



Public Document Pack

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29 November 2021

POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Policy and Finance Committee will be held in **The Council Chamber & Blue Room, Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, BN17 5LF** on **Thursday 9 December 2021 at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Gunner (Chair), Pendleton (Vice-Chair), Cooper, Dixon, Oppler, Roberts, Seex, Stanley and Dr Walsh

PLEASE NOTE: Subject to Covid-19 Risk Assessments members of the public are advised of the following:

Where public meetings are being held at the Arun Civic Centre, in order to best manage safe space available, members of the public are in the first instance asked to watch the meeting online via the Council's Committee pages. You can do this by clicking on this link: **[Arun District Council Corporate Policy & Performance Committee 9th December](#)**

- a) Where a member of the public has registered a request to take part in Public Question Time, they will be invited to submit the question in advance of the meeting to be read out by an Officer. There will be limited public access to this meeting and admission for public speakers will be by ticket only, bookable when submitting questions. Attendees will be asked to sit in an allocated seat in the public gallery on a first come first served basis. Only one ticket will be available for per person.
- b) It is recommended that all those attending take a lateral flow test prior to the meeting.
- c) All those attending the meeting will be required to wear face coverings and maintain safe distancing when in the building/meeting room.
- d) Members of the public must not attend any face to face meeting if they or a member of their household have Covid-19 symptoms.

Any members of the public wishing to address the Committee meeting during Public Question Time, will need to email Committees@arun.gov.uk by 5.15 pm on **Wednesday, 1 December 2021** in line with current Committee Meeting Procedure Rules. It will be at the Chief Executive's/Chair's discretion if any questions received after this deadline are considered.

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact Committees@arun.gov.uk.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are invited to make any declaration of pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda, and are reminded that they should re-declare their interest before consideration of the items or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the interest in
- b) whether it is a pecuniary/personal interest and/or prejudicial interest
- c) the nature of the interest

3. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 10)

The Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Corporate Policy and Performance Committee held on 14 October 2021, as attached.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

To receive questions from the public (for a period of up to 15 minutes)

6. MODERN SLAVERY POLICY STATEMENT [15 MINUTES]

(Pages 11 - 20)

From 2022 the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (section 54) will require Arun District Council to publish a 'Transparency in Supply Chains' Policy Statement. The purpose of the Statement is to demonstrate the actions the Council will take to identify, prevent and mitigate incidences of modern slavery and trafficking in its supply chain.

This report sets out for approval the Policy Statement and the registration of the Policy Statement with The Home Office.

7. BUSINESS RATES POOLING [15 MINUTES] (Pages 21 - 26)
- The report requests delegated authority for the Group Head of Corporate Support, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to enter into a business rate pool with selected other West Sussex authorities. The delegation is required to ensure agreement can be reached on membership, financial and governance arrangements for the pool and an application can be made to the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) by the required deadlines.
8. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT [30 MINUTES] (Pages 27 - 44)
- The Budget Monitoring Report sets out the Capital, Housing Revenue and General Fund Revenue budget performance to the end of September 2021.
9. LEVELLING UP FUND DELIVERY SUPPORT [5 MINUTES] (Pages 45 - 48)
- This report recommends the appointment of temporary staff resource to enable the delivery of the projects to be funded from the £19 million awarded to the Council from the Government's Levelling Up Fund. It also outlines how these will be funded.
10. CORPORATE PLAN AND SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN 2018-2022 - QUARTER TWO PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2021 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 [30 MINUTES] (Pages 49 - 58)
- This is an update report setting out the Q2 performance outturn for the Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plan performance indicators for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021.
11. RESIDENTS' SATISFACTION SURVEY 2021 [30 MINUTES] (Pages 59 - 108)
- Each year the Council undertakes a Residents Satisfaction Survey as part of the Council's performance framework.
- The Residents' Satisfaction Survey for 2020/21 was undertaken between 28 June and 25 July 2021. The Council instructed BMG Research to undertake the survey.
- This report sets out the main findings of the survey for review by Members.

ITEMS PUT FORWARD FROM SERVICE COMMITTEES

12. ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE - 17 NOVEMBER 2021 [5 MINUTES] (Pages 109 - 118)

The Committee is asked to consider recommendations from the meeting of the Environment Committee held on 17 November 2021. The minutes are attached.

There are recommendations at:

- Minute 448 [Empty Property Assistance Programme]
- Minute 450 [Annual Engineering Service Review]

To access these reports, please click on this link: [Environment Committee Reports](#)

OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

There are no items for this meeting.

13. WORK PROGRAMME [5 MINUTES] (Pages 119 - 122)

A copy of the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of 2021/22 is attached for information.

Note : If Members have any detailed questions, they are reminded that they need to inform the Chair and relevant Director in advance of the meeting.

Note : Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings – The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. This meeting may therefore be recorded, filmed or broadcast by video or audio, by third parties. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and as available via the following link [PART 8 - Section 5 Filming Photographic Protocol.pdf \(arun.gov.uk\)](#).

Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

Subject to approval at the next Corporate Policy and Performance Committee meeting

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CORPORATE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

14 October 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Gunner (Chair), Pendleton (Vice-Chair), Cooper, Dixon, Roberts, Stanley and Dr Walsh

Councillor Thurston was in attendance at the meeting.

385. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting of the Corporate Policy & Performance Committee.

386. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence had been received from Councillors Oppler and Seex.

387. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

388. MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting of the Committee held on 1 September 2021 were approved by the Committee as a correct record and were signed by the Chair.

389. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The Chair confirmed that there were no urgent items for this meeting.

390. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no questions had been submitted for this meeting.

391. DRAFT PUBLIC CONSULTATION DOCUMENT - COUNCIL VISION 2022-2026

The Group Head of Policy presented a report updating the Committee on the preparation of the Council's new Vision document which set the framework for the full Corporate Plan covering the period 2022-26. Following a series of themed workshops held over the summer, attended by 37 Councillors, the Vision document had been developed reflecting the views of Members that had participated and it set out what should be the Council's high-level priorities for 2022-26, prior to a one month consultation period which would commence soon, subject to the Committee's approval.

Members, staff and external partners would also have a further opportunity to comment. At this meeting Members were being asked to approve the key content of this document to allow the public consultation to proceed.

Members then took part in a full debate on the item where various points were raised:

- Whether Members would have the opportunity to see the finished document before it went out for public consultation. It was explained that it was necessary to agree the content first before finalising the look of the document. The Committee would be given the opportunity to see this before consultation commenced.
- Would a more public facing document be designed for the purpose of consultation – it was essential for it to be appealing, inviting and understandable. The Chair provided reassurance that work had already commenced producing a final version
- Digital access and whether comment could be made online
- It was pointed out that on 'Improving the Wellbeing of Arun' (5) the word 'services' had been missed
- On the 'Delivering the right homes in the right places' section - the need to maintain, rather than just provide, social housing to a high standard and the absence of this – could this be rectified? The Committee was happy to have this included as how this would happen.
- Whether within the 'Improving the wellbeing of Arun' section, if reference should be made, as an overall aim, to the 'arts' in Bognor Regis and Littlehampton which were essential to the physical and mental health of residents.
- The need for reference to be made to empty homes and the utilisation of empty and vacant homes for a good proportion of the year – this was a priority and should be included as an overall aim under 'Delivering the right homes in the right places'.
- There needed to be more specific reference to creating a digital sector, an important aspiration for the District, in meeting the need to diversify the economy especially after the experiences of the Pandemic
- Within the first overall aim [Work with other agencies and services to focus on Arun's areas of greatest inequality and to encourage healthy and active lifestyles] of the 'Improving the Wellbeing of Arun' section, whether 'inequality' should be replaced by 'deprivation' or whether both should appear in the document
- Using 'ensure' rather than 'working to' in 'how' sections as the latter implied a more leisurely approach and some statements needed strengthening
- The first overall aim of the 'Supporting our environment to support us' section, and whether the wording could be shifted around to change the sentiment to reflect the Council taking bold action rather than seeking justification

Having received responses to the queries raised by the Group Head of Policy, the Chair confirmed that he supported them and that they should be included in the revised draft to be circulated again to the Committee prior to public consultation commencing.

Councillor Pendleton then proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Dixon.

The Committee

RESOLVED - That

- (1) The content of the public consultation document as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, including the suggestions made at the meeting, be agreed;
- (2) Delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Policy to agree the final document and covering letter in consultation with the Chair of the Corporate Policy & Performance Committee; and
- (3) Delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Policy to carry out the consultation during Autumn 2021.

392. CARBON REDUCTION STRATEGY

The Climate Change & Sustainability Manager presented a report which reminded Members that back in January 2020, the Council had declared a Climate Emergency and in response to this had set an objective to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. In progressing this work, a carbon audit had been undertaken by consultants, CO2 Analysis, to analyse the Council's carbon emissions and so that a Strategy could be proposed to achieve the Council's objectives and to steer the Council in the direction to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. The work undertaken had included a detailed assessment of the Council's Scope 1 (emissions directly attributed to burning of fuels), Scope 2 (indirect emissions from the generation of purchased electricity and directly controlled by the Council) and Scope 3 emissions (from the activities of the Council but occurring from sources not owned or controlled by the Council) as well as audits of the Council's corporate buildings and housing stock to calculate the Council's carbon footprint.

It was explained that no emissions generated from the Housing portfolio had been included within the audit undertaken. Over the coming months more detailed analysis would be undertaken to inform the Council's strategic approach and to provide a roadmap on how such targets would be achieved.

A detailed action plan was in the process of being developed which would showcase what the Council needed to and when and it was confirmed that this would be brought to the Committee in February 2022 for approval.

The Chair also welcomed consultants from CO2 Analysis who had joined the meeting virtually to respond to questions raised by the Committee.

A summary of the debate is set out below:

- Much praise was given for the report which had been well presented and easy to understand, whilst providing a confident and realistic first step approach
- What the Council could do to actively influence partners to be more ambitious in their carbon net zero targets, especially when most of the Council's emissions were through its partners in the supply chain. Members were reassured that the Council was in a good place with its work as it was pushing hard to address emissions in Scope 3, many other local authorities were only addressing Scopes 1 and 2.
- Whether the £200,000 figure in Recommendation (b) was sufficient? It was explained that this figure would allow the Council to bring in the specialist advice that it needed. The Action Plan would then identify any further funding required. Recommendation (b) provided a healthy starting point.
- How could the Council influence the partners that it worked with such as Freedom Leisure who had a net zero carbon target of 2050 rather than 2030? Councillors were reassured that Freedom Leisure was very keen to reduce its carbon footprint as this made good business sense. The Council would work with them, and other buildings to improve the fabric and the technology to heat these buildings. In terms of encouraging the rest of the Council's supply chain, the Council would work through Procurement Policies, to ensure that carbon emissions were being addressed.
- The employee commute was of interest, especially now that employees were returning to the office following the pandemic and having worked from home. The idea of introducing more imaginative recruitment packages was mentioned to help reduce the Council's carbon footprint, for example lower levels of salary for remote workers to avoid commuting whilst providing opportunities to enhance the work life balance. The Director of Services confirmed that a number of staff employed during the pandemic had been recruited using this type of model.
 - The ambition to be net zero by 2050 - should this be brought forward by 5-10 years as a target to inject a certain urgency, and as the Council was delivering on its 2030 target earlier than asked to do. In response, the Director of Services confirmed that this related to the social housing stock which would be tackled using a two stage approach. The first stage would involve increasing the energy efficiency of all social housing using a fabric first approach and ensuring that appropriate heating systems were installed. It was likely that there would be funding available for this provided by the Government. The second stage would be looking to undertake further upgrades to properties to meet Net Zero carbon standards. The Council was in the early stages of this work having completed a piece of work addressing what needed to be done with social housing and was looking at an application to the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund. This

would allow the Council to assess what it could realistically achieve and when. Further updates would be provided to the Committee.

- Why was there an emphasis to reduce single-use plastic, this was not understood? It was explained that large emissions were generated from producing them and then again in discarding them causing pollution to wildlife and habitats.
- Would the Strategy be circulated to all staff and Members so that they were aware of the work being undertaken and as it covered all departments and services? Reassurance was provided that this would take place to ensure all areas of the Council understood what needed to be done.
- Staff training to meet these targets was crucial, and feedback had been received from meetings already held. The consultants confirmed that they had undertaken work with the Council's Carbon Champions resulting in many ideas being discussed about how the Council could change processes to achieve targets.
- The need to begin more outward-facing work in the District as soon as possible.

Councillor Roberts then proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Cooper.

The Committee

RESOLVED

- (1) The Carbon Reduction Strategy be adopted;
- (2) The inclusion of £200,000 in the 2022/23 budget to support carbon reduction projects be endorsed;
- (3) Support be given to the Climate Change and Sustainability Manager to develop a plan to deliver the Carbon Reduction Strategy with appropriate targets to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030;
- (4) The Corporate Support Committee be requested to review the Council's Procurement Policy to ensure that carbon reduction is given appropriate consideration in the purchasing of all goods and services;
- (5) The Interim Group Head for Corporate Support be requested to review the Council's investment portfolio to determine the cost benefits of environmentally friendly funds;
- (6) The commissioning of specialist consultants to undertake detailed audits of the Council's estate be supported and prepare a programme of energy efficiency improvement projects; and

- (7) the strategic approach to the Council's housing stock be endorsed by improving the energy performance of the buildings by 2030 and achieving Net Zero for the portfolio by 2050.

393. FINANCIAL PROSPECTS 2021/22 TO 2025/26

The Interim Group Head for Corporate Support and Section 151 Officer presented a report updating Members on the medium-term financial forecast. The length of the forecast had been reduced to four years due to the continuing levels of uncertainty and lack of information in relation to Government funding making future years forecasting increasingly unreliable.

The report had been written in September 2021 with more information being confirmed when the spending review was announced on 27 October 2021. The model assumed a rollover settlement for 22/23 with major funding reform implemented in the next year, including a Business Rate Baseline Reset and the Fair Funding Review. This was by no means certain and other scenarios could include a roll over settlement over the next 3 years or a partial reform of business rates including a baseline reset – these were all a possibility.

The Council had benefitted significantly from the growth of Business Rates since the inception of the scheme and any delay in the reset of the baseline was to the Council's benefit.

The Interim Group Head of Corporate Support and Section 151 Officer concluded her presentation by explaining that that the only way to mitigate against the risk from the Government's funding reforms was to hold sufficient balances, to which end the Council had set aside £6.6million, providing opportunity to plan without having to rush into any hasty decisions.

Members then took part in a full debate on the item where the following various points were raised:

- The recommendation for the Council Tax increase, whether the maximum increase had to be implemented and recognition that if it was it would most likely be in line with, or below, inflation later in the year
- Praise for staff action in ensuring the Council's finances were in the position they were in, especially due to the levels of uncertainty from Government

The Interim Group Head for Corporate Support and Section 151 Officer provided Members with responses to all points raised during the debate.

Councillor Dixon then proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Roberts.

The Committee

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The core assumptions set out in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the current financial position be agreed;
- (2) The significant risks to local government finance that have been outlined in the report be noted; and
- (3) Approval be given to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy to being used to set the Budgetary framework in preparing the 2022/23 Budget.

394. URGENT DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE UNDER THE SCHEME OF DELEGATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH PART 4, SECTION 2, PARAGRAPH 2.23 OF THE CONSTITUTION

The Chair explained that in accordance with the provisions of the Officer Scheme of Delegation in the Council's Constitution, Urgent Decisions that had been taken by the Chief Executive were being reported to this Committee for information purposes.

The Committee therefore received and noted the urgent decisions taken which were:

- (1) Supplementary Estimate to Cover Costs Awarded Against the Council in Appeal P/58/19/PL; and
- (2) Supplementary Estimate to Cover Costs for Defending Appeal on Land South of Barnham Station, Barnham – BN/142/20/OUT.

395. MOTION REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE FROM FULL COUNCIL

The Chair explained to the Committee that a Motion had been referred to it from the meeting of Full Council held on 15 September 2021.

This Motion was:

Introduction

Whilst recognising the good intentions of the Council as expressed in the Energy Efficiency strategy 2020-25, for measures such as improved insulation and energy saving measures, this Council believes that action now needs to be stepped up if we are to meet our carbon reduction targets. We recognise two major difficulties: a high level of fuel poverty in the district; and the need to understand the new and emerging technologies required to address the carbon reduction targets. However, Arun District has declared a Climate Emergency and aims to be a carbon neutral authority by 2030. That is only eight years away. In the last few years, Arun District Council has connected 200 council homes to the gas network, and in 2020, around 80 properties had gas boilers installed under the Safe and Warm Home grants scheme. And a few weeks ago, a special meeting of the Wellbeing and Residential committee was called at very short

notice to authorise a communal heating gas boiler serving 70 homes to be replaced at Bersted Green Court. This boiler was known to be reaching the end of its life and its replacement had been planned. Gas is a fossil fuel and causes high levels of carbon dioxide emissions. As we know, the government will be phasing out the use of gas for new housing in the next few years. It is still legally possible to carry on replacing boilers until around 2030 if they are assumed to last for up to twenty years; this would tie in with the government's target of reaching carbon neutral by 2050. However, at Arun we have set a higher target and so this does not set a good precedent. In fact, this decision alone will surely prevent us being a carbon neutral council by 2030 as we intended.

Motion

This Council requires that carbon neutral alternatives are found to replace heating systems in Council owned properties, rather than replacing gas boilers with new gas boilers. There are systems available and research for alternatives to suit a variety of properties should start now, so that Arun District Council is never again in the position of having to renew a gas boiler.

The Chair confirmed that having consulted with the original proposer of the Motion, Councillor Thurston, he wished to propose it with an amendment, additions have been shown in **bold** with deletions shown using ~~strikethrough~~:

This Council ~~requires that~~ **strongly supports the use of** carbon neutral alternatives ~~are found to replace~~ **when replacing existing** heating systems in Council owned properties ~~assets. rather than replacing gas boilers with new gas boilers.~~ There are systems available and research for alternatives to suit a variety of properties should start now, ~~so that Arun District Council is never again in the position of having to renew a gas boiler~~ **so officers are instructed to incorporate this into the HRA Business Plan and other strategies for the management of our assets so we can work towards the removal of all gas boilers in the interests of this council reaching its target of net zero emissions.**

Councillor Walsh then seconded this amendment.

The Chair invited debate on this amendment which has been summarised below:

- It was acknowledged that vital insulation and fabric work needed to commence now with the need to start research urgently and to look at carbon neutral alternatives – the aim of the Motion had been to highlight this urgent need
- The cross-Committee and cross-Service nature of the issues that needed to be addressed were acknowledged
- The need to cover installation for new properties as well as replacement of boilers in older properties
- The strengthening of the language to reflect its urgency
- Whether previous emergency boiler replacements could have been avoided with forward planning

- The need to insulate pre-existing properties before replacing gas boilers with carbon neutral alternatives, or risk leaving vulnerable residents with colder homes and higher bills, and whether insulation should be reprioritised
- How did this Motion address new Council owned assets?
- There was comment that the revised wording in the Motion was not strong enough – wording such as support needed to be replaced with ‘requires’.

In view of the debate that had taken place, a further amendment was proposed by Councillor Stanley to read as follows, further additions have been shown in **red** bold with deletions shown using ~~strikethrough~~:

This Council ~~requires that~~ **strongly supports the use of** carbon neutral alternatives ~~are found to replace~~ **when installing heating systems into newly acquired assets or existing council owned assets** ~~replacing existing heating systems in Council owned properties~~ ~~assets~~, rather than replacing gas boilers with new gas boilers. There are systems available and research for alternatives to suit a variety of properties should start now, so that Arun District Council is never again in the position of having to renew a gas boiler so **Officers are instructed to incorporate this into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and other strategies for the management of our assets so we can work towards the removal of all gas boilers in the interests of this Council reaching its target of net zero emissions.**

The Chair, Councillor Gunner, seconded this further amendment.

Debate on the further amendment was invited where it was agreed that the Council needed to reprioritise an insulation programme. It was hoped that the funding that the Council could receive would achieve this. There was strong support for this further amendment which was accepted by the seconder to the first amendment – Councillor Walsh.

Upon putting the amendment to the amendment to the vote, it was declared CARRIED.

The Committee, therefore

RESOLVED

This Council strongly supports the use of carbon neutral alternatives when installing heating systems into newly acquired assets or existing council owned assets. There are systems available and research for alternatives to suit a variety of properties should start now, so Officers are instructed to incorporate this into the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and other strategies for the management of our assets so we can work towards the removal of all gas boilers in the interests of this Council reaching its target of net zero emissions.

396. ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE - 23 SEPTEMBER 2021

The Chair confirmed that the minutes from the meeting of the Environment & Neighbourhood Services Committee were being presented to this Committee as there were recommendations for it to consider at Minute 289 [Changing Places Toilets Expression of Interest].

These were introduced by the Interim Chief Executive who explained that they involved adjusting the capital programme and revenue budget to increase the amount required for this toilet refurbishment.

Councillor Cooper then proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Councillor Stanley.

The Committee

RESOLVED - That

(1) The capital programme for toilet refurbishments is increased by up to £157k (depending on the amount of match funding required for the Changing Places Bid) to allow the existing programme to be delivered in 2022/23; and

(2) An additional £4,200 per toilet is included within the revenue budget (for a maximum of four toilets).

397. OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no feedback reports from Outside Bodies to present to this meeting.

398. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and noted its Work Programme covering the remainder of the Municipal Year.

The Climate Action Plan Update following discussion earlier in the meeting was added to the Work Programme for 10 February 2022 meeting.

(The meeting concluded at 7.29 pm)

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE ON 9 DECEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: MODERN SLAVERY POLICY STATEMENT

REPORT AUTHOR: Cathryn French, Safeguarding Officer
DATE: 11/11/2021
EXTN: 01903 737 828
AREA: Community Wellbeing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

From 2022 the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (section 54) will require Arun District Council to publish a 'Transparency in Supply Chains' Policy Statement. The purpose of the Statement is to demonstrate the actions the Council will take to identify, prevent and mitigate incidences of modern slavery and trafficking in its supply chain. This report sets out for approval the Policy Statement and the registration of the Policy Statement with The Home Office.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Policy & Finance Committee:

- 1) Adopt Arun District Council's Transparency in Supply Chains' (TISC) Policy Statement;
- 2) Request the Corporate Support Committee reviews the Council's Procurement Policy to ensure that supply chain transparency is given appropriate consideration in the purchasing of goods and services;
- 3) Require a break clause in contracts where Modern Slavery and Trafficking is identified and no remedial action is taken;
- 4) Support a procurement threshold of £100,000 for suppliers to evidence compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015; and
- 5) Support training in the principles of due diligence to mitigate any risk of exploitation in supply chains for front line officers and officers involved in the procurement of goods and services.

1.0 BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 Modern slavery is the illegal trade of humans for to profit off their labour by exploitation – labour, sexual or criminal. It includes slavery, domestic servitude, forced and compulsory labour. It is often hidden in plain sight. To tackle these crimes, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 ('the Act') was introduced which consolidates and clarifies modern slavery offences; toughens penalties and prosecution; and introduces greater support and protection for victims.
- 1.2 Section 52 of the Act imposes a statutory duty on public authorities, to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of Modern Slavery or Human Trafficking. The Council is a 'First Responder' under the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and requires the Council to make referrals to secure appropriate protection and support for victims.
- 1.3 Section 54 of the Act requires companies with an annual turnover above £36m and from 2022 public authorities to develop a Modern Slavery Statement to annually evidence the processes adopted in relation to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in its business and supply chains and the steps taken to assess and mitigate any risk.
- 1.4 The Council is uniquely placed with the wide range of goods procured and services delivered to ensure the community and the suppliers with whom the Council does business understand the risks of Modern Slavery in supply chains and take appropriate action to identify and address those risks.
- 1.5 The following sectors are considered as posing a high risk of slavery or human trafficking:
 - Security services
 - Cleaning
 - Catering
 - Construction
 - Health and Social care
 - Agriculture
 - Food supply
 - Nail bars
 - Car cleaning
- 1.6 Many of these sectors have a reliance upon low-skilled or unskilled labour, typically work that is low-paying and often carried out by vulnerable workers (women and children). The work is often characterised by its uncertain or temporary nature (e.g. seasonality or employment of agency workers).
- 1.7 Arun District Council procures goods and services which may be susceptible, either directly due to the nature of the work, or indirectly through supply chains (e.g., Cleaning, Waste collection, Grounds Maintenance, Leisure, Information and Communication Technologies, Stationery, Construction etc.). The Council therefore has a duty not only to demonstrate value for money in procurement of goods and services, but also to ensure that its supply chain is free from Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, particularly in areas of employment that may be susceptible to abuse.

<p>1.8 The Modern Slavery Policy Statement (Appendix 1) sets out Arun's commitment to the Act and the principles it will adopt to ensure the Council complies with its duty. It is proposed that the Policy Statement is adopted and reviewed annually, and that the Council's Procurement Policy is revised to ensure that supply chain transparency is given appropriate consideration in the purchasing of goods and services. Furthermore, it is proposed that training is given to those employees who are best placed to identify acts of Modern Slavery and those who procure goods and services to ensure that the Council is not inadvertently supporting unethical organisations.</p>																	
<p>2. PROPOSAL:</p> <p>It is proposed that the Policy and Finance Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Adopt Arun District Council's Transparency in Supply Chains' (TISC) Policy Statement. 2) Request the Corporate Support Committee review the Council's Procurement Policy to ensure that supply chain transparency is given appropriate consideration in the purchasing of goods and services; 3) Require a break clause in contracts where Modern Slavery and Trafficking is identified and no remedial action is taken; 4) Support a procurement threshold of £100,000 for suppliers to evidence compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015; and 5) Support training in the principles of due diligence to mitigate any risk of exploitation in supply chains for front line officers and officers involved in the procurement of goods and services. 																	
<p>3. OPTIONS:</p> <p>It is a legal requirement to approve, publish and register a Transparency in Supply Chains Policy Statement. The Policy and Finance Committee may support the proposals or propose changes to the Statement.</p>																	
<p>4. CONSULTATION:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 60%;">Has consultation been undertaken with:</th> <th style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">YES</th> <th style="width: 20%; text-align: center;">NO</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Relevant Town/Parish Council</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Relevant District Ward Councillors</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other groups/persons (please specify)</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO	Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓	Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓	Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓			
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Financial	✓																
Legal	✓																
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓															
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓															

Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain) Procurement Advice from Hampshire County Council, Pan Sussex Anti-Slavery Network, WSCC Community Safety Partnership and Chichester District Council	✓	

6. IMPLICATIONS:

Financial: The proposals will require the review and revisions to the Council's Procurement Policy.

Legal: It will be a legal requirement for the Council to publish and register a Transparency in Supply Chains Policy Statement. Service and supply contracts will need to reflect the Council's Transparency in Supply Chains Policy Statement.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To comply with the pending change in legislation and our statutory duty as a local authority.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Modern Slavery Legislation:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/30/contents/enacted>

Modern Slavery Act Guidance (2015):

[Modern Slavery Act Guidance \(2015\)](#)

Modern Slavery Statement:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/publish-an-annual-modern-slavery-statement>

Appendix 1

Arun District Council

Modern Slavery Policy Statement 2021-22

1 Policy Statement - Introduction

Modern Slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking, all of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.

Arun District Council (referred to as the Council herein) has a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery. The Council recognises its responsibilities under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and is fully committed to the prevention of slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities and to ensuring that its suppliers and supply chains hold the same high standards.

The Council has also signed up to the Modern Slavery Pledge and will adhere to its principles.

