



Woodley Town Council  
The Oakwood Centre  
Headley Road  
Woodley  
Berkshire RG5 4JZ

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To: **Members of the Strategy & Resources Committee**

Councillors K. Baker (Chairman); P. Challis; J. Cheng; K. Haines; L. Hayward;  
C. Lawley; D. Mills; S. Outen; E. Rowland

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee will be held at the Oakwood Centre at 8.00 pm on Tuesday 10 June 2014, at which your attendance is requested.**

Deborah Mander  
Town Clerk

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## AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of interest from Members relating to the business of the meeting.

3. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 APRIL 2014**

To approve the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 29 April 2014 and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record. ***(These minutes were provided in the Full Council agenda of 13 May 2014 and were subsequently amended. The amended minutes are enclosed.)***

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4. **FINANCE**

a) **Budgetary Control**

To receive **Report No. SR 19/14.**

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b) **Payments**

To approve the following payments as set out in **Appendix 4b:**

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	Current account	Imprest account
April 2014	£82,618.40	£60,643.28

- c) **Transfer Limit**  
To propose that Members consider an increase in the transfer limit of funds from the Council's current bank account to the imprest account from £55,000 to £65,000 per transaction. The imprest account is used to make the BACs payments for staff salaries and to maintain a level of funds to cover deposit refunds and other payments that require immediate payment (eg. online purchases, grants, staff expense claims, urgent payments). Monthly payroll and imprest costs have recently exceeded £55,000.
- d) To note that Section 150(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 has been repealed. The effect of this will be to allow town and parish councils to make online payments. The attached financial briefing from the National Association of Local Councils provides more information (**Appendix 4d**). The procedure for making online payments will be included in the ongoing review of the Council's Financial Regulations. Page 14
5. **APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR**  
To consider **Report No. SR 20/14**. Page 15
6. **SECTION 106 PROJECT LIST**  
To consider **Report No. SR 21/14**. Page 18
7. **WAR MEMORIAL / CIVIC SPACE**  
a) To consider **Report No. SR 22/14**. Report to follow by email. A printed copy will be provided at the meeting
- b) To note that following the awarding of a Heritage Lottery Grant, which the Council agreed to support, arrangements are being made to take part in the plans for a borough-wide Heritage Memorial Trail, to include the new memorial and the memorial at St John's Church. Further information on the plans is enclosed. (**Appendix 7b**) Page 23
8. **CAPITAL PROGRAMME**  
To consider **Report No. SR 23/14** and make any recommendations to Council. Page 24
9. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME – EMPLOYER'S DISCRETIONARY AND RECOMMENDED STATEMENT OF POLICY**  
To consider **Report No. SR 24/14**. Page 27
10. **THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DISCRETIONARY PAYMENTS) (INJURY ALLOWANCE) REGULATIONS 2012**  
To consider **Report No. SR 25/14**. Page 40
11. **POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND POWERS DELEGATED TO THE TOWN CLERK**  
To review the Powers and Duties of the Committee and powers delegated to the Town Clerk and make recommendations to the Council. (**Appendices 11.1 and 11.2**) Page 45
12. **CATERING PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT PANEL**  
To note that the meeting scheduled for 9 May 2014 was cancelled.

13. **PUBLIC TOILETS WORKING PARTY**  
To note that a meeting of the Public Toilets Working Party will be arranged to report on progress.
14. **RESIDENTS SURVEY 2013/14**  
To note the Residents Survey 2013/14 report (*enclosed*).
15. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY CODE**  
To note the advice note from the National Association of Local Councils. (*Appendix 15*)
16. **STAFFING RESOURCES**  
To receive a verbal report from the Town Clerk.
17. **RECOMMENDATION FROM COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
To consider a recommendation from the Community Services Committee for additional funding of £311 to enable the Council to sponsor the free Inflatable World event on Carnival Day 2014.
- The Committee's budget includes an allocation of £700 grant funding to the Carnival Committee, originally estimated on the anticipated cost of the hire of the Council's premises for carnival events. This year the total hire costs are estimated to be £411, leaving a balance of £289, which is £311 short of the figure of £600 requested.
- Members are asked to consider increasing the budget allocation by £311 to cover the sponsorship of Inflatable World.
18. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**  
To consider any future agenda items for the committee to consider.
19. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**  
To consider items to be publicised.
20. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**  
**To resolve that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to legal matters, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press are temporarily excluded and they are asked to withdraw for item 21 on the agenda.**
21. **BULMERSHE LEISURE CENTRE**  
To consider **Report No. SR 26/14**. Report to follow by email. A printed copy will be provided at the meeting.

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**Minutes of a meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee held at the Oakwood Centre on Tuesday 29 April 2014 at 8.00 pm**

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**Present:** *Councillors K. Baker (Chairman); P. Challis; J. Cheng; K. Haines; C. Lawley; D. Mills; S. Outen; E. Rowland*

**Officers present:** *D. Mander, Town Clerk; K. Murray, Service Support Manager; L. Matthews, Committee Officer*

85. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L. Hayward.

86. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

87. **MINUTES OF THE STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2014**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the minutes of the Strategy and Resources Committee meeting of 4 February 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

88. **MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 MARCH 2014**

Councillor Challis requested that the submission he had made to the meeting, as he was unable to attend, be attached to the minutes. He had requested this when he had provided his submission and believed that this would give context and make sense of minutes where these related to his submission. The Town Clerk responded that it was not normal practice to attach such documents to the minutes. Following discussion, it was agreed that Councillor Challis's notes would be attached to the agenda papers on the Town Council's website.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee held on 26 March 2014 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

89. **FINANCE**

a) **Budgetary Control**

Members were pleased to note that expenditure was below the budget allocation, and income above, and thanked the Town Clerk for her management of this.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 12/14.

b) **Payments**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To approve the following payments:

	Current account	Imprest account
January 2014	£114,435.99	£52,371.56
February 2014	£73,086.09	£55,335.87
March 2014	£236,147.33	£57,990.52

c) **Internal Audit**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the internal audit report for the 2013/14 financial year.

d) **Internal Auditor**

Members noted that a new internal auditor with knowledge of the local council sector is being sought and this matter would be brought to the next meeting for Members' consideration.

e) **Precept Support Grant**

Members noted the letter from Wokingham Borough Council giving an explanation for the reduction in the precept support grant passed to the Town Council and following discussion it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To send a letter of objection to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

f) **Fixed term Investment**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note the short term investment of £250,000 in a Lloyds Bank High Interest Deposit Account on 28 March 2014 for a period of 3 months at a rate of 0.6% interest.

g) **2013/14 Carry Forward**

After discussion it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To release the balance of £1,360 in the legal/professional fees budget for 2013/14 to general reserves.
- ◆ To allocate the sum of £1,360 from general reserves to the legal/professional fees budget to cover anticipated costs in respect of the Bulmershe Leisure Centre lease.

90. **RISK MANAGEMENT WORKING PARTY**

Councillor Haines presented the report of the Risk Management Working Party meeting held on 15 April 2014. On reviewing the risk register it was noted that the risk level in respect of compliance with legislation/regulations had increased. The Town Clerk explained that a recent HMRC visit had identified matters the Council was required to treat differently; a report would be provided to members. Members also discussed the highest risk item relating to staff capacity to achieve non deadline-driven work. The Town Clerk agreed to make a verbal report on this matter at the next meeting of the Committee.

Members considered the recommendations made in the report and it was

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 13/14.
- ◆ That the Risk Management Strategy for 2014/15 be approved.

91. **CATERING PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT PANEL**

The Service Support Manager presented the report of the Catering Partnership Management Panel meeting held on 4 April 2014. Members were pleased to note that the

income from business catering had exceeded the target for the year and the overall income had not fallen below the target for any month in the year.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 14/14.

92. **SECTION 106 PROJECT LIST**

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. SR 15/14. Following discussion regarding the list of possible projects, the Service Support Manager agreed to refresh the list as this could help to improve the targeting of requests. As the application process for the Section 106 grants had been revised Members suggested that a representative from Wokingham Borough Council be invited to give a presentation to the Council on the new process.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 15/14.
- ◆ That a representative from Wokingham Borough Council be invited to give a presentation to the Town Council on the new application process for Section 106 grants.

93. **GRANTS**

Members considered the seven grant applications received as set out in Report No. SR 16/14 in line with the community grants criteria and

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To award grants to the following:

Woodley Town FC	£250	Towards the cost of increasing the level of participation of girls in football by further involvement in local primary schools.
Early & Woodley Stroke Club	£250	Towards the cost of providing a day trip for members and the costs of driving members to and from the club.
Berkshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre, Reading	£250	Towards the costs of therapists providing physiotherapy, massage, yoga, spinal reflexology and acupuncture.
Individuals: Aleasha Lunn (Aerobic Gymnastics)	£100	Towards the costs of international competitions and travelling costs.
Hope Davies (Aerobic Gymnastics)	£100	Towards the costs of travelling and equipment for international competitions.
Adrian Wakelin (GB Dragon Boat Squad)	£100	Towards the cost of travelling and uniform for international competitions.

- ◆ To not award a grant to Vitalise on the grounds that other applications more closely met the criteria for grant awards.

94. **INSURANCE**

Members noted the appointment of Came and Company as the Council's insurers at a cost of £33,690, a reduction of £9,668 on the previous year's costs. The appointment was for a three year term with fees to be kept at the same level, subject to adjustment in values covered.

95. **INN ON THE PARK**

The Town Clerk presented Report No. SR 17/14 and Members noted that a new manager for the Inn on the Park had been appointed by LT Pub Leasing in March 2014. In response to a question the Town Clerk confirmed that the policy to not allow dogs in the pub or on the patio area remained in place but could be looked at again later in the year.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 17/14.

96. **WAR MEMORIAL / CIVIC SPACE**

The Service Support Manager presented Report No. SR 18/14. He informed Members that a full planning application had been submitted to Wokingham Borough Council and was not expected to impact on the project timing; and that tender documents for the civic space would be sent out at the end of the week. In reply to a question the Town Clerk explained that the tenders would be returned as sealed bids and would be opened in the presence of a member of the Council. Officers would award the contract, under the Council's financial regulations

The Service Support Manager reported that a full tree survey had been carried out to the trees in the vicinity of the proposed civic space. One sycamore had been found to be in very poor condition and this tree would be removed and replaced by a new tree positioned slightly closer to the gate, which would enable the memorial site to be repositioned slightly to the east, away from the root protection zones of the healthy trees.

Members were delighted with the progress of this project and asked that all Councillors be notified when the tree works were to be undertaken.

The intention to produce press releases jointly with the Woodley War Memorial Project group was noted, as was the need to make reference to the war memorial at St. John's Church.

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ To note Report No. SR 18/14.

97. **BULMERSHE LEISURE CENTRE LEASE**

- a) Due to the confidential nature of this item, it was agreed this be considered at the end of the meeting.
- b) Members considered the decision of the Leisure Services Committee that "Members request the full involvement of the Leisure Services Committee in discussions about the future of Bulmershe Leisure Centre and Woodford Park Leisure Centre, in line with their powers and duties described in Woodley Town Council's Standing Orders."

The Chairman explained that the Leisure Services Committee had no authority regarding the lease and therefore it would not be appropriate for the Leisure Services Committee to be involved with those discussions; however he accepted that the Leisure Services Committee had an interest in the outcome of the lease discussions and asked for the minutes to record that members of the Leisure Services Committee could attend the discussions and all progress regarding the lease would be reported to the Leisure Services Committee.



**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That matters relating to the lease of Bulmershe Leisure Centre be reported to the Leisure Services Committee.

98. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

No future agenda items were suggested.

99. **PUBLICITY AND WEBSITE**

It was agreed to publicise the following items:

- The war memorial and civic space
- The success of the café at the Oakwood Centre
- The new management at the Inn on the Park

100. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED:**

- ◆ That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted in relation to legal matters, it was advisable in the public interest that the public and press were temporarily excluded and asked to withdraw for the following agenda item.

101. **BULMERSHE LEISURE CENTRE LEASE**

- a) The Town Clerk tabled a confidential update on negotiations on the terms of an early surrender of the lease on Bulmershe Leisure Centre. It was agreed that this be provided to all Members of Council for their information.

The meeting closed at 9:50pm

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**STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE****BUDGETARY CONTROL 2014/15****Report No SR 19/14**

EXPENDITURE	Budget	Budget as at	Actual Exp	Actual Exp	Information
	2014/15	31/05/2014	as at 31/05/2014	as % of Budget	
Central Costs	238883	46587	31596	13.2	NI now paid from Corporate Management budget. Phone and equipment costs over 16.7%
Democratic Costs	43725	6616	6351	14.5	No expenditure from the training or election fund budgets. Civic Allowance at 29% - Civic Awards reception.
Corporate Management	261118	63305	75444	28.9	NI now paid from this budget. Insurance premiums and affiliations payable at the beginning of the year.
Capital Programme	45000	0	0	0.0	Annual contribution to be transferred to capital programme fund.
Grants	4000	1250	1050	26.3	Grants awarded in April and November.
Inn on the Park	11262	1805	1917	17.0	Rates, water ,phone, repairs and alarm maintenance over 16.7%
Oakwood Centre	141931	18983	20378	14.4	Staff, rates, maintenance contracts and catering costs over 16.7%.
Maintenance HQ	7292	1110	842	11.5	Rates and repairs over 16.7%. Other costs under at this point.
Capital and Projects	184940	80000	80000	43.3	Loans paid in September and March - sinking fund contribution invested.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>938151</b>	<b>219656</b>	<b>217578</b>	<b>23.2</b>	

INCOME	Budget	Budget as at	Actual Inc	Actual Inc	Information
	2014/15	31/05/2014	as at 31/05/2014	as % of Budget	
Central Costs	6647	434	148	2.2	Investment of balances income due at end of fixed period.
Democratic Costs	0	0		0.0	
Corporate Management	0	0		0.0	
Capital Programme	0	0		0.0	
Grants	0	0		0.0	
Inn on the Park	40800	10177	10200	25.0	Management fee invoiced in advance.
Oakwood Centre	140646	24269	22396	15.9	Room hire at 18%
Maintenance HQ	0	0		0.0	
Capital and Projects	0	0		0.0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>188093</b>	<b>34880</b>	<b>32744</b>	<b>17.4</b>	
<b>NET</b>	<b>750058</b>	<b>184776</b>	<b>184834</b>		

Month 2 = 16.7%

## Woodley Town Council 2014/2015

### List of Payments made between 01/04/2014 and 30/04/2014

<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	
(Personal Information)	7.00	Cancelled WPLC course
(Personal Information)	12.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	89.71	Wine for Civic reception
(Personal Information)	7.00	Cancelled WPLC course
(Personal Information)	6.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	12.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	6.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	30.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	63.10	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	6.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	7.00	Cancelled WPLC course
(Personal Information)	12.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	50.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	120.00	Double booked BLC course
(Personal Information)	200.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	15.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	6.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	50.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	32.55	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	6.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	50.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	7.00	Cancelled WPLC course
(Personal Information)	150.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	200.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	7.00	Cancelled WPLC course
(Personal Information)	7.00	Cancelled WPLC course
(Personal Information)	45.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	50.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	28.75	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	44.80	Flowers for Civic Reception
(Personal Information)	7.00	Cancelled WPLC course
(Personal Information)	12.00	Cancelled WPLC course
(Personal Information)	50.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	50.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	6.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	50.00	Refund deposit
(Personal Information)	12.00	Cancelled BLC course
(Personal Information)	50.00	Refund deposit
1st Metropolitan Locksmiths Lt	226.38	OC master keys cut
A1 Locksmiths(Berkshire) Ltd	26.18	WPLC keys cut
Accounting Solutions	497.40	End of year closedown
Arkell & Hurcombe (Bronzeworks)	87.60	Bronze cast plaque
BE Fuelcards	71.90	Diesel & Van
BE Fuelcards Ltd	0.60	Admin Charge
Berkshire Tai Chi	390.00	Coach
Bowak Ltd	565.53	Cleaning supplies
Brake Bros Foodservice Ltd	446.20	Vending supplies
British Gas	5912.41	Electricity supply
Broadwater Technologies Ltd	163.20	Call out - pool site reports

BT	68.94	Phone
BT	21.84	Phone
BT	121.68	Phone
BT Direct	20.40	Phone
BT Direct	39.86	Phone
BT Direct	314.52	Phone
BT Telephone Payment Centre	8.40	Phone
Bullseye Awards & Garments Ltd	87.31	Engraving trophy Mayor's award
Cardnet	848.68	Cardnet Charges
CF Corporate Finance	166.37	Annual photocopier lease
Churchill Contract Services Lt	3429.58	Contract cleaning
Churchill Contract Services Lt	2434.92	Contract cleaning
Combined Precision	6.07	Waterproof Gaffer tape
Credit Union	50.00	Credit Union deducted from pay
Crown Water & Coffee	89.40	Bottled water
Crown Water & Coffee	47.52	Bottled water
EDF Energy 1 Ltd	11.53	Electric for clock tower
Edmundson Electrical Ltd	23.89	Electrical supplies
EURODEC	12.39	Decorating supplies
Eurostat Office Supplies	181.28	Stationery supplies
Eurostat Office Supplies	111.85	Stationery supplies
Eventu	80.00	Citizens award hire of equipment
Fabric Warehouse	200.00	Repairs to OC curtains
FAS Capital Ltd	79.20	Monthly cash register charge
Frasers Office Supplies Ltd	154.42	Stationery supplies
Frasers Office Supplies Ltd	47.59	Stationery supplies
Fuel Fitness Ltd	22.50	Coach
Grundon Waste Management Ltd	108.00	Refuse collection
HC Slingsby Plc	196.23	Refuse sacks/CCTV signs
HM Revenue & Customs Only	15608.71	PAYE & NI
Investec Asset Fin	372.00	BLC Light/Heat
IQL Uk Ltd	790.00	Approved Centre renewal/NPLQ forms
J P Lennard Ltd	164.94	Boxing gloves/hand bandages
John Willis	110.00	Window cleaner
Just In The Park CIC	802.75	Charged on behalf of Just in the Park café
Just In The Park CIC	1222.30	Charged on behalf of Just in the Park café
KLM Digital Office Solutions L	156.07	Service & maint photocopier
Laundry Depot	48.80	Wash/press table cloths OC
Lloyds Bank	30.48	Charges 10 Feb to 9 Mar 14
Lloyds Bank	57815.12	Net April 2014 payroll
Lyreco UK Ltd	40.44	Stationery supplies
Mailcoms Service	238.80	Annual service charge
Mainstream Digital	57.39	Phone
Maudesport	385.19	Reebok punchbag
Merchant Rentals	52.85	Monthly Cardnet Rental
MKR Electrical Services Ltd	573.91	Repairs to Emg lights/install cooker WPLC
OCS Group UK Ltd t/a Cannon	270.00	Refuse collection
OCS Group UK Ltd t/a Cannon	120.89	Refuse collection
PDG Group Services	65.47	Cleaning supplies
Peninsula Business	489.60	HR Services
PETTY CASH A/C	161.90	Top up petty cash
Phonographic Performance Limit	162.77	Annual charge music licence
PHS Group Plc	24.00	Annual service charge
PHS Group Plc	306.54	Qtrly charge dust mats WPLC/BLC
PHS Group Plc	128.70	Qtrly charge dust mats OC
Prudential Assurance	30.00	AVC payment deducted from pay

R & J Services	6672.00	WPLC drainage works
Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd	312.00	Annual charge - bookings
Riso (UK) Ltd	347.36	Stationery supplies
Securitas Security	90.00	Monthly key holding charge
Securitas Security	90.00	Monthly key holding charge
SGW Payroll Ltd	342.74	Payroll service
SITA UK Ltd	359.06	Refuse collection
SITA UK Ltd	391.48	Refuse collection
SLCC Berkshire Branch	50.00	SLCC Berks-training day
SMS Environmental Ltd	973.36	Water samples
SMS Environmental Ltd	721.36	Water samples
Somerville Glass & Windows Ltd	1855.20	PVC fire exit door WPLC
South East Employers	667.80	Annual subscription charge
Southern Electric	526.81	Electricity supply
Southern Electric Contracting	781.55	Electricity supply
Southern Electric Contracting	64.10	Electricity supply
Thames Water	910.00	Water Rates
The Berkshire Pension Fund	11138.58	Pension - employers and employees
The BSS Group Ltd	5.64	Building supplies
Total Gas & Power	968.81	Gas supply
Total Gas & Power	1193.82	Gas supply
Total GP Ltd	5700.91	Gas supply
Trade UK	135.14	Building supplies
Travis Perkins Trading Company	12.39	Building supplies
TSM Copiers Ltd	141.46	Copier usage
Unison	41.90	Union fees deducted from pay
UNIVAR B.V.	628.27	BLC pool chemicals
Virgin Media Payments Ltd	38.89	Phone
Vodafone Ltd	170.29	Phone
Wall's Refrigeration	430.80	Wall's Freezer - WPLC
Wokingham BC	36.06	Rates
Wokingham BC	159.30	Rates
Wokingham BC	342.30	Rates
Wokingham BC	846.00	Rates
Wokingham BC	1803.00	Rates
Wokingham BC	4413.00	Rates
Wokingham BC	385.00	Planning app for Civic/War Mem
Wolverson X-Ray Ltd	350.00	Equipment for bootcamp courses

## Repeal of s.150 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972 - Implementation (England)

### Introduction

Please note that the LRO has today been formally made by the Minister and will therefore come into force tomorrow.

