Net Current Liabilities	(639,428)	1
Accruals & Deferred income	(755,352)	0
Total Net Liabilities	(1,395,308)	1
Capital and Reserves	(1,395,308)	1

For the period ending 31 March 2022, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to micro entities. For the period ending 30 June 2021, the company was dormant.

Directors responsibilities:

- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476;
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared and delivered in accordance with the provisions of the small companies regime applicable to micro entities.

The notes on pages 8 to 9 form part of these financial statements.

These financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on

1st July 2022 and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Wayne Layton - Director

Ravelin Housing Limited

Unaudited Micro Entity Financial Statements

Company registered number: 12644895

Period ending 31 March 2022

4 Average number of employees

The average number of persons employed by the company during the period was 0 (2021: 0)

5 Fixed assets

	2022	2021
	£	£
Cost		
At 1 April	0	0
Additions	0	0
At 31 March	0	0
Depreciation		
At 1 April	0	0
Charge for the year	0	0
At 31 March	0	0
Carrying amount		
At 31 March	0	0

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Title of meeting:	Governance and Audit and Standards Committee Cabinet City Council
Date of meeting:	Governance and Audit and Standards Committee 20 July 2022 Cabinet 26 July 2022 City Council 11 October 2022
Subject:	Treasury Management Outturn Report 2021/22
Report by:	Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer)
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	Yes

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy's (CIPFA) Prudential Code of Practice requires local authorities to calculate prudential indicators before the start of and after each financial year. The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management also requires the S.151 Officer to prepare an annual report on the outturn of the previous year. This information is shown in Appendix A of the report.

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To inform members and the wider community of the Council's treasury management activities in 2021/22 and of the Council's treasury management position as of 31 March 2022.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the actual prudential and treasury management indicators based on the unaudited accounts, as shown in Appendix B, be noted (an explanation of the prudential and treasury management indicators is contained in Appendix C).

4. Background

- 4.1 The Local Government Act 2003 requires local authorities to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

5. Reasons for Recommendations

- 5.1 The net cost of Treasury Management activities and the risks associated with those activities have a significant effect on the Council's overall finances. Consequently, in accordance with good governance, the S.151 Officer is required to report to the Council on those activities.

6. Integrated impact assessment

- 6.1 An integrated impact assessment is not required, as the recommendations do not directly impact on service or policy delivery. Any changes made arising from this report would be subject to investigation in their own right.

7. Legal implications

- 7.1 The S.151 Officer is required by the Local Government Act 1972 and by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 to ensure that the Council's budgeting, financial management, and accounting practices meet the relevant statutory and professional requirements. Members must have regard to and be aware of the wider duties placed on the Council by various statutes governing the conduct of its financial affairs.

8. Director of Finance & Resources (Section 151 Officer) comments

- 8.1 All financial considerations are contained within the body of the report and the attached appendices

.....
Signed by Director of Finance & Resources (Section 151 Officer)

Appendices:

Appendix A: Treasury Management Outturn Report
Appendix B: Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators
Appendix C: Explanation of Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
1 Information pertaining to the treasury management outturn	Financial Services
2	

TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT

1. GOVERNANCE

Treasury management activities were performed within the Prudential Indicators approved by the City Council.

Treasury management activities are also governed by the Treasury Management Policy Statement, Annual Minimum Revenue Provision for Debt Repayment Statement and Annual Investment Strategy approved by the City Council.

2. COMBINED BORROWING AND INVESTMENT POSITION (NET DEBT)

On 31 March 2022, the Council had gross debt including finance leases and private finance initiative (PFI) schemes of £763m and gross investments of £451m giving rise to a net debt of £312m. Major components of the Council's gross investments of £451m include the Council's general and earmarked reserves of £251m, and capital grants received but yet to be applied to finance capital expenditure of £147m.