This modern slavery statement sets out the Council's commitment to:

- acting ethically and with due regard to Modern Slavery and Human trafficking
- identifying and meeting any training needs within the organisation
- working with partners to identify and map high-risk supply chains
- acknowledging the Council's duty to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of Slavery or Human Trafficking via the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) notification tool

2 Structure of the organisation

Arun District Council is a local authority in the public sector. The Council has 380 employees. To find out more about the Council <https://www.arun.gov.uk/>

The Council works with over 1,500 suppliers providing a wide range of goods and services. The value of contracts ranges from tens of pounds to millions. The Council has an approved procurement policy and measures in place to audit and monitor contracts.

3 Definition of Modern Slavery

Modern Slavery is the illegal trade of humans for to profit by exploitation – labour, sexual or criminal. It includes slavery, domestic servitude, forced and compulsory labour.

- 'slavery' is where ownership is exercised over a person
- 'servitude' involves coercion to oblige a person to provide services
- 'forced and compulsory labour' is where a person works or provides services on a non-voluntary basis under the threat of a penalty
- 'human trafficking' involves arranging or facilitating the travel of a person with a view to exploiting them

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 was introduced to consolidate and clarify modern slavery offences; toughen penalties and prosecution; and introduces greater support and protection for victims.

The Council is a 'First Responder' under the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and requires the Council to make referrals to secure appropriate protection and support for victims.

Section 52 of the Act imposes a statutory duty on public authorities, to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of Modern Slavery or Human Trafficking.

Section 54 of the Act requires companies with an annual turnover above £36m and from 2021 public authorities to develop a Modern Slavery Statement, also known as a Transparency in Supply Chains (TISC) statement. The statement will annually evidence the processes adopted in relation to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in its business and supply chains and the steps taken to assess and manage that risk.

4 Due Diligence

The Council is uniquely placed with the wide range of goods procured and services delivered to ensure the community and the suppliers with whom the Council does business understand the risks of Modern Slavery in supply chains and take appropriate action to identify and address those risks.

The Council will ensure that procurement policy is reviewed and revised to include appropriate actions and address the risk of Modern Slavery in its supply chains.

Due diligence should demonstrate the reasonable steps taken to avoid an offence being committed by taking all necessary measures to identify, prevent and mitigate incidences of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The policy requires the Council to commit to supply chain transparency in the services delivered and the goods or services procured by the Council.

To this end, the Council will expect all suppliers to have due regard towards the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and to have their own policy relating to working practices or provide sufficient evidence that their standards are in accordance with the Act, including their own supply chains.

5 Procurement

The Council is committed to improving its practices to combat Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking and take the following actions:

- Consider the harms of modern slavery and trafficking when tendering and awarding contracts and require tenderers to confirm that they are compliant with the Act
- To act within an agreed timescale if there is a concern raised regarding Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking with an existing contract/supplier (including an option to terminate the contract)
- Collaborate with other local authorities to ensure that Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking is tackled in partnership
- Require suppliers bidding for major contracts (£100,000+) to complete the Modern Slavery Assessment Tool
- Commit to act when victims of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking are identified

6 Arun District Council Policy

The following Arun District Council policies and procedures are key documents to support the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015:

- **Whistleblowing policy**
The Council has a Whistleblowing policy to encourage and enable employees, elected members, contractors, partners, or members of the public to raise serious concerns with the Council. The purpose of this policy is to make clear that such concerns can be reported without fear of victimisation, discrimination, or disadvantage.
- **Employee code of conduct**
The Council's Code of Conduct makes it clear to staff that they are expected to provide the highest possible standard of service to the public.
- **Member code of conduct**
This sets out the general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct.
- **Recruitment policy**
The Council's recruitment processes include the vetting of new employees which includes confirmation of identity and qualifications. References are sought for all employees and relevant checks carried out, including Disclosure and Barring Service checks for relevant positions.

- **Pay and Reward Policy**
The Council operates a transparent, consistent, and equitable pay arrangements for its employees. The policy sets out the key principles for establishing pay levels, the basis for determining salaries, pay progression and pay supplements.
- **Equality & Diversity Policy**
The Council is committed to increasing inclusion and providing equality of opportunity in all its activities and to ensuring that discrimination does not occur at any level.
- **Safeguarding Policy**
The Council has a comprehensive Safeguarding policy and operating procedures which set out the Council's duty to identify and report potential abuse, including signs of human trafficking and modern slavery.
- **Procurement Policy**
The Council have a process of properly acquiring the goods, supplies, and services the Council requires in order to operate and fulfil its duties as a local authority.

7 Responsibility for the Policy

The Council's Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring this Policy complies with the Council's legal and ethical obligations, and that all those under the Council's control also comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

The Group Head for Corporate Support has primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy, monitoring its use and effectiveness, dealing with any queries about it in capacity as a designated point of contact and auditing internal control systems and procedures to ensure they are effective in countering modern slavery

Management at all levels are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them understand and comply with this Policy and are given adequate and regular training on it and the issue of modern slavery in supply chains.

The Council will set out Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for the number of staff trained and the number of the suppliers contacted in our first year and will review this annually. Training will initially focus on those with procurement responsibility and key operational staff who may come into contact with victims through their dealings with the public.

8 Compliance with the Policy

The prevention, detection and reporting of modern slavery in any part of the Council's business or supply chains is the responsibility of all those working for the Council.

Any Councillor, employee, or person acting on behalf of the Council who suspects a breach of this Policy has occurred, must notify the Chief Executive or relevant Service manager, or report it in accordance with the Council’s Whistleblowing Policy and compliance with the Safeguarding Policy.

9 Communication and awareness of this Policy

The Council is committed to addressing the issue of modern slavery in its business and supply chains. This commitment will be communicated to all suppliers, contractors at the outset of its business relationship with them and reinforced as appropriate thereafter.

Training on the risks of modern slavery in supply chains, will be provided in the induction of all new staff who work for the Council and those with procurement responsibility. Bespoke training is provided to staff whose duties are more likely to expose them to the signs or symptoms of modern slavery.

Regular information and updates will be shared with staff and elected members via staff intranet.

It is a statutory duty for the council to upload this statement to the Home Office Modern Slavery registry.

This Transparency Statement and the Anti-Slavery pledge will be published on the Arun District Council website.

10 Breaches of this Policy

The Council may terminate our relationship with other individuals and organisations working on our behalf who is in breach this policy.

11 Approval

This statement is made under section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 for the financial year ending [31st March 2022].

This statement is approved by the Council’s Corporate Policy and Procurement Committee and will be uploaded to the Home Office registry and subject to an annual review.

Signed:

.....

Chair of the Policy and Finance Committee

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ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE ON 9 DECEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Business Rates Pooling

REPORT AUTHOR: Carolin Martlew, Interim Group Head of Corporate Support and s151 Officer

DATE: October 2021

EXTN: 37568

AREA: Corporate Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The report requests delegated authority for the Group Head of Corporate Support, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, to enter into a business rate pool with selected other West Sussex authorities. The delegation is required to ensure agreement can be reached on membership, financial and governance arrangements for the pool and an application can be made to the Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (DLEH&C) by the required deadlines.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Committee:

- Agree to Arun participating in a business rates pool in West Sussex with effect from 1 April 2022; and
- Grants delegated authority to the Interim Group Head of Corporate Support, in consultation with the Chair of the Policy and Finance Committee, to agree the terms of a business rate pool for West Sussex for 2022/23.

1. BACKGROUND:

Members will be aware that the current system for dealing with income from business rates (the business rate retention scheme) came into effect from 1st April 2013. Under the business rates retention scheme, local authorities are able to keep a proportion of the business rates that they collect. However, the system remains extremely complex with tariffs, top-ups, 'safety nets' and levies.

The scheme recognised that the size of authorities' business rates bases was varied and that authorities have very different resource needs, depending on their functions and demography. The scheme therefore provides that, each year, some business rates income is transferred between local authorities by means of top-ups or tariffs. The amount of funding from the business rate retention scheme that any Council can expect to keep in any given year is known as 'baseline funding'.

Councils are annually given a target income level for business rates (Business Rates Baseline) of which 50% is paid to HM Treasury and 10% is paid to the County Council. Where the Council's share of "business rates baseline" exceeds the "baseline funding" they become "tariff" Councils and have to pay over the surplus business rates to the Government. Where the "business rates baseline" is less than the "baseline funding, then the Councils are "top up" authorities who receive additional funds from the Government. Arun is a tariff authority whilst the County Council is a top up authority.

The scheme provides a safety net for authorities who, in any year, see significant reductions in their income from the rates retention scheme. This is currently set at 7.5% of baseline funding which is the maximum income that could be lost if business rate income is expected to be below the business rate baseline. This is an important consideration as business rates income may decline as Central Government support is withdrawn following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those Councils whose business rate income exceeds the 'baseline business rates' are entitled to keep a proportion of the surplus. This surplus is subject to a 'levy'. For Arun and most other Districts, this is set at 50%.

As part of the rates retention scheme, authorities can formally seek designation as a pool. This not only allows them to pool their resources under the scheme (which they could do anyway) and ensures they are treated as if they were a single entity for the purposes of calculating tariffs, top-ups, levies and safety net payments. There are several potential advantages to this approach:

- The pool may be financially better off than the individual Councils. The financial benefit occurs as the pool's levy rate is lower than the individual Councils' rates;
- The pool may be able to mitigate some of the risks associated with the system (such as local business relocating between Council areas);
- Pooling the rates income from growth across a wider and economically coherent area ensures that all authorities can benefit from economic growth across the wider area. This can mean that the strategic decisions that are needed about economic regeneration and infrastructure investment are easier to make.

The Council joined the West Sussex Business Rates Pool on 1 April 2015 and was a pool member until 31 March 2021. The pool was suspended for 2021/22 because of the financial risks to all the pool members arising from COVID-19.

An invitation has been received from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to re-introduce a pool for 2022/23 and this is considered below.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

DLUH&C has invited Councils to indicate preferred pooling arrangements for the financial year 2022-23. Proposals had to be received by DLUH&C by 8 October 2021 as it must make the necessary designations by the time of the 2022-23 provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. Unless designations are made by this date, a pool cannot be brought into existence for 2022-23. As the previous pool was dissolved on 31 March 2021, the West Sussex Councils will be forming a new pool.

As this is a new pool, the following information must be provided:

- Name of the lead authority;
- Full details of Membership;
- Arrangements for remaining pool balances in event of dissolution.

The principles of the previous pool remain appropriate:

- That no Council participating in the pool should be worse off as a result of being in the pool. Although this is the aim, it cannot be guaranteed as the no detriment principle has been removed;
- That the pool should facilitate better management of the risks associated with business rates;
- That the final membership of the pool should be drawn to enable the Councils within the County to maintain the maximum amount of business rates locally;
- That the membership of the pool should be based on an economically coherent area.

Rigorous governance arrangements should be in place for the pool. Agreement will be required on the use of any additional business rate income retained locally. A proportion of any additional income will be paid to the administering body to cover any administration costs, and the pool should build a contingency fund in case a surplus is not made by the pool and the safety net arrangements are triggered. Therefore, the details to be agreed are:

1. How much of a surplus should be held back to fund administration costs;
2. How much should be held back for a contingency fund; and
3. How should any remaining surplus be distributed.

Any financial gain will depend on the levy rate associated with the pool and this will be dependent upon which authorities make up the pool. As a result of this consideration could be given to a strategic fund being re-established, which can then be used to support county wide projects, particularly around economic growth linked to the Strategic Economic Plan, which benefits all Councils in West Sussex and not just those participating in the pool.

Both membership and governance arrangements are key to re-establishing a successful pool and given the time constraints, it is requested to grant delegated authority to the Group Head of Corporate Support, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee to finalise the agreement for the operation and governance arrangements for the pooling of business rates between local authorities in West Sussex for 2022/23.

West Sussex Finance Officers' Association (WSFOA) discussed this matter on 30 September 2021 and agreed in principle to recommence pooling from 1 April 2022, subject to Member approval and agreement of governance arrangements.

It is hoped that the provisional local government finance settlement for 2022/23 will be announced before this report is considered and it will be known if the application has been successful. Members will be verbally updated on this.

Financial Modelling has been undertaken on the pooling model to be pursued. This indicates that the most optimal pool would consist of:

- West Sussex County Council;
- Adur District Council;
- Arun District Council;
- Horsham District Council
- Mid-Sussex District Council.

This pool, assuming modelling is accurate, would produce business rates growth of £10.924m in West Sussex for 2022/23, resulting in a retained levy of £5.462m across the County.

3. OPTIONS:

To participate in the pool for 2022/23 subject to agreement being reached on arrangements; or

To opt not to participate in the pool for 2022/23.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	✓	
Legal	✓	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain) Other West Sussex Councils	✓	

6. IMPLICATIONS:

The main implications arising are financial. It is expected that if a pool can be agreed and approved for 2022/23, that extra Business Rates income can be retained in the County than if there is not a pool.

There is a risk however, that if income declines, then participating Councils will receive less income if income is not realised. This is partly mitigated by a clause in the Memorandum of Understanding for the Pool that no Council will be worse off in the pool than what it would be if pooling were not in place. The modelling indicates this is not likely. However, it is important that all participating Councils enter into agreement aware of the potential risks of doing so. If agreement is not reached, the Council can withdraw.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To enter into a West Sussex Business Rates Pool for 2022/23 with the aim of realising additional retained Business Rates income in the County.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Invitation from DLUH&C to Councils to form a Business Rates Pool for 2022/23;
Report to Cabinet; 13 October 2014; Business rates Pooling.

2022/23 Pool Modelling - based upon 2021/22 NNDR1								
Authority	Business Rates for purpose of safetynet/levy	Business Rates Growth (excludes authorities in safety net)	Business Rates for purpose of safetynet/levy	Business Rates Growth 20/21 Pool	Business Rates for purpose of safetynet/levy	Business Rates Growth Original Pool	Business Rates for purpose of safetynet/levy	Business Rates Growth Optimum Pool
Adur	8,146,619	1,253,712	8,146,619	1,253,712	8,146,619	1,253,712	8,146,619	1,253,712
Arun	16,876,583	4,165,085	16,876,583	4,165,085	16,876,583	4,165,085	16,876,583	4,165,085
Chichester	21,014,016	1,431,701	21,014,016		21,014,016	1,431,701	21,014,016	
Crawley	44,953,189	0	44,953,189		44,953,189		44,953,189	
Horsham	19,242,621	2,048,925	19,242,621	2,048,925	19,242,621		19,242,621	2,048,925
Mid Sussex	21,638,318	3,456,304	21,638,318		21,638,318		21,638,318	3,456,304
Worthing	14,035,918	1,115,379	14,035,918		14,035,918	1,115,379	14,035,918	
West Sussex								
	145,907,263	13,471,105	145,907,263	7,467,721	145,907,263	7,965,876	145,907,263	10,924,025
Pool:								
Baseline Funding (including WSCC)		93,831,547		86,744,818		89,637,138		88,887,090
Business Rates Baseline (including WSCC)		120,947,932		70,263,065		85,572,222		88,445,079
Pool levy percentage		22.42%		0.00%		0.00%		0.00%
Retained levy - all authorities with growth		not viable %>0		3,733,861		3,982,938		5,462,013

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE ON 9 DECEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Budget Monitoring Report to 30 September 2021

REPORT AUTHOR: Carolin Martlew, Interim Group Head of Corporate Support and S151 Officer

DATE: November 2021

EXTN: 01903 737568

AREA: Corporate Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The Budget Monitoring Report sets out the Capital, Housing Revenue and General Fund Revenue budget performance to the end of September 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Policy and Finance Committee approve that:

- (i) Any specific project related General Fund revenue underspend continues to be transferred to earmarked reserves as per previous policy to allow projects to be completed;
- (ii) The Housing Revenue Account repairs and maintenance (Planned and Responsive) budget be closely monitored to ensure that any necessary corrective action is taken if required; and
- (iii) The Capital, Asset Management and Projects programme be reviewed to determine future projections and deliverability of current projects.

1. BACKGROUND:

The Council approved a General Fund revenue total net expenditure budget of £25.733 million; a Housing Revenue Account revenue total expenditure budget of £18.980 million; and a capital budget of £7.960 million for the year 2021/22. This report provides information to enable actual spending and income to be monitored against profiled budget for the period to 30 September 2021.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

The Committee is requested to consider the budget monitoring report in Appendix 1. The report provides information on a management by exception basis to enable the reader to understand the overall performance of the council within the context of the budget book summary. The report highlights the significant additional expenditure and loss of income due to the Covid-19 pandemic and any other factors.

3. OPTIONS:		
N/A		
4. CONSULTATION:		
Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓
5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	✓	
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓
6. IMPLICATIONS:		
<u>Financial</u>		
It is sound governance to monitor spending against budget during the financial year. Such control allows the Council to take prompt corrective action if spending or income significantly varies from the approved budgets.		
The Council continues to incur additional expenditure and loss of income due to the COVID-19 pandemic and net expenditure is monitored closely to ensure that corrective action continues to be taken if necessary. Transfers to earmarked reserves were required in 2020/21 in relation to Collection Fund transactions that impact the General Fund in 2021/22. These are also reviewed and monitored as part of the process.		
7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:		
To ensure that spending is in line with approved Council policies, and that it is contained within overall budget limits.		
8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:		
Revenue and Capital Estimates 2021-2022. http://www.arun.gov.uk/financial-information/		

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL BUDGET MONITORING

Financial Position as at end of September 2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the Capital, Housing Revenue and General Fund Revenue budget performance to end of September 2021 and presents performance information for all aspects of financial risk such as income and specific savings targets.
- 1.2 Budget performance is presented after taking account of the following:
- Spend to date excluding commitments against profiled budgets.
 - Consultation with managers and budget holders on service performance.
 - Budget savings identified where possible from existing budgets to cover additional expenditure.
- 1.3 Following the vaccine roll out programme, with most Covid-19 restrictions having ended on 19 July 2021 and most of the Government support tailing off by 30 September 2021, budget performance will need to be carefully monitored. The Government is continuing to monitor Covid-19 related expenditure, reductions in income and reserves.
- 1.4 From May 2021 a Committee Structure has been put in place. The Budget Monitoring Report has been completed on this basis.

2. General Fund Summary

- 2.1 The 2021/22 budget was approved by Full Council on 17 February 2021.
- 2.2 The General Fund performance to end of September 2021 against profiled budget is given in the table below. The table presents only the variances on budget in excess of +/- £20k.

General Fund variance on profiled budget to end of September 2021			
Service controllable spend	Variance on Budget Jul £'000	Variance on Budget Sep £'000	Change £'000
Economy Committee			
Land Charges - Fees & Charges	(22)	(23)	(1)
Environment Committee			
Building Control - Fees & Charges	(46)	(78)	(32)
Cemeteries	0	(36)	(36)
The Arcade, Bognor Regis - Rent	0	69	69
Planning Policy Committee			
Planning - Fees & Charges	(180)	(355)	(175)
Housing and Wellbeing			
Council Tax - Court costs collection	0	(92)	(92)
Homelessness	0	32	32
Leisure Contract Management Fee	0	310	310
Other Variances less than +/- 20k	(174)	(215)	(41)
Total Service controllable budget variance	(391)	(388)	3
Corporate controllable budget			
Establishment against savings target	30	32	2
Corporate Underspends	0	(128)	(128)
General Fund net expenditure variance against profiled budget	(403)	(484)	(81)
Covid-19 Income Compensation scheme 1st Quarter 2021-22	0	(173)	(173)
	(403)	(657)	(254)

2.3 Table 2.2 above shows a general net expenditure variance of (£657k) favourable against expected (profiled budget) to the end of September 2021. Variations on services first, followed by corporately controlled budgets.

2.4 The Council was awarded (£831k) of non-ringfenced Covid-19 Government support in 2021/22. This was included in the original budget for 2021/22.

2.5 Economy Committee

2.5.1 Land charges income is (£23k) above profile budget year to date. This service was hit particularly hard at the start of the pandemic but is now 38% up on the previous "normal" year of 2019/20 largely due to the reduction in Stamp Duty because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Stamp Duty has reverted to its pre-pandemic rates at the end of September 2021.

2.6 Environment Committee

- 2.6.1 Building Control fees and charges are currently (£78k) above profile. This is 34% up on the previous “normal” year of 2019/20. There is work in the pipeline from Covid-19 lockdown although the lack of material availability and high prices is slowing the building trade down.
- 2.6.2 Income on Cemeteries is currently (£36k) above profile due in part to an increase in demand for burial of cremated remains and the catch up of delayed burials during the lockdown periods.
- 2.6.3 Income from The Arcade, Bognor Regis is currently £69k below profile. This is largely due to current rent arrears of £58k with other small variances making up the remaining £11k (vacancies less additional income from previously vacant units). It should be noted that the prior year arrears were £192k.

2.7 Planning Policy Committee

- 2.7.1 Currently, planning income is (£355k) above profile. This is largely due to income from one commercial and seven residential planning applications over £30k each in year to date. £256k of income was transferred from 2020/21 to 2021/22 at year end (compared to £237k in the previous year) to limit the financial risk of refunds from income already received.

2.8 Housing and Well Being Committee

- 2.8.1 Council Tax court costs received to date are (£92k) above the full year profile. This is largely due to the backlog of court cases from the previous year.
- 2.8.2 To date, the overall spending variance for nightly paid accommodation and homelessness is £32k above profile.

The £32k over profile consists of a number of items, shown below:

	£'000
Cost of nightly paid accommodation	157
Ex-offenders grant receivable	(96)
Underspend on flex grant	(69)
Unanticipated spend on COVID items	26
Other items	14
Total over/(under) spend	32

- 2.8.3 Demand for emergency accommodation continues at the same levels as previous months. Whilst people are leaving emergency accommodation (for a variety of reasons), there are still new cases approaching the Council for help who require accommodation. As a result of this, there are no real net reductions in the overall number of placements. The two highest causes of homelessness are loss of assured shorthold tenancy and parental/family/friend evictions. This is the same as previous months and is also reflected in national trends. The risk to budget performance due to factors including Covid-19 was recognised as part of the budget 2021/22 and final accounts 2020/21 closedown process and funding was identified for this purpose. The situation will continue to be closely monitored and an update will be provided for the third quarter of 2021/22.

- 2.8.4 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) (now Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC)) invited bids from all Local Authorities (LAs) to secure funding to support ex-offenders to access accommodation in the private rented sector. The DLUHC is supporting Local Authorities to deliver a service to reduce rough sleeping for prison leavers and ex-offenders. Total grant awarded for 2021/22 is £192k, with a further £9k in 2022/23.
- 2.8.5 The Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) Funding is to support Local Authorities reduce the numbers of people sleeping rough but also to prevent people from losing their accommodation and living on the streets. There are several projects sitting under the RSI umbrella; Housing First which is accommodation with intensive support, Tenancy Sustainment and Prevention Workers and a Support Worker for Non-UK Nationals for people with no recourse to public funds. Also included in the initiative are Support Workers to help people move on from emergency accommodation, access to financial support to access the private rented sector and funding for a Rough Sleeper Co-ordinator. The Council has so far been awarded a £130k uplift funding for Rough sleeping in 2021/22 due to Covid-19.
- 2.8.6 Meetings with Freedom Leisure (FL) have continued on a regular basis to gauge the levels of ongoing support required. The recovery continues to be challenging for FL and income levels are anticipated to be at their pre-lockdown level by the financial year end. No direct financial support is currently required. The £310k variation to budget profile relates to the Leisure Management fee which has been deferred to help with Freedom Leisure's cashflow. It is anticipated that the management fee will start to be collected from January 2022. The Council has been able to apply for the Government's Sales Fees and Charges compensation scheme for the first quarter of 2021/22 resulting in an anticipated contribution of (£201k less deductibles). A report will be presented to a future Housing and Wellbeing Committee outlining the current situation and expected financial out turn for 2021/22.

2.9 Corporate Underspend

- 2.9.1 The corporate underspend relates to identified unrequired contingency and corporately controlled budgets and Government grants that are available for potential resource allocation. Budgets are set based on assumptions about service delivery, which sometimes result in a different actual budget requirement resulting in surplus budget. As these are identified, the surplus budget is vired to a corporate underspend account and made available for resource re-allocation. The advantage of this is a reduction in the need for supplementary estimates and managing service delivery within the approved budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). Senior Management Team (SMT) are expected to exercise their discretion in managing their budgets responsibly and prudently and wherever possible meeting additional cost pressures by virement from within existing budgets. The corporate net underspend is £128k at the end of September 2021 and the breakdown is shown in the following table:

Corporate Underspends Confirmed September 2021			
	Jul 21	Sep 21	Change
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Additional investment income	0	75	75
Additional non-ringfenced grants	0	166	166
Total identified corporate underspend	0	241	241
Virements actioned/earmarked from corporate underspend	0	(113)	(113)
Corporate Underspends September 2021 (Net)	0	128	128

2.9.2 There has been an additional £75k contribution to the corporate underspends due to extra investment income and £166k contribution from non-ringfenced Covid-19 Grants.

2.9.3 The corporate underspend has so far been used to fund the following items:

	£'000
Trisanto Update (Arun District Council's property company)	35
Economic Regeneration Project Delivery Role	30
Coast Protection Update	30
Palmer Road Community Sports Hub Review	18
Total	113

3. Externally Funded Services

3.1 Arun District Council hosts several services under its stewardship as the Accountable Body. Whilst these services are entirely externally funded, Arun District Council has service provision interests. These services are the Wellbeing team and Car Parking enforcement. There are no budgetary concerns to report on these services.

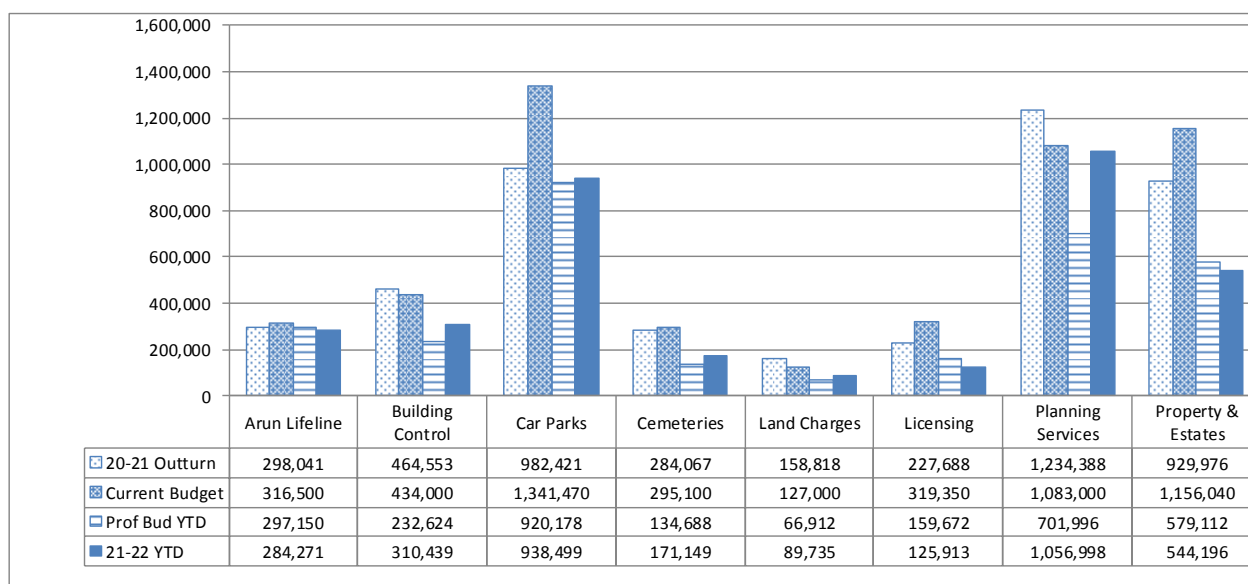
4. Establishment

4.1 Each year a vacancy management target is included within the budget to ensure that the establishment complement is scrutinised for efficiency and reflects the needs of on-going service delivery changes. For the Financial Year 2021/22 the target is set at £500k.