### Implementation

Councils are reminded that:

1. Appendix 11 of *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in - A Practitioners' Guide (England)* is now published on NALC's website (see [http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Latest\\_News/Governance\\_and\\_Accountability\\_2010.aspx](http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Latest_News/Governance_and_Accountability_2010.aspx)). This sets out proper practice guidance on making payments.
2. Every council that wishes to take advantage of it must formally put in place effective systems and arrangements compliant with the proper practices before it seeks to abandon the two signature rule. This effectively means adopting new Financial Regulations, and internal procedures compliant with the guidance.
3. Attention is drawn, particularly, to Paragraph 1 of the Overview in Appendix 11, to the effect that *"it is a general principal that more than one person should be involved in any payment, whether that is before, at or after the point at which payment is (actually) made"*.
4. The guidance states, particularly, that the two signature rule must not be abandoned until a council has put in place safe and efficient arrangements in accordance with the guidance. It is essential that councils *"maintain robust controls on payments as an integrated part of their overall financial control system"*. For larger councils this is likely to be relatively straightforward. For smaller councils this may be more difficult. It may well be that an essential element of the control systems in place is the retention of the two signature rule. The important difference is that this will be as a result of a council's own control decisions (e.g. its financial regulations and procedures in relation to the revision of its bank mandates) rather than because, under s.150(5) of the Local Government Act, 1972 it was a statutory requirement.
5. On behalf of NALC, I have drafted new model Financial Regulations which, together with the council's Standing Orders, contain the procedures appropriate to comply with the requirements of Appendix 11. Model Financial Regulations to which councils wanting to refer when amending their own financial regulations to enable them legally to make electronic payments (should they wish to), can be downloaded at [http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Members\\_Site/Legal/Council\\_business\\_law\\_and\\_procedure.aspx](http://www.nalc.gov.uk/Members_Site/Legal/Council_business_law_and_procedure.aspx) (in the Members' Area of the NALC web-site).

This briefing was issued by Derek Kemp, NALC's Audit and Accounts Advisor

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National Association of Local Councils

Tel: 020 7637 1865 • Fax: 020 7436 7451 • e-mail: [nalc@nalc.gov.uk](mailto:nalc@nalc.gov.uk) • website: [www.nalc.gov.uk](http://www.nalc.gov.uk)

## **APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR**

### **REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To provide information on the quotes provided for the position of internal auditor and recommend the Council make an appointment.

#### **Background**

It is a legal requirement under the 'lighter touch' audit and accounts limited assurance regime that the Council appoints an independent internal auditor to complete the Annual Internal Audit Report section of the Council's Annual Return. In order to do so the internal auditor is required to report on the Internal Control Objectives, A – K set out in the attached **Appendix A**. The Council has engaged Alan Harland as its internal auditor for 13 years. Mr Harland is retiring from his role as internal auditor and the Council needs to make arrangements to appoint a new internal auditor for the 2014/15 year onwards.

#### **Information**

Before the application of the limited audit regime in 2010, the Council paid significant external audit costs each year, up to £12,000, and was required to have an internal audit of its processes and procedures. Since 2010 external audit fees have been much reduced. It is anticipated that the annual external audit costs from 2012/13 to 2016/17 will be £2,400.

Over the past few years the Council has paid £3,600 annually for internal audit services, amounting to 12 days a year, including, since 2010, the requirement to sign the Annual Return confirming that the objectives set out in Appendix A have been met. In addition, the Council has required the internal audit process to include an emphasis each year on the checking of cash receipts and that anti fraud procedures continue to be properly operated.

Four quotes for an internal audit service from 2014/15 were sought but only two received. A local firm with experience of carrying out audits in the local council sector was unable to take on further work and Wokingham Borough Council does not have the capacity at the present time to provide this service.

Lightatouch Internal Audit Services and Auditing Solutions Limited have provided quotes for the provision of an internal audit service based on the information provided about the Council's income and expenditure and range of operations. These are enclosed for Members' information. Both firms are considered to meet the standards required; scope, independence, competence, audit planning and reporting. Both have experience of internal auditing for larger towns. For both firms two good references have been received.

	<b>Auditing Solutions Ltd</b>	<b>Lightatouch Internal Audit Services</b>
Number of days proposed	5 days	12 days
Price for 2014/15	£2,050 plus up to £410 for familiarisation with Council's systems No travel costs payable	£1,875 No travel costs payable
Daily rate	£410	£156.25
Number of visits proposed	1 or more plus Annual Return certification	Usually 3 plus Annual Return Certification but can be varied in consultation with the Council.

	<b>Auditing Solutions Ltd</b>	<b>Lightatouch Internal Audit Services</b>
Audit plan provided	Yes	Yes
Experience	Director of company – 35 years experience of external audit public sector bodies, 14 years internal audit in local council sector. Company provides service to 220 councils nationally. Associates' experience include internal audit experience and bank/Audit Commission experience.	Associates have 28/35 years local government internal audit experience – also acted as lead/group auditors. Local council internal audit experience – 3 & 12 years. One associate provides service to 62 councils of different sizes, including large town councils.
References	Have advised on improvements and are thorough. Fulfil critical friend role well.	Have advised on improvements and advised on specific projects. Professional.
Other information provided	Provision of advice and guidance throughout year within fee – excessive use/work required to be charged	Provision of advice and guidance throughout year within fee. Can provide a full financial risk assessment with reference to NALC governance manual for £200 in first year, £100 in subsequent years

### **Resources**

Both quotes are lower than the annual cost presently being paid for the internal audit service and are within the funds allocated for this purpose.

### **Recommendation:**

- ◆ **That Members consider the quotes provided and appoint an internal auditor to the Council and determine the period of the appointment.**



- A. Appropriate books of account have been kept properly through the year.
- B. The Council's financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.
- C. The Council assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.
- D. The annual precept requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process; progress against the budget was regularly monitored; and reserves were appropriate.
- E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked; and VAT was appropriately accounted for.
- F. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts. All petty cash expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.
- G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with Council approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.
- H. Asset and investments registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.
- I. Periodic and year end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.
- J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments or income and expenditure), agreed to the cash book, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate debtors and creditors were properly recorded.
- K. Trust funds (including charitable) The Council met its responsibilities as a trustee.

## **SECTION 106 FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

### **REPORT OF THE SERVICE SUPPORT MANAGER**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To update Members on the progress of current Section 106 applications.

#### **Current Section 106 Applications and Projects**

Changes since the last meeting are as follows;

<b>Submitted Applications</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Granted Applications</b>	
<b>Rejected Applications</b>	
<b>Suggestions for projects to be added to the list</b>	
None received	

The current Section 106 projects list is appended to this report **APPENDIX A**.

#### **3G Pitch**

Wokingham Borough Council has confirmed that there are no available funds to be allocated to the project at this time. Funding will be reconsidered along with other similar projects in the borough as these projects develop.

#### **Civic Space**

£68,000 has been allocated to the Civic Space project from the Sandford Farm development. These funds will be available once the developer has made payment to Wokingham Borough Council in accordance with the terms of the Section 106 agreement. Transfer of funds to the Town Council will be made upon receipt of invoices for works carried out in the usual way.

#### **Recommendation:**

- ◆ **That Members note the information contained in the report.**

**List A** Replacement of equipment in existing play areas due to increase in the number of Woodley residents

**List B** Upgrading of existing sports and leisure facilities due to the increase in the number of Woodley residents

**List C** Additional sports and leisure facilities due to the increase in the number of Woodley residents

**List D** Improvements to facilities in Woodley due to the increase in the number of Woodley residents

**List E** Infrastructure projects to be suggested to and carried out by Wokingham Borough Council (highways/lighting etc)

*Application submitted to Wokingham*

**APPENDIX A**

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Replacement of equipment in existing play areas due to increase in the number of Woodley residents				Approval to list	Application submitted
<b>A</b>	<b>Current Project List</b>				
ID	Site	Project/item	Estimated cost		
1a	Malone Park	Upgrade Play Equipment	50,000		
2a	Memorial Ground	Upgrade Play Equipment	50,000		
3a	Wheble Drive	Upgrade Play Equipment	20,000		
4a	Mollison Close	Upgrade Play Equipment	30,000		

Upgrading of existing sports and leisure facilities due to the increase in the number of Woodley residents				Approval to list	Application submitted
<b>B Current Project List</b>					
ID	Site	Project/item	Estimated cost		
1b	Woodford Park Leisure Centre	Upgrade of the football/cricket changing wing	10,000		
3b	Bulmershe Leisure Centre	New main dividing curtain in main hall	1,500		
4b	Bulmershe Leisure Centre	New gym mats	2,000		
5b	Bulmershe Leisure Centre	Soft play equipment	3,000		
6b	Woodford Park Leisure Centre	Soft play centre for under 5s – inflatable activity centre,mats, soft play shapes, climbing equipment	6,200		18.01.10
10b	Woodford Park	Improvements to Hard Surface Area	10,000		
13b	Bulmershe Leisure Centre	Replacement floor in main hall	Not known		
14b	Woodford Park Leisure Centre	Convert games room and tea room into a modern community facility with a kitchen for community groups and social events	30,000		

Additional sports and leisure facilities due to the increase in the number of Woodley residents				Approval to list	Application submitted
<b>C Current Project List</b>					
ID	Site	Project/item	Estimated cost		
1c	Southlake Crescent Amenity project	Multi use gym project for residents in Southlake Crescent/Hearn Road area	16,000		
2c	Woodford Park	Installation of 3G pitch	395,000		29.9.10 1/4/14
3c	Woodford Park	New crazy golf area at Woodford Park LC	8000		11.12.09
4c	Kingfisher Drive	Outdoor fitness equipment for open ground adjacent to play area at Kingfisher Drive	16000		29.6.11
6c	Woodford Park Leisure Centre	Installation of Gym facility	200,000(est)		29.9.10
7c	Bulmershe & Woodford Park Leisure Centres	Health Legacy Hub – mobile gym kit to use at sites around the town and at leisure centres – to promote fitness	15,000		
8c	Bulmershe & Woodford Park Leisure centres	Sport stadia – mobile sports arena which can be used with clubs at the leisure centres and at sites around the town	15,000		
9c	Bulmershe & Woodford Park Leisure Centres	Cyber coach interactive dance and dance mats	6,000 - 15,000		
10c	Bulmershe Leisure Centre	Replacement flooring in small hall.	6,000		
11c	Woodford Park	Development of Youth area in Woodford Park	not known		

Improvements to facilities in Woodley due to the increase in the number of Woodley residents				Approval to list	Application submitted
<b>D Current Project List</b>					
ID	Site	Project/item	Estimated cost		
1d	Woodford Park Lake	Lake refurbishment project – desilting, planting - can be phased	50,000		11.12.09 3 times
3d	Reading Road Allotments	Replacement Fencing	5,000		
4d	Woodley Town Centre	Public Toilets on Woodley Town Centre	100,000		
5d	Woodford Park	Lighting, refurbishment of pathways, entrance/access improvements	10,000		
6d	Woodford Park Entrance	Improvements to surfacing of access road from Western Avenue	Not Known		

Infrastructure projects to be suggested to and carried out by Wokingham Borough Council				Approval to list	Application submitted
<b>E Current Project List</b>					
ID	Site	Project/item	Estimated cost		
1e	Spitfire Way	Pedestrian crossing installation for new build residence to cross road for Drs, schools and shops	50,000		
2e	Headley Road	Pedestrian crossing installation or equivalent outside the Oakwood Centre	50,000		
3e	Howth Drive	Pedestrian crossing installation as near as possible to Bader Court	50,000		
4e	Colemans Moor Road	Traffic calming	Not known		
5e	Howth Drive	Remove ruined grass verges and replace them with large parking bays	Not known		
6e	Kingfisher Drive	Remove ruined grass verges and replace them with large parking bays	Not known		
7e	Woodwaye	Improved lighting. This is used as a cut through at night, residents have asked for better lighting which would make them feel safer	Not known		
8e	Ashenbury Park	BMX track	Not known		

*GREEN - Application submitted to Wokingham*

### Completed/in progress Projects

				Date Completed	Notes
2d	Memorial Ground	War Memorial, Flag Pole, seating, entrance improvements, Civic Space Project	68,000	in progress	
1a	Malone Park		13,800	in progress	Remain on list for future
	Woodford Park LC	Basketball court & Cricket nets	6355	01/04/2013	
	Bulmershe Leisure Centre	Sanding/sealing/remarking sportshall floor	866	Jan-13	
2b	Bulmershe Leisure Centre	Installation of cricket nets	4500	Jan-13	
12b	Bulmershe Leisure Centre	Replacement flooring in small hall.	6,000	Feb-12	Funded from 2011/12 BLC budget
11b	Woodford Park	Remove and install new outdoor play equipment.	28,000	Sep-12	
	Woodford Park Lake	Tree Works / thinning of vegetation	23,000	Mar-11	
	Woodford Park Paddling Pool		26,000	Mar-10	
	Woodford Park Skate Sp	Installation of skate spot	25,000	Aug-11	

**World War I Heritage Memorial Trail**

Town and Parish Councils across Wokingham Borough plan to join together to provide a Heritage Memorial Trail to commemorate the Centenary of World War I. This initiative will be launched on Heritage Day 14<sup>th</sup> September when, Wokingham Town Council's Victorian Town Hall will join the national open door event.

There are 23 War Memorials across Wokingham Borough which include open air sites, an unusual Memorial Window at St Sebastian's Memorial Hall in Wokingham Without, Wokingham Town Council's indoor wooden panel together with Woodley Town Council's planned new memorial which is being facilitated by local residents and the Town Council working in partnership.

A Heritage Lottery grant has been awarded to support this project. Feedback from the lottery team was that they welcomed the concept of this trail and recognised the difference their funding would make to the whole event. It is felt that this project will allow residents to better understand the contribution and sacrifice made by local people during the Great War.

The project will provide exhibition stands for those towns, parishes and churches involved which will offer a permanent display, sharing some of the stories of the fallen on their own individual memorials. These 'pop-up' mobile exhibition stands will also be designed to be displayed collectively as a larger scale exhibition, available to schools and community groups and with a 5-10 year lifespan there will be an on-going opportunity to reflect on these events. In addition residents from across Wokingham will be guided to relevant sites across the Borough, using a commemorative brochure. Some of these sites will perhaps be previously unknown and it is hoped that residents will become more aware of the heritage within their own community.

Towns and Parishes are hoping that, through a range of opportunities, local communities will have sensitively enjoyed the experience of connecting with WWI in the Wokingham context. We expect some families to be able to directly uncover the experience of their own predecessors and in addition, to be able to offer these to enrich the collective memory of the whole community. As a whole we will better understand the impact of the war on Wokingham, both in terms of those who fought but also the home front. By offering resources and activities young people, through their schools and local uniformed organisations (cadets, guides, scouts etc.) will gain in empathy and appreciate how the war ensured Britain's continued democracy and values and the fact that this can be linked to the quality of life enjoyed today.

## **CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15**

### **REPORT OF THE SERVICE SUPPORT MANAGER AND TOWN CLERK**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To provide Members with information on capital projects/works and to recommend projects for inclusion in the 2014/15 capital programme.

#### **Background**

Each year the Council approves a programme of capital projects to be funded from the Capital Programme fund. In 2014/15 the Council has allocated £45,000 to the fund.

#### **Projects Status**

The status and expenditure of projects in the 2013/14 Capital Programme are shown in **APPENDIX A**.

The Capital Programme fund is showing a balance of £104,289 taking into account all expenditure in 2013/14, up to 31/3/14. Proposed project items for the 2014/15 programme total an estimated £85,597 leaving an estimated carry forward into 2015/16 of £18,692.

Proposed items for inclusion in the 2014/15 capital programme and an explanation for their inclusion is shown in **APPENDIX B**.

#### **Recommendations:**

- ◆ **That Members note the information contained in the report.**
- ◆ **That Members recommend approval of the 2014/15 Capital Programme as set out in the schedule.**



# Capital Programme 2013/14 - Expenditure

APPENDIX A

CAPITAL PROJECTS	Allocation (£)	Exp as at 31/03/14	Status	Comment	Works Required
Signs	2000	792	Complete	Annual Allocation	Replacement, new signs
Seats	1000	74	Complete	Annual Allocation	Replacement/add seats - annual allocation. Donation of £383 rec'd
Litter bins	300	0	Complete	Annual Allocation	Replacement/additional bins - annual allocation
Dog bins	200	0	Complete	Annual Allocation	Replacement/additional bins - annual allocation
Pathway repairs	2000	1308	Complete	Annual Allocation	Repair work to council pathways - annual allocation
Playgrounds	5000	0	Carry Forward to 2014/15	Works in progress	Improvements to Malone Road play area identified 2012/13
Woodford Park car park	5000	5000	Rolling Fund	Annual Allocation	Repair & resurfacing - annual allocation to fund
Drainage improvements - Woodford Park	5000	4360	Complete		Works to improve drainage on driveway at entrance to Woodford Park
Replace dividers Woodford Park LC function room	7500	0	Carry Forward to 2014/15		Replace dividers in function room due to age - poor condition. Works complete but paid for in 2014/15 financial year
Improvements to outside Woodford Park Leisure	9250	8788	Carry Forward to 2014/15		Improvements to Leisure Centre frontage/approach (Rec from Leisure Services Committee 27/3/12)
Sports Hall Roof - Woodford Park LC	4000	2729	Complete		
Committee Rooms - Woodford Park LC	3000	790			
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>44250</b>	<b>23842</b>			

ROLLING FUNDS			Project Cost (estimated)	Total in fund	
Woodford Park car park resurfacing	5000	5000	60000	20000	Resurfacing and repair of car park substructure. 4 years allocation

FUNDED BY	
Carry forward balance from 2012/13	83131
<b>Balance as at 31/3/14</b>	<b>59289</b>

**Draft Capital Programme 2014/15**

<b>CAPITAL PROJECTS</b>	<b>Allocation (£)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Works Required</b>
Signs	1000		Annual Allocation	Replacement, new signs, fire signage and new entrance sign for Woodford Park
Seats	1000		Annual Allocation	Replacement/additional seats - annual allocation
Litter bins	300		Annual Allocation	Replacement/additional bins - annual allocation
Dog bins	200		Annual Allocation	Replacement/additional bins - annual allocation
Pathway repairs	2000		Annual Allocation	Repair work to council pathways - annual allocation
Malone Park	5000		Works complete but to be paid in 2014/15	Improvements to Malone Road play area identified 2012/13
Playgrounds	5000		Annual Allocation	Annual allocation - Improvements to play areas - new equipment
Improvements to outside Woodford Park Leisure Centre	462	C/F from 2013/14		Improvements to Leisure Centre frontage/approach (Rec from Leisure Services Committee 27/3/12)
Woodford Park car park resurfacing	5000	Rolling Fund	Annual Allocation	Repair & resurfacing - annual allocation to fund
Replacement roof WPLC	5000	Rolling Fund	Annual Allocation	Replace old asbestos roof - estimated cost £35,000. Old roof leaks patched but deteriorating.
Committee Rooms - WPLC	1000	C/F from 2013/14		Install window blinds. New flooring and decoration was completed 2013/14.
Replace dividers Woodford Park LC function room	5935	C/F from 2013/14	Works complete but to be paid in 2014/15	Replace dividers in function room due to age - poor condition. Works complete but paid for in 2014/15 financial year
Dividing Curtain - Function Room WPLC	2000			To increase functionality/flexibility of room
Chapel Hall - replacement flooring	7000			Replace current flooring - poor condition
CCTV WPLC	2000			Upgrade CCTV system
Reception area flooring - WPLC	10000			Replace current flooring - poor condition
Ventilation - Ladies & Gents toilets - WPLC	3000			Install extractor ventilation in Ladies & Gents toilets - WPLC
Changing Room refurb - WPLC	5000			Replace flooring, decorate, refurbish bench seating
Ladies Toilets - refurb - WPLC	3000			Refurbish toilets - new toilets, taps, decoration
Replace hot water tank - WPLC	9000			Old tank badly scaled, inefficient, causing problems with system
Water Storage Tanks - Chapel & Coronation Halls	1400			Cleaning of cold water storage tank at Chapel/Coronation, vented lid required at Chapel
Function Room Windows - replace - WPLC	8000			Replace function room windows
Water Softener - Oakwood Centre	3300			Install water softener to decrease limescale damage to heating and water systems caused by hard water.
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>85597</b>			

<b>ROLLING FUNDS</b>		<b>Total in fund</b>	<b>Project Cost (Estimated)</b>	
Woodford Park car park resurfacing	5000	25000	60000	Resurfacing and repair of car park substructure. 5 years allocation
Replacement roof - WPLC	5000	5000	35000	

<b>FUNDED BY</b>	
Carry forward balance from 2013/14	59289
2014/15 allocation	45000
Total funds available 2014/15	104289
<b>Capital Programme Balance</b>	<b>18692</b>

Woodley Town Council

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME EMPLOYER'S DISCRETIONARY AND RECOMMENDED STATEMENTS OF POLICY**

### **REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To advise Members that the Council is required to provide a written statement of policy in respect of the discretionary regulations under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions and Savings) Regulations 2014. It is also recommended that the Council formulate a policy on other matters set out in the regulations to clarify certain provisions.