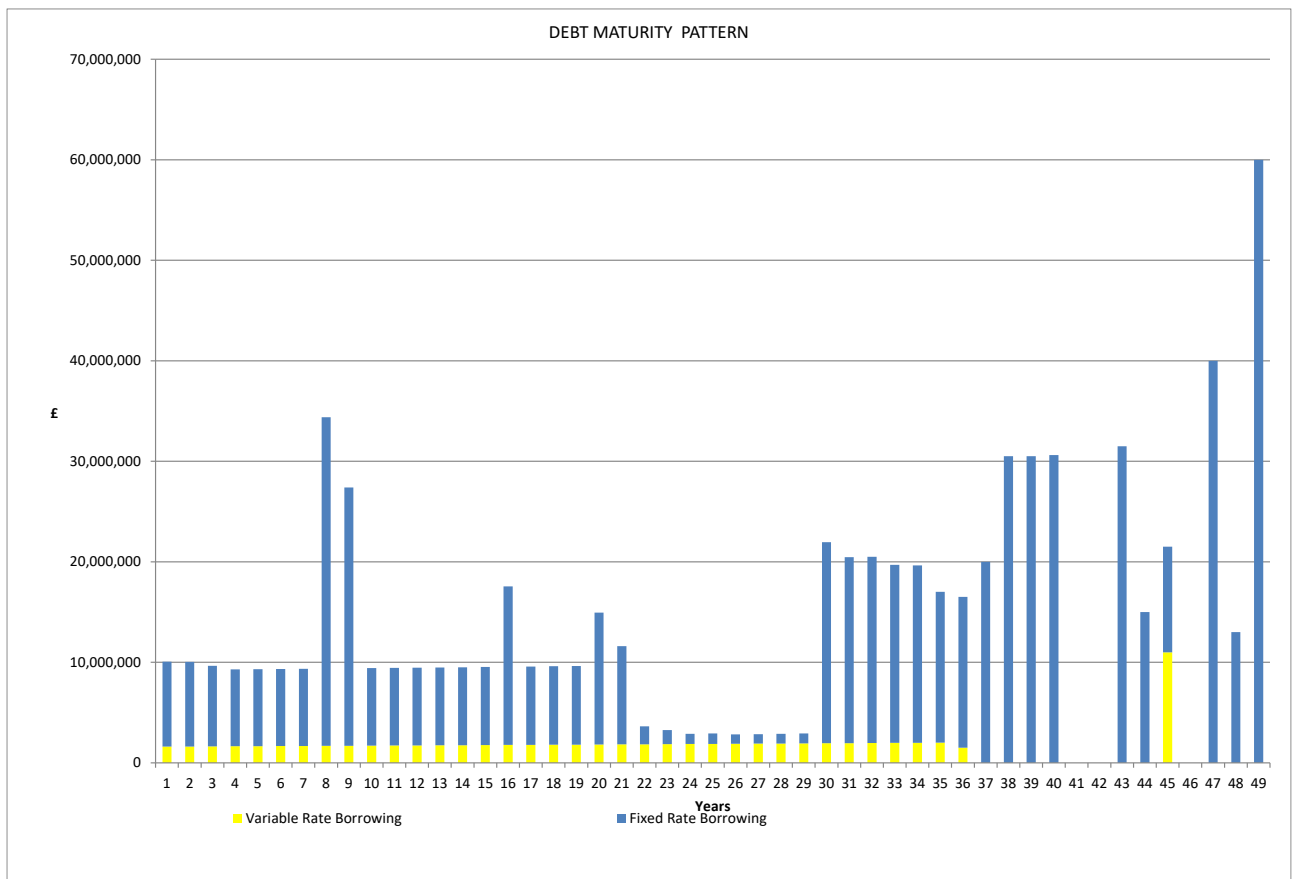
3. BORROWING ACTIVITY

Due to investment concerns, both counterparty risk and low investment returns, no borrowing was undertaken during the year.

The Council's underlying need to borrow on 31 March 2022 was £857m, £94m more than its actual gross debt of £763m. This shortfall of £94m is funded by internal borrowing from the Council's reserves and will need to be borrowed externally at some point in the future.

Debt rescheduling opportunities have been limited in the current economic climate and following the various increases in the margins added to gilt yields, which has affected PWLB new borrowing rates since October 2010. No debt rescheduling was undertaken during 2021/22.

The Council's gross debt on 31 March 2022 of £763m is within the Council's authorised limit (the maximum amount of borrowing permitted by the Council) of £876m and the Council's operational boundary (the maximum amount of borrowing that is expected) of £863m. The Council aims to have a reasonably even maturity profile so that the Council does not have to replace a large amount of borrowing in any particular year when interest rates might be high. The maturity profile of the Council's borrowing (see graph below) is within the limits contained in the Council's Treasury Management Policy.