4.2 The current vacancy allowance is £32k above profile to September 2021, however, this allows for the estimated backpay in relation to the anticipated minimum pay award of £130k. The latest situation is that the National Employers for local government services made a final pay offer to the unions representing the main local government NJC workforce of 1.75%. The current offer has been rejected by the unions so the final figure could be higher. The rejection of the offer could lead to a dispute which will further delay the implementation. This will make budget monitoring more difficult.

5. Income

- 5.1 Income from fees, charges and rents are included within net cost of service. In total, the original budget amounted to an overall financing of £5.085m. However, since the original budget was approved, a reduction was made to a revised figure of £5.072m using contingency budget. This was because of an agreed reduction for customers with Beach Huts due to lockdown measures during April 2020 to June 2020. Income is a key risk area to the budget as it is predominantly externally influenced, without direct link to service cost and each source is unique. Service income has reduced significantly due to the lockdown and subsequent social distancing measures.
- 5.2 General Fund income is currently overachieving by (£429k), largely due to additional Building Control income (£78k - paragraph 2.6.1) and Planning income (£355k - paragraph 2.7.1).
- 5.3 The graph below shows income by source and value, achievement to end of September 2021 against profiled budget, full year budget and 2020/21 outturn.



- 5.4 A claim has been submitted to DLUHC for (£173k) for Sales, Fees and Charges Compensation for Quarter 1 of 2021/22. The funds will be received later in the year. The scheme is ceasing, and it is likely that no further support will be receivable.

6. Estimated Outturn

- 6.1 The table below shows the approved supplementary estimates up to 30 September 2021, which will be funded from balances:

Reconciliation of Supplementary Approvals		
	Estimates	Total
	£'000	£'000
Fitzalan Road accoustic fencing FC 14/07/2021	25	
Planning Appeal P/58/19/PL	26	
Planning Appeal BN/142/20/OUT	50	
West Bank Strategic Allocation FC 15/09/2021	50	
	<hr/>	
Total Supplementary Approvals to end of September 2021		151

6.2 The change in the planned original budget General Fund Reserve movement due to budget performance to end of September 2021 is shown in the table below:

General Fund Reserve Movement estimated outturn 2020/21	Original Budget	Current Budget
	£'000	£'000
Net Budget Requirement	18,122	19,369
Financed by:		
Government Grants and Retained Business Rates	(1,457)	(2,554)
Council Tax	(16,665)	(16,665)
Taken From / (Added to) Balances	<hr/> (0)	<hr/> 151
General Fund Balance 01 April 2021	7,076	7,076
Budgeted draw down from GF Reserve	0	(151)
Current Budget Variation Estimated Outturn 2021/22	0	657
General Fund Balance 31 March 2021	<hr/> 7,076	<hr/> 7,582

This result in an estimated General Fund Balance of £7.6m at the end of the financial year provided that the current favourable budget profile variations continue. The profiled budget is also under review in relation to the leisure management fee, which will also improve the outturn position.

7. Earmarked Reserves

7.1 Earmarked reserves are amounts set aside from General Fund Reserve to provide financing for specific future expenditure plans and held alongside the General Fund for drawdown as required under the scheme of virement. These reserves are to be reviewed regularly to ensure that they are being drawn down as appropriate or returned to General Fund reserve.

- 7.2 The Council held £29.162m in earmarked reserves at 1 April 2021. This balance is anticipated to reduce to £13.829m at the end of the financial year. The reduction is mainly due to s31 grants that were received in 2020/21 as compensation for business rate discounts having an adverse effect on the collection fund in the current year. The Council earmarked this funding as the General Fund Balance would have been significantly overstated.
- 7.3 To mitigate covid related financial risk £538k was earmarked for covid catch up work and it is unlikely that the full sum will be required in 2021/22. To date £98k has been drawn down with an additional draw down of £260k anticipated before the end of the year. The remaining balance of £180k will result in some savings. Once these unrequired budgets are confirmed the funding will be added to the corporate underspend (2.9) The review of the corporate complaints process is nearing completion and the decision has been made to appoint a Complaints Manager to manage the process. This will lead to significant service improvements. The post will be funded through resource switching and is subject to approval through the budget 2022/23 process. It is, therefore, unlikely that the £51k earmarked for a part time resource will be required. The additional Environmental Health officer time, temporary toilets at Littlehampton and Bognor Regis and the Emergency Out of Hours are funded from COMF grant, which has to be spent by 31 March 2022.
- 7.4 The contingency budget for 2021/22 includes £538k for Covid Support. Although it is difficult to forecast the effect over the second half of the year (especially through the winter months), corporate income levels have held up but there are budget pressures in relation to Homelessness and Leisure Management (2.8.3 and 2.8.6). It is therefore unlikely that the full amount of the contingency will be required.

8. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

- 8.1 The estimated reserve movement for the HRA against original budget and the current estimated outturn reserve movement due to supplementary estimates and budget performance to end of September 2021 is shown in the table below:

Housing Revenue Account Reserve Movement estimated outturn 2021/22	Original Budget £'000	Current Budget £'000
HRA Balance 01 April 2021	8,081	8,835
Budgeted deficit for 2021/22	(1,967)	(1,967)
Capital Slippage from previous year (paragraph 8.3)		(1,363)
Current Budget Variation (paragraph 8.2)		(637)
HRA Balance 31 March 2022	6,114	4,868

The HRA balance 1 April 2021 in the Current Budget column is as per the 2020/21 Final Accounts.

8.2 Below is a summary table highlighting major controllable expenditure and income to end of September 2021.

	Full year Budgets (Orig) 2021/22 £'000	Full year Budgets (Current) 2021/22 £'000	Year to date Profile Budget 2021/22 £'000	Year to date Actuals 2021/22 £'000	Year to date Variance 2021/22 £'000
Expenditure					
Repairs & Maintenance	3,887	3,887	1,944	2,507	564
Supervision & Management	5,234	5,263	1,706	1,707	1
Rents, Rates, Taxes and other charges	166	166	86	132	46
Total Expenditure	9,286	9,315	3,736	4,346	610
Income					
Dwelling rents	(16,004)	(16,004)	(8,005)	(8,011)	(6)
Non-dwelling rents	(517)	(517)	(256)	(221)	35
Charges for services and facilities	(632)	(632)	(257)	(254)	3
Other Income	0	0	0	(6)	(6)
Total Income	(17,153)	(17,153)	(8,518)	(8,491)	27
Net Expenditure or Income of HRA Services as included in the whole authority Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement	(7,867)	(7,838)	(4,781)	(4,145)	637
Interest Payable and Similar Charges	1,418	1,418	709	709	0
HRA Interest and Investment Income	10	10	0	0	
Revenue Contribution to Capital	130	464	334	334	0
Yearend accounting adjustments	8,275	9,275	0	(0)	(0)
(Surplus) or Deficit for Year on HRA Service:	1,966	3,329	(3,738)	(3,102)	637

8.3 The Capital slippage of £1.363m from 2020/21 relates to £363k for a Housing IT system and £1m in the Housing improvement programme. This is as a result of delayed or deferred works due to the pandemic (kitchen, bathroom repairs). There is also pressure to increase the rate at which works are completed that are required by the Housing Regulator, for example fire compliance. The carry forward of funding allowed these issues to be addressed.

8.4 Repairs and maintenance (planned and responsive) expenditure has a current over commitment of £564k against profiled budget. This is being highlighted as a risk. The Service Manager is working closely with the contractor, to ensure appropriate spend and the timely submission of commitments. The situation will continue to be monitored closely between now and the end of the financial year. This is a demand led contract and national supply chain issues and inflation are continuing to increase costs. It is anticipated that there will be an overspend at the year end if this trend continues.

8.5 HRA income consists almost entirely of rents. Current projections forecast rental income in line with the budget forecast.

8.6 Loss of income due to Right to Buy (RTB) disposals and void dwellings remain a key financial risk. The estimated number of RTB disposals for 2021/22 was set at 12 (there were 4 RTB disposals in 2020/21 and 4 disposals in 2019/20). To date there has been 7 disposals in the current year.

8.7 Details of the HRA capital, improvements and repairs programmes are shown in Paragraphs 9 and 10.

9. Capital Receipts

9.1 There have been major changes since the 2012 retention agreement from 1 April 2021. These changes are listed below:

- Pooling of RTB receipts will take place annually. This replaces the former quarterly system deadlines for spending retained receipts and will also be calculated on an annual basis.
- The timeframe local authorities must spend new and existing Right to Buy receipts has been extended from 3 years to 5 years.
- The percentage cost of a new dwelling that local authorities can fund using Right to Buy receipts changed from 30% to 40%. (i.e. Arun will now only have to fund 60% rather than 70%). Every £40 of 1-4-1 receipts generated by the sale of right to buys would need to be matched with £60 of Council funding (£30/£70 previously).
- A cap will be introduced on the use of Right to Buy receipts for acquisitions to help drive new supply with effect from 1 April 2022 and phased in over 2022-23 to 2024-25. Its aim is to increase dwelling supply in the District by limiting property acquisitions.

The table below shows Arun's investment requirements under the above terms:

	£'000
"1 for 1" receipts accrued to 31 Mar 2021	5,597
"1 for 1" receipts accrued from 1 April 2021*	314
Arun's 70% contribution (70/30 X £4,906k)	11,447
Arun's 60% contribution (60/40 X £1,004k) change from 1 April 2021*	<u>1,507</u>
Total investment requirement	18,865
Less amount already invested to 30 September 2021	-19,032
Remaining investment requirement	<u>0</u>
By 31/03/2027	0
Total	<u>0</u>

* estimated

9.2 All 1-4-1 receipts carried forward on 1 April 2021 and estimated 1-4-1 receipts 2021/22 up to the end of September 2021 have been committed.

9.3 One of the key priorities of Arun's HRA Business Plan is a development programme to enable the delivery of an additional 250 new Council dwellings over a ten-year period.

- 9.4 In order to protect the Council's investment in the provision of new social housing, exemption from capital receipt pooling has been obtained in respect of all Arun's new dwellings in the current investment programme. This will enable Arun to retain 100% of the receipts from any future right to buy disposals in respect of these new dwellings (although it is worth noting that these receipts will be net of any discount entitlement).

10. Capital, Asset Management and Other Project Programmes

- 10.1 The Council's budget for 2021/22 included several projects which although included in the Capital budget for project management and monitoring purposes cannot, under current accounting regulations, be charged to the capital accounts.
- 10.2 The capital and projects budget will continue to be monitored on a corporate level as this provides better information and control of the budget.

General Fund

- 10.3 The Council is introducing Microsoft Azure. Azure is Microsoft's public cloud computing platform, which will provide a range of cloud services to the Council to reduce reliance on its physical data centre at the Civic Centre. Therefore, the Computer Services budget has been reduced by £167.5k to allow budget provision for Azure in the ICT ongoing revenue budget from 2022/23. £28k has been retained in the budget for any costs incurred this year. The Corporate Support Committee were updated on progress on this at the meeting of 28 September 2021.
- 10.4 Approximately, £316k of the current budget will be funding projects in 2022/23, including core switch, further digital strategy and telephony system (in part). Some projects have been delayed this year because of the potential impact homeworking has had on the Council's IT requirements.
- 10.5 The Arun Improvement Programme budget has been reduced by £61k, this was the balance from the environmental health system implementation and was being retained until such time it was required in the Environmental Health revenue budget for software maintenance. This has been included in the revenue budget for 2022/23.
- 10.6 The contractor has now been formally appointed for Littlehampton Public Realm project and final detailed design is being completed. Works are due to commence January 2022 completing December 2022. Following agreement from the funder; the Coastal Communities Fund, Phase 2 & 3 of the scheme will be progressed as part of this stage. Due to significant cost increases in materials and delivery delays, orders for paving and other concrete reliant materials have already been placed by the contractor to avoid unnecessary delays once work commences. Phase 1 detailed design has also been undertaken and negotiations are ongoing with Network Rail to ensure the proposed changes at the station can be implemented in a timely manner. This phase is funded from LEP Local Growth Fund, Arun District Council and Littlehampton Town Council and is expected to be delivered immediately after phases 2 & 3.

- 10.7 The contract has been awarded for the works at Place St. Maur. The contractor is due on site from mid-October 2021 and works are due to be completed by March 2022. This scheme is funded by a grant of £1.2m from the Getting Building Fund and Arun District Council.

Asset management and other projects monitoring - September 2021

	Original Budget £'000	Current Budget £'000	Actual to date £'000
General Fund			
<i>Corporate Support</i>			
Computer Services	120	412	68
GDPR	-	29	11
Storage Area Network (SAN)	-	170	162
Wireless Infrastructure	-	50	-
Digital Strategy	-	200	-
Arun Improvement Programme (AIP)	-	96	-
Web/Integration	-	91	39
E5 upgrade	-	32	22
<i>Economy</i>			
L'ton Public Realm Phases 1-2	-	2,230	123
L'ton Public Realm Phase 3	-	887	112
Asset Management	791	2,098	246
Works to Public Conveniences	150	431	10
Cemetery Buildings & Walls	-	248	9
Fitzleet Car Park	266	340	-
Bognor Regis Bandstand	165	352	2
Reactive Maintenance	210	210	61
<i>Environment and Neighbourhood Services</i>			
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,400	1,400	685
Parks Chipper	26	26	-
Keystone Centre	-	250	-
Sunken Gardens	-	500	-
Place St. Maur	-	1,776	101
Play Areas	100	170	-
Canada Road Play Area	-	4	-
Canada Road Skate Park	-	83	75
Goldcrest Play Area	-	17	18
Rose Green Play Area	-	10	11
<i>Residential and Wellbeing Services</i>			
Littlehampton Wave	-	113	12
Total General Fund	3,228	12,225	1,767

Housing Revenue Account

- 10.8 In September 2021 the land, golden brick and first interim payment was made relating to the construction of the first 10 affordable housing units at Cinders Nursery, Yapton with the next instalment expected around January 2022. There will be an additional 5 units at a later stage of the development estimated to start commencement around December 2021.

Housing Revenue Account	Original Budget £'000	Current Budget £'000	Actual to date £'000
<i>Residential and Wellbeing Services</i>			
Stock Development	100	6,577	14
Summer Lane, Pagham	-	3,444	850
Cinders Nursery, Yapton	-	2,500	1,160
Chichester Road, Bognor Regis	-	1,199	189
Canada Rd & Ellis Close	-	1,217	7
38 Arundel Road Conversion	-	195	164
Housing IT	-	-	-
Civica Implementation	-	363	58
Housing Improvements	688	738	94
Domestic Boiler Installations	525	525	229
Commercial Boiler Rooms	100	250	224
Reroofing Programme	250	250	61
Kitchen & Bathroom Replacement Programme	769	519	127
Fire Compliance	300	750	696
Windows & Doors	1,650	2,050	793
Aids & Adaptations	350	550	387
Housing Repairs	1,887	1,887	1,504
Day to Day General Repairs	1,250	1,250	1,040
Voids	750	750	667
Total Housing Revenue Account	8,619	25,014	8,264
Total Programme	11,847	37,239	10,031
Please note Housing Improvements, Adaptations & Repairs expenditure includes QL commitments taken from the Housing Mgmt. System			
Total programme comprises Capital, Asset Management and other projects budget plus Housing Repairs. Although Housing Repairs forms part of the HRA revenue budget it is included here because of the close link with the Housing Improvements Programme.			

- 10.9 The anticipated cost of the replacement Integrated Housing Management System has increased. The additional costs will be grant funded, or included in the budget for 2022/23. An update report will be provided to the Housing and Wellbeing Committee on 24 January 2022.

11. Section 106 sums

- 11.1 Section 106 (s106) agreements, also known as planning obligations, are agreements between developers and Arun District Council as the local planning authority that are negotiated as part of a condition of planning consent. The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 enables Arun to negotiate contributions towards a range of infrastructure and services, such as community facilities, public open space, transport improvements and/or affordable housing.
- 11.2 The Council currently holds £8.856m on deposit for s106 agreements, plus £3.625m is held on behalf of other organisations (e.g. NHS and WSCC). The total held on deposit is £12.481m.

Section 106 sums held on deposit as at 30 September 2021							
	Community				Arun		Total
	Affordable Housing	Facilities and other	Play Grounds	Open Spaces	Total	Non Arun	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
20/21 Balance b/fwd	3,628	4,912	576	122	9,238	3,268	12,506
21/22 Movement	(595)	40	140	33	(382)	357	(25)
	3,033	4,952	716	155	8,856	3,625	12,481

- 11.3 Most s106 sums are time limited in that the Council is required, under the terms of the agreement to spend the amount received on the project specified in the agreement within a set time scale. It should be noted that there are currently £53k of receipts that are required to be spent within the next 5 years.
- 11.4 Since the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy in 2020-21, demand notices have been issued totalling £483k. This figure includes 5% administration contribution for Arun in the sum of £15k for 2020-21 and £9k for 2021-22 to date.

12. Cash Flow and Treasury Management

- 12.1 As at September 2021 it is estimated that by year end the budgeted investment returns will exceed original budget by approximately £100k. This is largely due to higher than expected returns on the CCLA Property Fund (£5m invested) and the CCLA diversified fund (£2m invested). During budget setting, it was assumed that the average principal sums would be around £52m, this is now around £74m resulting in additional interest income. This is due to the following reasons:
- Budget was based around the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2020/21;
 - Unused Covid-19 grant funding has not been repaid to government;
 - House building programme is delayed; and
 - General Fund capital/asset management slippage.

13. Risk Analysis

- 13.1 Corporate and Operational risk registers are reviewed and updated for financial implications as part of the Council's risk management process on the criteria of probability of occurrence and materiality of impact upon balances. The most significant risk, which has been highlighted throughout the report is the additional service expenditure combined with loss of income and the effect on the Collection Fund (Council Tax and Retained Business Rates which will have significant effects from 2021/22) due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 13.2 Other risks which are inherent within the overall budget are analysed below.
- 13.3 As a result of courts being closed during the Covid-19 outbreak, implementation of Universal Credits and inability to secure debts with DWP it is proving more difficult to recover Housing Benefit overpayments. This is likely to continue until backlogs are reduced.
- 13.4 Due to the United Kingdom leaving the EU on 31 January 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic and extensive forest fires throughout North America and Europe, certain commodities and labour are in short supply. This is likely to have an ongoing impact on the Council's capital programmes and housing repairs budget.
- 13.5 As the DLUHC has changed the capital receipt pooling arrangements, with a cap being introduced on Right to Buy receipts for acquisitions with effect from 01 April 2022, going forward, it is important that the Council has a robust HRA Business Plan to meet the new requirements. This will prevent the Council having to repay to the Government some or all of these "1 for 1" receipts, together with interest at a penalty rate of base rate (currently 0.10%) plus 4%.
- 13.6 The Council's External Auditors, Ernst & Young LLP, have continued to charge the same fees since 2019/20 based on the current Public Sector Audit Appointments Ltd (PSAA) scale fee as no final decision has been made on the rebasing. Depending on the outcome, the Council could be charged up to £57k for previous years' audit services.

14. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 14.1 The budget monitoring to 30 September 2021 indicates that for 2021/22 the Council will:
- Significantly underspend compared to the General Fund Revenue budget;
 - Significantly overspend to the Housing Revenue Account budget, should the current spending profile on repairs and maintenance continue;
 - Significantly underspend on its Capital, Asset Management and Projects;
 - Where it becomes clear that any budget provision is no longer required, it will be removed in future budgets.
- 14.2 It is recommended that the Policy and Finance Committee approve that:
- Any specific project related General Fund revenue underspend continues to be transferred to earmarked reserves as per previous policy to allow projects to be completed;

- The Housing Revenue Account repairs and maintenance (Planned and Responsive) budget be closely monitored to ensure that any necessary corrective action is taken if required; and
- The Capital, Asset Management and Projects programme be reviewed to determine future projections and deliverability of current projects.

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE ON 9 DECEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Levelling Up Fund Delivery Support

REPORT AUTHOR: Carolin Martlew, Interim Group Head of Corporate Support and Section 151 Officer
DATE: November 2021
EXTN: 01903 737668
AREA: Corporate Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report recommends the appointment of temporary staff resource to enable the delivery of the projects to be funded from the £19 million awarded to the Council from the Government's Levelling Up Fund. It also outlines how these will be funded.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Committee approves that:

- (i) the virement of up to £55,000 from corporate underspend in 2021/22 be used to fund temporary staff to enable the delivery of the successful Levelling Up fund bid in 2021/22; and
- (ii) Budgetary provision is made from 2022/23 for these posts until completion of the projects.

1. BACKGROUND:

The Council has been advised that it has been awarded £19.442 million from the Government's Levelling Up fund to deliver improvements in Littlehampton and Bognor Regis.

The projects included in the bid are a major undertaking and the Council does not have the expertise or capacity in house to manage the delivery of these from current resources. It is vital that investment of this level is managed and monitored to deliver the projects outlined in the bid within the budget and specified timeline.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

To deliver the projects, following consideration it is proposed to recruit the following specialist staff on a temporary basis. It is anticipated that the cost for 2021/22 of the enhanced project team will be up to £55k, which can be met by virement from internal resources.

It is also proposed that the full year cost (£220k for 2022/23) be included in future year budgets until the project has been completed. The additional project team resource is required immediately and is comprised of: 1.4 (fte) Project Officers; 2 Project Support Officers; and 0.34 (fte) Project Manager. It should be noted that additional resources may be required as the project progresses, and that the Committee will be updated as soon as further information becomes available.

3. OPTIONS:

The options available to Members are:

- Approve the financial resources required for additional staffing for the delivery of the Levelling Up fund project (preferred option);
- Reject the additional financial resources to deliver the Levelling Up fund project. This option carries the significant risk that the Council will have insufficient resources to deliver a project of this magnitude successfully.

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓
Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)		✓

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)

	YES	NO
Financial	✓	
Legal		✓
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		✓

6. IMPLICATIONS:

Financial

The financial implications are as contained in the report (£55k 2021/22 and £220k from 2022/23 until the completion of the project). Failure to approve the requested funding carries the significant financial risk of the LUF project not being delivered. Failure of the LUF project also carries significant reputational risk to the Council

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

The funding is required to allow the Council to effectively deliver the projects outlined in the bid to the government Levelling Up Fund.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

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ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

UPDATE REPORT TO THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE ON 9 DECEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plan 2018-2022 – Quarter 2 Performance Report for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021

REPORT AUTHOR: Jackie Follis - Group Head of Policy
DATE: 19 November 2021
EXTN: 01903 737580
AREA: Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report sets out the Q2 performance outturn for the Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plan performance indicators for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

There are no recommendations for the Committee to consider as this is an update report.

BACKGROUND:

1.1 The Corporate Plan forms a series of targets that are measurable and, ideally, in the control of the Council. These are the Corporate Plan indicators. Service targets (Service Delivery Plan indicators – SDP’s) lay beneath these corporate priorities to provide more detail about how the service is doing. Performance of these indicators is reported to the Corporate Management Team every quarter and to the Policy and Finance Committee every six months and at year end.

Thresholds are used to establish which category of performance each indicator is within:

Overachieving target	1% above target
Achieving target	100% of target (or achieving the anticipated target for the reporting period)
Behind target	95% - 99% below target
Not achieving target	95% or less below target

Q2 CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE

1.2 There are 11 Corporate Plan indicators. 6 Corporate Plan indicators are measured at Q2.

Status	Number of Corporate Plan indicators in this category
Overachieving target	1
Achieving target	1
Behind target	1
Not achieving target	3
TOTAL	6

1.2.1 Overachieving target

1 Corporate Plan indicator (CP6) was overachieving its target at Q2. Full commentary for this indicator can be found within Appendix A which is **attached** to this report.

1.2.2 Achieving target

1 Corporate Plan indicator (CP3) was achieving its target at Q2. Full commentary for this indicator can be found within Appendix A which is **attached** to this report.

1.2.3 Behind target

1 Corporate Plan indicator (CP10) was behind target at Q2. Full commentary for this indicator can be found within Appendix A which is **attached** to this report. This is largely out of the Council's control although this indicator will be monitored by the Director of Place.

1.2.4 Not achieving target

3 Corporate Plan indicators (CP7, CP8 and CP11) were not achieving their target at Q2. These three indicators will be monitored by the Director of Services. Full commentary for these indicators can be found within Appendix A which is **attached** to this report.

1.3 Actions

The Director of Services will ensure that the 3 indicators which are not achieving their target (CP7, CP8 and CP11) are monitored. The Director of Place will ensure that the 1 indicator which is behind target (CP10) is monitored.

Q2 SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN (SDP) PERFORMANCE

1.4 There are 23 Service Delivery Plan (SDP) indicators. 13 indicators are measured at Q2.

Status	Number of Service Delivery Plan indicators in this category
Overachieving target	6
Achieving target	2
Behind target	2
Not achieving target	3
TOTAL	13

1.4.1 Overachieving target

6 Service Delivery Plan indicators (SDP1, SDP5, SDP9, SDP16, SDP17 and SDP19) were overachieving their target at Q2. Full commentary for these indicators can be found within Appendix B which is **attached** to this report.

1.4.2 Achieving target

2 SDP indicators (SDP3 and SDP10) were achieving their target at Q2. Full commentary for these indicators can be found within Appendix B which is **attached** to this report.

1.4.3 Behind target

SDP indicators (SDP4 and SDP22) were behind target at Q2:

- SDP4 – this is only just behind target and is largely out of the Council's control.
- SDP22 – this relates to the number of Council properties with a valid gas safety certificate (LGSR). Two properties have expired LGSRs. The Council has been granted an injunction for one property and the Council has applied for an injunction for the second property. The Director of Services will monitor the situation regarding these two properties although as injunctions have been issued, this situation will be resolved.

Full commentary for these indicators can be found within Appendix B which is **attached** to this report.

1.4.4 Not achieving target

3 SDP indicators (SDP2, SDP12 and SDP18) were not achieving their target at Q2.

- SDP2 - There have been some staff absences in Q2 that affected performance but the Group Head of Planning has said that it is clear that too many decisions were made without securing Extensions of Time (EoT). The Group Head of Planning carried out a full performance management review

exercise in mid 2020 and the aim is to get much closer to 90% without using Extensions of Time. The Director of Place will monitor the situation with this indicator.

- SDP12 - This figure is a direct result of the disruption to workforce caused by the national HGV driver shortage. The recruitment in recent months has been successful and stability is leading to a reduction in missed bins. This situation is being monitored on a monthly basis at meetings. The Director of Services will continue to monitor the situation.
- SDP18 – The impact of Covid means we are seeing an increase in court evictions and family evictions, along with a high level of complex cases, impacting on the number of placements and length of stay in emergency accommodation. The Director of Services will continue to monitor the situation.

Full commentary for these indicators can be found within Appendix B which is **attached** to this report.

1.5 Actions

The Director of Services will monitor the situation regarding the gas safety certificates for the two properties mentioned in item 1.4.3 above (for SDP22) and will monitor the situation regarding indicators SDP12 and SDP18. The Director of Place will monitor the situation in relation to SDP2.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

There are no recommendations for the Committee to consider.