#### **Background**

The Council is a member of The Royal County of Berkshire County Local Government Pension Scheme. All employees meeting the criteria are auto enrolled into the scheme or, where appropriate, informed of their right to join the scheme. The Council's existing statement of policy on the pension scheme employer discretions, agreed by the Committee on 1 July 2008 (Minute No. 8), is attached at **Appendix A**.

#### **Information**

Regulation 60 of the Local Government Scheme Regulations 2013 requires Local Government Pension Scheme employers to prepare a written statement of its policy by 30 June 2014 in relation to the exercise of its functions under regulations:

- 16(2)(e) and 16(4)(d) (funding of additional pension);
- 30(6) (flexible retirement);
- 30(8) (waiving of actuarial reduction); and
- 31 (award of additional pension).

In addition and in accordance with Paragraphs 2(2) of Schedule 2 to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings & Amendment) Regulations 2014 a Scheme employer must also prepare a written statement on whether, in respect of benefits relating to pre 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 membership, to 'switch on' the 85 year rule for a member who voluntarily retires (leaves employment) and elects to draw their benefits on or after the age of 55 and before the age of 60 thereby agreeing to waive in full or part any actuarial reduction applied to the member's benefits.

Several of these are similar to those included in the statement of policy approved in 2008. The pension administrators have also recommended that employers approve a policy statement on certain regulations which are not a requirement under the legislation but that will assist in the administration of pension regulations.

To assist in the consideration of these regulations **Appendix B** provides a proforma of the discretionary and other regulations for the Council to consider and includes any previous policy on a similar regulation made by the Council and a proposed policy/policies that can be considered be considered. The regulations on which it is advised a policy be agreed are also included in **Appendix B** under the heading Part B.

Most of the previous regulations require review under the new regulations. There are also two new regulations - (21(5)) and Schedule 2 – paras 2 and 3- on which the Council is required/advised to consider its policy.

Further information on each of the regulations to be included in a policy statement can be found in the employer's guide at [www.berkshirerensions.org.uk/employers\\_policy\\_statements.htm](http://www.berkshirerensions.org.uk/employers_policy_statements.htm).

Once agreed the statement of policy

- Must be provided to the administering pension authority
- Must be kept under review
- Must be published in a place that is easily accessible to all eligible scheme employees

Any revisions to the statement of policy must be provided to the administering authority within a month of the date of the revisions and also made accessible to all eligible scheme employees.

Members are asked to consider the policies it wishes to adopt on each of the regulations set out in ***Appendix B***.

### **Recommendation**

- ◆ **That Members consider and approve a statement of policy in respect of the discretionary regulations and other regulations under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 and the Local Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions and Savings) Regulations 2014.**

**APPENDIX A**

The employer known as **Woodley Town Council** has prepared this written statement of policy in relation to its exercise of certain discretionary functions available under the above regulations.

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**PART A – Formulation of policy in accordance with Regulation 66 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008**

Regulations in this part refer to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 (as amended)

**1. Regulation 12 - Power of an employing authority to increase total membership of active members.**

An employer may resolve to increase the total membership of an employee at any time whilst he is an active member of the Scheme with them. The maximum additional membership period that can be awarded is 10 years.

The employer must pay to the Pension Fund, within one month from the date that any additional membership is awarded (or such longer period as agreed between the employer and the administering authority), a sum as calculated in accordance with guidance issued by the Government Actuary.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved that consent to increase the membership of an employee under Regulation 12 will be considered on an individual basis. Any additional cost to the Council will only be considered where there will be a sufficient financial or other benefit to the authority.***

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**2. Regulation 13 – Power of employing authority to award additional pension**

An employer may resolve to award an employee, at any time whilst he is an active member of the Scheme with them, additional pension of not more than £5,000 a year payable from the same date as his pension is payable under any provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.

Additional pension may be paid in addition to any increase of membership under regulation 12 of the LGPS (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

The employer must pay to the Pension Fund, within one month from the date that any additional membership is awarded (or such longer period as agreed between the employer and the administering authority), a sum as calculated in accordance with guidance issued by the Government Actuary.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved that it will not award additional pension under Regulation 13.***

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**3. Regulation 18 – Flexible retirement**

A member who has attained the age of 55 and who, with his employer's consent, reduces the hours he works, or the grade in which he is employed, may make a request in writing to the appropriate administering authority to receive all or part of his benefits under the Regulations, and such benefits may, with the employer's consent, be paid to him notwithstanding that he has not retired from that employment.

If the payment of benefits takes effect before the member's 65<sup>th</sup> birthday they will be reduced in accordance with guidance issued by the Government Actuary unless the employer agrees to waive, in full or in part, any such reduction at their cost.

In the case of a person who was an active member on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008, and who makes a request before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, substitute the age of 55 above with the age of 50.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved that consent to benefits being released under Regulation 18 will be considered on an individual basis. Any additional cost to the Council will only be considered where there will be a sufficient financial or other benefit to the authority.***

#### **4. Regulation 30 – Choice of early payment of pension**

If a member leaves a local government employment before he is entitled to the immediate payment of retirement benefits, once he has attained the age of 55 he may choose to receive payment of them immediately. A choice by a member aged less than 60 is ineffective without the consent of his employer or former employer and the employer must pay to the Pension Fund a sum representing the capital cost of releasing those benefits early.

His pension must be reduced by the amounts shown as appropriate in guidance issued by the Government Actuary although the employer may determine on compassionate grounds to waive the actuarial reduction.

In the case of a person who was an active member on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008, and who makes a request before 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, substitute the age of 55 above with the age of 50.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved that such an election will only be considered where there will be a sufficient financial or other benefit to the authority. An exception to this requirement is the employee or ex-employee's exceptionally difficult domestic circumstances.***

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#### **PART B – Formulation of policy in accordance with further discretions under the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008**

Regulations in this part refer to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Administration) Regulations 2008

#### **5. Regulation 16 - Re-employed and re-joining deferred members**

Where a deferred member becomes an active member again before becoming entitled to the payment of those deferred retirement benefits, he may elect to have his former deferred membership aggregated with his current active membership on or after the date that he again becomes an active member. An election must be made within 12 months from the date that the member re-joins the Local Government Pension Scheme or such longer period as his employer may allow.

It is worth noting that if the member has more than one former period of deferred membership, it is only the most recent deferred membership period that can be aggregated with his current active membership unless earlier periods of deferred membership have already been aggregated with the most recent period of deferred membership.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved that it will apply a time limit of 12 months under Regulation 16***

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#### **6. Regulation 22 – Applications to make absence contributions**

This provides for a scheme member to pay optional contributions, for a period of unpaid absence from work, within 30 days of returning to, or of ceasing, employment. The employer can agree to extend this time limit.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved that it will apply a time limit of 30 days under Regulation 22.***

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#### **7. Regulation 25 – Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) and Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (SCAVCs)**

An active member may elect to pay AVCs into a scheme established under contract between his appropriate administering authority and a body approved for the purposes of the Finance Act 2004.

Under paragraph 3 of this regulation an employer can, at its discretion contribute to the AVC scheme and where they do the AVC scheme is known as a shared cost additional voluntary contributions arrangement and contributions to it as SCAVCs.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved not to adopt the discretion under Regulation 25***

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## 8. Regulation 83 – Inward transfers of pension rights

This provides that an active scheme member may elect to transfer into the Local Government Pension Scheme relevant pension rights held elsewhere. The member must request the transfer of such rights in writing within 12 months of becoming a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme or such longer period as the employer may allow.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved that requests to transfer pension rights under Regulation 83 should be made within 12 months of a member joining the Local Government Pension Scheme.***

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## 9. Regulation 57(5)(c) – Notification of decisions under regulation 58

Responsibility for determinations under the first stage of the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure rests with a “specified person” appointed by the (former) employer of a scheme member.

The specified person for this employer is:

Name: Deborah

Job Title: Town Clerk

Address: The Oakwood Centre, Headley Road, Woodley, Berkshire, RG5 4JZ

Tel No: 0118 9690356

Email: townclerk@woodley.gov.uk

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### **PART C – Formulation of policy with regard to Regulation 5 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 (as amended)**

#### 10. Regulation 5 - Contributions payable by active members

An active member shall make contributions to the Scheme at the contribution rate from his pensionable pay in each employment in which he is an active member. The contribution rate to be applied to his pensionable pay in any financial year (starting with 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008) is the rate determined by the employer to represent the assumed pensionable pay for the forthcoming year.

Where there is a material change to a member’s pensionable pay in the course of a financial year, the employer may re-determine the contribution rate to be applied in his case.

***Woodley Town Council has resolved to re-determine the contribution rate where there is a material change to members’ pensionable pay during the financial year***

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### **PART D – Formulation of policy with regard to Regulation 9 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 1997**

#### 11. Regulation 9 - Women with membership before 6<sup>th</sup> April 1988

This regulation provides for the employer accepting all married female scheme members have made an election to provide their husbands with a widower’s pension for any relevant service (unless the employee states in writing that she does not wish such an election to be provided).

***Woodley Town Council has resolved that it will accept that all married female scheme members have made such an election with the proviso that any employee may elect otherwise.***

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*It is understood that the above discretions are applicable to all eligible members of the Scheme. The Scheme rules allow for a revised statement to be issued at least one month in advance of the date that the new policy takes effect. The revised statement must be sent to the administering authority and publish its statement as revised.*

The policies made above:

- i) *Must have regard to the extent to which the exercise of the discretions could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service;*
- ii) *Will not be used for any ulterior motive;*
- iii) *Will be exercised reasonably;*
- iv) *Will only be used when there is a real and substantial future benefit to the employer for incurring the extra costs that may arise;*
- v) *Will be duly recorded when applied.*

Signed on behalf of the Employing Authority: \_\_\_\_\_

Name in Block Capitals: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Employing Authority: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



The Scheme employer known as **WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL** has prepared this written statement of policy in relation to its exercise of certain discretionary functions available under the Local Pension Scheme Regulations 2013. The Scheme employer declares that it will keep this statement under review and publish the statement (and any amendments made thereto) in a place that is easily accessible to all of its eligible Scheme employees and that it will provide to the administering authority the most up to date version of the statement at all times.

**PART A – Formulation of COMPULSORY policy in accordance with Regulation 60 of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013**

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**Regulation 16 – Additional Pension Contributions** *(see guidance note 1 in employer's guide)*

The Scheme employer may resolve to fund in whole or in part any arrangement entered into by an active scheme member to pay additional pension contributions by way of regular contributions in accordance with **Regulation 16(2)(e)**, or by way of a lump sum in accordance with **Regulation 16(4)(d)**.

The Scheme employer may enter into an APC contract with a Scheme member who is contributing to the MAIN section of the Scheme in order to purchase additional pension of not more than the additional pension limit (£6,500 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 subject to annual increase in line with the Pensions (Increase) Act 1971).

The amount of additional contribution to be paid is determined by reference to actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

Consideration needs to be given to the circumstances under which the Scheme employer may wish to use their discretion to fund in whole or in part an employee's Additional Pension Contributions.

**Scheme Employer's policy concerning the whole or part funding of an active member's additional pension contributions**

[2008: Woodley TC has resolved not to adopt the discretion under Regulation 25](#)

Employer's guide examples of policy statements:

- Not to fund and employee's APCs
- To consider funding an employee's APCs in exceptional circumstances and subject to the employee's difficult domestic circumstances
- To consider funding an employee's APCs in circumstances where there is a financial or practical reason to do so

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**Regulation 30(6) – Flexible Retirement** *(see guidance note 2 in employer's guide)*

An active member who has attained the age of 55 or over and who with the agreement of their employer reduces their working hours or grade of employment may, with the further consent of their employer, elect to receive immediate payment of all or part of the retirement pension to which they would be entitled in respect of that employment as if that member were no longer an employee in local government service on the date of the reduction in hours or grade *(adjusted by the amount shown as*

*appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State – separate policy required under Regulation 30(8)).*

As part of the policy making decision the Scheme employer must consider whether, in addition to the benefits the member may have accrued prior to 1 April 2008 (which the member must draw), to permit the member to choose to draw all, part or none of the pension benefits they built up after 31 March 2008 and before 1 April 2014 and all, part or none of the pension benefits they built up after 1 April 2014.

Due consideration must be given to the financial implications of allowing an employee to draw all or part of their pension benefits earlier than their normal retirement age.

### **Scheme Employer's policy concerning flexible retirement**

2008: Woodley TC has resolved that consent to benefits being released under Reg 18 will be considered on an individual basis. Any additional cost to the Council will only be considered where there will be a sufficient financial or other benefit to the authority.

Employer's guide examples of policy statements:

- To consider each application on its merits subject to the financial and business implications for the employer
- To accept any applications where there is no cost to the employer subject to there being no detrimental impact on the service
- Applications will be considered with the decision being delegated to the appropriate officer or committee
- To allow only for the release of pension benefits built up before 2008
- To allow for all pension benefits to be released regardless of the dates of scheme membership
- Not to accept any applications from scheme members for flexible retirement

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### **Regulation 30(8) – Waiving of Actuarial Reduction** *(see guidance note 3 in employer's guide)*

Where a Scheme employer's policy under regulation 30(6) (flexible retirement) is to consent to the immediate release of benefits in respect of an active member who is aged 55 or over, those benefits must be adjusted by an amount shown as appropriate in actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State (commonly referred to as actuarial reduction or early payment reduction).

A Scheme employer (or former employer as the case may be) may agree to waive in whole or in part and at their own cost, any actuarial reduction that may be required by the Scheme Regulations.

Due consideration must be given to the financial implications of agreeing to waive in whole or in part any actuarial reduction.

### **Scheme Employer's policy concerning the waiving of actuarial reduction**

2008: Woodley TC has resolved that such an election will only be considered where there will be a sufficient financial or other benefit to the authority. An exception to this requirement is the employee or ex-employee's exceptionally difficult domestic circumstances.

Employer's guide examples of policy statements:

- To consider each application on its merits subject to the financial implications for the Council
- A decision to waive any actuarial reduction will only be considered where there will be a financial or other benefit to the Council
- A decision to waive any actuarial reduction will be considered in exceptional circumstances subject to the employee's exceptionally difficult personal and domestic circumstances

- An actuarial reduction will always be applied where relevant and a decision to waive such a reduction will not be considered

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### **Regulation 31 – Award of Additional Pension** *(see guidance note 4 in employer’s guide)*

A Scheme employer may resolve to award

- (a) an active member, or
- (b) a member who was an active member but dismissed by reason of redundancy, or business efficiency, or whose employment was terminated by mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency,

additional annual pension of, in total (including any additional pension purchased by the Scheme employer under Regulation 16), not more than the additional pension limit (£6,500 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 subject to annual increase in line with the Pensions (Increase) Act 1971).

Any additional pension awarded is payable from the same date as any pension payable under other provisions of the Scheme Regulations from the account to which the additional pension is attached.

In the case of a member falling within sub-paragraph (b) above, the resolution to award additional pension must be made within 6 months of the date that the member’s employment ended.

#### **Scheme Employer’s policy concerning the award of additional pension**

[2008: Woodley TC has resolved that it will not award additional pension under Regulation 13](#)

Employer’s guide examples of policy statements:

- To consider using this discretion in cases of redundancy and business efficiency subject to the financial implications for the employer
- To consider using this discretion on compassionate grounds due to the member’s exceptionally difficult personal or domestic circumstances
- To consider using this discretion where a sufficient benefit to the employer can be justified
- Not to apply this discretion

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### **Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions and Savings) Regulations 2014**

#### **Schedule 2 – paragraphs 2 and 3** *(see guidance note 5 in employer’s guide)*

Where a scheme member retires or leaves employment and elects to draw their benefits at or after the age of 55 and before the age of 60 those benefits will be actuarially reduced unless their Scheme employer agrees to meet the full or part cost of those reductions as a result of the member otherwise being protected under the 85 year rule as set out in previous Regulations.

So as to avoid the member suffering the full reduction to their benefits the Scheme employer can ‘switch on’ the 85 year rule protections thereby allowing the member to receive fully or partly unreduced benefits but subject to the Scheme employer paying a strain (capital) cost to the Pension Fund

#### **Scheme Employer’s policy concerning the ‘switching on of the 85 year rule**

Employer’s guide examples of policy statements:

- To consider each occurrence as it arises subject to the financial implications for the employer

- Any decision to 'switch on' the 85 year rule will only be considered where there will be a financial or other benefit to the employer
  - Any decision to 'switch on' the 85 year rule will be considered on compassionate grounds in exceptional circumstances subject to the employee's exceptionally difficult personal and domestic circumstances
  - Under no circumstances will the Council agree to 'switch on' the 85 year rule
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## **PART B – Formulation of RECOMMENDED policy in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013**

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### **Regulation 9(1) & (3) – Contributions** *(see guidance note 6 in employer's guide)*

Where an active member changes employment or there is a material change which affects the member's pensionable pay during the course of a financial year, the Scheme employer may determine that a contribution rate from a different band (as set out in Regulation 9(2)) should be applied.

Where the Scheme employer makes such a determination it shall inform the member of the revised contribution rate and the date from which it is to be applied.

### **Scheme Employer's policy concerning the re-determination of active members' contribution bandings at any date other than 1<sup>st</sup> April**

[2008: Woodley TC has resolved to re-determine the contribution rate where there is a material change to members' pensionable pay during the financial year](#)

Employer's guide examples of policy statements:

- To set employee contribution rates at 1 April each year and make not changes throughout the year
  - To make changes to employee contribution rates throughout the year from the effective date of any change in employment or material rate to the rate of pensionable pay received
  - To consider a change to an employee's rate of pay where the employee requests a review as a result of a change in employment or material change in employment pay
- 

### **Regulation 17(1) – Additional Voluntary Contributions** *(see guidance note 7 in employer's guide)*

An active member may enter into arrangements to pay additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) or to contribute to a shared cost additional voluntary contribution arrangement (SCAVCs) in respect of an employment. The arrangement must be a scheme established between the appropriate administering authority and a body approved for the purposes of the Finance Act 2004, registered in accordance with that Act and administered in accordance with the Pensions Act 2004.

The Scheme employer needs to determine whether or not it will make contributions to such an arrangement on behalf of its active members.

### **Scheme Employer's policy concerning payment of Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions**

[2008: Woodley TC has resolved not to adopt the discretion under Regulation 25](#)

Employer's guide examples of policy statements:

- To consider using this discretion where a sufficient benefit to the employer can be justified
- Not to apply this discretion

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**Regulation 22 – Merging of Deferred Member Pension Accounts with Active Member Pension Accounts** *(see guidance note 8 in employer’s guide)*

A deferred member’s pension account is automatically aggregated with their active member’s pension account unless the member elects within the first 12 months of the new active member’s pension account being opened to retain their deferred member’s pension account.

A Scheme employer can, at their discretion, extend the 12 month election period.

**Scheme Employer’s policy concerning merging of Deferred Member Pension Accounts with Active Member Pension Accounts**

2008: Woodley TC has resolved that it will apply a time limit of 12 months under Regulation 16

Employer’s guide examples of policy statements:

- Each case will be examined at the appropriate time
- To extend the 12 month deadline to 18 months
- To allow an active member to elect not to aggregate a deferred member’s pension account with an active member’s pension beyond the 12 month deadline
- To allow an active member to elect not to aggregate a deferred member’s pension account to an active member’s pension account beyond the 12 month deadline only when there is no financial risk to the employer and it is of benefit to the member

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**Regulation 100(6) – Inward Transfers of Pension Rights** *(see guidance note 10 in employer’s guide)*

A request from an active member to transfer former pension rights from a previous arrangement into the Local Government Pension Scheme as a result of their employment with a Scheme employer must be made in writing to the administering authority and the Scheme employer before the expiry of the period of 12 months beginning with the date on which the employee first became an active member in an employment (or such longer period as the Scheme employer and administering authority may allow).

**Scheme Employer’s policy concerning the extension of the 12 month transfer application period**

2008: Woodley TC has resolved that requests to transfer pension rights under Regulation 83 should be made within 12 months of a member joining the Local Government Pension Scheme

Employer’s guide examples of policy statements:

Each case will be examined at the appropriate time

To extend the 12 month deadline to 18 months subject to the administering authority’s agreement

To accept transfers in beyond the 12 month deadline subject to the administering authority’s agreement

To accept transfers in beyond the 12 month deadline where there is not financial risk to the employer subject to the administering authority’s agreement

Not to extend the 12 month deadline

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**Regulation 21(5) – Assumed Pensionable Pay** (see guidance 11 in employer’s guide)

A Scheme employer needs to determine whether or not to include in the calculation of assumed pensionable pay, any ‘regular lump sum payment’ received by a Scheme member in the 12 months preceding the date that gave rise to the need for an assumed pensionable pay figure to be calculated.

**Scheme Employer’s policy concerning inclusion of ‘regular lump sum payments’ in assumed pensionable pay calculations**

Employer’s guide examples of policy statements:

- Each case will be examined at the appropriate time
  - No regular lump sum payments will ever be included in the calculation of assumed pensionable pay
  - Regular lump sum payments will always be included in the calculation of assumed pensionable pay
- 

**Regulation 74 – Applications for Adjudication of Disagreements** (see guidance note 9 in employer’s guide)

Each Scheme employer must appoint a person (“the adjudicator”) to consider applications from any person whose rights or liabilities under the Scheme are affected by:

- (a) a decision under regulation 72 (first instance decisions); or
- (b) any other act or omission by a Scheme employer or administering authority,

and to make a decision on such applications.