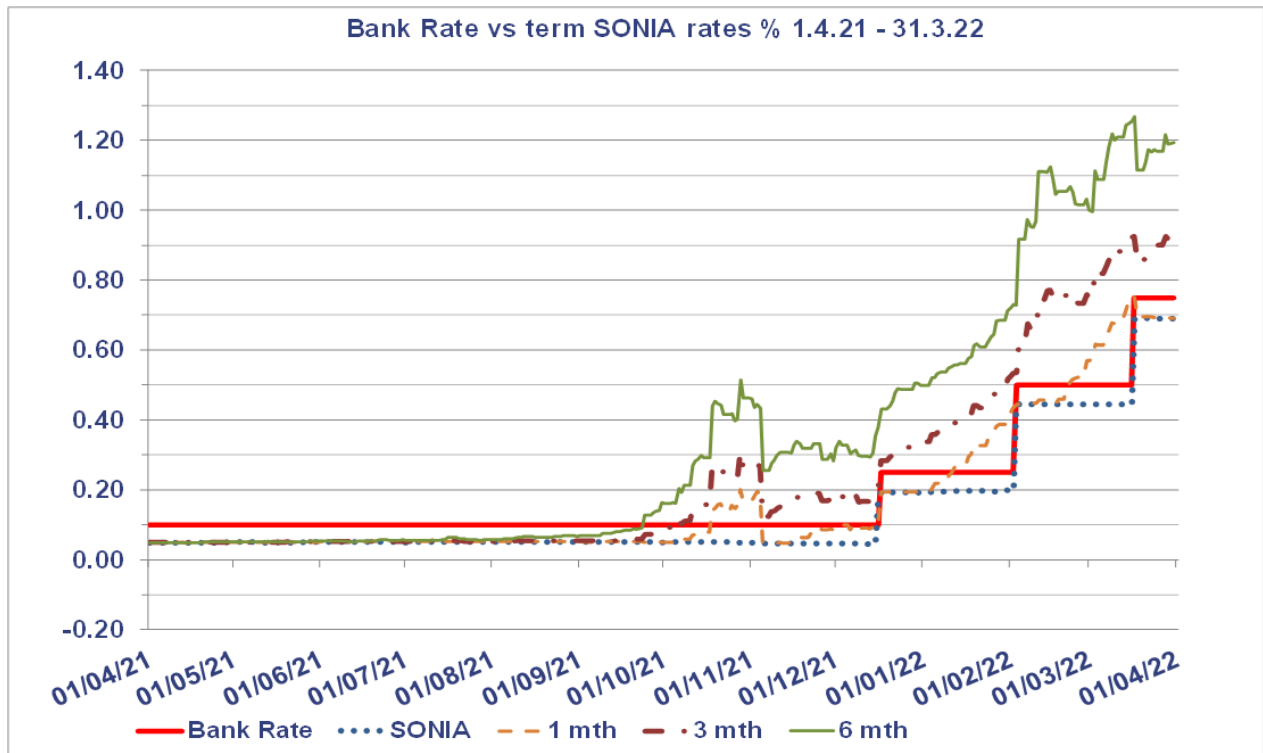
4. INVESTMENT ACTIVITY

Investment returns remained close to zero for much of 2021/22. The expectation for interest rates within the treasury management strategy for 2021/22 was that Bank Rate would remain at 0.1% until it was clear to the Bank of England that the emergency level of rates introduced at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic were no longer necessitated.

The Bank of England and the Government also maintained various monetary and fiscal measures, supplying the banking system and the economy with massive amounts of cheap credit so that banks could help cash-starved businesses to survive the various lockdowns/negative impact on their cashflow. The Government also supplied substantial amounts of finance to local authorities to pass on to businesses. This meant that for most of the year there was much more liquidity in financial markets than there was demand to borrow, with the consequent effect that investment earnings rates remained low until towards the turn of the year when inflation concerns indicated central banks, not just the Bank of England, would need to lift interest rates to combat the second-round effects of growing levels of inflation (CPI was 7.0% in March).