3. OPTIONS:

- To request further information and/or remedial actions be undertaken

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		√
Relevant District Ward Councillors		√
Other groups/persons (please specify)		√

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)

	YES	NO
Financial		√
Legal		√
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		√
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		√
Sustainability		√

Asset Management/Property/Land		√
Technology		√
Other (please explain)		√

6. IMPLICATIONS:

The Council may consider whether they wish to request that actions be taken by the relevant service area for some indicators.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

In order for the Policy and Finance Committee to be updated with the Q2 Performance Outturn for the Corporate Plan and Service Delivery Plan indicators for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 September 2021.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

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CP number	CP Performance Indicator	Council Priority Theme	Service Area	CMT Member	Measure Interval	Assess by	Target figure 2021/22	Q2 data	Q2 Commentary	Q2 status
CP6	Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims (days)	Supporting you	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6-monthly	Lower is better	8	3.3	Slight increase on Q1 due to a few outlying claims taking longer than average	Overachieving Target
CP3	Council Tax collected	Your Council Services	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6-monthly	Higher is better	98%	59.50%	On target. Customers now have ability to pay over 12 months.	Achieving Target
CP10	Total rateable business value for the Arun District	Your future	Economy	Karl Roberts - Director of Place	6-monthly	Higher is better	£99,000,000	£97,588,621	Figure is slightly below target. Some commercial premises have been lost to residential uses. New commercial premises, such as the Salt Box development, are coming online and it is expected this figure will improve.	Behind Target
CP7	Homelessness applications where homelessness is prevented	Supporting you	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6-monthly	Higher is better	70%	52%	Post pandemic has seen an extremely buoyant private rented market, with rental values increasing rapidly and demand for properties far outstripping supply resulting in landlords being able to command rents way in excess of local housing allowance. Furthermore, the ban on evictions was lifted on the 1st June resulting in a significant increase in the number of clients approaching us for help having been served notice, or are at the point of a possession hearing. Preventing homelessness in these circumstances is therefore becoming increasingly challenging.	Not Achieving Target
CP8	Number of new Council homes built or purchased per annum	Supporting you	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6-monthly	Higher is better	35	2	Global supply chain issues, coupled with shortage of HGV drivers are impacting on the progress of new build developments. Total number of properties anticipated to be completed by the end of the year is 17	Not Achieving Target
CP	Household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	Your future	Neighbourhood Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6-monthly	Higher is better	50%	43.50%	The recycling rate is 0.6% lower compared with the corresponding period last year. The waste growth in residual black bag waste has continued with the rise in property numbers and working from home. This is combined with a static recycling rate. Indications are that despite the issues with collections the Garden Waste Service has actually an improved tonnage performance over the corresponding period last year. We are exploring with partners other impacts on the service including the introduction of the booking systems at the tip.	Not Achieving Target

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SDP number	SDP Performance Indicator	Service Area	CMT Member	Measure Interval	Assess by	Target figure 2018	Target figure 2019	Target figure 2020	Target figure 2021	Q1 data	Q1 Commentary	Q1 status	Q2 data	Q2 Commentary	Q2 status
SDP1	Major applications determined in 13 weeks	Planning	Karl Roberts - Director of Place	Quarterly	Higher is better	80%	450kg	80%	80%	90%	The Council uses 'extensions of time' agreements with applicants to ensure that decisions are made within agreed time limits. In reporting performance, government guidance allows for these agreements to be used so that decisions are issued within time. When taking the use of these agreements into consideration the Council's performance was 9 out of 10 or 90%. When not taking these agreements into consideration and just providing raw data on timescales, the Council's performance on these applications was 6 out of 10 or 60% determined in 13 weeks. This performance is above the targets set. The Group Head of Planning carried out a full performance management review exercise in mid 2020.	Overachieving	92%	The Council uses 'extensions of time' agreements with applicants to ensure that decisions are made within agreed time limits. In reporting performance, government guidance allows for these agreements to be used so that decisions are issued within time. When taking the use of these agreements into consideration the Council's performance was 22 out of 24 or 92%. When not taking these agreements into consideration and just providing raw data on timescales, the Council's performance on these applications was 13 out of 24 or 54% determined in 13 weeks. The Group Head of Planning carried out a full performance management review exercise in mid 2020 and has a target of getting much closer to the 80% target without using EoT's.	Overachieving Target
SDP5	Occupied retail units in Bognor Regis	Economy	Karl Roberts - Director of Place	6 Monthly	Higher is better	90%	157,700	90%	90%	No data required	No commentary required		95%	This is a very high and better than expected retail occupancy figure. It is an encouraging sign that the town centre is stabilising after the pandemic lockdown and the temporary closure of retail businesses. Compared with some other local retail centres and data nationally, Bognor Regis is fairing well and remains a buoyant shopping location.	Overachieving Target
SDP9	Licence applications determined within the various statutory or service time limits	Technical Services	Karl Roberts - Director of Place	Quarterly	Higher is better	90%	94%	90%	90%	99.50%	Just one application was not determined in the last measurable quarter. There are a number of taxi matters still outstanding from previous quarters due to covid restrictions, these will be dealt with as soon as possible.	Overachieving	97.40%	We have a number of prospective drivers that still need to pass their knowledge tests before we can grant their applications. There is also one riding establishment that we are awaiting a payment from so that their licence can be granted. The inspection had to be delayed due to Covid.	Overachieving Target
SDP11	Business rates collected	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	Quarterly	Higher is better	99%	99%	99%	99%	20.90%	Below target. The government has made numerous changes to the collection of business rates including reducing retail relief from 100% to 66% from 01/07/21. This resulted us rebilling in June.	Achieving	51.30%	Following rebilling, collection rates have increased as more businesses set up direct debits. Overachieving target at 6 months (if one assumes 49.5% is the 6 monthly target figure).	Overachieving Target
SDP17	Housing Benefit overpayments recovered	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	Quarterly	Higher is better	110%	110%	110%	110%	510.89%	Above target. Recovery action resumed April 21 and invoices issued. A further resource has temporarily been deployed to increase the collection rate.	Overachieving	207.00%	Overachieving target.	Overachieving Target
SDP19	Rent collected on Council housing	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6 Monthly	Higher is better	94%	94%	94%	94%	No data required	No commentary required		94.95%	The performance reflects our consistent approach of early intervention, providing support and advice on maximising income to resolve debt. The longer notice periods imposed by the Government have allowed us to work with residents over a longer period without having to take enforcement action.	Overachieving Target
SDP3	Other applications determined in 8 weeks	Planning	Karl Roberts - Director of Place	Quarterly	Higher is better	90%	>61%	90%	90%	95%	The Council uses 'extensions of time' agreements with applicants to ensure that decisions are made within agreed time limits. In reporting performance, government guidance allows for these agreements to be used so that decisions are issued within time. When taking the use of these agreements into consideration the Council's performance was 255 out of 269 or 95%. When not taking these agreements into consideration and just providing raw data on timescales, the Council's performance on these applications was 212 out of 269 or 79% determined in 8 weeks. This performance is above the target set. The Group Head of Planning carried out a full performance management review exercise in mid 2020.	Overachieving	90%	The Council uses 'extensions of time' agreements with applicants to ensure that decisions are made within agreed time limits. In reporting performance, government guidance allows for these agreements to be used so that decisions are issued within time. When taking the use of these agreements into consideration the Council's performance was 453 out of 504 or 90%. When not taking these agreements into consideration and just providing raw data on timescales, the Council's performance on these applications was 386 out of 504 or 77% determined in 8 weeks. This performance meets the target set. We have been very good with dealing with the smaller applications and performance is always good on this indicator. We have some very good junior Planning Officers who perform very well.	Achieving Target
SDP10	Number of stage 2 corporate complaints found to be justified or partially justified	Council Advice and Monitoring	James Hassett - Interim Chief Executive	Quarterly	Lower is better	10	10	10	10	1	4 x Stage 2 complaints determined in Q1 21/22: - 1 x Partially Justified for Housing Repairs 3 x Not Justified	Overachieving	5	15 x Stage 2 complaints determined in Q2 21/22:- 11 x Not Justified 1 x Partially Justified for Parks 3 x Justified - Housing Repairs (2) and Planning (1)	Achieving Target
SDP4	Occupied retail units in Littlehampton	Economy	Karl Roberts - Director of Place	6 Monthly	Higher is better	90%	5	90%	90%	No data required	No commentary required		89%	204 properties are in use, 26 currently unutilised. Two national chains have closed their premises since the last audit. The majority of vacancies are in the High Street area and, interestingly, the units at the western end of the High Street, which are notoriously difficult to let, are all now occupied by new small businesses.	Behind Target
SDP22	Number of Council properties with a valid gas safety certificate	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6 Monthly	Higher is better	100%	100%	100%	100%	No data required	No commentary required		99.92%	Two properties had expired LGSRs. We have been granted an injunction for one property. We have applied for an injunction for the second property.	Behind Target

SDP number	SDP Performance Indicator	Service Area	CMT Member	Measure Interval	Assess by	Target figure 2018	Target figure 2019	Target figure 2020	Target figure 2021	Q1 data	Q1 Commentary	Q1 status	Q2 data	Q2 Commentary	Q2 status
SDP2	Minor applications determined in 8 weeks	Planning	Karl Roberts - Director of Place	Quarterly	Higher is better	90%	80	90%	90%	90%	The Council uses 'extensions of time' agreements with applicants to ensure that decisions are made within agreed time limits. In reporting performance, government guidance allows for these agreements to be used so that decisions are issued within time. When taking the use of these agreements into consideration the Council's performance was 47 out of 52 or 90%. When not taking these agreements into consideration and just providing raw data on timescales, the Council's performance on these applications was 36 out of 52 or 69% determined in 8 weeks. This performance is within the target set. The Group Head of Planning carried out a full performance management review exercise in mid 2020.	Achieving	78%	The Council uses 'extensions of time' agreements with applicants to ensure that decisions are made within agreed time limits. In reporting performance, government guidance allows for these agreements to be used so that decisions are issued within time. When taking the use of these agreements into consideration the Council's performance was 89 out of 114 or 78%. When not taking these agreements into consideration and just providing raw data on timescales, the Council's performance on these applications was 56 out of 114 or 49% determined in 8 weeks. This performance is below the target set. There have been some staff absences in Q2 that affected performance but it is clear that too many decisions were made without securing EoT's. The Group Head of Planning carried out a full performance management review exercise in mid 2020 and the aim is to get much closer to 90% without using EoT's.	Not Achieving Target
SDP12	Number of missed refuse and recycling collections per 100,000 within contractual target	Neighbourhood Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6 Monthly	Lower is better	80	80	80	80	No data required	No commentary required		159	This figure is a direct result of the disruption to workforce caused by the national HGV driver shortage. The recruitment in recent months has been successful and stability is leading to a reduction in missed bins. This situation is being monitored on a monthly basis at meetings.	Not Achieving Target
SDP18	Cost of emergency accommodation per annum (net)	Residential Services	Philippa Dart - Director of Services	6 Monthly	Lower is better	£533,000	£533,000	£533,000	£533,000	No data required	No commentary required		£552,000	The impact of Covid means we are seeing an increase in court evictions and family evictions, along with a high level of complex cases, impacting on the number of placements and length of stay in emergency accommodation.	Not Achieving Target

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO AND DECISION OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE ON 9 DECEMBER 2021

SUBJECT: Residents Satisfaction Survey 2021

REPORT AUTHOR: Jackie Follis – Group Head of Policy
DATE: 15 November 2021
EXTN: 01903 737580
AREA: Policy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Each year the Council undertakes a Residents Satisfaction Survey as part of the Council's performance framework.

The Residents Satisfaction Survey for 2020/21 was undertaken between 28 June 2021 and 25 July 2021. The Council instructed BMG Research to undertake the survey.

This report sets out the main findings of the survey for review by Members.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Review and note the contents of the survey.

1. BACKGROUND:

1.1 As part of the Councils performance framework, an annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey is undertaken each year. BMG Research Ltd carried out the survey on our behalf, so that residents can be assured that their responses will be anonymised. A copy of the BMG report is attached. *(please note that where charts or tables from the BMG report are included in the body of this report they retain their number from the BMG report)*

1.2 Section 1.2 of the survey explains the methodology. BMG sent the survey to 3000 randomly selected residents, ensuring that this selection was geographically representative of the whole district. This was an increase from 1800 in the previous year in an attempt to increase the number of respondents. Overall, 849 questionnaires were completed, a total response rate of 28%, against a response rate of 34% in the previous year (611 completed questionnaires).

The survey results are directly comparable to previous years because the same questions have been asked. It is also worth noting that the results are based on 'perceptions' of the district and how people 'feel' about the things we are asking.

- 1.3 Additionally we opened the survey to all residents by placing a web link to the survey on Arun's website and this was advertised through social media, parish councils and local press. This resulted in an additional 528 residents completing the survey. The results from the closed (targeted) and open surveys have been analysed separately and a comparison and gap analysis of the differences in perceptions between the two samples is set out in section 4 of the BMG report and comment on this is made later in this report.
- 1.4 The report outlines the findings from the research into the experiences of living in Arun and perceptions of the Council. It is not statistically valid to provide a breakdown to parish level. To provide a more local picture, wards have therefore been grouped into Western, Eastern and Downland areas for some outcomes. Table 1 in section 1.3 gives this breakdown.
- 1.5 The data in the report is benchmarked against questions in the Local Government Association's (LGA) national public polls on resident satisfaction with local councils. The national survey is carried out by telephone and consists of data from 1,006 adults. The cost of carrying out our telephone surveys for Arun would have been prohibitive and it is possible that self-completion surveys are less inhibited. The impact of this on comparative findings, if any, cannot be quantified, but should be considered when comparing data sets. Section 1.3 describes this in more detail.
- 1.6 It is also worth noting that where tables and graphics do not match exactly to the text in the report, this is due to the figures being rounded either up or down when responses are combined.
- 1.7 Questions 2 and 10 in the survey also relate to the Council's corporate plan performance indicators as follows:-
- CP1 – the level of public satisfied or very satisfied with the overall quality of the Council's services
 - CP4 – The level of customer satisfaction with the cleanliness of the district
- 1.8 As the survey was issued during the Coronavirus pandemic lockdown period, responders were encouraged to consider their responses in relation to the services provided all year round. Section 1.4 comments on the broader context of the survey and sets out some thoughts on the impact of Covid-19. It is inevitable that the national context, whether it is Covid-19 or other issues, will impact on perceptions of local government.
- 1.9 In 2020 it was notable that the national survey carried out by the Local Government Association (LGA) showed that the role of local authorities during covid had been viewed positively and that the unique circumstances of the pandemic did not appear to have impacted on perceptions and indeed may have improved perceptions. A number of our indicators have performed slightly less well in 2021 than in 2020, although still to a high standard, particularly the cleanliness of the District.
- 1.10 It is disappointing that the improvement in 2020 has not been sustained, but during 2020 the Council was operating in very different circumstances to normal which will certainly have influenced public perceptions.

1.11 There are two sections to the BMG Report and whilst this Committee report sets out some of the headlines, further detail can be found in the full report, in particular comparisons between different parts of the District and different demographic groups shown in tables throughout the report.

Living in Arun District

1.12 Overall satisfaction (section 2.1)

Overall satisfaction levels are high, with 81% of residents saying they are either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their local area (15-20 minutes walking distance of their home). This is very similar to the LGA benchmark which is 82% but is lower than the 2020 figure of 87%, and more in line with the 2019 figure of 80%. Data suggests that those who are satisfied with the cleanliness of the District are significantly more likely to be satisfied with the area as a place to live. Satisfaction levels tend to be higher than the LGA benchmark figures for those who are aged 65+ and for those who own their homes outright.

1.13 Community cohesion (section 2.3)

55% of respondents agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, 16% disagree, and a high proportion of people (29%) are neutral. Whilst this potentially identifies an area for the Council to consider in terms of future action it is possible that the high 'neutral' figure is because people do not consider that they have significant contact with people from different backgrounds.

1.14 Cleanliness of Arun District (section 2.4)

In section 2.4, 63% of respondents are satisfied overall with the cleanliness of the District. This is lower overall than for 2020 when it was 78%. The detailed analysis gives more detail on different kinds of places in the District. Parks & open spaces, beaches & promenades and town/village shopping centres have a high level of satisfaction, with public toilets at the bottom of the list. Table 2 shows how these have changed over time with 5 of the seven places either at the same level as or higher than in 2020. It is a point to note that the satisfaction level for public toilets has increased from 36% in 2019 to 35% in 2020 to 43% in 2021. Table 3 shows variations in perceptions by age and area.

Table 2: Satisfaction with cleanliness over time (All valid responses: Sample bases in parenthesis)

Cleanliness of...	Proportion satisfied								2021 (Figure 4)
	2013 (510)	2014 (515)	2015 (399)	2016 (574)	2017 (473)	2018 (585)	2019 (579)	2020 (611)	
Parks and open spaces	75%	72%	76%	79%	73%	70%	74%	79%	79%
Beaches and promenades	69%	70%	71%	68%	74%	67%	77%	78%	72%
Town/village centre shopping areas	66%	63%	67%	68%	69%	62%	65%	69%	70%
Out of town shopping areas	62%	62%	61%	65%	62%	62%	62%	59%	67%
Car parks	58%	63%	62%	64%	60%	55%	58%	60%	63%
Residential roads	54%	59%	57%	56%	54%	50%	57%	66%	59%
Public toilets	34%	36%	34%	34%	29%	25%	36%	35%	43%

The table above, shows the satisfaction with cleanliness over time, green indicates a significant growth, and red indicates a significant decrease.

Table 3: Satisfaction with cleanliness by age and location (All valid responses: based sizes vary)

Green indicates a figure significantly higher than the total average for the sample, while red indicates a figure significantly lower.

	Total	18-44	Age 45-64	65+	Downland	Area Western	Eastern
Parks and open spaces	79%	76%	71%	89%	76%	77%	82%
Beaches and promenades	72%	74%	68%	78%	67%	73%	73%
Town/village centre shopping areas	70%	65%	62%	82%	69%	67%	74%
Out of town shopping areas	67%	59%	66%	76%	63%	64%	75%
Car parks	63%	54%	60%	75%	55%	58%	73%
Residential roads	59%	59%	59%	66%	61%	51%	69%
Public toilets	43%	26%	45%	60%	46%	35%	52%

1.15 Problem behaviours in Arun (section 2.5)

It is worth noting that, compared to the 2020 survey, perceptions around the prevalence of all the issues have increased significantly. This may be due to the circumstances faced with being in lock-down for a large part of the last year.

Customer Satisfaction with the Council and its Services

1.16 Satisfaction with the quality of service (section 3.1)

68% of residents are satisfied with the quality of service provided by the Council. This is a significant decrease down from 77% in 2020. This is in line with the LGA benchmark figure of 68%. There is an association between their local area and Arun District Council in resident's minds, with those who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live are more likely to be satisfied with the Council.

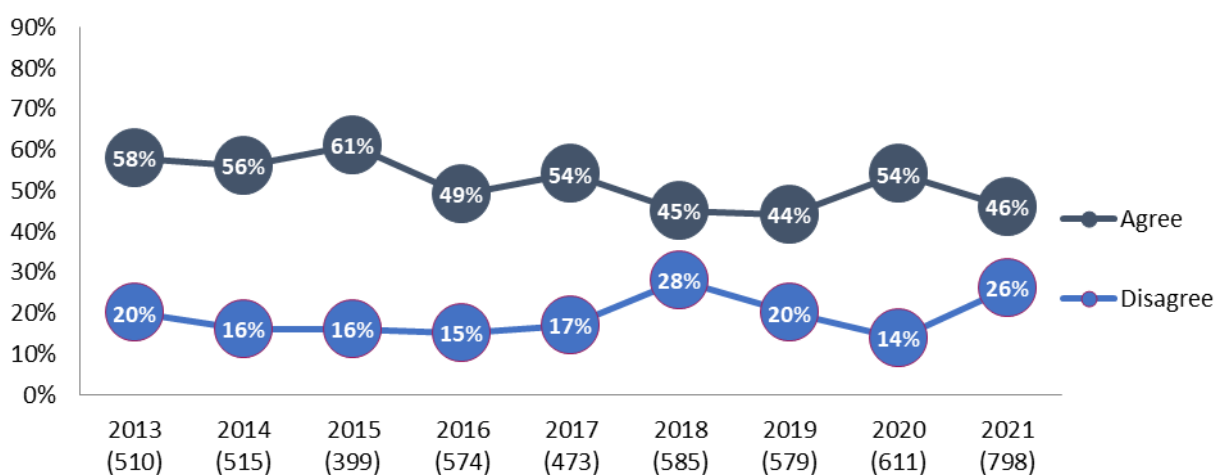
1.17 Satisfaction with specific Council services (section 3.2)

Satisfaction across services remains relatively high despite a drop from last year's figures. Waste collection and recycling has a figure of 84% satisfaction, down from 91% in 2020, and is more in line with the pre-pandemic figure of 85% in 2019. The LGA figure is 80%. Satisfaction with parks, open spaces and play areas have remained at a very similar level since 2019.

1.18 Value for money (section 3.3)

46% of respondents agree that the Council provides value for money compared to 54% in 2020, and 44% for 2019. This is slightly below the LGA benchmark of 48%. Figure 10 shows how this has changed over time, with 2021 figures being close to those from 2019.

Figure 1: Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Arun District Council provides value for money? - Over time (Sample bases in parenthesis)



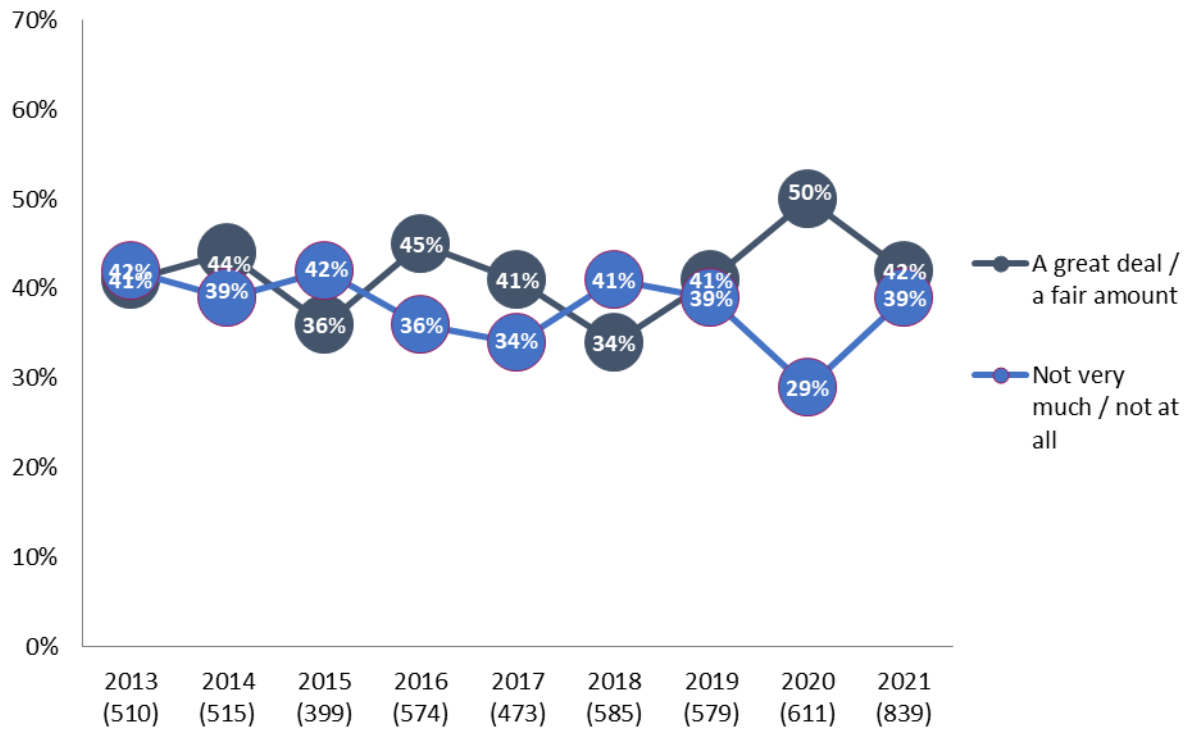
1.19 Trust in the Council to make the right decision (section 3.4)

This has decreased to 59% from 63% in 2020 and is below the LGA benchmark of 64%.

1.20 Acting on concerns (section 3.5)

42% of residents believe that the Council acts on residents' concerns, only 4% answering 'A great deal', and 37% 'A fair amount'. 39% of residents who answered disagreed that the Council acts on their concerns (29% 'Not very much' and 10% answering 'Not at all'). Figure 13 shows the change over time, with a return to the levels seen in 2019.

Figure 13: Q. To what extent do you think Arun District Council acts on the concerns of local residents? - Over time (Sample bases in parenthesis)



1.21 Residents preferred channels to be kept informed (section 3.6)

How we communicate with our Residents is a key component of building a trusted relationship. Figure 14 shows the responses to this question, indicating that the website is the preferred channel, down to word of mouth as the lowest. This shows the importance of maintaining a number of different channels, whilst continuing to develop those which are potentially most convenient and cost effective for residents and the Council. There are not unexpected variations in which channels are preferred, primarily by age. An example of this is that 45% of respondents over the age of 65 prefer to receive a hard copy of the Council’s newsletter.

The Council has already identified the importance of digital communications, both in its Digital Strategy and the Customer Services Strategy.

Comparison of key indicators between open and closed survey

1.22 Figures 15,16,17 and 18 in section 4 of the BMG report show the difference in perceptions between the open and closed surveys. In all instances residents in the closed survey report more positive perceptions than the open survey, suggesting that residents have engaged with the open survey because they are unhappy with a certain issue or service. The biggest differences are for the overall quality of the Council’s services with 32 points difference, the way the Council acts on concerns of local residents with 29 points difference and trust in Arun District Council to make the right decision with 27 points of difference between the two surveys.

Summary

1.23 The information gathered through this survey is about perceptions of the Arun District as a place to live and how we deliver services. The background to the 2021 survey has been a very challenging period of a prolonged pandemic and moving to new ways of delivering some services partly because of the pandemic, but also because some of our processes and channels of communication have been improved anyway. How these have impacted on individual residents and their perceptions of Arun will vary greatly. What is clear from the report is that a number of the responses indicate a lower level of satisfaction than 2020, although some have improved, and some remain very similar to last year. In general, the charts showing progress over time tend to indicate that 2020 was something of an anomaly and that the results for 2021 are close to those for 2019. The Corporate Management Team is looking carefully at this feedback and considering what action needs to be taken at this stage.

1.24 Looking to the future, the Council is currently working on the Council Vision for 2022 – 2026, with the high level aims currently out for public consultation during November and December 2021. The areas of focus are: improving the wellbeing of Arun; delivering the right homes in the right places; supporting our environment to support us and fulfilling Arun's economic potential. Following public feedback, the final 'Vision' will go to Full Council in March 2022 for approval. We are working hard to ensure that we will have clear and regularly monitored performance indicators that will show what progress we are making towards our high level aims for the next four years and the results of this survey will feed into that.

We would also like to express our thanks to all our residents who took the time to complete the survey.

2. PROPOSAL(S):

To note the survey, members may wish to comment on the views of residents

3. OPTIONS:

N/A

4. CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with:	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		x
Relevant District Ward Councillors		x
Other groups/persons (please specify) Consultation with 3000 targeted residents and 528 residents in the open survey	x	

5. ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)

	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal		x

Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		X
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		X
Sustainability		X
Asset Management/Property/Land		X
Technology		X
Other (please explain)		X

6. IMPLICATIONS:

To bring to the attention of Members the views of residents.

7. REASON FOR THE DECISION:

To make Members aware of resident's views on the wider District and Council services

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None

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Research Report



Residents' Survey 2021

Prepared for: Arun District Council

Prepared by: BMG Research

Residents' Survey 2021
Prepared for: Arun District Council
Prepared by: BMG Research
Date: September 2021



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1. Introduction

1.1 Background and method

In summer 2021 Arun District Council commissioned BMG to undertake research to understand residents' views on their local area and their perceptions of, and satisfaction with, Arun District Council.

The views of residents were collected via two methods: a randomly sampled postal survey and an open online survey only accessible to Arun residents. This research was conducted in June and July 2021.