Responsibility for determinations under this first stage of the Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure (IDRP) rests with “the adjudicator” as named below by the Scheme employer:

Name: Deborah Mander  
Job Title: Town Clerk  
Full Address: Woodley Town Council, The Oakwood Centre, Headley Road, Woodley, Berkshire,  
Post Code: RG5 4JZ  
Tel No: 0118 9690356  
Fax No: 0118 9216928  
Email: [townclerk@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@woodley.gov.uk)

Adjudicator’s Signature:

Date:

Strategy and Resources Committee: 10 June 2014

## **SCHEME EMPLOYER CONFIRMATION**

It is understood that the discretions contained within this statement of policy are applicable to all eligible members of the Scheme. The Scheme rules allow for a revised statement to be issued at least one month in advance of the date that any new policy takes effect. The revised statement must be sent to the administering authority and the employer must publish its statement as revised in a place that is accessible to all of its eligible scheme members.

The policies made above:

- Have regard to the extent to which the exercise of the discretions could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service;
- Will not be used for any ulterior motive;
- Will be exercised reasonably;
- Will only be used when there is a real and substantial future benefit to the employer for incurring the extra costs that may arise;
- Will be duly recorded when applied.

Signed on behalf of the Scheme Employer: WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Name in Block Capitals: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Scheme Employer's Name: WOODLEY TOWN COUNCIL

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DISCRETIONARY PAYMENTS) (INJURY ALLOWANCES) REGULATIONS 2012**

### **REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To inform Members of the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations and to advise that the Council must adopt a policy in line with these regulations.

#### **Background**

The regulations came into force in January 2012. Under Regulation 14 a Local Government Pension Scheme employer must formulate, publish and keep under review the policy that it applies in exercising its discretionary powers to make awards under these regulations. The Council is a Local Government Scheme (LGPS) employer. The legislation was introduced in the light of action taken by government departments to review their injury benefit schemes to restrict and tighten the level of injury allowance provided and the need to revise the local government provisions similarly.

#### **Information**

There are four regulations on which the legislation requires LGPS employers to exercise discretion. These are set out in **Appendix A**, attached.

In formulating and reviewing its policy the employer must

- have regard to the extent to which the exercise of its discretionary powers (in accordance with the policy), unless properly limited, could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service, and
- be satisfied that the policy is workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to the foreseeable costs

The employer is required to exercise its discretion where, in the course of carrying out their work, an employee sustains an injury or contracts a disease as a result of which the employee either

1. Suffers a reduction in their remuneration;
2. Loses their employment through permanent incapacity; or
3. Dies.

In determining the amount of an allowance or lump sum, as the case may be, the relevant employer must have regard to all the circumstances of the case including:

- In the case of an allowance payable under regulations 3 or 4 (see **Appendix A**)
  - the degree of injury sustained or the severity of the disease contracted as assessed by an Independent Registered Medical Practitioner (IRMP) (from whom a certificate must be obtained under regulation 5);
  - any right to benefit under Part 5 (benefits for industrial injuries) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992;
  - any other statutory right to benefit or compensation;
  - any right to receive pension benefit (whether payable under an enactment or otherwise); and
  - any damages recovered from any sum received by virtue of a contract of insurance.
- In the case of an allowance or a lump sum which is payable by virtue of a person having sustained an injury, no regard shall be had
  - to any benefit payable periodically which the person was entitled to be paid before the injury was sustained;



- to any right which accrued before that time; or
- to any damages or sum received by virtue of such a right.

Before making any determination under regulation 3 or 4 the relevant employer must obtain a certificate from an IRMP qualified in occupational health medicine as to whether in his or her opinion the employee has sustained an injury or contracted a disease in the course of carrying out their work and whether the employee continues to suffer from the injury or disease or, as the case may be, ceases to be employed as a result of incapacity which is likely to be permanent and was caused by the injury or disease.

If the employer decides to change its policy, it must publish a statement of the amended policy and may not give effect to any policy change until one month after the date of publication. The revised statement must be published in a place that is accessible to all of its employees.

Regulations 3, 4, 6 and 7, on which the Council is required to state its policy are attached at **Appendix A** to this report.

#### Existing employee terms and conditions and insurance

The Local Government Terms and Conditions set out a scale of payments to employees (or any dependents in the case of death) as a consequence of death or permanent disability arising from assault. Any damages or compensation recoverable are deducted from the payment made by the employer to the employee. Employees are also entitled to a period of full and half pay when on sick leave, depending on their length of service.

The Town Council's insurance in respect of employees specifically provides cover in respect of the above events and outcomes in the case of assault and also covers 'death or bodily injury by accident or violent means causing disablement (temporary or permanent)'. This cover is more extensive than the employees' terms and conditions in respect of the outcome of an assault and, in effect, provides a personal accident cover for employees, where appropriate, under the insurance terms. It also provides cover for the employer in the event of employees suffering assault or accidents at work.

The Council is required to formulate a policy in line with the regulations. It would be impossible to try and calculate the potential costs of making an injury payment in the circumstances set out in Regulations 3, 4, 6 and 7, given the various factors that would need to be taken into account to do so. With this in mind two options that have been adopted by other Local Government Pension Scheme employers are provided for consideration:

#### Policy option A

Some Local Government Pension Scheme employers have opted not to adopt the discretionary powers in relation to Regulations 3, 4, 6 and 7 and have cited the policies as being not workable, affordable or reasonable with regard to the foreseeable costs.

Under this option the Council could make the following statement:

"Woodley Town Council has determined not to adopt the discretion (to award an allowance in the case of (Regulation 3/4/6/7)) as it cannot be satisfied that such a policy would be workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to the foreseeable costs."

#### Policy option B

Some Local Government Pension Scheme employers have opted not to include workplace injury payments in relation to Regulations 3, 4, 6 and 7 in their policies but have referred to their council's Personal Accident Insurance policy and how that can be accessed.

Under this option the Council could make the following statement:

"Woodley Town Council has determined not to adopt the discretion to (award an allowance in the case of (Regulation 3/4/6/7)). However, employees who suffer an injury that arises from an

accident or unforeseen event at work may qualify for an award under the Council's Personal Accident Insurance policy. Application for such an award should be made to the Town Clerk."

Although it would be impossible to try and calculate the potential costs of making injury payments in the circumstances set out in Regulations 3, 4, 6 and 7, there may be situations where the Council would wish to make an injury payment of some kind and it should be noted that, in practice, employees would continue to be entitled to make a claim against the Council following an injury at work and would be entitled to receive a compensation payment in respect any injury as a result of an assault at work (as under the Local Government Terms and Conditions).

The Council's insurance brokers, Came and Co, who are aware of the regulations, have advised that the Council could consider adopting policy option B. This would allow the employer and the insurers to be able to assess any accident at work claims (other than those where the employee has a contractual entitlement under the LG Terms and Conditions) and take action that is in the Council's business interests and within the Council's means. Such payments have been used by one council to pay the costs of covering a post while an employee is on sick leave following an accident at work, as well as making an injury payment to the employee concerned.

### **Resources**

Neither policy option A or B would present any additional cost to the Council.

If a claim were made as a result of a serious incident the Council's premium may be increased, depending on the circumstances and the level of the claim. The level of increase, if any, is not possible to quantify given the many factors that would be taken into account by the insurers.

### **Summary**

The Council has to make a policy in respect of specific instances of injuries at work payments.

Employees have some rights under their terms and conditions to receive compensation for death/injury as a result of assault.

The Council's insurance covers this and provides a more extended employees' personal accident cover.

The potential costs of the four instances on which discretionary policy has to be made are not able to be calculated and it would not be in the Council's interest to adopt these.

It is impossible to foresee what kind of situation may occur in the future and whether or not there may be circumstances where the Council would consider making some form of payment, subject to an insurance claim payment received in respect of the insurance cover the Council has to protect itself and its employees. Any such payments should be within the Council's business interests, including employee welfare, and be within the Council's means. With this in mind it is advised the Council adopt policy option B, which makes employees aware of the Personal Injury at Work cover but which does not make any specific commitment to any particular circumstances and retains the ability of the Council to apply any claim payments in an appropriate way and within the Council's means.

### **Recommendation:**

- ◆ **That Members consider the policy options for the policy it is required to adopt in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011 and agree the policy it wishes to adopt.**

**Formulation of COMPULSORY policy in accordance with Regulation 14 of the  
Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011**

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**Regulation 3 - Reduction in remuneration**

Whilst an employee is receiving reduced pay as a direct result of an injury or disease contracted in the course of carrying out their employment, a relevant employer may consider paying the employee an allowance while the reduction in pay continues.

The relevant employer shall from time to time determine whether the employee should be entitled to continue to receive the allowance.

Any allowance payable must be paid directly by the relevant employer and, when added to the value of the reduced pay being received by the employee, must not be of a value that means the employee receives total pay in excess of the pay that they would normally expect to have received but for their injury or disease.

**Employer's policy concerning the award of an allowance due to reduction in remuneration**

Policy to be inserted here

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**Regulation 4 – Loss of employment through permanent incapacity**

Where an employee ceases employment due to permanent incapacity as a direct result of injury or disease contracted in the course of carrying out their employment, a relevant employer may consider paying the employee an allowance not exceeding 85 per cent of the employee's annual rate of remuneration at the point the employment ceased.

The relevant employer shall from time to time determine whether the employee should be entitled to continue to receive the allowance.

Any allowance payable must be paid directly by the relevant employer and, where the employee was receiving no pay or reduced pay at the time the employment ended because of absence, the employer must assess the remuneration on the basis of the pay the employee would have received but for being absent.

The relevant employer may suspend or discontinue the allowance if the (former) employee secures gainful employment (paid employment for not less than 30 hours in each week for a period of not less than 12 months).

**Employer's policy concerning the award of an allowance due to loss of employment**

Policy to be inserted here

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**Regulation 6 – Allowances for pensioners**

Where an employee ceases to be employed in a relevant employment and immediately before so ceasing was entitled to an allowance under regulation 3, and regulation 4 does not apply, but they become entitled to a retirement pension under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations, the relevant employer may pay an allowance of an amount not exceeding the annual rate by which the retirement pension may fall short due to their remuneration having been

reduced as a result of their injury or disease.

**Employer’s policy concerning the award of an allowance to a pensioner member**

Policy to be inserted here

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**Regulation 7 – Death benefits**

Where an employee dies as a direct result of injury or disease contracted in the course of carrying out their employment, a relevant employer may consider paying an annual allowance or a lump sum to a surviving spouse, civil partner, nominated co-habiting partner, or dependant (as defined in paragraphs 4 and 5 of regulation 7)

The annual allowance or lump sum is to be paid directly by the employer and is to be of such an amount as the employer may determine from time to time.

An allowance to a dependant (“an eligible child”) shall continue for such period as the employer may determine.

**Employer’s policy concerning the award of an allowance or lump sum following death**

Policy to be inserted here

**EMPLOYER CONFIRMATION**

It is understood that the discretions contained within this statement of policy are applicable to all employees. The regulations allow for a revised statement to be issued at least one month in advance of the date that any new policy takes effect. The revised statement must be published in a place that is accessible to all of its employees.

The employer must:

Have regard to the extent to which the exercise of the discretionary powers, unless properly limited, could lead to a serious loss of confidence in the public service; and

Be satisfied that the policy is workable, affordable and reasonable having regard to the foreseeable costs.

Signed on behalf of the Scheme Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name in Block Capitals: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Scheme Employer’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Draft Powers and Duties of the Strategy and Resources Committee

1. To regulate and control the finances of the Council with powers to revise, in each financial year, the estimates of the spending committees.
2. To collate the [income and expenditure estimates and charges](#) for each spending committee and to recommend to the Council the proposed expenditure and precept for the ensuing year.
3. To be authorised to approve additional expenditure, at the request of a spending committee, for items not included in [that committee's](#) estimates, providing that savings cannot be found within the requesting committee's estimates and that funds are available.
4. ~~To inform and advise the Council on [the annual capital programme projects. capital expenditure, with authority to authorise expenditure on schemes approved by the Council.](#)~~
5. ~~To manage the committee's budget and be authorised to transfer funds between each budget head within a location to meet unexpected expenditure within the powers delegated to the committee.~~
- 4.6. ~~To have the authority to authorise expenditure on capital schemes approved by the Council.~~
- 5.7. ~~To recommend to Council the [borrowing of funds and the](#) raising of loans.~~
- 6.8. ~~To approve leasing finance and investment of funds held by the Council and direct the appointment of Bankers, Building Societies and other financial establishments where funds are to be placed.~~
- 7.9. ~~To give guidance and instructions to spending committees and officers for the formulation of forward programmes and financial guidelines.~~
- 8.10. ~~To be authorised to approve the acceptance of a tender, other than the lowest, if payment is to be made by the Council, or the highest tender, if payment is to be received by the Council.~~
- 9.11. ~~To be authorised to [approve](#) make payments for [purchases and](#) services rendered to the Council and for the transfer of funds between the appropriate deposit accounts, including monitoring and replenishment of the Clerk's Imprest Account.~~
- 10.12. ~~To oversee the management and development of The Oakwood Centre.~~
- 11.13. ~~To manage the [use of the](#) Council's freehold and leasehold property and [to](#) make recommendations on all land use issues.~~
- 12.14. ~~To deal with all leases and licences.~~

- ~~13.~~15. To ensure that the Council's existing services are effectively undertaken and that any new service[s] or facilities required are promptly identified.
- ~~14.~~16. To supervise communications between the Council and the public.
- ~~15.~~17. To provide for the replacement, renewal or repair of vehicles, plant, furniture and major items of equipment.
- ~~16.~~18. To be authorised to ensure that the Council is fully covered by insurance to carry out all the functions of a local authority.
- ~~17.~~19. To oversee the administration of the Council's offices and depots.
- ~~18.~~20. To deal with all staff matters, including determining numbers, job descriptions, pay scales and working hours, [pension matters](#), recruitment, training and development of employees.
- ~~19.~~21. To make appointments to ~~the post of Town Clerk and those~~[the](#) posts ~~that reporting directly to the Town Clerk (as at ~~January 2006~~[June 2014](#): Service Support Manager, ~~Community and Members Services~~[Committee](#) Officer, Leisure Services Manager, Head Groundsman, ~~Oakwood Centre Manager~~)~~
- ~~20.~~22. To be authorised to act on behalf of the Council on the final internal appeal stage within the grievance and disciplinary procedures for all employees.
- ~~21.~~23. To deal with all matters affecting the Local Government boundaries of the town of Woodley.
- ~~22.~~24. To liaise and foster good relations with local authority associations.
- ~~23.~~25. To give consideration to and make recommendations on matters of major policy and use of resources, including consideration of those recommendations of other committees which are to be submitted to the Council when either major matters of policy and use of resources are concerned, or where the recommendation[s] of one committee on a particular matter differ[s] from the recommendation of another committee on the same matter.
- ~~24.~~26. To be authorised to appoint sub-committees and/or working parties to deal with matters delegated to the committee and to delegate such powers as vested in the committee.
- ~~25.~~[To institute from time to time, as necessary, a performance review on the aims, objectives, powers and duties of the Council and the standing committees. \(Council's responsibility\)](#)
- ~~26.~~27. To consider, where appropriate, the environmental impact on decisions being made by the committee.
- ~~27.~~28. To award grants in line with Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

## Powers delegated to the Town Clerk

1. To be head of the Council's paid service, with authority over all employees for ensuring the efficient management of the use of the Council's resources.
2. To be the "Proper Officer" of the Council for the purposes of the Local Government Act, 1972 and for all other statutory purposes.
3. To be the Responsible Financial Officer in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act, 1972, the Audit and Account Regulations and other relevant financial regulations.
4. To act as the Council's principal advisor on matters of general policy and for the co-ordination of advice on matters affecting such policy.
5. To be empowered to seek any required planning or building control permission in pursuance of any resolution or objective of the Council.
6. To be responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of all Council property, equipment and machinery.
7. To sign, seal and deliver any agreements, contracts, conveyances, licences, permission, consent or approval which may be required under any enactment or by virtue of any contract, covenant or agreement in the presence of two Members of the Council.
8. To be the holder of any licences in respect of any of the Council's public buildings and, whilst such licences are in operation, to have overall responsibility for such buildings or area for which the licence is granted.
9. To administer meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees; preparing such notices, agendas, reports and minutes as are needed to comply with the relevant statute.
10. To have authority to deal with all enquiries, petitions and complaints from members of the public and referring those that cannot be resolved to the [Leader/Deputy of the Council](#) or appropriate committee Chairman.
11. To be authorised to issue press statements on behalf of the Council in accordance with approved activities and pursuant with the objectives of the Council.
12. To be authorised to liaise with other public authorities, statutory and voluntary bodies and to attend the necessary meetings.
13. To be responsible for all staff matters, the appointment of all staff other than the posts that report directly to the Town Clerk. (As at ~~January 2006~~[June 2014](#) these are; Service Support Manager, ~~Community and Members Services~~[Committee](#) Officer, Leisure Services Manager, Head Groundsman, ~~Oakwood Centre Manager~~.) If necessary to be the Proper Officer for dealing with grievance matters, disciplinary procedures and, in the appropriate cases, for the dismissal of staff. A report to be submitted to the Strategy and Resources Committee where staff are dismissed.

14. To be authorised to place orders on behalf of the Council in accordance with the approved estimates, policies of the Council and the Standing Orders.

15. To be authorised to make payments for:

Staff salaries and wages.

Staff expenses/training fees/conference fees.

Refund of deposits held

Grants

Goods and services which require payment in advance or where payment is a matter of urgency

reporting to the Strategy and Resources Committee on all payments made.

16. To be authorised to delegate duties to the staff, providing full control measures exist, and during absence through leave, sickness, or for any other authorised reason, to delegate to the appropriate Managers.

17. To be authorised in extreme urgency to take such action as necessary to protect the Council, the general public, staff or property, where it would be impracticable or impossible to obtain prior authority from the [Council or its committees](#)Members.

18. To be authorised to make short-term investments to a maximum of the precept at any one time. Such investments shall [meet the requirements set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy](#) ~~be secure and~~ with either reputable banks or building societies ~~based in the United Kingdom~~ and on terms best beneficial to the Council. To report to the Strategy and Resources Committee all investments made, the institutions used and the rates of interest obtained.



## **The Local Government Transparency Code for parish councils with a gross annual income or expenditure exceeding £200,000 (England only)**

### **Introduction**

The Local Government Transparency Code was published by the Department of Communities and Local Government on 1 May 2014. With reference to paragraph 10 of the new code, the new code applies to certain local authorities which include a parish council which has gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeding £200,000. The new code also applies to district, county and London borough councils and other specified public authorities.

The new code recommends minimum requirements for the publication of certain information by the various authorities that it applies to. Part 2 recommends the publication of i) certain information quarterly (e.g. expenditure over £500) and ii) other information annually (e.g. relating to local authority land, grants to voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations, staff organisation charts which exclude staff with a salary of less than £50,000, controlled on and off-street parking spaces in the authority's area, senior officer salaries over £50,000). Part 2 confirms that information should be published in a format and under a licence that allows open re-use, including for commercial and research activities.

Part 3 of the new code recommends that the authorities to which it applies go further than the minimum publication requirements set out in Part 2 and that, for example, they publish i) information on a monthly rather than a quarterly basis, or ideally, as soon as it becomes (commonly known as 'real-time' publication ii) details of all transactions that exceed £250 instead of £500 and iii) additional information not specified in Part 2.

### **Statutory background**

The new code was issued under s. 2(2) of the Local Government, Planning and Land Act 1980 ('the 1980 Act') which gives the Secretary of State the power to issue a code of recommended practice as to the publication of information by local authorities about the discharge of their functions and other matters. s.2(1) of the 1980 Act defines local authorities and parish councils are included in that definition. S.2(10) provides that the Secretary of State may issue a code under s.2(2) for different kinds of local authorities, as defined. This explains why the new code does not apply to all parish councils.

## **Legal consequences of the new code**

The authorities that are subject to the new code are recommended to observe it. It is not mandatory for them to do so. s. 3 of the 1980 Act provides for the Secretary of State to make regulations requiring authorities to publish any description of information specified in the code issued under s. 2 if, in his opinion, regulations are necessary to ensure that they publish such information. It is the Government's intention to introduce regulations which will make Part 2 of the new code mandatory. The regulations are expected to be made within about 3 months of the Code being issued.

With reference to paragraph 16 of the new code, Part 2 will not be mandatory and will remain recommended for a parish council with a gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) between £200,000 and £6.5 million even when the new regulations are in force. When the new regulations are in force, Part 2 of the new code will be mandatory for all authorities with a gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) which exceeds £6.5 million.

The new code does not replace or undermine a parish council's obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004. A parish council that is subject to the new code must ensure that the publication of that information is compliant with such legislation. Information which includes data about an individual can only be published if this would not contravene provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Parish councils have a duty under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to maintain a publication scheme listing the classes of information they routinely make available. The new code does not replace these existing arrangements.