The Bank of England base rate was 0.10% until 16 December 2021 when it was increased to 0.25%. Further increases followed on 03 February 2022 to 0.50%, and on 17 March to 0.75%. This can be seen in the graph below, together with the effect on inter-bank lending rates.

Investment Benchmarking Data – Sterling Overnight Index Average 2021/22



While the Council has taken a cautious approach to investing, it is also fully appreciative of changes to regulatory requirements for financial institutions in terms of additional capital and liquidity that came about in the aftermath of the budgetary crisis. These requirements have provided a far stronger basis for financial institutions, with annual stress tests by regulators evidencing how institutions are now far more able to cope with extreme stressed market and economic conditions.

Investment balances have been kept to a minimum through the agreed strategy of using reserves and balances to support internal borrowing, rather than borrowing externally from the financial markets. External borrowing would have incurred an additional cost, due to the differential between borrowing and investment rates as illustrated in the charts shown above and below. Such an approach has also provided benefits in terms of reducing counterparty risk exposure, by having fewer investments placed in the financial markets.

The Council's investments averaged £449.5m during 2021/22. As of 31 March 2022, the Council had, £451.1m invested. The performance of the investment portfolio is summarized in the table below.

	Proportion of Portfolio	Return to December 2021	Return to March 2022
Externally Managed Funds Consisting of Tradable Instruments	3%	0.07%	-4.01%
Tradable Structured Interest-Bearing Deposit	2%	-1.76%	-1.21%
Vanilla Interest Bearing Deposits	95%	0.48%	0.48%
Overall Return	100%	0.42%	0.31%

There was a sharp decline in the overall performance of the portfolio in the last quarter of 2021/22 which was attributable to £12.6m invested in externally managed funds consisting of tradable instruments such as corporate bonds. This was caused primarily by a fall in the market value of existing tradable instruments driven by the increase in current interest rates. If a tradable instrument is paying interest at a rate below current market rates, its market value will be less if it is traded at that point. If a tradable instrument is held to maturity its value will still equal the principal invested plus accrued interest.

The Council also has £10m invested in a floating rate tradable structured interest-bearing note paying SONIA (0.69% on 31 March) plus 0.12% with a floor of 1.65% and a cap of 3.50% maturing on 07 June 2023. This note has paid 1.65% since inception. This was a good rate when the note was purchased in June 2018.

The bulk of the investment portfolio, 95%, is invested in vanilla interest-bearing deposits that have generated an average return of 0.48% through 2021/22.

27% of the investment portfolio matures in the first quarter of 2022/23, and this will provide the opportunity to re-invest funds at the higher rates available now.

5. REVENUE COSTS OF TREASURY MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES IN 2021/22

Expenditure on treasury management activities in both the General Fund and the HRA against the revised budget is shown below.

	Revised Estimate 2021/22 £000	Actual 2021/22 £000	Variance +/- £000
Interest Payable:			
PWLB	19,257	19,257	-
Other Long-Term Loans	1,210	1,210	-
HCC Transferred Debt	284	279	(5)
Interest on Finance Lease	191	191	-
Interest on Service	5,149	5,149	-
Concession Arrangements (including PFIs)			
Interest Payable to External Organisations	9	10	1
Premiums and Discounts on Early Redemption of Debt	100	100	-
	26,200	26,196	(4)
Deduct			
Investment Income:			
Interest on Investments	(1,272)	(1,414)	(142)
Other interest receivable	(1,576)	(1,576)	-
	23,352	23,206	(146)
Provision for Repayment of Debt	10,084	10,214	130
Debt Management Costs	549	560	11
	33,985	33,980	(5)

Interest on investments was £142,000 higher than the budget. Although there was a sharp fall in the market value of tradable investments, the returns on new vanilla interest bearing deposits increased because of anticipation in the financial markets that there would be increases in the Bank of England's base rate.

The provision for the repayment of debt was £130,000 higher than the budget. This was due to additional provision having to be made because of decreases in the market value of some investment properties. Overall, though, the market value of the investment property portfolio did increase.

Overall net treasury management costs were £5,000 above the revised budget.