1.2 Methodology

The approach adopted for the 2021 **postal survey** mirrored that used in 2020. Using the Royal Mail's Postal Address File (the most complete source of residential addresses available), 3,000 addresses were selected at random across the district to receive a short questionnaire by post. This questionnaire included details of how the survey could be completed online. The distribution of the selected addresses was checked against ward population data and IMD quartiles to ensure that the sample selection was spatially representative. Mid way through the survey period, any address that had not returned a survey to BMG Research was sent a reminder letter and a fresh version of the questionnaire in order to maximise the response rate. Overall, 849 questionnaires were completed and returned to BMG, representing a total response rate of 28%. This compares to a 34% response rate recorded in the equivalent residents' survey completed in 2020.

A sample of 849 is subject to a maximum standard error of $\pm 2.8\%$ at the 95% confidence level on an observed statistic of 50%. Thus, we can be 95% confident that if a census of Arun residents had been conducted and the whole population had responded, the actual figure would lie between 47.2% and 52.8% respectively.

The data collected has been subsequently weighted by area and, within each area, by age and gender. The exact profile of the data prior to weighting and after weighting can be reviewed in the profile summary within the final section of this written report.

In order to ensure all Arun residents had the opportunity to provide their feedback an open version of the survey was provided.

The **open online survey** has been created using the same questionnaire as per the postal survey. An URL was set up by BMG which was advertised on Arun council's website. Respondents were asked to enter their home postcodes prior to starting the survey. A postcode verification method ensured responses were from Arun residents. Overall, 528 surveys were completed via the open online survey.

BMG used information such as responses with identical postcodes as well as IP addresses and demographics information such as age and gender to identify and differentiate responses given by an individual who already answered the survey, or individuals using the same internet connection or device as another respondent.

As a result, a total of 8 responses have been removed from the final dataset as they were suspected to be duplicated responses from the same individuals.

The data collected has been subsequently weighted by area and, within each area, by age and gender. The exact profile of the data prior to weighting and after weighting can be reviewed in the profile summary within the final section of this written report.

Upon inspection of the data BMG noted that the sample of those from the open online survey is a bias sample of those who are more likely to engage with Arun council. Therefore, BMG has decided to treat the two samples, of the open online survey and the postal survey, separately from each other and to report the results separately.

1.3 Report contents and analysis

This report outlines the findings from the research into experiences of living in Arun, and perceptions of the Council. Where possible these findings are contextualised within the Priority Themes contained within the Corporate Plan 2018-2022.

Throughout the data report, area analysis has been used. Wards have been grouped together into the three areas shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Area definitions

Western	Eastern	Downland
Aldwick East	Beach	Angmering and Findon
Aldwick West	Brookfield	Arundel and Walberton
Bersted	Courtwick with Toddington	Barnham
Felpham East	East Preston	Yapton
Felpham West	Ferring	
Hotham	River	
Marine	Rustington East	
Middleton-on-Sea	Rustington West	
Orchard		
Pagham		
Pevensey		

Throughout this report the word 'significant' is used to describe differences in the data. This indicates where the data has been tested for statistical significance. This testing identifies 'real differences' (i.e. differences that would occur if we were able to interview all residents in Arun rather than just a sample). Within tables in this report, all figures highlighted are significantly higher (green) or lower (red) compared to the total.

The data in the report is benchmarked against the Local Government Association's national public polling on resident satisfaction with local councils. This benchmarking is included wherever consistent question wording was used to allow for the comparison with a national dataset. These surveys are conducted every four months, and the data used for benchmarking in this report is from the latest survey which took place between June and July 2021.

The Local Government Association June 2021 survey consists of data from a representative random sample of 1,006 British adults (aged 18 or over). It is important to note that the LGA polling was carried out by telephone, rather than the postal

methodology used for this research. There may be a difference in the findings produced by the self-completion methodology used in this research (i.e., postal or online) compared to an interview administered survey on the phone, as used by the Local Government Association. Self-completion surveys can produce less inhibited, more critical responses. The impact of this on the findings, if any, cannot be quantified, but should be considered when comparing the datasets. Throughout the report, data from the February wave of the Local Government Association's national public polls is referred to as the "LGA Benchmark."

Where tables and graphics do not match exactly to the text in the report this occurs due to the way in which figures are rounded up (or down) when responses are combined. Results that differ in this way should not have a variance which is any larger than 1%.

The responses are shown as a percentage out of the valid total for the question. The terminology 'valid responses' indicates the total number of responses after having removed responses of those who chose options such as "don't know" and of those who did not respond to the question. Therefore, the sample sizes for the 2021 data might vary across different questions, and the responses may not always sum to 100%.

1.4 Broader context for this research

This research ran against the wider backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown period and lockdown easing period. These unique circumstances were referenced in the covering letters sent out in this research, signed by Nigel Lynn which stated:

"Whilst we are in this unprecedented pandemic situation, your opinions are just as important, but we would like you to think about how our services are delivered all year round, not just during this extraordinary period."

It is not possible to ascertain to what extent, if at all, the responses of residents were influenced by the unique circumstances that the lockdown period produced.

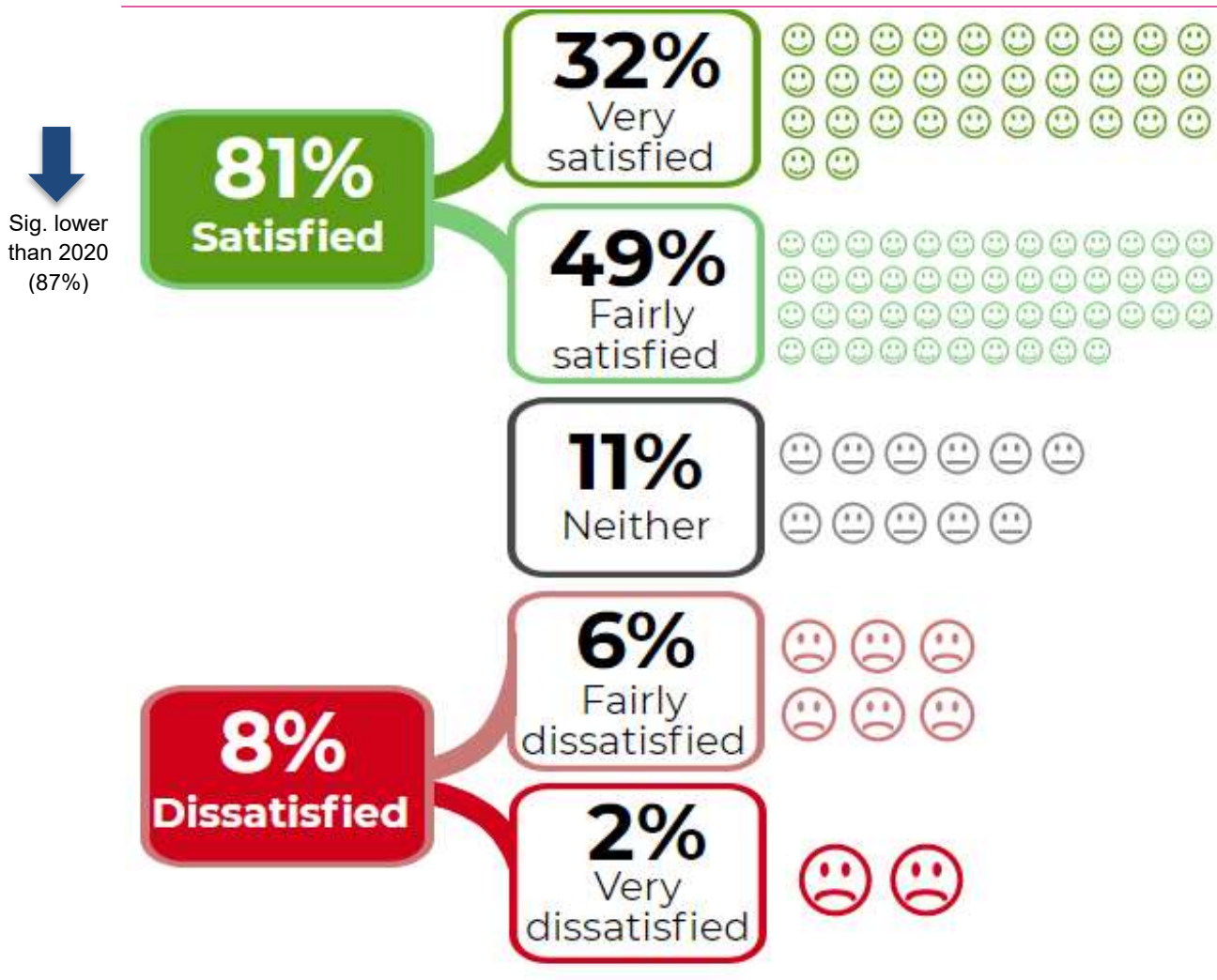
2. Living in Arun District

To understand the everyday experiences of residents in Arun, respondents were asked about their perceptions of their local area. This is important context in which to view their satisfaction with the Council, as this tends to inform it. Understanding residents' experiences of their local area can also be used to instruct Council decisions regarding services and resources. Therefore, Arun residents were asked, "Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?"

2.1 Overall satisfaction

Overall satisfaction levels are high, with 81% percent of residents saying they are either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with their local area (15-20 minutes walking distance of their home) as a place to live. This compares to be in line with the LGA benchmark figure of 82%, but it is significantly lower than the 2020 score (87%).

Figure 1: Q1 Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? (All valid responses: 834)



Satisfaction levels are pretty much in line the LGA benchmark figure for all three areas, this is also the case when compared to the average for the dataset.

Satisfaction levels tend to be higher than the LGA benchmark figures for those who are aged 65+ years and for those who own their homes outright.

When looking at the dataset, the satisfaction scores recorded for those aged 65+ are also significantly higher (90% cf. 81%). Similarly, the satisfaction levels of those who own outright is significantly higher than the average score recorded in the dataset (88% cf. 81%), interestingly this score is consistent with the level recorded in 2020 (89%)

Perhaps unsurprisingly, perceptions of the quality of Council services and the cleanliness of the local area appear to influence satisfaction levels: just 47% of respondents who are dissatisfied with the quality of Council services are satisfied with their local area overall, and just 62% of those who are dissatisfied with the cleanliness.

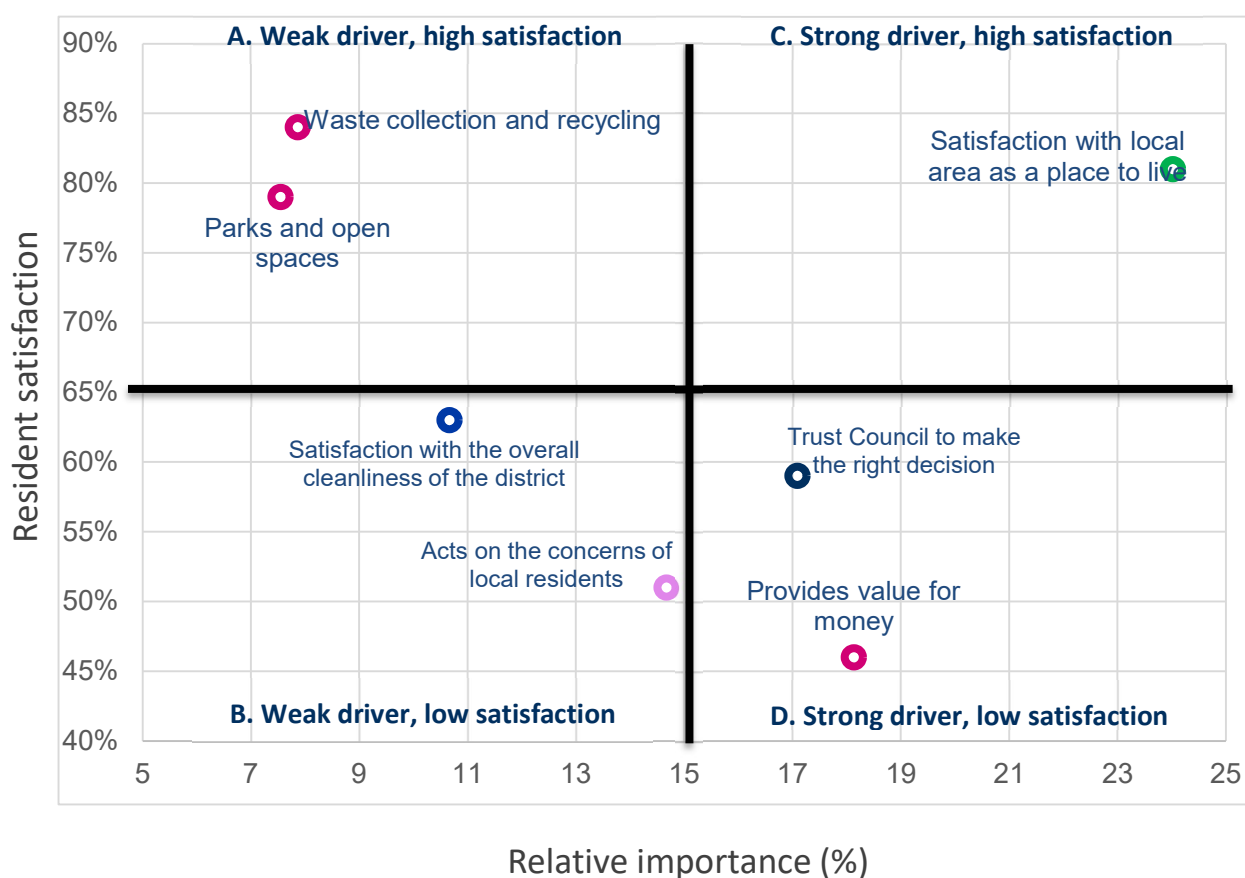
2.2 Key drivers' analysis for satisfaction

The key driver analysis (KDA) will help to see and understand the elements that drives satisfaction amongst the residents.

Reading the results:

- A – Weak Driver High Satisfaction: Focus on maintaining satisfaction levels here
- B – Weak Driver, Low Satisfaction: Focusing on improving position here will not have a significant impact on the overall Group score
- C – Strong Diver. High Satisfaction: Aim to improve satisfaction scores of questions in red box to here. And maintain position
- D – Strong Driver, Low Satisfaction: Focusing on improving satisfaction in these questions should result in an improvement in overall satisfaction score.

Figure 1.1: KDA analysis of satisfaction



For Arun residents, the “Satisfaction with local area as a place to live” is a strong driver of high satisfactions, whereas “Provides value for money” and “Trust Council to make the right decision” are strong driver for lower satisfaction.

When looking at the two strong drivers of low satisfaction “Provides value for money” has a slightly higher relative importance when it comes to impact the levels of satisfaction compared to “Trust Council to make the right decision”.

2.3 Community cohesion

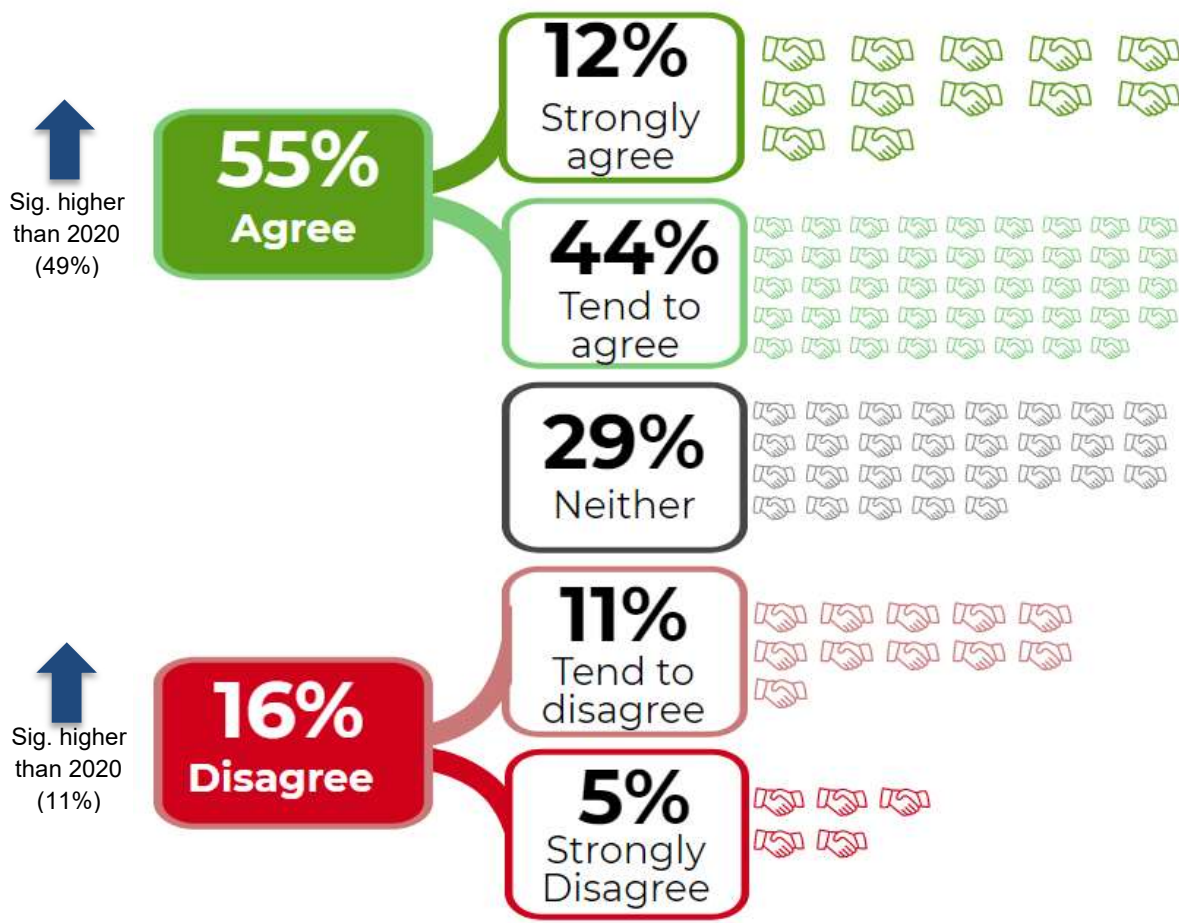
To understand more about residents' daily lives, they were asked whether they agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. Just over half of the respondents (55%) agree, while 16% disagree. The majority of those who agree said they 'tend to agree', just 1 in 10 respondents agreeing strongly. A high proportion of respondents (29%) selected the neutral option for this question. As such, there may be an opportunity for the Council and its partners to improve the sense of community cohesion with future initiatives if they are possible, as currently residents are fairly ambivalent to the statement.

Disagreement is higher among those aged under 45 (26% cf. 16% at a total respondent level and 9% among the over 65's), this is similar to the result seen in 2020.

It is also significantly higher for residents in the Western areas and those in employment, with 23% and 19% of these respondents respectively expressing disagreement.

It would be interesting to note that a 30% of respondents classified as unemployed, sick, disabled or a homemaker disagree with this statement. While the sample base size for this subgroup of respondents is just 33, this may be indicative of a lack of opportunity for residents who are not in employment to meet and interact with others from different backgrounds.

Figure 2: Q7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together? (All valid responses: 727)

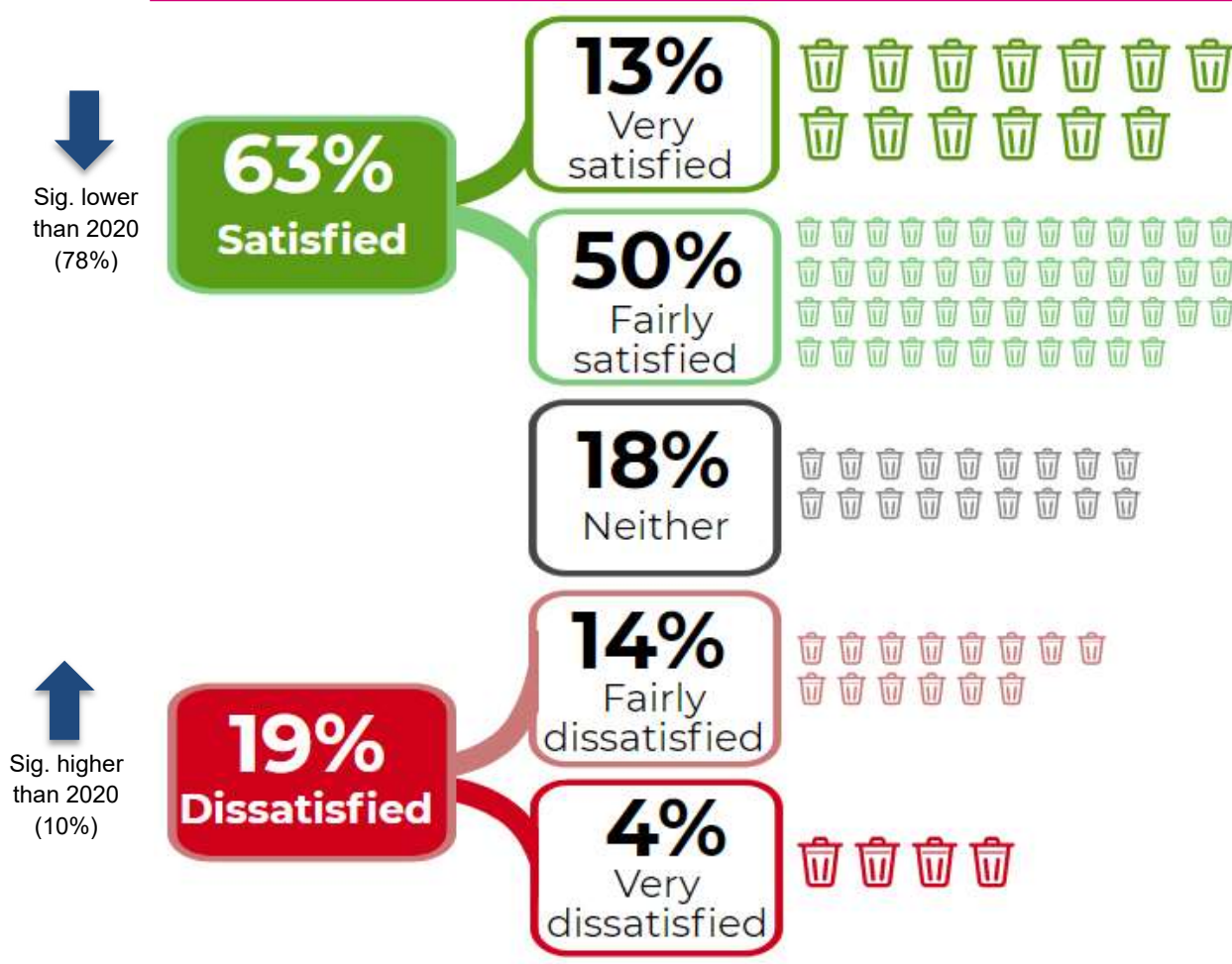


2.4 Cleanliness of Arun District

Customer satisfaction with the cleanliness of the district is of crucial importance to the Council. As part of the Council's Corporate Plan for 2018-2022 it has sought to improve satisfaction with the cleanliness of the district by delivering the best services possible in this regard. Residents were therefore asked about their levels of satisfaction with the cleanliness of the places that the Council has responsibility for.

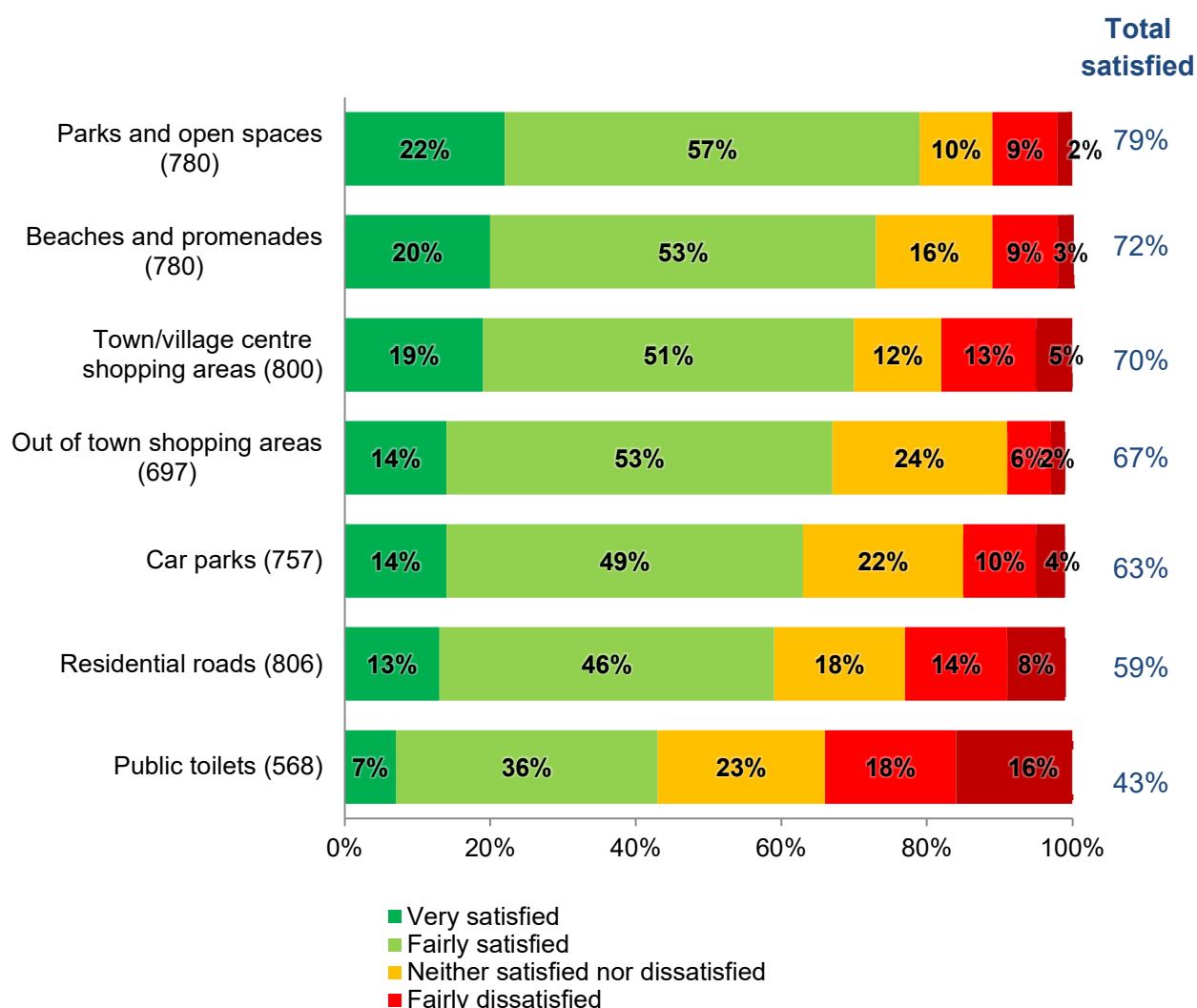
Overall, 63% of respondents are satisfied with the cleanliness of the district, while 19%, 1 in 5 are dissatisfied.

Figure 3: Q10. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall cleanliness of the district? (All valid responses: 828)



In order to pinpoint particular areas for improvement, respondents were then asked how satisfied they were with the cleanliness of different facilities in the district. Notably, there are high levels of satisfaction with the cleanliness of parks (79%) and beaches/promenades (72%). Satisfaction with the cleanliness of town and village shopping centres is 3% points higher than for out-of-town facilities; however, dissatisfaction with town/village shopping centres is also higher (18%, cf. 8% for out-of-town facilities). The lowest levels of satisfaction are with public toilets (43%), with 12% of respondents being dissatisfied.

Figure 4: Q11. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of cleanliness of the following places within the district? (All valid responses: Sample bases in parenthesis)



The 2020 iteration of this report noted the success of the Council’s plans to improve residents’ perceptions of the cleanliness of the district.