## **Further reading**

It is important that parish councils to whom the new Code applies read the new Code in full. The new code and answers to frequently asked questions about it are available on the Department's website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-government-transparency-code-2014>.

**This briefing was issued by Meera Tharmarajah, Solicitor and Head of Legal Services**



**Woodley Residents' Survey**  
**2013-2014**

**“Woodley is a lovely place – I was born and raised here and now have my own children. The quality of life is good and it’s safe and easy living here. Keep up the good work!”**

**“We love living in Woodley and are thankful for all that the Council do.”**

**“Woodley is a great little place with so much to offer. We should be proud of our town and shout about ourselves a bit more.”**

**“Good town with a great town centre.”**

**“We both love it in Woodley after 50 years in Earley and think the Council do very well. There is a good feel here, so can’t think how it can be improved. Good for you all.”**

**“Nothing is perfect, and there are always things that can be improved – that’s progress – but Woodley is a pretty good place to live and work in.”**

**“I think we sometimes take it for granted what a pleasant and peaceful town we live in, and how good the facilities are”**

(Source: Quotes from the survey response)

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## 1 Introduction

Each year, Woodley Town Council (WTC) aims to commission a survey among local residents to consult about the services the council provides, and about local peoples' views about and priorities for the town.

Between November 2013 and February 2014, the Residents' Survey was conducted by delivering a self-completion questionnaire to every household in the town. This report presents and discusses the results of this survey.

## 1 Conducting the survey

A self-completion survey was designed in consultation and agreement with Woodley Town Council. This questionnaire was designed to offer all local residents the opportunity to have a say about the services that the Town Council provides. It aimed to obtain a fully representative sample to show:

- how local people use the services provided by the Council
- what people think of local services and the value for money that they provide
- the relative importance of the services available to Woodley Residents
- residents' ideas for improving Woodley Town Council Services
- how people feel about living in Woodley.
- comments about and ideas for improving the quality of life in Woodley.

The questions were structured to obtain a mixture of quantitative measures and qualitative data and were partially based on the longitudinal questions from past surveys combined with addressing needs for information that the Town Council had at the time.

At the end of November 2013, 10,100 questionnaires were distributed with Woodley Town Council's quarterly newsletter, "The Woodley Herald", which is delivered to all households in Woodley.

To facilitate and encourage responses from as many people as possible, from the questionnaire could be returned by freepost, hand delivered to one of three collection boxes in Woodley or completed online. There was also an option to request a large print questionnaire or to answer the questions during a telephone call. The final date for responses was mid-January 2014, however some late results were received, and these were accepted until March 30<sup>th</sup> 2014.

## 2 Survey Response

One thousand and seventeen responses were received, the majority by postal return. This gave a total received response rate of 10.1%.

Of the 1017 returns, 34 had to be excluded from the data analysed as they were not completed in a way that could be used in the results, although any salient comments made in them were noted. This provided an analysed response of 983 completed questionnaires, or 9.7%. Responses were received from across Woodley, with no area being under

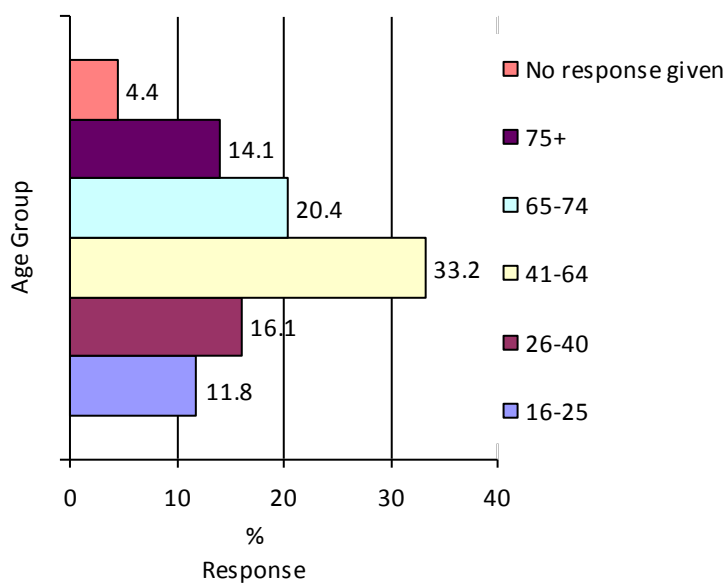
represented and the highest number of responses from the parish wards of Southlake North and Coronation East.

People from all types of households replied to the survey from single person households to families and people from all age groups were represented by the survey. In this survey it was not possible accurately to analyse the household size or composition of respondents.

**Table 1: The Age Profile of Respondents**

Age Group	% Response	Number responding
16-25	11.8	116
26-40	16.1	158
41-64	33.2	326
65-74	20.4	201
75+	14.1	139
No response given	4.4	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>983</b>

**Table 1: Age Profile of Respondents**





## 2.1 Representivity of results

The nature of this survey meant that it should be noted that respondents were self-selecting in this survey. Therefore, those that felt most strongly about aspects of life in the town might have been more likely to reply than those who felt less connection or involvement.

Even so, the response can be considered to be fully representative of the views of the people of Woodley given the response rate and the geographical spread, age range and mix of household types covered by the data. In statistical terms, the response rate provides data that can be considered 99% accurate, with a margin of error of +/- 4% in representing residents views (or 95% accurate within +/-3%). .

It was also noted that, of those responding, 1.9% (n=19) reported being in a household that had some form of connection to Woodley Town Council. This connection included aspects such as households having someone who worked for, or was a councillor for the Town Council.

## 3 Survey Results

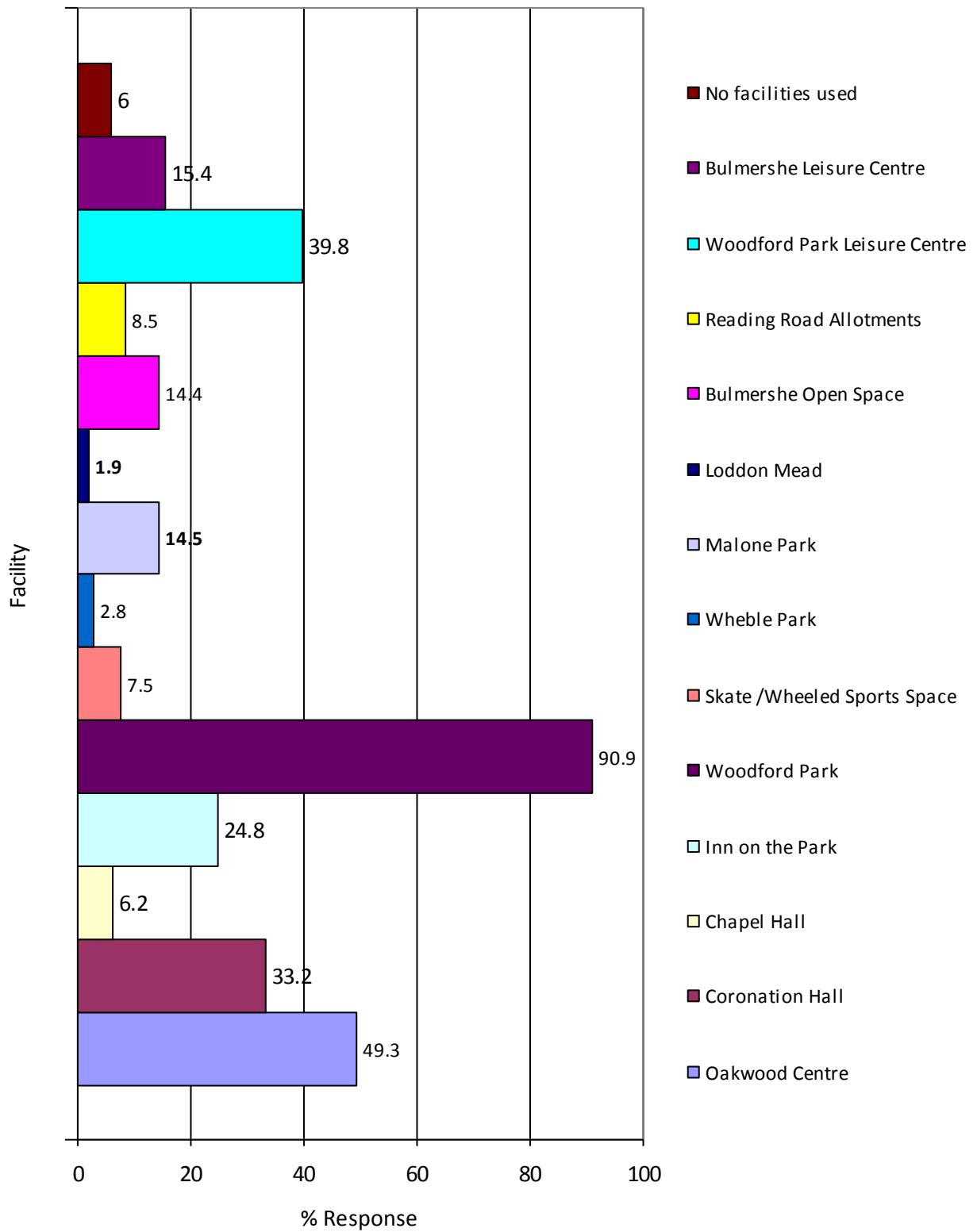
### 3.1 Use of facilities provided by Woodley Town Council

As in previous surveys, respondents were asked which of the facilities provided by Woodley Town Council had been used by members of their household. This question related to use in the past year. The results of this are shown in Table2, below.

**Table 2: Use of Woodley Town Council Facilities by Local Residents**

Facility	% of households using facility in past year	Number responding
Oakwood Centre	49.3	485
Coronation Hall	33.2	326
Chapel Hall	6.2	61
Inn on the Park	24.8	244
Woodford Park	90.9	894
Skate /Wheeled Sports Space	7.5	74
Wheble Park	2.8	28
Malone Park	14.5	143
Loddon Mead	1.9	19
Bulmershe Open Space	14.4	142
Reading Road Allotments	8.5	84
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	39.8	391
Bulmershe Leisure Centre	15.4	151
No facilities used	6.0	58

**Figure 2: Use of Woodley Town Council Facilities by Local Residents  
(2012-2013/4)**



This year, the most frequently used facilities had been Woodford Park (90.0%), The Oakwood Centre (49.3%), Coronation Hall, Woodford Park Leisure Centre (39.8%), and Coronation Hall (33.2%).

Use of Bulmershe Leisure Centre was lower than in 2010-2012, and use of Bulmershe Open Space appeared to have increased.

Use of the Oakwood Centre was 12% greater than in the years 2010-2012, and use of Coronation Hall, Woodford Park and The Inn on the Park also appeared to have increased markedly (although the sample basis was different between the two surveys).

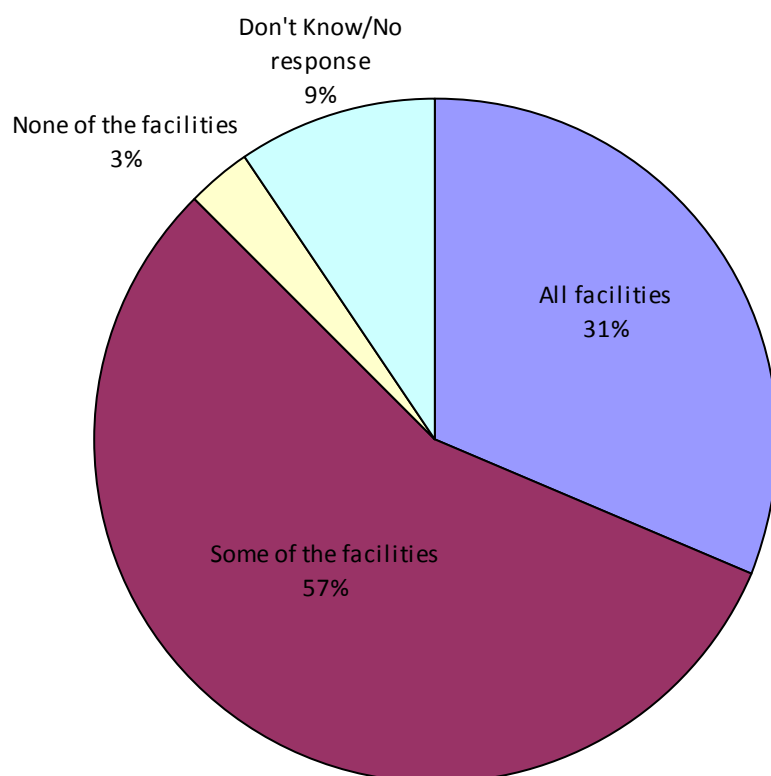
### **3.2 Awareness of Facilities Provided by Woodley Town Council**

Almost one third of local people were aware of all of the facilities that Woodley Town Council provides. Fifty Six percent know that WTC provides some of the services, one eighth either did not know, did not reply (which might be interpreted as not knowing), or thought that none of the facilities in Table 1 were provided by the Town Council. These results indicate that WTC might benefit from promoting its role in the provision of local services.

**Table 3: How aware are local residents of the services provided by WTC?**

Knowledge that listed facilities (Table 1) services are provided by WTC?	% response	Number responding
All facilities	31.3	307
Some of the facilities	56.3	553
None of the facilities	3.1	31
Don't Know/No response	9.4	92
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>983</b>

**Fig 3: Awareness among local residents of the services provided by WTC**



### **3.3 How Local Residents Rate Woodley Town Council facilities**

#### **3.3.1 The importance of the facilities to local people**

Residents were asked to rate the importance of local facilities. Table 4 shows the results of this. There was variability in the numbers of people that responded to each facility, possibly due to people having a low awareness of some facilities and therefore feeling unable to give a rating, or disinterested in doing so. The number of respondents for each facility is given as part of the table. Darker green cells represent the modal (most frequent) rating for each service, services rated as very important, lighter green shading indicates services the second most frequent rating.

**Table 4: The Importance of Woodley Town Council Facilities to Local People**

Facility	Number of responses	% Response			
		Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant
Oakwood Centre	893	44.7	42.0	10.9	2.5
Coronation Hall	888	36.8	31.0	28.9	3.3
Chapel Hall	764	19.0	52.5	21.9	6.7
Inn on the Park	792	28.7	44.6	18.1	8.7
Woodford Park	938	82.4	14.9	2.6	0.1
Skate/Wheeled Sports Space	801	45.3	36.3	10.9	7.5
Wheble Park	381	23.4	40.7	23.9	12.1
Malone Park	590	40.0	49.0	7.9	3.6
Loddon Mead	482	36.9	42.3	14.7	6.0
Bulmershe Open Space	628	49.2	34.1	16.2	0.5
Reading Road Allotments	754	54.9	38.6	4.0	2.5
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	889	38.7	43.0	18.1	0.2
Bulmershe Leisure Centre	793	51.2	43.6	2.6	2.5
<b>Mean importance: all facilities</b>		<b>43.8</b>	<b>38.9</b>	<b>14.4</b>	<b>4.3</b>

Most frequent response

Second most frequent response

From this it can be seen that, overall, the facilities provided by Woodley Town Council were considered to be very important to the people of Woodley (44%) and somewhat important by 39% of local people. No facility was rated as unimportant overall and all facilities were thought to be either very or somewhat important by 64% or more of local residents.

The 6 facilities considered to be of greatest significance to local people were Woodford Park, Reading Road Allotments, Bulmershe Leisure Centre, the Skate/Wheeled Sports spot, The Oakwood Centre and Malone Park. This is further demonstrated in Table 5, below, which summarises the rating of Woodley Town Council Facilities as very or somewhat important.

It is noted that there was some concern about the future of Bulmershe Leisure Centre at the time of this survey.

**Table 5: Relative Importance of WTC Facilities to Local People**

Facility	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Total
Woodford Park	82.4	14.9	97.3
Bulmershe Leisure Centre	51.2	43.6	94.8
Reading Road Allotments	54.9	38.6	93.5
Malone Park	40.0	49.0	89.0
Oakwood Centre	44.7	42.0	86.7
Bulmershe Open Space	34.1	49.2	83.3
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	38.7	43.0	81.7
Skate /Wheeled Sports Space	45.3	36.3	81.6
Loddon Mead	36.9	42.3	79.3
Inn on the Park	28.7	44.6	73.2
Chapel Hall	19.0	52.5	71.5
Coronation Hall	36.8	31.0	67.8
Wheble Park	23.4	40.7	64.0

### 3.3.2 The Quality of Woodley Town Council Facilities

Table 6: How Residents rated Woodley Town Council facilities

Rating	Number of responses	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Oakwood Centre	973	38.1	35.8	20.8	5.3
Coronation Hall	659	32.2	27.6	29.1	11.1
Chapel Hall	172	7.0	23.8	30.8	38.4
Inn on the Park	361	13.6	35.7	37.7	13.0
Woodford Park	940	45.1	38.0	12.8	4.1
Skate /Wheeled Sports Space	647	36.3	33.4	27.4	2.9
Wheble Park	84	25.0	22.6	15.5	36.9
Malone Park	188	17.0	43.6	23.9	15.4
Loddon Mead	83	2.4	33.7	27.7	36.1
Bulmershe Open Space	354	16.7	61.9	13.8	7.6
Reading Road Allotments	160	28.1	45.0	15.0	11.9
Woodford Park Leisure Centre	862	19.0	34.3	30.6	16.0
Bulmershe Leisure Centre	559	10.9	32.7	40.4	15.9
<b>Overall</b>		<b>22.4</b>	<b>36.0</b>	<b>25.0</b>	<b>16.5</b>

Most frequent response

Second most frequent response

Residents were asked to rate individual facilities in Woodley (See Table 6, above). Of particular note in these results are Woodford Park, The Oakwood Centre and the Skate/Wheeled Sport Space which were rated as excellent by over one third of local people. Woodford Park, Bulmershe Open Space, The Oakwood Centre, Reading Road Allotments, The Skate/Wheeled Sport Space were all rated as good or excellent by two thirds or more of respondents, with Woodford Park being the most highly rated facility on the town.



The lowest rated facilities were Chapel Hall, Loddon Mead, Bulmershe Leisure Centre and Wheble Park. Of these, one third or more of local residents felt that Chapel Hall, Loddon Mead and Wheble Park were poor.

Of those that responded, 36% felt that the facilities as a whole were good, 25% rated WTC facilities as satisfactory and 22.4% considered them to be excellent.

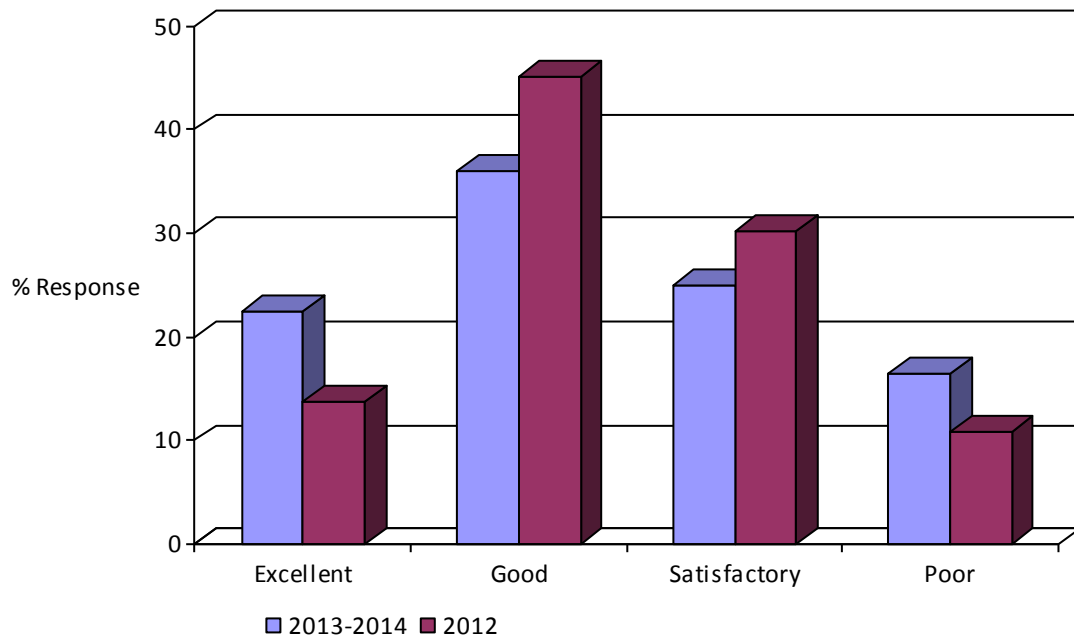
**Table 7: Aggregated rating for Town Council facilities**

Rating	% response	
	2013-2014	2012
Excellent	22.4	13.8
Good	36.0	45.2
Satisfactory	25.0	30.2
Poor	16.5	10.8

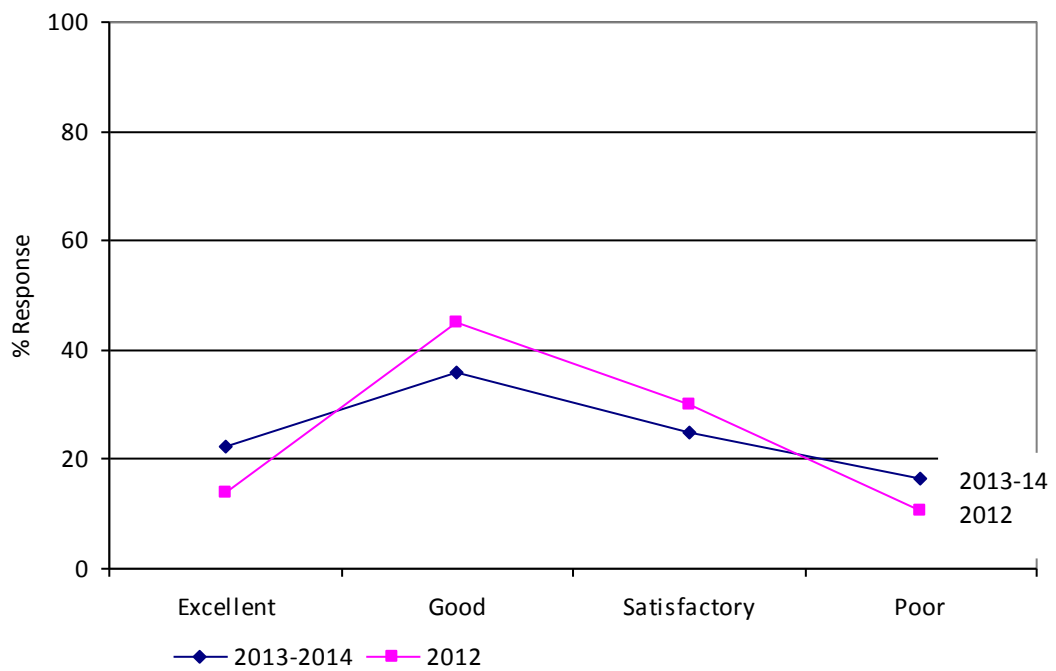
The overall rated and aggregated score for all the facilities was 73.3 (satisfactory-good), a slight decrease compared to the 2012 service.