PRUDENTIAL AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

1. Capital financing requirement	Original Estimate	Revised Estimate	Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Fund	720,426	655,251	628,168
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	224,090	207,608	228,737
Total	944,516	862,859	856,905
2. Authorised Limit	Original Limit	Revised Limit	Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Long Term Borrowing	911,532	824,971	711,272
Other Long Term Liabilities	51,340	51,340	51,340
Total	962,872	876,311	762,612
3. Operational Boundary	Original Limit	Revised Limit	Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Long Term Borrowing	893,176	811,519	711,272
Other Long Term Liabilities	51,340	51,340	51,340
Total	944,516	862,859	762,612
4. Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream	Original Estimate	Revised Estimate	Actual
General Fund	18.9%	16.7%	16.0%
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	7.0%	6.5%	6.3%
5. Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Actual
Under 12 months	0%	10%	1%
12 months and within 24 months	0%	10%	1%
24 months and within 5 years	0%	10%	4%
5 years and within 10 years	0%	20%	13%
10 years and within 20 years	0%	30%	14%
20 years and within 30 years	0%	40%	6%
30 years and within 40 years	0%	40%	34%
Over 40 years	0%	50%	27%
6. Maturity Structure of Variable Rate Borrowing	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Actual
Under 12 months	0%	10%	2%
12 months and within 24 months	0%	10%	2%
24 months and within 5 years	0%	10%	7%
5 years and within 10 years	0%	20%	11%
10 years and within 20 years	0%	30%	23%
20 years and within 30 years	0%	40%	25%
30 years and within 40 years	0%	40%	15%
Over 40 years	0%	40%	15%
7. Principal sums invested over 365 days	Original Limit	Revised Limit	Actual
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Maturing after 31/3/2023	134,000	125,000	48,325
Maturing after 31/3/2024	103,000	50,000	8,800
Maturing after 31/3/2025	-	50,000	4,800

APPENDIX C

PRUDENTIAL AND TREASURY MANAGEMENT INDICATORS

1. ACTUAL CAPITAL FINANCING REQUIREMENT

This represents the underlying requirement to borrow for capital expenditure. It takes the total value of the City Council's fixed assets and determines the amount that has yet to be repaid or provided for within the Council's accounts.

The capital financing requirement is increased each year by any new borrowing and reduced by any provision for the repayment of debt. Broadly, the higher the capital financing requirement, the higher the amount that is required to be set aside for the repayment of debt in the following year.

2. AUTHORISED LIMIT

The authorised limit for external debt is the maximum amount of debt which the authority may legally have outstanding at any time. The authorised limit includes headroom to enable the Council to take advantage of unexpected movements in interest rates and to accommodate any short-term debt or unusual cash movements that could arise during the year.

3. OPERATIONAL BOUNDARY

The Operational Boundary is based on the probable external debt during the year. It is not a limit but acts as a warning mechanism to prevent the authorised limit (above) being breached.

4. RATIO OF FINANCING COSTS TO NET REVENUE STREAM 2021/22

This ratio reflects the annual cost of financing net debt as a proportion of the total revenue financing received. It therefore represents the proportion of the City Council's expenditure that is largely fixed and committed to repaying debt. The higher the ratio, the lower the flexibility there is to shift resources to priority areas and/or reduce expenditure to meet funding shortfalls.

For the General Fund, this is the annual cost of financing debt as a proportion of total income received from General Government Grants, Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax.

The ratio of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) financing costs to net revenue stream is the annual cost of financing capital expenditure, as a proportion of total gross income received including housing rents and charges.

5. MATURITY STRUCTURE OF FIXED RATE BORROWING

The Council aims to have a reasonably even debt maturity profile so that it is not unduly exposed to refinancing risk in any particular year when interest rates may be high. The maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing matters less in future years as inflation will reduce the real value of the sums to be repaid.

6. MATURITY STRUCTURE OF VARIABLE RATE BORROWING

Variable rate borrowing could expose the Council to budgetary pressure if the interest rates increase. The maturity structure of variable rate borrowing matters less in future years as inflation will reduce the real value of the liability.

7. PRINCIPAL SUMS INVESTED FOR OVER 365 DAYS

Investing long term at fixed rates provides certainty of income and reduces the risk of interest rates falling.

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