This success continues to be evident in certain areas, with a significant increase in levels of satisfaction between 2020 and 2021 for out-of-town shopping areas and public toilets (+8 points for each area) and staying on the same satisfaction levels for parks and open spaces and town/village centre shopping areas.

However, there is the need to note that there has been a decrease in satisfaction levels with beaches and promenades and residential roads (by -6 and -7 points respectively).

In the below table, showing satisfaction with cleanliness over time, green indicates a significant growth, and red indicates a significant decrease.

Table 2: Satisfaction with cleanliness over time (All valid responses: Sample bases in parenthesis)

Cleanliness of...	Proportion satisfied								
	2013 (510)	2014 (515)	2015 (399)	2016 (574)	2017 (473)	2018 (585)	2019 (579)	2020 (611)	2021 (Figure 4)
Parks and open spaces	75%	72%	76%	79%	73%	70%	74%	79%	79%
Beaches and promenades	69%	70%	71%	68%	74%	67%	77%	78%	72%
Town/village centre shopping areas	66%	63%	67%	68%	69%	62%	65%	69%	70%
Out of town shopping areas	62%	62%	61%	65%	62%	62%	62%	59%	67%
Car parks	58%	63%	62%	64%	60%	55%	58%	60%	63%
Residential roads	54%	59%	57%	56%	54%	50%	57%	66%	59%
Public toilets	34%	36%	34%	34%	29%	25%	36%	35%	43%

Looking at the satisfaction with cleanliness in all of the listed places, the data evidences some variation in level of satisfaction across all demographics. Residents in Eastern areas are more satisfied with the carparks (73% cf. 63%), residential roads (69% cf. 59%) and public toilets (52% cf. 43%). Meanwhile, residents in Western areas are less satisfied with the cleanliness of public toilets (35% vs. 43%), residential roads (51% cf. 59%). For car parks, satisfaction with cleanliness is significantly lower in both Western (58% cf. 63%) and Downland (55%). As the Council prioritises the improvement of cleanliness, it may therefore be worth allocating resources in Western areas to tackle these issues. However, it should be noted that residents were asked about their satisfaction with these places across Arun district as a whole, so they may also be considering places outside of their immediate neighbourhoods.

Younger residents are less likely to be satisfied with the cleanliness of car parks (54% cf. 63%) and public toilets (26% cf. 43%).

Additionally, residents with children are less likely to be satisfied with parks (66% cf. 79%), public toilets (29% cf. 43%) and promenades (60% cf. 72%).

The low satisfaction levels for public toilets from younger residents and residents with children are driven by a strong dissatisfaction with this area with at least a quarter stating they very dissatisfied.

The below table shows satisfaction with cleanliness by area and age, green indicates a figure significantly higher than the total average for the sample, while red indicates a figure significantly lower.

Table 3: Satisfaction with cleanliness by age and location (All valid responses: base sizes vary)

	Age				Area		
	Total	18-44	45-64	65+	Downland	Western	Eastern
Parks and open spaces	79%	76%	71%	89%	76%	77%	82%
Beaches and promenades	72%	74%	68%	78%	67%	73%	73%
Town/village centre shopping areas	70%	65%	62%	82%	69%	67%	74%
Out of town shopping areas	67%	59%	66%	76%	63%	64%	75%
Car parks	63%	54%	60%	75%	55%	58%	73%
Residential roads	59%	59%	59%	66%	61%	51%	69%
Public toilets	43%	26%	45%	60%	46%	35%	52%

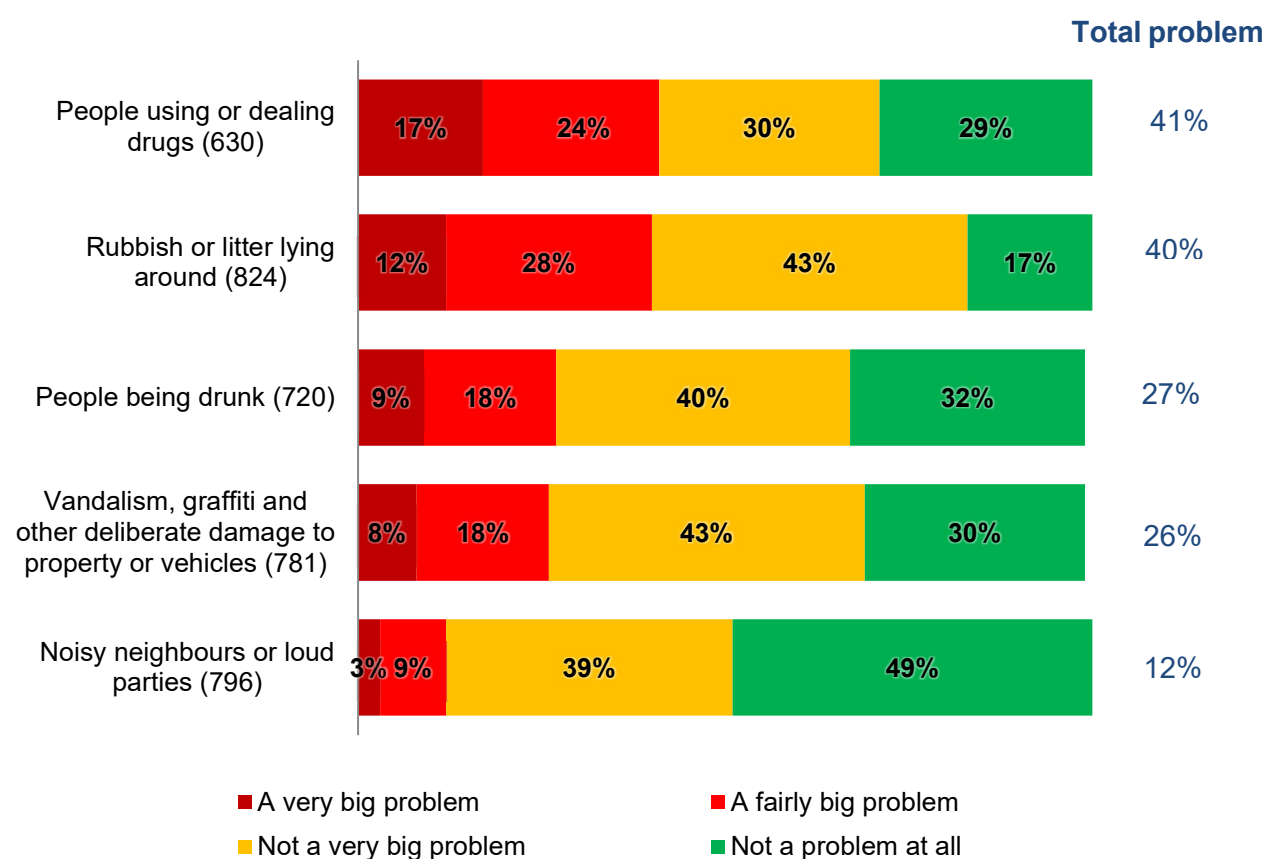
2.5 Problem behaviours in Arun

As well as being asked their views on the cleanliness of the area, residents were asked whether any anti-social behaviours are a problem. The most prominent issues to be identified are people using or dealing drugs and rubbish and litter, with at least two fifths of respondents identifying each as a problem. Drunkenness is also identified as a relatively common problem by residents (27% of respondents said this), followed by graffiti and vandalism (26%). There is little evidence of noisy neighbours or parties being an issue with 12% respondents saying this is a problem.

It is worth noting that the prevalence of all of these issues has increased since the 2020 iteration of this survey: significantly so, for people using and dealing drugs (41% cf. 21%), rubbish and litter (40% cf. 21%), vandalism (26% cf. 13%) and drunkenness (27% cf. 18%). The proportion of respondents citing noisy neighbours as a problem has also increased by 7% points since 2020 (12% cf. 5%).

However, it should be taken into consideration that the 2020 research was carried out from April to March 2020 during the coronavirus national lockdown imposed by the UK Government which limited residents to interact with people outside of their household. Although it is not possible to ascertain to what extent, if at all, the responses of residents' were influenced by the unique circumstances that the lockdown period produced, this would have also limited the frequency of problems residents faced with anti-social behaviour.

Figure 5: Q8. Thinking about this local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are? (All valid responses: Sample bases in parenthesis)



Overall, there are few significant differences in prevalence of these issues by area. However, residents in the Western areas are significantly more likely to note several of the problems:

- 39% of respondents from the Western areas see rubbish and litter as a problem, compared to 40% of the total sample. 16% of these respondents describe rubbish and litter as a very big problem, this is higher when compared to just 12% of the total sample.
- Additionally, 46% of respondents from the Western areas view the using and dealing of drugs in their area as a problem, this is higher compared to 41% of the total sample. 22% of these respondents describe using and dealing drugs as a very big problem in their area, which again, it is higher when compared to just 17% of the total sample.
- 32% of the Western area said drunkenness is a problem (cf. 27% of total respondents), with most (22%) saying that it is a fairly big problem which is higher than the 18% of the total sample.

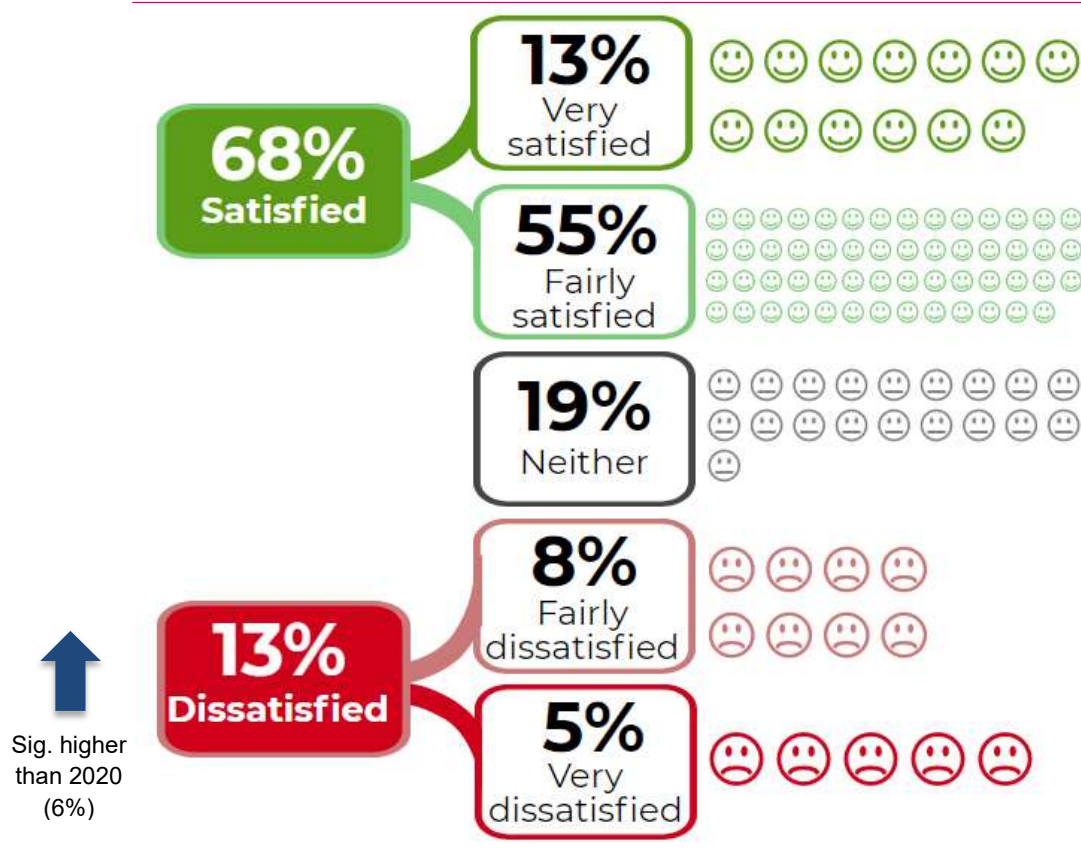
3. Customer satisfaction with the Council and its services

Within the broader context outlined above, the rest of this report explores residents' perceptions of the Council and its services. Initially, residents were asked about their overall satisfaction with Arun District Council. It should be noted that the wording of this question has changed since 2019, where residents were asked 'Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Arun District Council runs the things they are responsible for?', as opposed to 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of the Council's services?' in the current iteration.

3.1 Satisfaction with quality of service

68% of respondents are satisfied with the quality of service provided by Arun District Council. This is a significant decrease from last year's findings (-2% points), although the change in question wording noted above should be taken into account. Around 1 in 8 (13%) of respondents are dissatisfied against this metric. These findings compare to be in line against the LGA benchmark, where 68% of residents are satisfied on average (noting that the benchmark also uses the previous question wording).

Figure 6: Q2. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of the Council's services? (All valid responses: 822)



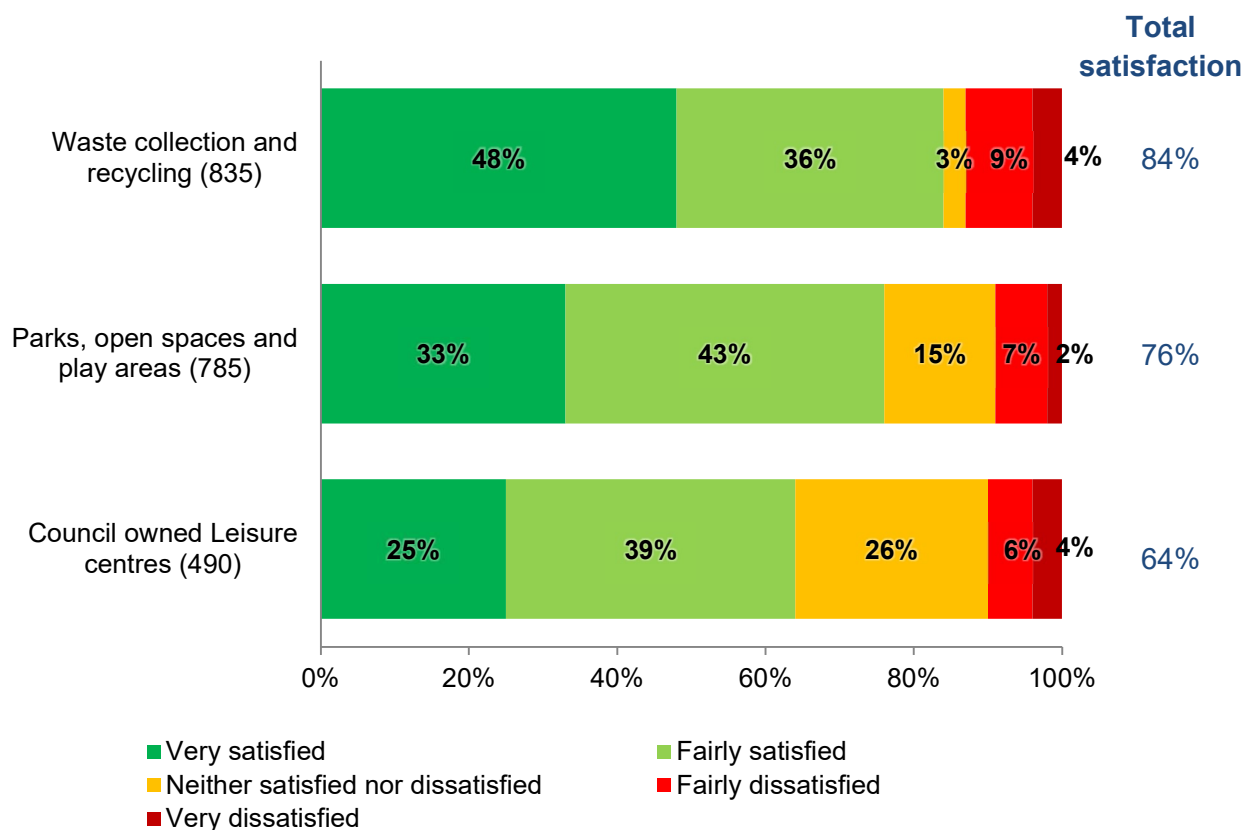
Those aged 65+ are significantly more likely to be satisfied with the local Council when compared to the total average (77% cf. 68%), as are those who are satisfied with the cleanliness of their local area (84%), and who agree that the Council provides value for money (86%).

3.2 Satisfaction with specific Council services

To understand what is driving satisfaction with the Council, residents were asked about specific services that the Council offers.

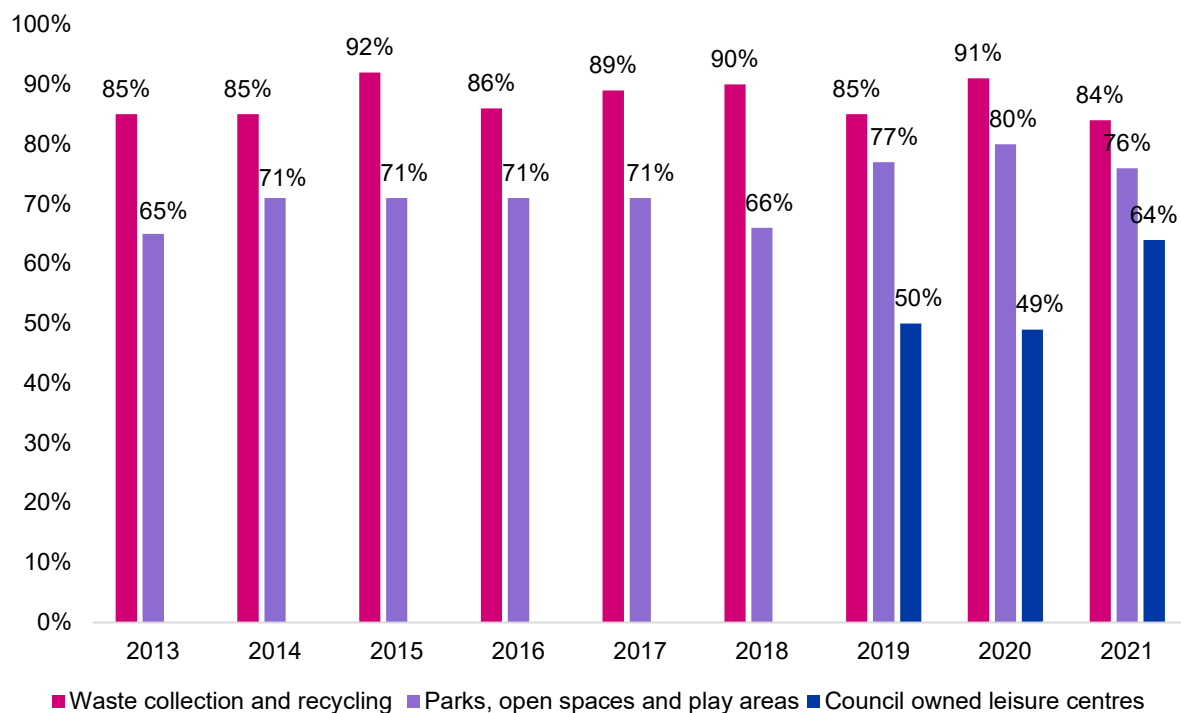
Satisfaction across services is high, especially for waste collection and recycling, a facet of the Your Future priority. Almost half of respondents (48%) are very satisfied with waste collection and recycling, and 84% are satisfied overall. Although not directly comparable due to differences in the wording, the closest LGA comparison, satisfaction with waste collection, is 80%, putting satisfaction with the service provided by Arun District Council significantly higher. Council-owned leisure centres have lower levels of satisfaction (64%), but when compared to last year's levels of satisfaction (49%) this level is significantly higher. Overall, the level of satisfaction with Council services continues to evidence successful implementation of high-quality services against the of the corporate Plan 2018-2022.

Figure 7: Q9. The following services are provided by Arun District Council. Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with Arun District Council's performance for each of them (All valid responses: basis in parenthesis)



Looking over the longer term, the data shows that satisfaction with refuse collection has remained consistently high, and this year it reached back to the levels recorded in 2019, 2014 and 2013. Satisfaction with parks, open spaces and play areas has increased by 10 points since 2018.

Figure 8: Q9. The following services are provided by Arun District Council. Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with Arun District Council's performance for each of them (All responses: base sizes vary)



Those aged 65 and over are significantly more likely to be satisfied with waste collection and recycling services and parks and open spaces (93%, cf. 84% of the total sample and 85% cf. 76% respectively), while those aged 18-44 are significantly less (75% and 63% respectively). Residents aged over 65 also show a higher satisfaction level with council owned leisure centres (75% cf. 64%). In the below table, showing satisfaction with Council services by age and area, green indicates a figure significantly higher than the total average for the sample, while red indicates a figure significantly lower.

Table 4: Satisfaction with Council services by age and area (Sample base sizes vary)

	Age				Area		
	Total	18-44	45-64	65+	Downland	Western	Eastern
Waste collection and recycling	84%	75%	85%	93%	84%	84%	84%
Parks, open spaces and play areas	76%	63%	78%	85%	62%	78%	80%
Council owned Leisure centres	64%	56%	70%	75%	60%	59%	72%

3.3 Value for money

In order to gain a greater depth of understanding of residents' perceptions of Council services, respondents were asked to consider whether they feel the Council provides value for money. To frame responses to this question, all respondents were reminded that Arun's 2019/20 Council Tax is £3.59 per week for a Band D dwelling.

46% of respondents agree that the Council provides value for money, with most (39%) tending to agree. This compares favourably with the LGA benchmark figure as both satisfaction levels are in line (49% agreement). 26% of respondents disagree with this statement, which is significantly higher than the dissatisfaction levels reported last year.

As demonstrated in the figure 10, agreement and disagreement that Arun Council provides value for money has gone back to the levels reported in 2018. Still, 29% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, indicating that there is still a certain level of ambiguity about this statement.

Figure 9: Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Arun District Council provides value for money? (All valid responses: 798)

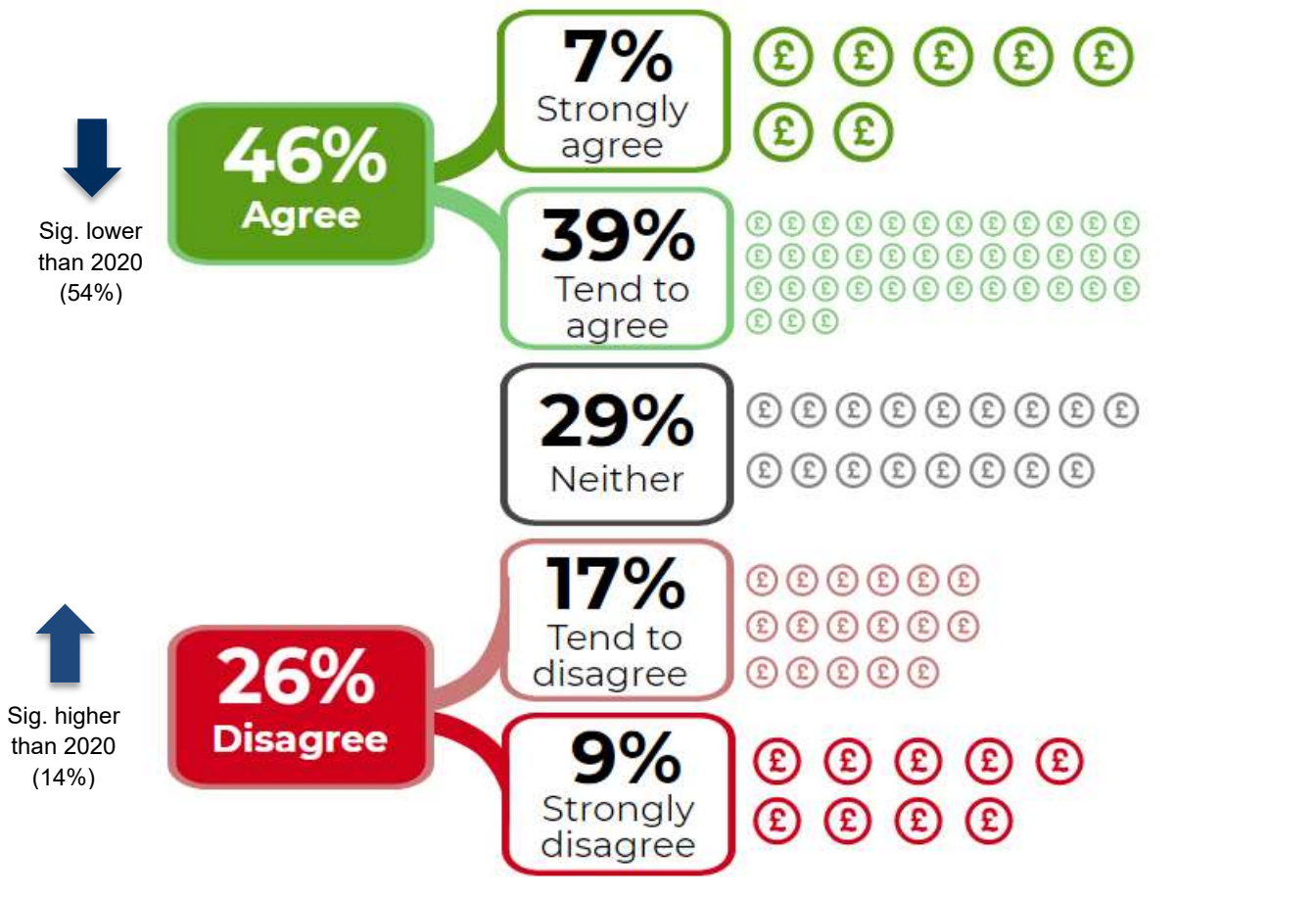
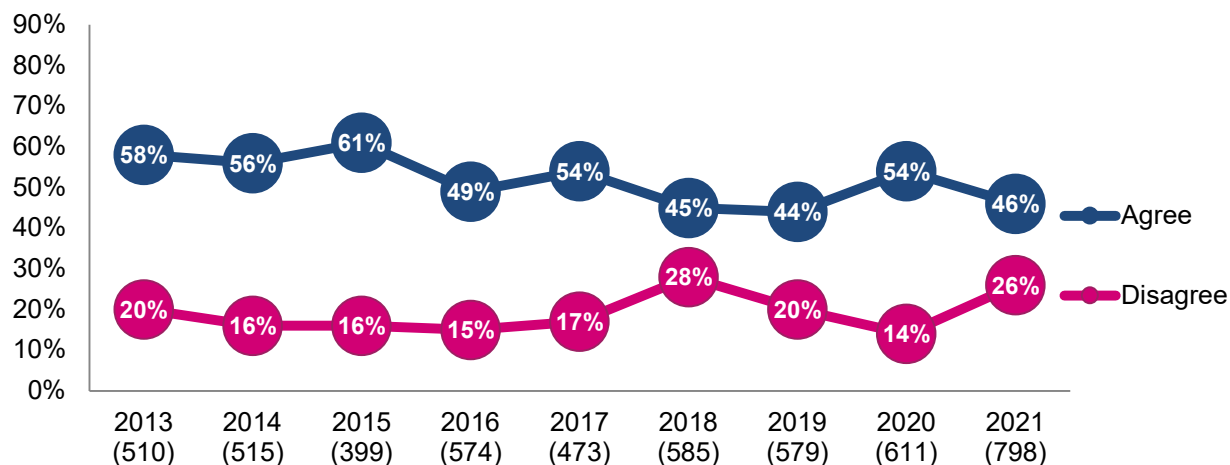


Figure 10: Q3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Arun District Council provides value for money? - Over time (Sample bases in parenthesis)

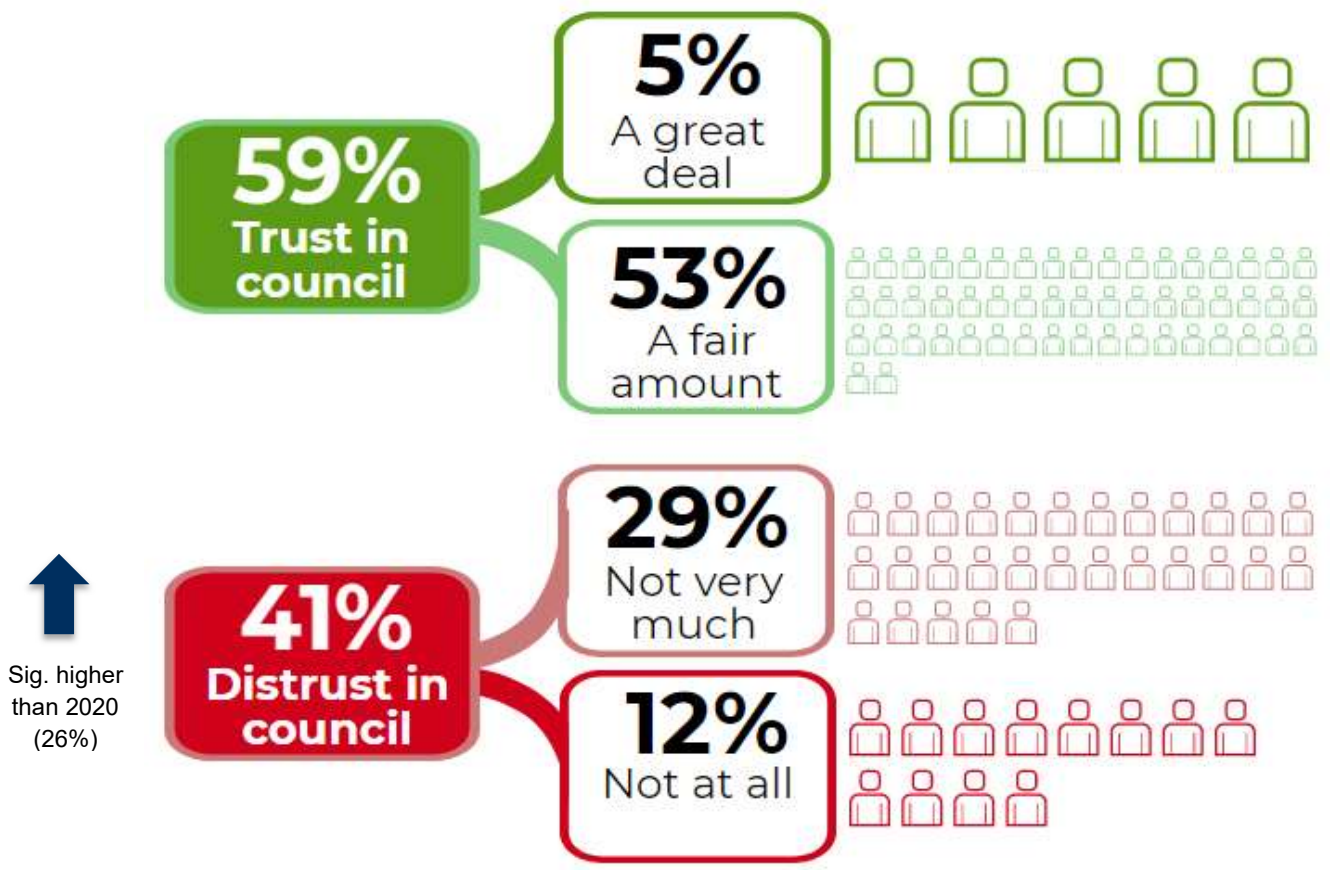


Mirroring their higher levels of satisfaction with the Council, residents aged 65 or over also tend to have higher positivity regarding value for money (56%% agreement, cf. 46% from the total sample). By area, agreement levels are pretty much in line across all three areas when compared to the average for the dataset.