This appears to reflect an increased levelling out of distribution in people’s views about services, with more respondents giving both poor and excellent ratings than in 2012, and fewer rating facilities as good or satisfactory (see figures 4a and 4b). This may be due to the difference in sample type or size.

**Fig 4a. Aggregated Ratings for Woodley Town Council Facilities**



**Fig 4b. Two Year Trend in Aggregated Ratings for Woodley Town Council Facilities**



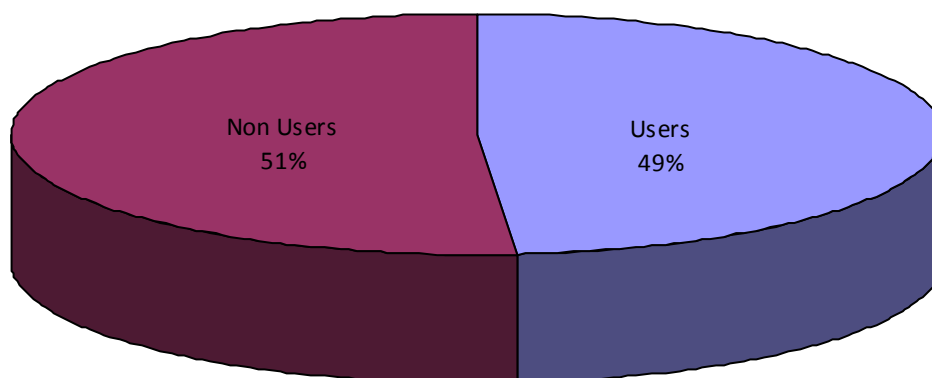
### 3.4 Woodford Park Leisure Centre

Residents were asked if they had used Woodford Park Leisure Centre in the past two years. Of those that responded to this question, (822 people) just under half had used Woodford Park Leisure Centre in the past year, and just over half had not used it.

**Table 8: Individuals using Woodford Park Leisure Centre in last 2 Years**

	% Response
Users	48.7
Non Users	51.3

**Fig 5: Proportion of residents using Woodford Park leisure Centre**



### 3.4.1 Uses of Woodford Park Leisure Centre

Woodford Park Leisure Centre(WPLC) had been used for a diverse range of activities, with 61% of people having used the centre for 3 or more reasons in the past two years.

**Table 9: Reasons for Using Woodford Park Leisure Centre**

Reasons for using WPLC	Number of responses
Visited while using children's play area	91
Buy refreshments from reception	84
Parties	64
Paddling pool	64
Toilets	59
Meetings	51
Table Tennis	41
Badminton	35
Ballet/dance classes	33
Exercise classes	31
Visited while using paddling pool	29
Yoga	28
Pilates	27
Tumble tots	25
Zumba	16
Pre-school	16
Circuit training	14
Chinese Exercise	11
Bridge	9
Play scheme/holiday club	9
Various/Unspecified Activities	7
Sports camps	7
Allotment Society AGM	4
Radar	4
Art group workshop	3
Street dance	2
Radio club	1
Reason not given	71

45 people mentioned the Inn on the Park as a reason for visiting Woodford Park Leisure Centre. This suggests that the two facilities are identified as one entity by many people, or that the Inn on the Park is either a draw to, or facility used alongside others at the Leisure Centre.

### **3.4.2 Positive aspects of Woodford Park Leisure Centre**

Users of Woodford Park Leisure Centre were asked what they liked about it. Their responses are summarised below. It is not appropriate to statistically analyse this data, but the results are given in order of the most frequently mentioned aspect to the least.

**Table 10: What local residents liked about Woodford Park Leisure Centre**

- Convenience
- Closeness to home
- Good value for money
- Easy/free parking
- Small and personal/friendly
- Range of activities available
- Easily accessible
- Knowledgeable, friendly, helpful staff
- Good value/facilities for children
- Is walking distance from town centre/home
- Like the location in the centre of the park
- Activities at user friendly times
- Large/good badminton hall
- Like the central location
- Ample space and facilities
- Like the availability of the pub and park close by
- Ability to book courts easily
- Pleasant and quiet
- Classes are friendly
- A good place to meet local people
- Clean and well kept
- Well organised
- Good lighting in the sports hall
- A good community asset

### 3.4.3 Improving the Entrance Area to Woodford Park Leisure Centre

Users were asked to give their ideas about how the entrance to upgrade Woodford Park Leisure Centre. The most frequently mentioned were:

- Install an automatic door/draft proof doors
- Have an open, obvious, welcoming receptionist's desk (many comments that current arrangements do not feel hospitable/ the fact that receptionists are behind glass is not liked )
- Rearrange layout to be more open and welcoming
- Modernise in general – contemporary paintwork, fixtures and fittings.
- Keep the entrance separate from the pub
- Use the improvements to make the whole place look more vibrant and interesting
- Ensure ample space for parking buggies
- Make generally brighter/ Make better use of natural light
- Have a chalet style roof to make a covered external porch/ install a porch entrance for footballers and park users to remove muddy footwear
- Improve signage for what is available and what rooms there are in the Leisure Centre
- Have boards to show activities and facilities in a better way
- Have a waiting area with plenty of seats for people waiting for those doing activities
- Have a coffee machine
- Make it child friendly and appealing for families

### **3.5 Improving Woodford Park Leisure Centre in general**

The most popular ideas for improving Woodford Park Leisure Centre were:

#### **Management**

Advertise the facilities at the leisure centre more effectively.

Make the Leisure Centre a real destination in Woodley: it has so much possibility but local people are not aware enough.

Franchise it out and consolidate the management with Bulmershe Leisure Centre.

Be more proactive and energetic in management style.

#### **Facilities**

Have a gymnasium.

Get the skittle alley back to working order.

Have a bigger sports hall.

Redecorate the upstairs meeting rooms.

Redecorate the entire leisure centre.

Use more modern colours/décor throughout the centre.

Have a studio style room for activities such as yoga and dance.

Have a large, soundproofed exercise room, with mirrors and clean floors.

Cover the tennis courts so that they can be used all year round/ move the tennis courts to other side of the leisure centre and have a low building where the tennis courts are now for activities such as dance and exercise classes.

#### **Amenities**

Improve the changing rooms and toilets (comments about smell in toilets despite refurbishment).

Have a small, family friendly café/kiosk to make it more of a venue suitable for children and people after classes who do not wish to go to the pub.

## **Activities**

Activities, games and groups for young children/ more pre-school children's activities.

Have a crèche for people attending classes.

Have a soft play area/soft play sessions.

Have adult and children's activities all year round.

Provide drop in children's activities for school holidays.

Have an advanced yoga class /Have yoga and pilates classes in the evening.

Squash courts.

More activities at a wider range of times.

Have regular classes at more popular times, not interrupted by the preschool.

More adult dance classes (eg. ceroc, over 50's, jazz, salsa/latin, ballroom).

Language groups/socials.

Adult learning (encourage use by U3A?).

Indoor bowling/skittles.

Indoor curling.

Ensure there is a good spread of activities for all ages, at low cost at all times of day and evening.

## **Charging for activities**

Give local businesses discounts to use the facilities.

Do more to make sure that local people know they can get discounts at the leisure centre.

## **Maintenance**

Improve general housekeeping/ cleaning of the facilities (the floor was mentioned particularly).

Full size snooker table/snooker club.

Install reliable and efficient heating and ventilation.

Mend/replace/modernise the roof tiles inside the halls.



## **Access and Parking**

Better separation of cars and pedestrians – mark safe walking routes and crossing points between the main services.

Have better outdoor lighting.

Resurface and remark the car park/distribute parking space markings more effectively.

Resurface the access road.

Improve road lighting.

Arrange the access so that people do not have to walk through the pub garden/smoking area to reach the Leisure Centre.

Place staff parking spaces in the lower car park.

Move the skip to provide another 3 parking spaces.

Take away the aggressive speed bumps on the access road.

Charge to use the car park to cover the cost of maintaining it better – make it free for paying users of the leisure centre.

Limit car parking at Woodford Park Leisure Centre to users of the centre and have increased capacity for footballers at weekends.

### **3.5.1 Reasons for not using Woodford Park Leisure Centre**

Those who do not use Woodford Park Leisure Centre where asked why this was. Of the 422 non users, 131 gave no reason for their choice.

The remaining 291 often had more than one reason for not using the centre. Forty six percent used other facilities (such as other local leisure facilities, gym memberships, sports clubs), 31% said they had no time to use the Leisure Centre. The other most frequent reasons for not using Woodford Park Leisure Centre were focussed on there being insufficient suitable activities available, a lack of activities at convenient times and the perceived poor quality of the facilities provided.

**Table 10: Reasons that people do not use Woodford Park Leisure Centre**

Reasons for not using WPLC	Number of Responses	% response (n=291) <i>excludes non-responders</i>
Use alternative facilities	134	46.0
Too busy to use it	71	31.3
Do not need the facilities/activities provided	69	23.7
No classes/activities at convenient times	62	23.4
Facilities not of good enough quality	59	20.3
Not enough facilities/activities	57	19.6
Not interested in sports/leisure activities	51	17.5
Not aware of WPLC	46	15.8
Nothing available at WPLC that is of interest	40	13.7
Not sure what is available at WPLC	38	13.1
Find WPLC unwelcoming/unfriendly	17	5.8
Prefer Oakwood Centre	12	4.1
Feel unsafe in the park/area at night	9	3.1
Feel nervous of going alone for the first time	2	0.7
Have to use public transport, too far to walk to WPLC from the bus stop[	2	0.7
<i>No reason given</i>	131	x

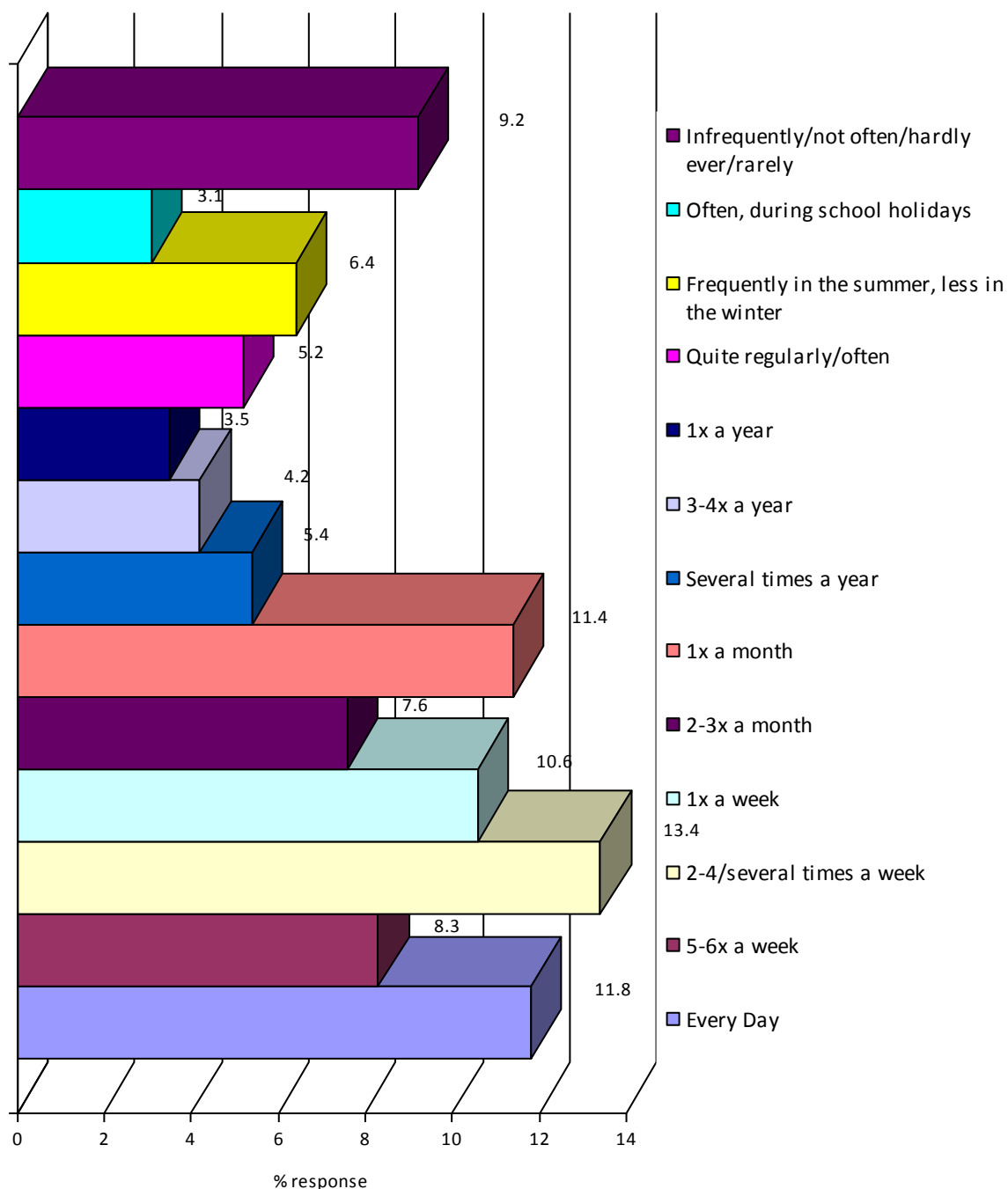
### 3.6 Woodford Park

Woodford Park is the most popular facility provided by the town councils, with over 90% of households using it in some way. Frequency of use varies widely from every day to very rarely, but over half of those answering used the park once a week or more. The pattern of use among those that replied to this question is shown in Table 11, and Figure 6 below.

**Table 11: Frequency of use of Woodford Park**

Frequency of visiting Woodford Park	% response	Number of responses
Every Day	11.8	81
5-6x a week	8.3	57
2-4/several times a week	13.4	92
1x a week	10.6	73
2-3x a month	7.6	52
1x a month	11.4	78
Several times a year	5.4	37
3-4x a year	4.2	29
1x a year	3.5	24
Quite regularly/often	5.2	36
Frequently in the summer, less in the winter	6.4	44
Often, during school holidays	3.1	21
Infrequently/not often/hardly ever/rarely	9.2	63
<b>TOTAL Responses</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>687</b>

**Figure 6 : Frequency of use of Woodford Park**



### 3.7 Reasons for using Woodford Park

There were many reasons for using Woodford Park. These are summarised in Table 12. Most users had 2 or more reasons for visiting Woodford Park, and its place as a central recreational open space and place for walking, playing and community and sports activities seems clear.

**Table 12: Uses of Woodford Park.**

Purpose	% Response	Number of Responses
Walking	241	40.1
Playgrounds	201	33.4
Dog walking	179	29.8
Paddling pool	171	28.5
Transit through (usually to Woodley Shopping Centre)	164	27.3
Carnival	161	26.8
Lake	143	23.8
Inn on the Park	131	21.8
Feed ducks	97	16.1
Running	74	12.3
Entertaining own children	69	11.5
Visiting Woodford Park Leisure Centre	62	10.3
Football	53	8.8
Entertaining grandchildren	52	8.7
Skate/wheeled sport area	49	8.2
Bike riding	46	7.7
Park Run	39	6.5
Garden of Remembrance	36	6.0
Cricket	31	5.2
Parties/picnics	30	5.0
Tennis	29	4.8
Use exercise area	28	4.7
Visit fair	26	4.3
Youth facilities	25	4.2
Scout parade	17	2.8
Enjoying the open space/sitting and enjoying the park	14	2.3
Bowls	12	2.0
Hanging out	11	1.8
Woodley 10k run	9	1.5
Shine Yoga	7	1.2

## **3.8 User views on the facilities in Woodford Park**

Users were asked for their views about the facilities available in Woodford Park. All were popular, although there was some ambivalence about the youth shelters, street art boards and Garden of Remembrance. The results are summarised below, and although not statistically significant analysis, the proportion of people making key comments is shown as a guide to the strength of opinion shown.

Ideas given for improving the facilities are also summarised.

### **3.8.1 Children's Playgrounds**

Almost 30% of those commenting said that they thought the playgrounds were excellent or good. The "new" Playground near the leisure centre is popular and considered to be a marked improvement to previous park facilities. It is particularly good for younger children but less appealing to over 6/7 Year olds (21%)

12% of people commented that there is a good selection of playground equipment in the park, but 19% said that there needed to be more challenging apparatus, especially for children aged 7+ and teenagers. 44% of those responding commented that the play area near the Oakwood Centre is dilapidated and/or needs updating.

9% of respondents thought they are well maintained (especially the new playground). However 6% said that better and more rapid maintenance is needed. It was noted that when equipment breaks (such as the ariel runway) it is often out of use for several months. 13% of those giving an opinion said that the equipment needed to be cleaned more often. 7% felt that something should be done with the old play area by the paddling pool, which is an "eyesore" and a "dead area".

#### **Ideas for Improving the Playgrounds**

Increase the variety and quality of playground equipment across the park.

Have play equipment scattered around, not just in set playground areas.

Have equipment suitable for 7-10 years olds, and also for 11-18 year olds.

Have more challenging and varied playground equipment for older children/develop a teenage playground, maybe involving teenagers to design it.

Create an all-inclusive fully accessible play area for adults and children of all ages, and people with and without disabilities.

Use one of the hills to make a slide and ariel runway play area for older children.

Replace the playpark behind Oakwood Centre with new equipment and a wooden fence around it (not metal or wire).

Have a café or kiosk for sitting outside to watch children play or in the paddling pool.

Remove and refit the remaining old play area near the Oakwood Centre.

Ideas were given for use of the old playground area next to the paddling pool included:

- an outdoor chess set
- outdoor table tennis
- a mini children's construction area
- a maze
- a shelter
- a sandpit with diggers
- mini golf
- more playground equipment for older children
- a proper garden area for the In in the Park

### **3.8.2 Paddling pool**

Local residents are fond of the paddling pool. 45% of those responding said that it was excellent, good or a valuable local facility. However 38% of people (including those that like the pool) commented that it is often dirty or not working and that this should be improved. 6% noted that the cover in winter is poor and/or unsightly –however some people thought that the pool is covered in winter, some thought that it is not..

The paddling pool is seen as a key resource and meeting place for families with young children (17%).It is important, and valued that the paddling pool is a free facility. (10%)

A high standard of cleaning and maintenance of the paddling pool are vital to Woodley residents wishing to use it, as it causes great disappointment when people visit and it is closed or too dirty to use. Similarly, it is important to users that the pool is consistently kept open, especially on hot days (8% of people commenting had visited on days when the pool was closed but was expected to be open). 16% of those giving an opinion commented that

the paddling pool was not open for long enough hours in the summer, and was closed too often, and unexpectedly.

7% said that they would like easier toilet access from the paddling pool.

4% of those answering were not aware of the paddling pool.

2% said that there should be a competent and visible attendant.

### **Ideas for improving the paddling pool**

Have regular cleaning and maintenance that is properly managed.

Make access to the toilets easier

Install a (better) winter cover to the pool to help maintain it more effectively

Have a splash area

Install a sprinkler park where the old play ground has been removed (13%).

Have more picnic tables and chairs

Have some small play equipment in the paddling pool area

### **3.8.3 Outdoor Exercise Area**

Opinions about the outdoor exercise area were mixed.

36% thought it was a good idea or good facility, 21% of those answering did not know about it, 19% had never seen it being used. Seven people commented that it was a useful facility for people who cannot afford gym membership, or who do not like gyms.

Those that appeared to have used it liked it, though 6% of people commenting said it needed some more challenging equipment.