3.4 Trust in the Council to make the right decision

59% of respondents said that they trust the Council to make the right decision with the majority (53%) of residents said they trust the Council a fair amount. The closest question to this in the LGA benchmark is ‘How much do you trust your local council?’ with the LGA average score being 64% and Arun District Council scoring 59%.

Figure 11: Q6. How much do you trust Arun District Council to make the right decision? (All valid responses: 734)



By area, in Western areas there is more of an equal split in the level of trust with the Council with 50% (cf. 59% of total sample) saying they trust the Council, which is significantly higher than the average from the dataset, and 50% (cf. 41% of total sample) saying they distrust the Council, which is significantly lower than the average from the dataset.

Eastern areas are significantly more likely to say that they trust the Council to make the right decisions (72%, compared to 59% of the total sample). Just 28% of residents in Eastern areas say that they do not trust the Council.

In the below table, showing levels of trust by area, green indicates a figure significantly higher than the total average for the sample, while pink indicates a figure significantly lower.

Table 5: Trust by area (Sample base sizes vary)

	Total	Downland	Western	Eastern
Trust (A great deal/ a fair amount)	59%	55%	50%	72%
Distrust (Not much/ not at all)	41%	45%	50%	28%

3.5 Acting on concerns

Respondents were asked whether they believe that the Council acts on residents' concerns, and two fifths (42%) agree that it does. Most (37%) agree that the Council acts on their concerns a fair amount, with just 4% agreeing that it does so a great deal. 39% of respondents disagree that the Council acts on their concerns, although just 10% feel that it does not act on their concerns at all.

As shown in the chart overleaf, agreement and disagreement with this statement has resumed with the 2019 scores. However, agreement is still lower than the LGA benchmark figure of 62%.

Figure 12: Q4. To what extent do you think Arun District Council acts on the concerns of local residents? (All responses: 839)

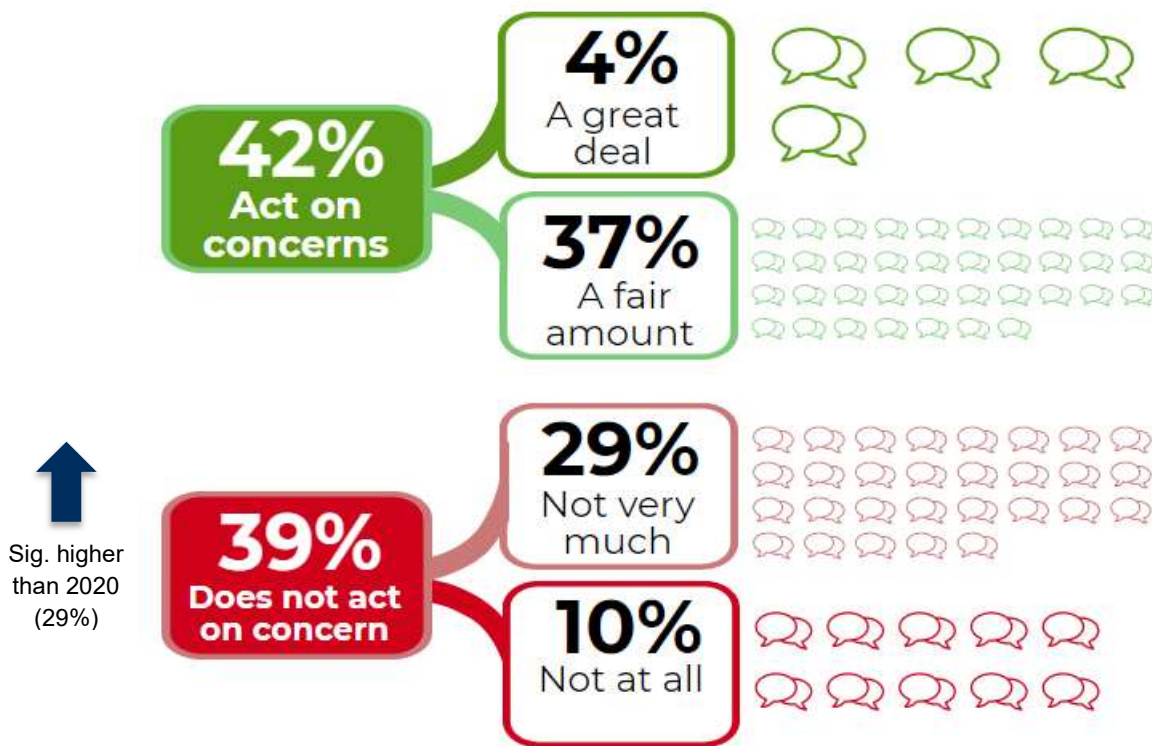
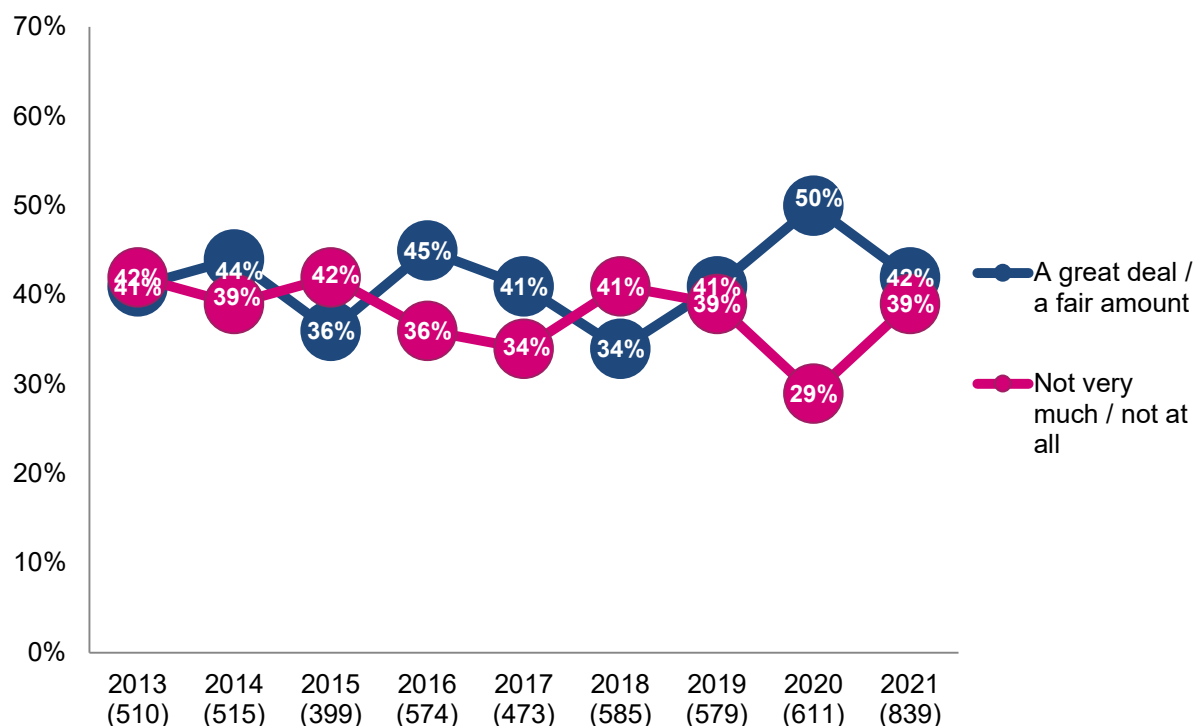


Figure 13: Q4. To what extent do you think Arun District Council acts on the concerns of local residents? - Over time (Sample bases in parenthesis)



Residents aged 65+ are significantly more likely to feel satisfied that the Council acts on their concerns (47%, cf. 42% of the total sample). By location, respondents in Western areas are significantly more likely to disagree that the Council acts on their concerns (44% cf. 39% of the total sample), while those in Eastern areas are significantly less likely to disagree (32%).

In the below table, showing agreement with this statement by area, green indicates a figure significantly higher than the total average for the sample, while pink indicates a figure significantly lower.

Table 6: Acting on concerns by area (Sample base sizes vary)

	Total	Downland	Western	Eastern
Agree (A great deal/ a fair amount)	42%	39%	36%	50%
Disagree (Not very much/ not at all)	39%	43%	44%	32%

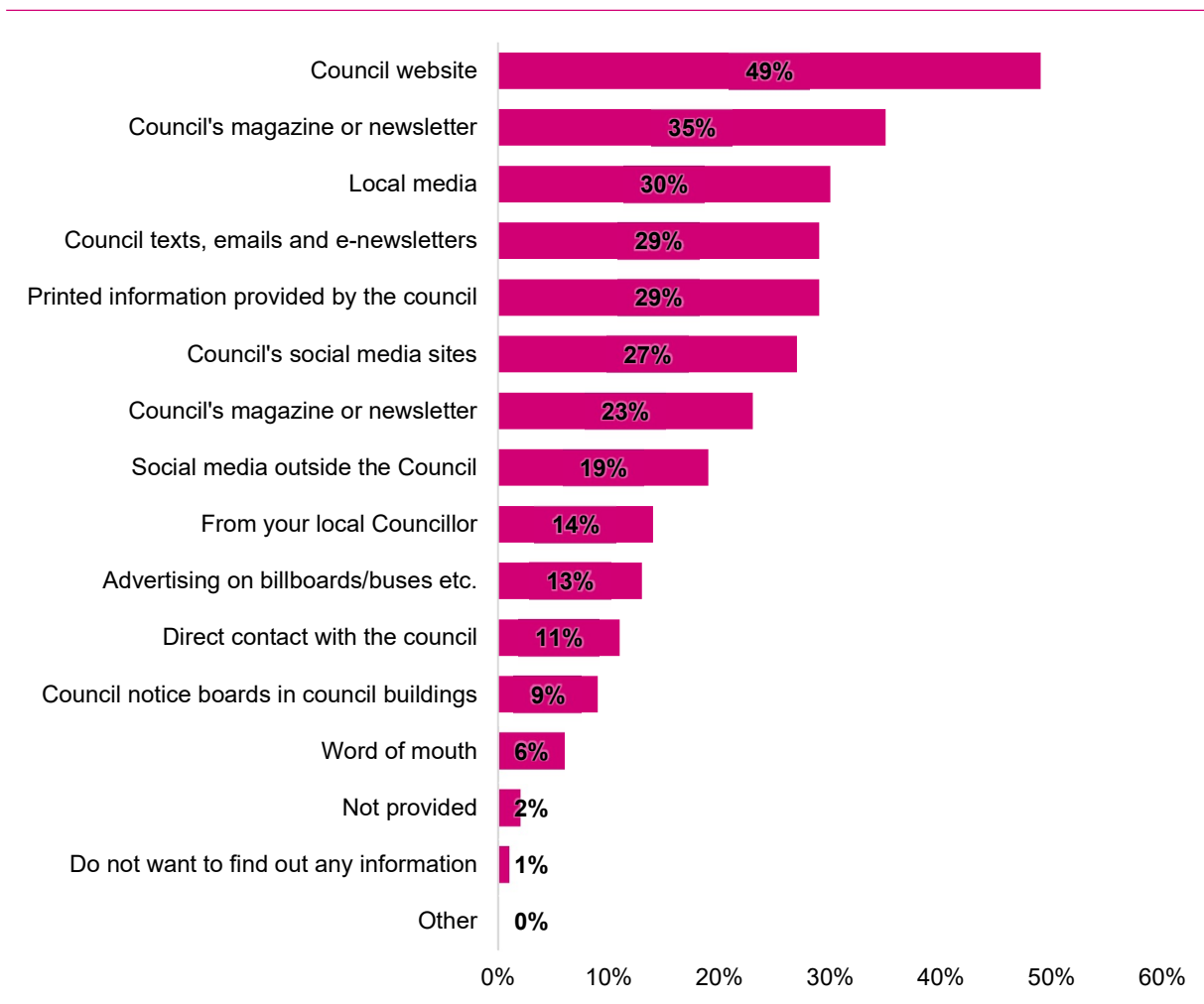
3.6 Residents’ preferred channels to be kept informed

A key component of building a trusted relationship between council and residents is whether the residents feel that they are kept informed. Residents were therefore asked how they would prefer to be kept informed by the Council, in order to help the Council understand which channels of communication may work hardest for them.

Slightly less than half of residents (49%), prefer to keep informed via the website. Local media, printed information and the Council magazine or newsletter are also indicated as being preferred options relatively commonly, selected by around one in three residents or more (35%). Around three in ten (30%) state that they are interested in local media from the councils and then digital communication from the Council more generally, for example through texts, emails and e-newsletters (29%) and printed information provided by the council (29%). Word of mouth, Council noticeboards in council buildings, direct contact from Council are all less preferred as sources of information.

Encouragingly, only 1% of residents said they did not want to find out any information, which suggests an appetite for communication.

Figure 14: Q5. How would you like the Council to keep you informed? (All valid responses: 839)



There are some variations by demographics, primarily by age. Those over 65 are less likely to want to use the Council website (33%), or to receive information digitally (copy of magazines or newsletters digitally 18% and council texts, emails and e-newsletters 18%). Instead, they are far more likely to prefer receiving a hard copy of the Council's magazine or newsletter, with 45% of respondents aged over 65 choosing this as a preferred communication method.

By contrast, two thirds (65%) of respondents aged under 44 would prefer to receive information from the website. There is also a strong appetite for direct digital communications amongst this age group, with 47% stating that they would like to be kept informed by the Council's social media sites.

Interestingly, residents with children in the house also express a preference for digital communication methods: 59% would prefer to use the Council website, 57% would prefer the Council's social media sites and then 38% would prefer social media outside the Council. This may be influenced by the fact that respondents with young children are more likely to fall into the younger age category. The time constraints of work and family life may also make digital communication more convenient for these respondents, since it can be accessed at any time.

4. Closed survey vs. Open survey

As the open survey was available for any Arun residents to complete, the sample of this survey is made of a bias sample of those who are more likely to engage with the council and of those willing to share their feedback.

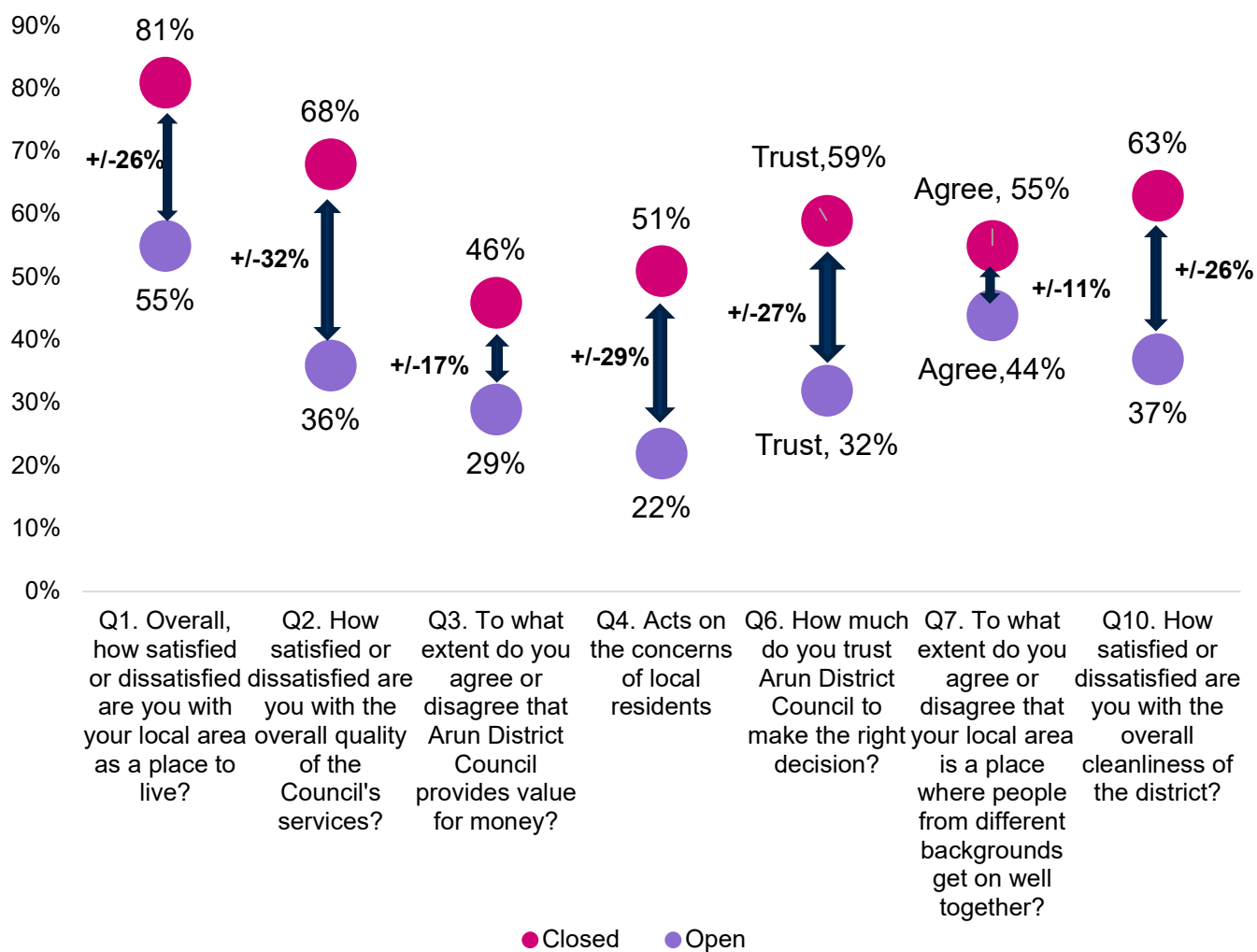
To compare the satisfaction levels between the open survey and the closed survey this section presents gap analysis between the two survey results as well as presenting the differences in the key drivers for satisfaction.

4.1 Comparison of key indicators

The following gap analysis charts showcase the difference in perceptions between the two samples, this will help to identify the largest difference in scores between the open and closed sample. In all instances, residents in the closed survey report more positive perceptions than the open survey, suggesting that residents have engaged with the open survey because they are unhappy with a certain issue or service.

As shown in Figure 15, the biggest differences in general perceptions between the open and closed survey is for the overall quality of the Council's services, with 32 points differences, the way the Council acts on the concerns of local residents, with 29 points difference and finally in trusting Arun District Council to make the right decision with 27 points of difference between the two surveys.

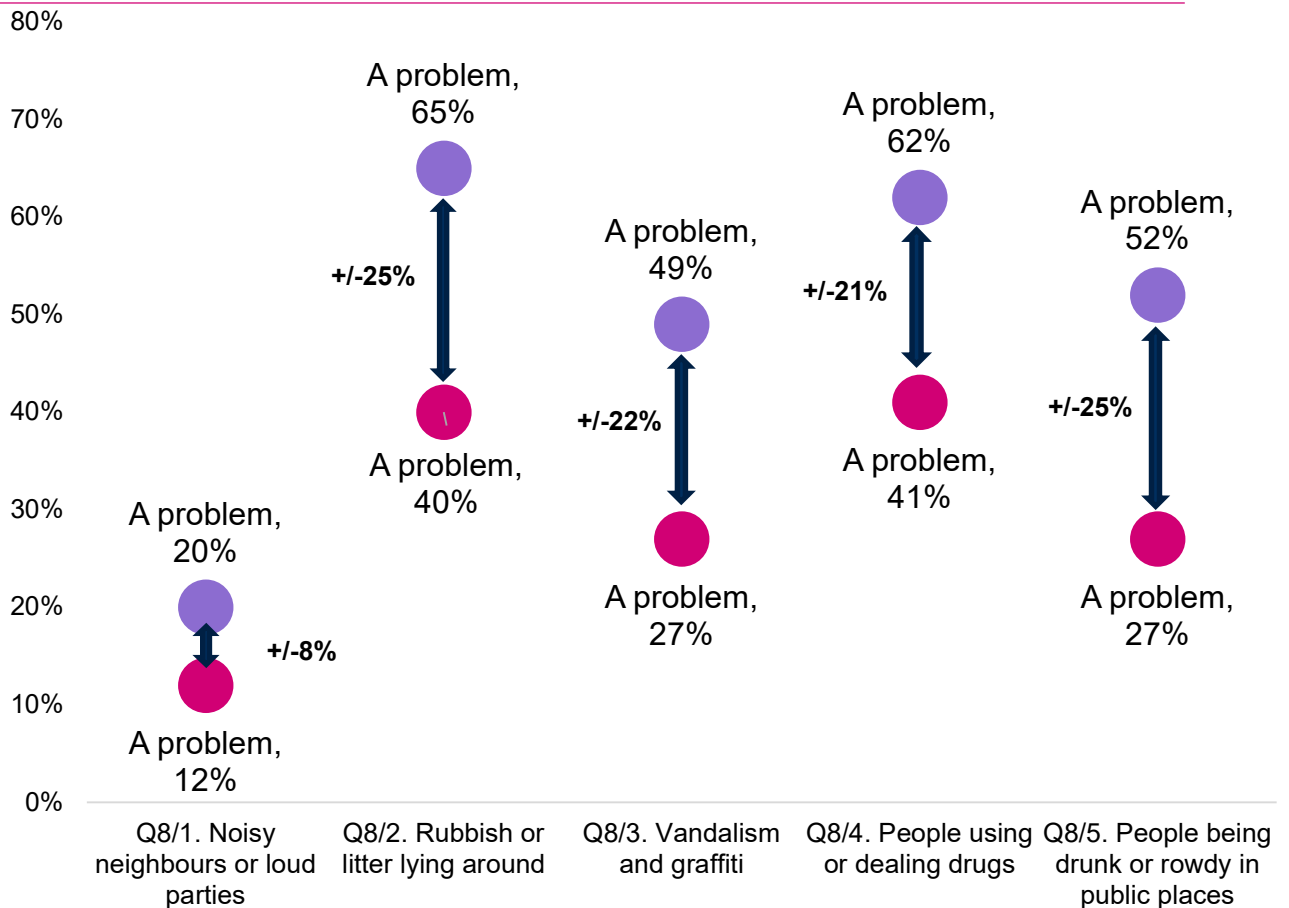
Figure 15: Gap analysis chart



*This chart is showcasing satisfaction levels, unless otherwise stated

Looking at neighbourhood problems, in both surveys Rubbish or litter lying around and People using or dealing drugs are the top two items' residents identify to be a problem. Notably, the smallest difference in the proportion indicating a problem between the open and closed survey is for noisy neighbours, which may suggest that residents engaging with the Council via the open survey may be due to the other problems listed.

Figure 16: Gap analysis chart (continued)

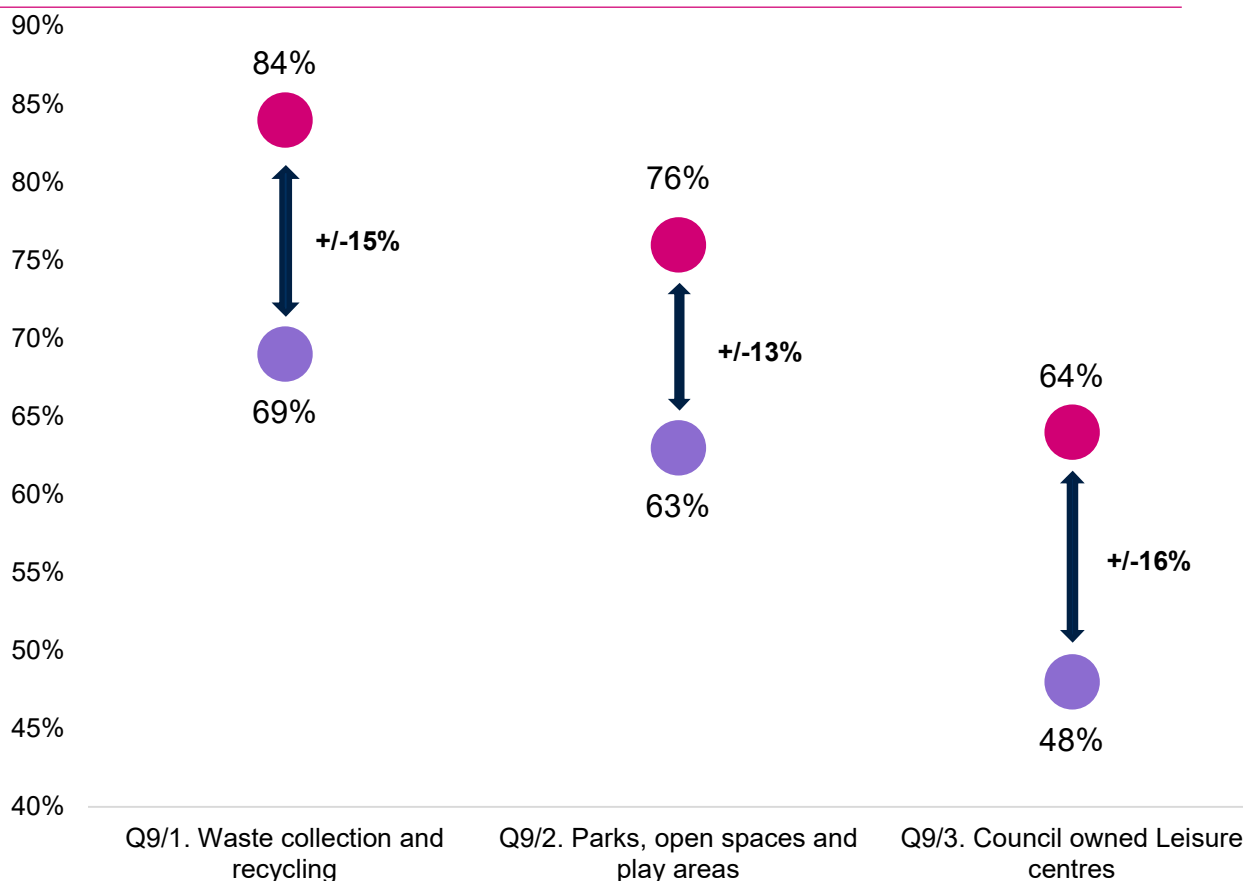


Q8. Thinking about this local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are?

● Closed ● Open

Residents were asked about their levels of satisfaction with the services provided from the Council. The difference in satisfaction levels for each service is similar between the closed survey and open survey.

Figure 17: Gap analysis chart (continued)



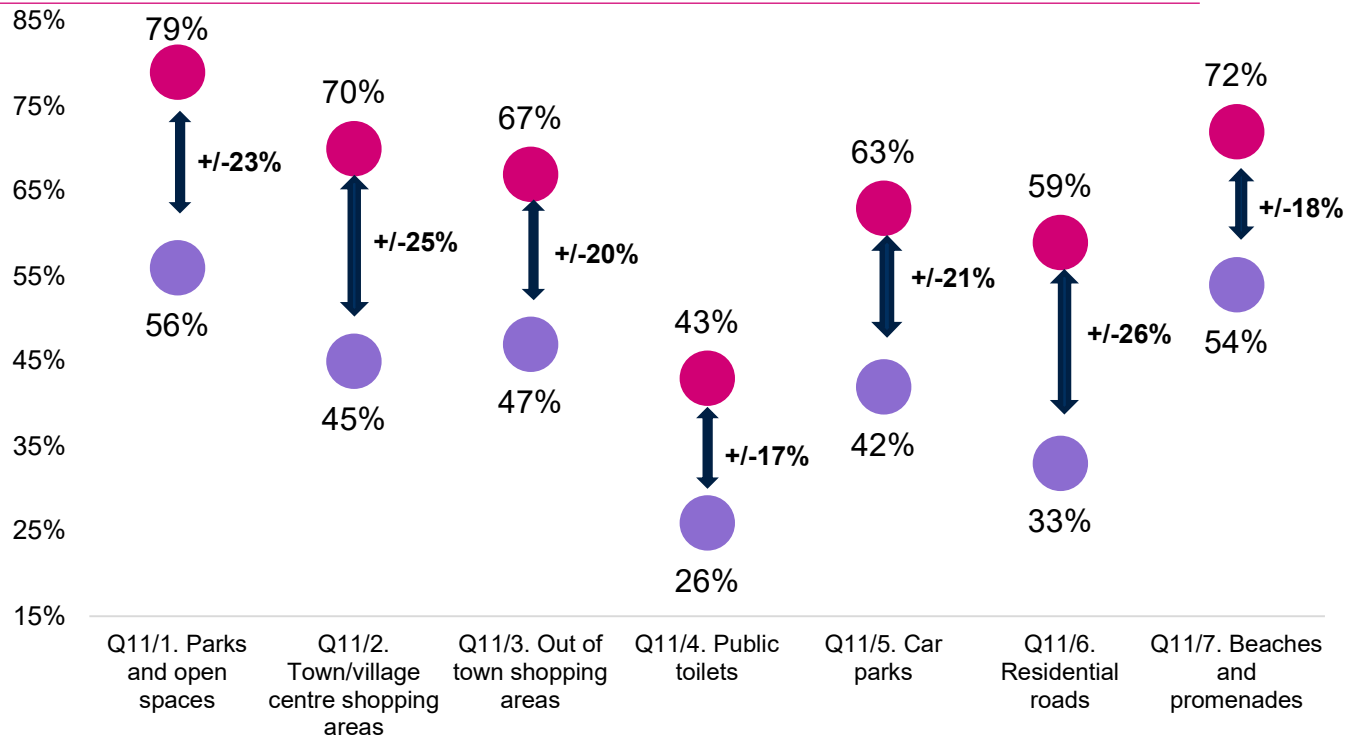
Q9. Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with Arun District Council's performance

*This chart is showcasing satisfaction levels

● Closed ● Open

When looking at the satisfaction with the level of cleanliness, the biggest difference in level of satisfaction is with Residential roads (+/-26% points), Centre shopping areas (-/+ 25% points) followed by Parks and open spaces (+/-23% points).

Figure 18: Gap analysis chart (continued)



Q11. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of cleanliness of the following places within the district?

*This chart is showcasing satisfaction levels

● Closed ● Open

4.2 Comparison of Key drivers for satisfaction across open and closed survey

The relative importance of the key drivers of satisfaction differs between the open and closed surveys. The two metrics of the Council provides value for money and whether a resident can trust the Council to make the right decision have a bigger importance for respondents in the open survey than for those in the closed survey (24% cf. 18% and 18% cf. 17% respectively).

Key drivers' relative importance for closed and opened survey

	Relative importance		
	Closed survey	Open survey	Difference
Satisfaction with local area as a place to live	24%	23%	+/-1%
Provides value for money	18%	24%	+/-6%
Trust Council to make the right decision	17%	18%	+/-1%
Acts on the concerns of local residents	15%	12%	+/-3%
Satisfaction with the overall cleanliness of the district	11%	10%	+/-1%
Waste collection and recycling	8%	7%	+/-1%
Parks and open spaces	8%	6%	+/-2%

5. Appendix 1: Sample profile

	Unweighted (Closed sample)	Unweighted (Opened sample)	Weighted
Gender			
Male	41%	34%	45%
Female	56%	62%	51%
Age			
18-44	8%	18%	29%
45 – 64	32%	41%	31%
65+	56%	35%	33%
Housing tenure			
Own outright (freehold or leasehold)	67%	55%	49%
Buying on a mortgage	20%	25%	31%
Rent from Arun District Council or from a Housing Association / Trust	5%	6%	8%
Rent from a private landlord	6%	8%	10%
Time in district			
Less than 1 year	3%	3%	7%
Between 1 and 2 years	4%	4%	3%
Between 3 and 5 years	11%	11%	10%
Between 6 and 10 years	15%	12%	16%
Between 11 and 20 years	17%	15%	16%
More than 20 years	50%	54%	46%
Children			
Yes	10%	18%	22%
No	86%	78%	74%
Area			
Western	41%	42%	45%
Eastern	37%	42%	36%
Downland	22%	16%	20%
Employment status			
Employed	38%	50%	54%
Unemployed/Sick/Disabled/Homemaker	5%	7%	9%
Retired	56%	35%	37%

6. Appendix 2: Statement of Terms

Compliance with International Standards

BMG complies with the International Standard for Quality Management Systems requirements (ISO 9001:2015) and the International Standard for Market, opinion and social research service requirements (ISO 20252:2012) and The International Standard for Information Security Management (ISO 27001:2013).

Interpretation and publication of results

The interpretation of the results as reported in this document pertain to the research problem and are supported by the empirical findings of this research project and, where applicable, by other data. These interpretations and recommendations are based on empirical findings and are distinguishable from personal views and opinions.

BMG will not publish any part of these results without the written and informed consent of the client.

Ethical practice

BMG promotes ethical practice in research: We conduct our work responsibly and in light of the legal and moral codes of society.

We have a responsibility to maintain high scientific standards in the methods employed in the collection and dissemination of data, in the impartial assessment and dissemination of findings and in the maintenance of standards commensurate with professional integrity.

We recognise we have a duty of care to all those undertaking and participating in research and strive to protect subjects from undue harm arising as a consequence of their participation in research. This requires that subjects' participation should be as fully informed as possible and no group should be disadvantaged by routinely being excluded from consideration. All adequate steps shall be taken by both agency and client to ensure that the identity of each respondent participating in the research is protected.

With more than 25 years' experience, BMG Research has established a strong reputation for delivering high quality research and consultancy.

BMG serves both the public and the private sector, providing market and customer insight which is vital in the development of plans, the support of campaigns and the evaluation of performance.

Innovation and development is very much at the heart of our business, and considerable attention is paid to the utilisation of the most up to date technologies and information systems to ensure that market and customer intelligence is widely shared.



Public Document Pack Agenda Item 12

Subject to approval at the next Environment Committee meeting

301

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

17 November 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Edwards (Chair), Goodheart, Huntley, Chace, Warr, Worne, Thurston, Cooper (Substitute for English), Cooper (Substitute for Staniforth) and Stanley (Substitute for Needs)

Councillor Pendleton was also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

[Note: Councillor Goodheart was absent from the meeting during items 439 - 443]

439. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Councillors English, Needs, Staniforth and Bicknell.

440. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

441. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2021 were approved by the Committee. These would be signed at the end of the meeting.

442. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chair confirmed that no questions were submitted for this meeting.

443. OUTSIDE BODIES

No Outside Bodies reports had been received, although the Chair advised that he and Cllr Stanley had been to the Bognor Regis Regeneration Board Forum Meeting the previous evening. The Chair would circulate a report to the Committee Members in due course.

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444. ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL'S GREEN SPACE TREE PLANTING STRATEGY 2021 - 2031

[Councillor Goodheart arrived during this item]

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Environmental Services & Strategy Manager introduced his report to the Committee. He explained this strategy was for Arun District Council's (ADC) own parks and open spaces and did not extend to land beyond ADC's control. He felt the proposal was a perfect balance between ambition and deliverability, and a huge amount of work had been put into the planning and development of the strategy and planting plan by the expert Tree Officer and the Parks Officers. The proposal was to plant 33,000 whips and 500 standard trees as a minimum. 90% of the standard trees would be native species, and the whip trees would be 100% native species. This would be phased over 10 years. The planting plans and species list would be published each year on the Council's website for information. There would also be at least 2 community tree planting events each year.

Members then took part in a question and answer session as summarised below:

- Clarification was sought on the number of trees that would be planted each year, and whether a regular update would be provided to the Committee. The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager explained they were expecting to plant around 60 standard trees and 2,000-3,000 whips in the first year. It was expected to average approximately 50 standard trees and 3500 whips each year.
- Expectation of survival rates for the whips. The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager said there would be a proactive after-care programme for 3 years.
- The reason for non-native species being introduced. The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager explained there was a place for non-native trees, some of which may be the trees of the future.
- The reasons for established trees being removed. It was confirmed that established trees would only be removed for very good reason such as being dead or dying.
- It was noted that there was no tree planting planned for Pagham. This was due to Arun District Council not owning much open space in Pagham, so no opportunity to do so.
- Would there be an opportunity for community groups to work with ADC, and for ADC to procure trees on their behalf. The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager said there would be opportunities for community groups to get involved. A discussion would need to be had with any groups wishing to plant on Arun's land, as this would need to fit with the Strategy. If Officers were in agreement with the proposals, they would be able to procure trees on behalf of community groups for this purpose.
- The Queens Canopy was a great opportunity to create a legacy for the residents, and it was asked that this be fully explained, and that community involvement be sought when building up the interpretation of what this would look like.

- Clarification was sought on the budget for the programme.
- Members were keen on the idea of tree-lined avenues, however noted this was under West Sussex County Council's remit.
- Concern was raised over the large number of whips due to be planted in West Park. The Environmental Services & Strategy Manager reassured Members that the planting would be appropriate to the location and would not interfere with how the site was used on a daily basis.
- Members welcomed the report, and sent thanks to the Environmental Services & Strategy Manager and his team.

The recommendation was Proposed by Councillor Andy Cooper and Seconded by Councillor Huntley.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the proposed Arun Greenspace Tree Planting Strategy 2021-2031 and associated planting plan be approved and adopted.

445. OFF-STREET PARKING STRATEGY 2021 - 2026

Upon the invitation of the Chair the Group Head of Neighbourhoods and the Customer & Parking Services Manager introduced the report to the Committee. They explained the vision in the Strategy which set out some key themes – to provide safe, well-maintained car parks; meeting the needs of residents, shoppers and visitors; providing an income for the Council and supporting economic growth; promoting a sustainable environment and creating a positive parking experience. It looked at the emerging new technologies and opportunities. There was a summary list of actions on Page 48 and 49. These actions picked up work already underway, but also new actions such as installation of electronic charging points and on all ticket machines being contactless by 2024.

Members then took part in a full debate where the following points were raised:

- It was felt the Strategy met the aims of what it was intended for.
- It was good that climate change and sustainability were included, tree planting in car parks and sustainable surfacing alternatives would be welcomed.
- The progress around electric parking and charging was welcomed.
- Whilst contactless technology was welcomed there was concern by Members about the prospect of complete removal of cash by 2024.
- Could consideration be given to the locations of disabled bays, as it may be that not all needed to be placed at the front of the car parks as proximity wasn't always the issue for disabled users. It may be that other priority bays could be considered in addition.

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Following further debate regarding contactless payments and the removal of cash, the recommendation, and with the addition of 'all pay and display machines to be contactless and accept cash' was Proposed by Councillor Stanley. This was Seconded by Councillor Huntley.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the Council's Off-Street Parking Strategy 2021-2026 as shown on Appendix A, with the addition of 'all pay and display machines to be contactless and accept cash', be adopted

446. VARIATION TO PARKING CHARGES

[During this item Cllr Chace declared a Personal Interest as Chairman of Friends of Brookfield Park]

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Customer & Parking Services Manager introduced his report to the Committee. He explained that each year the Council was required to review its discretionary charges, which included parking charges. The report identified a set of proposed increases in parking charges plus a proposal to introduce charges in a number of car parks that currently had no charging regime. He clarified that 5.2 in the report, which stated that parking for the first hour in the car parks in which they propose to introduce charging, would be free, this would be the case with regard to Bersted Brooks and Brookfield Park, but in the case of Links Avenue, Grassmere and Shrubbs Field this would in fact be 2 hours free parking as shown on Appendix A. He also clarified that where it said 'estimated income' on Appendix A, it should actually refer to 'additional estimated income'. After completing the consultation, a report would be brought back to the Committee in March, for Members to make a decision on the charges.

Members then took part in a full debate where the following points were raised:

- It was right to put this out for consultation and encourage members of the community to provide thoughts on the direction they thought the Council should take.
- It was asked whether it would be explained in the consultation documents what the income from the increase in charges would be used for. The Group Head of Neighbourhoods explained that this could be promoted across the Council's social media platforms.
- It was asked whether Friends of Bersted Brooks should be added to the list of consultees. The Customer & Parking Services Manager confirmed the Friends of Bersted Brooks would be added.

Councillor Chace declared a personal interest as Chairman of Friends of Brookfield Park. He asked that Friends of Brookfield Park also be added to the list of consultees.

The recommendation was Proposed by Councillor Andy Cooper and Seconded by Councillor Chace.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the proposed charges as set out in Appendix A be put out for consultation after which a report will be returned to Committee for final approval.

447. FUEL POVERTY FRAMEWORK

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Principal Environmental Health Officer introduced her report to the Committee. She explained that Fuel Poverty was a complex public health issue and was not the responsibility of just one agency or organisation. The West Sussex Fuel Poverty Coordinator, hosted by Arun District Council, was an externally funded post. The framework document attached to the report brought together all the actions for the coming 5 years across the County. The aim was that it would be possible to support funding bids going forward and to engage with a range of other organisations to develop initiatives.

There were no questions from Members

The recommendation was Proposed by Councillor Andy Cooper and Seconded by Councillor Stanley.

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the West Sussex Fuel Poverty Framework for Action 2021-2026 be adopted.

448. EMPTY PROPERTY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Principal Environmental Health Officer introduced her report to the Committee. She explained the Council was committed to tackling empty properties in the private sector, and there was an approved 5-year strategy that came into place in 2018. The report aimed to highlight all the work and achievement in this area, including the improvements this could make to

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neighbourhoods. Properties could be empty for a number of reasons, and work was carried out with the owners to try to understand the reasons and ensure they were brought back into use. There was an approved Empty Property Assistance Programme which provided funding for grants and loans, helping to finance repairs to properties to bring them up to standard. The fund was also used for enforcement work when necessary. More could be done and they were looking to learn from good practice from other local authorities. They were trying to increase awareness and also partnership working. Additional resources were required to support the current full-time Empty Homes Officer.

Members felt Arun District Council performed well with regards to Empty Homes, and thanked the Group Head of Technical Services, the Principal Environmental Health Officer, and the Empty Homes Officer for their work. It was felt that one of the reasons this worked so well was due to the delegations given to the Officers.

The recommendations (with amended Committee names to reflect the recent change) were Proposed by Councillor Stanley and Seconded by Councillor Alison Cooper.

The Committee

RESOLVED

1. that authority be delegated to the Group Head of Technical Services to make changes resulting from identified good practise and legislative changes to the Empty Property Assistance Programme, grants and loans criteria.

RECOMMEND TO THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

2. that growth of £17,523 be included in the 2022-2023 revenue budget, to recruit on scale 4, an additional part time Technical Support Assistant for 23hrs per week to support and enhance the empty homes work.

449. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE RESIDENTIAL AND WELLBEING SERVICES COMMITTEE - 30 SEPTEMBER 2021

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Group Head of Technical Services introduced the recommendations from the meeting of the Residential & Wellbeing Services Committee (which was now named Housing and Wellbeing Committee).

There were no questions from Members

The recommendations were Proposed by Councillor Chace and Seconded by Councillor Stanley.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

1. A review be undertaken of the incentives and services we (could) offer property owners to increase engagement with our Empty Homes Team and support tenant management issues and misconceptions.
2. A review be undertaken of how we promote our Empty Homes service and how we communicate success stories.

450. ANNUAL ENGINEERING SERVICE REVIEW

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Engineering Services Manager introduced his report to the Committee. He highlighted and explained key areas in the report including climate change; the South East Coastal Group; partnership funding; coastal monitoring; Pagham Beach; Climping Beach; revenue works; capital works; land drainage; drainage plans.

The Chair thanked the Engineering Services Manager for his concise and very informative report, and for all the excellent work that he and his team had done for the District.

Members then took part in a full debate where the following points were raised:

- What was the long-term solution to the flood risk in Climping. The Engineering Services Manager explained that this was not the responsibility of ADC, however they do work closely with the Environment Agency (EA). The work the EA was doing was working well, however there was an issue of cost, the area was attacked by both the open coast and the river. All the work that was being done was in line with the Coastal Defence Strategy developed by the Council and EA.
- Members further acknowledged the good work done by the Engineering Services Manager and his team.
- Funding coming from the Government for the Council to do Resilience work. The Engineering Services Manager confirmed that the funding for this term would be approximately double that of last term.
- Clarification was sought around some of the figures and terminology in the report.

The recommendation (with amended Committee names to reflect the recent change) was Proposed by Councillor Andy Cooper and Seconded by Councillor Huntley.

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The Committee

RECOMMEND TO THE POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 1) additional resources of £40,000, in the Coast Protection Revenue Budget commencing in 2022/23 and for a further 4 years thereafter, to allow for shingle management works associated with West Beach and other beaches e.g. East Beach, Littlehampton.
- 2) a £180,000 contribution to the Community Flood Fund in 2022/23 and a further £100,000 in 2023/24, to enable required Partnership Contributions to continue.

RESOLVED

- 3) that the Engineering Services Manager be authorised to undertake the necessary preparatory work relating to the new Capital schemes, to make Grant in Aid funding applications to the Environment Agency accordingly and to receive and draw down related funds.

451. BOGNOR REGIS BEACH ACCESS WORKING PARTY

Upon the invitation of the Chair, the Engineering Services Manager introduced his report to the Committee.

Councillor Stanley proposed an amendment to the recommendations, which was that 1 (f) would be changed to 'Chair of the Working Party: Cllr Worne'. This was seconded by Councillor Thurston.

Following a brief discussion Councillor Stanley, with the agreement of the meeting and the Seconder, altered his amendment to 1 (f) to 'the Chair of the Working Party would be elected at its first meeting'.

Following a vote, the altered amendment was CARRIED.

Councillor Stanley proposed an additional amendment to the recommendations, which was that 2 (a) would be changed to 'An invitation be extended to Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group for **three** representatives to join the Working Party (without voting rights)'. This was seconded by Councillor Thurston.

Members then took part in a full debate where the following points were raised:

- There were people with varying mobility requirements that were part of the Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group, and extending the invitation to an additional person would help to gain varying views.
- Increasing the size of the Working Party could make it too large and make it difficult to make progress.

- Opinions from people living outside of Bognor should also be taken into consideration as people from across the District would travel to the site.
- The Working Party needed to look objectively at making the beach accessible.
- The Working Party should be kept small and the representatives could feed in the views of other people.
- Increasing the Working Party by one person would not make it much larger, but it would be good to have the views of other people.
- The Working Party was put together by the Group Leaders who consulted with Members.
- If Membership of the Working Party was not increased, they could invite guests to input and give opinions.

The amendment was put to the vote and there being an equality of votes, the Chair used his casting vote against the amendment, which was LOST.

The substantive recommendations (with amended Committee names to reflect the recent change) were Proposed by Councillor Edwards and Seconded by Councillor Chace.

The Committee

RESOLVED that

1. The establishment of a Bognor Regis Beach Access Working Party be supported based on the following terms:
 - (a) Terms of Reference – to consider the issues surrounding the provision of an access to the beach for the disabled and elderly persons in Bognor Regis and to examine the options available for such an access
 - (b) To determine what part of the beach to improve access to (waterline or shingle etc) and to consider options for geographic location
 - (c) The Working Party will report to Environment Committee,
 - (d) Size of the Working Party – 6 Arun District Councillor seats with two further seats (without voting rights) to be offered to the Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group.
 - (e) Nominations to the seats – Cllrs Worne, Needs, Brooks, Staniforth, Edwards and English - to be confirmed by the relevant Group Leaders immediately if the proposal is accepted by Environment Committee.
 - (f) The Chair of the Working Party would be elected at its first meeting
 - (g) Proposals for the allocation of seats if vacancies occur – to be for the relevant Group Leader / Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group to fill the vacant seat as appropriate and this information to be reported this to the next Environment Committee meeting
 - (h) The Working Party will take the form of a Task & Finish exercise and conclude in not more than 12 months from the date of the first meeting.

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- (i) Timescale for the work to be undertaken – the first meeting of the Working Party will be in Spring 2022 with the site visit timed appropriately for sufficient daylight at around the time of Low Water.
 - (j) Presentation(s) will be made by officers as soon as possible to enable the Council to progress with any recommendations it supports.
- 2.
- (a) An invitation be extended to Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group for two representatives to join the Working Party (without voting rights)
 - (b) The suggestion be made to Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group that Cllr Goodheart be one of the two Group representatives should they choose to accept the invitation – this and the second representative to be confirmed by Bognor Regis Town Council Access Group.
 - (c) Review its terms of reference at its first meeting or thereafter and recommend any change back to Environment Committee
 - (d) Make any recommendations to Environment Committee based on the Terms of Reference – it will have no decision-making authority
 - (e) Meet in private unless it agrees that it will work to the Meeting Procedure Rules at Part 5 of the Council’s Constitution. Meetings will be held virtually until such time as the Working Party considers that ‘in person’ meetings are appropriate and then they shall be held in Bognor Regis Town Hall; and
3. Consideration be given as to how to approach similar issues in other locations if they have not already been resolved

452. WORK PROGRAMME

The Group Head of Technical Services updated Members on the Work Programme.

It was raised that the Sussex Nature Partnership could be invited to a Member Briefing to provide an update, which it was felt Members would find very interesting.

The Committee noted the Work Programme.

(The meeting concluded at 8.30 pm)

Agenda Item 13

Policy and Finance Committee - Work Programme
Updated 24 November 2021

Policy & Finance Committee	Lead Officer	Date of Meeting	Time	Full Council Meeting Date
Committee TORs Local Council Tax Support Scheme Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COF) Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 The Council's Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Corporate Plan 2018-2022 – Quarter 4 Reporting Supplementary Estimate to Cover Costs Awarded Against the Council in Appeal P/58/19/PL Supplementary Estimate to Cover Costs for Defending an Appeal on Land South of Barnham Station, Barnham Minutes from Planning Policy Committee – 1 June 2021 – Consideration of Recommendation – Deliver of West Bank Strategic Allocation Work Programme	Solomon Nigel Carolyn Martlew Carolyn Martlew Nat Slade Nigel Lynn Jackie Follis Neil Crowther Neil Crowther Karl Roberts All	17 June 2021	6pm	14-Jul-21
Draft Outturn Report 2020/21 Budget Process – 2022/23	Carolyn Martlew	1 September 2021	6pm	15-Sep-21

Policy and Finance Committee - Work Programme
Updated 24 November 2021

<p>Feedback Report from Outside Body – Greater Brighton Economic Board – 20 July 2021</p> <p>Feedback report – Update on County Local Committees including Joint Arun Area Committees</p> <p>Feedback report – Joint Climate Change Board – confirmation of Outside Body Representative and Feedback Report following meeting on 7 July 2021</p>	<p>Carolyn Martlew</p> <p>Denise Vine</p> <p>Jackie Follis</p> <p>Verbal and Feedback report from Cllr Staniforth - TBC</p>		
<p>Financial Prospects 2021/22 to 2025/26</p> <p>Carbon Reduction Strategy</p> <p>Developing a District Vision for the Council</p> <p>Changing Place Toilets – Expression of Interest – Recommendations from Environment & Neighbourhood Services Committee – 23 September 2021</p> <p>Urgent Decisions Taken by the Chief Executive Under the Scheme of Delegation</p> <p>Motion from Full Council – 15 September 2021 -</p> <p>Work Programme</p>	<p>Carolyn Martlew</p> <p>William Page</p> <p>Jackie Follis</p> <p>Nat Slade</p> <p>Nigel Lynn</p>	<p>14 October 2021</p> <p>6pm</p>	<p>10-Nov-21</p>

Policy and Finance Committee - Work Programme
Updated 24 November 2021

Business Rate Pooling Report	Carolyn Martlew	9 December 2021	6pm	12-Jan-22
Budget Variation Report	Carolyn Martlew			
Levelling Up Fund Delivery Support	Carolyn Martlew			
Corporate Plan 2018-2022 – Quarter 2	Jackie Follis			
Residents Survey Report	Jackie Follis			
Modern Slavery Policy Statement	Robin Wickham			
Recommendations from the Environment Committee [17 November 2021]	Nat Slade			
Council Budget 2022/23	Carolyn Martlew	10 February	6 pm	23 February 22
Council Vision 2022-2026	Jackie Follis			9 March 2022
Carbon Reduction Strategy – Action Plan Update	Will Page			
Budget Monitoring Report	Carolyn Martlew	31 March 2022	6pm	11-May-22

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