7% liked that it was suitable for all ages, 11% were not sure how to use it. 8% said that it needed better maintenance and that some equipment did not work. 2% commented that it was not used and was a target for vandals. One person said that they felt the area was dangerous, having seen several small/medium sized children hit by the machines, but few adults using them.

3% had not used the equipment but said that they might after realising it was there; this could be an indication that it should be better signposted or advertised.



1% of people had taken activity/youth groups there.

### **Ideas for Improving Outdoor Exercise Area**

“Tell more people that this excellent facility is there”.

Have organised circuit classes there (could move to the leisure centre on bad weather days).

Look after the equipment to a higher and more consistent standard.

Have more information about how to use the equipment and what parts of the body it is good for exercising.

Have boards with information about healthy living, diet, exercise etc.

Add some more challenging equipment.

Add some equipment/easier access for people in wheelchairs.

Let more people know that it is there/signpost it better.

### **3.8.4 Skate and Wheeled Sport Spot**

56% of people that commented on this said that they thought it was a good or excellent idea/facility. 42% noted that it seemed well used and popular with young people, especially after school. 12% thought that it was great for pre-teens and teens. 4% commented that it was useful that the JAC bus visited after school time. 2% said that it was a brilliant idea and excellent for the park.

Some people were concerned that the area is not staffed and were concerned in case there is an accident however, two people noted that it seems to police itself quite well and whilst bullying had been a concern it did not seem to be an issue.

Three people liked the skate and wheeled sport spot as an excellent way for youngsters to burn off energy and increase skills. One person commented that their daughter had developed “new skills and at last something she can feel proud of”.

17 people thought that the skate/wheeled sport area gets overcrowded and would benefit from extension. 15 would like to see something similar for younger children.

### **Ideas to Improve the Skate and Wheeled Sport Spot**

Have more seating around for adults who are keeping an eye on their children.

Extend it to provide more activities/space.

Have an area for younger children to use.

Have a member of staff there at busy times to keep an eye on the youngsters.

Have dedicated times for younger or disabled children.

Have it lit for easier/safer use at night.

### **3.8.5 The Lake**

The Lake is one of the most popular features of the park and considered to be an important local landmark.

78% of those commenting talked about the lake favourably, with comments such as “it is my favourite part of the park”, I love it”, “It’s a lovely feature” and “a nice feature of the park” , “picturesque” and “peaceful” being typical. 32% liked feeding the ducks on the lake. 11 people (5%) mentioned that they liked to relax by the lake. 14 people felt it was important for wildlife.

However, there were also significant issues with the cleanliness, smell and tree life around the lake. 3% of people felt that maintenance of the lake had improved recently but 46% of people who commented comments said it needed to be cleaned or de-silted to help with the smell, or cleared of the rubbish that appears to accumulate there. 18% felt that too many trees had been cut down, and that they should be replanted. For 11% of people the rubbish in and smell of the lake meant that they felt it was poor or somewhere they did not like to visit. One person felt that the lake was a disgrace to Woodley because of poor maintenance. Another was concerned about the safety of the lake and the possibility that a young child might run off and jump or fall into the water.

26 people said that the lake had been spoiled by the cutting back of vegetation from around it, 22 people felt that this had improved the lake.

### **Ideas for improving the lake**

Improve general maintenance.

Keep rubbish and debris cleared from the lake.

De-slit/clean the lake to help with smell.

Clean the end where algae accumulate.

Replant some of the trees and bushes.

Plant wild flower areas around the lake.

Have information boards about some of the wildlife on the lake.

Resurface the path around the lake, to make it safer and easier to use.

Clear dogs mess from around the paths.

Plant some water lilies.

Install adequate fencing all round the lake.

When the lake is clean enough, install stands or areas for children to do pond dipping (in organised groups, or informally). Have information boards showing what they might find.

### **3.8.6 Sports Pitches**

47% of those responding felt that the sports pitches were good, and/or a valuable amenity to Woodley. 24% noted that the pitches are well used, however 6% felt that they were not used much. 15% value the open space the pitches provide, 13% feel that the pitches should be upgraded (no specification given as to how). 9% said that the pitches were important to helping people keep fit and/or participating in local activities.

### **Ideas for improving the sports pitches**

Have more seating for people viewing/waiting for sports players.

Upgrade the pitches.

Advertise the pitches better, and that they can be used by all.

Have hockey and lacrosse pitches.

Have a netball court.

### **3.8.7 Bowling Green**

203 people commented on the bowling green. Of these, 36 people said that they did not know it existed. 89% of the remaining 167 responses praised the quality and upkeep of the green. 78% said they thought it was excellent or good. 19% of people enjoyed playing bowls there, 2% liked watching the bowling. 9% of people commented that they did not know if the Bowling Green was available for public use. One person (a bowling club member) felt that not enough attention was given to maintaining the green.

#### **Ideas for improving the Bowling Green**

Encourage more people of all ages to play.

Have turn up and play events.

Advertise the availability of the bowling green for public use.

Signpost the Bowling Green better.

### **3.8.8 Garden of Remembrance**

61% of the 301 people commenting made positive remarks about the Garden of Remembrance. 45% said it was an excellent or good feature of the park. 26% liked that it was peaceful and calm. For 9% of people it was an important and/or precious place for remembrance or contemplation, or “a lovely place to go when quiet time is needed”. 13% of people said that they did not know that the Garden existed.

However, there was some concern about the upkeep of the Garden, with 33% of comments suggesting that it has become untidy, shabby or appears neglected, and/or that work should be done to make it more special again.

4% of people did not feel safe in the Garden of Remembrance because of its secluded location.

### **Ideas for improving the Garden of Remembrance**

Maintain and plant and promote the garden.

Make it a “real feature of the town, not a neglected backwater”.

Improved signposting.

A board in the main area of the park saying what the garden is, and where it is located.

General tidying and improved maintenance.

Additional planting with more cheerful (possibly wild) flowers and plants.

### **3.8.9 Wild flower Areas**

91% of the 231 people that commented on the Wild Flower Areas were complementary about them. Typical comments were that they are a lovely idea, gorgeous, magical, very pretty, excellent for wildlife, a pleasure to have and an asset to the park.

8% of those commenting did not like the wildflower areas, typically commenting that they look scruffy or seem pointless. One person felt that it was the same as planting weeds in the park. Three people said that they prefer formal planting to wild planting.

18% of responders said that it was important that the Wildflower \areas are well kept, especially when the flowers are over for the year, with some commenting that they look particularly unkempt in the Winter.

9% of people replying said that there should be more wildflower areas around the park.2% commented that the areas will improve as they become more established.

### **Ideas for improving the Wildflower Areas**

Increase the number of Wildflower Areas.

Tidy the areas up when flowering is over.

Have boards showing what plants can be found.

Have boards explaining the purpose of the areas, and how they are kept.

Get local groups to adopt a wildflower area and look after it.

### **3.8.10 Street Art Boards**

The street art boards attracted favourable opinion and dislike in almost equal measure.

Of the 171 people who commented, 10% were not aware of the boards. Of the remainder, 52% liked them and/or thought they were a good idea. Forty eight percent did not like the boards.

One person had not seen them but did not like the idea as they dislike graffiti. Conversely another found the boards disappointing as they displayed poor efforts at tagging and had no real graffiti on them,.

Positive comments included that they are a good outlet for young people's creativity and self-expression, that they seem to be well used and appreciated by local young people.

Negative comments included that they are an eyesore, ugly, a waste of time and money or a place for local vandals to write obscenities. 7 people expressed concerns that the boards might encourage graffiti elsewhere in Woodley, whilst 17 people felt that they reduced this.

#### **Ideas for Improving the Street Art Boards**

Have workshops linked to the boards to teach local young people graffiti art/ offer graffiti day courses for those young people that are interested

Have a competition. Each entrant has a week on the boards, photos are taken of their art and this is judged after a period of time.

### **3.8.11 Youth Shelters**

Three quarters of those that commented felt that the youth shelters were a positive feature of the park, although 22% of people commented that the shelters needed to be upgraded or refurbished as they are looking shabby or run down. 16% of people said that the shelters appear to be well used.

11% of people who commented did not like the shelters, primarily because they are a place for local young people to gather, which was considered to cause trouble.

#### **Ideas for improving the youth shelters**

Better lighting inside and around the shelters.

Repainting, upgrading or refurbishing the shelters.

The community police should regularly check the shelters in a friendly manner.

### **3.8.12 General condition of the Park**

71% of the 429 people commenting felt that Woodford Park is in a good or excellent condition. 38% commented that it is well maintained or seems in good condition. 22% felt that the park could be improved and/or better maintained.

Typical comments among those liking Woodford Park were that the Park is a pretty/pleasant amenity, is important because it is “at the heart of Woodley”, provides activities for all ages and that it is good when it is litter free, and when dog owners do not allow their pets to foul without clearing up afterward. Dog fouling was seen as a problem in the park by 27% of those who commented.

The other most frequent comments about Woodford Park were that too many trees have been cut down, and that the informal pathway made by people walking from the Oakwood Centre diagonally across the memorial ground area is unsightly or alternatively should be turned into a permanent path). 12% of people said that that there should be a permanent path around the football pitch field.

Other issues raised were problems with waterlogging and blocked drains after heavy rain, the need for water fountains, more seating, more formally planted flower gardens and better signposting throughout the park.

Those who gave a less favourable view about Woodford Park commented that it looks dated and unloved, and needs a general upgrade, especially the play area near the Oakwood Centre. The park was said to need more ideas and imagination, and more plants/tress/flowers, including better upkeep of the sports field turf.

The area around the old horticultural society hut was felt to be poor and unsightly, and 20% of people felt that this should be redeveloped for community benefit and to improve car parking in the park.

## **Ideas for improving Woodford Park**

### **Maintenance/upkeep**

Improve the standard of park maintenance and improve/ upgrade all facilities (11%)

Improve the condition of the grass throughout the park.

Clear the drain by the play area at the leisure centre.

Make sure all drains around the park are kept cleared.

More frequent emptying of dog/litter bins.

### **Planting**

Plant more trees, bushes and flowers throughout the park.

Have more wild flower areas

Have more formal flower planting around the park

Have apple and other fruit trees dotted around the park for people to help themselves from.

### **Facilities**

Plant some more trees by the pathways and some more benches along them to allow more people to sit and enjoy the park.

Provide more facilities for more for older people in the park. It is too focussed on providing for the young.

Have an area with picnic benches and barbecue stands (by the lake was suggested).

Have more signposts, which are more clearly visible.

Have a board at the park entrances with a map of the park and what can be found there.

Install a large zip wire for all ages to use.

### **Dogs**

Ensure tighter control of dog owners – prevent fouling and also dogs scaring children/others.



## **Events**

Host organised outdoor sports events for all who want to take part.

Run a mini paralympics/all ability sports event.

Celebrate St George's Day in the park

Hold more evening community events in the park including music, fireworks etc. for special occasions.

Encourage local youth and other groups to make better use of the park.

## **Litter**

Monitor litter dropping in the park, make people pick up what they drop.

Have litter picker volunteers, particularly at weekends, or after community events.

Ensure that sports teams tidy up their litter after themselves, or charge them for the service of litter picking.

## **Pathways**

Extend the paved footpath around the north and eastern area of the park (around the football pitch field) to improve conditions for walkers coming in from or walking around that side of the park.

Put a pathway in concrete or tarmac from corner of Oakwood Centre across grass to join up with path by the old gardening club/Headley Road entrance.

Have more lighting throughout the park in the evenings.

Resurface all paths in the park.

## **Travelling Funfairs**

For some people, the fair makes Woodford Park less desirable. 19 people suggested reducing the number of visits made by fairs to increase the used and pleasure of the park

### **Access and Car Parking**

Improve/resurface the car parks in all areas of the park.

Parking at Coronation Hall end should be increased and made more available to park users.

Alter car parking to making access to play areas safer from cars.

Have an area for overflow parking when football tournaments and other events are held.

Have more bike racks around the park.

### **Woodley Carnival**

Although not specifically a park facility, Woodley Carnival is an important event to local people, and is identified with Woodford Park. 34 people made comments about the Carnival, especially the changes to the Carnival in 2013.

Two comments which summarise all of those made were that the 2013 was a disappointment, because there was no evening event. Half of those commenting wanted the evening event reinstated, feeling that it is an important community occasion.

### **Park Keeper/Dog Warden**

Eleven people made suggestions that there should be a recognisable park keeper/grounds person who can “care for and love the park and be a friendly face/monitor for any problems there”.

Similarly, 8 people suggested that there should be a dog warden in the park to make owners clear up their dog’s mess and control their dogs in an appropriate manner.

### **Inn on the Park**

Although not specifically asked about, 51 of people commented on the Inn on the Park as part of Woodford Park.

31 people said that they wanted dogs to be allowed back in the Inn on the Park.

27 people said that the Inn on the Park should be refurbished and/or made to feel more welcoming and family friendly.

## Old Horticultural Society Hut

This area of Woodford Park was thought to be run down and/or in need of improvement by 84 of the 429 commenting on the park (20%).

Suggestions for improvement were

Resurface the Parking area and make it a formal car park

Demolish the hut and turn it into:

- More green park area
- A community allotment/gardening area for people with disabilities
- A community orchard
- An all ages play area
- A picnic area
- Putting green

Rebuild/refurbish the hut for use as:

- A small community hall for charity groups
- A nursery for young children
- A club hut for/to be run by local young people
- An ecumenical chapel for all faiths
- A low cost, walk in community gym
- A café and/or cheap sandwich shop
- A youth coffee shop run by young people
- Small craft/art workshops
- A community tea shop run by local older people
- A community lunch club

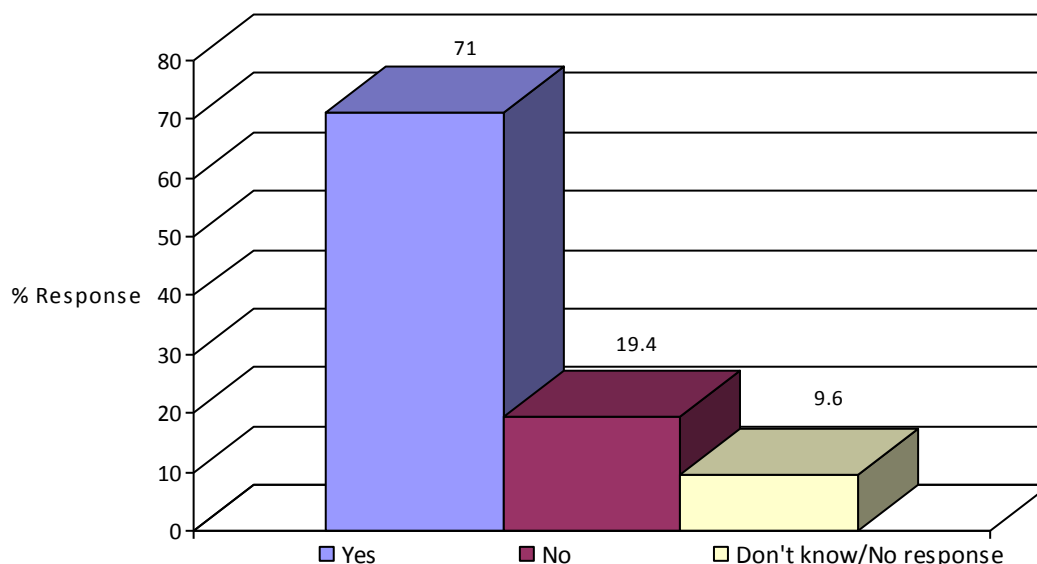
### 3.9 Providing Youth Clubs

Following a reduction in the funding of youth services by Wokingham Borough Council, Woodley Residents were asked for their views about whether Woodley Town Council should be involved in providing youth clubs open to all local young people, and about how these should be funded.

**Table 13: Should Woodley Town Council be Involved in Providing Local Youth Clubs?**

WTC involvement in Youth Club Provision?	% Response	Number of Responses
Yes	71.0	698
No	19.4	191
Don't know/No response	9.6	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>983</b>

**Fig 7: Should Woodley Town Council be Involved in Providing Local Youth Clubs?:**

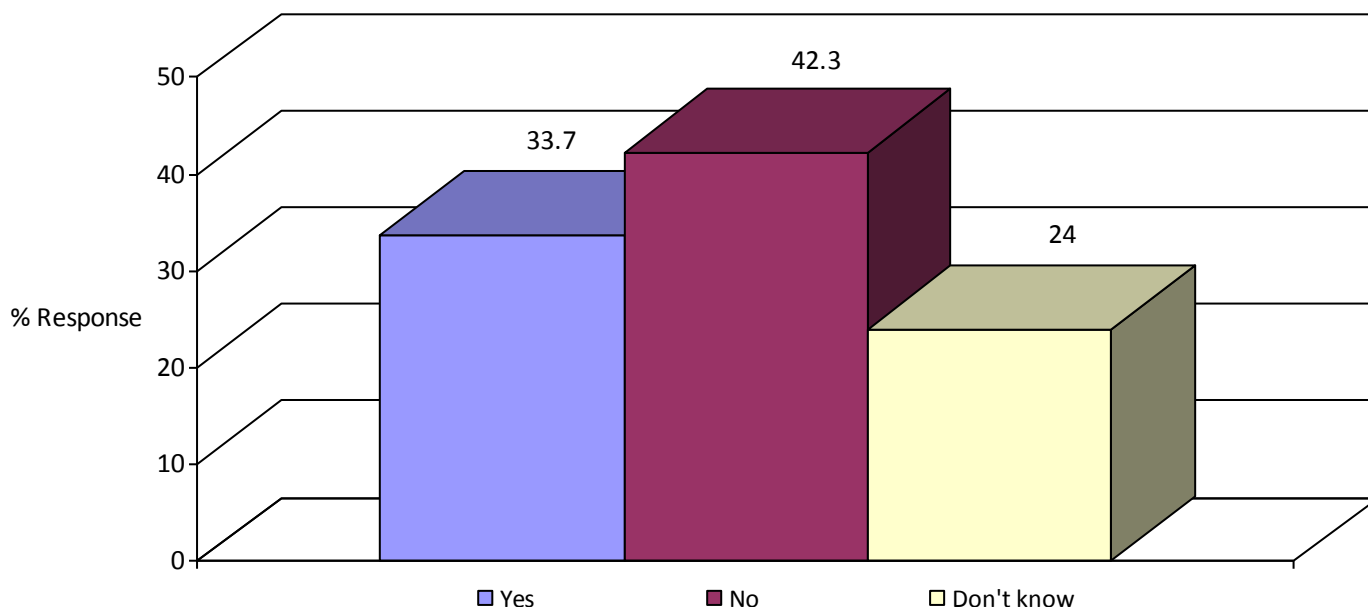


As can be seen in Table 13 and Figure 7 over two thirds of local residents believe that Woodley Town Council should be involved in this kind of youth service provision. However, views about whether local people were willing to pay for local youth clubs through extra council tax were less clear cut. 42.3% said that additional council tax should not be used to pay for Youth Clubs, whilst 33.7 felt that it should. Almost a quarter did not answer or did not know.

**Table 14: Are Woodley Residents willing to Pay More Council Tax to fund Youth Clubs?**

Funding via Council Tax?	% Response	Number of Responses
Yes	33.7	331
No	42.3	416
Don't know	24.0	236
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>983</b>

**Fig 8: Should Youth Clubs be Funded by Extra Council Tax?**



One hundred and twenty six people wrote comments beside this question which can be summarised as follows:

- Wokingham Borough Council should be made to continue the funding (48 comments)
- The clubs should be paid for by member subscription (64 comments)
- Look for grants or lottery+ funding etc. (11 comments)
- The Town Council should take money from other budgets to pay for the clubs (3 comments)

### 3.10 Belonging to Woodley

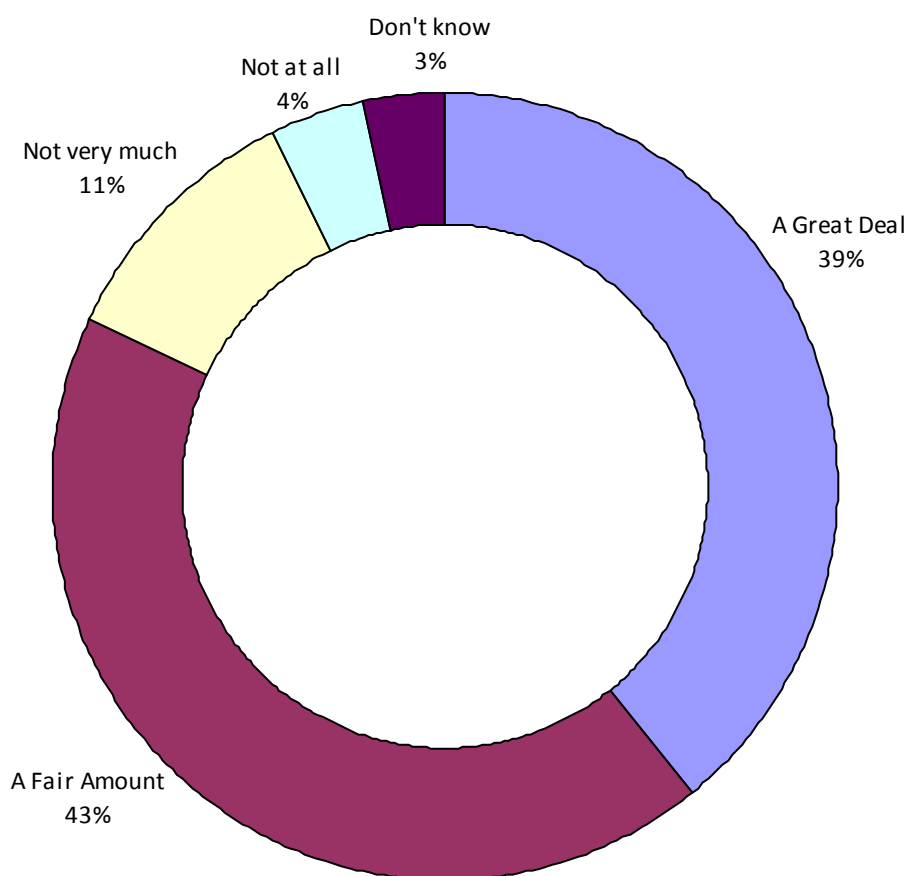
Local people appear to have a fairly strong sense of community spirit about living in Woodley.

Almost 40% felt that they belong to Woodley a great deal, and 43% feel that they belong to the town a fair amount

**Table 15: How residents identify with the town**

Having a sense of belonging to Woodley	% Response	Number of Responses
Great Deal	39.3	386
Fair Amount	42.8	421
Not very much	10.8	106
Not at all	3.8	37
Don't know/No response	3.4	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>983</b>

**Fig 9: Do Local Residents feel that they Belong to Woodley?**



### **3.11 Value for Money**

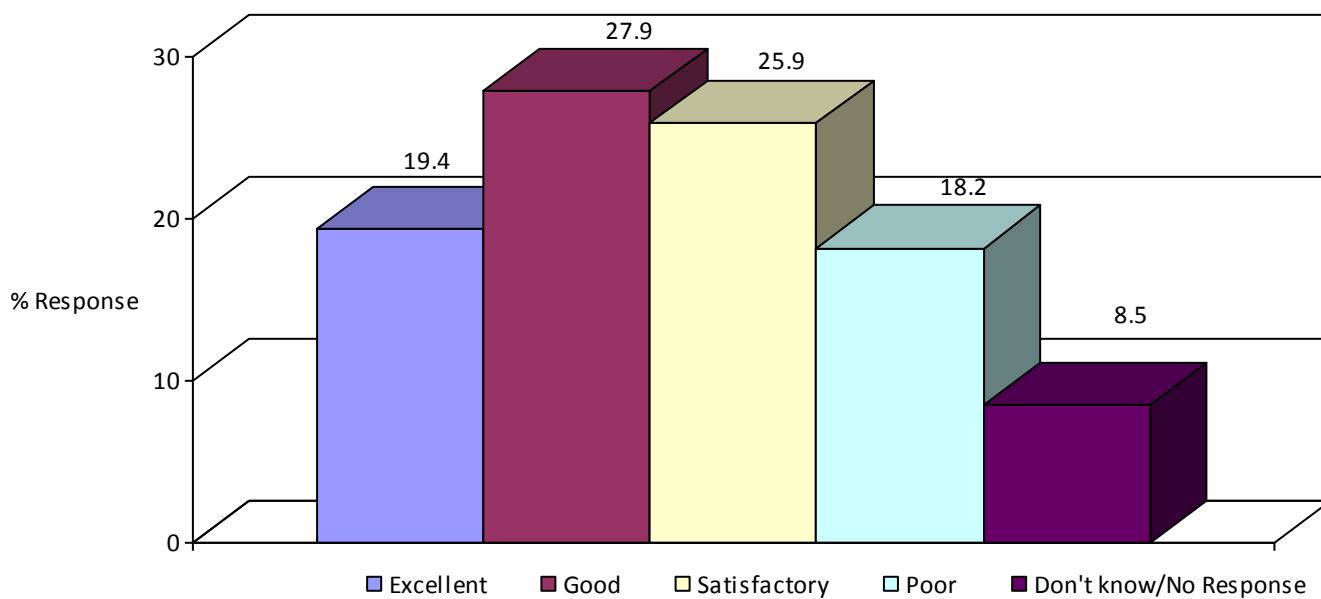
The questionnaire explained that Woodley Town Council services are paid for by a precept added to Wokingham Borough Council Tax, and that for a Band D house this was £2.20 a week (£114.65 a year) in 2013-2014.

Using this information, respondents were asked to rate the value for money provided by Woodley Town Council. Almost 19% felt that value for money was excellent, 28% felt that the Town Council provided good value for money and a further 26% rated value for money as satisfactory. 18% of local people felt that Woodley Town Council provides poor value for money.

**Table 16: Rating Town Council Value for Money**

Value for money	% Response	Number of Responses
Excellent	19.4	191
Good	27.9	274
Satisfactory	25.9	255
Poor	18.2	179
Don't know/No Response	8.5	84
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>983</b>

**Figure 10: Rating Town Council value for money**





### 3.12 The importance of Woodley Town Council Services

Residents were asked about the importance of each type of service provided by Woodley Town Council to themselves, and then to Woodley as a whole. The responses show a sense of community awareness, with services that may not be considered important to the individual respondent frequently being considered more valuable to the town itself.

The tables below show the responses for individual respondents (Table 17), and for Woodley as a whole (Table 18).

For each service there were a number of people who did not know, or did not respond to the question, thus the data in the tables are based on the number of people giving a rating. Figure 11 combines the results into an aggregated, weighted score for the importance of each service, and shows a comparison for the importance to individuals, and the perceived importance to Woodley as a whole.

**Table 18: The importance of Town Council Services for individuals**

Importance of Service to Respondent	Number Of Responses	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant
Community Halls	912	49.3	35.1	8.9	6.7
Parks	788	56.6	34.3	6.2	2.9
Children's Play Areas	911	41.2	26.3	19.6	12.9
Youth Facilities	812	19.7	30.6	27.4	22.3
Indoor Sports Facilities	869	34.2	26.9	21.4	17.5
Outdoor Sports Facilities	861	24.2	26	33.3	16.5
Allotments	791	11.2	25.4	29.6	33.8
Grants to individuals and groups	790	27.2	29.7	26.2	16.9
Mean Response, All Services		33.0	29.3	21.6	16.2

Most frequent response

Second most frequent response

For individuals, there were mixed responses about the relative importance of each type of service, with the most important services being Parks, Community Halls and Children’s Play Areas. The Allotments were of least importance to individuals, although for Woodley as a whole (see below) were considered to be very important by half of the Town’s residents and somewhat important by another 40%.

As might be expected, the age and family structure of respondents appeared to have an impact on the importance of different services to individuals. This effect was less marked when it came to rating the services for Woodley as a whole.

**Table 18: The importance of Town Council Services for Woodley as a whole**

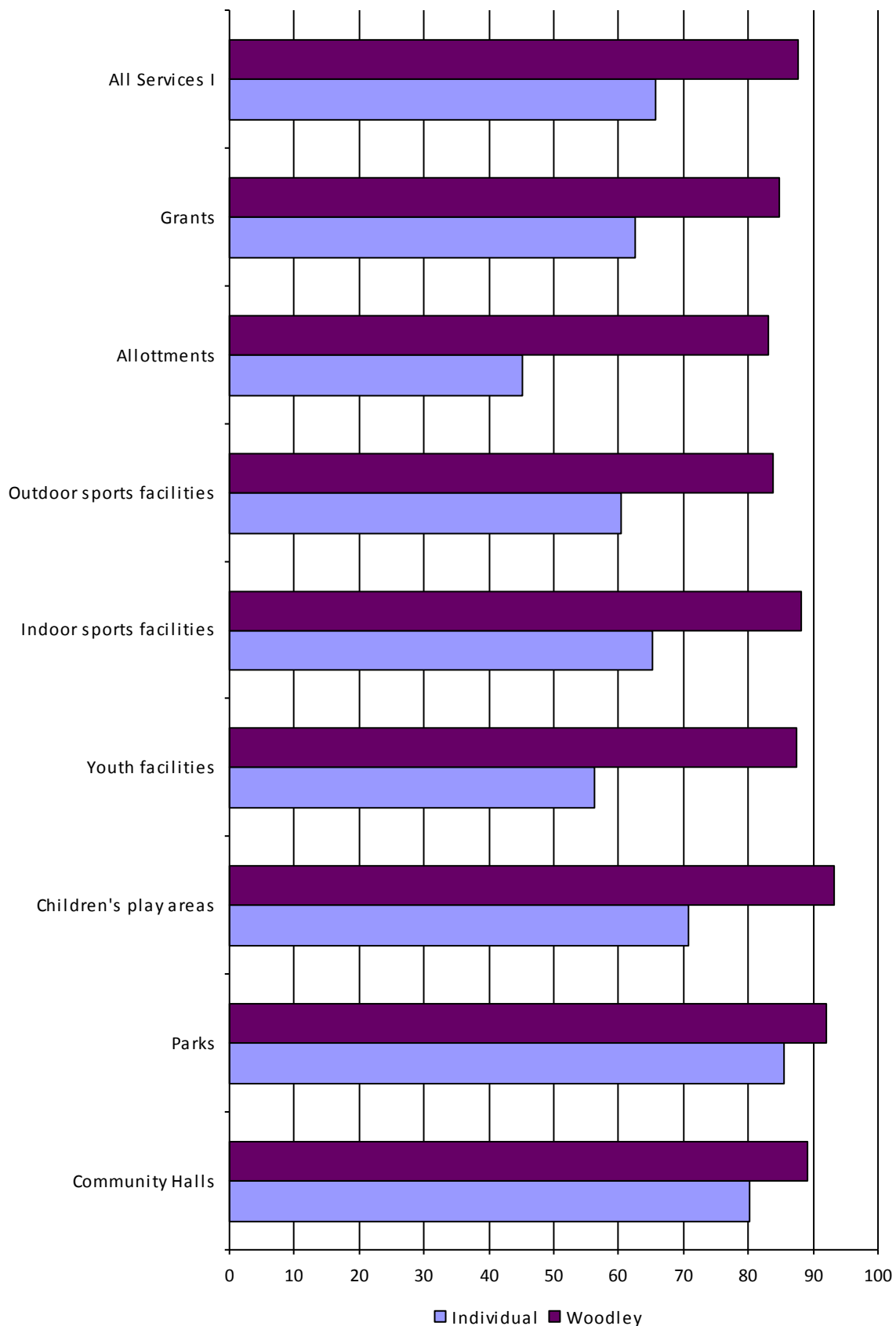
Importance of service for Woodley as a whole	Number Of Responses	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant
Community Halls	795	69.9	20	8.4	1.7
Parks	844	76.9	16.5	5.5	1.1
Children's Play Areas	869	80.3	13.8	5.1	0.8
Youth Facilities	875	68.2	19.9	8.6	3.3
Indoor Sports Facilities	922	68.4	21.5	7.1	3
Outdoor Sports Facilities	873	58.8	27.2	9.3	4.7
Allotments	779	50.7	39.6	5.1	4.6
Grants to individuals and groups	855	64.6	22	7.3	6.1
Mean response, all services		67.2	22.6	7.1	3.2

Most frequent score      Second most frequent response

For Woodley as a whole, the response was more consistent for all services, with every type of service being considered very important to Woodley by 50% or more of local residents. Children’s Play Areas and the Parks were considered to be very important by over three quarters of residents with the play areas appearing to be seen as slightly more important than the Parks. Community Halls, Indoor Sports Facilities, Youth Facilities and Grants were thought to be very important by between two thirds and three quarters of residents.

All services were considered to be very important to Woodley by the majority of local residents, with a minority of residents rating any service as unimportant or very unimportant.

**Figure 11: Weighted Mean Importance of Each Service Type to Individuals and to Woodley as a Whole**



### **3.13 Improving Town Council Services and Facilities**

Finally, residents were asked for their ideas on how to improve the quality of life and facilities in Woodley. The comments made and ideas given are summarised below.

#### **3.13.1 Community**

Woodley has a large and could be close knit population – make people involved and proud to live here.

Encourage volunteer activities in the town (e.g. litter picking, painting community areas, maintaining parks etc.) by giving money off/free vouchers to use facilities.

Have a Woodley Day, to include activities for all, a park party (like a street party in the park), celebrating the town and the community (link to the Carnival?).

#### **3.13.2 Events**

Arrange, encourage and promote more community activities : “They may need good leadership to run them, but do not necessarily need large amounts of funding”

#### **3.13.3 Facilities**

Have more facilities in general: Doctors, shops, schools – especially with the amount of new housing being built locally.

#### **3.13.4 Businesses**

Support local businesses and crafts.

Encourage local businesses of all sizes to come together as a community and support each other.

More encouragement and better facilities for local businesses to operate within the town.

Work to encourage new, young businesses, Woodley could be a thriving community for this.

Do not increase business rates locally.

### **3.13.5 Public Toilets**

Have proper public lavatories, which are free, central and accessible.

Bring back a public toilet, and keep it in good condition/Have proper toilets in the shopping centres, not just local loos.

Hurry up and get the toilets built.

Reinstate the public toilets facility to one that is open all day and every day for customers in the precinct. Accessible conveniences are essential for a civilised environment. Their upkeep should be good and appearance should be well maintained.

### **3.13.6 Environment/Development**

Keep on making Woodley up to date, clean, attractive and tidy.

Prevent expansion and building of houses where they will overcrowd the area, infrastructure and road network.

Stop agreeing for more housing to be built, making Woodley too big without the infrastructure to keep with more people and traffic.

Be more efficient at removal of autumn leaves, unblocking of drains.

Get the local community more involved with the care and general wellbeing of all areas.

### **3.13.7 Planting**

Have more flower tubs/hanging baskets etc.

Have community fruit trees and garden areas.

### **3.13.8 Markets**

Have more frequent food markets : (residents would like more identifiably local producers).

### **3.13.9 Health Services**

Improve the GP surgeries to cut down long waiting times for appointments.

### 3.13.10 Town Centre

Improve the whole shopping centre.

Modernise the northern part of the shopping precinct/The Chequers end of precinct needs upgrading to the standard of the other end.

Allow knock down and rebuilding of Reading end of the shopping centre.

More new clothes shops in town centre.

The north end of the precinct is an eyesore at the moment, but reading of the planned improvements, hopefully this will improve the centre for everyone.

Smarten up some of the town centre buildings, some look shabby/derelict

Knock down the shopping centre buildings and “build something decent instead”.

Install a better undercover area for charity sales

Improve the flats above the shops, they are in bad disrepair

Since Bosco arrived (and Costa) the feel of Woodley has improved and we now have some pavement café culture, but the town buildings are tired and dated.

Continue the upgrade of the precinct to keep popularity and bring business into Woodley.

Improve the range of shops and encourage more independent retailer.

Do something to redress the balance and have less charity shops .

Woodley needs a butchers, greengrocers and general clothing shop for basic needs, especially for older people.

Woodley needs a need a toy shop as there are lots of children in the town.

Have additional food outlets in the town centre.

Using the precinct for special events is good - do more of this.

Reduce rent of the Woodley shops to entice more variety in what we have.

### **3.13.11 Litter/Public bins**

Impress on Wokingham Borough Council the need to clear gutters and drains and maintain pavements in good order. Headley Road, for example, is a disgrace in these respects.

Keep on top of litter/graffiti/shabby streets etc.: keep precinct clean and smart.

Where appropriate, trim back verges, bushes and trees from public footpaths and pavements, e.g. between Pitford Road and Church Road.

Improve litter collection and litter awareness throughout the town.

Improve general maintenance throughout Woodley and make improvement to all areas.

Arrange for more frequent litter collecting from paths etc.

### **3.13.12 Refuse collections**

Take action to make sure refuse collections do not leave streets with litter behind when they do their weekly collections.

Provide covers for recycling boxes to keep contents dry and free from pests.

Put pressure on Wokingham borough about garden/tree waste collection = having to pay for them to collect green waste such as leaves from council trees which we have to tidy up because the council do not is unacceptable =- not everyone has cars to go to the tip.

Have a community skip (or several skips) in Woodley every month.

Deal with problem of blue bags getting ripped open by cats/foxes/birds.

Encourage people with wheel bins to store them at the rear of properties, out of sight of the road or use bags to avoid the unsightly look of the bins outside houses.

### **3.13.13 Community Buildings**

Allow the Community Halls be used for youth clubs at low cost to the groups, which also would not cost much for the council if they are not otherwise being rented out. (especially Oakwood/Coronation Halls).

Promote the Oakwood Centre as a venue for local business meetings, conferences etc.

Instead of erecting a war memorial, look after the memorial hall we have (Coronation Hall), it is in a dirty and disgusting state.

### **3.13.14 Public Transport**

Have more buses, especially routes 13 and 14.

Have buses to Wokingham.

Quicker buses to Twyford to get to the train station.

Install seating the rear of the shopping centre where No. 14 bus stops, particularly so older people can sit and wait for the bus.

### **3.13.15 Cycling/Walking**

Increase footpaths/cycleways for safe movement within the town Make a foot/cycle path connecting Woodley to Twyford alongside the railway line to help encourage people to commute by train more easily.

Enforce the no cycling law in the precinct.

### **3.13.16 Roads**

Improve the state of the roads throughout Woodley.

Resurface roads in Vincent Close and Malvern Close.

Improve Reading Road, the surface is very poor.



### **3.13.17 Traffic**

Make the whole of Woodley a 20mph town.

Consider making narrow roads (e.g. Western Avenue) one way for traffic (re-route bus for one direction).

Traffic congestion is becoming a problem and will be 10 fold when all the new houses are built. Work now to make sure that traffic is properly planned for and managed.

Work to impose a 20mph speed limit in Western Ave.

Do something about speed of cars all over Woodley.

Use speed bumps more often to calm traffic.

Roads identified as having particular problems with speed:

- Coppice Road
- Western Avenue
- Nightingale Road
- Beechwood Avenue
- Reading Road
- Hurricane Way

### **3.13.18 Parking**

Free parking for Woodley shops, especially at weekends, and for short times, to encourage more visitors.

Have free parking for first 1/2 hour of stay in Woodley Centre.

Improve and extend the main car parks, look at ways to improve the amount of cars that can be parked by remarking the layouts.

Have more disabled parking spaces in car park.

Improve poor/excessive car parking in residential areas.

Allow 1 hour free parking at Coronation Hall car park when there are no events happening in the hall.

### **3.13.19 Allotments**

Provide more allotments; the waiting list is too long.

Police allotments better to allow those not using theirs properly to make way for people who want and will use one.

Encourage sharing of allotments between people on waiting lists.

Have small community planting areas around the town .

### **3.13.20 Bulmershe Leisure Centre**

Improve/modernise/update Bulmershe Leisure Centre.

Completely revamp, update and revitalise Bulmershe leisure centre, especially the pool and the viewing area. Create a café and get more people using the Centre.

Bulmershe pool changing rooms are disgraceful – half the benches are missing and haven't seen any upkeep in 20 years! The benches could be painted and/or replace benches at low cost.

A shame there aren't different swimming facilities as I have to go elsewhere during the week as public swimming sessions are extremely limited due to the school, over 50's etc.

Have a gym here.

### **3.13.21 Chequers Pub**

Revamp or close the Chequers Pub/

Make the Chequers pub more community friendly and less rough/cliqey/

I don't know if the Chequers is Council owned, but it's an eyesore: updating the façade and turning the pub car park into a garden with seating would help greatly/

Do something to help the pub become something more vibrant and community orientated. It could be a compliment to the Bosco lounge feeling and could bring the Town Centre together, instead of having a good and a "bad" end.

### **3.13.22 Youth Services**

Put pressure on Wokingham Borough to improve their financial and workforce input into youth services.

Activities for teenagers in the evening/during holidays and at weekends.

Provide more youth clubs (to keep youngsters off the street).

It is vital to provide youth clubs and youth facilities in Woodley as without them problems are likely to arise in the next few years, which will cost more than providing youth facilities.

Younger people need easy access to positive social activities and services./ encourage and engage local young people in setting up activities and services which they want for themselves.

More for teenagers to do that allows them to feel more part of the community.

### **3.13.23 Council Tax**

Do not increase council tax.

Do not sacrifice local services in order to decrease council tax.

Woodley Town Council provide proportionally much more for our money than Wokingham Borough do, make the Borough work better for Woodley.

Take more of Woodley Residents' Wokingham Council Tax and use it for improving Woodley rather than it being used to improve Wokingham.

### **3.13.24 Wokingham Borough Council.**

Constantly encourage Wokingham Borough Council to consider and make improvements about the problems of rubbish, car speeds, and waste collection recycling.

### **3.13.25 Paying for local services**

Have a levy for people who come from outside Woodley and use Bulmershe Pool, community rooms etc.

### **3.13.26 Politics**

It's not a way of improving life here, which is pretty good anyway, but I want to say that I think the local councillors work hard on our behalf, thank you.

The local politicians should stop trying to score off each other and work together to make a better Woodley.

I worry that the councillors want to make cuts to services to try to make themselves look better and be more electable. They should think about improving Woodley, not cutting things back.

I want local politicians to remember that they are working for the good of Woodley on our behalf and not for the good of their Party.

### **And...**

"My son's input is to have more chocolate in the shops!"



**HMR**

*Consultation, research, evaluation, facilitation, mediation, training*

0118 9628394  
[Helen.masey@ntlworld.com](mailto:Helen.masey@ntlworld.com)